



Boost your Business

Build and Connect with your Database

by Natalie Danielson

PROFESSIONAL *Direction* INC

www.clockhours.com email: clockhours@gmail.com

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Curriculum

Session Hours	Major Topics	Method of Presentation
1 1/2 hour	All your Future Business is within Your Reach	Lecture Discussion
2 1 hour	Create a simple system	Lecture Discussion
3 1 hour	Have a strategy to connect regularly	Lecture Discussion
4 1/4 hour	Shake hands as much as possible	Lecture Discussion
5 1/4 hour	Follow up	Lecture Discussion

Boost Your Business

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People make decisions every day as a consumer for goods and services. Many decisions are rather mindless because they are, in many cases, routine. Most decisions people make don't affect their future in any critical way. We get bread and milk at the grocery store, we order books online, we get gas for our car at the station in town.

But, there are some purchase decisions, like the purchase of a property, that affect the buyer's financial status and future. The decisions are based on calculations, analytic evaluation, and emotions. When working with a real estate agent to negotiate the way through a transaction, people often choose that broker based on a referral from a friend, relative, connection, or a personal relationship because it is important to have a sense of trust when working with a broker.

Yet, real estate brokers in search of more business often choose to find more prospects by buying leads. These leads can be free or they can cost an arm and a leg! The goal is to get exposure to be visible in hopes a stranger will choose you as their broker to help on the largest financial investment in their life. It is much more difficult to turn a complete stranger into a client, than a person that already believes and trust in you. But, the tease of getting all kinds of prospects seems to work on brokers for decades because it appears so much easier to buy a lead than to connect with their own personal leads.

Top real estate brokers will tell you that much of their business comes from referrals. Yet, the majority of real estate brokers do not have a good working basic database!

This course focuses on the importance of a database and how YOU can make it Boost Your Business.

Course Objectives

As a result of taking this class the agent shall be able to:

1. Know your future business is within your reach
2. Keep it simple
3. Develop a strategy to connect
4. Shake hands as much as possible
5. Follow up

All your Future Business is within Your Reach



All your future real estate clients are already connected to you. Most brokers don't realize this and they are constantly looking for new and fresh prospects. But your future business is right in front of you!

There are millions of programs that real estate brokers can buy promising business leads. There are dozens of lead generating resources from Zillow to neighborhood websites that promise qualified leads for a fee to build your business. But, you will never find a real estate broker that could attribute his or her success strictly to buying leads.

Few... very few... real estate brokers have a decent, up-to-date, workable, readily accessible database of their sphere including family, friends, past clients, prospects and ... well... just everyone they know! It is crazy. It is difficult to find any real estate brokers... new rookies through experienced brokers.. that have a database.

Are you Still in the real estate business?

The one dreaded question that every real estate broker has heard during their career is: "Are you still in the real estate business?" Yikes, there is nothing worse than to hear that question.

You're in a coffee shop and one of your friends comes across the room thrilled to run into you because it has been a couple years. You sold her the first house she ever owned 5 years ago. She has a little girl in a stroller. During the chit chat all you can think about is that you can't believe how long it has been and that she and her husband now have a few children with the oldest in preschool. They are going to need a new house because you remember that the house was quite small. Her husband is now in management and she works part time. "Why did I not keep in touch?" you ask. She says, "I had no idea you were still in the business!"

We have all been there. If it is a lucky day, that past client says that they need your help to buy a house. If the cards are different, they might say that they didn't know you were still in the business and they just bought a new house.

This is when you get the contact information and promise to send this old friend some information that might help them regardless of whether they are working with an agent or not. Keep them on any database... because you just don't know. Maybe, they are not satisfied with their real estate agent and want to follow up in the future. They may even send you a referral.

If you kept in touch with your sphere, you'd probably never hear that question!

Do you think that you would be more successful if you kept in touch with your Sphere?

I ask brokers, "Would you sell more properties if you kept in touch with your sphere better?" They reply, "Of course!"

Would you have an easier time converting prospects if you worked with past clients and friends?" And, again, they reply, "Of course!"

You might remember the transaction with a past client didn't go as smoothly as you would have liked. This might create some anxiety when choosing to put them on a list and keep in touch. Your perception of a transaction is completely different from the clients. In addition to all the problems that arise, they trusted you to get them the house they wanted. They also had their own challenges behind the scenes. They will come back to work with you if you kept in touch.

We all have a tendency to be drawn to something or someone who is familiar. Sometimes that last boyfriend seems so much like the one before. When hungry, I am often defaulting to some well known hamburger franchise even though the food is not good or healthy but I trust that it will taste like the last time I was there. I remember the experience and, like many of us, will repeat it again because it is safe and familiar.

Ask yourself, "Why don't I take the time to put my future business in a list and keep in touch?" Figure out why you are procrastinating.

You have fans that are all potential leads!

You have a crowd of fans that just love and respect you. They make a difference in your life. That crowd, called your "sphere of influence," is where the majority of your real estate business will originate almost from the first day you hang that license in a firm.

All your fans are potential leads for your business. They are leads that are considered "warm" leads because they are already familiar with you and your work. They may compare you to other professionals, but you have the leading edge because you already have some sort of relationship. That familiarity will draw them to you. They know what to expect just like they do when they walk into a hamburger franchise.

