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GAME



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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF Dawn Brookshire
CHIEF MARKETING OFFICER Terri King
MANAGING EDITOR Florance Chung
CREATIVE DIRECTOR Franz Krachtus

CONTRIBUTORS Beverly Buffini, Brian Buffini, Brian Wildermuth, David McGhee, Dermot Buffini, Ed Sablan, J'aime Nowak, Joe Niego, Laura Foreman, Melanie Hitchcock

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS Angela Bruno, Dave Schindler, Pip Abrigo, Rodney Diaz

PHOTOGRAPHERS Franz Krachtus, Rodney Diaz

CONTACT

Buffini & Company
6349 Palomar Oaks Court | Carlsbad, CA 92011
800-945-3485 | buffiniandcompany.com

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MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

“As I sat in the backseat of an SUV, flipping through this magazine during a Realtor caravan, I thought: ‘I’d like to work for that company...for that publication.’”



I come from a family full of Realtors, so jumping headlong into the real estate business after college and a stint in publishing seemed an obvious choice. While I quickly came to realize I enjoyed the customer service leg of the business, the lead generation thing...man, that was a struggle.

Which is why I so distinctly remember Brian Buffini's 2004 Anaheim Turning Point (now the Success Tour). When he shared his method for lead generation, I felt a weight lift from my shoulders. The possibility of generating leads in a relational manner—by caring for and consistently serving my customers—was revolutionary, and I was hooked.

Fast forward to 2006. As I sat in the backseat of an SUV, flipping through this magazine during a Realtor caravan, I thought: “I’d like to work for that company...for that publication.”

I simply couldn't escape my passion for marketing and communications, and saw an opportunity to put my formal education to work for a company I truly believed in. Needless to say, I applied, interviewed with the infamous David Lally (who's now the producer of “The Brian Buffini Show” podcast, among many other things!), and the rest is history.

For the past 10-plus years, I've had the privilege of working in many different capacities for Buffini & Company, and now have the opportunity to serve as

Editor-In-Chief of this magazine.

Let me tell you, I'm as passionate about our message as I was on day one: that you can generate leads, a lot of leads, in a simple, relational way; that you can fill your pipeline so you've got more than enough business to pick and choose who you work with; that you can create predictable, steady income and not have to worry when or where your next transaction will come from; that you don't have to sacrifice yourself or those you love on the altar of your business; and that your work can fuel your quality of life, because really, that's what it's all about anyways.

If there's one thing I know for sure, Buffini & Company is driven by innovators, not for innovation's sake, but to help impact and improve your life. That's our company mission, and our focus for 2017 is no different. This year, we're coming out with an all-new Blitz productivity program, two-day Success Tour, one-day GameChangers, Membership and Community initiatives, and the list goes on.

We consider it an honor to be on the journey with you—let's all up our game together so we can celebrate a banner year in 2017!

A handwritten signature of Dawn Brookshire in dark ink.

Dawn Brookshire
Editor-in-Chief

A LETTER FROM DERMOT BUFFINI

After 17 years, I finally became an American citizen last October. I came to the United States in 1999. My brother, Brian, put me to work at a seminar within two days of landing. I've been busy ever since.

All joking aside, I had planned to become an American citizen over the years, but it kept getting bumped down the list. This year, my assistant started the process by taking care of the paperwork.

I went through the various steps and attended the oath ceremony, which is the final part of the process. After I took the Oath of Allegiance, a speaker told us there were three things expected of us now that we'd become American citizens: First, dream big; second, work hard; and third, serve others.

These simple values have been at the core of the American spirit for hundreds of years. There's a lot going on in this country, especially with the political climate as it is, but when it comes right down to it, America is still home to great people who epitomize these values each and every day.

Those values are central to what Buffini & Company is about as well. We dream big and we encourage our staff and clients to dream big as well. At Brian Buffini's Success Tour and MasterMind Summit, we encourage attendees to set and write down short-, mid- and long-term goals. And our training

programs give our clients the tools they need to build a solid foundation for a successful real estate business that allows them to fulfill their dreams.

We work hard to exceed the expectations of our clients by providing unexpected extras and innovative products like Referral Maker CRM, which was developed to make it easier for our clients to work by referral so they can do what they do best—serve their clients. As a result, they have more time to live the good life.

Our clients serve their clients just as we serve them. We serve one another in our company and many Buffini & Company employees are involved in serving their local communities as well.

Just as America is a successful nation because of these three values, we're committed to them as a company. Here's to many more years of dreaming big, working hard and serving others on this journey living the good life!



Dermot Buffini
CEO



Read more about Dermot's journey to become an American citizen in the Executive's Table blog at buffiniandcompany.com.

LETTERS TO BRIAN

Thanks for another great Success Tour! Magic Johnson was awesome and you, of course, were the reason I came! I very much appreciate your advice and humor. I have been diligent about my calls and notes and am looking forward to exceeding my goals and having my best year ever! All the best to you and your family!

Bryn Hutchinson
Mission Viejo, CA

—

This letter is a culmination of many “mental” letters of gratitude I’ve written you over the years. So please excuse its length! You have transformed my life.

I’ve been one of your Peak Producers Facilitators for several years now, teaching two classes a year. I’ve enjoyed it immensely. This program has transformed our office! Almost every person who has taken the class has seen their income jump. One couple in my last session got six new escrows during class!

When I first took Peak Producers as a student, I was bored and burned-out by real estate. But the class rejuvenated me by getting me face-to-face with my clients through Pop-Bys, shared meals and client parties.

Though at first I’d pick and choose which activities I did and how I worked the system, now I work the system just as you’ve laid it out and my income has increased significantly. This is a much more fun way of doing business and building friendships in what can be a lonely business of cold calling and door knocking. It’s also brought repeat referrals and lifelong friendships.

Along the way, my life’s become more balanced and I’ve eliminated my credit card debt. Putting myself on a salary made a dramatic difference in my peace of mind and my ability to save money. Thank you for showing us how to become financially independent. It is such a gift to your students and it is not taught in school! In 2016, I was able to purchase investment properties, all the while working fewer hours.

Your Long Beach Success Tour was phenomenal. It was Peak Producers on steroids! Your presentation was so concise, on point and well thought-out. And J’aime Nowak’s presentation was heartfelt and touching. Thank you for your unselfish commitment to excellence!

Julaine Waggoner
Los Alamitos, CA

—

I’m writing this note with deepest gratitude for the amazing presentation you provided at the RE/MAX team event. Thanks to your powerful presentation, my small, efficient and profitable team has several valuable insights and actionable steps, along with strong motivation to continue to improve. I felt like you told us the truth, spoke in our best interests, and gave us a clear path forward. WOW. And thank you!

Talia Champlin
Battle Creek, MI

—

I just wanted to send a note to say, “Thank you.” I recently committed to listening to one podcast every Friday on my drive into the office. Today, I listened to your podcast about gratitude. Now, I start each day with a gratitude list and end each day by

coming up with one thing I’m grateful for that day! It has impacted my life in such a positive way and changed so much for me! I now look at each thing in my life as a lesson or a blessing and am grateful for all the blessings I have in my life!

Mary Jo Cammarota
Kenilworth, NJ

—

I crossed our great country to attend the Success Tour in Toronto. As always, it was refreshing and beneficial to review the basics. Every time I attend one of these events I come away with more ideas for growing both the business and personal areas of my life. My team members enjoyed the event just as much—thank you!

Patti Martin
Richmond, B.C.

—

My grandmother came from Ireland at 16 to start a new life. You made a statement that left me sobbing: “How dare I not give it my all to succeed when my grandmother gave her all to give us a life here in America.” I owe it to her to do all that I can to succeed.

Maura Bain
Virginia Beach, Virginia

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✓ Get **INSPIRED** ✓ Keep in **TOUCH** ✓ Reach your **GOALS**

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Earn More. Work Less. Live the Good Life!

My mentor, Jim Rohn, said, “Motivation is what gets you started. Habit is what keeps you going.” When you develop successful habits, you’re more likely to achieve success. It’s a given. Some of these successful habits include keeping in touch with your clients, consistently doing your lead generation activities and committing to personal growth. But, if you really want to go far, you’ve also got to set goals, commit to a system and harness your productivity.

① SET GOALS

Zig Ziglar once said, “If you aim at nothing, you will hit it every time.” Goals give you something to aim for on your journey to success. What do you want to accomplish this year in your business and in your life? Many agents fall into the trap of making nonspecific goals. They say, “I want to close more deals.” It’s a great start, but in order to have a goal you can achieve, you have to be specific. How many more deals do you want to close? Five? Twenty? And what’s your timeframe? Do you want to close five deals in the next three months or an additional 20 deals by the end of the year? The more specific you are with your overall goal, the easier it is to track your progress.

Don’t just stop that practice with your business goals. If you want to live the good life, it’s important to set goals for every area of your life. For example, set a health goal, such as eating more vegetables or running a marathon by year’s end. The healthier you are, the more energy you’ll have to not

only spend time with your family and loved ones, but to serve your clients as well. Beverly and I are committed to a morning workout, followed by a smoothie for breakfast and G-BOMB (greens, beans, onions, mushrooms and berries) salad for lunch.

Similarly, set some financial goals so your financial house is in order and you have one less thing to stress about. Make this the year you get out of debt or start saving that nest egg for retirement. When you make and achieve goals in other areas of your life, the benefits trickle into your business.

By Brian Buffini
Founder & Chairman

“If you want to live the good life, it’s important to set goals for every area of your life.”

—BRIAN BUFFINI



② GET BACK TO BASICS

Success in real estate, or any industry for that matter, boils down to one thing: having a system. The Work by Referral system is designed to help you better serve your clients so you're top-of-mind for their referrals. The key to the system is consistency—there's no magic bullet. Every time you call a client, write them a personal note, send your monthly flyers and eReports and deliver a Pop-By gift, you plant the seed for future business. When you do these activities consistently, over time you'll build trust with your clients and deepen those relationships. You'll become their trusted real estate advisor, and, in turn, they'll be happy to send referrals your way.

③ HARNESS YOUR PRODUCTIVITY

One of the biggest mistakes real estate agents make is equating hard work with working nonstop. Many agents feel if they work all the time, they're sure to reach their goals. However, after a few months, they find themselves burned out and nowhere near where they wanted to be. In order to thrive this year, and any year, it's vital to work smarter, and that means working in sprints.

Introducing an All-New Blitz

To help you work in sprints and really cash in on the rhythm of the real estate business, we're introducing an all-new Blitz! The Blitz was originally developed during the Great Recession as a productivity program to help agents and brokers jumpstart their businesses and generate more leads in a short amount of time. It worked so well, we're bringing it back!

The Blitz is designed to harness your energy and give you the tools you need to generate 40 percent of your



The Blitz team putting their heads together to create the largest coordinated lead-generation program in real estate history! The mindshare and collective expertise in the room has been boiled down into an easy-to-follow productivity sprint guaranteed to produce results.



