



Ask Mr. Internet®

Ask Mr. Internet - February, 2003

Dear Mr. Internet:

I know that the new trend these days is coaching to help agents increase their productivity, but coaching is so expensive. Is there an alternative to coaching that can be found on-line?

Michael Salas
Coldwell Banker
Corona del Mar, CA

Dear Michael:

I am a firm believer in the power of coaching and have worked with many throughout my own career. The main benefit of sales coaching is that it provides objective feedback on your performance and methods, thus enabling you to make necessary adjustments to grow your business.

However, as you mentioned, hiring a coach can be an expensive endeavor. Expect to pay several hundred to a thousand dollars or more per month. Fortunately there is another way to get this valuable feedback, and it is as close as your Web browser...

Your Virtual Sales Coach

[Real Estate Simulator™](#) is sales skills assessment software developed by a Canadian company called Upward Motion. It is an extremely innovative, quick, and affordable approach to evaluating your current sales capabilities and making suggestions for areas of improvement.

Once you purchase an assessment (currently about US \$49.00 --much less than even one typical coaching session!), you will download the necessary software and use it to evaluate three primary areas of your current abilities:

1. **Sales Ability** - This is by far the most interesting and innovative part of the assessment. Using video clips of actors pretending to be potential buyers and sellers, you find yourself as the sales person interacting with them within simulated sales situations. Each clip is typically less than 30 seconds long, after which you are asked how you would respond to the "prospect's" questions, statements, or objections. This is so realistic that in taking this part of the evaluation I found myself feeling the same emotions as when I used to sell real estate! Ultimately, this process will very accurately measure your ability to: **a)** build rapport, **b)** manage the sales process, **c)** listen effectively, **d)** close the sale. [CLICK HERE](#) to view a very cool demo of how this video simulation works (and get ready to sweat a little!)
2. **Personality Profile** - it is no secret that certain personality types are more conducive to a high-performing sales career than others. This part of the assessment is similar to most personality profile tests in that you are asked a series of questions in which you rate your response on a continuum from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." What comes back is

an amazingly accurate assessment of your: **a) Extraversion and Assertiveness** (i.e. your tendency to be outgoing), **b) Conscientiousness** (i.e. your ability to stay focused on objectives and goals), and **c) Emotional Resilience** (i.e. your ability to handle stress, uncertainty, rejection, etc.)

- 3. General Aptitude** - essentially a timed IQ test that measures your ability to solve problems, process information, and learn new concepts. The assumption behind this particular assessment is that top performers tend to be quicker on their feet.

This entire assessment takes no more than 40 - 60 minutes. Once completed you will be able to access a detailed report on the results. In addition to giving you objective feedback on your respective strengths and weaknesses, you will also see where you fit within a collective profile of top producers who have taken the same assessment.

Now this is where the "coaching" part comes in. Armed with this 3rd party objective snapshot of your current abilities, you will now have a clear idea as to what kind of corrective action you could take to greatly improve your sales results. For example, my profile showed a very high general sales ability, however it also indicated a weaker than desirable ability to close the sale (something I suspected but never like to think about). Now I know that my most leveraged training will focus on improving my closing ability. This saves me a lot of time, money, and frustration that would otherwise occur by blindly taking other types of sales courses. This way, my assessment results become a very clear roadmap and "coach" to my improved sales success.

Not Just Theory

Real Estate Simulator is not just someone's fancy idea of how to test overall sales skills and supporting capabilities. A great deal of effort went into its development, including working with many top agents and brokers to determine common characteristics of top producers. The system was statistically tested by administering it to agents of all skill / production levels. The results of those tests showed that Real Estate Simulator has a very strong ability to reflect a sales associate's likely production level. Likewise, by measuring the difference between an assessment taker's results and those of typical top producers, it can suggest what training areas need to be addressed to boost sales abilities. If you are interested in learning more about how this system was developed and tested, just [CLICK HERE](#).

It is not too hard to imagine how brokers will find this tool to be a powerful way to evaluate potential associates as well. Imagine joining a firm where the broker gives you this assessment and then provides a personalized training program to shore up your weak areas based on the results. In this way, the broker and his/her staff become the personal coaching team --a powerful incentive for top talent to join their firm.

If you ever have an opportunity to talk with a top performer in any field, whether it be sports, sales, business, speaking, you name it --chances are they have a coach guiding their way. The initial step in any coaching situation is an assessment of where you are currently, so you know what to focus on to reach your goals. And thanks to the power of the Internet, you now don't have to hire an expensive coach to start the process.

Article Resources:

[Real Estate Simulator™](#) - a highly affordable and innovative sales ability assessment tool designed specifically for the real estate industry.

(NOTE: Mr. Internet, his company and staff receive no compensation whatsoever from any third party vendors or service providers. Investigate any products or services found on the Net thoroughly to your satisfaction before using them at your own risk.)

Mr. Internet's Tip O' The Month

Imagine being coached by the "best of the best" in the real estate sales field where they shared all their secrets about marketing, business planning, operations, etc.

That would be pretty awesome wouldn't it? Well, for only US \$29.95/month, you have access to that and a whole lot more at iSucceed.com. This site is another form of online coaching but with a twist. All the materials presented are "field-proven" by the top producers in the industry.

Once you are a member you can attend live phone-in seminars, download forms and materials actually used by top producers, view business plans, etc. This site is truly a cornucopia of proven success strategies that simply does not exist anywhere else.

In fact, there is so much here that it is easy to become paralyzed by so many choices. That said, perhaps the best approach is to start with your business plan (yes, there are courses on that too), and then implement only the modules that will help you execute your plan.

This is another great example of how real-world coaching for your business is just a mouse-click away!

Mr. Internet is the alter-ego of Michael J. Russer, an internationally recognized Internet speaker, trainer, author, and strategic consultant to the real estate industry. He's dedicated to helping real estate professionals leverage their people skills into profit on the Internet. You'll see his column on [REALTOR® Magazine Online](http://REALTOR.com) every month and in the magazine quarterly. Send your Internet questions to help@askmrinternet.com or you can visit his Web site at <http://www.russer.com/>

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