

The Real Estate
Instructor

at

Troublesome Creek



Realty

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Introduction

I am the real estate instructor at Troublesome Creek Realty (TCR).^{1, 2, 3}

As the instructor my duties include:

- updating company management and agents on recent law changes.
- teaching pre-license courses to salespersons and brokers.
- instructing all aspects of required and elective continuing education.

Besides working with TCR, I am allowed to teach anyone desiring real estate education. This includes members of the public and licensees from other companies. My students include: bankers, lawyers, investors, city officials, brokers, salespersons and even commissioners from the state regulatory agency.

I travel to various regions of my state when presenting. I've put a lot of miles on my vehicles, slept in a lot of strange hotels and eaten a toxic diet of food. My classrooms have been freezing cold conference rooms, sweltering hot college classrooms and placid green lawns situated near beautiful lakes, rivers or golf courses. It's all been so vastly interesting, loads of fun and lots of hard work.

Instructing real estate courses has been an adventure far beyond my wildest expectations. Like many instructors, maybe even yourself, I found real estate education far more interesting than teaching most other bodies of knowledge. It probably had something to do with being an adult when I began my studies; adults may have a more mature view of life compared to younger people. (The study of teaching adults, andragogy, is a different skill compared to teaching children, pedagogy.) It probably had something to do with real estate being a visible, physical object that could be bought, traded, rented or sold for a profit. But of course, real estate, as we all soon learned, not only included the physical but also the invisible aspects of the property such as subjacent/lateral support, easements, air space plus others. There were psychological aspects of the positive aura of a famous property or the negative stigmata caused by a murder or ghosts (it intrigues me that a real estate broker in New York was sued for ectoplasmic fraud for not saying "boo" about the presence of ghosts in the home!—but the court reasoned: "who you gonna call?"). I find all of these things just so vastly interesting. Teaching real estate has been an extremely interesting profession.

The purpose of this course is to present various aspects of teaching real estate education. This course is meant to be a practical course dealing with all kinds of topics: promoting mandatory classroom attendance; managing difficult students; choosing the perfect class room; comparing new and old teaching technologies, plus many others. I certainly will include theories of learning as it applies to numerous situations. For the greater part, however, this course promotes the hands-on aspects of instructing real

estate courses.

I've had a lot of enjoyment writing this course; I hope you have enjoyment completing it.

Sincerely, Brad Hanes

¹this course is not intended to be used as a substitute for competent legal advice.

²the Real Estate Commission does not necessarily agree with the opinions of the author of this program.

³Troublesome Creek Realty is a fictional real estate company created only for use in this course. To my knowledge there is no Troublesome Creek Realty anywhere in the U.S. However, all real estate companies may have gene-pool traces of Troublesome Creek Realty in them. Any possible or implied parallel between any actual company and this fictional company is unintended.

Chapter # 1 Getting the Seminar Started and Finished

Overview: this chapter covers practical information for beginning the seminar, for enabling student learning from the first teaching moments and for knowing methods for enforcing mandatory classroom attendance.

Learning Objectives

As a result of studying this chapter, you should be able to:

- Recite several different strategies for beginning the learning session.
- List speakers who might have great talent for focusing the student's attention from the first moments of the seminar.
- Recall strategies for making certain all students attend all learning sessions in compliance with state regulations.
- Summarize practical tips for gaining student cooperation regarding mandatory classroom attendance.
- Recite near disasters caused by instructors failing to maintain classroom decorum.

Getting the seminar started: the 45 minute "wasteland"

Here at TCR I find that real estate agents come to class with many mental distractions: newspaper advertising deadlines; numerous text messages requiring attention; web sites needing updating, etc. The real estate agent is a multi-tasker. How is it possible to get the agent tuned-in on what you are saying? Whatever method you use to start the seminar, you've got to be good at understanding the competition for your students' focus and attention.

Look at the following quotation. If it is true, we must make modifications to deal with this truth!

"the real estate student learns nothing during the first 45 minutes of a continuing education seminar."

I review that statement before starting a class. I don't know who coined the phrase. I don't even know where I heard it, but I believe the statement to be true and review it frequently. This statement is certainly not true in every situation, but will help every instructor take careful aim at how they begin their presentation.

She was one of the last students to be seated. The weather was cold and she was wearing a coat. At the end of the first session, I announced a ten minute break. This lady leaned over and placed her head on the shoulder of the student sitting next to her. She then fell off her chair and onto the floor. I thought she had died; there appeared to be loss of body fluids and my conclusion was she was dead. We made the 911 call for an ambulance, but within a few moments she resuscitated and was acting normal. I begged her to go to the hospital, but she insisted on finishing the class. My guess was she had all the early morning adrenaline working in her system ("I can't be late for class or they won't let me in and I must renew my license at the end of the month and the weather is terrible and. . .") and all that energy collapsed within her at that first break.

