

Weekend Sales Tips

Fabulous Follow-up

The day of closing and settlement has arrived and you have one happy client! Now what? Do you have a great system in place that continues to create a deepening relationship with the client and ensures their loyalty and referrals? Perhaps, instead, you have lots of clients with whom you are in contact sporadically but not consistently? Or maybe your business practices fall somewhere in between. The gap between a well executed follow-up system and a haphazard one can represent dozens of deals left on the table and lost potential new "loyal clients" that won't get added to your advocates.

The cost of attracting new business may be as much as ten times greater than generating business from those who already have had a positive experience with you. This low hanging fruit is also some of the easiest to harvest because they already know and love you. The agent who possesses a sales personality behavior type often excels at beginnings but isn't as adept at detailed follow through. Putting a good system in place that AUTOMATICALLY prompts you to action is the best solution. Here are three steps to fine-tune your follow-up:

Develop the Plan: At Closing: What is your "signature" gift or procedure? Don't give things like food and wine that will be consumed and gone, but rather something that will keep you in their minds over time. One gift I like for this is a magazine subscription. They'll think of you each month as they receive the magazine and once a year when it is time to renew, they'll appreciate you all over again. A doorknocker or other item they use often will serve this purpose well, also. This setting is usually a good time to get a testimonial statement to add to your files and to condition them to refer future business. It is critical you are THERE as a resource for them as any problems happen at the outset. It actually gives you an opportunity, if there is a problem, to save the day and reinforce your outstanding service.

The First Month: At least weekly contact will get a good "after-sale" relationship established. You can combine a phone call, an email contact, sending a newsletter and even a visit to strengthen the relationship.

Monthly: A newsletter is an easy way to stay in touch (and hopefully you are doing this by email). Do you have a more personalized newsletter for these clients than for

you larger prospect base? Do they receive something of value from you each time they hear from you? If you provide a way for them to save time or money or are a resource in other ways, they will appreciate you and want to reciprocate.

Quarterly: A phone call every quarter is a MUST! Better still with your true advocates, a breakfast or lunch regularly will yield great results. You'll find 20% of your clients will give you 80% of the referrals; so, concentrate on really taking care of these people as you identify them.

Yearly: A client appreciation event is wonderful because of the perceived value. Even those not attending are aware that you are doing something special for your clients. Send an anniversary card for their closing. The first year, in January, send a copy of the closing statements for their taxes.

Ongoing: Refine your strategies on a yearly basis, taking into consideration new ideas, new ways to connect technologically and including more and more strategic partners.

Automate The Plan: The first things that get dropped when we get busy are the details and follow-up. No, actually, I've found prospecting may be the first thing that gets dropped for many! But the follow up and follow through come next. For this reason it is very important to invest in real estate software to help you manage this system. Get the plan into your computer and set up reminders that will get generated daily on the actions to take. A good contact management system is CRUCIAL.

Implement The Plan: Remembering that you are going to get a tenfold payoff on this prospecting versus cold calling should be enough incentive to stay focused. Don't let this fool you into thinking it isn't important and it isn't truly "work." Besides, who said work had to be hard? Enjoy yourself when you visit with these folks.

Having a well thought out and implemented system in place for fabulous follow-up will produce a significant percentage of your yearly production.

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