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How to Use Intelligence and “Not” Time and Money to Get to Where You Want to Go in Real Estate.
How to Grow Status and Wealth in Real Estate by Out Listing the Competition.

Need-Payoff Presentation Selling by Al Lewis

Welcome.

I must begin by saying this:

"Most personal conflicts in life stem from the bruising of someone's self-esteem. Rejection by a prospect occurs largely because you did not manage their self-image properly."

I cannot emphasize enough the gravity of this statement.

The most important thing to all persons is the defense, maintenance and expansion of their self-image.

The defender of that self-image is pride. It is the greatest motivator you can use to nourish support for you and your service.

The information in this workbook will help you recognize what every person's basic needs are; what their related wants are; and, what the tact is for helping them gain them.

With that knowledge you can better serve and... Close!

Additionally, you will learn how to “Close the Seller” utilizing a process I call “Need-Payoff Presentation Selling.”

I hope you enjoy this complimentary workbook and find the closing worksheet at the back beneficial to your listing and sales career.

Best wishes!



The Future Belongs to Those Who Create It.

This topic, if you have already studied the listing development workbook, *Top Produce Listing by Al Lewis*, is a repeat.

Because the information given within it is intimately tied to successful need-payoff presentation selling, it is repeated in its entirety although a bit may be changed here and there.

It is not necessary, but recommended, you make a thorough study of the above mentioned lead development and client cultivation program before proceeding.

With that said, let's begin.

The Business Side of Need-Payoff Presentation Selling.

Many companies think they're doing their salespeople a favor by "tuning them up," by sending them to listing seminars, plying them with all sorts of prizes and plaques.

They pull, push, prod, and shove, do just about anything imaginable to motivate their salespeople.

The implication of all this is that having the right attitude and the right presentation earns listings. So by constantly refining and improving selling techniques it is believed more listings will be taken.

All this presents a picture of the salesperson as the center of attention.

One way or another “selling” is shown to be a matter of persuading, impressing, influencing, and of manipulating the prospective seller into saying, "Yes," but that's the wrong place to start when it comes to earning listings. Persuasive selling is good, but it is not the key to success.

Things could be very different if management realized the real break for salespeople isn't better training, a new bag of tricks, or more incentives.

These are nothing more than pressure cooker schemes for masking the total absence of conditions that are conducive to customer response.

The fact is, salespeople need the only gift that makes a difference: customers who will do business with them.

The solution?

It's focusing on the establishment of conditions that will create customers, on fostering an environment in which customers will want to do business with the agent personally.

Whether a company makes products or sells a service, its responsibility is to help its salespeople prepare the way to “selling” in such a way that customers have a predisposition to buy long before the salesperson arrives for the close.

Having done that, the salesperson can focus on putting the order together and not on "selling" the customer.

To create the kind of environment that will support sales, companies and their salespeople need to put into place a solid customer cultivation program that consists of three separate customer development stages: customer identification, customer cultivation, and customer response.

**1st.
Customer Identification**

Most companies and salespeople spend little time or effort building a "prospective customer" base.

From time to time they organize mailing lists of potential customers, but they do not maintain a regular program of culling from potential customers the real prospect: the "prospective" customer.

They simply do not know who their prospects are other than to say, "Everyone is a possible customer." That is nonsense and simply reflects a lack of understanding of who can benefit from their products or services.

One of the chief marketing tasks is to undertake programs that will result in the development of personal prospects. If new names are not being added to an agent's prospect list daily (or per some defined schedule), there is no customer identification program in place.

In real estate, a potential customer is any person that owns a home. A prospective customer is an owner that's volunteered their concession-deadline relative to selling (the date they must give-in or concede to making a decision to sell).

That knowledge is considered a lead to a listing and qualifies that prospect for cultivation into an actual "Client."

**2nd.
Customer Cultivation**

The goal of marketing is to create the right conditions for a sale (listing) to take place, to cultivate or develop the customer relationship.

Customer cultivation demands continuous planning and strenuous efforts in terms of consistent implementation. Yet, it is the heart of the sales process.

The goal of customer cultivation is to reinforce the agent's personal reliability, creativity, responsiveness, and ability to meet the customer's needs. If done enough ways over a period of time with any number of targeted prospects, the agent will develop a true customer base.

