

SANFORD

SYSTEMS & STRATEGIES

Newsletter

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THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING!

For those of you who attended our Titan Training seminar on July 13th, thank you for coming! We hope that you are already implementing some of our systems into your listing presentation. For those of you who were unable to attend our Titan Training seminar, you missed a great day! This intensive, one-day training program featured Walter Sanford sharing the secrets of his winning listing presentation.

If you would like to have your own, private training event on how to Beat the Competition Every Time, short sales, unique lead generation systems, buyer services, assistant training, and more – call our event coordinators today at 800.792.5837. We will be happy to help you in obtaining a great venue, filling your room, organizing the meeting, and so much more!

- **Download** this printer-friendly version of our newsletter in PDF format
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- Are you thinking about hiring Walter for your next event? Click [here](#).

If you are receiving this issue as a forward and would like to get your own free subscription, click [here](#) to sign up.

Featured Product of the Month

Our Titan Training seminar attendees received a **HUGE 496 page workbook** with a data CD for easy implementation of all the forms, E-mails, and letters. If you were unable to attend our seminar and you were regretting your decision ever since, you can at least purchase the workbook and gain access to part of this incredible day of training. Call Cyndi today at **800.792.5837** and ask for the Titan Training seminar workbook for just **\$125** including shipping.

Our Coaching Program

Our coaching program is nearing capacity. We keep our coaching program to a limited number of clients to ensure each client's one-on-one time with Walter. If you're interested in learning more about our top agent coaching program, please call Cyndi at 1.800.792.5837 or visit our website for more information.

THE BEST OF "ASK WALLY"



Q. Help me capture more expired listings! Over 90% of the expireds in my area do not have phone numbers, and finding the numbers is more difficult than ever. I want to get to the expired sellers first. Will mailing a letter really work? Is there a better way?

Valerie V.
 Zilver Realty Group
 Tustin, CA

A. The secret in expireds is in developing an image that you are the most motivated and service-orientated agent in your city. Better research finds the phone numbers, names, and addresses, and you will find the hardest to find ones being your best leads because of the lack of competition.

Next, watch your timing. Calling before they leave for work, after they come home, or on Saturdays will net more hits per call. Watch the "do not call" legislation and rectify that against your competition ignoring it. Timing also has a lot to do with time of year. There are more expireds on the last day and first day of the month. The same thing happens on January 1st, only more

intensely.

The mailing on the same day of the call has to be compelling (we have over 100 letters and over 20 scripts). It has to answer for the client, "What's in it for me?" It has to be sent in a vessel that will be opened. Use our firecracker tube or a look-alike overnight envelope. Another call has to be made that evening and always leave a voice mail message. That same day, the most expensive opportunities have to be visited with a great script and a great leave behind item/message if they are not home.

The next is the follow-up, which goes on every other day until re-listed or a reason for listing extraction is offered. Sending another copy of the same letter that went into the tube, crumpled up, and stamped with "Please Do Not Throw Me Away Again" will also cause the phone to ring.

I know it is rough, but we are available to custom design a program for you with our coaching program. Using these methods and others, I personally controlled a 14% market share of all listed expired listings in a market where there were over 4,000 agents.

Want to read more of Walter's "Ask Wally" column?

Click [here](#) for endless questions and answers that Walter posts to his website monthly.

FEATURED ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

Sick and Tired

Can you imagine a day with unlimited energy, enthusiasm, and love for the real estate business? Let's all wake up and have a dose of reality – stuff happens! As I travel the country, I hear tales of woe at the back of the room: tales of energy zappers and enthusiasm downers. Because we are in a fast-paced seminar, my answers have to be short and sweet. However, beware that all problems cannot be solved. Recognizing that there is a problem is the start though! I would like for you to solve the problems before bringing them to your family, your peers, or your most recent seminar speaker. Here are the fast cures for what ails you. We like to refer to them as "Wally's Magical Elixirs."