The point is this: students are thinking about a lot of things as they enter the classroom. As instructors, we compete for their attention. We fight to make certain that learning takes place during every moment of the presentation.

Getting the seminar started: back-to front

Here's my strategy: beginning at the back of the room, I work my way forward, using a lower speaking tone, greeting students at each table. This is easier compared to standing at the front of the room demanding everyone's attention. Working my way from back-to-front, table-to-table gives a message to the students different than the instructor beginning the program from behind the lectern at the front of the room. Maybe the message is one of being personable or flexible or willing to vary the instructional delivery style or letting the students know I am one of them or that I'm not afraid of them. The back of the room may be made up of people who want to sit and talk or text or answer emails. If I work my way from the back of the room moving toward the front, the students get the message that the back of the room is part of my teaching domain as is every part of the room. No special privilege for students at the back. I started my lecture at the back of the room and I can instruct from the back as well as any other part of the classroom. I am not teaching in fear of my students. This seems to get the students focused on the seminar right from the first moment. Why waste the first 45 minutes of the class. Let's get the students thinking about what they are about to learn. Every one has seen an instructor stand at the front of the room and yell to everyone to "be quiet." That "yelling" is hardly professional. That "yelling" hardly sets the tone for a good learning session.

Getting the seminar started: speaking rate

You've seen it done several ways. The instructor starts the seminar with a loud voice and a rapid, machine gun speaking rate. The instructor who says a few words and pauses numerous times and starts the class like a locomotive using powerful small tugs to put the train into motion. The instructor who remembers the high school or college speech class experience of starting the presentation with an intriguing question or an interesting story.

Me? I like the slow "locomotive" approach. The slow, deliberate, thoughtful, contemplative pause style of starting the class is the best way for me, but there are exceptions. Exceptions: #1. Your presentation will only last a short time, say 15 minutes or less. You will need high energy for every moment of your presentation. #2. Someone else has started the lecture, you are not the first presenter and the students are zeroed-in on the subject. #3. Your beginning style has worked for you for years and your students continue to return to your presentations bringing their friends—you must be doing something right!

Getting the seminar started: experimentation

"Getting the seminar started" will always be an important skill for the instructor. The best technique? Experiment. Try it different ways. Watch other teachers. One of the greatest speakers I've ever heard is Tony Evans, Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship. He's the master at getting started and getting the crowd on

task. Very slow at starting, very contemplative, a master at using pauses, . . . Look him up on youtube. Donald Trump is an excellent communicator, in my opinion—watch how he starts every speaking session. He repeats a lot; must be something to that. I think Trump is a great teacher. Judge for yourself.

Experiment with different styles. Come to your own conclusions. Experimenting with teaching styles is pure pleasure for me. Figuring out what works is half the fun of teaching. It's fun to try different techniques. Find what works well for you.

Mandatory attendance rules: keeping students in the classroom during the teaching sessions
I had just announced rules that students were to remain in class for the entire session: "if you get a phone call, you must wait for the break to respond."

As soon as I had made that statement, a student got a call, stood up and walked out of the room. I intercepted him and said, "Larry, is that an important call?" Larry responded: "How will I know unless I answer it? Talk about an existential answer! Just then another student, about age 25, also walked out. When I asked why he was leaving he responded, "I think I'm passing a kidney stone!" His pain was obvious to me and to the other students.

Today, when I make the mandatory classroom attendance notification, I let my students know that there are exceptions to the rule. "But you must let me know ahead of time!" Certainly a medical emergency is reason to exit the room, but there is no free time. You must make up time even if there is a medical emergency. One guy was leaving the room at will. He said he was coordinating three 1031(a) tax-deferred exchanges and that was reason for him to be absent. Another student was keeping record of each minute of class he missed. No mercy from me! "You must make up every moment you miss!" He wasn't happy with me, but I wouldn't sign his certificate until he made up the time. I could have told him to call the regulatory agency and see if they'd forgive his absences; they'd tell him the same thing as me. He returned to another class a couple of years later and we got along just fine.

Mandatory attendance rules: monitoring classroom attendance

Some states require classroom monitors, a person, to insure mandatory attendance. The monitor keeps records of student attendance. The monitor is certified to the regulatory agency when the course receives approval. The monitor sits at the back of the classroom tracking and enforcing attendance rules. Sounds like a workable idea.

