

# For Me, All Relationships, Including in Real Estate, Demand Authenticity

I have a confession. Every Monday night I watch The Bachelor with my wife Rita before sitting down to write this column. By the end of this Monday's episode, I had decided that I would write this week's column on authenticity.

In the show, the women who made it to the final episode are the two with the fewest insecurities and the most authenticity. The pretenders and wannabes have all been sent home.

It works the same way in business. Let me tell you a story about Journal Graphics, the transcription business I started in the 1970's. My first client was the MacNeil-Lehrer Report, produced by WNET in New York. To get the account, I didn't claim to be a good transcription company, I just transcribed one night's show and delivered the printed transcript, unsolicited, to the executive producer's office the following morning. "I can

do this every night, overnight for \$300 per show," I said in my cover letter. That got me an interview, and a month later I had a contract to transcribe that show and several other WNET shows, including Bill Moyers Journal.

During the interview, I was asked, "Would you also like to do fulfillment?" I could have said, "Sure," but instead I asked, "What's fulfillment?" "That's when you fulfill the requests for the transcripts," was the reply. "Oh, that sounds very clerical. I'm sure I can do that." Two years later, ABC came on board, then Oprah Winfrey, and within a few years my company was the biggest producer of TV transcripts in the country.

By showing what I could do and not pretending to know what I didn't know — by being authentic — I made that business a success. I

delivered that first transcript to MacNeil-Lehrer and went to my interviews by bicycle. To me it was about being honestly myself and avoiding pretense. I appreciate those qualities in others, so I assume they will be attractive in me..

This approach is reflected in my practice of real estate. That's why I write this column — to demonstrate that I know the business and let clients come to me. My listing presentations aren't about me, they're about the seller's home and how I will market and sell it. I bring no fancy binder or CD with me, but rather documents and information to help in pricing the home and a one-page summary of my marketing strategy and promises. They know who I am. I don't need to pretend I'm better or different.

I don't win every listing for which I compete, but not because I fail to be myself and show what I can do. Those fancy presentations can be persuasive. No worries.

## This Week's Featured New Listing:

### Must See Inside This Daniels Gardens Home

Daniels Gardens is that post-war subdivision located south of Colfax and west of Simms Street. It's a neighborhood in transition, with a mix of new and updated homes amid older, unimproved bungalows. This home, while not new, is definitely improved. It has an updated kitchen and bathrooms, and a 530-sq.-ft. master suite on the second floor (not obvious in the above picture, since all the windows face the backyard). My favorite upgrade is the 1,051-sq.-ft. garage with its two-story ceiling — really qualifies more as a barn. Built by the seller, it's designed to have a second floor. Altogether, this home has 2,513 square feet of living space, with four bedrooms and two full bathroom. If you pass this home up because of its limited curb appeal, you'll really be missing something!



### REAL ESTATE TODAY



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