The Customer Nobody Fights For

I don't write about real estate much. Nobody wants to hear about it unless they're buying or selling a home, which is a small slice of us at any given time. So I mostly leave it alone and write about life, love, and street smarts.

But sometimes something gnaws at me until I have to say it out loud, and this is one of those times. Here it is.

Real estate may be the only industry on earth that doesn't put the seller, our customer, the one who writes the check, first. Not second. Not third. Even further back than that.

And after all these years, I still can't fully explain why.

Whose Money Keeps the Lights On?

Let me explain the check part first. When a home sells, the seller pays the commission. All of it. A class action lawsuit was settled with the intention that buyers would begin paying for their own representation. But it hasn't happened. In most every sale, the seller still pays for everything.

And the seller's money quietly fans out and funds the entire industry. The brokerages, the agents, the coaches, the conferences, the associations, and yes, the home search portals you scroll at night. Trace any dollar in this business back far enough and you land at the same table, with the same person signing the same check. The seller.

So you'd think the whole industry would organize itself around one question. How do we get that seller what they want most, the highest possible price? You'd think wrong.

Major real estate firms have built entire business models around recruiting more agents. It isn't sellers. It's agents. How to recruit more of them.

These firms are reluctant to develop, advocate, and market a better way to sell homes, one proven to put more money in their sellers' pockets. Why? Because a few of their agents, often the established ones, don't need it and don't want to change their ways. Rock the boat and they might grumble and leave.

The better way goes unspoken. The majority of agents suffer. And the seller never hears about it.

In most industries, businesses hire people to service customers they generate.

> *In our industry, businesses hire people to go out and find business.*

Your Own Home, Turned Against You

Then there are the portals. We hand them our sellers' homes, and they hand the world days on market, the price-cut history, and offer guides nudging buyers to come in under the quoted price.

Worse, the portals use your home as bait. Your photos, your description, your biggest asset attracts a buyer, and that buyer gets sold off to an agent who paid for the lead and usually knows less about your home than the buyer who clicked on it. So the buyer isn't served and the seller is harmed.

> *"Sellers fund everything we do, so serving them should be the centerpiece of everything we do."*

What Ferrari Knows That My Industry Doesn't

There are absolutely, positively ways to market a home, show it, position it, and negotiate offers, that take from the playbooks of Rolex, Ferrari and other premium brands. Done right, and I know this from experience, these strategies sell homes faster and for more money, **a lot more money.**

And here's the quiet tragedy.

> *Most homes are still sold the way they were half a century ago.*

Put it on the market. List it on the MLS and the same portals as everyone else, with marketing that looks like everyone else's. Show it. Wait. Reduce the price if it stalls.

> *That approach is based on hope and time, and it entirely misses the sophisticated marketing strategies that separate a good sale from a great one.*

And this costs sellers a small fortune in lower sale prices. The cruelest part is they never know it.

Five Questions to Ask Agents You Interview

This isn't a knock on real estate agents. Most work hard with a genuine desire to serve the sellers they represent. But they live in industry handcuffs. Nearly all the training is about how to win your listing, not how to sell your home for more money, which, when you think about it, is the finest listing tool ever invented.

The next time you interview an agent, ask a few questions and listen closely. I could give you a hundred, but here's just five.

1. Exactly what training have you taken on buyer psychology, marketing, positioning, and price negotiation?

2. What exactly, step by step, do you do during each showing to make my home shine above every competing home a buyer is seeing?

3. What's your strategy so time on the market doesn't make buyers assume my home was passed over?

4. How do you create real urgency, without pressure, so buyers make a fast, strong offer?

5. And once an offer comes in, before you bring it to me, what do you do to learn how much more the buyer will pay?

Ask. Then listen. It's not their fault if the answers come up thin. I've spent a lifetime learning these things, and I still find it hard to believe that almost no one teaches them.

> *They teach how to get a seller to sign.*
> *Selling the home for more is a different craft entirely.*

The Bravest Thing a Brokerage Could Do

The firms, big and small, could build that craft into a real program, brand it, teach it, and stand behind it. Most of their agents would do a lot more business because of it. And when a firm generates more business than its agents can handle, that's when it recruits new agents to service it.

What Is My Motivation?

I'm not trying to sell you anything. My email is greg@72sold.com. If a phone call with me can help, I'm glad to make the time. I don't list homes anymore, but I'll happily get on the phone and help you make sure your agent, the one you choose, is doing the right things.

And if you'd like to learn the home selling program I teach, it's posted for every home seller in America to see at **72HOUR.com**.

I've been fortunate and made more than enough. So none of this is about money for me. It's about an industry that has been good to me, and my stubborn hope that it will someday see the one priority, home sellers, that it should be focusing on every day.

The truth is, most real estate agents work their hearts out, with good intentions, for people they genuinely want to help. But their hands are tied by an industry with the wrong priorities.

Okay, I got that off my chest. Thanks for indulging me. Next time, back to the mystery of life, love, and street smarts.

Greg Hague **CEO, 72SOLD**