1. "My broker won't, can't, didn't, isn't..."

Your broker is not responsible. You are the captain of your ship. You plan how many phone calls are to be made. You decide how much income you're going to make and how much you're going to budget for expenses. You are the one who plans how your time is to be spent. Your broker is responsible for an insignificant portion of your net profit. Therefore, make a suggestion to your broker about what you want him to do; if it doesn't happen, don't worry about it. Do it yourself. A broker is there to make money from your activity, so the fastest way to forget your broker woes is to be active.

2. "The bill collectors are calling!"

Everyone has cash flow problems. It can be cured by spending an hour on the phone calling the hot demographic groups, sending out mailings/emails, and doing other things that will help generate new leads. When you do have a transaction, make sure that the closing date isn't bunched with other closing dates. It is easy at the time of negotiation to set up closing dates that are in line with your cash flow needs. I always had a chart on my wall outlining when closings were going to happen. I liked to fill the potential gaps with closing dates of future transactions. You are in control of the transaction and you are one of the beneficiaries of its closing. If the closing date can be manipulated, manipulate it in your favor.

3. "My family is creating pressure for me to 'be there.' "

Your family depends upon you and looks to you for guidance. Remember, real estate is only a small part of your life. You have family, friends, fun, faith, fitness, and finances to take care of. All should receive your attention. Some family-pleasing concepts are the following: plan a family vacation for the year during the first week of January and pay for it, have a family night where everyone is in mandatory attendance, take one day off a week to be with your family, and leave real estate at the office. If the client can't handle it during your business hours, then...oh, well!

4. "This buyer just won't buy!"

I have shown him a ton of properties and frankly, I'm not sure that he'll ever be satisfied." Fire him...in a nice, warm, and fuzzy way.

5. "The seller is driving me crazy!"

All problems with a seller can be remedied at the listing presentation. Did you tell this seller how often you'd be in contact with them and receive agreement? Did you agree on a marketing plan? Did you agree on a price that you felt was satisfactory to this market? Did you agree on showing procedures that make it easy for your peers to show their clients the property? Did you under-promise and over-deliver? Did you consistently out perform the expectations that you set up for the client? If you have done all of these things, you should not have any problems with a seller, but if you do – fire him...in a nice, warm, and fuzzy way!

6. "The other agent won't return my phone call."

90% of the time, this is easily solved by going to their broker. If that doesn't solve the problem, go to your broker. If the problem persists, go to their client. I bet that I'll get a lot of calls about this one!

7. “The loan representative won't return my phone calls.” “The loan representative is unresponsive.” “The loan representative keeps changing his/her mind.”

Here's another heavy call-inducing answer -- IN GENERAL TERMS, I always wanted to deal with the loan representative that controlled the product, which means working with a direct lender. When you work with a mortgage broker, you are putting a third-party between you and the person who makes the decision; therefore, you've added another level of bureaucracy. If you want to lessen the problems IN GENERAL, then utilize direct lenders who have a stake in the local community and future business from you. The bottom line is that you need to control where the loan is going, whether you have buyer or seller representation.

8. “I am having a hard time getting the property appraised for the right value and the lender wants more comps.”

I regard these intrusive lender phone calls as a complete waste of time. Sure, I can spend a minute on the phone with the lender, informing him of comparable properties that I know might be in the process of being closed. However, my lender was required to have a membership to the board of Realtors®; this allowed him access to find comparable properties for himself through the MLS. It was his job to make the loan happen not mine. Make sure you that you put as much responsibility on your affiliates as possible so that you minimize the number of intrusive phone calls that take you away from solving the client's problems.

9. “My assistant is not enthusiastic, is a downer, or just creates an environment that I don't want to be in.”

