



GROUP
Coaching Calls

Alyssa: Alright, hello everybody. My name is Alyssa Granlund and I am a senior coach with Forward Coaching, and I'm super happy to be here with you today. Because so many of you have had questions about finding an admin or finding some part-time help or finding extra admin support, I wanted to get on this call and give you some answers and some suggestions about this topic. I'm going to be having some time for questions, but if you do have questions that come to mind and you want to text them to me, feel free to do so, and then I'll answer them at the end of the little presentation here. My cell is 612-759-5180. Otherwise when we get to the questions, you're going to be able to unmute yourself by pressing *7.

Now, you might be thinking to yourself, "I'm just a real estate agent. Why should I hire anyone?" And certainly, you don't need to hire anyone. No one is saying that you must, but if you do value yourself as a salesperson and you want to help as many people as you can buy and sell real estate, the time demands of administrative tasks like processing a listing and closing a transaction really take away from our ability to help more people. We can be great agents and not hire anyone, or we can be great agents and hire someone to help us with the administrative tasks, so that we can generate more leads and more business.

One thing that I've found is that, more often than not, agents wait too long before they make that first hire, and it becomes very stressful because it's a catch 22. We're too busy to do everything that we have on our plate and we need help, but we feel we're too busy to train someone.

So, the first question that I get asked a lot is...

When should I hire an assistant?

It's likely that you're going to hire your first assistant when you have between 25 and 40 transactions a year. And while that number might be lower for some of us, it's clear to us, based on many years of experience working with agents and also being in the industry, that we absolutely need to hire someone when we're at 40 transactions. If you work in luxury, we found that you are going to need help between 10 and 15 transactions.

So, here are some signs when it would be time for you to take action and get some help in some way. First one is if you're not able to make time for prospecting. So, if you find yourself busy a high percentage of the day with activities that are not dollar-producing, they're not our money-making activities – if most of your day is spent on the dollar-supporting activities – then it would be important for you to consider getting someone to help you a little bit.

Another sign would be that you're losing leads – if you feel that leads are slipping through the cracks, if you're getting back to people and they've already moved on without you. Or maybe you're not able to find your leads because you have them written in a notebook somewhere, but because you might be a little disorganized, you're not able to find the people that you need to follow up with. Then it would probably be a good time for you to think about getting a little bit of support.

Or maybe you feel that your customer service is suffering, or maybe you're at a point where you're feeling like you're ready to work on your business instead of just in your business. You want to move into that CEO seat and really be the rainmaker or the mastermind, so you need to think about hiring

your first employee.

If you're ready to generate those non-dollar-generating tasks or maybe you know that you're going to be a little bit afraid and you think that that might keep you from moving forward, because you might be afraid of letting go, but you're ready to give it a try. Also, again, if you're at 25 to 40 transactions a year, it really is time to consider getting some help. Or if you're between 10 and 15, if you're doing luxury. And maybe the last thing actually would be, you want to be able to grow your business without sacrificing quality service.

Another question that people ask often is...

What are some options if I can't afford an assistant or I don't want to be locked in to paying a ton of money for an assistant, but I do want some administrative support?

One great option that's available to many agents to use is the services of a transaction coordinator. If you're not doing that, that's a great first step – to get a transaction coordinator to help you within your office or through an outside transaction coordination service. This kind of support can really free up a lot of hours that we spend tracking and handling paperwork and monitoring completion of important events related to closing a transaction. This is also a great way to begin getting additional help for yourself. It's a great way for you to learn how to delegate and to let go. And it's an affordable option, because usually it's pay-as-you-go. You pay at the end of the process and if you don't have a deal, you don't pay. So, transaction coordination can range from \$150 a file to \$450 a file. It just depends on the market that you're in and that type of thing. So, that would be a great option to start with if you haven't explored that.

If you do pursue this option, it's critical that you spend time upfront with the transaction coordinator to establish some clear expectations about what the tasks will be that are going to be performed, and that you establish a good communication strategy, exactly how that's going to work. This will help you from having things fall through the cracks because of a misunderstanding about who was going to be in charge of it or who was going to be following up. And it also reduces the likelihood that you'll duplicate efforts. So, transaction coordination is a great option.

A second option that's low cost is hiring a college intern. Now today, many college students seek out internships to gain some good experience so they can strengthen their resume, so they're better positioned after graduation when they're seeking a job. In some cases, internships are required for students and many students accept internships that are unpaid. This can be a great, affordable option, and even sometimes it can be free. And interns usually have good tech skills, they're enthusiastic and excited, and they typically don't have high demands in terms of their hours and pay. It's been my experience that if you're willing to be flexible with their schedule, they're willing to be flexible with your needs and with the time demands on them.