I think the story goes like this: certain students left during the first break and didn't return for session #2. During session #3, the missing students returned and rotated out with their friends. These friends then went absent, but returned to rotate during session #5. Session #6 was the last session of the day. Unbeknownst to the missing students, empty chairs had been removed during one of the sessions; in order to get a certificate, the students had to be present during the last session. Some students told me it was hilarious to see two students straddling the same chair.

Similar story. Students check in for the first session, leave during the first break and return only for the last session. The instructor was willing to give the absentees continuing education certificates! Other students angrily protested the instructor's willingness. The situation became heated; the absent students did not receive class credit.

When I hold classes at Troublesome Creek Realty I know that agent offices are just around the corner.

It's tough getting them away from their offices and into the classroom for every minute of every session, but I do my best at this. Maybe the solution is to hold the seminar off-site. If I can get a location remote from the TCR main office and into a hotel or conference center, the attraction of their offices is diminished and my success improves.

I want to get along with my students and don't want to be harsh or mean when it comes to violators. I have established rules for all students. I will stay and make up time with students. Students who have good reasons for being late warrant a makeup session at the end. Most students arrive on time and follow the rules; others are just habitual in their unacceptable behavior. The last thing I want is yelling or name calling or a student who turns violent and threatens the safety of other students. "A soft answer turneth away wrath." This is a good way to handle it. I need to be cool, calm and in total control of myself. If I can honestly do it, I'll try to empathize with the student. Maybe I'll try something like this: "I don't know if I can meet your needs." Instead of telling the student of their nasty behavior maybe they are able to take hints.

Here's another: "I don't think that is going to work." I heard that statement used at a sports center. Members were taking wrongful advantage of an opportunity. The director approached the members, didn't identify their behavior but just told them, "I don't think that is going to work." The members immediately changed their behavior. The members were not told of their errant behavior but the words, "I don't think that is going to work" had strong implications. The members immediately responded in a positive way. I can hardly wait to try that technique in my classroom. If it works it will save me a lot of explaining and expended energy!

I personally call my students and remind them of the class time and location. Often I talk to the students directly. During this pleasant confirmation call I will just say a few words to certain students and get assurances from them of my expectations from them. That seems to work well. In forty years of teaching I've only had heavy words with about three (3) students; all of these students continue to be loyal students. I conclude, at least in those situations, correcting student behavior has resulted in positive change and has not hurt student enrollment. In some cases it has improved my relationship with those students.

During the first few minutes of class I share the rules with students including the full time attendance rule. Here's the problem: students who arrive late don't get a chance to hear the rules. Solution? -- start teaching the class material; after about ten minutes explain the rules. Late students will then have opportunity to hear the rules. This strategy works. When they understand your passion for proper classroom decorum they will cause fewer problems.

Everyone arrived at class in a timely manner, but at the conclusion of the first break a student was missing. I asked the class if they knew the whereabouts of the student. "We can't continue unless we find this student," were my words to the class. I exited the room, found the student talking on his phone and got him back in class. No one was late the rest of the day. Everyone took class attendance seriously when they observed my action in locating that missing student.

Here's another strategy dealing with full-time classroom attendance. Schedule the class for an extra 30 minutes. (Let's see now. Each session is 50 minutes with six sessions. Six times 50 minutes equals 300 minutes.) Make the class sessions 330 minutes for a six hour class. That gives everyone 30 minutes to be late or make phone calls or be late from lunch or just any reason that they like. They attended 300 minutes but were absent for 30 minutes; they qualify for full time classroom attendance. Some students will object, observing that they didn't miss any time and therefore are entitled to extra credit continuing education.

Here is my favorite motivator for full-time classroom attendance. "Ladies and gentlemen, I love the material that we are covering today and I am able to take this six hour class and stretch it into eight hours. Besides, when class is finished I'm just going back to a lonely hotel room with nothing to do. "Hello Walls!" I might as well just stay here and continue teaching the class materials and you all are such wonderful people. I certainly won't be lonely tonight. Here's the deal: if I see a lot of people returning late from breaks, I'm just going to slow down my speaking rate and I assure you I can stretch teaching this material for another couple of hours. I love this material, I enjoy teaching it and I really like you folks. The opposite is also true: if I see students keeping their energy level high and returning promptly after each break, I'll keep my energy high and I might even get done with all the material a few minutes early. That could mean an early get-out time if I finish all the learning objectives!" This works. Amazingly, students will try hard to earn an early dismissal, if only it is a couple of minutes.

Anyway you face it, keeping the agents in the classroom for the required time is a chore. Experimentation may be the answer. Try different techniques and see what improvements arise as you follow some of the strategies listed above.

Some of these techniques and strategies have really improved the quality of education at Troublesome Creek Realty!