Behind the scenes as Joe Niego records dialogues you can put to use in your own business to drive referrals, increase your listings, and have difficult conversations, to name just a few!

yearly leads in just 75 days and \$121K more in 2017.

Joe Niego and I had a great time filming new content for the "Blitz: Launch Your Year." Lasting 75 days, this productivity sprint will set you up to close an extra transaction each month. How fast can you run three percent on that?!

All you have to do is watch the weekly videos and do the daily action steps that are laid out for you. That's it.

"Motivation is what gets you started. Habit is what keeps you going."

—JIM ROHN

No tricks or gimmicks. At the end of 10 weeks, you'll have generated enough leads to set you up for a rock solid year.

As Zig Ziglar famously said, "People often say that motivation doesn't last. Well, neither does bathing, that's why we recommend it daily." With this in mind,

we've developed "Summertime Surge" for June/July and "Finish Strong" for October/November/December as a way to concentrate the bulk of your lead generation in short bursts.

Does that mean you get out of making calls, notes and Pop-Bys when the Blitz isn't in session? No, of course not. In addition to helping you generate leads, these activities help you nurture relationships with your clients, whether they're a recent referral or a client you've worked with for years. The Blitz allows you to take your lead generation into overdrive so you can lay the groundwork for future business.

In addition to the Blitz, I've got a ton of juice for this year's Success Tour. I'm fired up to share fresh new content and an incredible guest speaker lineup with all of you. In the meantime, come on over and visit me on "The Brian Buffini Show" podcast—this content will help you stay motivated all year long!

FROM ONE MARKETER TO ANOTHER

Marketing tactics change, but principles stay the same



Terri King
Chief Marketing Officer

As the real estate industry evolves, technology advances and everything moves at light speed, it's important to remember: While tactics change, principles don't. Here are a few core principles I've learned over my 25-plus years in sales and marketing. Buffini & Company draws from these principles again and again, and I hope you can draw from them for your business as well.

Ask "What's in it for Them"

"What's in it for them?" is the primary question your clients are asking, whether they verbalize it or not. Take a moment and put yourself in your clients' shoes. Spend some time there. What are their goals, fears and pain points? How can you not just meet, but exceed their expectations before, during and after a transaction? If you're able to identify your clients' needs, articulate the unique value you offer them

and then actually follow through for them, you'll create walking, talking billboards for your business.

Facts Tell, Stories Sell

While there's a place for hard numbers and stats, if you really want to compel someone to action, put a face on your facts. A great example of this is our "It's a Good Life" client story videos. We could share the fact that our One2One Coaching Members earn an annual average income over \$330K,

or we can introduce you to one of our clients, Ben Andrews, who went from having \$300 in the bank and a baby on the way to closing over 50 transactions and \$22.7M in sales volume. (Check it out at buffiniandcompany.com

under Resources.) Stories demonstrate who you are and what you do better than you could ever communicate by just sharing cold facts.

Authenticity Wins the Day

More than ever, people crave authenticity; they want personal service and specific messaging—they don't want to be treated like strangers. Brian often says, "Just being you is good enough to be great." So, be you. Be real, and connect with your clients on a personal level. Call them up or take them to lunch and listen, really listen. Engage with folks through your favorite social media platforms. See what they're passionate about and what they spend their time doing, then find common ground to build rapport. This is relationship-based marketing, and it's, what we believe to be, the most effective and most enjoyable way to build your business.

While marketing tactics may change rapidly, core principles always stay the same. Focus on your clients' needs, tell a good story and be authentic—do these things and I assure you, your marketing will benefit.

About Terri King: Terri King is a 25-year sales and marketing expert who's worked with industry giants such as Disney, Nickelodeon, Guinness and Easter Seals, to name just a few. As Buffini & Company's first-ever Chief Marketing Officer (CMO), she's responsible for the company's sales and marketing initiatives, as well as the entire customer experience, from acquisition to retention.

INDUSTRY FACTS & FIGURES

A glimpse of the U.S. and Canadian housing markets

In the U.S., first-time buyers are back!

First-time buyers made up

35%

of all buyers last year, the highest since 2013.

31%

of buyers said their primary motivation for buying was the desire to own a home of their own.

Buyers expect to live in their homes for a median of

12 years

Home sales are up.

Existing-home sales in the U.S. were up

0.7% to 5.61 million

in Q4 2016 and are at their highest pace since February 2007.

86%

of U.S. buyers purchased a previously owned home.

Nationally, in Canada, home sales made modest gains in Q4 2016.

Townhouses/row unit and two-story single family homes in Canada had the largest year-over-year sales increases in Q4 2016.

Prices are on the rise in the U.S.

55%

of Americans believe home prices have gone up in their communities in the last 12 months.

Median existing-home price for all housing types in the U.S.:

\$234,900

Up **6.8%** from 2015, this marks the 57th consecutive month of year-over-year gains.

Median prices by region:

Northeast: **\$263,000** South: **\$206,900**

Midwest: **\$180,300** West: **\$345,400**

Prices appear to be moderating in many parts of Canada.

In Canada, the 2017 national average price is forecast to ease by 0.2% to

\$486,600

Greater Vancouver and the Fraser Valley posted the **largest year-over-year price gains** in Q4 2016, but prices also increased in Regina, Greater Moncton, Ottawa and Greater Montreal.

At the end of the day, it's still a great time to buy or sell.

70%

of Americans say now is a good time to buy and 62% say it's a good time to sell.

THE Blitz IS Back!



By Joe Niego
Presenter & Trainer

As many of you know, I'm an athlete. A good number of you probably played sports yourselves. Back in my competitive basketball days, an important lesson I observed was the most successful athletes would practice hard, then take time to rest and recover. Now, recovery didn't mean sitting back and eating snacks. Recovery meant cross training, yoga or another activity that helped restore the mind and body.

Why is this cycle of activity and recovery so important? It's simple—to avoid burnout. When you practice all the time without taking a rest, you become fatigued. Instead of getting better, you just get tired and worn out.

Develop the Mindset of a Sprinter

In real estate, lead generation works the same way. Most agents have the mindset of a marathon runner—that is, they work around the clock, often without breaks. While they're no doubt working hard, they're not working as efficiently as they could. All work without breaks puts these agents on the fast track to burnout.

Sprinters run in bursts, covering a large amount of ground in a short amount of time. Similarly, the most successful real estate

professionals work in spurts of productivity and recovery. They focus their energy for a set amount of time on lead generation, then take time to nurture those leads and develop relationships. After all, these relationships are vital to closing deals and earning more referrals. These bursts not only allow agents to work more productively, they also give them more control over their time and energy.

Start to Blitz

We launched the original Blitz productivity program in 2009 to help our clients generate more leads in a short time span—75

6 Ways to Generate More Leads in 2017

1

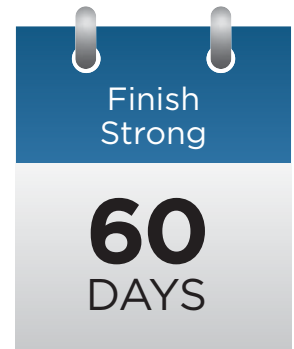
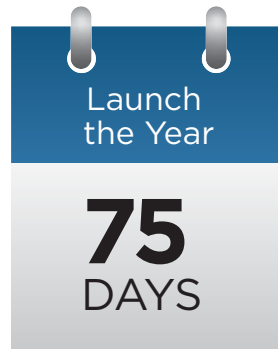
Sign up for "Blitz: Launch the Year," "Summertime Surge" and "Finish Strong."

2

Watch the weekly videos that arrive via email.



The Blitz 2017 Lifecycle



What to Expect from the Blitz:

Generate **40% of your annual leads** in just 75 days

Close 1 extra transaction per month.

Make \$121,776 in extra commissions if you participate in all three programs.

Sign up for the Blitz at
buffiniandcompany.com/Blitz
It's free for Members/\$299 non-Members

days at the beginning of the year, followed by two shorter bursts during the year (one in the summer and one in the fall). The intention was to help our clients generate more leads in a more efficient manner, so they could avoid the burnout and fatigue that afflict so many people in our industry.

The Blitz program was so successful we decided to bring it back this year. The all-new Blitz started in January with the “Launch the Year” 75-day productivity sprint, which was designed to help folks generate 40 percent of their leads by the close of the first quarter. Many of you are already Blitzin’ and seeing incredible results!

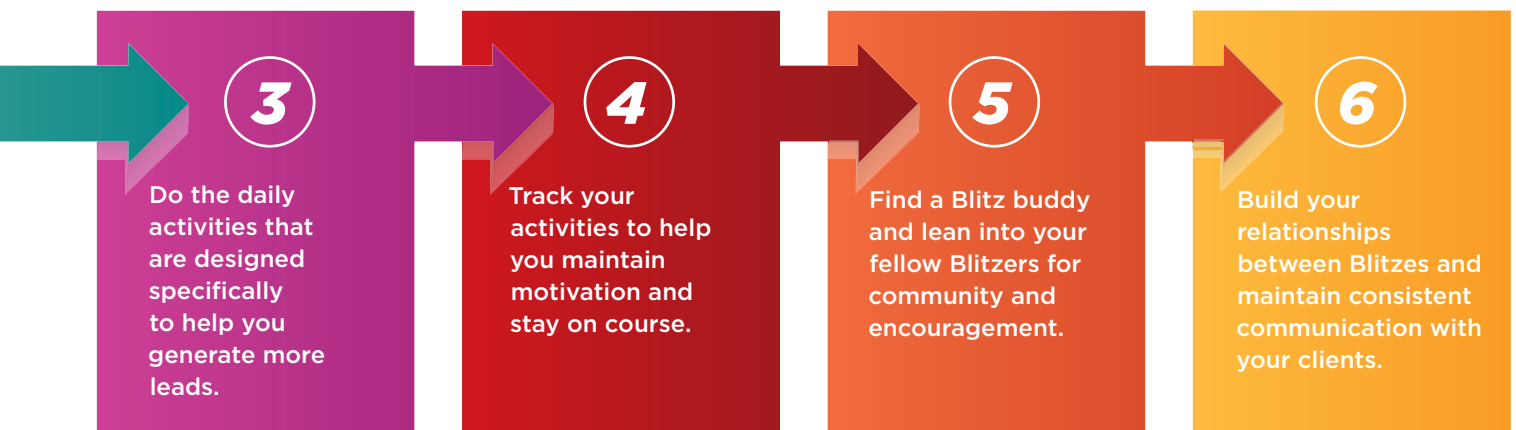
If you’re not on board yet, here’s the scoop. Each week features “edutainment”-style videos from Brian and I that’ll help you get out there and apply what you learn. There are also daily action steps to do each week that’ll have you closing at least one extra transaction per month. Pretty simple—but so effective! We set it up so that if you do your activities and track your progress, you’ll be positioned to have your best year yet.

