

Blueprint for Success



Real Estate Champions' mission is to teach and inspire people to use their God given talents to achieve excellence in life.

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The reason for this e-book is to help establish an effective blueprint for success. It is really a blueprint that we can follow to achieve the success that we want in life, a step-by-step, principle-driven process for us to have the success that we've always dreamed. The reason I came up with this concept of the Blueprint for Success really wasn't to utilize it with clients at first, it was to utilize with my 2 ½ year old son, Wesley. I realized I had to give him some specific steps, or a blueprint, to follow later on in life. I wanted to lay those steps out in an organized, systematic fashion so he could reach peak performance and be as successful as he could possibly be in his lifetime. I wanted him to achieve his goals and dreams in life.

One area I took a look at is the principles that effectively guided my life. I asked myself:

- **What has caused me to be where I am today?**
- **What areas do I need to improve on?**
- **What things do I need to change to increase the speed I travel to achieve my goals faster?**

I looked at the principles that had been laid out and I'd learned over time to be able to be successful in different fields of endeavor. These principles are the things I rely on when times get tough or challenging, or when I'm advancing my cause or position, growing my company, growing my business, growing my life. All these principles, and I'm going to outline a handful of them, are designed to be able to use in your business, in your life and for achievement of your goals.

The first is: **My attitude determines my altitude.** Now, that isn't a new concept, my attitude determines my altitude, but understand that it's truth. Your attitude is one of the top two factors of your success. Some people would put it as the #1 determining factor to your success and influence in life. It's true that you're AQ, or attitude quotient, is far more important than your IQ. Our AQ can make us or break us. It is rarely the problem or challenge we are facing, rather it's how we react to that challenge. Does it fire us up or fire us off. Ralph Waldo Emerson said this, "What lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us." Attitude is the critical ingredient to success. Attitude is what lies within you and me. Our mental strength, our mental approach, our mental outlook, our attitudinal outlook, creates the difference in the results we achieve. We have to change the way we think to reach the peak performance level in life. We have to embrace the change with thinking differently and thinking strategically about opportunities all the time as opposed to thinking negatively. I watch agents over and over think negatively, and think there is always a problem around the corner rather than an opportunity. I truly believe it's not what happens to me but what happens in me that makes all the difference in my world.

W. Mitchell, who's a world famous speaker, had a number of things that happened to him. The biggest change is what happened in him. He has a great book titled, "It's Not What Happens to Me, It's What Happens In Me That Makes a Difference", and in that book he outlines the challenges that he has been faced with and is currently being faced with in his life. W. Mitchell was a brilliant businessman in a number of different

ventures. He started the Earth Stove Company that made millions and millions of dollars by selling the popular wood stoves in the 70's. The Earth Stove Company was the original inventor of the wood stove. What has happened in his life since then has been dramatic. He was taking a little vacation and riding his Harley down the road, hit a piece of metal, which caused a spark, and his motorcycle caught fire. The fire spread to his gas tank. He literally was driving down the road with this inferno between his legs, burning his whole body. Obviously, he had to go through a massive surgical reconstruction procedure, recovery procedure, and immense retraining of his life to be able to exist. That certainly would be a big enough challenge for anyone, but his history continues. He came back from that accident and became the mayor of Crested Butte, CO and became a very famous person in the Colorado region. Then, he was flying his personal plane, and the engine shut down. The engine conked out while he was at a high altitude, forcing him to come down and try to find a landing spot in a forested area. He landed the plane, but at the time that he landed the front landing gear broke and the plane's nose drove into the ground, thrusting the engine and the console back into his legs and he became paralyzed from the waist down. What a series of mishaps to a person. A guy that is paralyzed and a guy that is burned, now has the opportunity to come back from those challenges and has transformed himself into one of the greatest motivational speakers on the face of the planet. I truly believe that bad things can happen to good people. Be responsible for what you can control and don't worry about what you can't control. Bad things are going to happen to you and to me.

I'll give you one last illustration on that. My father was a dentist for many years, and very successful. My parents were blessed with three children, me being the middle challenging son, which explains a lot about me. When I was three years old, right after my younger brother was born, my mother was diagnosed with MS. By the time I was seven she had completed her journey in walking. She hasn't walked for over thirty-five years. What my parents did with this extreme challenge of MS is incredible. Because of this disease, they forged an invincible team. They learned to overcome everything by working together. There were physical challenges because of the progression of the disease. Each phase presenting its "new rules" and issues to respond to. It tested their resolve for their relationship and their love for each other.

I have so much respect for my father to stay at the head of the family for almost 49 years. It would have been much easier for him to bail out and just write checks from a distance. He hung in there every step of the way until the end when my mom passed away in January of 2004. As a child I really didn't think about my mother being in a wheelchair. It's because of the way my parents reacted to her physical ailment. We did everything that normal families would do. The limitations that this situation of MS brought them was not going to beat them, that was very clear all those years.

- **What is the obstacle you are facing right now that seems enormous?**
- **Is your attitude or reaction toward it making it easier or harder to conquer?**
- **What do you need to change to leap beyond it?**

It is clear in this life that bad things are going to happen to good people. The only question is how will we react to them and will we turn them into a positive environment. The attitude or reaction is all we control and what we can't control won't dictate the results that we achieve.

