

# Unexpected Extras: Practice Reciprocity and Get More Referrals

Well-served clients become advocates that sing your praises to family, friends and even strangers on the street and are vital to a thriving real estate business. Client happiness is contingent upon exceeding expectations and creating an indelible impression upon each and every person you serve.

The easiest way to build trust is through unexpected extras—going the extra mile before, during and after a transaction. Unexpected extras are the little things that show your clients that you see them as people, and not as commission checks.

How do you transform clients into advocates? You must enhance every interaction they have with your business by doing the following:

- Find out what they value the most
- Communicate frequently
- Solicit input

*The best time to get a referral from a client is when you're working with them. Don't be afraid to ask!*



**57%** of first-time buyers and **39%** of repeat buyers were referred to their real estate agent by a friend, neighbor or relative.

Source: National Association of Realtors®

## What Are Your Strengths?

Oftentimes, the best way to discover your strengths as an agent is to ask your clients what they tell people when they refer others to your business. Is it the Item of Value, phone call or note you send every month to let them know you're thinking of them? Is it the personalized care you give to new homeowners, tirelessly answering all of their questions and easing their concerns? Whatever it is, keep doing it. It's your unexpected extra—the thing that keeps clients coming back and referring others to you.

If you are stumped trying to discover your unexpected extra, or you fear that you don't have one, it's never too late to start. The size of the gesture doesn't matter. What you see as something small might mean the world to your clients.



# Unexpected Extras that Drive Referrals to Your Business

## 1. Surpass Expectations

Ask yourself what you can do to go above and beyond what your clients expect.

*Example:*

- Mail a monthly Item of Value and follow up with a phone call or personal note.

## 2. Go the Extra Mile

An easy way to turn your client into an advocate and enjoy future referrals is to offer them a free product or service; something small that shows that you value them.

*Example:*

- Offer free interior inspections or another valuable service.

## 3. Address a Need

When you speak with your clients, listen for any challenges they are facing that you can help them address through your expertise or by introducing them to contacts in your database.

*Example:*

- If your client mentions a leaky roof or other property-related problem, put them in contact with a professional in your database. Even better, negotiate a discount with the tradesperson beforehand.

## 4. Turn Problems into Opportunities to Leave a Positive Impression

In any real estate transaction, problems can arise. As a professional, you have the expertise to handle potential challenges with aplomb.

*Example:*

- Use reassuring words and phrases to dispel tension and anxiety.

## 5. Make it Personal

Get to know your clients by truly listening when they speak. What do they do for a living? What are the names of their children or pets? What are their concerns about the buying or selling process? By paying attention to what they tell you, you can deliver excellent personalized service.

*Example:*

- Keep in touch with your clients throughout the buying or selling process, and take the time to answer their questions and listen to their concerns.

*By committing to doing the unexpected extras for each of your clients, your business will enjoy a boost in revenue year after year.*