

The Power of One...More

The Success Series: Appointing an Assistant

By Stefan Swanepoel

Introduction

It's time to expand ... to add one more to your team. They say business is only as good as the people in it. So where do you start? Remember that the primary reasons for appointing an Assistant are to delegate the time consuming, lower income-generating activities and to enhance and fill the gaps where you may be lacking certain skills. Your goal: To convert your current performance into top producer status. Use the following simple 5-Point Action Plan, taken from The Success Series (www.iSucceed.com), to provide guidance in your quest to maximize your income.

1. Defining the Tasks

Draw a line down the middle of a piece of paper. On the left side write high-payoff activities in which you are skilled. On the right side fill in low payoff activities in which you are not skilled. Then list activities based on dollar value return and create a plan to increase the time you will spend on high-payoff activities once an Assistant is appointed. By isolating the low-payoff activities you can develop an Assistant's job description by identifying the skills necessary to complete the activities.

2. Finding the Right Skills

Too often we hire people similar to ourselves. The key is to look for someone who is compatible but of necessity fills the gaps with those skills you do not possess and/or like doing. Search by networking your circle of influence, your real estate office or the local mortgage office. The best Assistant is most likely a technology savvy, part-time or new sales person that may be struggling with their career. Great Assistants are usually good and courteous communicators, able to multi-task and have strong organizational skills.

3. Perfecting the Timing

The preparation and timing of adding an Assistant is crucial. Determine whether your sales volume has reached a plateau and/or the busy work of multiple transactions has bogged you down. Often we add a new staff member when we are overwhelmed with work. This throws the new person into the pressure cooker and provides little time for training. For best results, consider hiring an Assistant in the slower months so that you have quality time to spend training and integrating this new member into your team

4. Staying in Touch

You need an Assistant to help you grow, but the further away you get from hands-on customer service - the very reason your buyers and sellers hired you – the greater the risk of loss. Appoint your Assistant to handle the time-consuming details of your business; answering the phone, getting fliers printed and mailouts done, taking pictures of properties and putting up yard signs. However, do not allow your Assistant to replace you in your customers' mind.

5. The Same Page

Create a business plan and communicate clearly its goals, tasks and responsibilities to your Assistant. The bulk of your Assistant's earnings should come from a base salary comparable to the market, with a bonus that will motivate them to share in your success. Your Assistant is your right hand, but always keep an eye on your budget. Their motives must match your needs and their commitment must be to the achievement of your goals.

In Conclusion

David Ogilvy, the father of modern advertising, once said: "Hire people who are better than you are, then leave them to get on with it." With those thoughts in mind, following this 5-point plan can enable the power of one assistant to increase your business value by a much higher multiple.

Acknowledgement

This article is part of "*The Success Series*" by Stefan Swanepoel author of 11 books and whitepapers, and a celebrated speaker to more than 250,000 people on five continents. Stefan is CEO of The RealtyU® Group, the largest real estate education, training and career development company (www.RealtyU.com) in the US.