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GROUP  
*Coaching Calls*

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**Anne Marie:** Okay. Welcome, everybody, to today's mastermind call. I'm Anne Marie Vernon, Director of Coaching, and we are excited to have you with us today, especially since this is our first mastermind call with Forward Coaching co-leader Ben Kinney. So, Ben will be speaking to you today, and then we will open up the lines for questions. Just please remember to use \*7 to unmute and remute your line. And due to our one-hour time limit, we may be unable to address all of your questions. Should this be the case, however, you may email your questions to Debbie's personal email – [debbie@forwardcoaching.com](mailto:debbie@forwardcoaching.com). And she and Ben will review and answer them within 24 hours.

I'd also like to mention that we will be holding a virtual business planning event in November to ensure your plants are ready to go for 2020. And we'll be holding a live event in December in Bellingham, Washington. We will be sending out a "save the date" announcement soon on that, so be checking your email. All of that being said, welcome again to today's session, and I will now turn the call over to Ben Kinney. Ben?

**Ben:** Hi Anne Marie! Thanks for having me today. Can you hear me okay?

**Anne Marie:** Yes, I can hear you great.

**Ben:** Awesome. Hey everybody, thank so much for joining me. This is kind of our first little intro into talking to a lot of you and I'm excited to meet many of you face-to-face. Let's start. I'll just tell you guys a little bit about me for those of you guys that don't know. I'm a real estate agent, born and bred. I started in Bellingham, Washington in 2004, and since then I've been building my real estate business, real estate team. I've owned and owned brokerages and mortgage companies and technology companies. But the pinnacle thing for me in building my business was transitioning from being an agent to having a team. And the person that helped me do that most, truly was Debbie de Grote, as Debbie was my first real estate coach. Debbie and I have been growing together for well over 10 years into the business and the platform that we have today. So, it's pretty exciting to be in this position of having my mentor now be my partner, and I'm very committed to giving back to you guys and providing a ton of value.

One of the big questions that I get asked about my real estate business is, "Where do you actually get your business, Ben?" And when people come into our teams and you guys as coaching clients, you're always welcome to come shadow and spend a day with us. One of the big questions that I get is, "Where do you get your business from?" And these people come and they spend a day with us, and they walk away, not with a secret, but with the reassurance that what they are already doing was close.

So let's talk about our lead gen model. We did roughly 2,300 transactions last year on our real estate team. Our lead gen business, where we actually got our leads for our closings, came from this pie chart. And on the left-hand side of this pie chart, if you could imagine, just draw a circle and cut it in half. On the left-hand side we have our sphere, and our sphere is about one third of the left-hand piece of the pie, if you can imagine that. So, it's going to be six total pieces of the pie. When the pie is cut in half, the left-hand side has three pieces. So, the left-hand side of the pie is where the agents get their business from. That's what I call the agents doing their job, or the agents bringing production to our real estate team. The right-hand side of the pie is where we as a team provide value to the real estate agent to help them grow their business. So let's start with the left-hand side of the pie.

The agents in our real estate team are expected to work their sphere – that is, to show up on day one with at least 200 names filled out into a spreadsheet with at least one piece of contact information. This allows us on day one to have the agent start working a sphere plan and generating referrals and business from people that already know and trust them. And we expect that the agents will get their first couple of transactions from their business, from people that already trust them, so they don't have to practice on our leads or on our customers. And we'll talk mostly today about our sphere plan.

The next piece of the pie is open houses. To be in our real estate team, every agent has to commit to doing a minimum of two open houses per week. That's at least one on the weekend, and one could be another day on the weekend, or two in the same day, or they could do it actually during the week. And that's the bare minimum. I call that the agent's opportunity to be on stage. When we're on stage, we perform, and we want agents in front of people, getting used to talking about real estate experience. And we have a whole open house plan that we'll dive into on another call here coming up.

And then the last piece of the pie on the left-hand side with the agent's job is prospecting. We ask each one of the agents on our team to try and make 150 dials every day of the week, for the days of the week that they're going to consider working. And those dials will be to leads in their database, to their sphere, to Canceleds, Expireds, to For Sale By Owners, to circle prospecting, making invites to open houses. Just getting them on the phone. And we don't care so much about the outcome of that in the beginning; what I care about is they get used to the word "No".

In my business, growing up in real estate, I used to have this jar of pennies. I would take the pennies out and I'd dump them on my desk, and there were about 50 pennies on there. And every time I made a phone call, I would take my finger and I'd drag a penny and I'd put it over on the other side. And then the next time I made a call, I would drag a penny and I'd move it over there. And I wouldn't stop calling until I had moved all my pennies to that other side. Over time what I was able to figure out was, on average for every 52 dials, I was able to schedule one appointment with a brand new client that was a buyer or a seller or an investor, somebody who was willing to sit down with me and talk about real estate.

