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RECRUITING

The 27 most influential words you will ever know!

By: Frank Chimento
VP Brokerage Development
Elm Street Technology



Recruiting and retaining high caliber real estate agents is the life-blood for any real estate brokerage. Competition has never been more fierce and aggressive. Relationships are at a premium and creating a message that cuts through the noise is paramount. But how do brokerages do this effectively? After almost 20 years helping brokerages recruit agents, I'm convinced the solution has far less to do with "value propositions," brand names, and compensation models and far more to do with proper persuasion, influence, and sales psychology techniques. If you want to succeed wildly at recruiting quality agents, then you must understand and incorporate the 27 most influential words you will ever know.

"People will do anything for those who encourage their dreams, justify their failures, allay their fears, confirm their suspicions, and help them throw rocks at their enemies."

My confidence in this approach is driven by the result of successfully recruiting thousands of agents in every market and in every major franchise brand and hundreds of independent brokerages across the nation. Why does this strategy produce repeatable results? One word - significance! We all want it and will go to great lengths to acquire it, steal it, earn it, or obtain it. Agents are the same way. If you want to recruit more agents, (and retain the agents you have,) authentically offer them significance. Practically speaking, to "give" someone significance, you MUST have a relationship with them. You MUST make them believe that they matter, they're important, they're uniquely qualified to produce excellence and most importantly, you MUST first believe this about them! Lasting influence and persuasion strategies start and end with authenticity. Anything less borders on manipulation, lies and/or deceit. Be authentic! One great "trick" for being authentic when approaching a new recruit is to pause and ask yourself, "What do I love about this person?" "What do I respect about this person?" These two simple questions will frame your belief system in such a way that you can pour value, enthusiasm, and authenticity into the person with whom you're communicating. After you have mastered the art of authenticity you'll be much more effective when designing your "pitch" around the 27 most influential words you will ever know.



When creating your messaging, think through your local market and your target list of potential agents and break down the message into chunks that address the 27 most influential words and how your brokerage's system, philosophy, resources, culture, and commitment will address each piece.

Below are just a few examples to get you thinking in the right direction but this is hardly comprehensive:

Encourage dreams!

What are agents' dreams?

- To make more money
- To be more significant in the local community
- To have more time
- To provide a better lifestyle for family
- To be in control of their business, time, decisions, etc
- To help people making big decisions
- To put their child in private school

Justify failures!

What are agents' failures?

- Explain that the last brokerage didn't help them enough
- Explain that they haven't had enough cheerleaders (no significance)
- Explain market conditions that prohibited growth
- Explain why it wasn't their fault
- Not enough support, resources, education, training, mentorship, etc.

Allay fears!

What do agents fear?

- Agents fear NOT being significant
- Agents fear NOT knowing (business knowledge, marketing knowledge, etc)
- Agents fear change
- Agents fear business disruption
- Agents fear new technology
- Agents fear competition
- Agents fear not making enough money
- Agents fear losing control of their time
- Agents fear being micro-managed

Confirm suspicions!

What are agents suspicious about?

- They're suspicious that what you say, won't happen
- They're suspicious that they will not gain significance
- They're suspicious that someone else is getting a better deal
- They're suspicious that you have a hidden agenda
- They're suspicious that you will change the rules after the game starts
- They're suspicious BECAUSE of past disappointments

Throw rocks!

What are agents' enemies?

- Insignificance is an agent's enemy
- Time / Fees
- Negative market conditions
- Negative beliefs (self-doubt, self-destructive behavior, etc)
- Competitors
- Lack of knowledge (not being proficient in core business fundamentals)

The path to effective, sustainable, repeatable recruiting efforts begins with embracing what is written above, but don't feel relieved yet. This only gets you to the starting line. The race is just beginning. To win the race, you need a system that incorporates everything you should be doing so you can become unconsciously competent in recruiting, so recruiting becomes like breathing!

Here are a few simple guidelines to get you started:

1. Understand your reputation in the local marketplace

It makes little difference about your brand or your comp plan if people in town don't like you. I've witnessed far too many brokerages suffer at recruiting because the broker/owner/recruiter was a jerk. Be likable. More importantly, KNOW if other people in town believe you're likable. Get outside your usual echo chamber and be vulnerable enough to really learn about your perceived local reputation.

Hint: Hire a call center to conduct anonymous calls to agents asking questions related to this topic. It works!

2. Be intentional and proactive

The nation's foremost expert on influence and persuasion, Dr. Robert Cialdini claims the Law of Reciprocity is the most powerful of all laws of influence. Offer something of value, first! Give compliments, offer a hand in friendship, send folks to lunch (without inviting yourself), congratulate publicly, etc. Have a system that notifies you when other agents (outside your brokerage) do "real estate" things. Send them a note of encouragement, high-fives, etc. Gush over them! Make a bigger deal about their small accomplishments than their brokerage makes about their large accomplishments!

3. Connect AND ENGAGE on social media

If you're not already connected on multiple social channels with all your target prospects then you're already behind and you need to catch up! Once connected, engage with people on a personal level. Like their posts. Share their posts. Specifically seek their comments by "tagging" them. Have fun with them. Make them laugh. Provide them with knowledge and intellectual value.

4. Avoid the "One-Call-Close" approach

By today's standards, people don't enjoy being the recipient of the vacuum cleaner salesperson. People prefer connection and dare I say..., significance. Avoid the recruiting pitch that vomits information, presents a comp breakdown and financial metric sheet, and asks for the signature on the first interaction. This approach may work for some brokerages, some of the time but it's not a philosophy designed to build long-term equity from a recruiting perspective. Build energy and momentum over a designed course of time based on your recruiting system and strategy. Avoid what sales people refer to as "commission breath." Be patient and operate from a position of abundance and not scarcity.

5. Ask GREAT questions

When you have conversations with recruits through the course of building a relationship, ask great questions about them and their broker/brokerage.

- a. What do you love the most about your company?
- b. What do you love the most about your broker/manager/admin assistant/marketing person, etc?
- c. What does the next stage of your real estate career look like?
- d. If you could design the ideal brokerage to meet your needs, what are a few things you would do?
- e. Does your broker/brokerage make you feel as significant as you would be to us?
- f. What is it about this business that keeps you up at night?
- g. What do you love most about this business?
- h. What would you most desire to change about this business?
- i. What is the most valuable area of help you wish you had?

Recruiting and retaining quality agents is a consultative, relationship-based sales function. And, at the end of the day, sales are little more than a transference of enthusiasm. I submit if you will authentically pour value and create significance into the agents you want to recruit and/or retain, you will become more likable, effective, and wildly successful.



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