

The National Association of REALTORS®, “The Voice of Real Estate,” is America’s largest trade association, representing 1.2 million members involved in all aspects of the residential and commercial real estate industries.

**Remarks Prepared for Moe Veissi
2009 NAR First Vice President-Elect
Maryland Association of REALTORS®
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Featured Speaker
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LEADING IN CHALLENGING TIMES

- **“You can’t handle the truth.”**
- **Does anyone know what movie that comes from?**
- **A Few Good Men.**
 - **It’s one of my favorite movies of all time.**
 - **That’s what the bad guy, Jack Nicholson, tells Tom Cruise, the Navy lawyer who wants to settle every case he’s ever given out of court.**
- **Why does Cruise do that?**
 - **One answer: He’s afraid.**
 - **He’s afraid to step up to the plate and be what he’s been trained to be.**
 - **He’s avoiding being the leader he should be.**
- **If you’ve seen the movie you know what happens.**
 - **One day Cruise wakes up and says, “I hate this! I want to be different!”**
 - **He sits down and writes out a detailed plan to change.**
 - **Then he carefully follows his plan every day.**
- **Wrong!**
 - **That’s nowhere near what happens.**
 - **What motivates Cruise to change wasn’t his personal will.**
 - **It was tough circumstances.**

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- **Right now REALTORS® are facing some of the toughest times I’ve seen in 40 years of being in the real estate business.**
- **We are seeing signs of a national recovery in the works.**
 - **But it’s still a fragile one.**
- **Existing home sales rose for four straight months through July.**
 - **But saw a 2.7 percent drop-off in August.**
- **Pending home sales have risen for seven straight months.**
 - **Highest level we’ve seen since March 2007.**
 - **Consumers are certainly being driven back into the market.**
- **But not all of these sales are closing due to the usual suspects:**
 - **Short sales**
 - **Appraisal rules**
- **Although, we’re seeing signs of a recovery...**
 - **We’re not there yet.**
- **And guess who has to help us move from a fragile recovery to a robust one?**
 - **All of us.**
 - **We’re all on the hook.**
 - **All 1.2 million of us.**
- **But I have a secret to tell you. Not all 1.2 million members in our organization are helping out.**
 - **We sent out a Call for Action to extend and expand the homebuyer tax credit on September 14th.**
 - **To date, over 150,000 REALTORS® have responded.**
 - **Over 15 percent of the Association.**
 - **That’s great!**
 - **But we can do better.**
- **North Dakota and South Dakota have a 40 percent response rate.**
 - **Pretty impressive.**

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- **Do you want to know where Maryland stands?**
 - **Above 20 percent!**
 - **You’re one of five states to go above 20 percent.**
 - **Awesome!**
- **But Maryland is in a unique position.**
 - **Maryland Representative Chris Van Hollen sits on the House Ways and Means Committee.**
 - **He’s a critical vote for us to get the extension and possible expansion of the tax credit.**
 - **Need to persuade every last REALTOR® in Chris Van Hollen's district to answer the CFA.**
 - **If you live in his district and haven’t taken action, the REALTOR® Party needs you to act.**
- **NAR estimates the tax credit has encouraged about 350,000 additional home sales in the market.**
 - **That’s people who would not have bought a home, if it wasn’t for the tax credit.**
- **Other sources back that number up:**
 - **Moody’s Economy.com**
 - **Deutsche [DOYTCH-uh] Bank**
 - **Campbell Surveys of Washington, D.C.**
 - **Even U.S. Treasury Secretary Tim Geithner [Guy-t-ner].**
 - **All report similar, if not higher figures.**
- **Credit has greatly helped out our businesses this year.**
 - **If you haven’t answered the CFA, go to RealtorActionCenter.com.**
 - **With a couple clicks of your mouse, letters will be sent to your state leaders in Congress telling them you support extending the tax credit.**

