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SANFORD

SYSTEMS & STRATEGIES



Newsletter

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NOW is the Time to Focus!

There is still time to make 2009 one of your best years. If you began working NOW on two new pro-active seller lead generation systems, if you began making smarter and shorter listing presentations, and if you efficiently worked with the buyers generated by those listings – you would soon find that you could buy a bargain-priced, break-even piece of investment real estate.

NOW is the time to focus. Don't let more time pass in talking with other agents about the market. They have no control over the market or your production. Focus on building your inventory before the rest of the world discovers that now is the time to buy! Watch your time by cutting minutes out of necessary activities and eliminating unnecessary activities. Get rid of the bad buyers and buy some bargains.

Sanford Systems offers complete systems helping you to know the right time to implement. If we are having a seminar near you, please attend to get your share of new, tough market strategies. If we do not have a seminar planned in your area, call us at 800.792.5837 and we'll see how we can help!

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ASK WALLY



Q. Hi Walter,

We're including several lists in our magazine, and we'd love to have you contribute your expert advice. Would you be able to provide a handful of tips on how to effectively price a property?

Please let me know what you think.

*Thanks!
Marty*

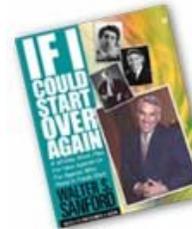
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**WALTER'S
BLOG**

Click [here](#) to sign up for your FREE daily dose of Walter Sanford! Complete the quick sign up to receive a direct link to each day's new thoughts directly from Walter's blog.

PRODUCT OF THE MONTH



IF I COULD START OVER AGAIN: Walter takes you by the hand, hour-by-hour and day-by-day for 90 days of your career. New or seasoned agents will get the foundation that

generated Walter's immediate cash flow. This product is the only one in the industry that includes every letter, system, call and move Walter Sanford would make, were he to start over tomorrow, with the determination to own the town he lived in.

Click Here to Buy Now!

A. Marty, I would be happy to help!

Seven Short Tips to Effective Pricing

1. Before going on a listing appointment, ask the potential client why they are selling. If their response is unclear, ask again. You need to let them know that the more you know about their needs, the better job you can do in customizing a program to meet their needs.
2. Bring up their motivation to sell every time you speak with them. How are they going to conform to this market unless you keep the vision of the goal line clear?
3. Let them know that surety of close can be as important as price. Let them know the steps you take to add surety to the close. Larger deposits, heavy pre-approval of the buyer, shorter closing times, and shorter contingency times are all methods of adding surety to close and taking the emphasis off of price.
4. Sometimes you have a seller with motivation and the wrong price in mind. Calling them every 10 working days, reminding them of what the goal line looks like and being armed with more comps, comparisons, or feedback will result in a price reduction if the motivation is there.
5. Understand that negatives are greatly magnified in tougher markets. If it is a busy street, there is always a discount in a good market, but it will sell because buyers have less to look at and will overlook it. In a tougher market, they want it all, and it might not be shown enough until you obtain a substantial price reduction.
6. It is not always about a price reduction. Sometimes the seller will turn to cement, resisting any further price reductions even if they have motivation. In this case, we use a list of over 100 value enhancements like including the appliances, buying down the loan, or offering a .5% more to the selling office. I would never get off the phone unless I got something to make the listing better.
7. You, as an agent, need to understand the most important law in real estate. With the MLS and all of the cooperation we get from other agents, there is a simple fact – if there are no showings, you are overpriced. If there are no offers, you are overpriced. Don't let the seller sell you on the fact that it is lack of marketing. Price is 95% of marketing.

ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

Eating the “Elephant” with Time Blocking

Without making time for the most profitable activities, I can tell you exactly what will happen -- you are going to be spending time on the most urgent items which are almost never your most profitable activities. The reason why my lead generation book is so popular with top agents is because it points to the direction of the most profitable activities in real estate. One needs now to decipher how to implement these activities on a consistent basis.

Many of the activities we cover in our systems are not done consistently by many top agents in our country. For instance, you need to choose a few seller lead generation activities. Whether you choose for sale by owners, expireds, mature people in large homes, out-of-state owners, or any of the any other amazing systems that will produce seller leads, you need to find the time to make sure they are getting done on a consistent basis. By implementing the ideas, your listings will go up, increasing your buyer inquiries. Buyers, being the demanding lot that they are, will soon cause you to be jumping through hoops at all hours of the day, if you have not followed some of the ideas shared in Buyer Net Profit.

Without time-blocking, you will find that you will always be urgently busy without getting your most profitable activities done therefore your listings will fall and buyer activity will fall. The largest difference between mediocre real estate agents and top producers is that top agents always find time to keep their pipelines filled with the most profitable activities. The most profitable activities are, of course, lead generation activities. These activities are normally time-blocked by the top agent to do himself or herself or activities for the assistant to complete.

Let me give you an example – at 9am every morning, I knew that I would spend 15 minutes researching the expireds of that day. I spent more time than anyone else researching and getting better names, addresses, and phone numbers. I then spent another 15 to 30 minutes preparing letters for mailing in the firecracker tubes. I would then start calling those same prospects. On my way back from lunch, I would time-block my day to stop by one of the most expensive expireds each day. On my way home, I would try reaching those expireds who I could not reach earlier in the day. The next day after I called all the expireds, I went ahead and sent them my crumpled letter from the previous day. There was little or no negotiation with the time-blocks. The only thing that would allow me to look the other way is a listing presentation or a family emergency.