Reach Your Goals All Year

It’s important to start your year off strong, but the sure way to reach your goals is by maintaining your momentum throughout the year. That’s why we designed the Blitz as three seasonal sprints. You launch your year strong, then rest and reap the results of that focused effort. Come June, it’s time to go hard again with the 45-day “Summertime Surge,” which is designed to focus your energy and resources on generating leads when many agents let off the gas. Developed to tap into the seasonality of the business, you’ll get face-to-face with your best clients when the market is up and it’s easy to socialize.

The final surge of the year, “Blitz: Finish Strong,” is a 60-day program that starts in late fall. During this focused sprint, you’ll drive enough leads to take you through the end of the year—so you can enjoy those holidays, and pay for them, too!

When you sign up for all three Blitz programs, you’ll generate the leads you need to meet and exceed all of your business goals in 2017.



Productivity vs. Being Busy

How productive people narrow their focus, simplify and measure



By Dave McGhee
*Vice President
of Coaching &
Membership*

In 1995, *The Economist* published an essay by British historian and public administration scholar C. Northcote Parkinson. As part of the first sentence in that essay, Parkinson wrote, “work expands so as to fill the time available for its completion.” That phrase is now known as Parkinson’s Law, and it is the reason you may often feel busy, but not productive.

There is a difference between being busy and being productive. Busyness is filling time, productivity is using time. Busy people expend effort, but have little to show for it. Productive people expend effort that produces results. Success is the byproduct of productive effort.

So, how can you ensure you are productive and not just busy?

In my 10 years of coaching business people, and now leading the Buffini & Company Coaching department, I’ve noticed three things that all productive people have in common: they narrow their focus, simplify and measure.

Narrow the Focus

Busy people have too many things competing for their attention. Productive people give most of their attention to very few things. The key is to prioritize.

Prioritization starts with clear goals. Buffini & Company trainer Joe Niego often says, “Most people don’t have a target and they hit it with amazing accuracy.”

When you don’t have a target, when you don’t have a clear goal, when you don’t know your priorities, Parkinson’s law comes into play. You will fill your day with busyness.

When you narrow your focus, you will use your time for what is important.

Simplify

Another key to productivity is simplicity. Busy people tend to overcomplicate things. Productive people simplify.

Simplification is a process of elimination. The key is to identify what is essential and to eliminate or delegate the rest.

You may have done an experiment when you were a kid, where you lit a piece of paper on fire using little more than the sun and a magnifying glass. That works because the magnifying glass concentrates the sun’s energy.

When you narrow your focus and simplify, you’ll find you get more done in less time.

Measure

The last key to productivity is to measure. If you want to be productive, you must track your time, your activities and your results.

Scottish physicist, Lord Kelvin, said, “If you cannot measure it, you cannot improve it.”

Management expert Peter Drucker and efficiency expert W. Edwards Deming have both famously said, “If you can’t measure it, you can’t manage it.”

When a lord and two experts say

essentially the same thing, you may want to pay attention. Tracking your activities gives you power to manage, improve and adjust. It allows you to see what is working and what is not.

Action Plan

So, what can you do to narrow your focus, simplify and measure? First, I suggest leaning into your Coach (or getting one if you don’t already have one). One of the true values of a Coach is outside perspective. So, ask your Coach to help you clarify your goals and narrow your focus. Ask your Coach where you may be overcomplicating things.

Secondly, I urge you to lean into (or begin using) Referral Maker CRM. We have seen time and time again, our Members who use Referral Maker CRM are far more productive than those who don’t.

The Referral Intelligent Technology helps you narrow your focus and automatically tracks your results to activity. Referral Maker CRM will make you more productive and less busy.

You will never have trouble filling your time with work, but if you’re intentional in narrowing the focus, simplifying the work and measuring the results, you will instead be filling your time with productivity.



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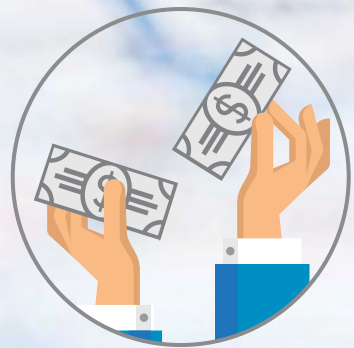
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Earn

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Real Estate Is Like Fitness:

Sticking with the fundamentals beats the magic pill every time



By Brian Wildermuth
*Vice President
of Business
Development*

When it comes to getting and staying fit, most people know what to do. Since they were little, they have been told to eat well, exercise and stay away from the cookie jar. (But darn those cookies are good!)

So, what do some folks do? They look for the “quick fix” because they don’t have time to waste on long-term solutions. Remember Suzanne Somer’s ThighMaster, the old Buns of Steel workout video or the Atkins diet? In the fitness arena, there’s no shortage of equipment, workout videos, breakthrough diets and fat loss pills promising “skinny” in just 10 days and three easy payments of \$19.99.

When it comes down to it, real estate is not much different than fitness. It’s no secret that 80 percent of all real estate business comes from relationships (i.e., repeat business, referrals, etc.). So, all you have to do is connect, provide excellent service and stay in touch after the sale. Right? But, those digital “leads” look oh-so-appetizing, don’t they?!

Most real estate professionals know what needs to be done to build a strong business. In many cases, however, they either don’t do them, or only do them when it’s convenient. Let’s face it, it’s hard to stay focused and stick to the core fundamentals when the “quick fix” seems faster and easier. It’s often more fun to try something new or reach for the promise of instant transactions.

Whether it’s the latest social tool, deploying a drone to capture aerial footage of your listing, snapping on some virtual reality goggles to show properties or placing a Facebook ad to grab potential buyers, there are endless options that may offer a short-term gain with no sustainable affect.

Want a healthy and fit real estate business? Stick to the fundamentals



that drive a healthy repeat and referral business. In health, these fundamentals are exercise, nutrition and rest. In real estate, these fundamentals are the three C’s: Contact, Care and Community.

Contact: Sending your Marketing Flyers and eReports each month and following up with phone calls and social media (within reason) keeps you connected to your clients. These tools of communication give you a reason to touch base and find a way to serve.

Care: Personal notes, Pop-Bys and other touches like video messages and texts help you show your clients you care about them and their best interests.

Community. When you break bread with clients over coffee or a meal, or you invite your database together for a client party, you’re fostering a sense of community.

Many people wear a Fitbit or another wearable device to measure their activity, sleep, weight, nutrition and other vital information in the hopes it’ll help them

stay on track to win each day and achieve their health and fitness goals. Think of Referral Maker CRM as the Fitbit for your real estate business. It tracks your activities and results so you can win the day, week, month and year—and ultimately, reach your goals.

While getting face-to-face with your clients offers the best bang for your buck, sometimes the right technology can help you supplement that vital offline engagement. Using your mobile to call, text and email your clients allows you to connect from anywhere, while video chats and social media engagements offer a way to connect when traditional means aren’t convenient.

Technological innovations will continue to dazzle and distract us. I know Snapchat is cool, virtual reality is hip and drones are no longer just for the latest Hollywood blockbuster. We are always lured by the latest and greatest “tool” that will make us skinny or successful. But, at the end of the day, consistently doing the small things well will always yield more powerful results than the latest shortcut or “magic pill.”

Stop Chasing Leads. Start Making Money.

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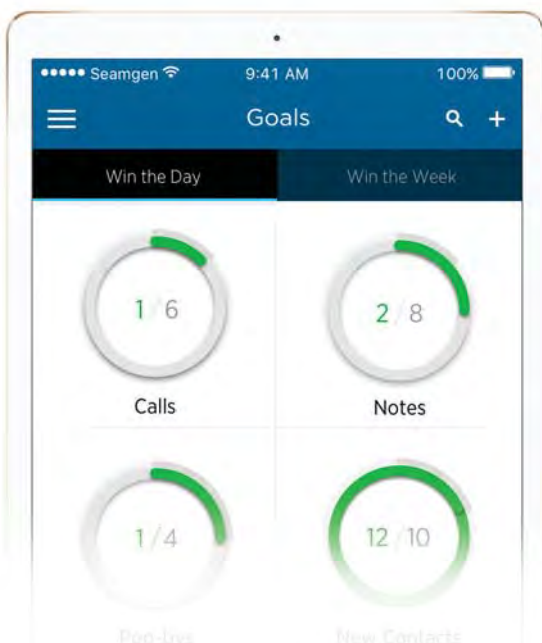
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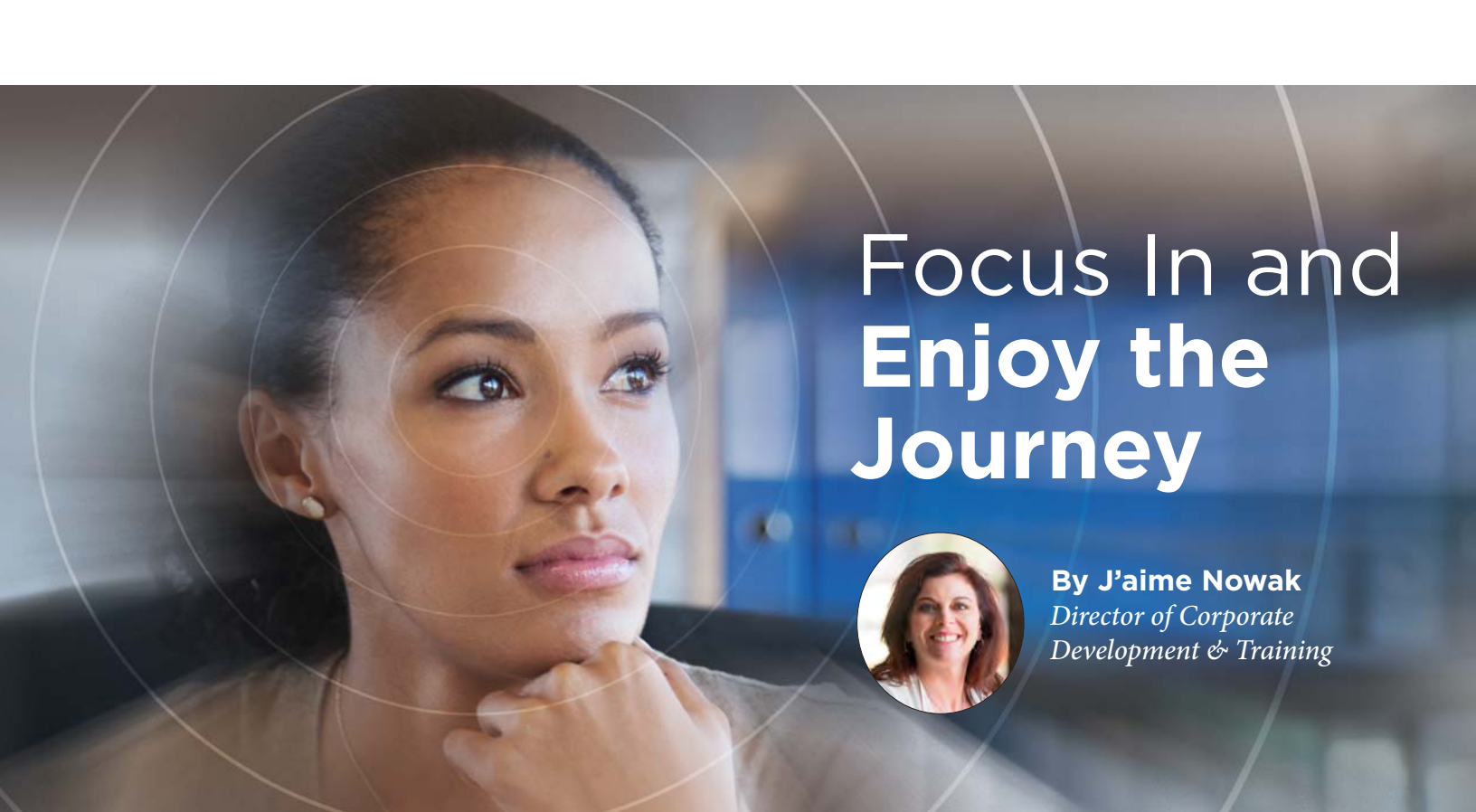
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Focus In and Enjoy the Journey



By J'aime Nowak
*Director of Corporate
Development & Training*

I was determined not to join our family real estate business. I'd grown up with it; I'd seen how crazy and full of opportunity it was...and, honestly, I wanted to go in another direction. After graduating from college, I scored a \$7-an-hour job with my big degree (please hold your applause) and worked my tail off towards someone else's goals for the next year.