I'm blessed because I get to travel a lot. Being away from family is certainly not the best part of traveling. There is a price to pay for travel, but there is also a reward. When you travel, you get to observe life. People are who they really are when the pressure of travel is applied. I observe a lot of situations that fascinate me. That fascination carries on throughout the airports. It's amazing to me what happens to people when, all of a sudden, it's announced that the flight is canceled, delayed, or some other problem is happening. People will go ballistic over the fact that a flight won't take off when there's a thunderstorm or some severe weather. The reason why I know that is one of the first speaking events I ever did many years ago was in Austin, TX. It was a tight connection to get home. I had been on the platform all day and was tired. I needed to get home and I wanted to be home with my family. I had to fly to Dallas and then back to Portland. My flight was delayed in Austin and I realized at that moment that I probably was not going to make it home that night. I turned into one of those people, one of those people that I'm now fascinated by. Finally, after about fifteen minutes, because I knew I couldn't control what was going on, I looked at myself and said, "Dirk, if you're going to do this for a living, you need to learn to react differently to the challenge of travel because this is going to happen to you all the time. If you're not prepared to take care of this mentally, you're going to be in deep trouble in the future. That was really my self-talk at the time. If I couldn't control my reaction, I was in the wrong business. Now, when those travel problems hit, I spend my time watching people and learning. I am not going to say that I like the delays, booking new flights, losing my assigned seats, and not getting home potentially. I can tell you that I don't like it at all. What I will tell you is I have no choice. The only choice I have is to control my attitude and set it on positive!"

We're going to be doing things, saying things, act a certain way and things are going to be happening that we don't want to have happen. We're going to have people that are going to be negative that we can't change. No matter what we do, we can't change them. The more successful we are, the more people around us are going to separate themselves from us. People tend to move away from successful people. I think it reminds them that they could be there themselves if only their attitude was better and they were willing to pay a little more of a price for success. For anyone to achieve success, they must pay the price. Success does not care who pays the price only that the price is paid. Most people wish for success, but few really have a burning desire for it. A wish is something that magically happens with no effort on our part. A desire for something means we are willing to work for it. We wish we were in better shape. Then the only question is: **What are we willing to invest in terms of time, effort, energy and desire to make it a reality?** Many are going to think that we did something unethical or we cheated or we did something wrong to achieve success. All we did was pay the price success wanted. There are many small-minded people that we are in contact with and are going to look at us even more negatively than they do now when

greater success is achieved. If there are ten things that they don't like about us now, when we become more successful there will be twelve things that they don't like about us, it's only going to grow. We have to take the right attitude with these people and leave them behind. We can't worry about their reaction to us.

I said to one of my clients that had an incredible production increase in her business, and what I mean by that is she moved from 10 million to 27 million dollars of production in one year. I said to her very clearly, "Sheila, you need to understand that if you're attached to the fact that these agents in your marketplace like you or not you're not going to grow any more. You have to realize that the target on your back is only bigger now than it's ever been. And if you can't deal with the size of the target you won't grow any more beyond where you are at right now. In fact, it might cause you to earn less than you did this year because most people want approval and acceptance from others. You could self-sabotage because you want back in the group. The truth is once you have broken away from the group and become a high achiever, the group won't let you back in. I have people that don't like me. We all have people like that. The truth of the matter is we can't help the fact that they have poor taste. It's what happens in me that's so important. You're responsible for yourself, that's it. You're responsible for yourself, your actions, your thoughts and your results. If you're a parent obviously you have a lot more responsibilities than yourself, but truly in the end you're responsible only for yourself."

My goal for each and every one of our coaching clients is to get them to a responsibility level. I want each and every one of them to achieve a high responsibility level. I don't want them dependent, I want them responsible. There is no one that can change you when it really gets down to it. You can only change yourself. Now, I can elicit change, as an outside force I can help with change that's going on, I can give guidance and direction to that change that needs to happen. I can help speed up the change process, but inside you, you hold the key to that change actually happening. Maybe I can motivate you, I can help direct you, but in the end, you're going to have to do it. I have said to clients before "It feels like I want their goals achieved, their dreams realized more than they do." If that is the case, they never get where they want to go.

Some people take the information and need for change and implement it and do it. Others hold back and study, review, but don't act. The secret of our success and anybody's success is not holding back. The choices we make today determine where we will be tomorrow. What we need to do is protect those choices, protect our mental strength. We can't let people back up the garbage truck and dump it out on us and receive all their garbage. Our job is to take responsibility of what we can take responsibility for and relinquish responsibility for things we don't control. We do this to ourselves sometimes, where we assume more responsibility than we should have and we assume the wrong responsibility. As an example, in real estate, our responsibility as a listing agent is to list the home, properly priced, and do a professional job to market the property. That's where our responsibility ends, up until the point of an offer. We certainly do have to communicate to the client on a regular basis and counsel them. We certainly have to protect them in the escrow negotiating process, but the first steps

of responsibility are pricing the home properly and exposing it professionally to the marketplace.

No one can keep a good listing a secret in any marketplace. The only question is, "Is it a good listing?" The area I really control as an agent is the pricing if I am strong, the exposure techniques and marketing will only work with proper pricing. If I don't get the price right, it doesn't matter what I do to market it. We work to price it right, we can't take ownership of the fact that the seller will not allow us to price it properly or will not allow us to position it properly to ensure the sale. It's our responsibility to convince them that our price is correct, but if they choose not to heed our advice and the home doesn't sell, that's not our fault. That's not our fault when the home sits. I think too often we accept and assume too much responsibility in a real estate transaction. The doctor doesn't assume the responsibility of the patient dying on the operating table. The doctor assumes the responsibility of doing the best job that she can do to try to save the patient. A doctor certainly wouldn't assume responsibility if the patient didn't heed their advice. The patient being saved or not is not completely up to the doctor. There are many factors in medicine that determine the results just like there are in real estate.