I enjoy the friendship I have with the loan officer I have worked with. We have become friends over the years. He and I have had lunch, been to parties, and chat on Facebook. When another friend is looking for a lender, I refer this loan officer because I know and trust him. This is a "warm" lead. I would feel bad if my friend was pressured to use another lender that is not as qualified or respected. I want my friend to have a good experience getting a mortgage loan. When the loan officer chats with my friend, he has already been referred by me... so his meeting is much easier than if he was meeting someone off a cold call.

Do you work with professionals referred to you by friends?

The most successful real estate brokers get most of their business from referrals from friends, family, past clients and just people that they know. A good personal referral system is operating effectively when it is the source of 80% of your business. When you have an organized plan to put into action a referral based business, it can take from 2 to 3 years before it feeds you. Ask homeowners how they chose their real estate broker and most will tell you that there was some kind of personal connection.

Most people rely on personal referrals when selecting a doctor, lawyer, insurance agent or financial consultant. In these fields, as in real estate, “trust” is a key factor when choosing a professional to represent your best interests. Our world has become so full of technology and we are getting out of touch with customer service. How do you know who to trust?

Let’s consider online dating. Everyone has the ability to create a profile with professional headshots and an intriguing bio. How do you trust that babyface? Or, on the other hand, the person might have bypassed the idea of a good profile and looks pretty questionable. But, an introduction by your best friend to the same person changes the way you start to consider that person. There is a better sense of trust because of that connection.

We can often forget how often we use referrals for services. In one week, I looked at the referrals to people I work with that are in the service business.

On Monday, I went to my doctor who was referred to me by a friend. On Tuesday, I went to a class that a real estate agent suggested. Wednesday, I went to the bank that was referred to me by the loan officer that refinanced my house. Thursday, I paid my insurance premium to the agent that was referred to me by the last insurance agent that left the business. My car was repaired on Friday by a repair shop that my daughter’s friend recommended. I had my hair cut on Saturday by a relative.

Think about the people that you currently work with in sales or the service business. Were you referred to them by a friend?

Doctor	Hair cut	Banker	Contractor
Insurance agent	Masseuse	Lawn/ tree service	Caterer
Baby sitter	Car repair	Chiropractor	Attorney
Dog sitter	Car sales	Dentist	Accountant

Why do people refer others?

Most of your future business will come from the people you know in your world. People refer other professionals to their friends and family because they care about you and want the best for you. They may also care about the professional they are referring.

Did your doctor ask you to send your friends to her? Did your attorney beg you for leads? Did the accountant brag about his/her success hoping it would encourage you to send leads? No, they did not. That is not how leads are generated. All of them build their business primarily on referrals but they seldom beg you for leads. People can sense desperation and no one does that better than a real estate agent begging for leads.

People will send you business if there is a mutual trust and basic connection to them.

I give out leads to real estate brokers consistently. I consider what the prospect is looking for and match that prospect with a real estate broker that I feel best meets their needs. I never consider sending a lead, which could be one of my best friends, because a real estate broker says to me, "Don't forget my name when you have a lead." Brokers constantly give me their real estate cards after class and say they will take care of my leads. But, did that broker invite me to coffee? Do I have any connection with that broker in my personal life? Has that broker ever sent me leads for my business?

Consider how you are relating to the people in your world and whether you are interested in their business and their life. Would you send them a lead?

Look at this from the other direction. Are you the "best" real estate agent in the market to help them? Do you believe that you are? Would you send your best friend, past client, or sister to that real estate agent sitting next to you at the office? If your contact was looking for commercial property and that is not your expertise, then a referral to an agent that better sets their needs is the best strategy. But if they are looking for a home in the area you work, would you really want to put your friend, past client or sister in the hands of a rookie, for example?

Where do real estate brokers get their business?

Many real estate brokers keep chasing prospects that are just random or they buy leads. It just seems so easy to have a qualified lead that you can call, ask how you can help, go show houses, and... "voila" make a sale. But, that rarely happens. Where are the buyers and sellers? It is worse than a hide and seek game! There are virtually no clues. Do they want to be found by some random broker or do they want to stay anonymous until the right time?

It sounds just so easy to find potential buyers and sellers especially to rookies in the industry. They worry about how to write a contract or how to order a sign. They are rarely told that is the easiest part of the job. Finding a prospect that wants to work with you is by far the most difficult aspect of a real estate agents career!

Consider who might want to be a "lead." Are there prospective buyers and sellers out there in the market wondering how to find a real estate broker? Is anyone out there searching for a broker?

This may be news to you, but there is NO shortage of real estate brokers in our market. They are everywhere.

From a prospects perspective, there is no way to look at a broker's business card, his/her resume, a for sale sign, or a website and determine if that stranger is the one to help make the largest financial decision of a buyer or sellers life. Most people today would not fill out a card, go onto a website

and register, or leave their phone or email with a service that would refer them to an insurance broker. So, why would they want some unknown real estate broker to call them?

On YouTube there is a humorous video out of Great Britain that shows a woman in her home detailing her frustration to an inspector. She is so worried about her house being “infested” with real estate brokers.” They are everywhere... in the cabinets, behind closet doors, etc. This video is so funny because there is an exaggeration of the truth. But in reality, there is no shortage of real estate brokers!