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- **If you’ve already responded, you’re not off the hook, either.**
 - **We need you to tell a colleague who hasn’t answered the CFA.**
 - **Especially ones in Van Hollen’s district.**
- **So if everyone in the REALTOR® organization isn’t going to step up to the plate, then that means we’re counting on you special people here at this Leadership conference even more.**
 - **We need you to be a part of leading REALTORS® all across this country.**
 - **I believe in you.**
 - **I believe you’re going to lead us out of these tough times.**
- **So what changed for Tom Cruise in the movie?**
 - **What made him decide to step up to the plate and to venture into that courtroom?**
- **Adversity.**
 - **He faced a tough case with a smart opponent.**
 - **He also had tough people on his team who wanted to win.**
 - **He had no other choice.**
 - **Stand up and lead.**
 - **Or sit down and feel the guilt that he didn’t do what he needed to do to bring the truth out into the open.**
- **I want to talk with you today about leading in times of adversity.**
 - **If you ask me, it’s the only way to lead.**
 - **Your inspiration is always in front of you.**
 - **You never have to ask yourself why you’re doing it.**
 - **You’re needed. That’s why you’re doing it.**
 - **You have a purpose, and people are depending on you!**
- **That’s what keeps our guys and girls going in Iraq and Afghanistan.**

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- **They have an enormous duty.**
- **They are needed.**
- **We are depending on them.**
- **I want to share with you five tips I think are important for leading during these tough times.**
 - **And I want everyone to get comfortable because we’re going to have fun today.**
 - **Leadership is a way to stretch ourselves and to make us better people.**
 - **A way to make us the people we were meant to be.**
 - **Okay, let’s go!**
- **Sacrifice**
 - **I just talked about the troops serving overseas.**
 - **We’re here in Annapolis, a military town.**
 - **How many people here know someone serving overseas today?**
 - **Let’s applaud them!**
 - **They are sacrificing their safety, their time with their families, and their lives.**
 - **All for us!**
 - **Nothing more honorable than that.**
- **As a leader in the REALTOR® organization, you won’t be sacrificing your life...**
 - **You can breathe a sigh of relief.**
 - **But you will be sacrificing your time and putting your integrity on the line.**
 - **I always say, “You have to be the first out of the fox hole.”**
 - **If you’re not willing to do it, you can’t fairly ask others around you to do it.**

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- **That’s why I speak about RPAC all the time.**
 - I’ll be speaking on it this afternoon.
 - I served as the Political Fundraising Chair for the REALTORS® Political Action Committee in 2008.
 - I’ve been giving to RPAC for many years.
 - RPAC serves as the single voice for REALTORS® in the national political process.
- **Because I give to RPAC, I feel confident in asking others to do the same.**
 - I’ve been on numerous committees back at my local association in Miami.
 - I served as President for the Florida Association back in 2002.
 - I’ll only ask my fellow REALTORS® to do something that I’m willing to do myself.
 - That’s how I make sure I keep my integrity intact.
 - I urge you to do the same.
- **Be knowledgeable.**
 - It’s hard to lead if you don’t know what’s going on.
 - It would be hard to be a prosecutor if you didn’t know criminal procedure.
- **Start with your state and local boards.**
 - Find out where they publish local information on your market.
 - Sign up for updates if that’s available.
 - Attend meetings.
 - Find out what’s going on around you.
- **Think about getting a new certification.**
 - Through Realtor University, you can access online all of NAR’s education programs for all designations and certifications.
 - Check with your state and local association as well to see what training opportunities they have.

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- **Check out the Short Sales and Foreclosure Certification program**
 - **Newest NAR certification.**
 - **Will prepare members to manage deals with short sales, foreclosures, and REO properties.**
 - **Complete a one-day education program, either in-person or online.**
 - **Complete 3 one-hour Webinars.**
 - **Find more information at RealtorSFR.org.**
 - **Program will also be offered at the 2009 REALTORS® Conference and EXPO in San Diego, November 13th to the 16th.**
- **Don’t forget about Realtor.org.**
 - **Information on every topic you’d ever want to know about.**
- **Start with Realtor.org/GovernmentAffairs.**
 - **Check it out on a weekly basis.**
 - **Click on the “Washington Report” tab.**
 - **Weekly report on latest legislative and regulatory issues.**
 - **Make it a habit to keep up with the issues NAR is dealing with.**
- **Then go to Realtor.org/Research.**
 - **NAR Research department is fantastic!**
 - **Have local and national market reports.**
 - **Lawrence Yun, NAR’s chief economist, writes a weekly commentary.**
 - **It’s an easy way to know what’s happening in your local market and in the national market.**
- **If you’re up on the issues, you will be prepared and respected.**
 - **You’ll also start to be inspired.**
 - **You’ll start thinking of ways to solve problems because you know what the problems are.**

