

The Power of Surprise

By Patti Brotherton

Doesn't it feel good when you receive something totally unexpected? How often do you think people feel that from us? Are we just living up to the expectations of our clients or are we going above and beyond? Surprise everyone with service, with thoughtfulness, with helpfulness and you will find that power shifts to you. You will be getting referrals from sources you never expected.

I'll give you some small surprises that you can do that mean much, cost little, and wield power in the results. Most wonderful surprises are simple common sense, but we forget to do them or we get complacent because the business has been good.

Surprise Your Clients

What can you do that is unexpected for your buyers?

Personally take new buyers to five of your favorite service people such as hairdresser, cleaners, a great boutique, local restaurant, and bank.

Introduce them to these establishments personally. Let the establishments know that you are introducing one of your clients. Perhaps you can even arrange to get them a discount when they make their first visit on their own. Have you ever had anyone personally take you to these places when you are new to the community?

What else can you do?

Offer to have someone help them unpack on moving day and remove all the trash. Have you ever had anyone do that for you?

What else?

Have 'just moved' notes made with a picture of their house on them.
Provide them with another copy of their closing statement in January.
Have their heater filters changed once a year.
Provide new batteries for their smoke detectors once a year.

What can you do to surprise a seller?

Create a photo scrapbook of all that goes on when they are selling their home; e.g., a picture of the house with a for sale sign, a picture of the house when you hold an open house, a picture when a home inspection is being done, a picture of the sellers at the time they are accepting an offer, a picture of the new buyers, etc. It sounds silly, but when the sellers look back on this small photo scrapbook many years later, they will be so glad to have it. Surprise them with it.

There are many things that you can do for your clients if you just put your mind to it. Think of things that you would want and need, then do it for them. It's fun and you will love what the surprise does for your clients. They tell all their friends about you.

Surprise Other Brokers

When cooperating brokers call to find out about a property in the office, the regular thing to do is to just give that information and hang up. Why not surprise them and not only help them with the information they requested, but tell them about other listings in your office that you feel might be similar to the property they inquired about? How about emailing brokers the night you have a hot new listing and let them know about it. This will be good for your sellers and also help the cooperating brokers. Why not send them a thank you surprise of flowers at the transaction close? Or, just a simple thank you note?

Surprise the Public

When you are holding an open house, the public does not expect too much from you. Just have the house open so that they can preview it. Why not surprise them by having a lender present to qualify buyers? Why not give them a package of listings in the area as well as the brochure on the property? Why not advise them that you can provide them by email everyday all the new listings that come on the market in their price range or criteria? Why not give them all the comps for the area? Give them more than they asked for and you will surprise. Why not have giveaways for every person coming to the open house like a lottery ticket?

Surprise the Service Providers

We have many people that help us close a sale in the real estate industry; title companies, escrow officers, attorneys, home inspectors, termite inspectors, and many more. How about surprising them by sending them a note of thanks when you close escrow? These people don't hear from many people for doing their jobs. You not only will be well thought of, but you will receive referrals from these people because you took a moment to surprise them.

Send Surprise Thank-You's

Every single day you can find someone to send a thank you to. If you make it a habit to send at least one per day, you will be making many favorable impressions and it took maybe one or two minutes out of your day. These small surprises to people have great power.

I think you get the picture. Do something nice for someone and it comes back to you. Don't be like others and just do what is expected; go beyond and do something personally. It doesn't cost much to do most of the ideas in this article, but will you ever like the results! Surprise someone!