

# TOP AGENT MAGAZINE



## Lorraine Easton

When Lorraine Easton, Top Agent with RE/MAX Real Estate Solutions in Pittsburgh decided to become a REALTOR®, she already had years of experience in customer service, sales, and marketing all of which would serve her buyers and sellers incredibly well. She'd spent 20 years in retail for major department stores and specialty stores with areas of concentration ranging from buying and merchandising to recruiting and training. She'd also learned how to think outside of the box in order to earn the trust of new clients, and reinforce the existing relationships she'd forged. "I would organize community events, because I know involvement is incredibly important," she says.

With her strong background in business, expertise in marketing, and a true desire to help others, Lorraine astutely identified real estate as the perfect industry for her unique skill set. That was nearly 15 years ago, and Lorraine has never looked back.

"I built my business initially from people I already knew, but I immediately began networking. There was no Facebook, or Twitter, so I spent a lot of face-time, getting to know people in my community through networking," she recalls.

Once she had built those relationships, Lorraine knew it was up to her to showcase her talents and she has done so magnificently ever since. With a business that is roughly 60% sellers and 40% buyers, Lorraine says she never takes a client for granted. "I am very appreciative of clients. This is a huge investment they are making, so I do whatever it takes to make sure that I provide the kind of service that reflects that. Everyone is treated the same regardless of the price of their home, but I don't believe in a one-size-fits all plan for each client. Instead I think 'If this were my home, how would I like it to be shown?' I focus on the unique traits of a home, and highlight them."

To that end, Lorraine says that she is very picky about photographs, since most buyers do start their search for a home online. "I use two photographers. One shoots vacant homes, and the other photographs homes that are furnished." Lorraine has also been known to provide staging when necessary, or to hire a cleaning crew to make sure the home shines. She also has snow removal

companies on stand-by in the winter, and offers sellers free landscaping consultations so that sellers can inexpensively enhance their curb appeal. Moreover, Lorraine will call the local papers and campaign for her listings to receive premium placement in the real estate section.

Indeed Lorraine goes to great lengths when it comes to marketing, but only if those marketing efforts will have a direct benefit to her clients. With a whopping 80% of her business stemming directly from referrals, Lorraine chooses to spend her marketing dollars on her clients, rather than on marketing herself. "I do have someone who will create my home brochures, and take photographs, but this is for my client's benefit, not my benefit. I'm not looking for things to make my job easier, I am only looking to do those things that will help me to help my clients."

When it comes to working with buyers, Lorraine also pulls out all of the stops. "I have sent personal letters to homeowners, when I have buyers looking to move into a specific neighborhood. I'll request a private showing," she says.

If it sounds like Lorraine is willing to do whatever it takes for her clients that is because she is, and she's proud of that fact. "I get really passionate about my clients," she says. In fact, she admits that although she has earned many designations and has accumulated numerous awards, she's not interested in showing them off to clients. "The biggest reward or award I can earn is a referral from a happy client. That means more than anything to me."



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