
UNLEASH YOUR POWER for Realtors®

**Five Fundamentals for
your Success**

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Introduction

This book was written from my heart, because my dream and purpose in life is to help others succeed. I do not have all the answers, only my past trial and error experiences and the lessons learned through my mistakes. This is not a “how to book” on real estate basics, like how to get leads, or how to conduct a listing appointment, etc. (because these fundamentals can be easily found on the Virtual Properties Realty Agent Portal or in other books. This is a book about how our God-given talents can fit into a real estate career. If you are looking to learn the most current “how to secrets” by the most successful real estate professionals in the country then you can go to Google and type in pertinent key words like “real estate + marketing + facebook” or “farming + USPS® every door direct mail”, etc. Also, if you are willing to spend hours on You Tube, Realtor.com and the MLS resource pages and other websites, you will end up knowing as much as anyone about the most current real estate trends, tools and statistics.

Walt Disney once said: “***If you can dream it you can do it***”.

I know from experience that our real estate dreams can come true when we have the courage to harness the **five P’s**.

Find your **Purpose**,
Begin the **Preparation** process
Practice good moral **Principles**
Be **Patient**
Stay **Persistent**

It is that simple!!

The road to a successful real estate career is never boring and can be very exciting. Release your foot on the brake.

“Take chances, make mistakes. That’s how we grow. Pain nourishes our courage. We have to fail sometimes and practice being brave.” – Mary Tyler Moore

Succeeding in a real estate career is possible when your actions are in alignment with the **five P’s**.

Purpose

Our life purpose is to follow our dreams

Most successful people are visionaries. They know their God-given talents and use them to pursue careers that best suit their innate abilities. Like an appraiser who determines a property's highest and best use, we also need to assess our highest and best use for our career path. We cannot become our highest & best selves without taking leaps of faith in the direction we think is programmed in our DNA. Like a butterfly, in order for us to grow into our full potential we must first accept change. We must be willing to surrender who we are today so we can grow into our full life purpose . If we are lucky enough to be able to combine our God- given talents with our careers then a special kind of fulfillment will be felt. Over the past 75 years, I have had to adjust my sails and change my direction many times in order to avoid ending up in a place that I did not want to be. Most of my major life changes were happy and exciting while others were met with extreme anxiety and worry.

For example, the humiliation of failing first grade (one time), happily getting married (three times), joyfully becoming a mother (two times), divorced depression (two times) widowhood sorrow (once), business owner anxiety (several times), finding a soulmate at age 72 (once and forever), and retirement fantasies (not happening - love VPR too much). Looking back what strikes me the most is no matter how difficult my life may have seemed at any one time, **I GOT OVER IT!**

What is exciting about life's inevitable changes is that we are in control of our outcomes much more than we realize. If we focus our thoughts on making more money, losing weight, or finding a soulmate, etc., then we have the power to make it happen. When we align our abilities and goals with intended action in the direction we want to go, then our life purpose will eventually become our future reality.

Since 1989 most of my life purpose has evolved around trying to build a successful real estate career. In 1999 my son and I got our broker's licenses and began our real estate company with only one agent. Since then, we have succeeded in becoming one of the most successful and largest privately owned real estate firms in Georgia with over 2,200 agents and 24 employees. The success principals that we have learned over the years I would like to share with you so you can also manifest your desires, take control of your destiny, and live your life's purpose. If we can transform our natural abilities into a livelihood then that will become the sweetest success story possible. If you are considering a career in Real Estate sales then you need to first decide how much time you are willing to devote daily to this profession.

If your dream does involve real estate sales then there is no limit to the income you can make. There are many agents who have become very successful because they worked very hard .

A gauge which I use to determine which agents will make the most commission is very simple. I ask my agents two questions:

1) On a scale of 1-10 (1 being not very willing and 10 being very willing) -

Are you willing to work more than 40 hours a week building your real estate career?