Chapter #2 The Perfect Classroom and Expecting the Unexpected

Overview: This chapter describes difficulties in teaching caused by faulty conference room design or the irresponsible staff managing these conference rooms.

Learning Objectives

As a result of studying this chapter you should be able to:

- Carefully analyze the positive physical features of a conference room for your students' learning needs.
- Explain how wall, floor and ceiling surfaces may hinder good communication.
- List sources of "white noise" and ways to eliminate it.
- Describe the shape of a good classroom.
- Describe the lighting in a good classroom.
- List problems students may encounter when deciding to meet outdoors or near a lake or park.
- Recite problems caused by incompetent hotel staff.
- List reasons for not using community college classrooms.
- Explain why "eye contact" may be a good barometer for determining successful teaching.

The conference room at Troublesome Creek Realty

Troublesome Creek Realty decided to build a new office building. They included me in the planning stages. I gave my recommendations for the conference room. Initially, an architect proposed plans and specifications for the conference room. At least the architect got it right for compliance with American With Disabilities Act, but that's about all! I'm so glad I got involved.

Here are some of the amenities prescribed by the architect:

- Hard surface floors; smooth plastered ceilings.

- Recessed canister ceiling light fixtures with floodlight bulbs.
- Restrooms with access from inside the meeting room.
- Patterned wallpaper on all walls.
- Long, narrow meeting rooms.
- Low ceilings.
- Hard plastic chairs lacking seat cushions.
- Ceiling pull-down projection screen positioned front and center in the room.
- Vertical ceiling support poles in the middle of the room.
- Electrical outlets on one wall only.
- Windows on the south, east and west sides of the classroom.
- flimsy wall curtain partitions between the classroom and the mechanical room.
- Heating/air conditioning appliances located on the roof of the conference room.
- Heating vents, air conditioning vents, fresh air vents blowing directly onto the student seating area.

The architect's specifications will impede student learning.

First thing I wanted to know: what university granted this architect his degree?
The Jim Beam and Jack Daniels School of Architecture?

The ideal classroom should be designed for optimum student learning. This means that all distractions should be reduced.

The room will echo because of the hard floor and ceiling finishes. Persons with hearing disabilities will be disadvantaged.

With heating and air conditioning units on the roof, the room will fill with white noise; white noise has always reduced student participation in my classes. White noise requires more effort to project the instructors' voice above the white sound level. In one of my meeting spaces the white sound came from vending machines, ice makers and the HVAC air handler system. Management turned off the air handler and everything went much better.

Bathroom entrances within the meeting room make for all sorts of distractions, smells and hilarious intestinal sounds. Locate all restrooms away from the meeting room.

Poorly located windows allow too much sunlight, heat and glare during afternoon classes.

The room divider curtain must be properly designed for soundproofing.

Pull down screens located near the front wall are okay if positioned diagonally across one corner, unfortunately, they are often placed in the middle of the front wall. This makes poor use of room space and efficiency. I use two types of projection systems when teaching; the front and center pull down screen proves very inconvenient.

The closer the room dimensions are to being “square,” the more I like the room. I despise long narrow rooms. It’s hard to be personable with students who sit near the rear of a long room. It is more difficult to project your voice in a long room. It is more difficult for students to see certain visuals over a long distance.

Low ceilings in homes and conference rooms are not desirable. Try to get a room with ceilings of adequate height.

With only one wall outlet for electrical cords, extension cords are going to be snaking everywhere across the floor. The breaker box will be over loaded and students subjected to possible tripping hazards. Each wall should have ample outlets.

Canister light fixtures with floodlights cause problems: 1) They increase heat within the room, 2) Students must look through the extreme glare caused by canister lighting. I love fluorescent or long tube LED ceiling lights.

Support poles located anywhere within the classroom obstruct vision and learning. There are good reasons why support poles, columns and other obstructions generate sub-par ticket prices at athletic events.

It is very obvious when students do not make good eye contact with me. In one setting it was very noticeable. Here’s what I found: the room partition curtain was retracted and located behind me. That caused the appearance of long, slender edge lines of the folded curtain. For some reason this made it difficult for students to look at me. It was an optical illusion of sorts. Solution: I tipped a long table vertically in front of the curtain, which solved the problem. Here’s another teaching situation with a similar problem. Some of the walls of the conference room had patterned wall paper of different shades of color. Again, it was difficult for students to look at me with such a background. Solution: I found a wall painted white and tried to present near it. Be careful wearing shirts or blouses with pinstripes. Same problem: it will be hard for students to make good eye contact. Why is it important for student-teacher eye contact? I try to *read* my students. Their eye contact gives me clues as to how well my message is being conveyed. Body language reveals much regarding the effectiveness of your teaching. Difficult topics made easy? Students in a fog? Boring and uninteresting presentation? Watch the students’ body language and watch their eyes; these two (2) items are critiques on your teaching. Glaring canister lights, room obstructions and wall coverings are enemies of a good learning environment.