I took that plan and made it part of our model for our real estate team, because I knew that if I could over time dial 50 people and get one appointment, that our agents, if they dialed 150, especially using the technology that we have today, that allows you to dial much faster and so on – that they would be able to get a new appointment every single day of the week. So, that's the foundation of the agent side of the business. We tell our agents that if they do those three things – work their sphere, do the open houses, and do the prospecting – they will do one to two transactions per month, minimum, as a brand new agent.

And if they're doing that, we let them into the other side of the pie. And the other side of the pie is Internet leads - whatever lead sources that you might get – paid advertising, Zillow, whatever you want. Leads from our listings – so the fact that our team takes a lot of listings and we have "For Sale" signs out there, we put call capture on them – leads from listings. And then the other piece of the pie, the final one, is just "other". So, whatever unique thing that we do in our business – that would be like agent referrals or classes or farming or door-knocking, depending on the actual geography.

So, that is our lead gen model, the six pieces of the pie. Now, if the agents are doing one to two deals per month on the left-hand side of the pie, on the right-hand side of the pie, they should get another

one to two deals per month, which leads up to our team standards. Our team standards are, if an agent can do one to two deals per month, they get to do what I call “stay”, which means they earn the right to stay in our real estate business. And if they can’t hit that standard of one or two deals per month, we really want to encourage them to go off and be an individual agent, or maybe seek out a different career. The good agents over time, by following the same exact model, within a year or two, they’re now doing three or four deals a month, or they’re doing five or six deals a month. And we come up with a plan for them.

So let’s start off with tackling one piece of the pie today. We’re going to talk about working your sphere. There are a million different ways to do it, and no judgment here – you can pick whichever way you want personally – but I’m going to share with you mine. There’s the Brian Buffini way, if you like stickers and that kind of stuff. And there’s the 33 Touch that you’ve heard other people talk about in books. But this is what I call “getting your sphere in gear”. This is a plan that I give my real estate agents, so that they can be successful at working their database. Let’s talk about plans for a second before I give you our actual sphere plan.

Many of you on the call, you might be like me and you might have a gym membership. And you might even be more like me if you have a gym membership and you don’t actually use it that often. Well, when I go into my gym membership, I walk in there and I look around and there’s a bunch of really attractive people that are in much better shape than me. There’s a million different machines in there and I’m not even entirely sure what direction I’m supposed to sit on some of those machines. It’s really uncomfortable. I go and I do a couple of things, I look around, and then I feel awkward and I grab my stuff and I leave. That’s been a history of me and my love relationship with the gym.

Now, gyms fail not because they don’t provide all the equipment and all the tools, but they fail because it’s more than that. It takes more than that to be successful at getting in shape. So I was looking at an alternative to a standard gym – that’d be like a CrossFit. And CrossFit, you walk into a gym and it’s probably the dumpiest gym that you could go into. It’s probably in some old industrial area and the weights are probably dirty. You know what I mean. I’m painting a picture for you.

And they’ve got a whiteboard on the wall, or a chalkboard or something, and it says, “Here’s the workout of the day.” On the wall it says you need to do 14 pushups, and then you need to do seven burpees – whatever those are, and then you’ve got to do 10 pullups, and then you’ve got to do four sprints. When you’re done with that, that’s one cycle. And then you have to do that three times. And when you’re done with all three, you’ve won. You’ve actually won the day and you get to go home. Doing that once, you realize that, “This is the hardest I’ve ever worked out. It’s also the quickest I’ve ever worked out, and it’s also the simplest.” Creating a CrossFit plan for your health simplifies things and allows you to get your body in shape.

But creating that CrossFit plan for your business can do the same thing. It allows you or the members of your business the ability to have a plan. And inside that plan, they know, “Did I win today, or did I fail?” So, I’m going to give you today my CrossFit plan for working your sphere. Many of you guys are really high producing individuals and you have great businesses, and you probably know how to do this. So, keep doing it your way, whatever you want. Sometimes when I hear another idea and I already do it or I already know it, what I’m looking to get out of the conversation is, how can I better explain it or package it, so that the agents in my business or the people that work or mentor with me can hear it differently and implement it? So, take that with a grain of salt today.

So, when we're bringing a new agent into our business, as I said, on day one, they've got to show up with at least 200 names of people that they know, with at least one piece of contact info. And there are always the people who say, "I don't know 200 people" or, "I don't have 200 people. I just moved here", etcetera. So I always start the conversation off with an idea and a couple of questions. And Debbie's been good at teaching me to ask questions instead of make statements. But the first thing I say is, "Let me ask you a question. How many people are in your cell phone?" And most of them say 100, or 300, or 1,000 or 5,000. Okay, that sounds like more than 200. We can put all of them in there. How many people are you friends with on Facebook? 500, or 600, or 150, or 300. Okay, that sounds like more than 200. You should put those on them in there. How many have you connected to on LinkedIn? How many are in your email account? Can you make a list of all the business cards you have at home? Who cuts your hair? Who's your doctor? Who are your neighbors? Who are your family? Who did you graduate with? Who did you work with at your last career? I give them those questions so that they have some inspiration to fill it out. And most of them can easily come up with those 200 in just a short time.