2) On a scale of 1-10 (1 being very little and 10 being a lot) -

How much do you enjoy helping others?

Then I look at their answers to the two questions and that gives me what I call the “agent income predictor.” If an agent scores 10 on both test questions there is a very good chance that this agent will make well over \$150,000 a year in commissions. If an agent scores 1 on both questions then they will be lucky if they make any commission, ever.

The closer the answers are to 10, the higher the likely income the agent will make.

The only adjustment that I would make to my barometer is if an agent is just getting started in their real estate career. If they are motivated it could take at least a year to develop the skills and tools necessary to generate the income desired.

Achieving extreme success as a real estate professional involves extraordinary focus, action, courage, patience, sacrifices and a commitment to hard work. Successful real estate agents come in many different personalities. Some are soft spoken and even considered introverted while others can be loud extroverts. Defining one's success is subjective and should only be determined by the agent and what their goal is. For example, some real estate sales agents will only feel successful if they earn over \$150,000 year, while others due to family commitments, another job, or different priorities may feel successful if they are able to find enough time to supplement their income with just a few closings a year.

At Virtual Properties Realty every agent is valued and considered successful as long as they demonstrate professionalism, keep current with their continuing education and are always compliant with the Real Estate Commission regulations.

In real estate there are many career paths other than representing buyers, sellers and renters. Not everyone can handle the high stress level associated with a fluctuating commission based income. However, there are many other jobs within the real estate field that have a fixed income and may be more suitable to certain personalities. Some of these positions include: marketing manager, agent assistants, property managers, office staff, appraisers, managing brokers, recruiters, instructors, contract reviewers, bookkeeping, receptionist and others.

Whatever you decide to do **aim high!**

“Most people don’t aim too high and miss, they aim too low and hit”. – Bob Moawad

Preparation

Commit to a success plan

One of my favorite quotes by ZIG ZIGLAR is:
“Success occurs when opportunity meets preparation.”

The most successful people I know do not sit on the dock waiting for their ship to come in but find their own boat and set their sails in the direction they want to go.

When I was selling real estate as a buyer's agent I worked with a husband & wife trying to help them find their first home. She was a beautiful well-educated lady and he was a rather average looking college drop out. They could not afford much of a house because the auto shop that they owned had just opened and income was slow coming in. However, she had some money of her own which enabled them to qualify for a mortgage. Over the course of a few months I got to know her really well and learned what it was about her husband that she saw and loved so much.

She told me that she had never known anyone like him before. He was so focused, so devoted to learning what it took to succeed, and had a library full of “how to succeed” books which he read every day. She said that on slow days at the auto shop he would make shelves and label each shelf with an auto part name that he planned to buy some day. About 10 years later, they called me to see if we would list their home. I was very impressed to learn that their auto repair shop became so successful that they sold it for a huge profit and were retiring and moving to Florida at the age of 45. She told me that they had made up a plan for growing their business to the point where in 10 years they could sell the business and retire.

When I first became a buyers agent the GPS did not exist. I had a map book that I followed while driving buyers from one property to the next. Sometimes I had as many as 25 houses to show in one day which took planning. This route planning could take hours and many times it needed to be done the night before a day of showings.

To cut back on the preparation time I developed a process that took me half the time to put together a day of showings. Well ahead of time, I had made 10 reduced copies of each map page which I filed by page number. When the time came to show properties, I would find the listings that I wanted to show and hi-lighted their streets on my appropriate pre-printed map pages. Next I taped the map pages together to make one big map. Then it was much easier for me to determine the quickest route between each listing. Because I had planned ahead and prepared for situations where my time was limited, I was able to save myself a lot of time and stress.

Making a plan and staying focused on reaching a goal is very important for maximum success. I know a lot of ADD agents with focus challenges that still managed to build a successful real estate career. **I was one of them.** When my two children were teenagers I started getting restless and began thinking about what I wanted to do with the rest of my life.

