# Which comes first: your team brand or individual brands?

Every real estate agent thinks about how to brand themselves to stand out from the competition. When it comes to teams, team leaders have to work to balance their own brand with the brands of their team members, including making sure the members of their team feel seen and recognized.

For Barak Sky, leader of The Sky Group in Bethesda, Maryland, this starts with making sure the agents he chooses for his team want to be a part of the family and the culture he's built. He said the team brand comes first, but it's a family atmosphere and he tries to promote the team and its agents evenly.

"We create a culture where we want to promote each other's success so it's all our success," Sky said. "We will constantly help each other out and fill in the gaps so we can better serve our clients. At every team meeting, we'll give props to people's successes and congratulate them."

Sky Group

Highlighting the successes of team members can also help reinforce the values and excellent level

of service that a team provides. Elizabeth Lucchesi of The Liz Luke Team in Alexandria, Virginia, says she is constantly working to spotlight her team members in video, print, and social media.

“It’s not just one point in time that we feature our team members,” Lucchesi said. “It’s a reiteration time and time again, and it’s always someone’s name attached to the Liz Luke Team.”

She said this allows her to show how when a client works with any member of her team, their values and work ethic will be consistent with her team’s culture.

“Because we have a very positive reputation in the marketplace, people react nicely to our name, so it’s important that our team members realize that they are part of a team,” Lucchesi said.

Liz Luke Team

Many real estate teams also focus on their individual agents with recognition of their hard work and

awards for their accomplishments.

Kyle Yeatman, who leads The Yeatman Group in Midlothian, Virginia, recognizes his team members who perform at a high level with team awards. That includes celebrating significant sales made by team members, quarterly awards and contests.

“We try to make it more fun, so it’s better to be a part of our team than to be an individual agent,” he said. “We uphold our culture pretty tightly, which is work very hard, play very hard, and create a more laidback environment than what you see in corporate culture.”

Yeatman Group

Promoting the skills of a team’s agents can be beneficial during transactions as well, according to Stephen Mottola of The Mottola Group in Wilmington, Delaware. The Delaware market is unique in that it’s small but still sees a number of luxury transactions, he said, and promoting both the team and its members are mutually beneficial.

“When we go into a listing presentation, we talk about the experience of our agents overall and how we can leverage that experience to provide a larger realm of knowledge to the client,” Mottola said. “If there’s something we don’t know as individuals, we can get the answer within The Mottola Group. The group is important but day-to-day, it’s the individual team members that are

meeting with clients and bringing their skills to the table."

Mottola Group

While there are many ways to focus on balancing the promotion and successes of a team and its individual members, finding a brokerage that is supportive of teams can be key as well. At Long & Foster Real Estate, we offer online and in-person training for every stage of an agent's career, including how they can start, develop and build a team. Additionally, our Agent Succession Program focuses on team building and succession strategy.

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