Now, the next thing I do for the agents that have been in my business – I continue to teach the "sphere in gear" plan, and I'll say, let's make sure that we have all of our closings from last year. Let's make sure we had all of our bio consults in there. Let's make sure that we had all of our listing presentations in there. Let's make sure we add the new contacts and the new doctors and the new vendors and your new neighbors and your new friends. Because a lot of times you forget that you've been working your database, but you forget to feed it constantly. One of our goals is to make sure that we're always feeding our database and increasing the size, because what happens is that half of our database is getting a real estate license, the other half is moving away, getting sick, passing away, getting mad at you, dating a realtor. Your database is always shrinking, unless you're consistently feeding it. So, that's step one.

Step two is, you get all these people into your CRM, or into a spreadsheet if you don't have anything else, and your goal is to fill in the blanks. So what happens on day one – they'll show up with somebody's name and a phone number, but they don't have their address or their email address. And the next person, they'll have Sally, and they'll have Sally's address. And the next person they'll have John, and they'll just have John's phone number. And Reed, and they'll just have Reed's email address. Their first couple of weeks of being in our real estate team is filling in the blanks. And I give them some simple scripts to use, like a text or a call or an email...

Hey, I was trying to call you and I realized I didn't have your phone number, but I have your email. Can you send me back the best number to reach you? This is Ben.

Or send the same thing as a text. And just filling in the blanks, because you can't work this sphere plan if you don't have a variety of ways to communicate with your database. So step two – filling in the blanks.

Now, step three – organizing your database. If you're in real estate for a long time, maybe you're already doing this. But what I try to do is I try to put them in A+s, As, Bs, and Cs. And in our CRM, I'll use tags to say this is an A+ person, an A, a B, that kind of stuff. And I'll use "source" to mark them as sphere, and I'll use "status" to say what sort of intent they have today; and as many other tags that I can put in there – neighbors or friends, that sort of stuff. Bucket people so they're easily searchable. But let's talk about organizing the database.

A+s are rare. After all those years of me being in the business and doing so many transactions, I have

about 25 A+s. A+s are people that send me more than one referral a year, that I meet with one-on-one, that I would have lunch with or invite over to my house. These are kind of my Christmas list. Who would I actually hang out with? Who consistently sends me multiple forms of business? They would interrupt a conversation and say, "You know what, Emory? I know you know a lot of agents, but you'd be stupid if you didn't call Ben." That's the type of person that we're looking for.

Now, an A is somebody that consistently sends you business, you would invite to your events, you see them a couple of times a year. A B is somebody that knows you by name, that would do business with you, but they haven't referred you anybody yet. And a C is just people like your distant aunt. They don't know what you do, you haven't spoken to them for a long time. They were just a lead or a quick conversation and you never made a connection. I organize them because how you work your database should depend on how they're organized, and are they an A+, an A, a B, or a C? So, working your sphere.

What I want you to think about is, everybody likes to be communicated with in their own way, and everybody that I talk to in real estate has the sphere in their head, but they say, "I don't want to bother my database", "I don't want to harm them" or, "I don't want to annoy them." And the way I think about it – just grab some money from your wallet, and I think about it being like a \$20 bill. Every text I send, every call that I make, every email that I reach out to – if that touch is like me handing them a \$20 bill, I'm winning. If that touch is like me going in there and taking a \$20 bill, I'm losing. I don't want to be the person that takes from my database. I want to be the person that makes deposits into my database all the time, because I'm providing value. And we'll talk a lot about that value. So, do me a favor – if you're taking notes today, write this down. We're going to come up with a plan on what you could do to work your database.

Number one – let's start with the most obvious one – calling. So just write down "calling". Now, you've got to decide how often you're going to call your database, but for me it's once a month. And this would include my A+s, my As, and if I have time, my Bs. If I don't have time, I don't worry about it. And my Cs might get quarterly or bi-annually, or just when they do something that indicates intent or activity. So we're going to call them once a month. At the end of the year, that's 12 touches that simply came from calling. One of the big questions that agents give me all the time is, "What are you going to say to them?" Well, I'm not going to be slimy. I'm not going to be car salesman-ish. I'm not going to be somebody that takes. I'm going to call and I want to have a good conversation. So one of my phone calls might be things like...

Just checking in. How are you doing? What are you up to? How's your home?

It could be as simple as that, because not every call is going to be about me asking for business. But here's how I do ask for business...

Just out of curiosity, do you have any real estate related plans for the year?

What do you mean?

Well, have you considered selling or buying or investing in any real estate this year?

And if they say, "No"...

That's alright. If you ever do, then I'd love to talk to you about it, at least give you some advice. Since I have you on the phone, do you know anybody that has real estate related plans for the year?