The number one reason for burn out comes from not controlling what we can control and trying to control things we can't. The number one reason is not because we work too hard, it's because we're trying to control things we can't control. Every problem has a hidden possibility. The thing we dread in the problem is what's going to make us or break us. The problem is going to make us stronger. Our problem is really not the problem that exists right in front of us, it's how we react to the problem. Most of us when faced with a problem or challenge go immediately into "I wish I didn't have to deal with this." We also don't chunk it down into segments so it looks too large. When we overcome the challenge, frequently we are glad we went through it because of what it made us into. The strength and skills we acquired to overcome it gives us energy, conviction and power. We all have problems, each and every one of us. The real problem is not the problem in front of me. When I don't have the right attitude about the problem I'm facing, that's the problem I truly have. It's the attitude in addressing the problem as an opportunity.

One of the things I have observed in my life is that the problems don't stop as you become more successful. I used to have the attitude and expectation that when I reached a certain threshold or point that I was striving for, I wouldn't have problems. I was certainly wrong in that thinking. The truth is the more successful we are, the more problems we have in life or business. The problems I face today are larger and more complex than when I was selling 150+ homes a year. The good news is the larger the problems, the larger the reward. The reward in terms of personal growth, personal confidence and personal satisfaction. There is also a larger corresponding monetary reward. The larger the problems, the larger the money paid to solve them. If someone is facing a \$10,000 problem, it's only worth a few thousand to solve. If someone is faced with a million dollar problem, it's worth hundreds of thousands to solve.

Let me give you a quick little acronym that you can use and look at on a regular basis to help you with the inherent problems that you're going to have. I learned this from John Maxwell, the leadership speaker. The P in Problem is a Predictor of our future success. How we handle problems will predict our success in the future. It also reminds us that life is about problems. Our job is to be a problem solver. The most successful people have learned to solve problems. They objectively evaluate them holding their emotions in check while they work at them until they are solved. To be successful at problems we must have resolve, R is Resolve. We need to be prepared for the long battle of challenge to solve some problems. Many problems take multiple attempts to finally solve. Studies have shown that the average sale is made after 5 closes. I believe most problems take multiple "closes" or attempts, maybe up to 5 of them to solve. We must resolve to persevere through to completion. The good news is most people won't, so if you solve the current problem you will be one of the few people on earth with the solution.

O is Opportunity. The great thing about problems is they really are opportunities. Dr. Norman Vincent Peale said that opportunities are merely wrapped up inside problems. If we learn to peel back the layers of the problem, we then can uncover the opportunity. B is a Blessing. If we learn to problem solve it's a blessing because most people never learn to acquire the problem solving skill. It gives us an opportunity to have a strategic advantage over everybody else. In the competitive nature of our world, we must have strategic advantage over our competition. Being able to identify the problems for our clients and then prescribe solutions, separates us from 95% of our competition. The vast majority of our competition does not evaluate the problem well. They don't really look at the problem from all angles so they just react to the problem rather than pausing to evaluate. They prescribe quick solutions rather than the right solutions. **They are merely trying to sell their off-the-rack services and solutions in a custom fit world.**

The L is for Lessons. We learn lessons out of problems. I've learned a lot more from my defeats that I've ever learned from my victories. The lessons we learn enable us to take another step toward our success. We will learn lessons in life. We really don't make mistakes; we just learn the lesson of how we shouldn't do it again. We learn the lesson of how it shouldn't be done. The key to the lesson is don't repeat the learning. The biggest errors we make come from the repeat of lessons we should have mastered by now. The other key in lessons is, don't take too long. If we take too long, we lose all the opportunities we could have had by mastering the lesson sometime ago.

We will always find that a lesson will repeat itself until we learn it. We can be faced by the same challenge until we learn it and move beyond it. A great example of this is people who yo-yo diet. Because they work a gimmick diet or diet system, they always end up back where they started or worse. The fundamental approach of weight loss is through reduction of food intake, restructuring of the type of food we intake (i.e., lower fat, more fruits & vegetables and lean meat) and increased physical exercise establishes a habit over time that we can build on. The lesson will repeat itself if we take a short cut or don't learn that fad approaches don't work. E is Everywhere.

Problems are absolutely everywhere. If we learn to solve strategic problems we become an indispensable asset in any real estate transaction or any other type of profession or situation that we're involved with. M is Message. Problems are often messages to change. Some of the messages have been delivered for a while but we choose to ignore them. When we ignore the message, it will only intensify. If we don't learn the easy lessons, they will get harder. It's funny how we can ignore and ignore hoping that the lesson or problem will go away but it only gets worse. When we finally deal with it because we cannot ignore it any longer, the problem is exponentially more difficult than it was when it was brought to our attention. The message a problem carries only gets louder. And S is Solvable. In other words, all problems are solvable. There has never been a problem that hasn't been solvable. The key word is solvable, which means it can be solved by the right approach and through time. There are still problems we're working on trying to solve, but there's never been a problem that we can't solve or aren't in the process of solving.

P = Predictor
R = Resolve
O = Opportunity
B = Blessing
L = Lessons
E = Everywhere
M = Message

One of the biggest challenges that I've had in life was in my earlier years growing up and thinking that failure or making a mistake was one of the worst things that you could do. That's one thing I'm never going to pass on to my son because it took me years to realize that failure is just part of being a human being. Making a mistake or experiencing a lesson moment in life is just part of being a human being, it's just part of the equation. To try to create perfection is not reality. When we fail or apply the wrong solution to a problem, it's not fatal and not final. We have to treat failure as just one of the steps along the road to success. The most successful people have built their success on the foundation of failure. We can't be afraid of failure because it leads to success. Our mental strength and how we control our thoughts have a profound impact on our success.

