

Constructing Relationships

The holiday season is a great time to develop new business

By Bubba Mills

Inspirational writer Anthony J. D'Angelo once wrote, "Treasure your relationships, not your possessions."

Not all construction and development efforts in the housing industry happen on a build site nor are they all planned in a board room. For a slight twist on the theme, let's look at constructing and developing not deals or homes, but rather something that is just as important — constructing and developing relationships.

Let's face it, when all is said and done, the mortgage business is really all about people and relationships. Nothing, yes nothing, happens in this industry without people understanding each other, cooperating with each other and coming to agreement with each other.

Now is the time to discuss this topic because the holidays and the beginning of a new year are perfect times to consider your relationships — to construct new ones and develop current and past relationships.

The holidays are, of course, a time for gathering and socializing. And the turn of a new year is an obvious time for renewal and rejuvenation. So, stick around as we pour some concrete to construct a solid foundation for your business-development efforts moving forward into 2018.

Attend holiday parties

Networking is the single most important task to grow your business. Again, it's about people and about face-to-face flesh-pressing. So always make networking a priority and seek out opportunities to do it.

When you get those invitations to all of the holiday parties this year, RSVP with a resounding "Yes!" Most importantly, be strategic. Think

about who'll be attending and what you can offer them — as well as what they may be able to offer you, of course.

Identify key folks and set up a time to meet them outside of the holiday party. Challenge yourself: Set a goal of meeting a certain number of people at the party who might lead to future business.

Host a holiday party

Holding your own party allows you to be even more strategic. Why? Because you control the invite list. With just a little effort, you can have a business-winning "who's who" list on your own stomping ground.

Take time and give plenty of thought to those local professionals you want to network with, and go for it. Send out those invitations. Also, think about how you might be able to leverage your acquaintances — those people you know who can then make more effective introductions to others you want to meet. That's how you turn a cold call into a warm call.

But again, don't make the party all about business. People want to have a good time and not necessarily talk about work. So, instead, set up times to meet with new prospects in the near future after the party.

Reconnect with past clients

The end of the year is a perfect time to reconnect with past clients. Give them a call just to check in, to make sure their contact information hasn't changed, and to ask for referrals.

The key here is to have your thoughts in order before you call. Ask them how their year has gone, how their family is doing, what their plans are for 2018, etc. And be prepared to answer these same kinds of questions in return.

Craft a holiday greeting

What if you crafted a special holiday message that specifically targeted a group of professionals that could help you grow your business? Think about it.

The holidays are really the only time of the year when this doesn't look awkward. So, do it. Take a few minutes and jot down a list of the folks you can single out that could pay big dividends if you developed that relationship.

Make your holiday message stand out. Don't just send out another holiday greeting card that will get set in a pile. Perhaps add a specialty gift like a pen or calendar that will stand out from all the other holiday mail. Then follow up with phone calls in early 2018 to discuss how you can help them with their business.

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Conduct a mortgage workshop

This is the perfect time of the year to conduct your own workshop because, let's be honest, work tends to slow down a little around the holidays. People have a little extra time.

Your workshop doesn't have to be long. Just a couple of hours is long enough to talk about what's new and what's coming down the pipe in the industry in 2018.

Plus, this workshop gets you out in front of people. Again, remember, it's all about networking. Plus, as another big benefit, teaching a workshop positions you as the expert you are.



As you enter the final month of 2017, ask yourself how much effort have you put into building and developing your personal connections? Do you believe this would help your business? Do you think you'd enjoy your job more if you did put more effort into building your personal connections? You can even share your answers with a colleague or a friendly mortgage coach. ■