The other activities that I would like to make certain that you time-block are just as important as your seller lead generation activities, especially activities where you knew the exact number that you need to complete. Here is what I mean -- if you have a 1,000 person database and there are approximately 300 working days in a year, you should be calling six people a day to get through your database with phone calls twice in a year. It would most likely be more calls in a day, because I would like for you to try calling three times before giving up and putting them back in rotation. The same goes for the letters to the database – if you are going to be sending one letter each quarter and there are 100 working days in a quarter, you will be sending approximately 10 letters a day to get all the letters to your database for that quarter.

The magic of breaking your business plan into time-blocked pieces is that it allows you to “eat the elephant” faster and more efficiently. It also allows you to write personal notes on those letters, hand-sign them, and see if any of the letters might require special handling.

Another massively important time-block is listing leads in the “A” class. This group is for people who are going to be listing in the next ninety days. You were either unsuccessful in getting them to list, or they have promised you a listing. Even though they have told you not to call back until a certain time-frame, it is your job to call them each week with something of value to weigh their motivation and readiness without letting the lead pass you by. It is important that you maintain contact on a much more regular basis than the “soon to list” person tells you contact.

Another amazing time-block to maintain is the buyers in the “A” class group. These are buyers who have jumped through all the “hoops.” This means they have answered the questions, been pre-approved in writing, have showed up for a meeting at your office, and have signed a loyalty agreement. These people need to be time-blocked for once a week to determine if the properties you are sending them still meet their criteria and when they would like to go look at the best leads.

Broker-required activities is another time-blocked section. Whether it is a profitable office meeting or an office tour, just remember, the broker is paying the overhead so support the systems.

Another important time-block is calling your sellers. In tough markets, there is one truism – if they do not like you, they are less likely to drop the price for you. The easiest way to babysit upset sellers is to take your listings and divide by ten. Call that many people each day. This gives you the energy to bring about a price reduction or obtain a value enhancement. Many real estate agents wait until their clients become discouraged then go through their entire listing inventory trying to obtain price reductions or value enhancements. That process is not only an energy-zapper but it is also ineffective. Regular contacts from you will allow your sellers to feel at ease that the job is being done. You will soon find that they will not be available for appointments, because they trust your efforts so much. Efforts like this allow the inevitable price reductions in tough markets to be easier. Please time-block your listed seller communications.

Add in contact to your pendings for another time-block activity. Each week, you need to contact all parties involved in a pending – sellers, buyers, cooperative agent, affiliates, and anyone else involved. I spent Thursdays making sure that all contingencies were being met, and there were no smoldering embers that needed to be put out. Staying on top of pendings will allow you to flush out the bad transactions sooner and possibly reduce problems that might affect your closing. You will grow to dislike the pending process so much that you will try to increase the velocity of your business by shortening your pending periods. As long as they are pending, you need to call all parties involved at least once a week.

Another important time-block is making time for your LIFE! Some of these items are “floating” like your daughter’s dance recital or your son’s game, but some of these items can actually be anticipated like “date night.” I chose a weeknight as date night because babysitters are more plentiful during the week and the lines at our favorite restaurants were not so long! It was also a nice break during the week, and everyone always looks forward to date night. The same process applies for working out, lunch, breakfast, church, and other mandatory parts of your life that allow your life to go more smoothly. Having these things time-blocked will reduce any disappointment in your family and allow you the opportunity to re-make appointments with clients.

This is the perfect time to bring up an important distinction between time-blocked and non-time-blocked agent schedules. When I knew that I only had a few different hours in which to book a listing presentation, a showing appointment, or a negotiation appointment, it allowed me to funnel the cooperative agent or client into those available slots. I was able to always give them three or four hours a day from which to choose. Without a time-block, you are always moving your most important activities around urgent activities, when it is much easier to book urgent activities in the time allotted. I promise that the cooperative agents and clients you are working with will have less disciplined schedules, and you will be able to conform to your available times.

Occasionally, there will be an infrequent time-block for activities that only happen once a month or once a year. These activities would be time-blocking the first and last day of the month and the first part of the New Year for excessive expired activity. These are times when the expired activity is so heavy that you will have to free up time to take advantage of it. These items need to be time-blocked at your goal setting session early in the year. Do not forget to time-block your goal planning session, too!

The process of time-blocking is fairly simple. Time-block the activities that are important to your life. Time-block your lead generation activities. Time-block your listing leads “A,” buyer leads “A,” pendings, and listed client activities. You will soon find that you have a lot fewer hours available during the week than you realized. Of course, these time-blocks will be devoted to listing appointments, showing appointments, contract negotiations, and all of the other “emergency” activities that we are all involved in.

You will find that when your time becomes scarce that putting a “do not disturb” sign on your office door will become a much better idea! You will also find that hob-nobbing with other real estate agents or affiliates will become activities of the past (possibly). Soon you will be prioritizing your free-time among activities including family, fun, faith, friends, fitness, and personal finances. You will find that urgent items will be either eliminated or lessened.

Time-blocking is the first step to true time management and forces you to do the items that are the most profitable in your business. Soon there will be no more excuses that you are too busy to make money in this business. Congratulations!

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 <http://www.waltersanford.com/>, by calling 815-929-9258, or emailing Walter at walter@waltersanford.com.

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