CHAPTER 4

Shake the Water Off Your Duck Feathers

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A sample chapter from The Real Estate Journey. Free to keep. No email required.

Confidence as a Real Estate Agent

Top real estate agents are confident real estate agents. They know it is important to maintain a positive attitude to ensure their success. Fill interactions with energy to make sure that confidence always comes across. A real estate agent should be excited about selling a home! That sort of attitude will impress clients as much as your thorough knowledge of the market or how to manage listings. Energy breeds confidence. Always remember to instill your daily real estate interactions with a dose of it. How does an agent effectively embrace excitement? By not sweating the small stuff! Tiny issues will always come up, but by not allowing them to ruin your day and instead maintaining a positive attitude, you can focus on improving your knowledge of your industry and take advantage of your excitement over deals. There is nothing more attractive than self-confidence. Use it to promote yourself professionally and succeed through all aspects of your life.

- **Repetition, Repetition, Repetition:** With all great athletes, practice is a necessity. If you have a player who cannot catch the ball, what do you do? You have them practice catching the ball over and over for months until they develop the skill. The same mentality can be applied with improving your self-confidence. If there is something work-related that you are not confident about, then work the system and practice it. Practice talking to clients and applicants or practice handling difficult situations.

- **Stop the Negative Self-Talk:** We are all guilty of negative self-talk. It is that voice inside our head that immediately tells us what we just said was stupid. Or that voice that makes us overly aware of how we might have made a mistake. If you have to, stand in front of the mirror at home, in the car, in the elevator, or in the bathroom every day and encourage yourself. By believing in yourself and reminding yourself of what makes you feel confident, whether it is a list of what you are proud of or a mantra, you can stay confident professionally.

- Boost Your Confidence by Boosting Their Confidence First: We all make mistakes and we all have self-doubt. While you should not point out your clients' weaknesses, make a point to compliment their strengths. Build their self-confidence as well. This can be as simple as complimenting your client's property upkeep or an applicant's handshake. By building others up, you will not only build a better relationship with your clients, but you will also be able to get out of your negative self-talk and focus on the present positive attributes.

- **Make Every Review a Positive One:** With confidence, you can choose how to interpret feedback. While you should not get carried away and completely ignore feedback from someone you trust, if you get negative and malicious feedback from an online review or an applicant, you have the power to decide if it is going to affect your self-confidence. Use negative feedback as constructive criticism, when it is valid, to grow as a professional and improve the way you interact with people. Just remind yourself that the most you can do is get a little better each week, each month, and each year.

- **Listen to Your Clients' Needs:** To earn the trust and confidence of your clients, you have to have a clear understanding of their needs. This involves more listening and less talking. Asking great questions is a noble life skill, and the better you get at it, the more it will serve you and those around you. Home buyers are specific and know exactly what they are looking for in a house. Their perfect home may not exist, but if you listen and prioritize their wants, you can locate a property that is suitable for their family.

- **Do Not Make Promises You Cannot Keep:** Some buyers and sellers interview multiple agents before choosing one to work with. Since there is competition, you will have to sell yourself and explain how you are better than other agents. Although you want to impress potential clients and gain their business, be careful about making promises you cannot keep. One of the fastest ways to lose the trust of your clients is not delivering on your promises. There are no guarantees in real estate. You cannot guarantee when or if a client's house will sell, and you cannot guarantee that a client will succeed in a bidding war. Confidence is good. Being overly confident can damage the relationship between you and clients. Make it abundantly clear that there are no guarantees and that every case is unique.

- **Stay a Step Ahead of Your Client:** Some clients are savvy and have done their homework. They are not real estate professionals, but they have a pretty solid idea of how the process works. For that matter, you need to stay a step ahead of these clients to prove that you are working hard on their behalf. If your clients are always a step ahead, they could feel you are not working for your commission. Strive to be a truly knowledable expert, not just someone who gets by. Leaders are often just a couple steps ahead of those who are being led. Always stay that one step ahead!

