

# Solving problems face to face—be part of the solution, not the problem

## LESSON

# 14

If you want to build your business to last for years, this is an absolute. Take a look at your market. Invariably, there are agents with a reputation for being difficult to work with. Everyone knows who they are. You don't want to be that person.

In our business, conflict is inevitable. How you handle it will determine how successful your business ultimately is. Because anyone can close a transaction when everyone agrees and all the details fall into place. Those transactions rarely occur. But every time you manage conflict effectively, you give people a reason to want to work with you again; you establish your reputation as a professional. Ultimately, people choose to work with you over other agents, which leads to more sales and more profitability.

## TIPS

**1:** Overly communicate with your fellow agents to avoid unnecessary conflicts or confusion. If amidst a transaction you receive a call from the cooperating agent's client, you can certainly answer their questions (making sure they know who you are and are not representing), but afterwards be sure to follow up with the cooperating agent to make them aware of the situation.

**2:** Be clear with cooperating agents that you share a common goal: You both want buyers and sellers excited about the transaction. Don't let the stress of negotiations ruin either party's excitement about their pending life transition.

**3:** Remember, no one gets paid if the transaction doesn't close. It's not about winning; it's about finding a place where everyone is happy.

## CASE STUDY

### Case Study #16-18: Assumed Consent for Direct Contact

You hold an exclusive listing with your client. You invite another REALTOR® to cooperate on the sale with you. Soon after, the other agent brings you an offer to buy your client's house. You take the other REALTOR® with you to present the offer to your client. And then the negotiations begin.

The next day, the cooperating REALTOR® calls on your client without you, recommends that he (your client) accept his client's offer, which is less than the asking price. Your client agrees, signs the contract and the sale is closed.

After the sale, you complain to the Board of REALTORS®, charging the cooperating agent with unethical conduct for violating Article 16 of the Code of Ethics, having made second contact with your client without your consent. The other agent argued that since you brought her to the first meeting with your client, it implied your consent for additional meetings with or without you. She also argued that she needed to go alone because you presented her offer without understanding it and made a mess of it. When the Board questions you, it turns out that you had misunderstood some important considerations of the offer.

*Was the cooperating agent guilty of unethical conduct?*

**The answer is yes, she was. No one can assume they ever have the consent of the listing agent to meet with the seller; consent must be expressed every time.**



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### Instructor's Notes

- Try to create conversation; lectures are less interesting. Try to talk about personal experiences. Encourage newer agents to talk about situations that might be confusing. In the long run, dialogue is good for your business.

- The ability to listen is critical if you want to effectively manage conflict. Offer these tips for effective listening:

#### How to Listen:

- Prepare yourself
- Consciously transition to role of mediator
- Quiet your mind

#### Engage in Active Listening:

- Stop talking
- Focus on the speaker
- Take your time
- Maintain eye contact/attentive posture
- Acknowledge what is being said/suggested
- Acknowledge emotions
- Look for non-verbal cues
- Empathize
- Clarify
- Avoid assumptions
- Summarize

- For agents that miss your meetings, these lessons are also available online at [thecodeisgoodbusiness.com/va/lessons](http://thecodeisgoodbusiness.com/va/lessons).