Consider millennials who are ripe for buying real estate. They do not want to be a “lead.” Seldom, will they register on a website or leave a phone number where it can be captured. They are secretly playing hide and seek. They need to trust that their agent is in touch with the market and at some point they will announce the “big reveal” to the lucky real estate broker.

How many real estate brokers are you competing with?

In Washington State during the year 2016 there were 36,224 active licensees in 3929 firms. Of the licensees, approximately 23% hold a Managing Broker’s license.

The Northwest MLS is the largest MLS in the state with about 28,000 Brokers which is about 80% of the brokers licensed in the state. The number of monthly sales has hovered around 10,000 in the state.

Of the 80% of the brokers in the state that hold an active license and pay the MLS fees and dues, the number of sales per month is modest. Only about 1/3 of the brokers have a sale on the average in a month. That statistic has stayed near the same for years. There are many brokers that have many more sales during a month. Some brokers lump all the sales for a team under one broker’s name. There are brokers that are not very active in sales because they are rookies or they may be nearing retirement. But, if you take out the high and the low statistics, the majority of brokers have 3 or less sales per month.

In 2017, we will see a record number of new licensees take the exam and become rookie brokers actively looking for business.

What percentage of your clients are repeat and referrals?

The goal of a real estate broker is to build a referral based business by creating a following so that the leads are “warm.” Otherwise, the brokers will just keep chasing random “cold” leads.

According to the *2014 National Association of Realtors® Member Profile*:

Experienced real estate brokers in the business 16 or more years get 42% of their business from repeat clients and an additional 21% of their business from referrals. That is a total of 63% of experienced brokers attribute their business to their past clients and referrals.

This referral business is what every real estate broker is trying to achieve. That number could be higher, but there are so many brokers who simply do not keep in touch with people that they know including their past clients.

Building a base of business from referrals and past clients takes time. Newer real estate brokers must develop relationships with a number of prospects as they build their sphere. As time goes on, the number of referrals can grow based on how well brokers keep in touch with them consistently and on some kind of personal level.

The *Annual Trends Report for 2016 by Properties Online* compiles information for several sources to give an overview of statistics that affect the real estate buyers and sellers.

The survey notes that 72% of real estate buyers would “definitely” use their broker again or refer their broker and 16% would “probably” do the same. But, only 10% of buyers “actually” used a broker they had used previously.

In the case of home sellers, 42% of the sellers were referred to the broker that they worked with and 24% had used their broker previously. Home sellers that had personal contact with an agent were about 4% and referrals by another agent were 4% in the Trends Report.

Sellers were asked if they would use the real estate broker again and 67% said “definitely” and 17% responded “probably.” That means that over 84% of sellers would use their broker again, but only 24% of sellers actually used the same broker for the next sale!

Less than 18% of brokers touch base with past clients on a monthly basis according to the report. Let’s say that you were a broker fortunate enough to have a half dozen sales in a year. That would mean you would have to follow up with SIX past clients in the next year. Yet, only a fraction of the brokers even do that!

Interview a handful of experienced agents to find out about their current clients and how they made the connection.

I ask real estate agents in a classes and about 3 of their most current clients. “Where did you meet them?” Almost exclusively, the clients were from the agent’s sphere or referrals. A few were working with a past client. Rarely will a real estate agent answer that they have business from expensive lead generation prospects. Though, might brag about the prospects they had from spending money on a lead generation program for a specific zip code, they rarely will say that their last clients were from those cold leads.

Statistics should make it clear to you how important it is to maintain relationships with past clients and to keep in touch with your sphere. Your past clients and your sphere are the source of most of all your future business. These people are already fans and believe in you. It is much easier to work with them than walking up to a stranger on the street corner and suggest that person trust you with their money.

I don't want to 'sell' to my friends and family.

This is a fear many real estate brokers have that gets in the way of their own self-promotion. It does sound easy to “keep in touch” with people you already know. But, there is that fine line between keeping in touch and appearing like a used car salesman bugging them.

When you connect with your sphere, it is important to make sure it is genuine. You need to be as interested in them as they are in you.

I was at a party with my dentist. He doesn't ask everyone if they are looking for a change in dentist? The dentist doesn't look in everyone's mouth evaluating the amount of work that may need to be done. Of course not! The dentist chats with everyone about their lives. Most of the time everyone knows that the guy with toothbrushes on his tie is a dentist. But, he is not there to sell himself. He asks as many people what they do for work as they ask him.

It is important to recognize the fear you might have to telling others that you know that you are a real estate broker. Make a list of the reasons you might hesitate. The reasons can be as varied as “They might think I am not good at my job” to “They might think that real estate is not an honorable career after working in the military.” You might worry that the relationship could be ruined if there is a problem with a transaction.

I had a friend in real estate who did not want to work with anyone in her family or any of her close friends. I would ask, “Really, don't you think that you would serve them best instead of a stranger? Don't you think they like you enough to refer you?” She basically didn't want to ever disappoint and “fail” in front of people that she knew. She was embarrassed to let them know she sold real estate. She thought it was easier to work with strangers and cold leads because there wasn't any emotion involved.