Now, how you use an intern is going to depend on your needs and the skills that the intern has. For example, you want to develop a marketing campaign with all of the related marketing materials. So, an intern working on a marketing degree would likely possess the basic skills to work on this. Or you might want an intern to begin identifying and analyzing the steps involved with some of your processes, so that you can ultimately streamline or at least get together a written step-by-step procedure that a future assistant could follow. In this case, you'd likely be looking for an intern that's working on a

business degree.

You can find interns by exploring local colleges and university websites, and also finding their resource centers for jobs or internships. They often times have posting boards. Also, some of the job sites that I'm going to cover a little bit later often offer an internship category that you can advertise in, so you could check that out. And you can call various departments at the college and let them know of your interest.

Another strategy to find interns is to call people in your database that are affiliated with a college or a university. It's really best to use an intern who is a junior or a senior because they're usually more mature, they have more skills, and if they're a good fit for your team, it might be an easy transition to train them for a full-time future paid role.

Another question that I get when people are thinking about hiring their first assistant...

Should I hire my own or should I share my assistant with another agent?

Now, it's been our experience that this arrangement usually doesn't work very well, simply because the dominant agent will dominate the assistant. So, let's say that John and Jim are sharing an assistant, and John is really busy with listings and he's supposed to have the assistant from 8:00 until noon. But John just got two new listings at 11:30. He'll ask the assistant to stay over for an hour or two to help process the listing. And then John tells Jim this is a crisis and he'll have the assistant make up this time later. But that doesn't happen, because another crisis occurs. And before you know it, John is taking over the afternoon timeframe too. This is very, very common, so that's one thing to think about.

Another significant problem that occurs when you share an assistant is confusion for the assistant, because one agent's processes are not like the other agent's processes. So because each agent has a different way to handle business processes and how they treat their clients, the assistant can get confused about how something is to be done. And because of the confusion, mistakes will occur, and the assistant and the agents are going to feel frustrated. So, our opinion has always been that if you want a part-time assistant, hire a part-time assistant. Don't share the assistant, especially with an agent that you know. It's very hard to navigate.

Alright, next question that I get a lot is...

When should I hire someone part-time versus full-time?

Well, the obvious answer is that hiring a full-time assistant is best if you know how to use the time profitably and effectively to grow your business, and you can afford the salary and the expenses associated with the new team member. But unfortunately, many agents don't use their time wisely when they hire their first assistant. So, sometimes hiring a part-time assistant is a great option, especially if this is all you can afford right now, and/or you're unsure how to best use your time and the time of the assistant.

For example, you decided to hire an assistant for 20 hours a week because this is what fits within your budget at this time. The assistant comes into the office for four hours a day and is responsible for processing paperwork and listings, answering the phone, and maybe performing data entry. This frees you up four hours a day, so what could you be doing? You could be generating leads and looking for new

business. And let's hypothetically assume that as a result of your lead generating, you increase your business by two listings a month. This means that at the end of the month you have two listings that you were able to get because you spent four hours a day looking for business. And let's say your average commission is \$10,000 – that's a potential of \$20,000 more income if you're using your time correctly in finding business and not being involved with the assistant and their job of paperwork. If you maintain this increased level of transactions, you're going to soon be able to convert this assistant to a full-time position. I've seen it happen many, many times. And it's awesome what it can do for us.

Alright, next question I get a lot...

Should I hire a virtual assistant?

There are a lot of opinions on this, but my feeling is that a virtual assistant should not be your first administrative hire. As a general rule, a virtual assistant cannot perform as effectively and efficiently as having somebody in your office and at your side. Now, it can work, for sure, to have a virtual assistant, but typically they're not able to perform all of the tasks and duties that you need performed, simply because they're not at the same location with you and your files. Also, they're not able to respond immediately when something needs to be done on the spot. They can't pull a file for you while you're talking on the phone with a client, they can't email a purchase agreement that you just brought back into the office, whatever.

But on the other hand, virtual assistants can do a great job with some very specific tasks or projects to fill in the gaps caused by an overload of business. Some of these things would be things that aren't time-sensitive, like marketing activities, posting your listings to your website, database management. That is where a virtual assistant can really come in handy, is if you're using a database product and you want someone to manage it for you. There a VA can work wonders. But they really can't be used for tasks that involve client contact, because it's difficult to monitor the quality that your contacts are going to get and your standard of service, because they're not with you.