The entire sales atmosphere will change dramatically. Relationship-building, product-oriented selling will not be an issue, but merely need-payoff presentation selling:

"Conversations regarding the process by which the agent's product or service will be delivered."

This happens because the targeted prospects have already bought the agent and the agent's company, product or service for reasons of their own before arrival for the close.

**3rd.
Customer Response**

Customer identification and customer cultivation have but one goal: customer response.

If agents adopt the philosophy...
"We only want to do business with

those prospects that will do business with us."

...and work hard as well as creatively to build a sizable list of prospective customers targeted for cultivation into actual customers, then their efforts will create an atmosphere that motivates prospects to seek their advice, counsel and service.

When the time is appropriate, these prospects will "ask" their real estate agent to list their house.

The future in real estate really does belong to those who create it.

The methodology I teach for customer identification, customer cultivation, and for generating customer response is specifically outlined within the already mentioned listing workbook.

**The Personal Side of
Need-Payoff Presentation
Selling.**

People are wanting beings: they want more of everything.

They want more love, more money, more pleasure, more success, more life; just more and more.

A want is an inner urge which is strictly emotional in nature. It can be turned on instantly when the right motivator is present or when the right prompt occurs.

When a want is turned on, it must be justified logically to become a necessity or need and, therefore, a reason to buy.

Our customers and clients can do that for themselves.

Our role, appropriately, is nothing more than to recognize what every person's basic needs are; what the related wants are; and what the tact is for filling them.

Closing the Seller.

Now we can talk.

Closing that makes working in real estate enjoyable is a three step process. The three steps are...

Generate - Cultivate - Close

We must generate the lead (a prospective seller), cultivate the prospect into a client (a friend), and close; but now the truth:

I Don't Actually Believe In Closing!

Most agents with any time in the business have been taught by one trainer or another the value of what we might call "Mechanized" sales and closing procedures. Procedures designed to manipulate, persuade, tie-down and process buyers and sellers as though they were a commodity made of clay to be molded by a fast talking, fast thinking salesperson.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

Mechanized closing procedures may achieve short term goals on occasion, but in the long run they will lead to agent-failure by way of agent burn-out.

Any procedure we practice related to listing or selling that runs against the grain of our most natural selves will chip away at the foundation of our motivation to succeed until we just don't want to bother trying anymore: we lose interest and give-in to trying something else.

Having a feeling or sense of rightness about what we are doing day-to-day is paramount to our success on a continuing basis.

When you have generated a lead by knocking on a door, for example; and have qualified the seller's con-

cession deadline (the date they must give-in to listing in order to sell by an objective date); and have followed-up that lead with a personalized, handwritten marketing card every couple of weeks for, maybe, six months leading up to the target listing date; and have nurtured this client's self-esteem utilizing techniques discussed in the next section; then mechanized tie-down closing procedures that makes them say, "I know what you are doing, you're closing me!," won't be needed.

When a prospect feels they are being closed for the selfish purposes of the salesperson as opposed to being served for the fulfillment of their own self-interests, they will often build a defense against the close that leads to an "Advance" rather than a "Commitment."

You might say an insurmountable psychological wall goes up between you and your prospect. Lines are drawn in the sand; trenches are dug; the battle field is mined.

The harder you fight for your interests the thicker the smoke of battle grows. Commitment is rarely reached once this happens.

There is another approach to closing, however, that virtually always works. To succeed with it, though, you need to undergo a radical change of mind or attitude about what closing actually is.

Closing is not selling: the hard or persistent presentation of facts, features and benefits of doing business with you or your company until the client gives-in to listing.

Completed listings, instead, are "Gained" by acting on implied consent. There is no selling involved.

Need-payoff presentation selling is the process by which you and your prospect arrive at "Implied Consent" together.

Once gained, you have closed!

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Self-Esteem

American born psychologist, Abraham Maslow, is the founder of the humanistic school of psychology that emerged in the 1950's and 1960's.

Before Maslow, the psychological world was awash in behaviorism and Freud's psychoanalysis. Maslow changed this focus on broken brains by popularizing psychological humanism.

Famous people like Abraham Lincoln were subjects of study instead of people with serious psychological problems. One of Maslow's most important contributions to psychology was his theory of human needs. This theory explained that human needs were hierarchical in nature.

