

## Short Notes

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### **New Agents: Increase Your Success by Focusing on the Right Things**

**Are you feeling overwhelmed?** As a new agent you have so much to learn and so much to do. You have to learn all the specifics related to your industry. You have to learn how to be an independent business owner. You are responsible for your own sales, marketing, leadership, and determining where you want to take your business. Feeling overwhelmed, frustrated, overworked, and even a little lost is common and understandable. So what do you do first and where do you turn?

**Do you feel like you're spinning your wheels?** Your activity is high but you aren't making the progress that is providing the financial security you need. This is a very common experience. It's also common to experience paralysis by analysis where you're so focused on preparing to be successful that you aren't doing anything to become successful. Neither situation is desirable.

**So what should you focus on?** There are five areas that you will need to master to become successful in your industry and be among the elite few that last and become financially successful. You will need to learn how to:

- master your time management,
- uniquely market yourself to attract qualified prospects,
- develop relationships with your clients that lead to repeat business and referrals,
- lead yourself and eventually others to get the results you need,
- develop a plan for a successful business.

All of this plus you have to know the basics specific to your industry.

**Wow, that's a lot to have to master in a short period of time so where should you start?** Well, I sincerely hope you didn't become an agent because you thought you would get instant riches. I hope you realize that you can have the financial security as an agent that allows you to get the life style you're hoping for, but it will take focus and determination! So let's look at the order that you should focus your energies on.

**Focusing your efforts and energies on these things first will help you to shorten your path to success.** It almost goes without saying that you absolutely must have the basic knowledge required to function as an agent. Yet, you don't want to get so caught up in the details of knowing every nuance of your industry that you aren't out there moving your hands and feet. So get this basic knowledge and then get active.

**Focus your activities on those that'll put dollars in your bank account first.** This means that you have to get out there and get appointments with, initially suspects, so you can practice your sales/buying process. Don't start with your "A" prospects; rather start with your "C's" and "D's" until you get proficient in this process. Unfortunately, in the initial stages of your business it is important to be highly active so you can begin to learn how to be highly productive.

**Develop short term plans.** As a new agent it is much more important to develop plans for the current quarter and maybe the next quarter than to develop long term plans because you don't know enough about your business at this point to be able to make those long term plans. Then turn those short term plans into a weekly action plan and track your progress daily.

**Time management will eventually make you or break you.** Even though you don't think your time has value at this point because you aren't making any money that mind set will set you up for failure. Start off with good time management practices now so you don't develop bad habits that you'll need to change later. Block your time the way you want to spend your time based on what's important to you, and then work to fill those time blocks the way you want.

**When you start consistently putting money in the bank you're ready to learn how to market yourself so you can attract qualified prospects to you.** In the mean time as you get clients, learn about those clients and keep track of this information. You're looking to identify the commonalities among the people you work with. You are trying to learn what their pains/problems are and what their desires/objectives are. This will allow you to target specific markets that you can seek to develop. This information will help you to communicate to your prospects in a way that helps them to realize that you understand them, and helps them to understand that you are the best person to help them.

**Later as your book of business grows and you are able to easily attract clients you are ready to achieve results through other people, to develop a successful business that can run without you and that is easily transferable.** But first things first, most agents don't make it beyond their first year. Of those that make it the first year, few will make it beyond three years. Making it past the five year mark seems to be a good indicator of your ability to make this a life long career. Focusing on the most important things first, and doing those things well will definitely put you ahead of most of your competition.

Beyond doing the right things in the right order the most important thing is to get help. When you're struggling, feeling uncertain, feeling embarrassed, wondering where to turn; instead of reaching out for help, frequently you will try to hide from and deny that things aren't going the way they should be. Big, gigantic, colossal, kiss of death mistake!

Have you done everything your trainers told you to do? Have you tried everything your mentors suggested, but it just isn't working for you? **You aren't alone.** The reason is that you have to do what works for you, not what works for someone else. You have to develop your own success model. Trying to look like, sound like, and act like everyone else in your industry just makes it harder for you to have long-term long-lasting success. Get help from someone that can help you to be the uniquely successful person that you can be. This will enable you to shorten your learning curve and smooth out your path, so you can start putting money in your bank account and obtain financial security.

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Look for Cheryl's column "Coaching Excellence" in Omaha's newest paper the "Heartland Messenger". Any business wanting to receive a copy of this free paper can email [hrtlndmessenger@yahoo.com](mailto:hrtlndmessenger@yahoo.com) to have an issue delivered each month. March issue (you may want to snag a copy of this issue for your boss's desk):

**"How do Your Management Skills Measure Up?"**

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