Now, with virtual assistants there are a couple of different models that are typically used, and each of them brings their own set of benefits and challenges. The first model is to obtain a virtual assistant through a company that specializes in these services. The company provides candidates that have been screened and in some cases maybe even trained to perform certain activities. This option can provide really pretty decent caliber of talent at a low cost. But again, this is for specific projects, like database management. The main challenge is that there can be some coordination and communication difficulties if the virtual assistant is in a much different time zone, or if English is not their native language. So, you're going to need to provide training and you're also going to need to set up some very specific times that you talk with the virtual assistant and that you have your tasks really laid out that they're going to be working on.

The other virtual assistant model is one where you locate and hire an individual to work off-site. Typically, they might work in their house. And the primary benefit of this model is that you don't have to provide them with working space or equipment, and it's going to cost you less than hiring someone to be in the office. But again, the challenge is that you don't have the assistant available when you need them for time-sensitive and unexpected tasks. Additionally, the most dedicated person is not likely to work quite as effectively from home as they would in an office. So, for me it's not the best model, but if you're going to do it, you need to really carefully consider how you're going to use them and what

projects you're going to use them on. And again, like I said, database can be a great way to use them.

So, before you hire a virtual assistant, interview several people and avoid hiring the first one you interview. You're going to need to interview as many as six or seven to find somebody who communicates well and has the skills to complete the tasks that you assign them. Unless you use a service that specifically works on some type of software that you might be using.

Okay, next question that I get a lot...

Who do I hire?

So, when you've made the decision to hire your first team member, there are several important steps to take before you start looking for the ideal candidate. Taking these steps is going to help you hire the best possible candidate and help you avoid problems down the road, especially if you hire the wrong person.

These steps are: Number one, understanding the type of person that you need to hire. Number two, writing a job description. And number three, developing a schedule for your new team member, for your assistant. The actual recruiting for the position really should begin after you've looked at these three steps and outlined the strategies for it.

So, number one, understanding the type of person that you need to hire. In this case, in order to find the perfect assistant, you really need to develop a wish list or a profile. You want to identify the specific skills that you want the team member to have. Now, think about what would be a deal breaker for you and identify it upfront so you don't waste anyone's time. Perhaps you must have a bilingual assistant, or an assistant who can be direct. Once you're clear on what you're looking for, they're going to be easier to find.

It's been our experience that the perfect assistant has eight characteristics, so consider these things as you develop the profile of your perfect assistant: Number one, they've got professional administrative skills. You need someone who actually wants to be an office administrator. This is the kind of person who enjoys playing a supportive role within the office environment, and likes multitasking a variety of jobs and duties, and also, they have a high attention to detail. This is not someone who wants to learn about the real estate business so that they can become an agent. So, just keep that in mind. Do you want somebody who really wants to be an office administrator?

Number two, you want someone who's an organizer. Because of the nature of the multiple tasks and all the paperwork and the organizational skills, this is a real critical characteristic for an assistant. In fact, you want someone who is more organized than you are. A great assistant has good common sense to understand how to prioritize and organize their day efficiently and how to make the most of their day. Their desk has to be organized and the files have to be organized. It's really important.

Number three, we want somebody who has some computer skills. Really good computer skills with basic everyday office software and email communications is a must. While they are not likely going to know how to use real estate specific software, they should be able to learn quickly if they already have general computer skills.

Next, attitude. A great assistant has a positive attitude and brings positive energy. They're enthusiastic about their job, they're eager to learn, and they are striving to be the best that they can be.

Number five, you want somebody who's available. You want someone who's willing to work the specific hours that you need without any caveats. This is important, because what I've seen so many times is agents try to be flexible around the assistant's schedule, and then the agent ends up having to do all the work and pick up all the slack, because the assistant's not available. It's really important that you work around your schedule. And it's important that the person has a little bit of flexibility in their schedule, so they can stay late if needed to manage a particular problem or meet some critical deadline. It's been our experience that hiring someone who lives pretty close to the office usually works best. If a person lives more than 15 to 20 minutes away, more often than not this causes problems because they might be late because of traffic, they might ask to leave early to beat the traffic, and also, they might eventually find a job closer to home.

Number six, we really want your person, your assistant, your helper, to be a problem-solver. Some people like to figure out how to solve a problem, and other people become overwhelmed and paralyzed when they're confronted with a problem. A great assistant is the type of person who owns the problem and then tries to find a solution.