Maslow saw human beings' needs arranged like a ladder. He decided that almost everyone wants to be happy and loving, but they have particular needs that must be met before they can act in ways that bring happiness and love.

The animal or physical needs, said Maslow, are placed at the bottom of the hierarchy and the human needs at the top. The hierarchic theory can be seen as a pyramid with the base occupied by people who are not focused on intrinsic values, but on the extrinsic value of just staying alive. A person, for example, who is starving dreams about food, thinks about food and nothing else. Each level of the pyramid is somewhat

dependent on the previous level for most people.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs includes seven categories organized within five basic levels ordered as follows:

Physiological Needs

Biological needs such as oxygen, food, water, warmth/coolness, protection from storms and so forth. These needs are the strongest because if deprived, the person could or would die.

Safety Needs

Felt by adults during emergencies, periods of disorganization in the social structure (such as widespread rioting). Felt more frequently by children who often display signs of insecurity and their need to be safe.

Love, Affection and Belongingness Needs

The needs to escape loneliness and alienation and to give and receive love and affection. The need to feel a sense of belonging.

Esteem Needs

Need for a stable, firmly based, high level of self-respect, and respect from others in order to feel satisfied, self-confident and valuable. If these needs are not met, the person feels inferior, weak, helpless and worthless.

Self-Actualization Needs

Maslow describes self-actualization as a person's need to be and do that which the person was born to do. It is their "calling." A musician must make music, an artist must paint, a poet must write. If these needs are not met, the person feels restless, on edge, tense, and lacking something. Unfulfilled lower needs may also produce a restless feeling, but here it

is much easier to find the cause. If a person is hungry, unsafe, not loved or accepted, or lacking self-esteem the cause is apparent. It is not always clear what a person wants when there is a need for self-actualization because the lower needs have been met.

The importance of Maslow's work relative to our purpose here cannot be overstated.

Nowhere within the hierarchy of human needs is the name or size of your company mentioned; nowhere within the hierarchy is your length of time in the business mentioned, or the number of homes you sold last year, or your status within the hierarchy of your company, top producer or not; nowhere within the hierarchy are your clothes or car or portfolio mentioned; nowhere within it is the kind of advertising you use to sell homes mentioned; and nowhere within it are the number of signs you have in yards mentioned.

The things we generally find meaningful to ourselves have no meaning to our clients. Yet we exhaust ourselves "Selling" these things as though they mean something and are reasons in and of themselves for doing business with us.

If Maslow's work is a benchmark for measuring or analyzing the motives behind a person's actions, then our work is clear. It is our job to promote the "*Personal Growth*" of our prospects and clients. By doing so, we will gain their trust, acceptance, and the privilege of doing business with them irrespective of our programs and expertise.

Experienced Brokers and Agents often wonder at the apparent ease with which newcomers to the business often succeed. Some, they are

sure, couldn't find the signature line on the listing agreement to list their own home.

But, perhaps, just perhaps the explanation for their success is this: new Agents, because they are new, are forced to rely on relationship-building skills they may naturally possess (*those outlined by Maslow*) as opposed to technical skills they have not yet mastered when working with prospects, and because of that find success where others fail.

Then, sometimes, over the years they learn the technical skills of the real estate business and their production goes down. That actually happens.

On the following page you will find a simple chart or guideline for recognizing and mastering the personal side of need-payoff presentation selling.

Looking at the chart, you can plainly see the hierarchy of personal needs from the lowest (Survival) to the highest (Achievement) as outlined by Maslow.

Additionally, within each section is the "Want" underlying each need and the "Tact" you can use for helping your prospects and clients reach them.

I want to urge you not to overthink these principles, but to merely be aware of them. While conversing with prospects and clients it is your job as a salesperson to "Payoff on Their Needs," thus the phrase need-payoff presentation selling.

This must, however, be done invisibly, with tact and demeanor. If you are obvious they would recognize you as an ambitious "Courtier." Honesty and sincerity will be the keys to your success.

