



The Client Whisperer

How to *Connect* In-Person



You may be thinking, “Do you mean the Horse Whisperer?” Well, kind of.... According to *Webster’s New Millennium Dictionary*, the definition of a Horse Whisperer is a person who tames and trains horses by gentle methods and speech. Every horse, just as every client, is unique and different, but there is an underlying consistency within each new relationship; removing barriers and building trust. Sound familiar? Of course, your responsibility is not to tame horses but to put at ease and *connect* with your client! The more quickly you *connect*, the faster you can present a solution (an apartment home) to the client’s problem (needing a home)!

Connect IN YOUR GREETING:

Initial barriers exist with every new client who walks through your door. Barriers can range from distrust, intimidation, and dislike to insecurity, frustration, anger and even fear. Barriers can also be as simple as physical barriers (desks in the way, standing too close, etc.) or even cultural differences. Each one of these—even at its mildest level—can pose a barrier between you and your client, making it difficult to *connect*.

Remove Barriers and Build Trust With...

- 1. Body Language-** When your client enters your office do not wait for them to walk towards you; *move* towards them. Stand tall and present yourself with confidence and pride in your position.
- 2. Eye Contact-** Greet your client, introduce yourself and look them square in the eye. Show your confidence and transfer it to them.
- 3. A Handshake-** Offer a firm handshake. This says, “I respect you and I am here to help you.”
- 4. Empathy-** Although you may enjoy the sales experience, searching for a new home can be a stressful process for your client. Consider what your client may be going through, and then help them find their new home. *“The best way to get what you want out of life is to help others get what they want. Empathy and genuine concern encourage communication” -Zig Ziglar.*
- 5. Questioning & Listening Skills-** Ask questions to shape your conversation, and then listen to your client. If you are talking more than your client, you are not truly listening or pulling details from your client about his needs. A conversation is a relationship. Both parties must be involved.
- 6. Consistency-** Trust is built by consistency in a relationship. Make certain that the information you provide in-person is consistent with previous conversations and any published advertising or marketing materials. For example, pricing on the Internet should be consistent with the pricing presented to the client in person. Any variation could make the client feel as if they have been misled.

Connect WHILE ON TOUR:

As you leave your office and proceed on tour, new potential barriers and distractions exist. They can range from poor product presentation, to overwhelming “mental” lists, time constraints, disagreements, and even impatience.

Remove Barriers and Build Trust By...

- 1. Creating Positive Moments-** Every interaction has many “small moments”. The more positive those moments are, the more your client will begin to open up and trust you. Get to know your client’s needs and interests. Ask questions, focus on them and find common interests. Make sure that your product does not become “the barrier” by walking your community and apartments each day. Curb and product appeal should be at their best!
- 2. Making Intentions Clear and Sincere-** If a client needs a 3 bedroom and you only offer a 2 bedroom, they may not be qualified but let them know you are still there to help. Refer them to another community you manage or to a friendly competitor. When you prove that your intention is to help them, you will win over your client. This may result in referrals or a return visit in the future. There are also times when a client wants to “look around”. Express your sincere desire for them to become your resident but that you respect and understand their need to look around. Remind them you believe what you offer is a perfect fit for them. Avoid simply thanking them and giving them an application. Instead, review how your product is the solution to their problem and invite them back!
- 3. Focusing on the Client-** Sometimes your own objectives may get in the way of your client’s needs. You may be focused on leasing the oldest vacancy or the apartment with the highest bonus. If you are thinking like this, the focus is off the client and on you. Always focus on what the client needs and not necessarily what you want. If the two happen to be a match -- great!

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~ When the day is over and your client reflects on their time spent searching for a new home, they should remember you as someone who showed interest in them and truly cared about helping them solve their problem...finding a new home. ~

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