It was about that time I made the decision to get into real estate. Needless to say, I got off to a bumpy start. Although I was excited about the opportunity, I flailed along in my first few months because I hadn't yet discovered how to handle the freedom this industry affords. I could show up when I wanted, didn't have to punch a clock for the first time in a long time, and ended up misusing my time and energy on low-level activities.

This is something we all struggle with due to the chaotic nature of the real estate industry! But, what I've learned over the past 20 years is: In structure, there is freedom. Each day that we actively pursue productive routines or habits and follow a proven system, we can achieve incredible results!

Here's how to be more productive, work less, serve your clients deeper and enjoy the work you do.

1 Create the Environment

Our environment is defined as: "All the things that influence conscious or unconscious thought." Our brains and our bodies are so sensitive to our surroundings! If you show up to a messy, cluttered space each day and expect great things, you may be disappointed. Those stacks of projects and sticky notes plastered all over your desk actually undermine your effectiveness. To set the tone for clear-headed thinking and action, here are a few suggestions.

Stimulate your senses. Choose a spot that's inspiring

to you. It could be your home office or desk at work, or, thanks to the mobility of our industry, it could be at the beach or under a tree at your favorite park. If it's a space you can control, put a few of your favorite things nearby—things that spark life, creativity and forward momentum.

Dump the stuff. Remove anything that doesn't lift you up. If there's clutter, grab a box, throw it all in and put it away until you can sort through it later. I recently cleaned out every drawer, closet and cabinet in my home and feel lighter and more at peace because of it! Start small. You don't have to fix it all in a day. Just make sure your space is ready for brilliance and possibilities!

Give up your excuses: Approach your work without negativity or limiting-thoughts. Instead of saying, “I don’t have enough time to get it all done,” or “I don’t want to make these calls today!” shift your mindset to the great opportunity you have to make someone’s day by following up, providing great value or letting them know they are important to you. This type of connection is powerful. Just think of how great you’ll feel after tackling that tough project. Believe you can and get after it!

2 The Power of Focus

Once you’ve got your environment set up for success, it’s time to get down to business! Often, our tendency is to try and tackle everything at once. We are fantastic multitaskers after all. If you’re wired this way, it’s critical you manage yourself and prioritize your activities by importance (not urgency!). Choose ONE top-dollar-producing or relationship-building activity to focus on. Silence the weapons of mass distraction and set a timer for 30, 60 or 90 minutes to dig down and get into an uninterrupted flow of focused action.

When you truly focus on ONE task at a time, you will be tremendously more productive in a shorter amount of time and will achieve better results! This strategy frees you up to devote attention and energy to the other important circles in your life.

3 Embrace the Principles (of productivity)

On every great journey there comes a time when the excitement wears off. You get tired and bored; you feel like your efforts are futile, so why bother? You will have conflict, adversity and challenges. When this happens, here are three ways to get back on track.

Remember your driving force. Why do you need to be successful in real estate during this season of life? For me, when I first started, it was to have food with my meals. Seriously. What is it for you? Is it to pay off debt, contribute to an important cause or provide a college education for your children or grandchildren? Your reasons are fuel for you to stay the course.

Be consistent. This is something we all struggle with! We have the best of intentions, yet we drift, get sidetracked or face circumstances that get in the way of doing what really matters every day. It is imperative that we make time for those good habits that create momentum and compounding effects. I don’t mean all day, everyday. There are ebbs and flows to being

productive. We must work hard for a time and then reward ourselves with an opportunity to restore our minds and bodies for the next sprint.

Don’t give up. Above all, this could be the most important message in this article. Keep one oar in the water if you have to, but do not quit. You never know what’s around the next corner, the lessons and growth available to you, and how close you are to making great things happen.

Whether you’re brand-new to this great business or a seasoned veteran, the good news is, you have freedom and choice to harness the power of focus for your productivity and well-being. The way we choose to invest our time, attention and energy each day makes the difference between living the good life and getting the most out of this business or not.

This is your year to get after it! Create a space that inspires you. Join us in doing the Blitz; focus, consistent execution and fun are built in for you. You’ll be more productive with short bursts of high-quality activities and then you will rest, sans guilt, to revive and enjoy. That is what the good life looks and feels like—and that is my hope and prayer for you. Let’s do this!

J’aime Nowak: The new producer of Buffini TV



J’aime began her career in real estate in 1995 in Gilbert, AZ and began to double her income each year by building her business by referral. She was then asked to manage her office and turned the business and culture around in less than 16 months by implementing Buffini & Company Systems office-wide. Recruited by Brian Buffini, J’aime now helps develop Buffini & Company’s training programs and is a sought-after real estate industry speaker. At the helm of Buffini TV, J’aime’s going to continue bringing the very best content out there to help real estate industry professionals build a profitable business and prosperous life.

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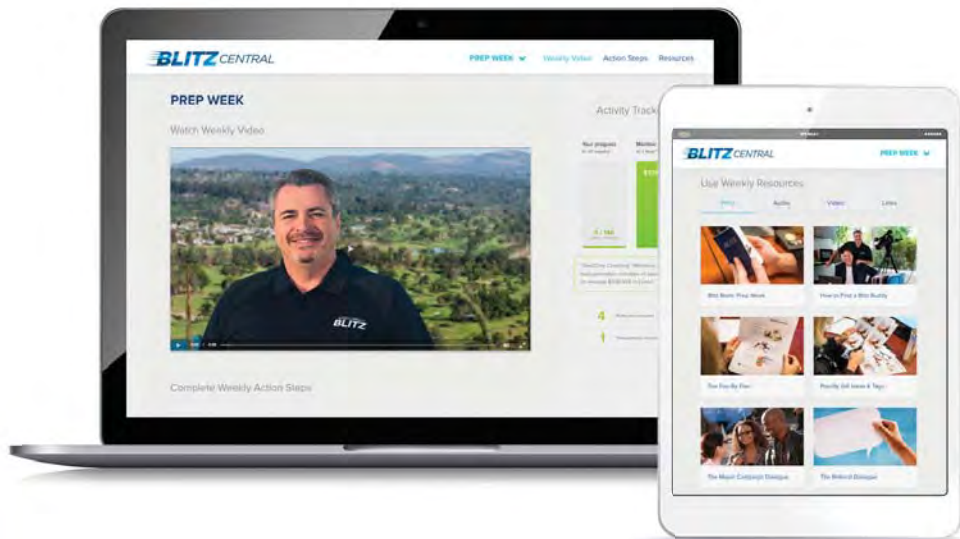
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Business Plan	✓	✓	✓
Monthly Training Podcasts & Webcasts - <i>Brian Buffini</i>	✓	✓	✓
Buffini & Company Magazine (<i>Biannually</i>)	✓	✓	✓
Buffini TV	✓	✓	✓
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Can't Stop this Goal-Getter

Wendy Hulkowich signed up for Coaching after four months in the industry and built a successful business by committing to the Referral System

Wendy Hulkowich attended her first Buffini & Company event after losing a bet on a mapping coordinate with her manager, who was in One2One Coaching. She had only been in the real estate business for four months at the time of the event. The mother of four had been a stay-at-home mom for six years when she got her real estate license in August 2002. Two months later, her husband, Gary, lost his job as an executive and money was tight. "I hadn't closed a deal yet when I attended that first event," she says.

Rookie of the Year in Less than a Year

Wendy set the tone for her career on her first call with her Coach, Kelli Snyder, who was new to Buffini & Company herself. "I told her, 'I'm giving you permission to give me a kick in the butt whenever I need it,'" she says. Wendy and Kelli then went to work, setting ambitious goals for her business.

With her business growing rapidly, she enlisted Gary's help to post listings to the MLS, take photos of listings, create property brochures and more. Although he was still looking for a job, he helped Wendy with the day-to-day tasks of her business. Eventually, she had so much business her husband got his real estate license, too. "One day, I came home and told him I had so many buyers to show property to, I needed him to get his license so he could show property for me," she says. By the end of the year, not only was she able to replace her husband's salary, she had closed 51 transactions, done more than \$10M in sales volume and

hired a full-time assistant. By the beginning of 2004, she'd hired a second assistant.

As a result of her hard work, she was named Rookie of the Year by Buffini & Company at MasterMind in Orlando, and was invited to attend Peak Experience in Ireland. "I wasn't sure how we were going to pay for the trip, but I believed in myself and investing in our business," she says. She worked with her Coach to set goals and paid for the 17-day trip to Ireland, in cash, before she left. "I have the most incredible Coach," she says. "She always knows what we need to do next. We've been in business for 14 years now and have never looked back."

Gary attended MasterMind and Peak Experience, and

"I fuel my tank at the end of the year so I can hit the ground running in January and February."

—WENDY HULKOWICH

“Our staff handles the work while we are gone and we are only consulted when absolutely necessary.”

—WENDY HULKOWICH

also attended a Turning Point later that year. “At MasterMind, he said, ‘Brian is speaking your language, he’s giving you the formula for how to do business by making friends,’” Wendy recalls. According to Wendy, as time went on, Gary used his Heritage Profile to grow outside of his social comfort zone to become more effective in the real estate industry.

The couple has attended many events over the years, including Turning Point, Peak Experience, MasterMind and the Success Tour. “These events helped immerse us in the culture of working by referral, and we adopted Brian’s attitude toward business and client care,” she says. “We used these events to network with other Buffini-Coached Realtors and created a referral network that basically paid for our first 10 years in Coaching.”