Maslow's

The Need The Want The Tact	Achievement. I want to be great. Stroke self-image with ADMIRATION.
The Need The Want The Tact	Ego Enhancement. I want to be important. Stroke self-image with COMPLIMENT.
The Need The Want The Tact	Social Acceptance. I want to be loved. Stroke self-image with FRIENDSHIP.
The Need The Want The Tact	Security. I want to be secure. Appeal to desire for EASY GAIN.
The Need The Want The Tact	Survival. I want to be alive. Appeal to FEAR OF LOSS.

Hierarchy of Needs

If you are aware, for example, that the lowest need, the need to survive is inherent among all persons, and that the tact for triggering the want behind the need is to “Appeal to Fear of Loss,” then you might suggest during a conversation with a prospective seller that it is a good time to sell because interest rates will soon be going up making it more difficult to get top dollar for their home.

“Fear of Loss” is interpreted by the subconscious mind as a threat to survival and a reason to take action. Ever been to an auto dealer to find

they only have “One” car left at the price or with the features you indicated you wanted?

The fear-of-loss tact seems to be the most commonly used tact in consumer sales, but it is the tact I recommend you use least. Among the relationship-building tools at our disposal it is the lowest and of least consequence.

Higher up then on the hierarchy of needs you can see that we want to payoff on “Security.” The tact, as outlined, for triggering the want

behind the need is to “Appeal to a desire for Easy Gain.”

During a listing interview, for example, that seems to be moving toward an advance, you might say something like this: “We could do the paperwork now to save time and the necessity of having another meeting, but date it for a week or two from now. Then, during that time, should you change your mind about selling we’ll just tear up the contract and go on from there. But should you decide to continue, I’ll already be prepared with flyers, signs and ads.”

The idea behind making your pros-

pects and clients feel secure is to make everything easy.

Higher up again on the hierarchy of needs is "Social Acceptance." Everybody wants to be loved. Your tact for triggering that want and for filling that need is the most enjoyable of all. You merely "Stroke their self-image with Friendship." Among the three steps to successful listing, Generate-Cultivate-Close, cultivate is a word that defines the friendship-building process. Friendships are cultivated like flowers in a garden. They must be watered, fertilized and nurtured. If ignored, they fade away.

When doing business with people that want to do business with you, implied consent for your service is reached without selling at all.

Moving up the hierarchy of needs once more we come to "Ego Enhancement." Most people want to feel important, to feel that they count for something and are worthy. As before, there is a tact for triggering the want behind the need. That tact is the "Stroking of their self image with Compliments."

Compliments are interpreted by the subconscious mind as accomplishments; for you cannot, generally, get a compliment about something you have not accomplished or for which you are not well distinguished; thus, a compliment is proof of your importance.

When visiting with prospects and clients... Compliment, Compliment, Compliment!

Compliment them on their family, their home, their interior design, their yard, their jobs, their hobbies, their education, the education of their kids, etc., etc.

Lastly we come to the highest need of all as indicated by Maslow: the need for "Achievement."

The want behind the need for achievement is the want to be great. Though not everybody wants this.

Maslow taught that a very small group of people actually reach a level synonymous with the intended meaning of achievement here: self-actualization, where all needs are met. He described self-actualization as a person finding their "calling."

Many people confuse self-actualization with fame or fortune, but often this is not the case. While wealthy or celebrated people might reach self-actualization, many psychologists believe that most people who have reached the highest level of happiness are unknown beyond their circle of family and friends.

The tact for triggering the want behind the need for self-actualization (achievement) is the "Stroking of the self-image with Admiration."

When you delicately go beyond the compliment to statements of admiration, your prospects and clients will "Feel" great in your presence. By great I mean warm all over: important, self-actualized.

That, ladies and gentlemen, is the personal side of need-payoff presentation selling. Tactfully done, there is nothing you cannot accomplish in sales with these skills.

Respectful teaching, said Maslow, promotes personal growth. Often, throughout my career, I have realized my highest calling as a real estate agent and salesperson is that of teacher. Even though I am product/sales oriented -- I do have to make a living -- I have realized that

success in that regard comes naturally because of the teaching I share with my prospects and clients; importantly, teaching that often has nothing to do with real estate.

I am just about done quoting Maslow, but among his work are these directives:

We should teach people to be authentic; to be aware of their inner selves and to hear their inner feeling voices.

We should teach people to transcend their own cultural conditioning, and become world citizens.