- **Do Not Lose Contact:** You do not have to be at your client's mercy, but you should stay in communication with them. If your client feels that you are constantly MIA or if they can never get in touch with you on urgent matters, they will assume you do not want to be bothered. This does not leave the best impression, and you could potentially miss out on referrals or repeat business. Good customer service will also give you personal satisfaction of a job well done.

- **Be Their Advisor:** Buyers and sellers will have questions about the real estate process, the mortgage process, local communities, etc. You can earn their trust and confidence by being their advisor. For this to work, you have to educate yourself on different aspects of the home-buying process. You should be knowledgeable about neighborhoods and local attractions and have basic knowledge about the mortgage process. The reality is, many times as a real estate agent you are also a counselor helping clients work through their fears during potentially one of the most stressful periods of their life.

Understanding the Value of the Property as an Agent

> *"Top real estate agents are confident real estate agents."*

As an agent, you need to not only understand the value of what you are selling, but also why. You build your credibility by caring about clients' short and long-term goals. Clients vary, and they come with different interests, tastes, and lifestyles. Here are a few thoughts to bear in mind:

- **Know What the Client Wants and Needs:** Determine the type of buyer who would purchase the home you have for sale. Is the home the kind the buyer needs? Does the home fit the parameters of their budget and desire? Is the client single? Are they planning to get married and raise a family in their new home? Do they have kids? How close or far are the schools? The list goes on and on, but the point remains the same: know your client and know what they want.

- **Are They Working with Another Agent:** We hear stories of buyers calling in a new agent simply because their current realtor has been unreachable for a few hours. This is not always the pushy client's fault. Regardless of whether they have signed anything, taking on a client who has committed to someone else can sometimes be a bad idea. However, it is "America the great," and competition is celebrated and rewarded. If a consumer has an agent they do not like, they want to be released from the buyer/broker contract, and you take them on as a client, can you live with that? Do what you can feel comfortable within your conscience.

- **Are They Financially Qualified:** This is not just about your bottom line. Asking clients about their financial circumstances is a great way to separate window shoppers from serious buyers. If you are on the buyer side, ask your prospects if they have been pre-approved for a loan. If you are on the seller side, find out how much equity they have in their home. Nevertheless, just because a prospective client is not pre-approved, does not mean you should kick them to the curb. If they seem serious, you can always point them to a lender you trust and who can help you close quickly when the time comes.

- **What Are Their Expectations:** This goes for everything: their budget, your schedule and availability, the state of the market, the inventory in the area, etc. Many clients will need a little education up front to calibrate their perspective with the facts of the present day real estate market environment. Realistic benchmarks will save you the trouble of showing them properties they cannot afford and will also give you ideas about what areas and homestyles to focus on.

- **Why Is Now the Right Time to Move:** This question can provide a lot of insight into your client. For one, some people begin looking for an agent long before they can actually sell, while others wait until the last minute. Asking about timing will let you know how many hours you can expect to work before you can close a sale.

- **What Have Their Past Experiences Been:** If your clients' previous real estate experience has been positive, you can expect more confidence in your process. If it has been mostly negative, you may have some hurdles to jump in order to earn that trust.

Why is My Listing Not Selling

Once you become an agent and start growing your clientele, you need to know the tips and tricks to ensure your listings sell. You will first need to find the USP, or unique selling proposition, for each home, each community, and each city in which you work. Then, there are four factors that affect the sale of a home: Price, Product, Promotion, and Personnel.

- **Price Analysis:** Is the home priced right?
- **Product Analysis:** What are the unique features of this home? What are its challenges?
- **Promotion Analysis:** Are you highlighting the uniqueness of your listing in all marketing forums?
- Personnel (YOU) Analysis – After performing all of the above analyses, have you provided your seller with all the necessary information to determine whether the home is maximizing its selling potential?

Becoming and succeeding as a real estate agent can truly be a fun, challenging, and rewarding long-term career. It can serve as a full-time or part-time job, or you can work as a referral only agent. Whether for your own primary residence or as an investment property, challenge yourself to become a real estate expert and to surround yourself with real estate and business eagles.

Want the rest?

This was one chapter. The full book is bite-sized on purpose — first home, becoming an agent, money, and the mind game.

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The Real Estate Journey — Dr. Brian P. Simon (Morgan James, 2019).