To call Wendy a go-getter is an understatement. Over the past 14 years, she’s surpassed the goals she set to create a solid, referral-based business and a debt-free life. “Our gross income went from \$179K to \$550K in the first six years of our business,” she says. “We keep about 45 percent of our gross income, which moves to our personal set of books each year. This percentage has stayed the same since

we started the business.”

This year, she set a revenue goal for her team of \$625K and a personal goal of \$595K for herself. “My ‘why’ expanded to include college for my two youngest children, along with other goals to enhance and improve our family life and the lives of my older children,” she says. “My husband thought I was crazy when I changed my personal goal to a quantum leap of \$750K.”

By the end of 2016, she’d exceeded \$800K in revenue, far surpassing her original goal for the year. And it truly is HER quantum leap, as she is the lead agent and the primary rainmaker on her small team, which also includes a buyer’s agent and three assistants. Over 90 percent of the revenue is hers and she is laser-focused on what she keeps.

By tracking P&Ls and her Referral Maker CRM statistics, the business is running at nearly a 50 percent margin. Gary is a large part of the “behind the scenes” operations and marketing, which makes the margin a reality. “If you believe in yourself and have support, surround yourself with like-minded professionals and follow the system, you can achieve what you set your mind to,” she says.

Building a Business One Relationship at a Time

Although her father had been a real estate agent and people told her she’d be a natural in the business, she had resisted joining the industry because of the “non-reputable” image real estate agents had at that time. She did not want to be a high-pressure salesperson; however, the work by

Wendy’s team, from left to right: Jennifer Kirby, Danielle Belair, Wendy Hulkowich, Gary Hulkowich, Blair Brown, Tina Smith.





Wendy and Gary host their reverse pie Pop-By party every Thanksgiving. They spend the months of November and December giving to others so they can hit the ground running in Q1.

referral model appealed to her social nature and high integrity. When she became an agent, an unexpected benefit of growing up with a self-employed father was she didn't fear living on 100 percent commission. "My husband was used to having two paychecks a month, so it was challenging to try to get him to change his mindset from one of fear to one of believing the money would come," she explains. Although it's taken several years, the pair has worked on building a business and lifestyle of consistency. "The more my schedule allows me to be balanced, the better I perform," she says.

In addition to attending events, her business relies on Referral Maker CRM to help them stay on top of their client communication, referrals and marketing activities. "We can't do business in this system without it," she says.

An essential part of her schedule is getting all the business in the books and closed by the end of October. "I spend November and December giving away Christmas ornaments as Pop-Bys, hosting our Thanksgiving reverse pie Pop-By and planning the next year," she says. "It's a blessing to give to others. I fuel my tank at the end of the year so I can hit the ground running in January and February."

For the past decade, she's hosted a client party for the Super Bowl. She books a local dinner theater to show the

game on the big screen and serves a "tailgate" dinner. Additionally, local vendors in her network sponsor the event and furnish significant prizes for the football pools or pay for the open bar.

According to Wendy, Coach Kelli always reminds her to turn off her phone and take vacations. She also leaves weekend showings to her buyer's agent (who's licensed and able to handle any issues that arise), and only occasionally meets with a new client during this time. "We actually have our weekends pretty free these days. Not at all like the early years," she says. However, sometimes her clients drop in on her. "They know where we live because we have the Thanksgiving reverse pie Pop-By party at our house," she says.

In addition to attending several Buffini & Company events a year, she also takes one vacation a quarter, including a big vacation in the summer and one during Thanksgiving break, when her children are home from college. Wendy and Gary also take several long weekends a year to visit their kids at school. "Our staff handles the work while we are gone and we are only consulted when absolutely necessary," she says. Additionally, she and Gary have saved enough to pay for their children's college educations in cash, and have built their dream home.

She had no idea her business would be so successful when she started in the industry; she was focused on the "why" of trying to feed her family. With determination, a commitment to the system, the support of her family and the guidance of her Coach, she's been able to build a business beyond her wildest dreams. "I don't think about where my next piece of business is coming from," she says. With a confident approach, she focuses on her clients. "I make it all about them."

"Coaching isn't something done to you," she advises. "You have to be the player and want what the system is trying to deliver." When asked what advice she has for someone who's thinking of getting a Coach, she shares, "If you want to be successful and enjoy your work, Coaching has all the pieces. Build it into who you are and your lifestyle."

"I have the most incredible Coach. She always knows what we need to do next."

—WENDY HULKOWICH



Wendy Hulkowich

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Tapping into His True Potential

What began as a side job for Sal Carola has become a lucrative business with the help of One2One Coaching.

Sal Carola began his career in real estate as a side job at the end of 2001. Although he had just recently been promoted to sergeant with the New York Police Department, he wanted to make extra money to support his family. “I had big dreams of making great money, but I didn’t have any guidance from anyone on how to build a true business,” he says. Like most new agents, he called listings that were for sale by owner (FSBOs) and expired listings to generate leads. After a few weeks, he realized he’d rather work with people he knew than with strangers.

In 2005, he joined RE/MAX and heard about Buffini & Company’s training program, 100 Days to Greatness. When he completed the training, he joined the Referral Maker PRO Membership and attended a Turning Point in Boston. He enjoyed being surrounded by other Realtors, most of whom were further along in their careers. “I could see that these agents were having success,” he says. “They told me

to just trust the system.”

He signed up for One2One Coaching after seeing an ad while flipping through a copy of *Buffini & Company Magazine*. “What caught my eye was the amount of money I could make if I got a Coach,” he explains. “I can’t remember what the number was, but I remember it was substantial.”

Sal borrowed money from his mother-in-law to pay for a year of Coaching and within six months he was able to pay it back. His business has continued to grow, even during the economic downturn from 2006 to 2008. “As everyone was losing market share, I was gaining it,” he says.

However, during this time, his Coach, who was a retired San Diego police officer, was laid off. “As a fellow cop, he really understood me and where I was coming from,” he says. He was then paired with his current Coach, Billy Van Raaphorst, and they hit it off right away. “I was worried I wouldn’t have the same level of comfort,” he says. “But, I’ve come to consider Billy a true friend.”

Getting out of the Comfort Zone

According to Sal, Coach Billy has encouraged him to get out of his comfort zone. Although he was in control in his day job as a police officer, as an agent, he was anxious about some of the lead-generation tasks, including Pop-Bys and client parties. Coach Billy kept telling him to host a client party, but he continued to resist because it was so far out of his comfort zone. Finally, he relented. Leading up to the party, he

had nightmares that no one would show up. Luckily, the party was a huge success, and his clients not only showed up, but had a great time as well. “My clients told me ‘we’ve never met a Realtor like you,’” he says.

As an officer, people would get nervous if he’d knock on their door, so he had to change his mindset when doing so as an

“My clients told me ‘we’ve never met a Realtor like you!’”

—SAL CAROLA

agent. “As a real estate agent, people want to see me at their front door,” he says. He has more confidence now and has overcome his fear of not being accepted. Instead of focusing on his fears, he focuses on helping his clients and meeting their emotional needs. “My clients know I care and I’m looking out for their best interests,” he shares. He often refers to a quote from Brian Buffini: “If you meet their transactional needs you get a paycheck; if you meet their emotional needs, you get an advocate.” His philosophy is to meet their emotional needs, whether they buy now, in the future or simply refer new clients.

His business took off over the years and he was able to stop working overtime. In fact, in 2014, what he earned as an agent was more than double his salary with the NYPD.

“Coaching taught me how to build a business. I have predictable revenue coming in,” he says. He has more time to spend on his business, including with his best clients, thanks to the team he’s created. He hired an assistant a few years ago and has

a team of buyer's agents supporting him. While he works with buyers from time to time, especially if they're his top clients, having buyer's agents allows him to focus on the listings that drive his business. "My expenses went up a little bit as the business grew and I expanded my team, but if you look at the whole picture, my expenses would have been so much more without the Buffini System," he says.

Focusing on Business and Family

In July 2015, Sal retired from the NYPD after more than two decades of service. "I won't need to work nights anymore and miss dinners with my family. And holidays, birthdays and special events won't be missed at all," he says. "I only wish I could have made it to a few more Little League games and school plays." But, he can make up for lost time now. "I do know that I would be working more hours in my retirement to maintain my lifestyle if my business wasn't powered by Buffini & Company," he says.

In addition to taking Sundays off, he also stops working at 7pm and takes a half-day on Fridays. "I respect my personal time more and have more control over my life," he adds.

He also takes vacations each year, including a trip to MasterMind in San Diego each summer. "We always stay at the Hotel del Coronado," he says. "We don't live in debt," he adds. "I make a goal to make a certain amount of money to pay for the trip, and I always meet it."

Sal's wife, Maria, has been a huge source of support for him throughout his real estate journey as well. "I'm very fortunate to have a wife who is very supportive of my two careers and has been a voice of encouragement throughout the years," he praises. "I couldn't have reached this level without her."

When he was doing double duty as an officer and an agent, he worked an average of 12 to 14 hours a day, without having a

"In real estate, there's no ceiling for my potential."

—SAL CAROLA

whole day off to himself. Although he's now working fewer hours than he did before he retired, he's able to concentrate more on his business and what he needs to achieve each day. While he's making more money, he's spending it on other areas of his business, such as on the salaries of his assistant and staff, as his business grows.

Setting Goals, Achieving Results

At the time of this interview, Sal and his team had closed 38 transactions so far, and had 32 pending. In 2015, he closed 52 deals, up from 35 deals in 2014. This is a substantial increase from the number of transactions he closed when he started Coaching; in 2006 he closed 13 deals. "Every year it goes up," he says. "Eventually, I want to close 100 deals a year." Sal has worked with his Coach to set goals every year and has met each of them so far.

His next goal is to break into a higher priced market. He knows the same principles apply and his Coach has encouraged him to go beyond his comfort zone to reach out to these new clients and gain their trust. "Sal is one of those clients who never pushes back! He always says, 'If you think that will get us to our goal I will do it,'" says Coach Billy. "When I first started

coaching Sal he said, 'I will do what you tell me, but I have big goals, just so you know.' He truly is an example of being faithful in using the system and having it pay you back more than you thought possible."

Sal continues to be a strong advocate of the Work by Referral System and Coaching. "If you follow the system, you'll get there," he says. "It's no secret; having a Coach helps you create structure in your business and keeps you from drifting." He also advises agents to be patient when they start the system. "I always tell them it'll take some time," he says. "You have to be willing to invest in yourself."

In the beginning, Sal chose real estate because he didn't think he could ever reach his true potential as a sergeant. "In real estate, there's no ceiling for my potential," he says.



Sal Carola

STATEN ISLAND, NY
One2One Coaching
Member since 2008



**Coach Billy
Van Raaphorst**

CARLSBAD, CA
Business Coach since 2005

WINNER'S CIRCLE

WORKING BUFFINI & COMPANY'S REFERRAL SYSTEMS FOR SUCCESS

Amy Massey-Weider | Shoreland Realty Group | Hyannis, MA

Where were you when you started with Buffini & Company and where are you now?