I had always wanted to be a real estate agent since college and this desire was beginning to resurface again in my mid 40's. But I knew, because of my ADD, going back to school could prove very embarrassing if I failed the state real estate exam.

At the time I was married to a successful banker and money was not a problem. I had a stress-free country club life style, played tennis every day, and had a very enjoyable social life with lots of friends. Why would I want to give up my cushiony life style and go to work selling real estate? And why would I want to subject myself to the embarrassment of possibly failing the real estate exam? Well, my yearning overrode my fear and I went for it. It took me six months of continual study but I finally did pass the exam the first time around. My daughter and son also got their real estate licenses about the same time, but they took only one month from start to finish to pass their real estate exam. I was kidded a lot by them about how long I was taking to prepare for the exam but I accepted the fact, because of my ADD, that I required a lot more preparation time than they did.

My ADD is still a challenge but I have learned to compensate over the years. The biggest help for me is to make checklists and write everything down in my calendar note book. I believe the young people today enter everything into their phones. To help Virtual Properties Realty agents focus better on their goals, we have taken all my real estate related checklists and put them on the VPR agent portal.

Preparing for a successful real estate career should consist of always keeping up with the housing statistics which can be found on the MLS portals and in many real estate trade magazines. Because technology keeps changing and improving it is imperative that agents stay informed by keeping up with the newest cutting edge technologies, tools and resources available. Successful sales professionals are constantly reading all the on-line real estate trade magazines. They take all the continuing education classes offered through their company, MLS, lenders and vendors, etc.

Successful agents are well connected to all the social media platforms. They have lots of “followers” and are continually marketing themselves.

The reason preparing for success through education is so important is because the more we know the more confident we become. And the more confident we become the more we are trusted. The more people trust us the more they want to do business with us. In many sales jobs including real estate there are dialog scripts to learn and practice. Many people struggle with scripts because they don't feel natural. This is something a good sales person needs to overcome and work through. The most successful sales people I know have mastered scripts which help them overcome objections. The key to sounding as natural as possible using scripts is to read them over and over again until they become natural. When scripts are mastered, more sales will happen in a very matter of fact way.

The best way to find good scripts that are used by the most successful trainers is on the internet and You Tube. Some agents invest in coaching and attend seminars, however, from my experience there is nothing new in a seminar that you can't find on the internet.

Writing down your own personal business plan is also very helpful to a lot of agents. Finding sample business plans can be found on the internet, but best if you keep it simple. As an example:

- 1) Determining my 12 month gross commission income goal – starting now.
- 2) Deciding how I will market myself every month for the next 12 months.
- 3) Charting my progress every month on the 1st of every month

Successful real estate professionals pick their goal first then execute a plan to get there.

“If you don't know where you are going, you'll end up someplace else.” – Yogi Berra

Principles

You are what you do, not what you say you'll do.

One of my favorite stories that my father read to me as a small child was “Horton Hatches The Egg” by Dr. Seuss. When Mayzie bird asked Horton to do her a favor and sit on her nest while she took a break, Horton being the kind elephant that he was said he would be happy to do that until she came back. He never realized that he would have to endure blizzards and hunters, and that Mayzie would stay away for 52 weeks. However, Horton sat on the egg despite all his obstacles. Because he had principles and had made a promise, he continually told his teasing friends “I meant what I said and said what I meant, an elephant is faithful 100%.”

Having principles and Integrity is a decision and a willingness to **choose actions based upon values rather than on personal gain.**

My late husband was a man of principles who worked as a banker for 37 years and conducted sales meetings every Monday morning. I believe his success as a banker was due to his dedication to his principal of serving others before himself. For years he would leave our house at 6:30 every Monday morning to make sure that he would not be late for his 8:00 AM weekly sales meeting. On the Monday the week before his retirement, he got up as usual at 6:00 AM to get ready for the sales meeting. I couldn't help but ask him why he did not ask his replacement to conduct his last meeting in his place? After all the bank would not fire him after 37 years of service the week before his retirement. His reply was that he wanted to set a good example for the younger bankers coming up the rank.

