

inman

October 16, 2018

<https://www.inman.com/2018/10/16/how-to-make-sure-your-clients-never-ever-call-another-agent/>

How To Make Sure Your Clients Never Ever Call Another Agent *Here's how to stay top-of-mind with your clients and be their agent for life*

By Dorothy Schragger



Let's face it. Clients don't fall from the sky. It can take years for real estate agents to build a solid client base, so it's important to do what you can to keep your past clients loyal.

If you sell them a home and then disappear from sight, you've pretty much guaranteed that the next time they are in the market to buy or sell, they will use their cousin's husband's friend's aunt who's also a real estate agent.

Don't let this happen. Make a conscious effort and take consistent steps to reach out. Here's how to stay top-of-mind with your clients and be their agent for life.

What doesn't work

You know all those parties and fundraisers you attend in hopes of meeting your next client? More often than not, they end up bearing none, don't they? There's a lot of *talk*, yes: "How's the market?" everyone asks. So you share all the best details about your favorite neighborhoods — what's selling where, what big Hollywood star just bought where and what's the newest, most sought-after building in a certain area.

All good conversation. Then you'll hand out your business cards (have your business cards with you at *all* times), but that's usually where it ends; my personal experience has been that those random chit chats and party talks are not where most clients come from.

You've got to put more effort into it.

What does work

Your *relationship with your clients* shouldn't end with the sale. Make it clear that you are there for them regarding all things relating to their home, whether it be referrals for contractors or recommendations for restaurants or schools in their new neighborhood.

Being a *success* in this business means working hard, thinking hard, being on top of the game and *always* staying in touch with the clients you already have. It is important to make sure they know that you're still working and relevant in the marketplace.

Most of my clients come from *referrals*, friends and past customers. Staying in touch with them is the best route to more referrals. Here are some steps that I try to adhere to on a continuous basis to make sure my clients know that I'm still around:

Gift giving



MediaGroup_BestForYou / Shutterstock.com

Give a thoughtful gift when your clients move into their new home. You can really get to know your *buyers* throughout the sales process, and it's not difficult to pick

up on their interests. Maybe they love gardening — so a set of gardening tools or a gardening book would be meaningful.

Know the kids



wavebreakmedia / Shutterstock.com

Know the names of your clients' children. Check in every once and a while (a good time is at the start of the school year).

Know the pets



a katz / Shutterstock.com

Know your clients' pets. Ask how they're enjoying their new space. Send over a doggie treat.

Check in



Goodluz / Shutterstock.com

Follow up a month or two after your buyer moves in. Go over and see their renovations.

Communication



Credit: Photo by Jim Reardan on Unsplash

Email and call. The phone is still a good way to connect.

Be their Google



Sfio Cracho / Shutterstock.com

Send your clients articles about what's going on in their neighborhood. Share information about new buildings going up nearby, new restaurants that have opened or new neighbors they might want to know about.

Also, send them relevant articles with facts about the real estate market in general.

Remember birthdays and holidays



Jaktana phongphuek / Shutterstock.com

Send birthday cards. (When working on their board package, make a note of their birthday in your calendar.) Also send out holiday cards, anniversary cards, New Year's greetings, etc.

Don't forget about another great option: eCards. They work well too. There are some excellent websites that let you schedule greetings in advance of birthday and holidays.

Meet up



Rawpixel.com / Shutterstock.com

Make an effort to get together for a meal (or coffee at the very least).

Be a resource for home upkeep



Stock-Asso / Shutterstock.com

If you speak to past clients who say they are thinking of renovating their home, don't just give them a good referral — kick your service up a notch by setting up several appointments with different contractors and going with your clients to meet those contractors.

Go over estimates and contractor reviews until you and your clients find the right person or company for the job.

Make it altruistic



P. Chinnapong / Shutterstock.com

Know their charities and make a donation in their name.

Keep them updated on their market



everything possible / Shutterstock.com

Keep your buyers informed on what's new on the market in their building, especially in their apartment line, even if it's several years after they purchased.

I sold a large apartment in a new development years ago. They were the first buyers in the building. Now, seven years later, an apartment in their line went on the market for a huge price.

They were happy to hear the update and I'm sure it made them feel even more confident in their purchase.

Also, when getting together with friends at dinner parties make an effort to research what has sold or what is currently for sale in their building. People love to hear those facts.

Stay active online



rawpixel on Unsplash

Write a blog or article about the market and send it to your clients, and keep your website up to date.

Walking the walk

My associate at Warburg Realty, Harriet Kaufman, has had a successful business for many years and remains successful, she says, by staying in touch, sending holiday cards, emailing to find out how her clients are doing, getting together for dinners and sending a December holiday gift.

Lindsey Owen, owner of Nylon Real Estate, feels strongly about the results she sees when her agents put forth the effort to stay top-of-mind:

When it comes to their clients, they don't just stay in touch around the time of the transaction, they work with clients on an ongoing basis more like a private wealth adviser does.

When a relationship is genuine, you can be counted on to be there even when a deal isn't in play, and that's how you stay top-of-mind. You aren't just their real estate agent, you are their friend, trusted adviser and the first person they want to call for anything home-related.

Keeping up with past clients and staying top-of-mind is a lot of work, but it all pays off in the end. Being a real estate agent can be fun, and staying engaged is rewarding in more ways than one.

Dorothy Schragar is a licensed real estate salesperson with New York-based Warburg Realty. Visit her website or connect with her on LinkedIn.