

how to build your

REAL ESTATE DATABASE

from

SCRATCH

Are you new to the real estate industry? Did you recently relocate your business?



Maybe you're a veteran in the business but are tired of relying on conventional lead generation methods like door knocking and cold calling to fill your pipeline.

Whatever the reason, if you need consistent high-quality leads, we have a solution!

This eBook is designed to help you build your real estate database from scratch by generating referrals from people you already know and new people you meet.

Think you don't know enough people?
Think you'll seem like a pushy salesperson?
Think again!

At Buffini & Company, we've been teaching our clients how to run their business in a relational manner and generate a consistent stream of high-quality referred leads since 1996. We've helped thousands of real estate professionals just like you build the business of their dreams and enjoy *the good life*.



READ ON AND BEGIN BUILDING YOUR DATABASE TODAY!

1



What is a database?

Our lives are so inundated with technology that many times when we hear the word “database” it can sound like something related to computer software. However, we encourage you to scratch any cold, number-laden images that may come up when you think about your business database.

From now on, start thinking of your database as The Relational Asset of your business

This means that the relationships you already have, and those you will create from now on, are the number one asset in your business.

The goal is to continuously communicate your professional character and competence to these relationships and...

Ask for their referrals!

“YOUR DATABASE IS THE HEART OF YOUR BUSINESS.” ~ BRIAN BUFFINI



Where should I start?

Whether you're brand new to the business or you've relocated, the first place to start is by **making a list of people you know.**

We recommend aiming for around 100 people then grow from there!

This should include your:

- » Family & Friends
- » Business Relationships
- » Services You Use
- » Social Media Contacts
- » Sphere of Influence

Family & Friends

Parents, grandparents, in-laws, siblings, children, aunts, uncles, cousins, close friends

Business Relationships

Past colleagues, vendors you worked with in your previous career, professors/teachers (anyone who knows your professional competence)

Services You Use

Barber/hairstylist, banker, insurance agent, doctor, dentist, accountant, favorite waiter/waitress or barista, landscaper, masseuse, florist, etc.

Social Media Contacts

Your Facebook friends, Twitter or Instagram followers, and/or your email contact list

Sphere of Influence

Family friends, friends-of-friends, community and organization acquaintances. For example, church, charities, volunteer groups, parents from your children's school, and anyone you're friendly with that might not be in your closest circles.

THINK ABOUT WHO YOU MIGHT MAIL A CARD TO DURING THE HOLIDAYS



Some questions and objections that might pop up

You may have looked at some of the people we encourage you to add to your initial list of relationships and had a few objections or questions pop up in your mind, such as...

“ *I don't want to bother my friends and family about my business.* ”

Your friends and family are probably some of your biggest advocates. They want you to succeed! Including them in your database simply means you're going to be intentional about gently reminding them to send you referrals.

“ *I'm new to this area and don't know anyone.* ”

Chances are you've already made connections with more people than you realize. Have you met your mailman, found a new hairstylist, or had a conversation with the grocery store clerk? These are all people you know so... **add them to the list.**

Join organizations of interest to you and continue getting to know people. This is when you need to be a master networker!

The key is to get out there and be intentional about connecting

“ *Why should I aim for a 100 people?* ”

100 is the magic number when it comes to the ideal size for your database because it gives you enough people to get some great momentum, but it's not overwhelming to maintain. This number is likely to fluctuate over time as you add or remove people, but it's a good baseline to aim for.

YOU'VE ALREADY MADE CONNECTIONS WITH MORE PEOPLE THAN YOU REALIZE



I have a list of everyone I know...now what?

It's time to get organized and make contact with each person on your list to let them know that you're in the real estate business! This is when your list of relationships truly starts to become The Relational Asset of your business. It's the first time you're connecting with each person as a real estate professional.

Look at your list and make sure you have everyone's full contact information. This should include mailing address, phone number, and email address. If you're missing one of these, this gives you the perfect opportunity to make contact, ask for their information, and start a dialogue about your new career. This is a good time to decide how you're going to manage this information.

We recommend using a Contact Relationship Manager (CRM) designed for the real estate industry. We created **Buffini & Company's Referral Maker** specifically for professionals who Work by Referral. **Try a FREE 30 day trial** to see if it's right for you. Regardless, start organizing your database now to avoid getting overwhelmed later.

MAKE SURE YOU HAVE CONCISE CONTACT INFORMATION

Making first contact

What do I do?

You get to tell everyone you know that you've started a new career and you're planning to build your database with referrals they send to you.

Send everyone in your database a letter via snail mail, let them know you're in the real estate business and you plan to work primarily by referral.