A number of years ago I started the mental exercise when I got up in the morning to program my mind that today was going to be an unbelievably great day. That it was going to be an outstanding day of performance, productivity, and results. From that day forward, after learning that skill, and applying that mindset, I've been able to hook together very good days regularly, one after the next after the next. I firmly believe my attitude changed so the outcome changed. It wasn't my skill set that changed in that moment. Certainly my skills were good, but the attitude came before the skills. The attitude led to the right mental approach for the day. It even helped me work to improve my skills. The right skills with the wrong attitude won't accomplish much. The right attitude and average skill sets can accomplish quite a bit. The right attitude and the right skills are a lethal weapon to the marketplace. We can dominate a marketplace

when those two align. The renewed attitude for me led to tremendous growth. If that's the way we start a day we're going to be able to move our business, move our life forward to where we want it. If we're going to be leaders, which each and every one of us are, we're leading these multi-million dollar sales companies, we're leading other salespeople, other agents, and others working cooperatively in the transactions. If we have assistants, we're obviously leading them. If we're going to be leaders we can only make one choice. We must have the right attitude. People don't follow people with the wrong attitude. We can't determine exactly what's going to happen to us, we can only determine how we respond. We can influence what happens by our attitude and the activities we engage in. We can't predetermine exactly what will happen in the future. There's not much difference between success and failure. There's not a large difference, it's a very small margin and attitude plays a very great role in the differentiation between that margin.

Let me share with you an example of the difference between success and failure. A number of years ago we had the Women's World Cup soccer match here in the United States. There were two teams who played in the final. United States was one and the other was China. The game was played to a stalemate at the end of regulation. They played regulation to a 0-0 tie; the first overtime ended 0-0 tied. The only difference between the United States and China that day was the United States made five penalty kicks and China only made four. It was the dramatic difference between success and failure. It was a small difference in terms of score. It made a dramatic difference to the people on the women's team, like Brandy Chastain or Mia Hamm or Julie Fowdy and the rest of the USA team, because they all got big endorsement contracts, made a lot of money, they became famous because Brandy Chastain made that one extra penalty kick. The difference between success and failure is small. It's very close. Most of us only need to change 10 or 15 percent to lap the field. We don't have to change 90%. But in that 10 or 15 percent, that strategic change, that's going to make all the difference in our productivity and our quality of life.

Let me share with you the five things to change. The first is our attitude. Making sure that our attitude is focused, and fixed on positive. The second is our priorities. We all work hard, but do we really work smart. We must check to see that our priorities are aligned with our activities. We must live, eat, sleep and breathe the 80-20 rule. The 80/20 rule is the most powerful rule to live life by. It can change our income, relationships, wealth, and influence. It says 20% of the things we do will produce 80% of the results. In sales we must make sure we are qualifying and quantifying our prospects and clients. These clients and prospects must be in that 20%. We can only work with the highest priorities and highest quality prospects. We won't get everything done daily. We must prioritize what is most important. If it's your family, put them first. If it's your health, put it first. If it's your business, put it first. Whatever it is that's a priority make sure that you've got the priorities in the order you really want them. This is the source of frustration for so many people. We say that family is important, but it doesn't show up that way in our day-timer.

The third is relationships, how we work with people, how we get along with people is critical. It will determine the level of the success that we have in life. No one has ever become extremely successful without the help of others. I would not be as successful today without the years of support from Joan, my wife. That relationship of support has always been invaluable to my success. There are numerous people that have contributed to my success. There have been staff members, mentors, coaches and both formal education and personal education teachers as well. We all can create more success and impact in life through the relationships and those around us. To be able to get the most from the people that work for us, we need to provide two things for them. The first is, they're going to need a strategic set of expectations. Then they are going to need an inspection process. They will only do what we expect and what we inspect. If we don't set clear and specific expectations, we lose. If we don't establish a monitoring system we also lose.

Most salespeople in real estate are challenged due to lack of expectation. The expectation or performance standard has to be set by us for us. I always say that one of the best things about being an agent is you are an independent contractor. You set the goals, agenda and activities that need to be done. You self monitor the progress to the goals. No one tells you what to do, you have freedom. One of the worst things about being an agent is you are an independent contractor. You have to self monitor your progress and demand performance of yourself. Most people are scared of the self-analysis that is necessary to be a Champion Performer. I have found that the most successful people are also the most honest with themselves.

With our staff, we must establish predetermined performance standards. Those performance standards are the expectations that we have for them to achieve. We must monitor their progress to those standards in a tangible way. If it's a sales associate, the numbers of contacts to leads, leads to appointments, appointments to contracts, contracts to closings are essential sales ratios. To set and monitor the performance standards in these areas leads to dramatic improvement. We have to measure and inspect what people do. When performance is measured, performance improves. When performance is measured and reported, performance improves faster. That is the inspect part – the measuring and reporting. If we don't expect and inspect the activities and results of our team, we are not going to achieve the level of performance we want from them.

My team knows what I expect. They know exactly what I expect in regards to their performance and I inspect them regularly or key management staff inspects them regularly. I then inspect the results of the key management staff. They have to own what happens in their department. We inspect them in quantified ways. Another key ingredient is leadership and the trust that we build through leadership. Leadership capabilities and skills are going to make a dramatic difference in the long-term growth of our business. Our leadership abilities and skills will allow us to grow our business as large as we want. The lack of leadership skills will stunt the growth of our business and ourselves.