And I would use that script if I ran into somebody walking my dog, or if I was at a networking event, or if I was making calls to my database, because it's simple, it doesn't make me feel slimy. I don't have to say anything in like an Irish accent of, "Oh, by the way..." I don't like that. I like to feel authentic. And for me, just asking a very direct, simple question: "What are your real estate related plans for the year?" I can't make those phone calls to a bunch of people and not generate referrals or people that want to do business.

Okay, number two – emailing people. Nobody likes reading emails. I went into my main mailbox this morning, I've got 10,000 unopened emails. That's super annoying. And I think about the ones that I open. I open listing alerts, I open market reports, I open emails from people I really know and like. But I don't open them if I know they're just going to send me a whole bunch of spam and a whole bunch of junk. So, do me a favor. Think about what could you email people that would deliver a whole bunch of value?

For me, the number one thing that I can email my customers is a market report. It is the most opened email of anything I've ever sent. A market report will send out Actives, Pendings and Solds in a radius around their home. Actives, Pendings and Solds in a radius around their home. And there are lots of systems out there that you can use, but you want something that automatically goes out that gives them information about what's going on in their neighborhood. We built a tool called Brivity Market Reports that does this, and I set up everybody in my database – my past clients, my current clients, my active listings, my sphere on a monthly report, because I don't want them going to Zillow or Redfin to get information on what's happening in their neighborhood or what their neighbors' home sold for. We want to be that source of expertise.

Since I do two emails a month, I make those automated and have those do market reports, and if they ever get another email from me, it's never a spammy piece of content. It's always an invite to something, or a very personal email. I want to train them to open emails from me, because they know I deliver value.

Okay, third thing – mail. We try to make sure that we mail people one time per month. This could be a postcard, a handwritten note, a newsletter. So, email we do twice a month. Mail we do once a month. Mail we only do for our sphere. We're doing an event this month called the Food Truck Rally, where we're bringing in a whole bunch of food trucks, and all the proceeds of the Food Truck Rally go to helping the food bank in our community. So, we've emailed invites with free tickets out to our database for them to come to our event.

Prior to that, this summer, we did Summer Movie Nights, where every Saturday we have an open area in a park where people can come and watch movies with their family, and we play a different movie and it's brought to you by the Ben Kinney team. And we have our agents that are hosting it and so on. So, we'll send invites to that. In the fall, coming up, we'll do an invite to come pick up pies for Thanksgiving. Then we'll do a client party, we might do a movie premiere.

We try to make sure that the physical mail we send are either handwritten notes from our database,

invites to something important for us to get face-to-face, or really a direct call to action piece of marketing, like a postcard, like a “Come see what your home is worth”, for instance, or maybe a rate change or some kind of market or real estate update. But try to keep this down to the bare minimum. It’s cheap and it’s easy. You export the list out of your CRM, send it to a mail house and they send it all for you. So that’s one piece of mail per month. So far we’ve got one call per month, two emails per month, minimum, and one piece of mail.

Now, the next one is we have visit. And I call visits face-to-face. Our goal is for our A+s and our As to be face-to-face with those people at least three times a year, because not everybody’s going to come to every one of our events. Our A+s we’re going to get in front of as much as possible, but the goal is for all of them. Can I get them to an event? Can I get them to an open house? Can I stop by? Can I get them to come to one of our classes? It’s just about getting in front of them, because when they’re in front of you, they’re going to feel compelled to do business with you, and it creates a new level of loyalty. So there’s just three a year.

One way to get people to come to your open houses is turn your open houses into events. This month is a great month to make all your open houses be also for collecting school supplies, since school is starting. So you send an email or a piece of mail out to your database and the list of the open houses that you’re going to do for the week or for the next couple of weeks. And you say, “By the way, we’re collecting school supplies this month to help all the children in...” whatever school district you’re in. And then the next month you do jackets, because we’re getting into winter. And then the next month you do food or donations for the food bank.

Turn your open houses into social causes – that will get your sphere, even if they don’t have a home to buy or they aren’t interested, to come out to your open houses. That makes your seller happy, it delivers value, it shows that you care for the community. You’re doing something more than just promoting yourself. And it gives you a reason to post those things on social media because you’re talking about the cause and where you’re going to be, which allows you to mention the open house that you’re at.

The last way that we work our sphere is social media. So, we try to touch our sphere once a month on social media. That could be a Facebook message, that could just be a like or a comment. And we organize them in groups on Facebook so you can save them and you can go find them. That could be endorsing them on LinkedIn or making a comment on Instagram. It’s just about letting them see that you’re there and you’re watching and you’re paying attention. Often I’ll do the social media touches at the same time as I’m making the phone call, because I’m looking for some indication in there for a reason to call. So, if I looked on social media and I saw that they just got a puppy, I’ll bring that up in my conversation. If I saw that they’re having a baby or they just got a new promotion or there’s something traumatic that happened, it allows me to reach out, them to know that I’m paying attention and to see that I care.

