Build a culture of learning and growth

Competition for talent in real estate is fierce. And one of the strongest differentiating factors for your brokerage is found in training and continuing education.

It’s something Dan Nelson, VP of Performance Excellence at Leading Real Estate Companies of the World® (LeadingRE), feels passionate about and the reason LeadingRE has prioritized educational offerings for its network of 565 brokerages.

How can you be that brokerage that develops agents in a way that no one else will? How can you ensure you don’t lose your best talent because somebody else is providing more effective training?

Here are some things your training program needs in order to attract and keep top performers.

Accountability partners

Accountability means a commitment to learning and growth from the top. For your brokerage to focus on education, it should be woven into the fabric of the organization.

“If your leadership doesn’t talk about how valuable education is, it isn’t important to your company — no matter what your literature says,” said Nelson.

Accountability also means partnering with a designated person who will hold you to your commitment. For anyone who has joined a gym, this will feel familiar. You will make progress and see change by working out regularly on your own. But if you embark on a fitness program with a friend, you will see true transformation.

“You both show up because you’re letting the other person down if don’t,” said Nelson. “You’re performing in front of someone else, which ups your game and drives you to do better. The same is true of learning and training.”

Offer personalized learning

Each of your agents is at a different stage and has different needs. Why would one program serve them all?

The LeadingRE Institute platform offers learning paths that provide custom training based on the agent and his or her goals.

“We have learning paths for leaders and sales associates, as well as paths for marketing and technology,” said Nelson. “But the learning path doesn’t just tell you what content to watch. It

organizes the content, so you know the most effective way through. It also helps leaders hold you accountable and ensure you're getting the value from the courses."

Brokerages that provide customized learning options see the impact across their organization.

"The most successful training programs deliver a blend of personalized and relevant content that fosters empowerment and accountability at every level. It's about evaluating the agents in your brokerage to determine their specific needs, and then building a comprehensive and flexible curriculum available at the company level and at the office level," said Sarah Pelton, VP of Learning & Development, Baird & Warner.

Create micro-learning opportunities

The always-on access we have today has the side effect of shortening our attention spans. And that's not generationally specific. But rather than rail against the lost art of long-focus, your brokerage needs to create those micro-learning opportunities that fit the lifestyle of a top performer.

Phyllis Brookshire, president, Allen Tate Realtors, offers these tips: “Busy agents respond best to short segments on specific topics so they can ‘grab and go’ with personalized learning. Topics must be extremely relevant and speak to current market conditions and trends. Programs must be accessible and address different learning styles.”

By breaking learning into small lessons, you create more opportunities for achievement along the way, and that keeps your agents engaged and motivated to continue.

Make it relevant

It’s one thing to offer educational materials and training opportunities. It’s quite another to ensure the agents who go through your training understand exactly how the material is immediately relevant to their business.

“One of the Learning Pillars of LeadingRE’s Maestro Leadership program is developing a Growth Attitude. We focus on creating a learning environment for the leaders to really integrate an entrepreneurial spirit to leading their branch and their sales associates. Being a branch manager is not just a job. You are the CEO of your XX-million-dollar organization,” said Rosey Koberlein, CEO, Long Companies.

So, as you develop your training program or implement one from a source such as LeadingRE, make it crystal clear not only what your agents will learn, but why it matters to their success.

Everyone in your organization is going to engage in learning in some form or another. Ensuring that learning is essential to your brand and that you have the best tools available can help you build a culture of growth.

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