I have one of the best classrooms ever! It’s located right on one of the most popular lakes in my state. During breaks students walk on the decking and could even cast a line if they brought their fishing poles. Great location and rave student reviews, but the chairs are very uncomfortable plastic chairs with absolutely no seat cushioning. (I even called my students and told them to bring pillows; one student thought I was kidding and wanted to know how much sleeping was included in the class registration fee: “Not for sleeping but for sitting—the chairs are hard!”) We were there for five days straight and six (6) hours a day; no one really complained and few people even used their pillow the second day. Maybe I’m making

too much out of comfortable seating. Same great location, but the ceiling vents blew directly onto the students. I turned the climate control system off during the class, but back on during the break. That seemed to solve the problem. If there is a single significant classroom feature which can make or break a location it is poor climate control.

You may want to consider other venues for teaching. If the weather is nice, consider meeting outside in a shady area. You won't be able to set up much technology outside, but the students may appreciate the effort. Let your students give their input: "it's a beautiful day and I was hoping you could give me your opinion about having one of our sessions outside?" Some may voice their opposition to meeting outside because of allergies or possible insect bites or difficulties walking in the grass. Make your decision and try outdoors as an alternative to the traditional classroom. I heard of an instructor who took the class to a local bar; several students got a little drunk including the instructor. Keep your classes out of bars.

The conference center was built at Troublesome Creek Realty. Because of the suggested changes, it's truly a great place to teach!

Classroom worse case scenarios

Instructors want the best learning environment for their students. The rookie teacher isn't knowledgeable what difficulties may arise. Experienced instructors have accumulated an entire inventory of horror stories.

Here's a list of the few worse case scenarios that I have experienced.

The hotel conference room was next to a bar; I forgot to tell the students not to drink while attending the class. I can't describe how obnoxious one student became after a few drinks.

I was teaching without a microphone; the presenter next door was using a microphone and had the volume jacked up on high.

Landscapers decided to mow the grass just outside the conference room.

The local judo club was throwing members onto the mat next to my seminar room. It was humorous listening to all the judo yells they would make during their class.

The hotel staff was experiencing rapid turn-over. The meeting room was not set-up by class time.

The hotel staff was experiencing rapid turn-over. Even though I reserved the classroom, the room was rented for a different event.

The hotel staff was experiencing rapid turn-over. Even though I reserved the classroom, workers were tearing out the walls during the scheduled conference dates.

The room was cold during the December end-of-year class. Students were able to see their own breath. Staff promised to send maintenance to fix the heating unit. Maintenance informed me the valves in the steam pipes had been rusted shut for years and refused to fix them.

The room was cold during the December end-of-year classes. The furnace was not functioning properly. Management was waiting for a special furnace part; on the last hour of the last day the part arrived and the furnace was fixed.

I woke up early and turned on the television. A local television station showed video of a fire at the hotel where my seminar was scheduled. All events were canceled. I had to make other arrangements. What a mess!

Community Colleges cancel classes with even the slightest threat of bad weather. My room was filled with students who had traveled from all parts of the state and even other states. I was informed by the college staff that "the campus will close in 45 minutes and everyone must leave." I had no contingency plan and had to tell students to go home or stay over night and hopefully the college would re-open the next day. (Don't hold seminars at community colleges in the colder climates. College staff seem too eager to cancel their classes.) Solution: hold your seminars at a hotel. Hotels thrive on bad weather. You can teach all week long and your students can check into one of the rooms. One of the best decisions of my life was to eliminate community colleges as a possible teaching site.

Same community college as above. The class was starting late Friday afternoon and continuing all day Saturday. The college had thirteen buildings. Heating and air conditioning was controlled off-site. College staff forgot to tell the maintenance staff to turn on H/AC in room # ____ of building # _____. Luckily, security staff was able to resolve the issue.

Same community college as above. The seminar room had an extremely complex heating- air conditioning system. When the room reached the right temperature, the heat and air conditioning would rotate off and on to keep the room at an exact temperature. It was terrible. During one minute you would be too hot and the next too cold. It was the ultimate "shake and bake" classroom.

The President of the United States had decided to use the same conference center which I had scheduled nine months prior. Secret service agents demanded hotel management to cancel all events for security reasons. Hotel management found a sub-par meeting room to host my event.

Same hotel as above. There was a fire in the electrical box and all events were canceled. I think this happened just 24 hours before the scheduled class.

