

## Responding to Change

The people have spoken. They refuse to allow unwanted salespeople phoning them. Laws have changed and more and more people are joining the No-Call list. Bad news for Realtors? Surprisingly, it may be one of the best things that has happened in the real estate business in a long time. No more wasting time talking to disinterested people who have no intention of buying or selling a home. Now your focus can be on talking to people who know you, or know of you, and might be interested in your valuable services.

One thing that has not changed, however, is that you *must* prospect. You are a selling professional, and you must constantly be about producing your future. Your mastery of prospecting is your professional security, and you cannot allow these recent changes to victimize you. You simply have to be responsive to the challenges before you.

Because of these changes, I want to help you with a new approach. These pages will update my book *Selling Real Estate on Purpose*. Here I want to suggest a few things you might explore in your ongoing prospecting efforts and provide you some supporting scripts to replace those you find in Appendix B. The old scripts can still give you insight into the Purposed Performance [sm] scripting pattern; however, in view of the recent changes, some of them, particularly about cold calling, are simply no longer relevant.

### New Approach to Prospecting

In *Selling Real Estate on Purpose* in the section titled “Whom do I call?” (page 17), I discuss several groups who insist upon your attention. While some of my comments in this section are as relevant now as they were when I first wrote them, I would like to elaborate some in the interest of helping you become even more purposed in your prospecting response.

*Team (Past) Clients*—The new law governing telephone prospecting provides that you may in fact contact those with whom you have had professional contact within the past eighteen months. Listing agreements for both buyers and sellers provide you additional permission for making those calls. (I love this part!) You now simply must stay in touch with your clients. The law is *requiring* that you make contact if you intend to keep them as your customers. You now have prospecting structure, and the people themselves have provided it. Only in America.

*Targeted Cold Calls*—This section has become somewhat irrelevant, although not entirely. Targeting your prospects is always essential. However, the targeting process for making contacts has changed. Here are a few suggestions for you to consider:

1. Make sure to ask every client you serve to introduce you to someone new. Build your business around the people you serve. Remember, people love to help those people who help them. These referrals will become your new “cold

calls.” The good news is, they are no longer really cold. Your present client referrals make them warm for you.

2. Mass cold calling into targeted areas is no longer possible. Targeting and walking those neighborhoods door to door must become your “new/old” strategy. It is back “in” to meet people face to face. Go figure. The old becomes new once again.
3. Become aware of the people you meet in those targeted neighborhoods and let them become your conduit to their neighbors. Remember, you become their resource, and they will want to become a resource for you in return.

*Just Listed/Just Sold*—This prospecting strategy is still valid, although it will have to be approached differently. My suggestion is that you mail “Just Listed/Just Sold” cards out through the people you have listed. Let them make contact with their neighbors as a part of your team effort for them. Let them get permission from their neighbors for you to make contact for the purpose of sharing contemporary information about their neighborhood. People will still want to know what is happening where they live.

*For Sale by Owners (FSBO)*—It is my understanding that you can still make contact with these people as long as you serve as a valid resource to them. Surveying FSBOs is your means of making contact and providing them a valid service. Provide them information about how long other FSBOs have been on the market. Give them insight as to how their property compares by way of price. Become the resource they really need, and those who really need you will ultimately choose to become your customers. You will have earned it.

*Expireds*—This is an area where there is probably more gray than black. These are people who have contracted the services of the Realtors in your area. I don’t believe asking expireds if they would allow you to serve them is improper. I do recommend that you consider the door-to-door contact as your most certain option. Get out there early and with every intention of helping them get their home sold. Consider taking a shorter term listing if they are willing to price their property to sell. Remember what I have already said about this group of people, and respond empathetically.

*Sphere of Influence*—Once again, relationships mean everything. The people who know you best are your best means of validating your contact with the public. Get them to provide you permission. Let the people team you have spent a lifetime developing know that you need their help. Don’t be afraid to sound desperate, because you desperately need their help.

Forget what I said earlier about starting in the A’s of any telephone book. You have to be more targeted with your efforts in response to public opinion. Do not, however, let this become your new excuse for not prospecting. You simply will not survive in this business without an aggressive prospecting strategy. That is one thing that has not changed.

## Revised Appendix B

### Team (Past) Clients

*Say:*

- Hi, this is \_\_\_\_\_. I just wanted to check in with you, as an important and valued member of my team. I hope all is well with you and the people in your world.
- Have you thought of anyone who would appreciate a contact and an update from me?
- I could certainly use your help in identifying and contacting people I need to be serving. Through your relationships, I just want to make sure that no one is victimized in having their real estate needs met.
- I will check in with you periodically. In the meantime, please be thinking about the people you know that you'd like for me to meet.

### Cold (Warm) Calls

*Say:*

- Hi, this is \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_. Your friend \_\_\_\_\_ said that it would be good for us to make contact. I really appreciate \_\_\_\_\_ for making our meeting possible.
- What are your plans for taking advantage of today's real estate opportunities? How much do you know about property (availability and/or marketability)? How familiar are you with what interest rates are doing?
- I would like to earn the right to be your Realtor. I want to be a resource for you so that when you or people you know have real estate needs, I will be the choice.
- Periodically, with your permission, I will check in with you. In the meantime, feel free to call anytime or let me know if there are people like you whom I need to meet.

### Just Listed/Just Sold

*Say:*

- Hi, this is \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_, and your neighbor \_\_\_\_\_ said that you might be interested in learning about the real estate values and needs in your neighborhood. I really appreciate their contact and your giving me the opportunity to share this information with you.
- How long have you lived in the neighborhood? Are you aware of recent sales and the nearby properties that are now on the market?
- I want to give you as much information as I can so that you can help us continue to build this neighborhood by making sure that it remains a great market value.

Who do you know that might want to move into your neighborhood? Have you considered putting your own house on the market?

- I just want you to think of me as your Realtor. If something or someone comes to mind whom I need to know, please call. And certainly, if there is anything that I can help you with please call. I'll stay in touch.

## **FSBOs**

*Say:*

- Hello, this is \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_. I am not calling to list your property. I am calling for two purposes. First, to share with you some survey information that might help you as you continue to work at marketing your property. And secondly, to earn the right to represent you in the purchase of your next home.
- How much do you know about homes for sale that are competing with yours right now? How long have you folks been attempting to sell your home? Are you up against any time constraints? Have you changed your sales price since you put your house on the market? Have you decided how you will proceed if you are unable to get it sold by yourself? Who is representing you in the purchase of your new home?
- Well, as I said, I want to give you all the help I can by providing you the most contemporary information available about the surrounding neighborhood and homes that are for sale. I also want to help you with your next purchase.
- In the event you are unable to get this done by yourself, I want to be the Realtor you call—and I intend to earn that privilege. I will stay in touch, but please let me know if there is anything I can do to help.

## **Expireds**

*Say:*

- Hi, I am \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_. I just learned that your listing has expired. The purpose for my call is to make sure you don't become a victim of your unhappy experience over these past six months.
- How do you plan to proceed with the sale of your home? How quickly do you need to get it sold? How have these past six months changed your approach to selling your home?
- With what you have learned and with what I know, I am confident we can sell this property. Like you, I am not interested in sitting on this property for the next six months. Let's price it to sell and work together for the next three months to get it sold. If it doesn't happen, you are not stuck in some long-term agreement.
- Starting today I will work hard to become your Realtor of choice. I want you to be able to introduce me to your friends as the Realtor who got the job done. Unlike your previous agent, I won't lose interest, and I will continue to stay in touch with you.