

# SATISFIED CLIENTS RARELY REFER

We have another saying in our offices that gets repeated a lot.

## “SATISFIED CLIENTS RARELY REFER!”

In our experience, it takes a lot more than providing a good or satisfactory experience to a client for them to be willing to take the step of actually referring friends and family to you. Obviously, if we provide sub par service to a client we would not expect to receive referrals from them in the future. Our belief is that even providing good service falls short most of the time.

Think of it this way. When you represent a buyer client, show them homes, negotiate the deal, handle the inspection, facilitate a walk-through and guide them through financing and closing, you are doing the job for which you are earning a commission. Even in the process of providing them a closing gift, for most buyers, you are engaging in what is essentially a “quid pro quo” exchange. You provide the service and you get a commission check. A good or satisfactory experience does not create any overt motivation in a client to pass on your service to their social circle, in part, because everybody got what they expected from this deal.

There is however, a completely different outcome when an agent manages to find a way to deliver **remarkable** service to their clients.

## PURPLE COWS

Seth Godin, (one of our favorite authors) in his book “Purple Cow,” expresses this idea of remarkable service in a brilliant analogy. Imagine (he describes) taking a road trip through the country with your kids in the back seat.



When they see a brown cow on the side of the road, they eagerly point it out with excitement. A few miles down the road, they see several more, and point them out too. But within just a few miles of travel, the sight of regular cows on the roadside become nothing more than part of the landscape. These brown cows represent the unceasing onslaught of marketing solicitations thrown at us as consumers and that the real estate world throws at our clients on a daily basis. There was perhaps a time that they were appealing, but today, for most people, they are just noise, and for the most part, we work to filter them out.

But what if, just play along, while driving down the road, you came across a bright purple cow. What would you do then? Well, if you are like most people today, you would probably stop the car to admire it. And then? You would take a picture, post it on social media, and watch as the world commented on your remarkable discovery. Right?

Well, we believe that this reality holds true in the world of real estate as well, and that our goal is to deliberately work to create “purple cow” experiences for our buyer and seller clients. Experiences throughout the transaction that stand out from the noise. That would give them a reason to stop. Take a mental picture. And tell the world.

## REMARKABLE.

By definition, “remarkable” is something that you would tell others about. It’s something worth remarking on. Doing a good job for a client is seldom remarkable. Rather, it’s expected. Doing what was expected simply does not warrant the social risk of referring friends and family. After all, when you watch a halfway decent movie, or eat at a decent restaurant, you don’t tell the world about it.

So what does “remarkable” look like in real estate? What is our “Purple Cow”?

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There is no canned response to this, it is easy to imagine a hundred ways to create a remarkable experience. To be honest, the bar is pretty low to stand out in our industry; remarkable doesn't need to be expensive.

**Remarkable is** when Ted's lawn mowing service shows up the day after closing, introduces themselves to the new homeowner, and lets them know that you sent them over to take care of the lawn for them.

**Remarkable is** following up exactly a week, a month, 6 months, and a year after the sale simply to check in, see if there is anything you can do to be of help, and to ask if there is anything you can do to help them get settled in their new home and community.

**Remarkable is** providing annual updates to home buyers on the valuation of their real estate investment in the form of a simple market analysis that keeps them informed of what has sold and listed in their neighborhood since they bought their new home.

**Remarkable is** dropping whatever you are doing when a past client has a need and finding a contractor or vendor who can solve their issue (HVAC, plumbing, etc.) and perhaps even covering the cost.

**Remarkable is** knowing and caring about the personal life events of your clients and taking the time to find a personalized and relevant gift for them to celebrate them.

Remarkable really isn't all that hard to achieve. For the most part, it looks a lot like what happens when you begin with a relational rather than a transactional approach to the business, and actually care about the long term needs of your clients and sphere of influence.

The impact, however, of deliberately working to go above and beyond in providing service worth remarking on is an investment in your business that pays the highest dividends of any investment you can make.

So although "satisfied clients rarely refer," our experience is that clients who receive "Purple Cow" service, provide a steady stream of ongoing referrals to the agents who were willing to invest the time to be **remarkable**.



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Last updated 10/25/2017

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REAL ESTATE