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- **Balance**
 - You will never be able to be everyone to everybody.
 - You can’t be a people-pleaser all the time.
 - What U.S. president has ever had a 100 percent approval rating?
 - It’s unheard of.
- **If you want everyone to like you, don’t be a leader.**
 - If you want to be a part of taking our industry from where we are now to putting us “On the Rise” in 2010, please be a leader!
- **To achieve balance, you must know your boundaries.**
 - You’ll need down time.
 - You’ll need time away from the business to clear your head.
 - You’ll need time with you family and friends.
 - Everything in moderation.
- **We can’t keep going all the time.**
 - We’ll burn out.
 - Especially when we’re facing challenges like we are today.
- **Leaders make tough decisions.**
 - They are decisive.
 - They are driven by a goal.
- **Doesn’t mean you are a dictator.**
 - Dwight Eisenhower said: “You do not lead by hitting people over the head - that's assault, not leadership.”
- **An effective leader in challenging times means you must cultivate good listening skills.**
 - Imperative to listen to those around you.
 - Others can help you reason through an issue.
 - Have good, smart people around you to encourage you when you have a good idea.

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- **And to tell you to cut it out when you have a terrible idea!**
- **That’s why a President has cabinet members.**
- **No one goes it alone in leadership!**

- **Listening brings me to my final point.**
 - **Once you listen to your members, you must be responsive.**
 - **You won’t be able to correct every ill in your association, but you must respond.**

- **2009 NAR President Charles McMillan responds in a number of ways.**
 - **He communicates with members.**
 - **Blogs on a monthly basis.**
 - **Records podcasts twice a month.**
 - **All can be found on Realtor.org/PresidentsReport.**
 - **Frequently he’ll send out an all-member email.**
 - **He writes a message every month to members in REALTOR® Magazine.**
 - **He has several ways that he directly talks to members.**

- **You may be saying, “Well, he’s never talked to me personally.”**
 - **You may be right.**
 - **But he’s only one man. One leader for 1.2 million members.**
 - **That’s more members than many U.S. Senators represent.**
 - **I bet if you wanted to talk to your local association president you certainly could.**
 - **As a leader you must use your time wisely.**
 - **Evaluate your role and decide how best to respond, considering your responsibilities.**

- **Charles also responds in action.**
 - **He listens to issues on members’ minds.**

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- **He then meets with regulators and leaders in Washington in order to get answers.**
- **He responds with communication as well as in action.**

- **REALTORS® are facing an uphill battle right now.**
 - **We’ve made enormous progress.**
 - **But we still have more work to do to get our industry moving in the right direction.**
 - **We want to get the tax credit extended.**
 - **We want to make appraisals rules work better for our industry.**
 - **We want to make the higher conforming loan limits permanent.**
 - **You have specific goals for your associations and committees here in Maryland as well.**

- **Let adversity lead you on.**
 - **Let these tough times inspire you.**
 - **Let these tough times light a fire in you.**

- **You are leaders in a unique position.**
 - **Like Cruise in the movie, you have the option to stay out of the courtroom and the mess and let life be simple.**
 - **To do the bare minimum.**
 - **Or you can jump into the tough challenges before you and be a part of the solution.**
 - **And perhaps even a hero.**

- **I challenge you to not be afraid of the challenges before you.**
 - **To choose to be a part of the messy battles our industry is facing.**
 - **To choose:**
 - **To sacrifice**
 - **To be knowledgeable**
 - **To be balanced**

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- **To listen**
- **To be responsive**

- **I believe these tips will help you as a leader in difficult times.**

➤ **Thank you for your leadership.**

- **I look forward to seeing the good fruits of your work here in Maryland.**
- **I also look forward to seeing some of you moving into leadership positions with the national association!**