



FIVE FABULOUS QUESTIONS ...

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Are you starting your career in real estate? Here's one tip to help you establish yourself – without looking unnecessarily foolish in the process. You can even use it before you join an agency!

Find out about your core business area

Prepare a simple questionnaire, with about five straightforward questions, such as the ones you'll see below.

I recommend you survey at least 200 households, although more is definitely better! I always recommend door-knocking, but you can do this as a telephone survey, although it's not as good for personal branding)

If you've already joined an agency, have a good supply of your business cards, but don't offer a card immediately the person opens the door (if you're door knocking, of course!) Some people are very wary of 'real estate agents' because of the perception of pushiness, and you don't want to give an initial impression that you're about to bully them into sitting through an endless presentation on why and how they should be selling their property.

Start by explaining that you're starting your real estate career, and you're doing a survey to get a better understanding of the market in which you're going to be working.

Ask for just two minutes

Ask the person if they would mind giving you about two minutes of their time? If they say "No", thank them, offer your business card (if you have one), smile and leave.

If they say "Yes", assure them that the information you receive will be treated in confidence, and that the final report won't identify any specific person or property.

Here are the questions:

- Are you the home owner? (If not, say thanks, and explain that you're doing a survey of property owners)
- About how long ago did you move to this property?
- Which suburb, town or city did you move here from?
- What most motivated you to move to this particular home?
- If you were thinking of moving, where would you be most likely to move to?

This is what I call the Two Minute Survey, because it never needs to take any more than two minutes, and usually considerably less.

Pleasant, not pushy

In my experience, people are usually happy to answer these questions, and you may have noticed – not one question asks the respondent for anything beyond a little information. You're not trying to put their home on the market, or sell them into something else!

Be sure to mention at the end that you'd be happy to send them a copy of your final report. That's an easy way to ask for their name. You should already have their address recorded! Don't bother asking for phone numbers at this stage – keep it very, very simple and relaxed. Of course, if they volunteer additional information, be gracious and make a note of it. Do, however, offer your business card.

You should be able to survey at least 30 to 50 people a day – yes, even when most of them work!

Write that report!

Of course, once you've completed the survey, you need to write up the findings. This is easily done using a simple report format. It must be on your agency's letterhead or similar paper, but make sure you are clearly identified as the researcher.

Remember to send a copy of your report to everyone who has asked for it. That's the way you get a second chance to remind them that you're there, and doing what you say you're going to do!

This is the first of two articles about the Two Minute Survey. The second is called 'The Two Minute Survey in Action'.

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