John Maxwell wrote an excellent book a few years ago called “The Twenty-One Irrefutable Laws of Leadership.” One of the laws in his book I really love. And that law is called the Law of the Lid. The Law of the Lid basically says that any organization can only grow to the extent of the leadership skills of the people that are leading that organization. The limiting step for growth is the leadership skills of the people that are leading that organization. In the book Mr. Maxwell illustrates one specific, tremendous example to clearly demonstrate the law of the lid. His example was two young gentlemen who moved out to the west coast from New Jersey. These two young brothers started a restaurant and they started it in the Pasadena area in the late fifties. They built this great little restaurant that had great service, had great food and they opened a second one in San Bernardino. They worked those two little restaurants and between those two brothers, they were each making about \$25,000 a year take home pay. Now understand, this was the early sixties. That was a lot of money at that time. They opened a third restaurant and their little empire started to bomb miserably. They couldn’t keep control of these three little restaurants. They were out of control and started losing money in some of the restaurants where they weren’t doing as well because they couldn’t control what was going on. They didn’t have leadership skills.

In 1966 they brought this other gentlemen in who had great vision, had great leadership skills and had a great operational mind. He had a grand vision of the future. What he did was improve their systems. He provided leadership to the organization. Then he started opening all these other little restaurants around the country. In the next two to three years, he’d opened a hundred restaurants of Ben and Maurice’s original concept. At that time, Ben and Maurice had to sell out their concept, because they lacked the leadership skills to expand. They sold their concept to a gentleman named Ray Kroc who bought out Ben and Maurice McDonald for 2.7 million dollars in 1969. We all know what happened after that point. Ray Kroc eventually became one of the wealthiest men in the world. But the Law of the Lid stopped Ben and Maurice in their tracks. They were the ones who invented McDonald’s, but they couldn’t capitalize on it. They couldn’t expand because their leadership skills wouldn’t allow it. Our leadership skills are a critical element.

The next key point is improvement of our ability to persevere. Our perseverance will carry us through the vast majority of life’s challenges. The changes we need to make in our perseverance are largely because most of us quit before we should. Our job is to stay on, to keep going, to keep growing, to keep moving. Personal growth always precedes professional growth. Our ability to increase our personal growth opportunities and our perseverance through the challenges we face increases our professional growth. The most successful people have persevered through challenges to accomplish grand dreams and goals. They have all had situations and days, weeks and months that they wanted to quit. They felt like quitting, but something inside them made them go on.

I have had dry spells in my career. Dry spells where nothing was going right. I couldn’t get a client relationship created (listing taken or buyer contract signed) to save my soul. There was something that kept me going to get through the dry spell. Baseball players

talk about being in a slump. This is where they can't get a hit against anyone. Even the best players have slumps. The real test is what you do when you experience one.

- **Do you evaluate your sales process?**
- **Do you evaluate your skills?**
- **Do you check your attitude?**
- **Do you double-check the activities you are doing?**

If we do those four tests and just persevere, I guarantee the slump or dry spell won't last long. We can also increase the amount of time we invest in learning. One mistake I see with people is they stop the life long pursuit of learning. They stop the daily investment toward their personal growth. Our personal growth is going to precede our professional growth. The growth of our company is a direct reflection on our own personal growth. It is linked through our own learning path.

Our company will only grow at the rate that we are growing. In a small company like a REALTOR'S® practice, even if you have 10's of assistants, the company's growth will always follow your growth. In larger companies the company's growth will always follow the senior management team's growth. This is the biggest challenge for most individuals and companies. It's our biggest challenge at Real Estate Champions. Diligently investing the time for personal development while balancing day-to-day work responsibility, while investing enough time into our family, friends, health and spiritual lives. If we're not getting new stuff in our mind, we're not growing. If we're not putting new thoughts, new ideas, new direction, new energy into our mind, through discipline, through lifestyle or personal growth, we're not going to be where we want to be two or three years from now. Most of us will arrive two to three years down the road. The probability is that we will be here in a few years. The only unsettled question is:

- Where will we arrive?
- What will our lifestyle be like?
- Did we achieve the goals that we set to accomplish?
- Did we make the changes necessary to raise the odds of achieving our goals?
- Did we learn and take in enough new ideas to reshape and strengthen our mind?

Change for humans comes from exposure to new ideas. Growth comes from applying those new ideas. If we aren't getting new ideas, we can't apply new ideas.

The next principle is helping others helps you succeed. My goal is to help as many people as I possibly can because that's going to help me succeed to a greater degree in life. Pour your life into people. It will expand your knowledge base. By helping people, you learn as well. It will increase your influence. None of us lives in a vacuum. We are either constantly being influenced by others or constantly influencing others. It will expand the impact we have in this world. At some point in life, people make the change from wanting to be successful to being significant. The real joy is using our success to significantly impact others. Significance creates a legacy that far outlives our earthly

existence. We invest in others to carry on our work, goals and dreams that we were unable to fulfill. We work with our children to raise them correctly out of love and out of the desire for significance. We can only accomplish enormous goals and visions through the help of others. That's our greatest opportunity in life. Our payday is going to come down the road when we pour our life into other people. The question is always:

- **What can I give people?**
- **What can I teach, what can I learn?**
- **How can I direct and help them toward greater success and happiness?**