My next question was after all these many years of sales meetings what was the most important thing that he learned that made a good sales person? His answer was quick and to the point.

Find out their need and satisfy it.

Sales can really be that simple if you are perceived as a caring person, with principals, and you find their need and satisfy it.

Our job as real estate agents is to become the best service person possible, with principles, not a self centered sales agent trying to make a commission. I have known agents who would only show a property which advertised the highest commission. This is wrong on so many levels. If a real estate agent does not come from a serving and caring heart then not only will their real estate career be unfulfilling, but most likely short lived due to lack of repeat clients.

When I was a buyers agent I would show a pre-qualified buyer as many houses as it took until they were ready to write an offer. Some buyers looked at 3 houses before making an offer, while others took as many as 50 showings before settling on that perfect home. I never considered looking at the commission advertised on the MLS print out.

In John Maxwell's book "The Maxwell Daily Reader" he devised the questions we must ask ourselves if we want to be a person of Principle.

(1) How well do I treat people whom I can gain nothing from?

(2) Am I transparent with others?

(3) Am I my authentic self no matter who I am with?

(4) Am I the same person when in the spotlight as I am when I'm alone?

(5) Do I quickly admit wrong doing without being pressed to do so?

(6) Do I put other people ahead of my personal agenda?

(7) Do I have an unchanging standard for moral decisions, or do circumstances determine my choices?

(8) Do I make difficult decisions, even when they have a personal cost attached to them?

(9) When I have an issue with another person do I talk to them about it, or do I talk to others about them?

(10) Do I take responsibility for my actions and not blame others for my circumstances, mistakes, or bad decisions?

Patience

“Inch by inch, life’s a cinch. Yard by yard, life is hard” - anonymous

As a broker owner I have at times listened to newly licensed, frustrated agents who were discouraged because they thought they would have more closings than they had. They wanted to blame the company so they moved around from company to company looking for the secret sauce of success only to discover that there is no secret sauce. After a few months most ended up coming back to us with a more realistic perspective.

“God has perfect timing; never early, never late. It takes a little patience and it takes a lot faith but it’s worth the wait.” – unknown

My son has told me that I am one of the most impulsive people he knows. A lot of ADD people like me seem to share this same personality trait which sometimes gets us in hot water.

In 1970 there was a study conducted by a team of researchers at Stanford University called the “The Stanford Marshmallow experiment” where delayed gratification was studied. In this experiment, 7 to 9 year old children were offered a choice between one small marshmallow immediately or getting two bigger marshmallows later if they waited 15 minutes before eating the marshmallow in front of them.

In a follow up study years later the researchers found that the children who were able to wait the 15 minutes before eating their marshmallows tended to be more successful in their chosen fields.

Sixteen years ago, when my son and I first started Virtual Properties Realty we had no idea it would become the size and success that it is today. Even if we wanted to be big in the beginning, we were not sophisticated enough to properly manage the monster it has become. Our only option at the time was to start where we were with one agent. We did not know there was such a thing called the law of compounding.

To experience the law of compounding requires patience and a willingness to invest in ourselves. It is like taking a penny and watching it double in value every day. If you did that for a month you would get a total return of over \$10 million dollars! That is the law of compounding.

We all know that outward signs of progress do not always reflect the progress going on behind the scenes. Zig Ziglar tells the story of the Chinese Bamboo Tree as an example. When the seed of the Chinese Bamboo tree is planted nothing happens until the fifth year. After four years of continual watering and fertilizing have passed, with nothing to show for it, - the bamboo tree suddenly sprouts and grows eighty feet in just SIX WEEKS. No one could see the roots rapidly growing underground. The valuable lesson learned from the Bamboo tree is that sometimes we may have to wait patiently for several years while we build a root system strong enough to support the growth to come.