I don't know if there is a solution for assistants. Whenever you are responsible for someone else's livelihood and their work is responsible for yours, this symbiotic relationship will cause problems. The only way to cure the assistant problem is to hire someone who is worthy of the position. An individual with enthusiasm, brains, and a do-it-all attitude is your goal. If they want to get paid more money, tie it to future production. If you want to make a lot of money, make sure that your assistant is lead generating at least three to four hours a day. If you still can't stand to come into the office, fire them. After thirty years, I've realized that sometimes this is the only way to alleviate the pain!

10. “Sometimes it's just hard to get out of bed!”

I have seen many unmotivated real estate agents. Some speakers suggest that you get in debt to create pain and then you'll get busy! I suggest that you look at what you want to accomplish in life and write these goals down. Keep these goals in front of you all day. Draw up a plan of action on how to accomplish these goals. Break these goals into daily, weekly, monthly, yearly, and even five-year action lists. This means that every day you'll have an action plan that, if accomplished, will make your dreams come true. I know no other greater motivating factor than this. However, one thing Steven Covey taught me a long time ago was to make sure that your goals match your internal values and belief system. For instance, if you want to have eleven kids that are raised in a loving, attentive family, you'll have to take time away from work to make that happen. Make sure that your goals are not mutually exclusive with your core values.

11. “For me, real estate is just not as exciting as it used to be.”

Well, it happens. It happened to me at the twenty-six year mark. At that point, I had spent all of my adult life in the business. I thought about it, worked in it, wrote about it for approximately ten hours a day, six days a week. After twenty-six years, I got really good at it. Since I no longer felt challenged, I turned my expertise to speaking, authoring, and mentoring. I feel revitalized in this business, and I see other people take my systems and strategies to utilize for themselves. Understand that if you do everything that I ask you to do, real estate does not have to be a forever career until you become financially independent; therefore, you'll be able to do whatever you want to do. Remember number ten. Do your goals match your values?

12. “Technology sometimes creates more problems than it solves.”

I have been on the leading edge of technology. Whenever you implement technology, you have many costs including: the initial research, the purchase price, the learning curve, the applications to profitable systems, the maintenance, and the eventual replacement in two to five years. These six costs are substantial in time and money. If technology is not proven to produce at least five times these six costs in gross profit, I deem that there are more profitable activities for you. At this moment, the technological items that meet that criteria are the following: an interactive lead generating website, phone/PDA combinations, databases that allow you to do mass emailing and direct mail, and calendared database files that will not allow a client to fall through the cracks. The other wild stuff that's being promoted and sold by some speakers is sometimes questionable on their return of the money and time invested.

13. “My peers in the office are just so negative.”

This is not a revelation to top producers. Top producers don't hang around with fellow real estate agents. Fellow real estate agents don't buy property from you. Fellow real estate agents, if you look at the averages, aren't wildly successful. Hang around successful real estate agents and you'll probably find that they are enthusiastic about the business; better yet, hang around buyers and sellers who have the opportunity to provide a mutually satisfying experience.

14. “I never have enough time for myself.”

You never have enough time for yourself, because you didn't block it out! I took every Friday off, no matter how important it was or how urgent the out-of-town buyer was. I now have a date night every Wednesday night with my spouse where we have a standing baby-sitting arrangement. I have my goals written down, and virtually nothing gets in the way of my achieving those goals. I decide for myself what's important for me, I block it out, and I minimize the interruptions that will prevent me from accomplishing my goals.

15. "I can't find anything in my office."

This has to do with your filing system. Whether an electronic file or a paper file, it all comes down to a system and checklist. Your seller client file is as simple as a Pendaflex® divided into six sections. The first section is your client contact information, listing agreement, underlying loans, disclosure statement, and all other statements regarding the property. The second section is your listing checklist outlining everything you do during the marketing period through the time that the contract is signed or listing is cancelled. The third section includes all the marketing paraphernalia used for the property including ads, flyers, and mock-ups for your website. Section four has all the offers that were tendered but rejected. Section five includes all the documents needed for closing, from which you'll move some documents from section one to section five. This section five also includes the contract and escrow, or closing, instructions. Section six includes the closing checklist, which are all the items you do from contract acceptance to contract close including follow-up and database solicitation. This should organize your office completely, whether you're working with a seller or a buyer. Then the comment, "I can't find anything," will soon be eliminated.