I joined One2One Coaching in June 2006. Three months prior, I'd become the broker/owner of my first office at 26 years old. A consistent producer in my marketplace, I was working 12-hour days and enjoying the business; however, there was room for growth through strategic planning and vision.

As the market tumbled into recession, we were growing our team and production by over 100 percent across the board year over year. By working and recruiting by referral, while building and deepening relationships with our team, our clients and referral partners, we managed to not only survive, but thrive through the recession. We took the company from \$8.5M to \$90M in volume, with a dedicated and loyal team that shared our core values, mission and vision.

In 2009, my daughter was born, followed by my son in 2012. After years of Coaching, I had strong systems in place that allowed me to have quality time with both children and experience company growth and production, while connecting deeper with my clients and receiving more high-quality referrals.

Why did you ultimately decide to get a Coach?

After becoming my own boss at a young age, I quickly realized how much I wanted accountability and coaching. My goal was to stay aligned with my core values, and to be the best leader I could be for my team and family. Working with my Coach, Laura Sanano-Hawkins, has been a catalyst for me to push through perceived limitations and fears, and to dream a bigger dream.



What challenges have you faced and how have you overcome them?

I used to attend networking events several evenings a week. As a mom, I cherished the evening time with the kids most of all. Laura encouraged me to "work where you are." So, instead of attending these events, I started maintaining those relationships through calls, notes, Pop-Bys and lunches. Our client parties also evolved to become family-friendly events. Now, we host annual ice cream socials, pumpkin carving contests, gratitude pie parties and a Santa breakfast.

What are you doing to succeed in this market?

Although we stay on the cutting edge of technology and it enhances relationships, it doesn't replace personal connection. We focus on the fundamentals and dedicate ourselves to world-class service

and consistent connection with our database. Our clients appreciate the care and attention they receive, and enjoy being introduced and connected to one another through the community we've built.

How is your Coach helping you win?

Coach Laura helps me win by working with me to plan at least two quarters to a year in advance. We work backwards from there and get specific with micro 10-day goals in an effort to hit the macro targets. We've started focusing more on client parties and events, which have a high impact on my relationships and leverage my time. She also makes sure personal renewal and family fun are in my calendar first.

What specific Buffini & Company resources have been particularly helpful for you?

The best resource for me is the incredible Buffini network. I've also found our Buffini Group filled with helping hands and a shared commitment to personal growth and success. Within the Buffini network, there are others that have been where you are, or are experiencing similar wins and challenges right now, and they are ready to help and encourage you.

What advice do you have for someone who might be struggling?

What is failure, anyway? We can't judge success or failure, as a month later you may find that thing you thought was failure, was actually the best thing for you to do! We can set our goals, do our best and be intentional. That's it. Trust the system, relax, do your best and enjoy yourself.



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“ I love being in my Buffini Group because each month I get to share my experiences and, more importantly, hear about others' experiences with the the Buffini & Company system. Hearing success stories and gathering new ideas from the other group members is invaluable! ”

MARK JIORLE—SOUTH BRUNSWICK, NJ



If you are a Buffini & Company Member, join a Group in your local area or online.
Visit the Members Area at buffiniandcompany.com or call 800-945-3485 x2202

The Easier Way to Manage and Lead Your Team

By Ed Sablan

*Referral Maker CRM
Product Manager*

Want to boost your team's productivity and get on a solid path to success in 2017?

With much fanfare, we recently launched Referral Maker CRM for Teams. We're always looking for ways to improve Referral Maker CRM and the Teams feature was one of the most common requests we received.

Many real estate professionals rely on our CRM to help them connect with their clients, track their progress and reach their goals, and brokers wanted to take this functionality to the next level with the ability to track data for everyone on their teams.

Gone are the days of using boards and spreadsheets to track your team's productivity. With Referral Maker CRM for Teams, you can track each team member's performance, download a variety of reports, share contacts between team members and streamline your team's marketing campaign to ensure your messaging remains strong and consistent. This new option will turn your team into a lean, mean, lead-generating machine.

Set Expectations

The Teams feature provides broad insight into your team's performance. You can view real-time data, including the number of leads in both the team's and individual members' pipelines as well as conversion rates. With this information, you can set clear, achievable goals for your team and guide each member through the process of setting short-, medium- and long-term goals.

Track Progress

What's the key to success? Tracking! The Teams upgrade features several all-new reports to help you assess your team's progress and keep them motivated. The Activity Reports offer a snapshot of how

your team is spending their time—are they meeting their goals for calls, notes and Pop-Bys, or do they need a boost of motivation to complete their proactive lead-generating activities each day?

Transaction Reports give you an overview of the types of transactions in the pipeline, including active, pending, closed and non-converted leads. Similarly, the Lead Progress Report allows you to filter individual and total team potential, active, pending and closed leads.

Stay Connected

Not only can you view individual and team contacts, transactions and goals, you can also view contacts that are unassigned and assign them to team members. If a team member is going on vacation, or a client's personality or needs better suit

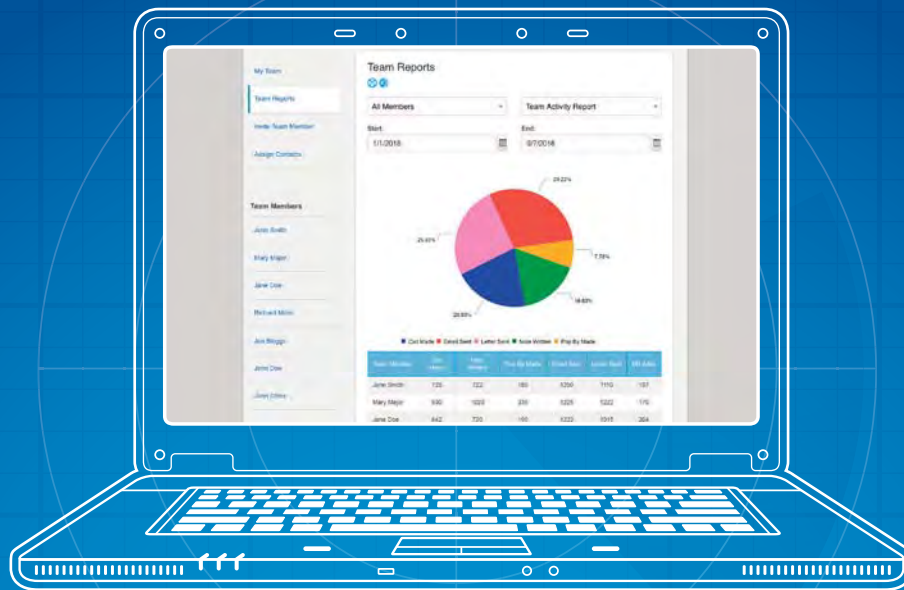
another team member's skillset, you can reassign contacts among the team while minimizing any potential disruption to the transaction. Having this information at your fingertips will help you identify areas of strength and allow you to guide your team through areas that need improvement.

Stay On-Brand

When you work as a team, it's important to maintain consistent branding and messaging. With the Teams option, you can create email and letter templates that ensure clear communication, exhibit expertise and, most importantly, help establish trust with current and prospective clients and businesses in your network. "Push" these templates to your team to help them stay true to your brand.



Referral Maker CRM for Teams is designed to make it easier to lead and manage your team, boost their productivity and keep them motivated to achieve success all year. Go to referralmaker.com to learn more and upgrade.



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- ✓ **Real-time data** on team performance and what activities are generating results
- ✓ **Keep top producers** producing with high quality lead distribution



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Members Share What They Have Learned

If you're like many real estate professionals, you're eager to fulfill your goals and achieve success. With your motivation and focus high, your productivity is sure to increase. Over the course of the year, however, your motivation and productivity may wane. We asked several of our high-producing Members, "What are your tips for maintaining productivity throughout the year?"



My tip for staying productive throughout the year is: don't coast. Either rest or run, but don't get stuck going halfway. I think one of the reasons the market slows is because agents stop making calls, sending out notes and popping by their clients in certain seasons. They assume their clients don't want to buy or sell, when, in reality, I think many agents are burnt out, so they take their foot off the gas. I've been doing this a long time and know all-too-well what happens when you're vacationing when you should be working. Keep up the activity!

Randy Wells

Windermere City Group
Spokane, WA

THE IDEA X-CHANGE



By Laura Foreman
Copywriter



My most important way of staying productive is making sure I'm taking care of myself! Getting up one hour earlier each day to hit the gym helps my energy level and attitude, which leads to more production!

Second, hire a great assistant! I hired

a fabulous assistant that handles the day-to-day and planning tasks, which allows me the time to focus on lead generation. She also plans out who I call, send notes to and Pop-By each week.

Third, get focused on organization and time management. Our business plan is set for all of 2017. We know exactly what our Pop-Bys are going to be each month, the dates of our client parties, the dates of our business networking events, etc. All the big rocks and some of the smaller rocks are in place and we have a clear path to follow in 2017!

Terri Chapman

Chapman Real Estate Group, Inc.
El Dorado Hills, CA



The single most important thing is to have a big "why"! In my case, it's a desire to send my son to college. I constantly envision paying the fees without loans, and "seeing" him graduate through visualization techniques. That is what keeps me going when I am flagging! The other suggestion I have is to schedule breaks. I do yoga and have regular massages.

Kitty Stockton

RE/MAX Winning Edge
Chapel Hill, NC



Staying productive in a busy market is challenging, especially when it comes to lead generation. There are so many things we need to do to stay on top of things. So, first and foremost: make sure you have systems, systems, systems! If the small day-to-day demands are looked after with solid systems, you'll have more time for lead generation. This year, in our market, it's been tough to make time for calls, notes and Pop-Bys, so we've leaned into the "Duplicate Your Clients" dialog. The

way we look at it is, we're giving these folks the best of ourselves and demonstrating how we like to work, why not ask them to keep us in mind should a friend or relative be thinking of buying or selling?

Dawn Setter

RE/MAX Setter & Associates
Parkville, BC



Every morning, when I get in the office, I write four personal notes before I do anything else. I use Referral Maker CRM, which tells me who I need to contact. When I'm finished with those four notes, I look at who's next on the list and queue up the next four for the following morning. While I am addressing the envelopes, I think about the clients. It has become one of my favorite activities to do and sets me up positively for the morning.

I get a lot of texts from clients checking in with me and thanking me for my note. I truly believe there is no better way to deepen a relationship or check in with someone than with a hand-written personal note.

Larry Hassan

Keller Williams Real Estate
South Easton, MA



Our company has a policy of making sure we take time off to refresh, to contemplate and to plan. We travel frequently, and all of our get-aways are paid for before we ever leave home! It's amazing how much you can get done after a relaxing trip and, also, how many times business picks up right before a trip starts. It's a good life!