Number seven, personality style. Now, there are particular personality styles that are more suitable than others for an assistant to have. In general, the best personality type is somebody who's analytical, who's detail-oriented and who is highly organized. And I'm going to get into that next in just a minute.

The last thing that we want is experience. And they don't necessarily have to have experience in real estate. I actually have found that to be a little bit of a detriment, when they do come in with experience or if they were an agent that didn't make it and they want to be an admin. That hasn't worked out the best for me in my business, and for clients of mine as well. The perfect assistant though usually has prior experience in a professional administrative role within an office setting. They've got experience with customer service and they are okay with teamwork or working closely with other people to perform a job function. Those are really great, so be looking for that. They're used to working in a professional environment, they have some customer service background, and again, they would like to be part of a team.

So, when you start to interview people, we are going to want to talk about their personality profile. What we use and what we feel is really an amazing tool is the DISC personality profile. The DISC assessment is a test that allows you to get a read on a prospective hire's personality traits, their strengths, and their potential weaknesses. Once you've hired them, if you understand their DISC, it's going to help you manage and train them more effectively as well.

Now, we consider it a priceless tool and we offer it to you to use for free. You can access the DISC link under our free tools on our website. In fact, it is so critical in the hiring process that we really suggest that you do not even interview anyone until you've had them take the assessment and you've had the chance to review it. Because if you discover that they're not a fit, then you won't want to waste your valuable time meeting with them.

To begin to understand the DISC, it's best if you take it yourself, and if you're one of our clients, you've taken it probably. If you haven't taken it, you can go to our website and underneath the "Free

Resources” tab you’re going to be able to take the DISC test. Taking the assessment is easy. It only takes about 15 minutes, and if you take it properly, it is surprisingly accurate.

So, as you take the test and as you coach others to take it in the future, just keep the following things in mind: Don’t take it when you’re tired or stressed. Take it when you can focus 100%, and complete it in one sitting. I mean, it’s very short. Don’t overthink your answers; just answer instinctively. And remember that there are no right or wrong answers. You are who you are and we all have our own gifts and talents. There’s no right or wrong personality type, but there are right or wrong personality types for the role that we’re hiring for.

Now, as soon as you or a potential hire takes the test, it’s going to be automatically emailed within a few minutes, and you can review it. I would suggest that you have your friends and family take the test and then review it with them, because the more time you spend on this topic, the more quickly you’re going to understand it and be able to use your knowledge easily in your work with your clients and with your staff and with your personal relationships. It’s really great. The DISC assessment that you receive is very thorough, and much of the explanation you will need is in the report that’s going to be sent to you.

Let’s go over though, just a little bit, some highlights on it. You’re going to notice when you get your DISC test back that no one is just one style, but rather kind of a combination of the different styles. So, there are four different categories. There’s the D, I, S, and C – DISC. D, I, S C. The D is the Driver, or the direct style. The I is the Influencer, or the expressive style. The S is the Steady, or amiable style. And then C is Cautious, or analytical. There are a lot of different versions and names for these categories, but these are the most common ones.

So, some tendencies with High Ds are that they can be a little bit demanding, or actually a lot demanding if they’re a High D, and dominant. They’re impatient, they don’t like personal criticism. And they’re a people-mover; they get people going, they get people moving forward.

The tendencies for a High I are, they can be impulsive, they’re very influential, they can be impatient. They also do not like criticism, and they are also people-movers, get people going.

The tendencies for High Ss – they are safety-seeking, they are a stabilizing force among the team, they are a cooperative group worker. They are possessive of their job, or their environment, or their family. And they resist sudden change.

And the tendencies for High C – they’re conscientious, they’re a perfectionist, usually. They’re reserved. They are overly critical sometimes, and they do resist other people’s ideas or work. So, they do kind of think that their idea is the best; and that’s okay.

But most people’s styles are a combination. So, let’s talk through... I’m going to give you a cheat sheet of what you’re going to be looking for to fill a good fit for an admin. Now, there are a lot of considerations to take into place, and these are just general guidelines. There are other things that are going to matter to you, but as we’re looking at the DISC, here are some of the things that I would be looking for.

