

What Makes for Success in Real Estate? Here's What Golden Real Estate Does

Last week I mentioned how Golden Real Estate was honored for coming in third among metro brokerages of our size in the number of transactions completed in 2016.

In this week's column, I'd like to share my **personal** strategy for success in real estate, which has evolved into a **company-wide** strategy serving all agents — and benefiting clients.

Decades ago I adopted what I thought was a quote by Confucius. My sister had it posted on her refrigerator. Thanks to Google, I discovered that it wasn't a quote by Confucius, but it could have been. **"Concentrate on giving, and the getting will take care of itself."** That philosophy underlies this column and its success in attracting clients for me and our agents. The time most real estate agents spend prospecting, I spend coming up with topics on which I can educate myself and then share that knowledge with my readers.

That's how journalism works. A reporter is given an assignment, learns all he can about it, and then reduces it to a concise article that summarizes what he learned. That's what I do every week — learn more than I already know about a given topic, then share what I have learned.

I never run out of topics to write about which educate the public — and thereby myself — regarding some aspect of real estate. Sometimes, I'm able to clarify or contradict statistics or statements which I see in the press or on TV. For example, is the market cooling down or heating up? Are we in another bubble? As a Realtor, I have access to raw data that allows me to address such topics in a way that general assignment reporters can't.

Giving back is important. Golden Real Estate is a member of two chambers of commerce (Golden & the West Chamber) and one business association. Rita and I are active members the Rotary Club of Golden, and I'm also a member of the Golden Lions Club. Serving in this way is satisfying in itself, and demonstrates our values.

Another business principle that underlies my practice of real estate is **authenticity**. Misrepresenting one's level of success, for example, is not only a violation of the Realtor Code of Ethics, it is not good salesmanship. I consider myself a lifelong learner and don't "know it all."

That principle expresses itself in me by being a news and public affairs sponge. I love listening to music as much as the next person, but my car radio is always tuned to the only all-news radio network we have — NPR. I often hear local real estate stories, since it's a popular topic these days, but being well informed on other national and world affairs is also important to me.

On the other hand, I have little patience for talk radio, whether conservative or liberal. I'll listen to analysis and hard news, but I consider opinions a waste of time.

A Testimonial from a Recent Client:

Jim, I always recommend your company to buy and sell homes. You and your brokers do a terrific job. My son Nathan made out so well selling both his townhomes through you and buying his Lakewood townhome and, more recently, his single family home, just a few blocks from us, through your company. So glad we know you! You and your broker associate Chuck Brown add value and integrity to real estate!

— Brenda Bronson

In terms of the day-to-day practice of real estate, I know I can't do it all, so I surround myself with a **support team**. That team includes, among others, a transaction

coordinator, a stager, a photographer, a drone pilot, several lenders, inspectors, and a handyman (who works only for our clients). That said, I don't over-delegate. I like to get my hands dirty. I'll put signs in the ground and do my own narrated video tours of each listing, including for my broker associates. Our office manager, Kim Taylor, helps with every aspect of listing and selling homes, but I'm happy to show listings, hold open houses, enter listings on the MLS, create websites for each listing, etc. **I don't just have a team, I'm part of the team.**

Another factor in my personal success is surely my **full-time accessibility**. My cell phone (see number below) is never turned off. I was in Puerta Vallarta all last week, which may come as a surprise to those clients and future clients who reached me on my cell phone and made appointments to meet with me this week. (I also submitted last week's column from Mexico.)

Experience has taught me that **"to make money, you need to spend money,"** and I never forget that. One example of an expenditure that paid off was our moving truck. I bought our first one at a convention in 2004 and it has been so useful to clients and has built so much goodwill for us among non-profits and community organizations, that I bought a second one last year. In 2008 I also

invested in a storage shed for the moving boxes and packing materials that we provide free to clients.

Another "investment" was the purchase of a 10'x20' chain link enclosure for collecting polystyrene ("Styrofoam") for recycling. We take at least one truckload per month to a reprocessing facility in Denver, keeping over 200 cubic yards of that material out of landfills every year. Our investment in 20kW of **solar panels** not only powers our electric cars and our office, it allows us to provide free EV charging to the general public. Both these expenditures send a statement about our values that resonates with our clients and prospective clients.

Back to real estate, we have been early adopters in sometimes expensive ways to improve the quality and exposure of our listings. Years before they were adopted by other brokerages, we invested in **drones** to take aerial photos and videos of our listings. We also were early adopters of **HDR (High Dynamic Range) technology** for still photographs of our listings. This produces magazine quality photographs in which every element of a picture, including the view out each window, is perfectly exposed.

By now, you may be thinking I'm a workaholic, but Rita and I do enjoy a personal life, going to the theatre, traveling often, and watching many entertainment programs at home. But when my phone rings (except in a theatre!), I answer it. I feel my clients deserve that.

Some listing agents put under "broker remarks" that "Seller requests no Sunday deadlines." What they're really saying is that they don't work on Sunday. Not me!

REAL ESTATE TODAY



By JIM SMITH, Realtor®

Just Listed: Two Great Ranch-Style Homes in Golden

I can barely touch upon the many features of the first home at **1453 Jesse Lane** (at right), which was just listed by **Chuck Brown**. Built in 2012, it has many of the upgrades demanded by today's picky buyers—porcelain tile floors, 10-foot ceilings, gourmet kitchen with slab granite counters and cherry cabinets, plantation shutters, and more. The finished basement has 2 of the home's 5 bedrooms, a family room with wet bar and plenty of storage. This home's in great condition too, being lived in only six months each year. What will really help to sell this home, however, is its location — an easy walk or bike ride to White Ranch and North Table Mountain open space parks, or to Clear Creek and downtown



Golden. For a more detailed description and guided video tour, visit this home's website at www.CanyonViewHome.info, or call Chuck at **303-885-7855**. **Open this Saturday, 1 to 3 p.m.**

Not far from the above listing and closer to downtown Golden and North Table Mountain park, is this 1960's 3-bedroom, 2-bath brick ranch, also with a finished basement, at **308 Iowa Drive**, listed by **Jim Swanson**. Its private backyard backs to the Foss Ranch. See a video tour at NorthGoldenHome.com, or call Jim at **303-929-2727**. **Open Saturday, 11am - 2 pm.**



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Jim Smith

Broker/Owner

Golden Real Estate, Inc.

CALL OR TEXT: **303-525-1851**

EMAIL: Jim@GoldenRealEstate.com

17695 South Golden Road, Golden 80401

MAIN: **303-302-3636**



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