We should help people discover their vocation in life, their calling, fate or destiny. This is especially focused upon finding the right career and the right mate.

We should teach people that life is precious, that there is joy to be experienced in life, and if people are open to seeing the good and joyous in all kinds of situations, it makes life worth living.

We must accept the person and help him or her learn their inner nature. From real knowledge of aptitudes and limitations we can know what to build upon, what potentials are really there.

We must see that the person's basic needs are satisfied. That includes safety, belongingness and esteem needs.

We should refreshen consciousness, teaching the person to appreciate beauty and the other good things in nature and in living.

We should teach people that controls are good, and complete abandon is bad. It takes control to improve the quality of life in all areas.

We should teach people to transcend the trifling problems and grapple with the serious problems in life. These include the problems of injustice, of pain, suffering and death.

We must teach people to be good choosers. They must be given practice making choices.

When knocking on doors for leads to listings, I may talk real estate, but underlying my seemingly casual conversation, these are things I try to do. These are the things that make talking interesting and meaningful for me and the prospect at hand.

I hope you'll do the same.

The Closing Process.

On the last page of this workbook you'll find an outline of the "Need-Payoff Presentation Selling" closing process.

Five underlined titles represent the core elements:

Preliminaries

Need/Want Questions

Payoff Statements by Agent

Review CMA

Close When Comfortable with Recommendation on Advance or Commitment

It is during the preliminaries that you payoff on the seller's personal needs by establishing or confirming a friendship, by enhancing their self-image with compliments and statements of admiration, but there is much more behind-the-scenes work to preliminaries.

The preliminaries to a listing appointment actually begin with things you must do before you even leave your house or office.

Irrespective of a "friendship" that may have developed between you and a prospective seller, you can be assured they want to do business with a professional: one that dresses properly and appears to be well

organized. They will want to do business with a person that drives a clean car, has an ordered portfolio, a pen and notepad as well as ordered documents and forms.

Once you have seen to these things, there are others to be aware of. It is important that you show up on time for a listing appointment: I'd say about three-to-five minutes early.

When you first arrive, get out of your car quickly like you are ready to do business. I personally get very perturbed when a person drives up to my house to meet me for an appointment and then sits in the car for five minutes talking on their phone or ruffling through papers in an apparent effort to organize for our meeting. These things make it clear to me that "I" nor my business are important priorities for this person, but merely events in their schedule of activities for the day.

Always assume the seller is watching whether you can see them or not. When you arrive, jump out of your car, put your coat on if appropriate, grab your brief and walk with authority up to the door. These minor things make a big impression.

After knocking, when the seller opens the door greet them with a smile and say, Hi.

We are not yet done with preliminaries, though. After entering, even if you have seen the house before, ask if there is a place you can set your portfolio because you would like to tour the house to get familiar with every room, every nook and cranny, every feature before sitting down to talk.

Every man's home is his castle and it's during this tour that you will be

able to stroke their self-image with relationship-building conversation that leads to a friendship. During the tour you can also find ample opportunity to stroke their self-image with compliments and admiration about this or that over and over again. Pour it on. But as I said before, aim at invisibility. Be as sincere as possible.

Enter every room, no matter how small. Then stand still and quietly for a moment as you look around for things to admire. Tour the garage, the back yard, side yards, pool, pool house, airstrip, etc. Tour everything.

After your tour is complete, you might say, "Thank you for the tour. If you're about ready, why don't we make our way back to the living room or maybe the dining room where we can sit comfortably and talk a little business?"

Though your tour is complete, your preliminaries have not quite yet reached their end. It's important for you to develop a personal and professional rapport with your prospective client.

On the personal level this is done a number of ways, many of which you have already done by paying attention to detail, touring their home and by stroking their self-image with compliments and admiration. After sitting, though, you need to become a guest. This is done by accepting water, or coffee, or tea, or beer, or wine, or something hard on ice if that's what this prospective client is drinking.

Coffee drinkers want coffee drinking friends. The same goes for tea or beer or wine, etc. Should this prospective client offer you something, take it.

You don't necessarily have to drink it, though. If you are not a drinker, you might say that you don't think you can drink much right now because you are working, but you would enjoy a little. Or if you don't drink at all, perhaps, because of your religious beliefs, politely refuse but add that you would enjoy a cold glass of water or a cup of hot coffee instead.

