



Six Ways to Out Recruit Your Competition

by Maria Mull

What makes you so special?

When recruiting and retaining agents, many real estate companies often advertise they are the best game in town, offer the best technology, best compensation, have the highest market share, best training and so on.

With so many new agents entering our field, changes in regulations, hiring practices, retention issues, on-going development of training programs as well as the multitude of transgenerational changes faced by small and large brokerage firms, it is challenging to offer something valuably different.

Finding, recruiting and selecting agents remains foremost on the brokers' list of things to accomplish and setting your firm apart from your competitors is a key component to reaching that goal. But how do you make your firm stand out in a crowd of competitors who are recruiting from the same pool of candidates?

Here are just a few ideas to help you think beyond the boundaries of traditional value statements that have become common amongst a number of real estate companies.

Hire an IT specialist. Sounds simple enough and many of you will feel you already do this. Consider this, while the GenXers and NeXters are comfortable with computers and technology and think nothing about how quickly technology changes, the largest sector of the workforce today is still filled by Baby Boomers and Veterans.

Most would agree and recognize the value of technology but many are still intimidated by computers, the Internet, web pages and software applications.

Technology is advancing at a speed that challenges even the techno-savvy. Continually upgrading your equipment and providing on-going technical training for both new and existing agents will help you stay current in the ever changing technology world.

As the younger generations continue to enter and take over the industry they will expect nothing less than the latest and greatest and the Boomers and Veterans, well they are not in a hurry to give up their place in the sun just yet. Having the

latest equipment and an IT specialist talented in both the technical and training area is no longer a luxury, but a necessity.

Conduct telecalls and teleseminars. Agents, Buyers and Sellers all demand our time. Providing a high level of customer service, reaching the masses and squeezing in enough quality time to satisfy everyone is possible.

Servicing is our business and responsiveness is equally high on the importance scale. The personal touch is what this industry was built on and is still needed even in today's high tech world.

Conducting quarterly telecalls to train a large group, hold a managers' meeting, or educate your customers about your company and its offerings is so simple. Imagine how many people you can touch and what you can cover by having the President, a manager, a top producer or training director host a monthly telecall or teleseminar. Ramping up your new agents, reaching out and touching existing agents, meeting with your managers, educating your buyers and sellers has never been easier. Keep the personal touch and touch many personally and you might just maximize your time, money and energy.

Listen and respond to your agents. Listening has been identified as one of the top traits of successful producing agents. So why does it seem that brokers will turn to each other for insight about how to operate their businesses but feel uncomfortable asking their own agents for feedback and suggestions?

When you ask a friend or significant other about their challenges, their day, their life, you are not offering to "fix" anything. You are simply showing you care about them. Retention is something we need more of, tweaking our businesses is never ending, recruiting more agents is on-going. Listening can be a way to help you achieve all of these things and getting direct feedback from your own clients, your agents, can prove to be very rewarding. On-line surveys and telecalls are great examples of ways to poll agents to solicit input and feedback.

Offer errors and omissions insurance. The National Association of Realtors proudly advertises that there are now over 1 million NAR members. With so many people getting their real estate license and entering this service segment with little training or on a part-time basis we increase the odds of trouble and litigation. Real estate is not as easy as one thinks it to be. We live in a litigious society where anyone can be sued for virtually any reason. Protection against loss could be a "value-added" service you offer your agents.

Provide the necessities. This can be done without overspending while at the same time it will help you manage and control costs. Offering and making available necessities like Buyer or Seller kits ensures the agents keep the latest and most current forms on hand.

By supplying access to digital cameras you encourage multiple photos, by supplying access to letterhead with logos, contact information, website addresses and so forth you are promoting company awareness to the public and displaying a partnership between agent and company.

There is a cost of doing business but agents should not feel nickel and dimed to death for every service or supply you offer. The feeling of hands continually digging deeper in agent's pocket is uncomfortable. Offer up other consumables like staples, paper clips, pens, etc. with the understanding the office has a budget and it is up to them to help conserve the resources provided.

Pair up individuals. Top performers want to be in the top 10-20% earning scale in this industry. They realize they can not do everything and frankly don't want to do it all to be successful in this industry. As entrepreneurs at heart most of us are aware of our strengths and weaknesses. Admitting we can't do it all is sometimes our downfall.

So why not do what top performers have been doing for decades and combine the talents of others to create teams. Pair complimentary personalities, skills and abilities and help them leverage their strengths necessary for success in this business.

Encourage them to build their own business and achieve their dream of success rather than fear failure. Having agents work as a team offers multiple benefits for the company and agent. They share office space, have a larger sphere of influence combined, they utilize their time to maximize their effectiveness, they pull their weight on the team as well as push and encourage each other to strive for a higher level of success.

Conserving resources, maximizing and managing our time while making money and living the lifestyle we envisioned when we entered this profession is what keeps most of us going. Keep the dream alive and encourage others to follow by helping yourself, and them, to succeed.

About the Author: Maria Mull has been in the recruiting industry for twelve years and currently is a Recruiting Specialist and Sr. Account Manager with the [Real Estate Simulator](#), a world-class assessment tool that uses simulation technology to recreate the real-life challenges that real estate agents encounter on a daily basis. Maria can be reached at 919-372-9092 or via email at mmull@realestatesimulator.com.