So when you add all those up, it’s a total of 63 touches in a year. And those 63 touches, if they don’t remember that you’re the person that they want to do real estate with, then they’re crazy. Nobody will forget that you’re the person that delivers value to their life if you complete the 63 touches in a year. And I always make bets with my agents and I say, “If you follow up with 200 people and you do the 63-touch plan for one year, and you don’t get 18 to 24 transactions, I’ll give you \$10,000 cash.” And I’ve yet, in all the years I’ve been making that offer, been able to find one new agent that couldn’t generate 18 to 24 transactions in a year, simply from their sphere, if they follow the plan. Now I’ve had plenty of people

that actually won't follow the plan, but those that do, get the results.

And this is what I would consider your CrossFit plan for the sphere side of your business. You don't have to follow my plan, but if you're going to run a team or run a business or do this for yourself, or give your admin an action plan for working their sphere, you need to provide one and you need to come up with the ideas, the frequency, and the actions that you're going to take to generate the amount of business that you want to generate from your sphere. Anne Marie, that is what we call the "sphere in gear" plan. Let's see, does anybody on the call, do you guys want to jump in and ask some questions and talk about working your database? We can do a little Q&A for today. Or thoughts or comments. Please, jump on and let's have a conversation. Not all at once though.

**Anne Marie:** Remember to select \*7 to unmute your line.

**Ben:** Welcome to the call on, anybody.

**Joe:** Hi, how are you? It's Joe.

**Ben:** Hi Joe. Thanks for being on here today. What question do you have?

**Joe:** I looked a little bit at the website. I assume that you are involved with Brivity.

**Ben:** Correct.

**Joe:** I like the website, but I have a question for you. Is the website geared towards more Keller Williams, or all companies?

**Ben:** No, about 60% of our customers are at all major brands.

**Joe:** 60% are major brands.

**Ben:** Yep. Non Keller Williams. Yep. Very, very nondenominational. In fact, one of the things that we can talk about one of these days is, as being a member of Forward Coaching now, each one of you guys get the Brivity CRM for free, at no cost. It's my gift for you guys being a loyal member of Excellence and Forward Coaching. We'll schedule a call and a walk-through for those of you who want to take advantage of that. That is going to be my gift for you guys, to get the CRM on me.

**Joe:** Thank you!

**Ben:** You're welcome.

**Joe:** One more question. Online, can I register and do it on the spot, or wait for Debbie to send an email?

**Ben:** Either one. You can reach out to us, we can connect you. Or we can call you and reach out. Whichever one works. Anybody else have a call you want to talk about? Working your sphere.

**Joe:** Me? No, I'm good. Thank you.

**Ben:** Okay. Anybody else?

**Julie:** Yes, hello. Can you hear me?

**Ben:** Hi, yeah. What's your name?

**Julie:** Hi, my name's Julie. I'm from Santa Rosa in California. A couple of questions, quick ones. Is this being recorded like the other calls are?

**Ben:** Correct.

**Julie:** Okay. And then the pie chart that you talked about early on in the call, where can we find that?

**Ben:** I will have Anne Marie send it out to you.

**Julie:** Okay, because I couldn't follow it fast enough to write it down.

**Ben:** How about I send you about 30 slides that you could use to get your sphere in gear? Would that be of value to you?

**Julie:** That would be awesome.

**Ben:** Okay. I'll send you the slides, and you guys can have those if you're on the call today.

**Julie:** That would be great. And then lastly, what was the website that the gentleman before me was talking about?

**Ben:** He was talking about Brivity, and we'll get you guys an email out about that as well.

**Julie:** Okay, great, thank you. I enjoyed the call very much.

**Ben:** Yeah. Any takeaways or any questions that you want to talk about?

**Julie:** Well, I tried to write down everything as quickly as I could as you were speaking. A lot of really good ideas. I'm a little overwhelmed as I'm a solo agent. I'm wondering is it possible – I guess anything's possible – to do all this on my own?

**Ben:** Yeah, absolutely, because this is what I did on my own. You might need to pick and choose what you're going to do, but a good way to tackle this would be, come up with an automated way to send out an email, like a market report. Schedule to call your top 200 people every month. And for me, I picked 200 because if I agreed to work 20 days a month, I only had to call 10 people in my sphere every day. And they're my sphere, so I could call them while I was driving or while I was waiting for an appointment or I had 15 minutes to kill. And I just kept a list with me. That was back in the day, because I didn't have a CRM. Now I just use my CRM. And then decide, "Every time I'm done talking to somebody, I'm going to write them a little note." And I'm going to do a couple of events a year where I invite people.

**Anne Marie:** Can everyone who's not speaking please mute their line? Thank you.

**Julie:** Yeah, okay. That sounds good. I'm glad you let me know that that's doable, because it just seems like so much. Good to know.