Becoming more patient is a learned habit requiring discipline and a belief that a goal will eventually come into fruition. The Chinese philosopher Lao Tzu once said *“A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step”*.

All big accomplishments begin with a first step. When Neil Armstrong stepped on the moon and said *“one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind”*, that was not really the first step because the first steps began decades before by a team of aeronautical engineers. We can't reach any goal in life without taking that first step. Finding success is all about beginning with what you have and patiently taking the time to develop it one day at a time.

As long as we are persistent in our pursuit of our deepest destiny, we will continue to grow. *“We cannot choose the day or time when we will fully bloom. It happens in its own time”*. - Denis Waitley

Persistence

Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent - Calvin Coolidge

Perseverance is failing 19 times and succeeding on the 20th - Julie Andrews

“Nothing in this world can take the place of persistence. Talent will not. Nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not. Unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education is not. The world is full of educated derelicts.” – Calvin Coolidge

The more committed a person is to their dream, the more unstoppable they become. Their passion becomes a force to be reckoned with. They will not let setbacks stop them even when disappointments seem overwhelming.

Some of the greatest discoveries of all times were mistakes. Thomas Jefferson once said “I have gotten a lot of great results in my lifetime by learning from the many thousands of things that didn't work”

When my son and I first began our real estate company, we had very little money to spend on marketing. However, we knew that if we wanted to grow we needed to take the leap of faith and invest in agent recruiting postcards. We bit the bullet and spent over \$15,000 for the mailing list, post cards, printing and postage. We mailed them out and patiently waited for our new company phone to start ringing. Soon after the time the postcards hit, my son received a call on his cell phone from an agent friend who had received a card.

The first thing he said while laughing was “have you guys already gone out of business?” My son, who saw no humor in his question, said “NO!, Why would you say that?” He replied that when he called the phone number on the card a recording said that the phone had been disconnected. Needless to say we were horrified and embarrassed. As it turned out this was my fault because I mistakenly thought our phone bill was set up to be paid automatically on a charge card and it wasn’t.

At the time we thought we were doomed to failure and that we would never be looked upon as a credible company. The moral to this story is that we did not throw in the towel and give up. We may have felt wounded and discouraged but we persevered and kept going forward and growing in spite of our embarrassing setback.

Howard Schultz, the founder of Starbucks, was turned down by 217 investors before obtaining the line of credit that he needed to open his first coffee shop. In his book he says *"You have to have a tremendous belief in what you are doing and just persevere. Risk more than others think safe. Dream more than others think practical. Expect more than others think possible. Care more than others think wise. You have to believe in yourself even when 217 people don't believe in you."*

Sometimes I think back and remember when we first began our real estate company needing to open a bank merchant credit card account .

My banker husband at the time told us that no banks (including his bank) would give us this account because we had not been in business long enough. Being the persistent non-stoppable person that I was, I did not listen to him and proved him wrong by finding a bank that was not only happy to provide us with a merchant account but also with a line of credit if we ever needed it.

One of the most persistent leaders of our country was Abraham Lincoln. He failed in business at the age of 21, was defeated in a legislative race at age 22, failed again in business at age 24, overcame the death of his sweetheart at age 26, had a nervous breakdown at age 27, lost a congressional race at 34, lost a senatorial race at age 49, and was elected president of the United States at age 52. To Lincoln, defeat was only a detour and not a dead end.

Most success stories are stories of failure and a persistence to overcome the failure. When I was a freshman in high school, I wanted to be a cheerleader more than anything else in my world. All the upper class cheerleaders were beautiful, smart, popular and nice, and I wanted to be in that group.

When the tryouts came, at the end of my freshman year, I was prepared and knew every cheer that they ever did. When I woke up every morning, the first thing I did was a cheer. I had developed my jumps so high that my landings had created a huge crack in my upstairs bedroom wall. My parents always knew when I woke up because the whole house shook.

