

# CHOOSE YOUR CLIENTS – CHOOSE YOUR BUSINESS

The path to failure is trying to please everyone you come into contact with. I believe that I was not put on this earth to help everyone buy and sell. I can't help everyone, and I don't want to. Too many Agents believe that they are forced to work with anyone who shows up. By excluding people, you will create better and more loyal clients.

Some of the people we meet are unreasonable and should not be clients of anyone. They don't deserve the honor of any Agent's time and attention. Our job is to recognize their low probability of ever becoming a quality client and to run away quickly.

The feeling of walking away from someone who would otherwise cause my staff and me great frustration was even better than that of getting a new listing. The look on that person's face was always priceless. Most Agents never experience the thrill of doing business on their own terms. Most Agents compromise their philosophy and beliefs for dollars. Below are four different categories of people you will find yourself working with regularly.

**Terrific Clients:** Most salespeople are just looking for the sale. A professional salesperson is always on the lookout for terrific clients. Terrific clients respect people who are highly skilled at their professions. They listen to advice and guidance that is presented well and that has sup-

porting documentation. They open up about their goals and desires for real estate and their expectation for service. You will always know where terrific clients stand; they don't play "hide the ball." You are not the enemy. You and the terrific clients will be on the same team, working toward a common goal. They also will be fantastic referral sources for your business.

**No-Clue Clients:** No-clue clients live in a dream world. It is difficult to get them to look at the facts and figures that might upset the fantasy world in which they live. These clients really don't want to know the truth . . . that their home is worth 15% less than they think. Each one believes that he or she will land the one buyer who will pay above fair market value. Unless the no-clue client has extremely high motivation – job transfer, divorce, new children — you will have no sale. If the bottom line is that they have to move, you may be able to bring them to reality. In that case, the no-clue client could eventually make progress toward becoming a terrific client.

**Information Service Clients:** These people just want information and expertise from you. They have no intention of creating a relationship of trust; you are only there to provide your knowledge. The information-only client truly believes that this approach is justified. He or she also believes that if you are foolish enough to give your knowledge for free, then that's your problem.

These clients will take your knowledge; they will either use it to buy or sell on their own or will give it to a friend or family member who doesn't have your skill level and put the business into that person's hands. Information-only clients will rarely answer direct questions. They are evasive. They will challenge your knowledge, beliefs, advice, fees, and services; these challenges will usually become their justification for not working with you. Sometimes they get offended at your questions. Their belief is that the expertise that they can get out of you is useful, but that their way is better.

**Distrusts Everyone Clients:** These clients believe that everyone is out to get them. They believe that everyone is trying to reach into their back pockets. They believe that every question you ask comes with its own hidden agenda . . . that what you are really looking for is the weak point that will allow you to destroy them. Even when, with a lot of care and attention, you manage to win these people over and make them your clients, they will be gone if you or your team make one honest error. They believe that whatever negative experiences happen to them it is all part of the big conspiracy against them.

Selecting and excluding people at the outset is the best way to ensure good client relations. Many problems with clients are caused, not by external events or deficiencies in our interpersonal skills, but by the perceptions and expect-

tations of clients themselves. Some people just don't make good clients. Create a strong interview process, so you can quickly and efficiently remove the problem prospects before they get inside your inner circle. The price you pay for letting them inside is wasted time, wasted energy, emotional drain for you and your staff, and certainly loss of revenue. Focus on working only with terrific clients. You'll be amazed at the increased income and job satisfaction you will enjoy.

*Dirk Zeller is an Agent, an Investor, and the President & CEO of Real Estate Champions. His company trains more than 350,000 Agents worldwide each year through live events, online training, self-study programs, and newsletters. He's the widely published author of Your First Year in Real Estate, Success as a Real Estate Agent for Dummies®, The Champion Real Estate Agent, Telephone Sales for Dummies®, and over 300 articles in print. You can get more information by visiting [www.RealEstateChampions.com](http://www.RealEstateChampions.com). © 2008, Dirk Zeller. All rights reserved. For information contact FrogPond at 800.704.FROG(3764) or email [susie@FrogPond.com](mailto:susie@FrogPond.com); <http://www.FrogPond.com>.*