**Ben:** You know the best way to eat an elephant?

**Julie:** One bite at a time.

**Ben:** Tabasco.

**Julie:** Oh, Tabasco. (Laughing.)

**Ben:** Kidding. One bite at a time, my friend. So, if you weren't doing any of this stuff, let's just start with for the next 30 days, reach out to all your sphere and simply ask them...

I was planning my year and getting ready for next, and I wanted to reach out to everybody that I knew and just ask them a simple question. Do you have any real estate related plans for the next year?

If you just do that, it'll dramatically change the trajectory of your business. You cannot call your past clients, your database, your friends and your neighbors and ask that question, and not walk away with business, if that's all you did. Now, if any of those people in there said, "Yeah, I have some interest", then you have things to follow up with them. If they say "No, but I know somebody that does", then you can write them a handwritten note. If they say, "No, I don't have any interest", you could follow up with...

Let me ask you a question. Would it be of value to you if I kept you up to date with what was going on in your neighborhood, when a new property came on the market or one that sold?

And then you could subscribe them to a listing alert, a market report. If you don't have any of those tools, just use your MLS and set them up, so once a week or once a month or once every two weeks they get an email with the new properties that come on. You want them to consistently hear from you and for that conversation to trend towards real estate related conversations. Does that help?

**Julie:** That helps a lot. Thank you so much.

**Ben:** Awesome. You're welcome. Anybody else have a question?

**Holly:** Hello?

**Ben:** Hello.

**Holly:** Hi, my name is Holly Sanders. I'm a broker in Miami, Florida, and I'm a sole agent like the previous person. Are you going to teach us how to create market reports?

**Ben:** Sure. We can recommend some tools that do it automatically for you. You can use your MLS to set up things like, "In this zip code, or within a radius of this property, can you send every time a property goes active or pending?", unless you have that tool. Or you can use tools that do it and we can give you

some demos and walk you through some of those options. Back in the day, the first tool that I used, which I think is kind of ugly today, was Market Snapshot. That was one that was produced by Top Producer. But there are lots of tools out there that do that, and we can get you set up with some options if you like.

**Holly:** Yeah, that would be good, if maybe we have a video.

**Ben:** I can make that for you.

**Holly:** Okay, that's great. Good luck, and congratulations!

**Ben:** Thanks, thanks. Good to have you, and thanks for speaking up. Who else? Anybody else have a question or comment or thought or concern or joke that you would like to make?

**Neil:** Hey Ben! Can you hear me?

**Ben:** Yeah, who's this?

**Neil:** Okay, this is Neil Bennett. Nice to talk to you.

**Ben:** Hi Neil!

**Neil:** So, I listened to everything and I have a couple of questions. Is prospecting Expireds, Off The Markets and For Sale By Owners a big part of your plan?

**Ben:** Yeah, it sure is. During the last couple of years, the market got really hot, so the amount of them definitely reduced. There was more For Sale By Owners and less Canceleds / Expireds. Now, as the market's starting to shift, we're seeing more and more Canceleds / Expireds popping up and it's becoming a bigger piece of our world. The other thing that we prospect too, when we don't have those available is we just circle prospects, "Just Listed" and "Just Sold". So every time we help a buyer buy something, we'll call around that property the buyer bought and let them know that the property just sold. Every time we take a listing, we'll call around it. Every time we have an open house, we'll call around that. And we use that as ways to get nurtures into our database, people that are accepting market reports or listing alerts, or people that actually want to sit down and talk about buying, selling or investing.

**Neil:** Okay, so increase the number. I've been doing that for years, but I've found it very hard to reach 25 or 50 actual contacts a day doing that nowadays with Expireds, Withdrawns, For Sale By Owners.

**Ben:** Yeah. You're probably going to have to add other things – FSBOs, RentBOs, notice of defaults. We call a lot of 90-day Expireds. In our MLS properties, once they've been on the market 90 days, they can reset the days on market to zero. So it's another reason for us to touch base. And we call a lot of the old Expireds, because the agents stop calling them. We also call vacant land, commercial business opportunities, multifamily. I found that anybody that owns vacant land owns a house. When I call and I talk to them, I may not get the land listing, but I'll get the house listing.

**Neil:** Right, okay. And in your counting of the 150 calls, are you counting bad numbers? You're not

counting contacts, right? You're talking about dials.

**Ben:** Yeah, dials. For me, if I dialed 50 people, I talk to about 15 on a good day. So if they're dialing 150, they're having 45 conversations. There could be a lot of "FUs" and hang ups and that kind of stuff, but they're at least going to have some decent conversations.

**Neil:** Right, okay. Even if I get a wrong number or an Expired that's not a selling anymore, I always ask them if they have any plans in the next 12 months for other real estate activity.

**Ben:** That's brilliant. That's what you've got to do. What I've found is that most people live somewhere.

**Neil:** Exactly, exactly. One last question. What do you consider to be the best method or best software for finding contacts for as many of those clients as possible, For Sale By Owners and Expireds?