So, for an administrative assistant, their D is ideally somewhere in the 20 to 40% range. When you get the test results back, I think on the second or third page there’s a graph and it gives you a percentage of each of their categories. So, the 20 to 40% range is good for a D. However, this could depend on

whether or not you're looking for someone a bit stronger who can help you build the team and eventually have some type of a leadership role. If that's the case, you're looking maybe a little bit higher than that 40, because the lower they are on the D, the less of a self-starter or dominant person they're going to be. So, it kind of depends on how dominant you want them. If you are a High D – which a lot of top-producing agents are High Ds and High Is – and if you are, then you might need somebody who's a little bit stronger, who can stand up to you if needed and not be intimidated. But just be careful not to go too high on the D, because they can be harsh and they can be too direct with clients. They can be impatient with details and they might want to boss you around. Some of us don't care about that, but if you do, it's something to think about.

Now, the I – we want to have that below the midline as well. 30 to 40 is good, because we want them to be able to communicate with people, but we don't want them to be so High I that they spend a lot of their free time socializing. If you know that they're going to have a lot of client interaction, you may want to go a little bit higher on the I scale. But for an admin, I really wouldn't go above the 70 on the scale if you can avoid it, because otherwise they are going to be very talkative, not only to you – which can get annoying when you're trying to get your work done – but also to people in the office. They're very social, so they'll be flitting around, talking to everyone. They'll have a lot of friends in the office, and they're easily distracted. I've also found that High Is tend to not be as organized or detail-oriented. They just don't like it. It's not that they can't do it. Same with Ds – it's not that they can't do it; it's just that long-term it's not a great fit for them.

Now, S should be above the midline – about 50 to 70, because you want people that are going to be patient and service-oriented, and we want them to be somebody who puts the priorities of others ahead of their own. But if they're too high of an S – over 70 – they will be too nice and too passive. And also, if you're like me, which is a High D and a High I, they'll be too sensitive for you and you end up hurting their feelings. So, you really want to try to stay below that 70.

Now, my favorite assistant is a High C, because I am quick, I like to move fast. A High C can take it; they're not emotional. I like to have a C that is between 50 and 80; really more toward the 80 is great for me, because they're very detail-oriented, they're process-oriented. Really, I think for most people, this is what we need, because we need people who are going to follow the process, dot all the Is and keep us on track and keep us organized. So, a perfect assistant in my opinion – the C is the highest, then the S, then the I, then the D. So, that would be what I would be looking for if I were you.

Okay, so after you have defined the specific characteristics in a person that you're looking for and you've got a job description together... By the way, if you would like a copy of a sample job description, go ahead and shoot Samantha an email at samantha@forwardcoaching.com, and she'll send you one. We've got one that we can get for you that just has our sample job description that talks about all of the different tasks that they could potentially perform for you as an admin. So, if you want that, we've got that and that'll help you put yours together. And then again, you want to think about the schedule that you want for people. Then you're going to be in the position to actively start recruiting.

Here are a few places that you could look for an assistant. Number one, you could look through your database. You could send an email to your database saying that you've got a great opportunity for somebody who's looking for an executive assistant job. It's a great way to reach out to people. It's exciting. You've been telling them your team is expanding and that you're excited, and if they know of anybody, to pass along your contact info. You could call business professionals. You could call four or

five business pros that you know and say...

Hey, I'm looking for a great executive assistant. Do you have anyone, or have you downsized anybody?

In that case, again, you want to send them to your ad so they can apply or give out your contact info.

The other thing would be job posting. Most job seekers today are looking at the Internet, and right now, my favorite one is Indeed.com. It's a great one because it's free. They do offer you a paid version but you don't need it; you can use the free version. I had a client last week, she had 124 applications when she posted hers. And I had another client in a small town, she said, "Oh, you're going to be disappointed. We're not going to get very many." She posted it, the first weekend she had 40. So, Indeed is really good. That's one I recommend, but there are other ones too – Craigslist, Monster.com CareerBuilder, Jobs.com. I mean, there are lots of them out there.

You can talk to your vendors and your affiliates – so, your title and mortgage, your home warranty, your home inspections. They know you, they know how you work. You could ask them if they know if somebody's looking for a job. And then, you could think about maybe people you've worked with, some of your clients. Have any of them been in an admin role? Or maybe someone just started to stay home with a child and maybe they'd be looking for something part-time, if that's what you're looking for. And then of course the job boards that we talked about in the colleges – that's a great place to go to.

So again, if you want the job description, samantha@forwardcoaching.com for that.

