Be more than a service provider. Be the solution.

This is a true story.

Armed with hours of HGTV and a screwdriver, a homeowner named Gina set out to fix and flip real estate. But she soon discovered what any savvy investor knows: it takes more than 60 minutes minus commercials to successfully renovate and sell property for profit. So Gina turned to a trusted advisor, her real estate professional, for advice.
Her agent took the time to understand the motivation behind Gina's plan and — just as important — to get to know Gina herself. Gina explained that she wanted a Plan B. She already owned her own home and had money put away for retirement. She wanted to leave a legacy for her children. She was divorced, and she and her ex-husband mediated to live within ten miles of each other so they would be able to co-parent well.

The agent's effective questions also revealed that Gina has her groceries delivered and she utilizes housekeeping and landscaping services. From this, the agent surmised that it would suit Gina better to manage a project rather than to use that screwdriver herself.

The agent had extensive knowledge of the community where Gina lived, including the fact that it boasted the highest public school ratings in the state, and it was common for divorced couples to do everything in their power to stay in that town to minimize the disruption for their children, just as Gina and her ex had done. It's a fairly expensive town in which to live, so many people rent condos and stay there until their children finish school.

With this portfolio of information on Gina and her "why", Gina's agent proposed a different path and the seeds of her Plan B took root. With her agent shepherding her through the process, Gina began buying investment condos to rent in the town where she lived to help divorced parents stay close to each other, keep their children in the same school system and minimize disruption. Gina spoke the language of her tenants. This was her lane and it felt right.

Within three years, Gina began realizing profits of approximately $400 per month per unit and began paying off some of the units entirely. Her tenants often stay for two to ten years and when new renters come in, freshening up the décor is all that's needed. Renting to this niche is in Gina's comfort zone.

She had a problem and her agent was the solution.

The best thing you can do to build your real estate business is to be the solution for the person in front of you. Obviously, accurate knowledge of your market is key, at a 30,000' view, a 2,000' view, and at street level so you can recognize trends and seize opportunities at a federal and state level, county, and city and in the neighborhoods you work. While that's a given, I believe a key area where many agents lose out is in not gaining thorough and accurate knowledge about their

prospects and clients. Do as much homework on the person as you do on the product, so you can serve them effectively and get the most out of your experience together.

Gina is real. I know her personally. If her agent had taken what Gina initially said she wanted at face value, the agent would have shown her fix and flip opportunities, a path that may have proven disastrous when Gina realized it would take more than her screwdriver and good intentions to accomplish her goal. It was only through research and taking the time to get to know Gina that her agent could be the solution she needed.

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