**Ben:** Probably Mojosells.com. They have a dialer and they have Canceleds / Expireds and FSBOs. Or Landvoice. One of those two.

**Neil:** Alright, thank you.

**Ben:** They can give you lots of lists and people to call and they'll give you cell phone numbers and other things that you can add to it.

**Neil:** Okay. Alright, very good. You're not planning on going into that software?

**Ben:** There's a really good chance that we'll be in that business. We want to make sure that we can provide all the tools that agents need to be successful, without them going to a lot of different places. So you'll see us adding a lot more stuff.

**Neil:** I like that idea. Very good. Thank you, Ben!

**Ben:** Anything else? You're welcome. Thanks for being on the call. Anybody else?

**Sandra:** Yeah, I had a question. This is Sandra. Can you hear me?

**Ben:** Hi Sandra!

**Sandra:** Hi! Real quick. So, as I am getting more business, I'm also starting to find that it's obviously more administrative work. At what point do you suggest maybe having an admin of some sort or a personal assistant of some sort to help with that? And do you also have a software that you would recommend to log your time to each client so that you can actually measure how much time you are spending with clients so that it is advantageous for you? So that you can look back and see where you're spending your time and if it's actually profitable or not.

**Ben:** That's a really good question. I haven't seen a software that does that. Maybe there's ones in the software design world that bill by the hour. We use the software we built, Brivity, because it manages all the chats that we do and all those tasks. When you complete a task, you can see a list of all the different tasks you've done for each client. It won't necessarily say you spent 7.5 hours with that person, but it'll

give you a pretty good indication of that.

The first question you asked is a really good one: “When should I get an assistant?” For me, the number one best decision that I ever made in my career that set me up to be where I’m at today was hiring my first admin. And the way that I did it was, back then I said I’m going to live on a hundred grand a year, which means I need to be making more than that to pay for an assistant. I did the math, and at \$250,000 average sales price, which is where I was, I needed to sell 25 homes. So once I had a full year of selling 25 homes, then I saved up enough money for three months’ salary for an assistant. You don’t need to have a salary for a year for an assistant. You need to have a salary for a couple of months, because at the end of those 90 days, that assistant should be helping you make more money than you’re actually spending on that person’s salary.

But it only happens if you do a few things. I call that “leverage”. And leverage is only leverage if you hire an assistant and they take things away from you, so that you can spend your time doing stuff that’s more dollar productive – prospecting, showing, negotiating, going on listing appointments, lead generating. But if you hire an assistant and you don’t change your activities at all, it’s just a luxury. There’s nothing wrong with that, but your income is not going to proportionally increase enough to cover the cost.

When I hired an assistant, what was amazing was, I did 26 transactions on my own that year. When I hired my assistant, the next year we did 84. What I realized is I was spending 75% of my time at things I wasn’t good at – listing paperwork, making flyers, calling clients. I was actually pretty good at doing real estate. I was bad at all the other stuff. So I gave her everything I could think of and I left myself to lead generating, going on buyer appointments, negotiating deals and going on listing appointments. And it just helped my business blow up.

So, I would say as soon as you can afford it and as soon as you’re willing to transfer those activities and replace those activities with something more dollar productive, you should jump on an admin. Your choice is a part-time one, a virtual assistant, a full-time one, an intern. Or you could even bring in a junior agent to your office and have them do some of the activities for you if you really didn’t have any budget. I jumped right in and said, “I’m going to get a full-time one.” I found one and she was like \$13 or \$14 an hour, and she’s still with me today, 14 years later. She basically runs our world and she’s phenomenal. I’ll have you guys do a call with her someday. Her name is Jillene. She’s really an amazing woman.

**Sandra:** That’s great. So, she was somebody in your office that you could actually see and communicate face-to-face with, or was she more like an Elancer at first and then came in? Or how did you manage that?

**Ben:** No. One of the things that you guys will learn about me as you get to know me is, I was pretty learning-challenged as a kid. I was dyslexic, I had a stuttering problem. I’ve always had a hard time reading. I’m very visual, and I’m also quite messy. For me, it was so much easier to have somebody in front of me and for me to talk to them and for me to hand them files and hand them stuff and throw things and say, “Help!”, and have that face-to-face. We shared a 10 by 10 office for 10 years, and she was just my right arm. I think more organized people and more disciplined people can do better with maybe virtual staff. Now we do a lot of virtual staff, but they work for her, not for me.

**Sandra:** Okay, good. Good to know. Well, thank you very much. I totally appreciate that, because it's one thing that I've been thinking about and I really do feel that that's probably the next step, because I'm getting lost in the details, and that's the stuff that's just so mundane and it's losing me money. I need to make money. Yeah, totally get that.

