

# Facing up to buyers that can't:

## Practical tips for helping people make decisions

### LESSON

# 5

Is there anything so frustrating as a client who won't make up his/her mind? You can literally waste hours and days trying to satisfy the changing whims of an unserious client. Face it, some people prefer shopping to buying.

The faster you can identify serious clients, the more productively (and profitably) you can spend your time working with them. But remember this, be careful how you manage your less than serious clients. They, too, may reach a time when they actually make a buy; you don't want to be left out in the cold when that day comes.

### TIPS

**1:** Consider spending time doing a needs/wants analysis with your buyer clients before starting to show them property.

**2:** If you keep showing your buyer clients properties that seem to match their needs/wants, ask if you misunderstood what they are looking for, or if you are misjudging how the properties apply to their needs/wants. Don't be afraid to ask, but be mindful how you phrase the question.

**3:** When showing properties, ask if the buyers could see themselves living in that particular house, and why or why not. Some people are poor decision makers because they need to think aloud, and appreciate someone leading them through that process.

**4:** Stay in touch with indecisive buyers through periodic emails or phone calls; if you publish regular newsletters, keep these buyers on your list. These simple touches can keep your name at the top of their minds when the day comes that they turn serious.

## CASE STUDY

### Case Study #10-3: Equal Professional Services by the REALTOR®

You are the listing agent for a house that has just sold. A woman contacts you after reading an ad you've run in the local newspaper, and you tell her that the house has already sold. The woman asks if you would help her find a house in the \$80,000 to \$90,000 price range with three bedrooms and located near schools and playgrounds. Over the next few weeks, you show your client a number of homes, all of which meet her stated criteria for price range, size, and location, but she's interested in none of them.

Shortly thereafter, your client files a complaint with the Board of REALTORS® against you, complaining that you had violated Article 10 of the Code of Ethics by failing to offer equal professional service to her because she was a woman. Your client contends that she did not receive the same professional service from you that would have been afforded to a male head of household and home seeker with the same criteria for price range, size, and location.

At the hearing, the woman expressed her complaint and concluded by saying, "It was obvious to me that he discriminated against me because I am a woman. In my opinion, he showed little interest in helping me to find a home."

In your defense, you say that you are sorry that your now former client had that opinion, but that certainly you held no such attitude as charged. You tell the Hearing Panel that you use a contact report on each prospect that includes identification information on the client, provides data on the price range, type of house and location preferred by the prospect, and records the homes shown to the prospect with information on the price, type, and location of each home shown. You present several such reports from your files, including the report pertaining to this particular client.

*Did you violate the Code of Ethics?*

**Based on the evidence, the Hearing Panel concludes that your documented evidence did, in fact, establish a clear position in which equal professional service had been offered and that no violation of Article 10 has occurred.**



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A black square with a white border. On the left side, the word "LESSON" is written vertically in white capital letters. To the right of this, a large white number "5" is centered.

**LESSON 5**

### **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.
- Ask the group for any tips they use to identify potentially difficult clients.
- Ask them to discuss techniques for prompting action from a client.
- For agents that miss your meetings, these lessons are also available online at [thecodeisgoodbusiness.com/va/lessons](http://thecodeisgoodbusiness.com/va/lessons).