I believe it is important to become a guest by accepting or asking for a beverage of some kind prior to talking business. Should they have to prepare it for you, all the better.

Should they ask you to break bread with them, eat! Don't let professional courtesy hinder the chances of your developing a friendship with your prospective clients. Be an honored guest: a friend, first, a professional, second.

Then, after receiving at least a beverage and talking a bit about this or that in the news, you can ever so gently move from personal preliminaries to professional preliminaries as indicated by the subheadings under the main "Preliminaries" title on the chart at the back of this workbook.

You might ask them to clarify the situation they are in. To reiterate why they are selling, where they intend to move, etc.

You might ask them what their experiences are relative to buying and selling real estate. You can ask them how many homes they have bought or sold before and when these experiences occurred.

Persons experienced at buying and selling real estate want you to know how smart they are. Inexperienced persons want you to know how

naive they are as well. How else could you serve them according to their needs?

Once you are aware of their situation and of their experience you can posit a few problem/success question to discover whether they have experienced problems buying or selling real estate or have experienced successes.

At this point I'd like to point out that this process must be carried out as though it were entirely extemporaneous; as though two friends were merely talking real estate. This is the key to "Invisible" selling.

Then, with each problem or success experience proffered, you might extrapolate the implication of the experience and derive an implied "Need" of this prospective client.

For example...

Let's say your prospective client says they once sold a house with an agent that never called after the house was sold, never let them know what was happening. They felt like they were always in the dark and had to do everything during the escrow period themselves to ensure a closing right up until the time the escrow closed.

You might say, then, that the lack of communication is a problem, and that you sympathize entirely with the situation. When agents don't stay in contact with their clients regularly it's usually because they aren't on top of things properly and that buyers or sellers really do have to pick up the ball themselves to ensure the success of their transactions.

Above are examples of a seller's "Problem Statement" and an Agent's "Implication Statement" outlined under "Preliminaries."

A unique, particular need of this prospective client has thereby been revealed. It is very important for you to realize that this may be the "ONLY" need this client has relative to their preconceived notions about the valuable elements of your service.

In their minds, perhaps, if you will communicate well with them, that is reason enough to list with you.

Because you are a professional, they assume you will do whatever other things are important to market their home automatically.

And they "Are" right, aren't they?

The problem has thus been stated and the implication clarified, but you have yet to fill the need implied by the whole scenario.

So we move, now, to the next major headline, "Need/Want Questions," and its single subhead, "Explicit Need/Want Statements by Client" shown on the closing outline.

Immediately after you have made an implication statement like the one shown, follow it with a need/want question.

For example:

You might ask, "What you want from an agent, then, is good communication; maybe, just to talk every few days or every week so that you know exactly what is going on during the time of sale and escrow after a sale has occurred? Right?"

If your prospective client says, "Yes." That is all the "Explicit Need/Want Statement" you need from your prospective client to payoff.

The next headline in our outline reads "Payoff Statements by Agent." A payoff statement can go some-

thing like this...

“You can rest assured, Mr. and Mrs. Seller, that I will call on you regularly just as I have to date, except now every week to keep you updated on the success of my marketing activities, and after a sale occurs, that I will call on you regularly to keep you abreast of every important detail required of the sale and escrow so that you will always know what’s going on. I will do the work required of the sale, that’s my job, not yours.

“In fact... reaching for something within your listing portfolio... during the sale effort I will leave you this weekly “Open House” report.

“I will keep you informed every week of the number of prospective buyers that have visited your property from the day the sign goes up in your yard to the date of sale as well as any comments made by those that didn’t buy and of our objective per the ‘49 to 1 Rule.’

“Let me explain...”

Your payoff statement can be as brief or elaborate as you are inclined or prepared. The essential element of this step is that you “PAYOFF” on your prospective client’s need.

Then, after you have payed-off, get your prospective client’s approval by asking something like this...

“Okay?”

If they say, “Yes,” you’re in.

Payoff statements, generally, are demonstrated with visual elements pulled from your Seller Services Portfolio.

I want to point out that there are limits to what a seller will generally bring up as problems or successes. There are only so many topics relevant to our business that they could think of. So don’t worry too much

about where they might go with this conversation, but be prepared.

