

Consider a Business Coach: Soaring to New Heights Can Require a Push

By Bob Corcoran

The poet Guillaume Apollinaire once wrote:

*"Come to the edge He said.
They said: We are afraid.
Come to the edge He said.
They came.
He pushed them, and they flew..."*

Yes, edges can induce great fear. I've seen many agents look over that cliff with palpable dread. It's understandable. Change, even if it's about improving your career, raises some questions: Can I handle it? Do I have what it takes to reach the top-producer level? What if I fail?

Tough questions, especially to tackle alone. If you've been looking for ways to reach top-producer heights, you might consider a business coach. But before you hire one, read on.

Success or Bust

Know what you want to achieve and the more specific the better. Maybe you want to sell 50 more homes in 2006. Or, perhaps you're looking to sell the same number, but tap the higher-priced-homes market. You bring the destination; the coach helps with the map to get there.

The ABCs of Return on Investment (ROI)

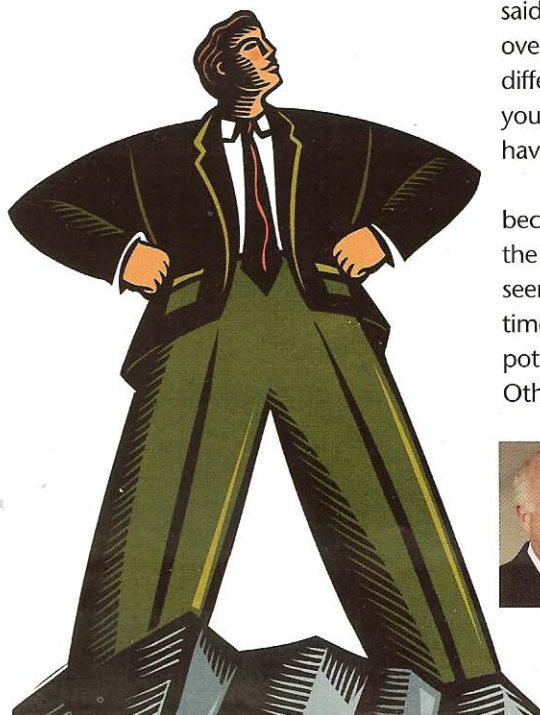
Every Realtor® wants a good ROI. Good coaches will offer guarantees, but look for clear evidence that the coach has left a consistent path of ROI for his or her clients. Numbers don't lie. (I have a client in Clarksville, TN who spent \$11,780 with me in 2003. In 2004 she increased her revenue by \$350,000.) It's that simple. And verify them with the coach's clients.

The Price Can Be Right

Coaches can typically fit any budget—from \$100 a month for a couple of phone sessions to several thousand dollars a month for onsite seminars with a team or one-on-one sessions. It all depends on your goals. The length of contracts will vary from coach to coach as well. Most run from six months to one year. And cancellation clauses are common if things don't work out. Just get everything in writing. And if you have a choice in payment terms, choose to pay a flat fee. Some coaches seek a percentage of how much your income increases by using that coach. My client in Tennessee saved literally thousands of dollars by paying a flat fee.

Coaches Don't Do it All

Remember, it's your destination and your trip to make. The coach assesses, guides, teaches you and helps with the road map. A coach will also give structure, inspiration and perhaps most important, challenges.



A good coach will challenge you to start to do something, to stop doing something or to change what you are currently doing—or a combination of all three. A coach helps implement the new skills and changes to ensure that you meet that challenge. Even though the work is up to you, your coach should be available almost anytime.

Hold the Cookies, Please

Avoid coaches with cookie-cutter approaches. Good coaches will first learn about your situation to customize a plan to fit your specific personality, situation and goals. Beware of coaches who offer solutions before you've even explained your business. And choose someone who knows real estate. Many coaches lump sales into one big category. You and I both know real estate is an industry unto itself with plenty of nuances.

Shake Hands with Change

Finally, be open to change. This goes back to looking over that edge. It's scary. And so is change. Einstein said insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. If you want results you're not getting currently, you'll have to change.

I chose the coaching profession because I believe each one of us has the potential to achieve greatness. I've seen potential reached hundreds of times. For some it is easy to see that potential, to grasp it and to reach it. Others need a push. Best of luck.



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