

IF YOU'VE NEVER: DONE FLOOR TIME

Floor time is a practice at some brokerages in which agents take turns answering phone calls to the general office number and handling walk-ins from potential clients. Though it largely disappeared in 2020-2022, floor time is coming back in some areas – especially urban centers and vacation spots. State law also limits aspects of listings that unlicensed agents can discuss with clients, so having a licensed agent available for unsolicited calls is beneficial. Floor time can benefit new agents by getting them leads and allowing them to practice their skills. Here are some ways to make floor time pay off.

- Always be positive and cordial on the phone. Your voice makes your first impression.
- If the caller is inquiring about a listing and the home is available, ask if they would like to set up a time to see it. Use the opportunity to get in front of potential clients and work to become their agent.
- Identify whether the caller is a potential client or a REALTOR®. If the caller is a potential client, ask whether they are already working with a real estate agent.

QUESTIONS TO ASK PROSPECTIVE BUYERS

- What kind of home are you looking for?
- What neighborhoods do you wish to live in?
- What is it about the area that you find attractive?
- NOTE: Be careful not to steer a client toward specific neighborhoods, and to follow fair housing rules. For more information, see fairhousingcalifornia.org.
- How long have you been looking for a home?
- Have you talked to a lender about getting pre-qualified for a home loan?
(Note that for some potential clients, asking about finances can be off-putting at first.)

QUESTIONS TO ASK PROSPECTIVE SELLERS

- How long have you owned your present home?
- What do you like about the neighborhood?
- When are you planning on moving?
- Where will you be going?
- What is motivating you to sell?
- Are you looking to buy another home? If so, where?

SUMMARIZE WHAT THE CALLER SAYS

An important skill for a new agent to develop is the ability to listen to and summarize the information that the client has conveyed. Use these phrases to reconfirm what you've heard and keep the conversation going.

- What I hear you saying is ...
- If I understand you correctly ...
- One of the things you are looking for is ...
- So what's important to you is ...
- Is that right?
- Is that a correct assessment of what you've said?

HANDLING WALK-INS

- Be very familiar with the office's listings and have your local multiple listing service open on your computer.
- Introduce yourself and ask how you can help.
- Ask about the potential client's current situation, their must-haves in a home, their time frame for moving, why they are interested in moving, their expectations on pricing, and whether they have a down payment lined up (if the conversation is going well – don't jump to this too early).
- Have information packets ready to hand out with your card.
- If people come in asking for rentals and you don't handle rentals, have the contact information for agents who do.