If you want to become proficient at “Closing the Seller” your main task is to be prepared for paying-off on their implied needs whether they are implied from problems, successes, or from preconceived notions about your obligations as a listing agent.

It is important to realize that you must payoff on something. If after asking situation or problem/success questions your prospective client doesn’t come up with anything you can payoff on, you must cull from the seller a preconceived notion or two about the sales and marketing process or about an agent’s responsibilities that you can payoff on before proceeding with the close.

If the given example, now, was reversed; if the seller said, for example, “The best thing about selling they ever experienced was with the last agent that handled the sale of their home up north; that he was the best communicator they ever met; that they were never in the dark for a moment about what was going on with the sale of their home or during the escrow period.” Then it would have been your job to question, implicate and payoff, basically, the same way: affirmatively.

You would imply the benefit of good communication, affirmatively question their need/want of it, and payoff.

It is important to note that the pertinent features and advantages of your overall sales and marketing program are mostly discussed or reviewed presentation-style solely for the purpose of culling from a prospective client things of interest they will likely want to hear or

know more about. You can elicit a prompt by encouraging them to let you know if something they see or something you are sharing grabs them or catches their eye. Should they stop you at something, start – and maybe finish – there.

They, your prospective clients, are only interested in what “They” are interested in. Any other such verbosity is “Selling” and the surest road to an advance. It is more important to relate by paying-off on specific needs than it is to prove what a great program you have or what a knowledgeable “Professional” you are.

It is very rare that a prospective client will be interested in your paying-off on more than one or two incidences or that you could hold their attention for more.

I am a firm believer in the Golden Arches: the front door. If a prospective client has allowed you through that portal to talk about selling now, I am confident you merely need to payoff on one or two needs to consummate the sale (the listing).

When interviews are just that, interviews, and the seller asks you a relentless series of tough sales and marketing questions, one after the other, grinds you, pounds you, and you are ineffable, you answer them all correctly with style and grace until you get to question number sixteen upon which you fumble a bit and the seller says, “Aha,” you can bet that an opportunity “for you” to list this property never really existed for one reason or another. No one can answer every question to an interviewer’s satisfaction.

Relentless questioning is an indication that an interviewer is trying to

disqualify you, not qualify you for the job. This type of seller is not interested in need-payoff, but in disqualifying the presenter.

When in an “interview” I quickly ask what’s this about?, pack up and go. I’d rather do business with people that want to do business with me on a need-payoff basis.

Reviewing every possible payoff situation that can arise between you and a seller is not the topic of this workbook, but closing the seller: the process for doing that.

Gaining payoff knowledge is your job, one idea, one lesson, one experience at a time.

After gaining “Client Approval” for your payoff, take the closing initiative.

Without hesitation, the moment your client agrees with your position (your payoff), turn the conversation from a discussion about sales and marketing to a review of the CMA: the Competitive Market Analysis.

Say something like this after a payoff affirmation:

“Thank you!

“I prepared in advance of this meeting a CMA: a Competitive Market Analysis. It is a worksheet on which I have ordered a list of properties that have recently sold in your neighborhood, as well as properties that are now for sale and, even, some that were on the market for a substantial time that did not sell.

“It will help you and I effectively position your house for a sale at the top of the market.”

With that said, pull the CMA from your portfolio, review the elements of price positioning outlined on it

and come to agreement with the seller regarding price.

Don’t argue too much if they want to push the market a bit. If the market is good I am a firm believer that you should always push the price about 3% over recent sales, 5% max. If the seller wants to go beyond that, explain the drawbacks of overpricing and the time-delay they might experience waiting for the market to catch up with them.

Most sellers, though, do price their property reasonably, but it is your job to list the property, whether you agree completely with the price they want or not. A ninety or 180-day time period on the listing will provide ample opportunity for a price adjustment if needed.

Once agreement is reached on price, prepare and review a Seller’s Proceeds worksheet with your prospective client. Once done and it is clear the proposed net is acceptable to the seller... Close!

Oh my gosh, Close!, the scary moment has arrive.

Well, it’s not scary at all if you are predisposed, as I, to acting on implied consent.