My class had been in session for one hour. Tornado sirens went off and all students were ushered into the basement of the hotel. (One student told me that each student needed to make their own decision regarding their own safety. I agreed and mentioned optional safety plans, but let them decide for themselves.) At the same hotel, 200 high school girls were enrolled in a cheer leading camp. My students and the cheerleaders shared the storm shelter. Every time the lights flickered, the cheer leaders screamed. (I informed my students that if they had a son or a grandson and did not inform them of the cheerleading camp that) Four days later the same thing happened again. Somehow we were able to complete the course and issue certificates.

I reserved the basement of a bank building for a seminar. I had never visited the bank or the meeting room, but was told the bank was newer and of excellent design. The class was scheduled for 4pm to 10pm; the weather was hot and the month was August. Seventy (70) people convened in the bank basement and class began. We all quickly realized that the basement had no air conditioning and no venting of any kind. If ever students had reason to complain it was during this class. Not a single student complained! What a group of students! The lesson I learned was to always check out meeting space before reserving the meeting room.

The meeting room was designed to hold 30 students classroom style. Very nice classroom. Problem:

only one restroom and the restroom was for one person. Management understood the problem and opened up unoccupied hotel suites for my students at no additional charge to me.

It is impossible to predict all of the problems which may arise at your seminar location. Good news: I survived all the situations described above.

Chapter # 3 Myths about Teachers and Teaching

Overview: Myths have arisen regarding real estate teachers and teaching. This chapter explores some of these myths.

Learning Objectives: as a result of studying this chapter you should be able to:

- Recite reasons why good teachers must also be good salespersons.
- Analyze the premise that adults don't like to study outside the classroom.
- Recall the selling technique of impressing students with the benefits of learning outside the classroom.
- Debate whether prelicense courses have any relevance beyond passing the licensing examination.
- Recall an experience of the author during the board of REALTORS indoctrination program.
- Demonstrate to students how prelicense education may be used to solve difficult real estate transactions.

The instructor as a salesperson

I want to visit with you about teachers being salespersons.

There is a perception that real estate salespersons go into teaching real estate because they are not good selling real estate.

I tell this joke in some classes: "Those who can't sell, teach. Those who can't teach go to work for the regulatory agency revoking the licenses of those agents who can sell!"

My belief is that teachers must be good salespersons! As an instructor you must *sell* your students on knowing the law, the license law, consumer protection law, etc. You must *sell* them on knowing these things. Good instructors must be good salespersons!

This teacher-salesperson thing? I discovered this when my children were young. My oldest child came home from 1st grade and said he had been tested for musical aptitude. The music teacher thought he should enroll in Suzuki violin lessons. Eventually all three of my children studied Suzuki violin from an early age. Over the years I've attended over 700 of their violin lessons. They all got into All-State orchestra, two played in the community symphony and one got a college violin scholarship. They had many teachers. Because I was also a teacher I enjoyed watching their music teachers in action. Their high school violin teacher was among the best. Before retiring, he built a high school symphony orchestra of about 150 players. Anyone with a nodding acquaintance with music programs might agree 150 players to be a huge high school orchestra.

I watched this man carefully. He was a great teacher, but was a better salesman. He sold the students on practicing and how to practice. He was always, and I mean always, in a pleasant mood. He never shamed the children, always encouraged them and gave appropriate compliments. My wife and I had

few difficulties getting our children to practice. They enjoyed the lessons and they loved to please their teacher. He was a real salesman! He was a legend in my community. Other teachers were great teachers but wow! — he was a sensational teacher-salesman!

My guess is that good instructors are good salespeople. They have to be. Instructors must be careful to persuade their students to be more zealous in their endeavor to protect the public.

Also, good instructors are good salespersons to themselves. They must sell themselves on diligent classroom preparation.

Here are some issues for which teachers must successfully persuade their students: (the following list is illustrative, certainly not restrictive)

- Knowing contract law, its terminology and contract enforcement.
- Knowing finance law, its terminology and application.
- Knowing title issues and general aspects of abstracts, lawyer title opinions, title insurance and title guaranty.
- Convincing students to study outside of the classroom!

That last one is huge! Convincing students to study outside of the classroom is a must!

It is generally believed that adults will not study outside of the classroom. Most tested real estate continuing education courses are designed for a test at the end of the day. Why a test at the end of the day? There could be several reasons for this. One reason could be adult resistance to take-home assignments.

It's different in college and high school. In higher education, you have a test at certain intervals and are expected to study one or two hours for each hour in the classroom. In college, the semester examination is the culmination of all studying within and without the classroom. Once formal education has concluded, the adult learner may loathe studying outside the four corners of the classroom.