I have a rule in life and that rule is this; I only hang around certain kinds of people. The first group of people is those that I can enjoy, laugh with and be entertained by. It's just fun to be around them. The second is people that I can learn from, that I can learn something from to improve my life or improve the life of others. The third group is people that I can profit with. If we can come together and create an opportunity that brings profit to both of us, I like hanging around those types of people. Those are the three types of people that I have hung around for years. The more time I spent with these 3 groups, the more I would grow. Then I found out about another magical group. I have added a fourth in the last half a dozen years and that is people that I can teach. Because I hang around them I can teach all the time and I love to hang around people that want to learn. People that have a passion for learning, energize me. They make me want to learn more so I can use the knowledge for others and myself. People that want to learn just fire me up. In the end, they're going to be able to teach other people. Winners give back more than they ever put in. The winners and teachers get back more than they put in because we get more back because of new knowledge from all different sources. The other reason we get more back is because we have to master the knowledge before we can teach it. We are the beneficiaries because of the knowledge mastery that we gained.

The fifth step on the blueprint is, be yourself. Whoever you are, be you. Don't be anybody else, don't try to be anybody else, don't be intimidated by other people, don't try to be what everybody wants you to be, don't try to be everything to all people. Being somebody you're not causes burnout. When a client asks us to do something that we're not comfortable with doing, or when a client is trying to get us to do things that are against our better judgment, tell them no. Tell them no very clearly in a forceful way. If we are trying to run our business and our life the way other people want us to or prefer us to do it, we're going to head for burnout.

In a coaching call a year ago with a new client, I was coaching him on this concept. He was changing who he was in pressure situations. We use a series of assessments for all our clients. Based on those assessments, I knew he was changing who he was at the core with his staff and clients. He was much softer, less powerful and forceful, less resolved in his views. His behavioral change frustrated him but it also confused his clients and staff. I told him clearly you are a high Dominant behavioral style, be that person in the selling situations. Your clients want and expect you to take control, when you don't you confuse them and they feel uncomfortable with you. They lose

confidence in your ability because you don't show them the confidence inside you. He was softening to achieve a "like relationship" with the clients rather than a "respect relationship" with the clients. He needed to focus on the achievement of a respect relationship because that's the way he worked best. Even a year later he talks about that coaching session and how that has really changed his life. He has told me many times that one thing was worth the money of years worth of coaching. He really has learned to be himself

The sixth principle is, people don't care how much we know until they know how much we care. The only difference between retail stores is how they treat their customers. Nordstrom's, having grown up in the Pacific Northwest, is one of my favorite stores because of the way that they treat their customers. They understand their customers are gold and there's a million stories of how Nordstrom's has gone above and beyond the call of duty for their specific customers and I've received that type of service from them for years. I really feel like they care about me. They work at showing that level of care and concern by going the extra mile to find that shirt you want. It's a culture that they have created at Nordstrom's. **What culture are you creating in your company? Are you willing to take the risk and show that you care?**

Sometimes we may not be able to provide that "go the extra mile level of service", but there is a level of service that we can provide and the key feature is the caring element. Maybe we provide less service than somebody else, but if we really show the client that we care that can make up for the lower level of service. True caring and concern knows no boundaries. People will leap to work with somebody that cares. We need to make sure that we're positioning ourselves as caring directing people.

We need to know what I call the 1-11-55 Rule. The 1-11-55 Rule has a drastic impact on businesses. The rule is, one person with a bad experience will tell eleven people. Those eleven people will tell five others, 1-11-55. That one bad experience will be poured on the pool of 55 people. We have to work to make sure, first, that we select the best clients going into our practice so we don't end up with a bunch of 1's. This causes a bunch of people that have bad experiences. Some of avoiding that initial one is selecting the right people to do business with. For me I'd rather screen out the negative people, the bad apples, and not do business with them so I don't end up with a bad experience. I'd rather not take the risk with a marginal qualified prospect hoping to do a transaction. This could also be someone who has too high an expectation and too low a value they put on my service and me. I had the luxury of doing that because my prospecting was so consistent that I knew that it would have been easier to pass on those who are difficult for me to do business with than try to pound a round peg into a square hole and end up with a negative relationship with a client in the end. We must be very clear whom we're going to do business with and who we are not. We have to select the right people to be our clients and we have to align the needs that they have with the service that we are willing to provide. I believe we have an obligation to determine the client's needs and wants and see if we can meet and exceed them. If they want us to change our system radically, we either need to demonstrate why our system is best and convince them of this or pass on them to another agent. I don't

believe that we change our service model; we just may need to change our clients to make sure that we're selecting the right one. The only time to change the service model is if we are in a competitive disadvantage to our competitors in the marketplace. If we are getting beat in the marketplace because of our lack of services – then we need to look at our service model and our services to our clients.

The next principle, live what you teach. For me, I've got to make sure that I live what I teach. It is not fair to do otherwise. If I don't live it, in my opinion, I can't teach it. The hardest challenge for a leader is not leading; it's living the life of a leader. To be consistent in actions and thought of what a great leader would do or be. That's why I believe that a lot of coaching companies, as an example, which have a lot of coaches out there who have never sold real estate before in their life, are doing a tremendous disservice to the REALTORS® in this world. Because, if you haven't lived it and you haven't done it and you haven't been in the trenches, and you haven't been successful, you cannot teach it.