**Ben:** Yeah, absolutely. It should be your next step. Let us know if we can help you with that at all, okay?

**Sandra:** Great, thank you. I appreciate it.

**Ben:** You're welcome. Anybody else have any questions or comments or thoughts or jokes, concerns? Anybody? Dealer? Dealer? Last call. Anybody?

**Joe:** Congratulations on getting together with Debbie. This is Joe again.

**Ben:** Thanks, Joe! Debbie was life changing for me. Now I hope that the combination of Debbie and I can be life changing for you guys. We're really excited. There's a couple of things to think about. There are very few coaching companies out there that have people that actually sold real estate. Debbie and I are real estate agents to the bone. She was one of the first people... She was selling 300 homes in a year without an admin 20 years ago. She was one of the most phenomenal coaches that we ever met. We want to help you real estate agents transition from having a job to having a business, and that is by implementing systems and models and technology, and then hiring staff and building up, so that you guys can get your time back and enjoy your life a little bit more and still build wealth and still have a really big business, because none of it's worth it if you have to sacrifice your health, your family, your relationships, your faith. We've got to find a way to have it all. Right, Joe?

**Joe:** Yeah. You're lucky you met her 10 years ago. I just met her five years ago and she changed my business. I wish I met her 20 years ago, but that didn't happen.

**Ben:** Well, thank you guys all for being on the call today. Anne Marie, thank you for hosting us and doing the announcement.

**Samantha:** Hey Ben!

**Ben:** Yeah, fire away.

**Samantha:** This is Samantha from the home office here. I do have one email question that I want to make sure is addressed, from Blane here. So, I'm just going to read this off to you real quick and you can just give your thoughts, and this can be just the last question of the day, if that's alright. Okay, so Blane says...

I have been through a big shift, but this one feels different, like the demand is too high to support this big shift. I'm in a really strong market, but I'm definitely feeling this. Any advice? Also, any advice on marketing companies trying to take out the realtor?

**Ben:** Ooh, that's a deep question. Thank you for bringing that up. Market shifts and economies change and recessions happen. The average recession happens every seven years. It's a cyclical cycle, and we are far overdue. But Warren Buffet said that the greatest distributions of wealth happen in down

markets, not up markets. So as the markets shift, if we are prepared, we can take advantage of that and it can be the foundation that puts us on a trajectory like no other. And the last shift was like that for me; it really built who we are.

Now, what do you do to prepare for that? Number one – you double down on your activities. Whatever you've been doing for lead generating, you need to double it. You need to double your open houses, you need to double your sphere touches, you need to double your prospecting. You need to get ahead of it. It's not that real estate stops happening, it's that the pie shrinks. Now it's up to you to decide if your piece of the pie is going to shrink or not. If you can maintain your pie size, your piece of the pie as the market shifts, when it starts to recover, you'll grow so much faster, you'll set up such a head start on the competition.

Number two – you've got to watch your finances. Now is the time for us to sit down with our bank statements, our credit card statements for our business and for our personal. Here's what I do, everybody: I take a pink pen, a green pen and a yellow pen, and I sit down and I highlight. Each expense will have a color. Green is something I have to keep, like my house payment, my car payment, my Internet. Yellow is something that I'm going to research getting rid of, or I'm going to cancel. Red is something I'm canceling right away.

So, every month I sit down with my actual bank statements printed out and I go line by line with a highlighter and my goal is to cut as much as I can. And I even cut things that I don't think I can cut, just to see if it has an impact on my life and my business. Now, over time that allows you to run more profitably and more leanly, and that'll give you more reserves and allow you to handle a downtime if that ever happens for a month or two. If it doesn't, you just have a more profitable, better business. So the two things we can do to prepare – double our activities, be lean on our expenses.

Somebody messaged me the other day and they said, "Hey, have you seen this show?" And I said, "No, I haven't seen this show. Where's it at?" And they said, "It's on Hulu." I said, "I don't have Hulu." And the person said, "It's only \$10. I think you can afford it." And I responded with, "\$10 invested every month for the next 30 years at my current rate of return in my retirement account is \$86,000." See, the problem is that people don't understand that \$10 matters. \$10 put in the right spot every month makes a big difference. So, watch every expense, all the way down to your Hulu account. That'll get you guys prepared to take advantage of the opportunities that come in a shifting market. I hope that helps. Anything else, Anne Marie or Samantha?

**Anne Marie:** I don't have anything. Samantha?

**Samantha:** I think we're good.

**Ben:** Awesome. Thanks for being on the call. I'm looking forward to talking to you guys on the next one. We're going to do a couple of different formats. In the future, we'll probably do video calls and more screen share so you guys can see some of the stuff that I'm talking about a little bit more visually. So I'm looking forward to doing that. And I will talk to you guys again. You guys can reach out to me on LinkedIn, Facebook, send me an email – [ben@benkinney.com](mailto:ben@benkinney.com). Talk to you guys soon! Bye!

**Anne Marie:** Thank you, everyone!