But, she also tended to trust strangers and got herself caught up in several scams because she believed their stories.

Do you have any hesitation to working with family or friends?

Remember, that you are not “selling” yourself to your sphere. They already believe in you and you have identified them as fans. So, don't “brag” about your own success. Let your love of your work shine by telling people about the waterfront house you just previewed or how the value of real estate has doubled in the past several years.

Your friends, family, past clients and prospects “NEED” you! They need to have someone that believes and trust them! They need a real estate broker that will look out for their best interests! You are not selling to them! You are there to help your sphere and share the knowledge you have in the area of real estate for their own best interest... You care about your friends, family and prospects!

Create a Simple System



There are well over 100 different database and contact management software systems on the market. Some are designed for real estate agents and some are not industry specific. They all share two things in common: they are all complicated and expensive. Even the least expensive is approximately \$100 a month. That does not seem like a high dollar figure, but it is over \$1000 a year. You would wince if you were going to spend money this year to replace your phone or computer that you used almost hourly, so why spend money on a program that is rarely ever used. Most agents are like you and they do not have a decent database.

What program do I use?

Far and away the majority of real estate brokers have absolutely no database. The closest list of their sphere would consist of the contacts on their smart phone, the friends on Facebook, a partial list in Outlook, the gmail contact list, or the annual Christmas card list. The groans can be heard across town when brokers are encouraged to open up that computer and start a list.

When I start asking real estate brokers about their database, they seldom answer enthusiastically. One broker literally started crying. Another broker defiantly stated that he didn't need to have a list of his friends and family. Another broker said it would take too long. Most brokers avoid the question. Its like asking a teenager if he has done his homework. It's the same type of response.

Do you have an excuse for not having a working database? Well, toss that scratched vinyl record!

The idea of starting or working with a database seems very overwhelming. It almost is too big to contemplate. It is easy to avoid because it doesn't seem like it will pay off in the short run. Getting the car washed or checking the latest political posts online, though, won't generate prospects, and ends up as a good diversion. "Let's see, I think I will check CNN.com right now!" I can hear you thinking.

Start simple! Do not buy a program that has all kinds of bells and whistles. Use either Excel spreadsheets or Google Docs. When you build a database on these programs, you can transfer the information to almost another other program if you choose to upgrade.. Build your database in a simple spreadsheet that costs nothing. Make sure it is on your computer and saved to a hard drive. DO NOT Upload your database into someone else's program whether it is free or not, owned by your company or a "hot" software product you were referred to.

You keep your credit cards in you own wallet. You don't let someone else keep them for you! You want control over where those dollars are spent. You don't want those credit card numbers on your office database! Ergo, you don't want anyone else in control or with access to your fans!

Get that database on your own computer and then BACK IT UP!

If you build your database in a proprietary system owned by your real estate firm, for example, in most cases you have just given away your contacts list.

A real estate agent moved from one firm to another. She ordered business cards, worked on her website, and uploaded her database into the new firm's CRM program. She was promised that drip campaign the company developed would bring her more business from her sphere. At one point she decided to move across town to another brokerage, and her current firm would not release her sphere database. So, while she was promoting herself at a new firm, her past contacts and clients were getting "junk mail" from her old firm eliminating her name, of course!

If you do decide to use proprietary software at your firm, keep your database current and accessible on your own computer so that you "own" those names. Put your names into a basic Excel spreadsheet and keep that current. Update your own database first! Then, if you do decide to use an email marketing program, you can upload your database... but the original copy you still own.

There are many Client Relationship Manager (CRM) types of programs, that are designed for salespeople and some for real estate brokers specifically. Consider seriously if that is worth the investment. Few people ever keep up with a CRM. Just say, "no!" If you are not working with your database now, it is not worth it to make it complicated. Start easy... Just a spreadsheet. A CRM sounds good, but with our busy lives, it is hard enough to keep our contacts on our phone or spreadsheet updated! Drip campaigns are basically spam and can irritate your friends and family.

What about sending out bulk emails?

When you use the emails of your contacts you will need to sign up for an email program because otherwise the internet will recognize your emails as spam. There is a limit to every email program. There are bots out there that will recognize that you are sending out bulk emails. They don't know if you are sending an email newsletter to your large list of friends, or whether you are emailing about the fastest way to make \$1 million dollars online with the latest scam. So, email bots may block your bulk emails.

That is why you need to sign up for an email program that assures the "Board of Directors" of the internet that you are not sending out spam. Some email programs are available through your office, for example. Some email programs are also CRM's that will offer one free month. Really? A free month? Some email programs promise all kinds of templates that will catch the attention of your prospects. Some will guarantee success beyond any reasonable response rate. Some will give simple templates full of "valuable" information for your prospects. Don't believe any of the promises or offers.

When you sign up for an email program, they have an agreement with whoever is in charge of the internet, that they do not support spam. You check that you have permission to send emails to the people on the database.

If your list of contacts is less than 30, then you can easily send out emails from your email program. If you do ever send out emails to people on that list, make sure that the people you are addressing the emails to are not listed. In those cases, make sure you put the list in a blind copy or BCC. It is inappropriate to send out an email with a number of addressees listed. BUT, that list needs to grow and become 100 names BEFORE your next email!