Dale Servetnick

DMS Properties, LLC
Waldorf, MD



Each day my job is to ask for a referral and book an appointment. Marketing must come before customer service, and time management is a MUST. Make sure to create "wobble room" in your calendar and always arrive 15

minutes before your appointments. Take time to be present each morning and know you will never have a "balanced" life, but a life that is being balanced each day. Trust your instincts and follow through with them. You will never please 100 percent of your clients and you have to be okay with that. Learn to interview your clients and say no when red flags arise. But, most importantly, enjoy your real estate career and embrace the life it can provide you and your family, if worked correctly.

Deanna Bone

DPR Realty
Gilbert, AZ



I'm goal-driven and start my year at a Success Tour. I have my goals for the year written down, and then attend the event to help me focus on the action steps I need to take to achieve those goals. I have a team of five

buyer's agents and they are all taking the Peak Producers training program. We're committed to teaching them the Buffini way. Teaching them to work by referral reinforces what I need to do and it makes me more accountable. We just did 150 Pop-Bys and we have two events planned.

To sum it up, write out your goals and review them daily. Follow them up with the activities to achieve them, and stay focused while you're working. It's a good life and I love what I do!

Jo-Ann Zebrowski

RE/MAX Integrity
Eugene, OR



BRIAN BUFFINI ASKS PETER SHEAHAN

Peter Sheahan, founder and CEO of Karrikins Group, started his career 16 years ago running a hotel bar and restaurant. After attending a seminar with entrepreneur and author, Jim Rohn, Peter was inspired to motivate young people to tap into their potential to benefit future employers.

Over the years, he's adjusted his focus to help leaders of businesses great and small, in numerous industries, harness their potential and provide value that benefits their businesses, employees and clients alike. His latest book, *Matter: Move Beyond the Competition, Create More Value, and Become the Obvious Choice* outlines strategies and examples to give businesses an advantage in the changing market.

1 What does leadership mean to you?

Leadership is seeing opportunity where others cannot, catalyzing the organization to take intelligent risks and keeping the vision aligned.

2 What does leadership look like to you?

I believe great leaders share five core attributes: The first is an optimistic perspective; second, a propensity for action and taking smart risks for the sake of learning and not necessarily outcomes; third, vulnerability; fourth, the ability to get more out of people than they know to give; and fifth, the ability to find and identify opportunities.

3 What's your personal mission as you help people and companies improve the way they work?

I want to inspire people to take intelligent risks in pursuit of something better.

4 What is your advice to real estate professionals who want to "matter" more to their clients, business and industry?

It's about offering expertise and insight. What challenges are you uniquely positioned to solve? Find the opportunity to offer a solution, to take on the complexity of a problem and solve it for your customer. For example, you're helping your clients search for a home; this may involve removing the friction from the search process. Finally, people want a reason to believe in and buy the story behind the product or service you're



selling. Sharing your story or mission with your clients will help them buy into your business.

5 How do you leverage your time and energy?

My philosophy is I only do the things I can do and I outsource the rest. I have assistants and staff who take care of things so I can work on those activities that create the most value.

6 What habits have allowed you to stay positive?

Most importantly, I ask positive questions. Second, I work out at 5am and I write in a journal from time to time. I also have a 10-minute playlist that keeps me focused on my core values.

7 What are the philosophies that drive you and your business?

I'd rather do things that are important and make money than just do things for the sake of making money. Money is important, but it's more important to create value and become the obvious choice of your clients.

8 What does success look like to you?

Success is sucking the marrow out of life and filling my days with things that are meaningful and purposeful. I value independence and freedom; it's also important that what I do doesn't negatively impact others.

9 What are some things leaders and real estate pros can do to adapt to changing times?

Get back to the sustainable understanding that it's about more than making money; it's about creating value. Brokers and agents who exist only to extract value, rather than focusing on creating it, will find themselves out of a job. A good real estate agent understands how to create value, manages their relationships and uses creativity to take what's changing and add value.

10 What's your best advice to a business owner or real estate pro who's struggling?

Rather than just working hard, do the hard work. Spend time prospecting and building relationships with your clients. Do the thing only you can do, and be relentless.



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MENTOR TOP TIPS

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LINDA CARNEVALI

Berkshire Hathaway Home Services—The Preferred Realty | McMurray, PA



Help them find their vision! I ask my class on the last day of Peak Producers what was a game changer for them. Time and again students point to the vision board exercise I incorporate into the program .

I provide a blank poster board to each student during Week 5 of the program and ask that they bring in magazines and scissors. We spend 15 minutes before the Week 5 training to cut out images that inspire them or represent something important to them for their vision board. They are all then instructed to bring back a completed board for Week 6. Before we kickoff the Week 6 training, they present their board to the class and explain what it all means.

I follow Week 6 up with a request that each person choose another person in the group to celebrate. They are then asked to write a personal note to that person and bring it to the next class. They have to hand the person the note and tell them why they were chosen to be celebrated.

These exercises show them the power of the personal note and what going after your dreams actually feels like. For many, they've never had a written goal let alone a picture of it. This gives them all confidence that Peak Producers is taking them down the right path.

JOHN KANTORSKI

Cummings & Co. Realtors | Nottingham, MD



Be transparent and share ideas: I try to be a completely open book when I mentor my Peak Producers classes; whether it's ideas for Pop-Bys, client parties and personal notes, or my processes and systems for working by referral. I also encourage the same from my

students.

One of the wonderful things about the Peak Producers training course is the collaborative process. So many agents come into class for the first time thinking they have to hold all their cards close to the vest when it comes to their business. If they commit to being transparent, it strips away many of those beliefs. By the end of the course, just about everyone enjoys sharing his or her ideas, as well as successes or struggles. Sharing specific ideas I've implemented with great success isn't likely going to hurt my business...but it certainly might help theirs!

ANTHONY PERROTTA

Signature Premier Properties | Northport, NY



Set the expectation: As a Peak Producers Certified Mentor, I find it's important to manage expectations right from the first session. I explain there is no texting, emailing or listening to voicemails during class. (That offer that came in while we were in session will still be

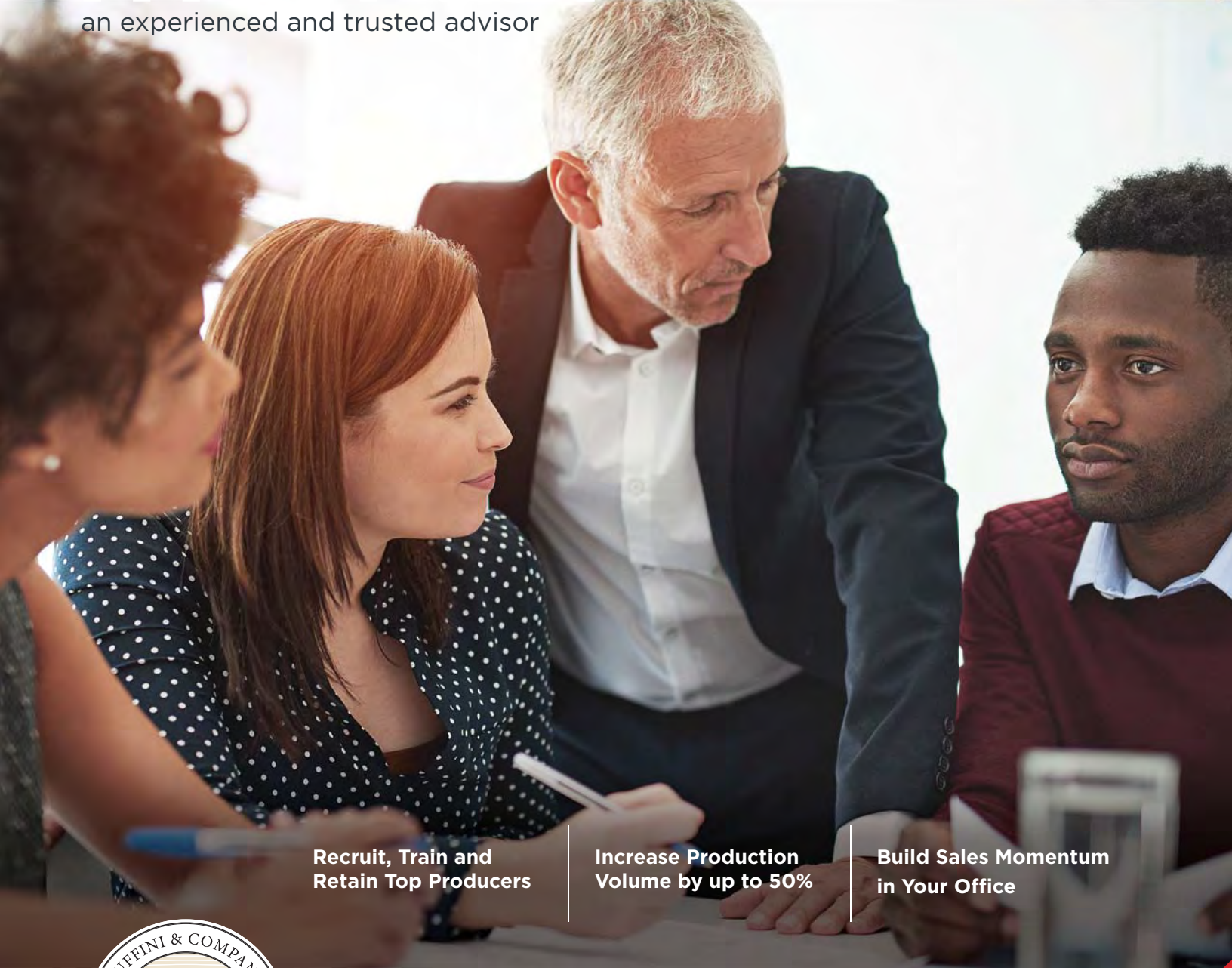
there when we finish!) Also, I start every class four minutes after the hour to allow for traffic or detours. Having facilitated many Peak Producers classes, I've often received feedback that the agents want more accountability. Setting these boundaries from the beginning makes it easier to hold them accountable later.

I know I sound like a tough Mentor, but I take it seriously. I've seen amazing results from agents who've taken this program. It's not unlikely to see many of our company's top awards given out to Peak Producers graduates, and I take great pride in that!



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When Mentors “Buy In,” the Students Follow



JEFF NELLES

ROYAL LEPAGE PROALLIANCE REALTY
BELLEVILLE, ONTARIO

Ontario Broker, Jeff Nelles, became a mentor in 2007 to bring the 100 Days to Greatness training program to his office. While his students found success in building relationships, improving customer service and managing their finances, there were a few challenges. “The message of creating relationships was accepted, but getting them to do the calls, notes, Pop-Bys and dialogs was hit or miss,” he says.

The launch of Peak Producers was a greater success. “When the updated program came out, we promoted and upped our training schedule, doing our best to get as many of our sales reps as possible registered for the program,” he says.