Well the day for tryouts came and went, and all my friends made the team except me. I was devastated! I should have known this would happen because my biology and algebra teachers were two of the five teachers who made the pick, and I was not one of their star (pet) students.

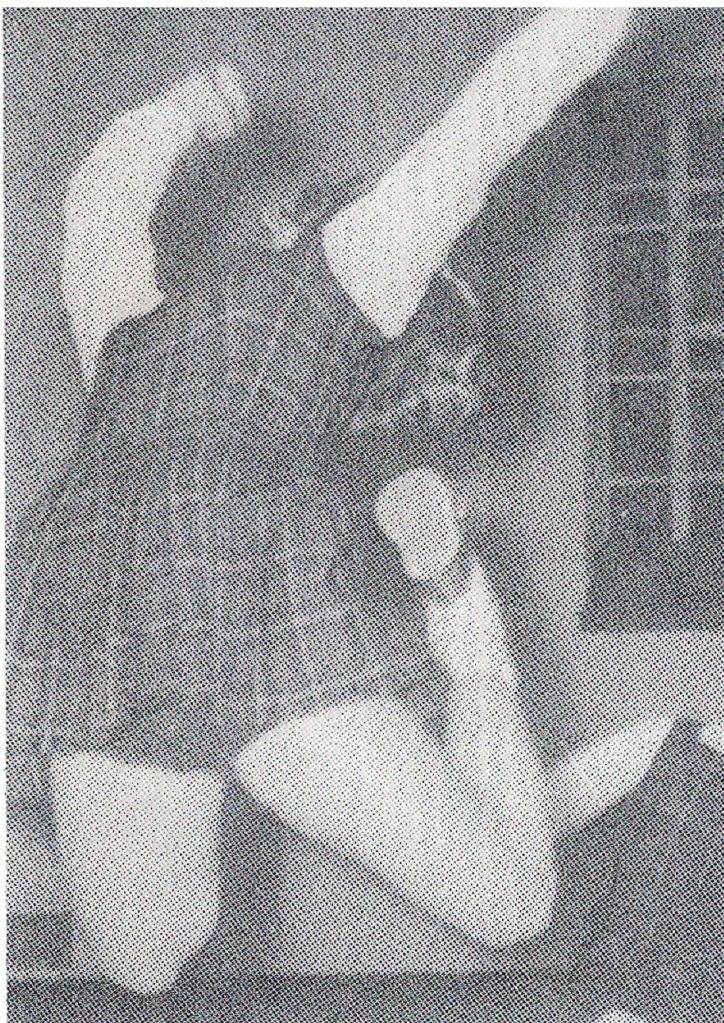
However, I did not stay down for long and was determined to get my jump so high that the teachers could not overlook me the next year.

Well, again as the luck would have it those same teachers were back and again picked their pet students. I was **double devastated!!**

Through my tears I made a determination which was that the next year at tryouts I would not be ignored because I would have the highest jump that anyone had ever seen.

Well.....I am here to tell you,
persistence does pay!!!! (see next page)

1960 High School Yearbook



Conclusion

Applying the Five Fundamentals Of Success

So what more can be said about becoming a successful real estate Agent? Probably volumes, but none of us have the time to read everything ever written. In this book I tried to sum up, from my experiences, what I believe are the basic fundamentals needed to build a successful real estate sales career. In conclusion, I would like to add to this book my favorite prayer as well as John Maxwell's top 15 qualities that successful people possess:

Trustworthiness Loyalty Fairness
Ability to listen Supportiveness Dependability
Warmth Sociability Flexibility Adaptability
Approachability Responsibility Cooperation
Generosity Reliability

Serenity Prayer

***God grant me the serenity to accept the
things I cannot change;
Courage to change the things I can;
And the wisdom to know the difference.***