The most common inexpensive programs to utilize are MailChimp.com and ConstantContact.com. These programs are very inexpensive. You design very simple emails. Do not spend time reinventing the wheel. When working with the next email, use the last one as a guide or template.

It is so important to send out information that is personal and compelling to read. Life is too busy and complicated to read a long drawn out letter. Most importantly send an note fro you.

Put your database in Excel and then upload it to one of these programs. At a certain point there is a monthly fee, but it is minor and necessary to send out bulk emails.

How do I get the contact information for each of my contacts?

Start with what you have easily on hand when entering information. If you go chasing after a person's email or street address, you can get lost in the world of the internet and have a hard time getting back to the project of inputting names. Focus on putting together a list. Do NOT focus on all the contact information!

If you have the phone number of your friends, you can just call or text them. Don't just say you want to add them to your list. Ask for their address so you can send them something... then think of something personal to send. I might text a friend asking for their street address and then send out a card with their photo, a book I loved or some flower seeds.

If you want their email address, then send a text or a facebook message and ask for their email so you can send them a personal note or a link to something they might be interested in.

Most importantly, get their names into a spreadsheet and work out the details later.

Who do I include?

You should include everyone that you know and everyone that knows you. Your fans believe and respect you. They all need to be in touch with you.

The real estate industry involves trust between customer and client far more than a person handing a hamburger out a drive through window or a bank teller cashing a check. We tend to trust the people that we are closest to more than strangers. A real estate transaction is the largest financial transaction that most people will ever experience. That, in itself, triggers our emotions. Then you add on the fact that it may be the place called "home" for one year to decades and may also include family. Trust is one of the most important characteristics that consumers evaluate when deciding on a real estate agent.

You need to include all your family, friends, acquaintances, past co-workers, members of clubs, schools, churches, alumni, neighbors, etc.

There are times that you might have to consider whether it is appropriate whether to include certain people on your database. Do not hesitate to include any of your “fans.” There are people that know you and love you. Even the “dorkiest” people probably have close to as many fans you your might have. There are times that you should think twice before adding people to your database. For example, you might not want to add everyone that you spouse works with at the office unless they consider you a “friend.”

One of my real estate broker friends and I were at a meeting along with someone in management at the firm. She had just given a housewarming party for her clients that had closed on their first home. She reported that the party was a fabulous success. She was given the invitation list by the homeowners, and sent out invitations. After the party, she sent out thank you notes by email that included her contact information at the real estate company. Her manager insisted that she add those names to her database and put those people on a drip campaign of spam emails. She argued that she did not have permission to do that from the new buyers. He insisted that they were new prospects and explained that it was important to add them. Again she refused. It was uncomfortable listening to the manager pressure her because I agreed with her. The list of the friends of her clients was not given to her for marketing... but only for the party so I would hesitate to add them to a database without permission from the homeowners. The homeowners might gladly say to add them, but, on the other hand might be offended. Ask.

How many people do I need to have in a successful database?

Most people have about 200 people in their world. If you consider the invite list to a wedding, funeral, notable birthday party, or other major life event, the average person has about 200 people that are directly connected to them and would be concerned or notified.

Robin Dunbar did a study decades ago on primates to see how many other primates they associate with. This information was taken and compared to humans. The humans “Dunbar Number” is around 180-220. On the average, you have about 200 people in your world. Then a study was done before email was popular that concluded that, on the average, the British participants sent out 153 Christmas cards. The average Facebook user now has over 300 friends but the mean number is 200.

Shoot for a database with 200 names of people that you know. Right now you can rattle off the names of 10 people. OK... start there!

Start that list!

Most real estate brokers “plan” to start a database. It seems like a large undertaking that will just add to the overwhelming number of things that are pulling for time. But, it is one of the most important ways to spend time. It must be done in little chunks.

There are ideas on how to start. First, open up your computer to a spreadsheet program.

List everyone you can by first and last name.

Go to your phone contacts and just start with the first letter of the alphabet.

Use your Christmas card list if you have one as a start.
Open up an older database and start from there.

This can be done by yourself. Or, you can hand off your phone or computer to someone to just start this for you. It could be your teenager. If you make this into some huge project, it will never get done!

I have offered to help about a half dozen real estate friends on this very project to create a database. I suggest just sending me 5-10 names and I will make a spread sheet. We can fill in the information later. They all can use the help. Yet, not a single one has participated though they really want to have good database. We all have our own challenges, and blocks.

If you have no database spreadsheet to start with, then shoot for 25 names. Then start working with that list. No one on your list knows how many others you are sending emails out to. Always put them in BCC... which is for blind copies so that the addressee is not listed. But, get an account with mail chimp or Constant Contact.



Develop a strategy to connect regularly

Will all your friends and family just remember you when they need a real estate broker? Is there a chance that they might wonder if you are still in the business?

