



NATIONAL RELOCATION & REALESTATE

"There's a whirlwind in the front office to see you," your receptionist says over your phone speaker. "He says that Ed Krafchow sent him."

And you notice that it does sound rather, well, "windy" out there in the reception area. You don't usually take unannounced callers, but this sounds intriguing, and anyone sent by Ed Krafchow from Prudential California Realty must be worth listening to. Besides, it's not like you're overly busy with new listings.

Make Friends with Chaos

By Kim Ades

And there beside the decade-old *Readers Digests* in reception is sitting someone who does look uncommonly like a whirlwind. Kind of fast moving and whirly. If this is a dream sequence, you're somehow dreaming in literary metaphors. Maybe you need more coffee.

"I have a note for you from Ed," he says. And as you read it, keeping one eye on the visitor at all times, it says, "Here is a gift for you, to help you move forward and grow." "I've got some ideas to build your business," says the whirlwind in a windy, energetic sort of way. "I'm kind of confusing at times, but I do produce results." On his business card is just one word: "CHAOS." Once in your office, Chaos manages to knock aside the draft copies of

your recruitment ad for sales agents in the local paper, and then the less-than-stellar stack of resumes that came in as a result of the ad.

You're about to ask Chaos to leave but he does seem to offer a change of pace—and maybe you could use that.

"I'd like to tell you a story," says Chaos, somehow managing to stay in the chair.

"Go back to 1974, the 'Rumble in the Jungle' boxing match between Muhammad Ali and George Foreman," he says. "It's Round Two, and Ali is fighting hard to protect his kingly crown. He's throwing his best at Foreman and Foreman is just absorbing those punches like they're not even happening.

"It's between Round 2 and 3 and Ali's getting worried, even desperate," Chaos continues. "It's at that very point that I stop by for a visit and force him to revise his strategy. He changes his mindset and for a brief moment he arrives at clarity of vision. He sees that forging on in the same old way is a sure formula for failure—and this is a fight he cannot afford to lose. He decides to alter his fighting tactics, and in a flash develops his now-famous 'rope-a-dope' strategy. He backs up against the ring, stands there flat-footed, and lets Foreman just wear himself out trying to get past his defenses. Then, in Round 11, Ali regains his composure and comes out to finish off the match by pounding Forman to the ground. Muhammad Ali moved himself into boxing history with that strategy—and it all came from gaining clarity

of vision in a moment of chaos.”

Bounding out of his chair, Chaos dashes over to your white board and grabs a marker. “Let’s think of at least one way you can create chaos to gain clarity of vision in your business today,” he says. “Let’s look at the way you’re recruiting agents. How well is that working?” he asks, peering out from under his disordered hair.

“Not all that well,” you respond. “My three last new hires couldn’t stand the cold calling, and the one who did okay at it, didn’t close a thing.” Looking at the applicants’ resumes strewn all over the floor, you add, “And there’s not much in there that excites me, either.”

“So lose control!” Chaos retorts explosively. “Here’s a radical concept for you—put your current agents in charge of recruiting new agents!”

Visions of unpredictability dance in your head. “I can’t do that. Agents have no interest in increasing their own competition.”

Chaos pounces on this right away, shedding light on an otherwise bleak dilemma. “Your agents are your army and your most powerful resource. Find a way to motivate them to recruit. Create an incentive structure. Help them see how critical their involvement with the recruiting process is to their own success. Don’t just sit there, do something!”

He writes—almost legibly—on the board. “What you need is a big funnel, sort of like a tornado, to draw prospective agents in,” he says, drawing a funnel-shaped cloud on the board. “Your agents can help make the big end bigger. You need to supply your agents with some kind of tool that will interest sales minded individuals in a career in real estate—perhaps a computer-based simulation that allows them to play the role of a real estate agent. Or involve your existing agents in your current recruiting efforts—like your career seminars, or pave the way for them to have more direct contact with the students in real estate schools. There is so much you can do—but the first step is to welcome me into your organization and start changing your mindset about recruiting.”

Putting down the marker, he smiles. “Try it, I think you’ll like it.”

As Chaos whirls his way back out your door, you realize with a start that your phone is ringing. Were you asleep? Awake? You don’t know for sure. But as you pick up the receiver, you glance over at the whiteboard, and there’s that tornado picture—and you like what it means.

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