Question: What's more painful than classroom study? Answer: Study outside the classroom. There are students who prefer distance learning/home study courses over classroom learning. These students like the efficiency of time and energy; they spend no money traveling to the seminar site. They seem to be born that way and many confess they learn more through distance learning compared to face-to-face classroom learning.

Some states allow licensees to re-pass the licensing examination in lieu of any continuing education classes. (Yearly, in my state, about 100 licensees -- 2.5% of all licensees-- re-pass in lieu of any continuing education.) These people may dislike continuing education of any kind. These people may be motivated in saving time and money. (A 3 hour licensing examination versus 36 hours in a live classroom? A 90% savings in time and 70% savings in money.) Either way, these people don't want to spend time studying on their own. As instructors we must be persuasive in our teaching—we must be good salespersons!

Instructors must be good salespersons to persuade students to memorize pertinent facts, figures, math formulas and definitions.

Example: A salesperson wants to expand their business into 1031(a) tax deferred exchanges. I try to persuade my students to memorize the 50 words: (26 USC 1031(a)) "No gain or loss shall be recognized on the exchange of property held for productive use in a trade, business or for investment if such

property is exchanged solely for property of like kind which is to be held either for productive use in a trade, business or for investment.” Like all salespersons we must persuade students regarding the benefits of a product. Our product is information regarding IRS exchanges. “Don’t you see the benefits you would have in your business derived from memorizing these important 50 words? Do you see how knowing, point-blank, these words will help you to answer client questions? Don’t you see the benefit of how your professionalism will improve when you have this important IRS statute memorized? Don’t you see the advantage you will have over your competitors who refuse to take the time to fully understand that statute?”

I teach a 72 hour, 9 day pre-broker program. One of my most important jobs is to convince my students that they do not know the material well enough to pass the Broker licensing exam. “When you studied for your salesperson license you needed a job; real estate was new and the material was exciting and fresh. You studied hard during class and spent a lot of time studying on your own. Things are different now. You have the job, but we are trying to upgrade your license to broker status. You must remember to study outside the classroom!” At the conclusion of the program, I give them a comprehensive test. As they ponder their low test score, I again try to persuade them of the need to spend personal time studying—— outside the classroom!

An insurance broker told me his philosophy on pre-license study: “I want to hire a salesperson who has completed license study through home study rather than a face-to-face classroom program. It is harder to do it that way. They must manage their time to find time to master the material. If they can do that, then I feel confident that when they are licensed, they will be able to study on their own to stay updated with new insurance marketing, laws and regulations.” His philosophy was built on the idea that: adults do not want to take the required time to study on their own. Getting adults to study on their own is difficult. We must be good salespersons to get that task accomplished.

My high school chemistry teacher was a good salesman. His students took a national chemistry examination for both semester final exams. He demonstrated to us a college level study technique. “This method of study I’m going to show you will help you do well on your semester examinations.” He proceeded to demonstrate his method of study. He persuaded me. I followed his study method. I scored extremely high on each chemistry national semester examination. Today, I teach the same study method to my students. The technique requires adequate time, plus requires perfect attention. Your mind cannot wander during this study technique because the technique will not permit your mind to wander. Like all instructors, I have students who fail their licensing examination. “Did you follow the study technique I taught you?” More than likely they did not. I remember one student. He said he used the technique, but I know he cut corners. As instructors, we must convince our students to be aggressive in their study and refuse to cut corners or be lazy in their learning. Good instructors must be good salespersons!

Good salespersons can be very sanguine. Sanguine salespersons are great story tellers, love to be with people, are the life of the party, have a huge circle of friends but hate detail work. They hate being alone. We must convince them to take adequate time to engage in personal study. It is so hard for them. We must be persuasive: “taking time to study outside the classroom will *not* shorten your life or give you bad health; besides, your friends will be impressed with your newly found body of knowledge.”

The opposite may be true. Some salespersons spend too much time studying and not enough time out with the crowd. We must also persuade them of the benefits associated with being more social.

As instructors we must be good salespersons.

The fiction about pre-license courses

Pre-license real estate courses prepare students for difficult real estate transactions.

I was attending the Board of Realtors membership indoctrination course. Most persons in attendance were newly licensed real estate agents. The presenter made this statement: “now that you have your real estate license, you can forget all that stuff you learned in the Brad Hanes pre-license course. I will teach you the stuff you really need to know!”

I think his comments got some chuckles from the students. Why would he say such a thing? Seems very unprofessional. I’ve heard this before and maybe you have too. Over the years, many students told me their employing brokers made similar comments.