On the average, 20% of the people in your sphere are potential clients at any given time! You may have a database with 100 names but your sphere is larger. There are at least 200 people around you in your world. Of those 200 people, 20% or 40 people have questions about real estate to ask you! They are considering a move, wonder how much their house is worth, wonder if they can afford to buy, wonder if their daughter can qualify for a mortgage, wonder if it is time to buy a vacation property, wonder if it is a good idea to buy investment property. They don't know the interest rates, what is required to get a loan, and if the market is what the new purports it to be. It is important to connect with your sphere so you can be there to answer questions and be available as their "broker!"

Would you rather your friends and family choose a broker that is not as capable as you? Of course not! So, get your name in front of them regularly!

Junk mail is not enough to connect with your sphere. You can buy programs that will put your contacts on a drip campaign. There are videos and training seminars that say this is the best thing since apple pie. But, it is essentially junk mail.

Whenever you shop at retail stores no matter how big or small, you are asked to give them your email so you can be the first to find out about special offers. Sometimes, you basically "have" to sign up to get the best prices on the products at the store. Sometimes, it is just for promotions. Then the stores send you emails... and more emails... The emails might have coupons or sales that require a purchase within days. How do you feel about the emails you get from the stores that had you sign up for their preferred shopper car? It can just plain be annoying. In most cases I just "unsubscribe" because I can tell it's just junk and I am not missing anything. The emails are no different than the junk coupons you get in the mailbox. Is this what you want to subject your prospects to in their emails? Is a drip campaign going to bring you more business?

Once a past client or friend unsubscribes, you have lost them. So, the more you make whatever you are emailing compelling to read, the greater chance that they will remain on your list.

Yes, it is important to make use of email because you can NOT get any cheaper than email! But the more personal the email campaign is, the more chance it would receive a response or they might just read it. It must be genuine!

When I get emails during the two times a year that we have to adjust our clock an hour, I just delete them. But, if I get an email from someone with a subject line that read something like.. “When I forgot to turn the clock back this happened...” Then the email could have a personal short humorous story. That would get more response than a junk spammy email.

Send out regular emails but make sure that you are connecting with some personal information. Consistency is important. Have a plan. Make any plan easy! Make it your own! Do not buy products ... don't spend money unless you have extra dollar bills hanging around.... Do you?

What are ideas that I can use to connect with my sphere?

The best ideas are personal. Purchasing areal estate template with decorating ideas or recipes is mindless dribble. It is just junk mail. It may look pretty with a rainbow of colors and fabulous photos. It might promise a happier live in a newly designed kitchen. But, consider how much time you spend reading the junk mail in your mailbox in front of the house or mixed in your emails from stores you had to register an email in order to get a discount. Do you get excited reading spammy emails that bombard you constantly? The best emails that are opened, read and remembered are those that have some personal information!

Know that the reader will spend less than a minute to read an email you send out. There is between 10-20% chance that a recipient will actually click and read the email. They will seldom scroll down through a long one.

People are wary of clicking on links. If you find an article that you think is interesting, summaries it in three sentences and add your take in another two sentences.

Monthly Email to your Sphere

Send out an email once a month. It must be short and, most importantly, personal! If you send out one canned email, your sphere will be able tell that it is canned... and you may be unsubscribed the first time you send an email. Then, that person is gone from your list.

For example, on Valentine's day, write an email about something you did in the past. For example, when you were a kid did you make little valentines? What is a gift you gave or received? Then, you might say something about the market... “Has your valentine asked about looking at new homes? This month is the time as the weather gets better!”

When the clocks have to be set forward or back .. Don't just send out some canned email... Write “Last year when I forgot to set my clocks back... this happened!” and tell some stupid story. Then remind them that it is this Saturday... and it might be time to set your clock for an appointment to look at new houses!

Short Sweet.... Personal... Make sure you add something about you in each email. Don't “Sell!”

- January – Happy New Year/Goals
- February – Happy Valentine’s Day
- March – Happy St. Patrick’s Day
- April – Market Update Spring is here
- May – Happy Mother’s Day
- June – Happy Father’s Day
- July – American Dream: Home Ownership / Happy 4th of July
- August – Back to School
- September – Market Update
- October – Happy Halloween
- November – Happy Thanksgiving & Thanks for Your Business
- December – Happy Holidays & Recipe

Client Appreciation Event

Have a client appreciation event. Don’t spend a ton of money. Plan an annual event. It could be a movie night, a picnic in the park, tickets and meeting at the Home Show, or photos with Santa.

Make it compelling So they will come! Give them a reason! Have give-aways. No one leaves the Boat, Flower or Home show without a bag of coupons and things.

Phone Calls

Think about whether you would be happy if your insurance agent called you at 7pm to chat. Hmmm... is that what you want?

If you are going to call your prospects and clients... read their Facebook posts first! If they are on Facebook, they will tell you what is happening in their lives. Try to have at least one reason to connect. You could have a column on your database that will trigger one thing that you remember about that person. If you have nothing personal to discuss, then take a peek at the activity in the market in their neighborhood. Find out about the listings or sales. Some statistics say that about 25% of the buyers move within less than 5 miles of their house so that they stay in the same school district or have the same commute time.

My friends just moved to the next suburb in the same school district. They had worked with an agent years ago on their last sale. At Thanksgiving time the broker had a pie give-away. This has become a popular holiday gift with brokers purchasing carts full of pies from the local bakery or Costco, for example. Every year, their agent called to inform them of the Holiday pie event and asked if they wanted pumpkin or apple pie. By doing this, she had a connection, a reason to call, and an opportunity to catch up with them and their family!

