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3 must-have traits for converting real estate leads

Catering to the 'Google generation'

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You can have all the greatest technology and lead generation systems in the world, but they won't make one bit of difference if you are unable to convert your online leads once you get face to face.

While older agents are accustomed to doing business face to face, it can be a real challenge for the Google generation (those born after 1993), a demographic that prefers to do everything via text or on social media. They may search for a house online, research you on Google, but ultimately they will visit the house and often negotiate with you in person.

The Google generation demands transparency and authenticity. They want to know as much as possible about you and the property they buy. The two most important requirements they seek, however, are trust and competence.

Establishing trust is a process. Here are some key requirements.

1. Build connection

Personal connection is the foundation upon which both collaboration and a great customer experience is built. To create a strong connection, you must be genuinely curious and caring about the clients with whom you work.

For example, do you inquire about what recreational activities your clients enjoy? Do you know what they love about where they live, including some of their favorite restaurants or hangouts? If you are working with a seller, do you inquire about what they have enjoyed about living in their property as well as what is great about the neighborhood? Do your best to learn what matters to them and what gives their lives meaning.

2. Communicate the way your clients want to communicate

The Google generation normally prefers text messaging and will almost never pick up the phone to make a call. Perhaps the most important question that you can ask is: "How would you like me to communicate with you?" It's your role as an agent to adjust to them, not vice versa.

A second and equally important question is: "How often would you like me to hear from me?" People today are busy. The Google generation expects you to do your job -- most don't need constant contact. Again, this varies from person to person, so find out what is wanted and needed by your clients.

3. What do you have in common?

The moment you say, "I've done that" or "I have eaten there," your shared experience or commonality forms the basis for building connection. People prefer to work with others who share similarities. You can observe this any time you have a party where new people meet. People will group themselves with those who share similar interests. The cooks and the sports enthusiasts always seem to find each other.

To make yourself more attractive to more people, stay up to date with movies, current events and sports. Know where to find the best chili or the most outlandish chocolate dessert in town as well as the best-kept secret about where to shop.

When you connect based upon commonality, you can literally see the other person's face light up as their energy also increases. Most people are eager to share their passion. At that point, all you have to do is ask "how" and "what" questions and be a good listener. Listening strengthens the connection.

4. Walk the talk

Trust occurs when you walk your talk and keep your commitments. If you fail to do so, the connection lessens and trust disappears. When trust is strong, your clients are loyal, they recommend you to their friends, and your business grows.

In terms of your professional competence, here are four commonalities that most top-producing agents share.

1. Inventory mastery

A common trait virtually all top producers share is excellent product knowledge. Clients want to know that you can accurately price their property, aggressively market it and successfully close the transaction once the property is under contract. For the areas where you work, you should be able to name the best-priced listings, how much it costs to purchase a typical three- or four-bedroom home, as well as what types of properties are available in various price ranges. If you don't know the inventory well enough to do this right now, start spending part of each day mastering this critical knowledge.

2. Know your numbers

The Google generation constantly seeks data. Key statistics they want to know include the average days on market in your area. How many months of inventory are on the market? How do these numbers affect our ability to buy or sell a home? Having a mastery of market statistics is one of the best ways to enhance your professional credibility as well as your personal sense of confidence.

3. What you say and how you say it

Watch your rate of speech. If you talk fast, slow down and speak clearly. Fast speech can make you appear like the stereotypical fast-talking salesperson. Avoid using slang, foul language or chewing gum while at work. Avoid criticizing anyone, especially your competitors. Religion and politics are also taboo. Finally, if you have a heavy accent or if you want to improve how you speak, consider taking a diction class or joining a group such as Toastmasters.

4. Choose quality

Presenting a high-quality image along with high-quality supporting business materials enhances the probability you will convert your leads into signed business. When you don't value yourself, you increase the probability clients will work with someone else.

There's an old adage that says, "You get what you give." When you give connection, you get connection. Connection ultimately forms the basis for all great business and personal relationships. Connection, trust and competence are what transforms you from one of those "pesky Realtors" into "our Realtor."

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