Let's explore how we learn. We learn 89% of the time visually. Most of us learn the most in life from example. I watch Wesley, my son, all the time mimicking what Joan and I do. I watch him do that every day. The different things that he mimics, the hand motions, the facial expressions, the sounds that we make, he's learning visually watching what we do which is sometimes good and sometimes bad. The visual example of success is powerful. The next highest learning is via the auditory functions. Only 10% of our learning is auditory. There is a significant drop from the visual to the auditory learning. We go from roughly 90% to 10% in one category. Then last is all the other senses combined. Hearing the message is not necessarily what is digested. What they see us do is the way that we teach. Our new staff members that we hire are going to buy into what we say initially. They haven't seen what we do yet. After about a month of watching us, if we have inconsistency in what we do, we have created a major credibility crisis for ourselves. For those of us who are saying to our assistants, I need you to prospect every day and we are not doing it ourselves, we will have a major credibility crisis coming. We have to do what we say we're going to do. We can't put across to our people what we're not living ourselves.

If we have consistency with our message we send our staff, our clients, the other agents, our family, our message becomes more powerful with time. It increases in intensity and power. The visual and auditory consistency carries our message even when we aren't around. That audio and visual message linking together in one concise statement of words and actions creates an incredible, powerful, consistent message. If we are inconsistent in our message and action though, it gets less powerful. There are two things that happen when we're consistent. The first is we gain credibility. When we are consistent over and over again, we gain credibility because they know that's the way that it is and the way it's going to be. There isn't any change or adjustment. There is no doubt about it in the minds of the people we deal with. When we lose the confidence of our people who aren't consistent we lose our confidence in ourselves. We lose confidence in our people, we lose confidence in ourselves and our service and our credibility long term. The second thing that happens is motivation. People do what

people see. We gain motivation for ourselves and gain the motivation of others. Our people receive energy from seeing the daily activities we do with purpose.

One of my great clients talked about this concept with me about 6-8 months ago. And he said, "It's amazing. I've been in this business twenty years and I haven't done some of the things that I said I was doing. I wasn't consistent and it was eating me up inside because I knew I was living a lie." Eight months later, after consistently doing what he knew he was supposed to do he said, "This is so important because I love what I do, I'm good at what I do and most importantly I believe in what I do and this is a much easier way to live, to do what I say I'm going to do each and every day, to do the prospecting every day that I'm going to do, to absolutely not go home unless it's done. To do the lead follow-up every day that needs to be done. To spend a little time with my staff, coaching, training and directing them, if I operate that way, I go home energized, directed and focused because I am gaining self-confidence. I'm gaining credibility and discipline with myself and I'm increasing my motivation. If we can go back to anything that we were doing and how we were doing it and be satisfied then we're fine. If we can look back at our actions, consistency, and thoughts and say this was good, we are on the right track. But if we can't we're in major trouble. The reason I love to do what I get to do is because it keeps me digging and learning constantly. My biggest challenge is staying ahead of all our great clients. That's my biggest challenge on a daily basis is to learn some new thing that can help impact my life and my client's lives. The day I stop learning and growing is absolutely the day that everybody should stop listening to me, reading my writing, instantaneously because there isn't anything more to say. When I don't have anything new to share is the day you all should walk out and never listen to what I have to say again.

Principle #8: pay now play later. There is no success without sacrifice. Sacrifice is a real part of success. If I succeed without sacrifice then it's because somebody else before me made that sacrifice. If I see sacrifice and don't see success then somebody who follows is going to reap the benefit of what I've laid out. There's no such thing as a free lunch. Somebody, somewhere along the way has paid for what we're about to eat. I think of the incredible price my mother paid with her physical illness of MS. She paid and her children received the benefits of self-reliance, independence, and confidence due to her illness. I am a different person than I would have been with an able bodied mother. Either you have paid in your time, effort and energy or somebody previous has paid a significant price for you. But don't be fooled that somebody hasn't sacrificed. You are where you are because of what you have done yesterday. Yesterday builds today. Some people are not where they would like to be. They have not achieved the goals they have set in a timely manner. They are not happy where they are in life. It is because of what they did yesterday and the yesterdays before that. The good news is that we can change that today. We can change today so when we look back tomorrow on yesterday we have created a new future by what we did today. A crisis in life doesn't set in because of one day. For most people, the crisis is created by a poor today, which in turn creates a series of poor yesterday's. It's the linking of multiple poor today's that leads to disastrous results for us. The issue is not whether we are going to pay, guaranteed we are going to pay. The question is merely what we're going to pay. I

have learned clearly that we are going to pay more in the future than we are going to pay now for something we could do right now. It's just the way life is. It's the way it is in every situation in life. Resolve to make today a success so you don't have any "what if's" when you look back on the day.

My friend Zig Ziglar says that "Life is like a cafeteria line, first you pay then you get to eat." The payment comes before the enjoyment. It's not like a restaurant where we eat our fill and then the bill comes. We must diligently pay in terms of our activities to enjoy the fruits of our labor later in life. We must do some things regularly in life that we don't want to do so we can have the things we want to have in life. We do things now, like prospecting, so we can have the income and lifestyle we want later. We save some of the money we now earn so we can have the lifestyle we want later without having to work. I am not in favor of only working. There are people that delay gratification too long and then can't enjoy due to health reasons or changes in their life. We do have to live for today because tomorrow may not come. We have to balance that out with planning for and preparing for tomorrow. With my mother's illness of MS, tomorrow was an uncertainty, not that she was going to die young. Her physical capacity to do things did change with time. As a family, we took the trips, and played and created memories now. To do it later would have changed being able to do it at all. My prudent parents at the same time built a strong shelter for themselves for the future. They have been a great example of that perfect balance of pay now, play later and enjoying the journey along the way. That is a tough balancing act.