If this prospective client was “Generated” and “Cultivated” by you; if you “Managed Their Self-Image” properly; if you were careful to conduct your “Preliminaries” appropriately; if you “Paid-Off” on their implied needs; if you “Demonstrated” your capabilities coolly; if you helped them “Effectively Price” their home at the top of the market; and if you professionally assured them of an expected net proceeds, then you are in a position to recommend, when comfortable, an advance or commitment.

The last headline of our closing worksheet reads:

Close When Comfortable
with Recommendation on Advance
or Commitment

Recommending an advance or commitment is not closing at all. It, again, is need-payoff.

In one instance, you might say something like this...

“Mr. and Mrs. Seller:

“It is my feeling, based on our conversation today, that you are not quite ready to put your home up for sale; to put a sign in the yard; to have me put it on the multiple listing service for the sale efforts of other local agents, etc.; that you need, maybe, another couple of weeks or longer to get there.

“Am I right or am I wrong, do you want to take action now?”

If they respond affirmatively about an advance, continue...

“Okay, what I would like to do is to stay in touch with you just like I have to date, and to work with you then, when the right time arrives.

In another instance, you might say something like this...

“Mr. and Mrs. Seller:

“It is my feeling, based on our conversation today, that you are ready to put your home up for sale; to put a sign in the yard; to have me put it on the multiple listing service for the sale efforts of other local agents; to plan our first open house, etc.; that you are ready to take action now.

“Am I right or am I wrong, do you need a little more time?”

These statements, essentially, put the responsibility for the decision to take action or to wait a bit in the seller’s hands and, in either case,

allows you to respond appropriately relative to their implied consent: to recommend an advance or to recommend a commitment.

Both are good. In either case, if you have “Generated” and “Cultivated” properly, the listing will be yours when the time is right. Your prospective client will become a client.

There is an old saying in sales:

“You cannot lead a person to a decision unless you have already made it for them.”

There is some value to that precept, except when taken to the extreme: when an agent believes the decision to sell, to close, is theirs to make.

That belief, if underlying an agent’s actions, will lead to conflict, struggle and heartache. They will find success here and there, but in the long run they’ll butt up against so many heads that they will tire of the business (of listing) and quit.

There should be no stress experienced listing real estate at all. The entire process from lead generation, to client cultivation, to closing the seller by acting on implied consent can be a stress-free pleasure for all, agent and sellers alike.

Need-Payoff Presentation Selling is the process by which that pleasure is experienced.

Best Wishes.



Al Lewis
Broker/Mentor
Marketing Professional
Since 1975

Professional Marketing
by Means of Our Standalone
Advertising Agency.

Real Estate Professionals World
Enterprise Marketing

Professional Sales by
Means of Our Top of The Mark
Real Estate Company.

Real Estate Professionals
Allstate Marketing

Career Opportunities.

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Maslow's

The Need
The Want
The Tact

Achievement.
I want to be great.
Stroke self-image with ADMIRATION.

The Need
The Want
The Tact

Ego Enhancement.
I want to be important.
Stroke self-image with COMPLIMENT.

The Need
The Want
The Tact

Social Acceptance.
I want to be loved.
Stroke self-image with FRIENDSHIP.

The Need
The Want
The Tact

Security.
I want to be secure.
Appeal to desire for EASY GAIN.

The Need
The Want
The Tact

Survival.
I want to be alive.
Appeal to FEAR OF LOSS.

Hierarchy of Needs

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The Closing Process

Preliminaries

-

Walk the House
Offer Friendship / Admire Accomplishments
Suggest Comfortable Meeting Place

-

Ask Situation/Experience Questions
Ask Problem/Success Questions

-

Suggest Implications
Implication Statements Suggest Implied Needs Derived from Answers
(Statements Made by Seller to Above Questions)

-

Ask Need/Want Questions

-

Seek Confirmation by Seller

-

Payoff

-

Demonstrate "Payoff" Specific to Need/Wants
with Pertinent Sales and Marketing Activities Presentation
Sales and Marketing Activities of the Seller Services Portfolio

-

Get Seller Approval

-

Review CMA

-

Establish Agreeable Selling Price
Review Seller's Costs and Seller's Net

-

Get Seller Approval

-

**Close When Comfortable
with Recommendation on Advance or
Commitment**

Closing is Acting on Implied Consent

Need-Payoff Presentation Selling

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