Maybe you can invite them to a shredding event at your office, a charity collection, or an open house in their neighborhood.

Make the call short and sweet. Make sure you tell them:

- That you have been thinking of them because you remember a time when...
- That you are checking in to see how they are doing
- That you are planning ...
- Ask if they are interested in finding out what their house is worth in this crazy market. Have they looked at Zillow and wonder if it is accurate?
- Tell them you are really enjoying selling real estate and to remember you if they know someone in the market.

Avoid scripts! Write your own. The scripts that top trainers encourage real estate brokers to use are plain, dry, and do not make a connection with the person on the other end of the line. You need to want to talk to the other person and be interested in their life.

Signature

Think of a signature item or idea you can do that can make you memorable. A funny Christmas card yearly, Seahawks schedules along with something blue and green, 12 of something during football season, flower seeds, etc. The holiday pie event is an idea.

Facebook

There is nothing more powerful than Facebook for real estate agents. There are you clients and prospects right there... You can see what they are up to, their family, their hobbies. Take time every single day to post something... alternate between personal and a real estate post. Then take time to “like” at least 5 posts of people and comment on 3 posts each day. That will generate conversation.

You can do the same thing on LinkedIn but the interaction isn’t always so direct.

Put something in the mail regularly

Send something to at least one prospect a week. It can be any kind of gift. Make it personal.

Also, look at what your friends are posting on Facebook. Are they having a baby? Go buy a onesie and stuff in a priority mail box. Do they like to garden? Send seeds you pick up at the grocery store. Do they like to fish... a lure might be fun to send.

Send Notes!

Thank you notes. It seems that a thank you note is “old fashioned.” We all appreciate something in the mail that is not a bill or junk! Rarely do we ever send a note out to people. One way to make this easier is to have thank you notes WITH postage on them ready to go!

I sent a referral to a real estate agent and he sent a thank you card and a coffee gift card. It was small, but it meant so much.

There are also anniversary (home purchase) or birthday cards that are appreciated.

Notes do not have to be just thank-you cards or holidays. You can just send random cards. Take a photo from Facebook and make it into a card.

Every week I try to send out 2-3 cards from an app called RedStamp. I take a photo off their Facebook or one that I have taken and send them a card. If the photo is just great, I don't put my name on the card. It is in an envelope and my return address is on the back. I sometimes just randomly one of my friends or clients.

When was the last time you send something to a past client to reward them for their business and their loyalty.

Examples can include:

Thank you note.

Coupon for a free latte.

An invitation to an annual party.

A discount coupon to a local store.

Shake hands as much as Possible



When you call customer service because you have a problem with a well know brand name product, it can be frustrating to know the person on the other end of the telephone line is across the ocean, cannot really understand you, and has no ability to make any decisions. You could receive a ton of emails about the company's charitable giving or the fun contests they sponsored that you can enter. But, the idea that the closest you will get to a real person is the phone or computer. No matter how nice they are, you will not have a real relationship.

People have tried to do so using online long distance dating. It is a rare situation if that worked. Belly to belly, eye to eye, or the handshake is the best way to build a relationship.

Consumers want a real person that they can trust. It is imperative to take the contact that you have made online and make a personal connection. This means you will have to meet them in person.

When I discussed with a real estate broker about meeting up with prospects and even current clients, I was met with the big "UGH!" She had a new listing and just wanted to take the listing and not have to me with the crazy lady who owned it. She just didn't want to talk to people or go meet them for coffee.

But, the more you can meet face to face, or "Belly to Belly" as the author Tom Hopkins used to always say, the more chance you will have a potential client.

It can seem easy to just mail out cards, emails and coupons, but the more difficult part of your position is to create relationships with people and that is much easier done by meeting them!

Follow up!



Real estate brokers always have their smart phones within reach. They check them constantly. Email and text messages are constantly bleeping for attention. But, for some reason, it is difficult to get a real estate broker to answer the phone or return a phone call.

Yes, today, we live in such a “busy” world. We are often overcome with stress or face an overwhelming day. So much of our work is not actually bringing in income. We wander through the maze of clients, prospects, office information, spam, unmotivated clients, demanding clients, along with the additional stress from our family and friends. Life is complicated and difficult.

What we are most after in the real estate industry is a “real” client. It is hard to distinguish the ready to buy client from the one that is just going to waste time. It can make us feel a bit crazy.

How do you handle the barrage of phone calls and emails?

One way real estate brokers handle the large number of calls is to make sure that the callers are listed in their contacts list so the caller ID will show their name. When listing a person in the contacts list... put some tag under the company name and a code for the month and year. That makes it easier to delete the contact if they are not a real lead. That way you can tell when the phone rings most of the time where that call may stand in a priority list.

Some real estate brokers make use of an assistant to follow up on all clients and calls. This can be an expensive alternative but if you are past that tipping point, it may be something to consider.

How many prospects can you work with at the same time?

It can be difficult to juggle too many prospective buyers and sellers. It can be hard to remember their names, their motivation and their situation. Some real estate brokers have a list of all prospects either on paper or on a notes page on their phone with short notes so they remember what they need to know about the prospects.