The system allows his sales representatives to optimize their productivity and become more successful. Jeff reports that his brokerage’s production has increased to above market averages, with the Belleville and Kingston offices touting a year-over-year increase in closed

sales volume of 25-plus percent. “While some of this is market-driven, both are significantly higher than Board area averages and, in some cases, are producing as much as 38 percent higher than the Board average increase,” he says.

A large brokerage, his company continues to grow, adding 40 new and experienced agents in 2016 alone. Jeff credits the Peak Producers training program for this success. “We have our new sales reps take the Peak Producers program as soon as they come onboard,”

he says. “This gives them the best start possible. Many quickly become successful and win awards within our offices.”

Once the agents are trained, they’re achieving a high level of success, both inside and outside the office. “We’ve seen a significant increase in production and our sales reps have a much better quality of life,” he says. “Production and income are certainly a main goal, but self-satisfaction and improved lifestyle have been wonderful added benefits for many.”

This success has spread throughout the brokerage as well. Jeff reports an improved level of professionalism and culture within the business, as more representatives get involved with Buffini & Company Coaching, training and events. “It seems that success breeds success. This has been evident ever since we committed to adopting the Buffini culture,” he says.

For Jeff, the opportunity to facilitate classes has been a great experience. “It’s been very satisfying to facilitate the training programs and events Buffini & Company provides. Dollar production is the obvious sales rep and company goal, but I have seen lives changed for those who’ve committed to Peak Producers. Watching agents grow, along with increases in dollar volume and overall satisfaction, have been added benefits for me,” he says.

Over the years, he’s learned a lot as a Certified Mentor. While he’s seen the value and success Peak Producers brings to the sales representatives who participate in the program, he’s also honed his skills to become a more effective Mentor. “Knowing the program and being involved helps with the overall success of the agents,” he says. “Providing examples of successes and challenges, as well as truly believing in the program, makes a big difference in the acceptance level and ultimate success of the students.”

“PRODUCTION AND INCOME ARE CERTAINLY A MAIN GOAL, BUT SELF-SATISFACTION AND IMPROVED LIFESTYLE HAVE BEEN WONDERFUL ADDED BENEFITS FOR MANY.”

—JEFF NELLES

cul·ti·vate

to improve by labor, care or study



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The Rhythm of High Performance

By Beverly Buffini

In 1986, while a member of the USA volleyball team, I was fortunate to hear Coach John Wooden speak at our annual awards banquet. As I've reflected on that experience, I now realize how instrumental that one encounter was in affecting my daily efforts and attitude leading up to the 1988 Olympics. Coach Wooden, for those who aren't familiar with him, was one of the most successful coaches in college sports history. He earned the nickname the "Wizard of Westwood" as head basketball coach of UCLA, where he won 10 NCAA national championships in a 12-year period, including a record seven in a row. He is well known for his Pyramid of Success, a model which reveals his philosophy on success, block by block. I left that banquet with renewed zeal and recommitted my efforts to being the best I could be. Coach Wooden commented on the two cornerstones of his pyramid: Industriousness and Enthusiasm. He described Industriousness as, *"very hard work. But hard work is not enough. It must be ignited, lit afire by something that will raise it to the extraordinary level required for success. That 'something' is your Enthusiasm which infuses hard work with inspired power that all great competitors have. Your heart must be in your work. Your energy and Enthusiasm stimulates those you work with. It is the ingredient that transforms Industriousness into something of great magnitude—the engine that powers all blocks of the Pyramid. It is why I chose Industriousness and Enthusiasm as the cornerstones of my Pyramid of Success. It is where everything begins."*

I was fired up! It was just the medicine I needed to continue the journey. In the '80s, we trained year round, sometimes six days a week. The training was arduous. Each and every day we were challenged to perform at an extremely high level in the gym, in the weight room, on the track and in the "classroom." We were constantly being evaluated, always competing for a spot and often managing injuries. Talk about stressful. But, despite the daily grind, I kept going. How was I able to give my best daily in such an intense environment? How did I handle the mundane, the pain and all the obstacles? I attribute my enduring performance to three factors that I believe are keys to transform your business as you "Blitz" your way through the year.

To begin with, it was essential for me to recommit daily to my purpose for being on this team. Ultimately, my goal was to play in the Olympic Games, a dream, that was born when I witnessed the '76 Olympics. I remember lying on the floor watching those Games with my brother and sisters when a spark was lit within my heart. I boldly announced to my entire family, "I want to go to the Olympics one day." The pursuit began. I worked hard during the remainder of my high school years, earned a scholarship to the University of Alabama, excelled in college and attended the open tryouts for the USA volleyball team upon graduation. Fortunately, I made the team with three and a half years before me to train for the '88 Olympics in Seoul, Korea. I

was overjoyed, but the real work was just beginning, unlike anything I'd ever experienced. The daily toil was tough, monotonous and non-rewarding at times. Many of my peers quit the grind because it was too strenuous. The difference maker for me was my daily renewal to my purpose. I was on a mission, and that mission required a tremendous amount of sacrifice, discipline and effort. I flooded my walls with quips and quotes. I committed to filling my mind with motivational and inspirational material to combat the many negative influences that attempted to derail my dreams, even my own self talk at times. The discipline to work hard grew out of what I put into my mind more so than anything else. Over the years, there were many adversities, but because of my



resolve and daily renewal I recognized that the adversity was a needed piece of the puzzle to help me reach my goals.

Secondly, I attribute my enduring performance to the comprehensive management of my activities. The key component that influenced my journey was the coaching staff. They established a training rhythm over four years that prepared our team to perform at an elite level. The road was long, hard and wearisome at times. A comprehensive program with long-term planning in mind, along with a strategic daily performance management plan, was essential for our team's success. Our coaches took into consideration off-season, pre-season and in-season, as well as seasons of rest and recovery. Off-season focused on laying a strong foundation with lots of repetition. During the pre-season, we were blitzed with a heavy workload, but, because of the firm foundation established during the off-season, the blitz only elevated our game and produced positive results. The repetitive drills were incredibly tedious, but in the end they also produced results. Hard work does bring profit. Coach Wooden taught that, *"With every success, comes hard work. Without hard work, you cannot achieve results. People who try to find the easy way out are kidding themselves if they think they can achieve excellence without putting in hard work. Hard work is the universal quality that will pay off in the long-term. Once you invest the due time and effort, the results will start coming in."*

Third, but equally as important, was the emphasis I placed on maintaining a positive attitude, the fuel that made it all work. Again, as Wooden shared, an attitude of enthusiasm “transforms industriousness into something of great magnitude.” I was affectionately known as “Bubbles,” which I attribute to a positive disposition. I worked hard to improve my skills, but I also worked extremely hard to be a great teammate. I knew that the one thing I could control, no matter the situation, was my attitude. Prior to joining the team, a friend shared a truly inspirational quote by Chuck Swindoll with me that contributed to my outlook on life. I’ve plastered it on the walls of every room I’ve ever lived in. I hope it resonates with you, too, and inspires you to make choices that will transform your business.

“The longer I live, the more I realize the impact of attitude on life. Attitude, to me, is more important than facts. It is more

important than the past, the education, the money, than circumstances, than failure, than successes, than what other people think or say or do. It is more important than appearance, giftedness or skill. It will make or break a company...a church...a home. The remarkable thing is we have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day. We cannot change our past... we cannot change the fact that people will act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude. I am convinced that life is 10 percent what happens to me and 90 percent of how I react to it. And so it is with you...we are in charge of our attitudes.”

In my conversations with Brian, I can honestly tell you, I don’t remember when I’ve seen him so excited about a new innovation as I’ve seen him with the Blitz program. The more I hear about it, the more I realize that, by helping you focus on daily activities and supplying lots of positive encouragement, he is going to help all of you pursue your purpose. I pursued five Olympic rings with gusto; you all will get a chance to pursue your five circles with the Blitz program. I hope you are “lit afire” as you Blitz your way through 2017.

You can. You will. Believe!

“The key component that influenced my journey was the coaching staff. They established a training rhythm over four years that prepared our team to perform at an elite level.”



“I pursued five Olympic rings with gusto; you all will get a chance to pursue your five circles with the Blitz program. I hope you are ‘lit afire’ as you Blitz your way through 2017.”



LESSONS FROM THE LEGENDS

Q WHAT WAS YOUR BUSINESS AND LIFE LIKE BEFORE YOU STARTED COACHING?

I emigrated from India to Canada in 1969; I was the pioneer for the family and I borrowed money to come over. I stayed at the YWCA free with a promise to pay later. After finding a job, I sponsored my fiancé and got married. Together, we sponsored 10 family members from India to Canada. In 1977, I put my accounting career on hold to raise my two children, and in 1990 my family of four immigrated to the United States. In 2000, 23 years after I stepped out of the workforce to raise my children, I re-entered as a Realtor.

I joined One2One Coaching after attending a half-day Buffini event in 2000. I was new in real estate with no income or contacts, plus I was adjusting to an empty nest. I've been in the One2One Coaching program for 16 years.

Q HOW HAS YOUR LIFE CHANGED AS A RESULT OF COACHING?

When I first started One2One Coaching, I was working around the clock. Now I work about 30 hours a week on average. I usually don't work weekends and take time off for vacations each year. I find time to attend the activities of my grandsons plus Bible Study and other ministries at church. My expenses have gone down as well. My Coach keeps me accountable so I only spend what I need to in order to get a good return on investment.

Q WHY DO YOU STILL NEED A COACH?

My Coach is invaluable to me. In 2008, my life was turned upside down: my extended family was still in Canada, my son was then in Amsterdam and I'd lost my husband Frank. Upon his death, Frank's identity was stolen, the



AN INTERVIEW WITH IONA ALPHONSO

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recession hit and Hurricane Ike struck Houston. My Coach helped me keep one oar in the water while I dealt with these tragedies. She's been a pillar of strength in the storm of life.

Q WHERE ARE YOU NOW IN YOUR BUSINESS AND LIFE?

My business continues to do well and I'm able to spend more time doing the things I enjoy, such as spending time with my three grandsons, volunteering and traveling. I've gotten better at taking care of myself, too. I now walk four miles every other day and work with a personal trainer. I'm excited to be where I am in my business and personal life.

Q HOW DO YOU CONTINUE WORKING THE SYSTEM, BUT KEEP IT FRESH?

I hired an assistant to help with clerical tasks. I also hold two client parties a year.

Q WHAT IS YOUR ADVICE TO SOMEONE WHO FEELS LIKE THEY'RE NOT MAKING PROGRESS?

Lean into your Coach and stay true to the system. Step up the calls, follow up with notes and Pop-By your clients so you can stay energized!

Q WHAT IS ONE PIECE OF ADVICE YOU'D GIVE TO SOMEONE WHO JUST STARTED COACHING?

You've already made a financial commitment to work relationally and not transactionally. Remember, others have done it; so can you. Don't fight your Coach, and stay focused on generating referrals. The system works and is far better and more fun than doing floor time, open houses or door knocking. It is what attracted me to the system and why I have been all-in for the past 16 years.

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