TIP: USE YOUR NEW COMPANY LETTERHEAD AND INCLUDE YOUR BUSINESS CARD.

You'll want to set the expectation that you'll be keeping in contact by sending them valuable information on a regular basis and give them the Gentlest of Reminders...

“Oh, by the way®...I'm never too busy for any of your referrals.”



MAKING FIRST CONTACT IS EXCITING!

Making first contact

What do I say?

Follow-up your introductory letter with a phone call. Make sure they have received your announcement and let them know you're excited to be in business and

“ Oh, by the way...I'm never too busy for any of your referrals.”

TIP: REMEMBER TO SHARE YOUR ENTHUSIASM ABOUT YOUR NEW BUSINESS, EVEN IF YOU HAVEN'T CLOSED YOUR FIRST TRANSACTION YET. (ENTHUSIASM - I AM SOLD MYSELF)

You'll want to make sure they don't already have a real estate professional they use and/or refer exclusively. Maybe someone in their family is already their trusted advisor in the industry and that's great!

Knowing who you can count on to be an advocate for your business will help you prioritize the relationships in your database. Use the sample dialogues on the next page to help you easily initiate this conversation. We call this the **Mayor Campaign** since you're essentially finding out if you can count on their vote.



OH, BY THE WAY...I'M NEVER TOO BUSY FOR ANY OF YOUR REFERRALS



The Mayor Campaign

Oh, by the way...If you were buying or selling a home, or had a friend or family member who was, am I the person you'd refer them to?

No.

Let them know...It's great they have someone they trust to work with, and if that ever changes, you'll always be here to help.

Yes.

Let them know...

You'll be keeping in touch and are happy to take excellent care of anyone they refer to you.

When meeting new people, you can also use the Mayor Campaign in a slightly different manner. It's inevitable that you'll be asked what you do for a living when first getting to know someone. This is a perfect opportunity to add new relationships to your database:

Oh, by the way...If you were buying or selling a home, or had a friend or family member who was, do you have an agent you would refer them to?

Yes.

That's great, it's important that you have a qualified professional to work with.

No.

Well, I'd like to be that person...And from time to time I come across valuable real estate information that everyone finds helpful. Would you like to receive that?

Sure!

OK, great. Where's the best place to send it?

For those of you who are new to the area, make sure to notify your friends, family, colleagues, and past clients that you're moving or have moved using the same technique outlined above, but ask them if they know anyone in your new area. You never know who might have a great contact waiting for you in the place you now call home.



Do I just wait for the phone to ring?

At this stage it can be tempting to feel like you've done enough to sit back, relax, and wait for the phone to ring with referrals. However, for many new real estate professionals generating their first referrals can take a little time.

Our guess is that you want to start filling your pipeline as quickly as possible, so we suggest you implement some conventional lead generation strategies in a relational manner. Examples of conventional strategies for generating leads are: **sign calls, floor time, ad calls, walk-ins and internet leads.**

Typically, these leads are inquiring about a property and just want some quick information. Many agents miss an opportunity to create a relationship with these leads because they lack the communication skills and confidence required to simultaneously **answer questions and also ask questions** to uncover the true need of the person calling or walking-in the office.

While we might not be able to cover the all of the communication skills you'll need to succeed in business in this short eBook, we encourage you to do one thing:

Ask the right questions.

You have to first provide value by answering questions and then discover needs by asking questions.

CHECK OUT BUFFINI & COMPANY [RESOURCE HUB](#) TO HELP SHARPEN YOUR COMMUNICATION SKILLS



The Office Adoption Letter

It's likely there are agents in your new office that are getting ready to retire or transition out of the business. This is when we'd recommend using the **Office Adoption Letter**. Inquire from one of these agents, or your broker, about past client files that are not being optimized. This should give you a list of people who have done transactions with your company that you can introduce yourself to, add to your database, and provide value to on a regular basis. **Here is an example of the letter you'd want to send:**

Dear [Name],

As a representative of the company which assisted you during your recent real estate [transaction /financing], I'd like to take a moment to introduce myself. My name is [Your Name] of [Company Name]. It was a pleasure for us to serve you the last time, and we would love the opportunity to help you again in the future.

In the meantime, if I can be of help to you in dealing with any [real estate/mortgage]-related questions, please call me at any of the numbers on the business card I've enclosed. I will be more than happy to help you.

In the near future, I'll be contacting you to introduce myself personally and inform you of a whole host of complimentary services available to you because you are a valued client of [Company Name].

Yours Sincerely,
[Your Name]

TIP: REMEMBER TO USE YOUR NEW COMPANY LETTERHEAD AND BUSINESS CARD.