As that indoctrination course progressed, the instructor was barraged with questions he couldn’t answer. He deflected those questions to me. I knew the answers because I know the pre-license course study material. The presenter became humble. He recognized the error of his statement. He recognized the value of knowing pre-license *stuff*!

When a broker says to forget all the pre-license material and “I will teach you what you really need to know!” I think the broker is saying: I will teach you how to write good real estate ads, how to install the for-sale sign, the best way to host an open house, how to sell the purchaser on the property, how to work with attorneys, etc. I think the broker is beginning to give the new agent the hands-on training needed to facilitate the sale of the principal’s property. Remember the first time you navigated the soft ware programs designed to list the seller’s property? It was difficult. The board of Realtors required strict conformity to their rules for listing all property amenities. The Board of Realtors required strict compliance rules for submitting the property forms. All of these rules reflect the broker’s statement: “I will teach you what you really need to know!” Maybe the broker is saying, “you needed to know a lot of theory to pass your real estate examination; now you need to know the practical details associated with getting the seller’s property on the market with the Board of Realtors, on the company website and into the local newspaper. Once we get an offer on the property, the theory you learned in your pre-license program will help you to get the property closed and your commission in your pocket.”

Here’s when that statement —“you can forget all that information you learned in the. . .” — is true: 1) when the transaction is extremely “clean;” and 2) when there are no problems with any aspects of the transaction. The buyers are paying cash for the property, the home is fairly new and the buyers have perfect credit history. You don’t need to know all that pre-license material. The transaction I just described is the transaction from HEAVEN!

The transaction from HELL requires in depth knowledge regarding pre-license course information.

Here’s an example: there is a property line dispute concerning the subject property. This dispute requires knowledge about surveyors, legal descriptions, adverse possession (squatter’s rights plus color of title and claim of title differences), prescriptive easements, the eight (8) ways easements may be created, the extinguishments of easements, fence line laws (title by acquiescence), attorney’s opinions, good and bad faith construction of encroachments and the wisdom to recognize that only lawyers can practice law. Most of these things were covered in the pre-license course.

Here’s another example: late at night and over the phone the purchaser consents “verbally” to the

seller's counter offer to the buyer's offer. This has the potential of one of those hell-bent transactions. (Sure enough, another agent discovers that the purchaser *did not consent to the counter offer in writing*, but only consented verbally. That other agent procures a written offer from his own purchaser *for more money*. The seller wants to revoke the prior counter offer. I hear this dispute on a regular basis.) Information presented in the pre-license course should help the agent. This possible dispute requires knowledge about the Statute of Frauds and Perjury plus the *exceptions* to that Statute. Real estate agents seem to solve the dispute by saying: "if you ain't got it in writing you ain't got nothing!" I don't know where that phrase originated but it seems to be known in every county of my state! The truth is that there are very well established exceptions to that Statute. These exceptions may permit court enforcement of verbal agreements!. It's lawyer time! The agents should have remembered information from the pre-license training course and obtained lawyer input into the situation.

Did you notice the phrase "late at night" in the above example? There is another angle to this example which involves License Law and Rules and Regulations. In a state disciplinary matter, the agent obtained buyer verbal consent to the counter offer. It was late at night. The agent neglected to drive a distance of three (3) blocks to obtain buyer written consent to the counter offer. Problems ensued. The agent's professional competency was scrutinized by the state regulatory agency.

Pre-license courses contain information necessary for transacting difficult real estate transactions. Don't let anyone tell you that pre-license training is superfluous.

Chapter #4: The Challenge of Challenging Students

Overview: This chapter explores various student behavior and personalities. This chapter explains that student behavior and personalities may create good learning opportunities.

As a result of studying this chapter, you should be able to:

- List several ways to limit student grandstanding.
- Analyze a practical method to reduce student interruptions.
- Recall four (4) techniques for quieting talkative students.
- State a method for allowing more favorable student seating within the classroom.
- Restate ideas for dealing with sick students, agent impersonators, stonewallers and newspaper readers.
- State the value of having skeptics, old seasoned pro's and the hot-shot new agent in your classroom.

Troublesome Creek Realty has some very interesting agents! Their personalities can present some challenges in the classroom. Their personalities may also be a great asset to your presentation!

Student Grandstanding

Grandstanding is when a certain student or students monopolizes the classroom conversation. If you haven't encountered a grandstander, it won't be long!

Maybe the best way to handle a grandstander is to *bump into* the grandstanding topic at the beginning of the seminar. I think most students expect an explanation of the classroom rules. One way to bring up the topic is to say: "any body ever been in a class where someone was a grandstander?" Most students will smile and nod in agreement. Some might groan. "As your instructor, I'm going to monopolize the