With all that attached to a simple phone call, brokers just don't answer the phone, return a phone call, or follow up with people that really want to work with them.

I couldn't work with indecisive buyers for a long time. I would work with them to look at properties and narrow down their search parameters. At a certain point, because of my personality and juggling family, I had to refer the buyer to another agent that had the patience and time to work with them. I knew my limits and lack of patience. I worked more often with listings because this part of the business was more predictable.

Predict your future!

If you follow up with the prospects you currently have and the ones that you are going after, you will grow your business. If you look in the rear view mirror, you will see where you have been and how you got there. If you repeat the same drive the results are typically repeated. So, now is the time to change your direction and go make your future the way you want!



Boost Your Business

Complete answers on this form. Mail or scan with evaluation to Professional Direction. It is important to make sure the agent participated in the course material for clockhours.

1. What is the main reason that you do not have a good working database? _____
2. Do you remember the last time someone said, "I didn't know you were still in real estate?" _____
3. Do you think that you be more successful if you kept in touch with your sphere? _____
4. How many fans do you have around you that you would call your "sphere of influence? _____

Make a list of 3 professionals that you work with who were referred to you by a friend or family member.

5. _____
6. _____
7. _____

Name two professionals that you have referred to friends or family.

8. _____
9. _____

10. Do you predict a shortage of real estate agents in the near future? _____
11. How many licensees in Washington State as of the 2016 statistics? _____
12. Do you believe that there are prospects or leads that are struggling to find a real estate agent? _____
13. Do you believe in your heart that you are the best real estate agent for your friends and family? _____
14. What percentage of your business last year was as a result of referrals or past clients? _____
15. Do you have some anxiety working with or marketing to friends and family? _____

- 16. What advice would you give other real estate agents who might have concerns about marketing to family? _____
- 17. Have you ever gone to a professional like an insurance agent recommended to you by family? _____
- 18. Name a few CRM's or database system that you might have you might have heard of. _____
- 19. What would you say some real estate brokers pay for a CRM or database software program monthly? _____
- 20. Have you subscribed to a CRM or database software program? _____ Are you successfully using it? _____

What are the three main reasons your database is not current, accurate or workable?

- 21. _____
- 22. _____
- 23. _____
- 24. If your database is currently in a proprietary program, do you know how to download it to your computer? _____
- 25. Why would your email provider potentially block an email that you send out to 500 people? _____
- 26. What would be one way to get the contact information for a past client? _____
- 27. Do you include everyone you consider your "sphere" in your database? _____
- 28. Robin Dunbar did a study of the number of primates others socialize with. Taking that information he concluded that the average person has about _____ to _____ in their social sphere.
- 29. The number of people in our social sphere is sometimes referred to as the _____ number.
- 30. How many people are in your database? _____
- 31. How do you plan to increase that number in the next year? _____
- 32. What would you like to change about your database? _____
- 33. How do you keep track of your database? _____

34. Where do most of your prospects come from? Name three areas. A club, social media, family? Etc?

35. Keeping in touch with your sphere is the most _____ activity you can do for your real estate business.

36. A daylight savings time reminder email is much more powerful if it is _____

37. Do you get spam emails from real estate agents, finance people, insurance agents and like to read them? _____

Name three retail stores, online publications or professionals that email you monthly.

38. _____

39. _____

40. _____

A good plan to connect with your sphere for the next three months would include the following:

41. _____

42. _____

43. _____

44. _____

45. _____

46. What is one way to get a person's email if you only have the home address? _____

47. What is the most difficult thing about keeping in touch with prospects? _____

48. A real relationship with someone includes _____

49. Each week you could take two online relationships and either _____ or _____

50. If you want to know what the future will look like, look at the _____

Name _____ Signature _____ Date Completed _____

You must attach to the Evaluation along with tuition to get clockhours.

Professional Direction 13148 Holmes Pt Dr NE, Kirkland, WA 98034 email: clockhours@gmail.com

Thanks, Natalie Danielson, Professional Direction



Mandatory Evaluation

- Did you read the material in the booklet on this date? YES / NO
- Did you complete the quiz and attach answer sheet? YES / NO
- Did you enclose Tuition (\$30 for 3 clockhours) YES / NO
- Did you fill out and sign this form? YES / NO

Paid Visa/MC PayPal processes credit cards avail on website.

Why did you choose to take this course? Topic? Time? Cost? Ease? Other?

A "clock hour" is 50 minutes. This 3 hour class should take about 2 hrs 30 min. How long did it take to complete the course? _____

	No	Yes
Will the material you learned improve your performance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Were the course materials easy to follow?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Were the course materials relevant to your profession?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Were your objectives met by attending the class?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What are 3 things that you learned from the course?

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

Boost Your Business

Print Name CLEARLY	Signature	Company
Address	City Zip Code	Phone
	Email	
License Renewal Date		Date class taken

Thanks for taking this class! I really appreciate the agents that take clockhours from my school! I am always working on my classes and writing new ones!

Professional Direction, 13148 Holmes Pt Dr NE, Kirkland, WA 98034 email: clockhours@gmail.com

www.clockhours.com