When I was small, I remember a commercial that was famous by the Fram oil filter company. They were trying to convince you that changing your oil regularly with a Fram filter saved you problems in the future. This greasy mechanic at the end of the commercial would close with, "You can pay me now, pointing to the filter, or you can pay me later" and gesture to this engine core that he was rebuilding. The message was clear, the couple bucks on a Fram filter was much less than the cost of a rebuilt engine, which is where we were heading without the Fram filter. The price doesn't get cheaper than the price today. We all have the choice to pay now or pay later. The price is always greater when it is later.

I have made a number of investments in the last 15 - 20 years. They have been in many areas of real estate as well as stocks, bonds and mutual funds. I have also made countless investments in my business, in people and equipment. I can attest that not all of those seemingly well thought out investments were good. In fact, some were really poor, some bordering on devastating. I received a piece of counsel from a wise mentor of mine a number of years ago. He said, "The lowest amount of loss that you will take is the one you take right now." Sometimes we also hang on too long to a losing situation. We end up paying more later because of our pride or ego getting in the way of the prudent decision. I am not suggesting to compromise on your values, those are priceless! I am saying evaluate the field and if you are on a losing team, change the game plan, the players on the team. If you need to take a loss, take it today and move on. Give yourself a reasonable amount of time to evaluate, but once that is done ACT! I was once convinced by someone to stay in an investment longer than I should have

stayed. I knew I should have gotten out, but didn't. By the time I did, I lost another 100k before it was all over. It cost me more later!

The sooner that we embrace that concept of pay now, play later, the better we're going to be. We must pay before we get to play. The underlying truth is the pain of discipline is weighed against the pain of regret. The pain of discipline is very small, to stay consistent to be disciplined. To do what needs to be done daily is a small price. The pain of regret is real large and it happens in every facet of our life. Its weight is staggering and we can't change it. The pain of discipline vs. the pain of regret must be evaluated and acted upon. The pain of discipline of walking around the block, eating good meals, effectively exercising, is miniscule to the pain of regret of having to have some kind of horrific surgery later on in your life because you made poor choices of diet and exercise. There's a direct relationship between the commitment that we make with ourselves to something and the success that we are going to realize. Our direct relationship between committing ourselves to something and making something happen is critical. This is one of the skills of pay now play later that I'm really going to work on with Wesley. He's going to clearly understand this because this is one of the problems we're facing in society. We do not need another generation that thinks the world owes them something. Many of us view life that way. If we don't pay on the front end, we can't gripe on the back end. When we pay later the price is always going to be greater. We must be willing to pay under the installment plan in little incremental amounts on a daily, weekly, monthly basis.

Principle #9: giving is the highest form of living. Our generous spirit has nothing to do with our income in my opinion. Certainly, it's easier to give more if we make more or to spend more time doing other things if we make more. I think there is an obligation that comes with wealth. That obligation is not to consume it all, but to give and help others with it. Many of us have been blessed with talent and abilities that we didn't create. They were a gift at birth. We worked hard to refine them but they were a gift. A 7-foot NBA player had to develop skills and practice, but the gift was being tall. He did not earn that, it was a gift. To use those gifts only for our benefit would be to use them selfishly. That generous spirit can be created early on at an early stage in life when we don't have as much as we all do right now. Our generous spirit needs to be generated and germinated at an early age. We don't all of a sudden decide to be generous. We don't all of a sudden decide as an example to start saving money. It fascinates me that a lot of people say well if I only made another \$50,000 a year I would be able to save money. We must be able to start saving with a small amount to be able to work up to the larger amounts. I have seen that attitude crush people too often. Where they make that extra \$50,000 and savings doesn't happen. They spend that \$50,000 and another \$25,000 on top of that. If we start when the amounts are small and establish the habit, everything will change. It won't change later on, when we make more money. That habit of spending all that we have is well entrenched by then.

I have discovered money only makes someone more of what they currently are as a person. If they are a poor spender and investor, money only intensifies the spending habits. If someone is a jerk, money only creates more of an opportunity for that

behavior to be exhibited. When focusing on giving, we should focus first on the people closest to us. We need to start with our family, our staff, and our church if you attend one. The charities you are involved with or believe in. If you struggle with giving to them do it for yourself. Do it for what it does in you. It will change you and improve you.

Principle #10: Success is having the love and respect of the people closest to you. When we boil it all down, when we look at it all, the money, all the different things that we're all chasing on a regular basis, it is pretty fleeting. And success, when we boil it all down, is the love and respect of the people closest to us and the people that we impact. Success for me isn't a tape series or speaking engagements or books, success is not people buying my books or my tapes or my tele-seminars. Success is not making a certain amount of money or a certain amount of production goals. Success is truly boiled down to having the love and respect of the people that are closest to me. For all of us, we have opportunities and moments of time to make selections on number ten, to invest our time, effort and energy in the arena that we're in. In our kids or our spouse or our significant other or our families and that's probably the biggest challenge for REALTORS® on an ongoing basis is making those right selections because the money is pretty big and the opportunities are pretty large.

What we must analyze is our individual definition of what success is to us. The clearer the definition is the easier it aligns with our priorities and ultimately our actions and the higher the quality of life that we will possess. Understanding our individual definition of who is successful and how they achieved it and our ability to integrate that with the concept of success, is having the love and respect of the people closest to us and is how we're going to create the overall blueprint that's going to govern, move and guide us to the success that we want in life. It will also clearly define and create the legacy we leave behind after we are done. We all will be done on this earth some day. That is an absolute guarantee! The only question is did we complete the task; did we run the race well and complete the journey?

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