16. "I forgot to call that client back and I lost them to another agent."

Please review the date stamp feature on your database. One of the goals of achieving top real estate success is entering five to ten leads a day that have future date stamps so you will be notified to call or email a client. This is the mark of a top agent.

17. "I lost the listing to another agent."

I have a number of solutions for you. Improve your listing presentation by knowing more about the seller, prior to your appointment than anyone else. Once there, deliver more value to that person than anyone else. If you lost that listing to someone who overpriced or undercut your commission, please don't worry about that. Even though, I will not give up the fight and my quiver is filled with "arrows" to overcome these objections, sometimes people just want a much lower commission. They will not negotiate or the price has been set so high by a previous agent that I am unwilling to accept the listing. Never go down without a fight. If you are eliminated by a commission-cutter or a price-buster, don't close the communication channel with the seller. Revisit the situation at the time that the listing is going to expire. These are called "expired watches," and my office was very cognizant of these expired listings. When and if these potential properties expire, I was sleeping on their doorstep on the day of expiration!

18. "My buyer bought a 'for sale by owner.' " "My buyer bought at an open house." "My buyer bought through another agent."

My only answer to this is get a buyer-brokerage agreement signed, or you will never have a life. If you don't know how to get a buyer-brokerage agreement signed, well, that's another article! Bear this in mind, I would never sign a buyer-brokerage agreement with you unless you gave me twenty reasons why.

19. "I have no energy."

Eat better. Work out. Sleep more. Go back, and re-read problem number ten.

20. "My spouse and I aren't getting along, and I can't keep my mind on work."

Go back and re-read number fourteen, but also add the "gift a week" program. It doesn't matter how small the gift. A "gift a week" almost guarantees to cure a problem. It doesn't matter how insignificant. It just matters that you thought of him/her. A "gift a week" program has saved many boring relationships.

21. "I'm not making any money."

Stop what you are doing. Decide the demographic group of sellers that you're going to seek. Find them by doing better research. Contact them by direct mail, email, phone, advertising, and website services. Offer them services that no one else will offer. They will list with you in a higher frequency than with any other agent. You will control the inventory of that demographic. Cut your expenses. Sometimes outsourcing is less expensive than doing things in your own office. A good real estate software program can eliminate most of the duties of that assistant that you think you need. Eliminate the things that don't work. Keep track of your closings and where the lead came from. If you find out that you're doing things that don't create leads, stop doing them! Understand how to pay less to the IRS, and negotiate everything you buy. Don't buy anything with your credit card, unless it can make you money. Never go into debt for more than 5½%, unless it's such a good deal and you're immediately going to make money on it. Write on your closing checklist that you will save 10% of each commission check. Start investing in what you know best. Since you are the wholesale purveyor of the world's greatest investment product – real estate – start buying some.

Eliminating the hassles and problems of real estate has been my passion for the last thirty-one years. I love this business, and I feel that the problems can be solved with a little bit of forethought, internal fortitude, goals, systems, checklists, and a conscious decision of what you really want out of life. Some people don't deserve to be served by you so that you can make room for the people who do. Be strong. Defend your principles. Understand that your family needs you. Tell the truth. Be

passionate and enthusiastic...and show up on time! With these systems, you can't help but be a superstar.

Walter Sanford was one of the top real estate agents in North America for nearly thirty years, and now, he is one of the most requested speakers, trainers, and coaches. He has authored twelve systems and books on checklists, pro-active lead generation, affiliate lead generation, plus others mentioned in this article. You can hire Walter or buy his products by visiting his website for more details at www.waltersanford.com, by calling 815-929-9258, or emailing Walter at walter@waltersanford.com.

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