Alright, lastly, before we jump into questions, I just want to quickly go through a few common hiring mistakes that people have. So, one of the things that people do often when they're hiring is, they hire too quickly. And this is because we are, again, stretched and we want to find somebody to help us and get things going. And so, we might hire the first person we interviewed and we rushed through it, or we skip important steps in the interview and the hiring process. So, take your time with that.

Another mistake we see is people hire without defining the expectations – so, not knowing exactly what the person's going to do, not developing the job description, or hiring the wrong personality style that we talked about. So, I know that you might be feeling the pressure of your workload and it might be tempting to skip these steps, but don't do it, because you're going to lose time and money in the long run. And I'm speaking from experience here. I had to go through when I first started – and this was 30 years ago when I started looking for assistants – I went through 12 of them before I finally figured it out. I took a course, I followed the course to the letter and I was able to finally find some really great help. And that's when my business just really took off.

Some other common hiring mistakes are that we don't give ourselves enough time to collect resumes. We hire the first person through the door. We don't have a system for interviewing. We want to have questions that we interview, we want to have a process, we want to make sure they take the DISC test. Sometimes we hire by our gut. That's not good either. I remember when I was following this process initially that I first started, I had two people, I got it down to two people. My gut told me to go with one of them, because I really liked her a lot, but the other one was really qualified. So, I had a series of tests that I had them take to check out whether they had good grammar and math and blah, blah, blah; just some skills tests. And the gal that my gut had told me to hire, failed the tests. So, instead, I went with

the other one, and she stayed with me for four years. She was fantastic. I mean, she was amazing. So, you really want to follow your process.

Another thing is, we need to thoughtfully review the resumes. We're looking for detail-oriented people, so we want to make sure that these resumes look good, that there aren't typos, and that they have the experience that we're looking for. We want to make sure that we ask interview questions about the candidate's previous work history. Don't ask questions about their personal life, but we can ask about their life journey. We can ask about where they see themselves in a few years, kind of what their future goals are for themselves. Again, hiring the wrong personality style, not getting a DISC for the candidates, and failing to kind of validate that DISC.

We sometimes make a mistake because we don't allow enough interview time to really get to know the candidate. I think that you need to do two interviews and I think that it's important that you have somebody else in on the second interview.

Number 10 reason that we might make a bad hire is we fail to test the skills. If you use Indeed, they do have skills tests in there. You can select a few and have them do the skills test.

Another step that people skip is checking out their references. This is important, we definitely want to talk to the references. You're going to maybe hear some red flags potentially. Maybe not necessarily exactly – they might not exactly say it's a red flag, but you sometimes will pick it up when you're talking to people. And again, another mistake is not involving other team members in the interview process, or your broker if you don't have a team member, or your lender, or somebody who has some experience hiring.

Another thing you can do is you could roleplay a script during the interview process, see if they would be willing to follow a script. Also, you want to find people that would be willing to promote your business, that they would be open to talking to their friends and family about real estate. Also, you want to check their Facebook page. I mean, there are a lot of different things that we need to do to get ready. There's a whole process for it. But anyway, this is quite a bit for you guys and I think it's going to be helpful if you're thinking about it.

So, I just want to pose one question to you. Oh, one last thing – this is really important. When you do hire someone, I just want to say, don't hire them as an independent contractor. Bring them on as an employee. There are services that can help you with this. I've personally used Paychex and ADP – those are great. The problem is, if you hire them as an independent contractor, you're setting yourself up for some major fines, because if you tell somebody the work that you want them to do for you, and how to do it, then they're not an independent contractor anymore. They're an employee. So, keep that in mind.

So, here's my question for you. I want to know, being honest with yourself, how much time you actually spent prospecting in your business last week. Most people that I talk to spend between two and four hours a week generating new business. So, really, if you consider if you brought someone on to help you and if they could just relieve five hours a week for you in administrative tasks, imagine the difference that could make for you in your business. So, consider it.

Alright, I'm going to open it up for questions now. We've got a little bit of time left. If you have a question, please just press *7 to unmute yourself to ask a question.

Nick: How much should we pay them? My name's Nick, by the way.

Alyssa: Oh, great question. Hi! I'm sorry, what's your name?

Nick: Nick Petrosio.

Alyssa: Hey Nick! You know, it depends on your area that you're in. That's a great question though. What I am seeing is, depending on where you are, between \$12 to \$15 an hour, if you're not in one of the higher paid markets, like on the East and West Coast. East and West Coast, we're looking at probably \$20 an hour.

Nick: And any performance bonus?

Alyssa: For me personally, I think that saving the bonuses as a raise is a great way to do it, because then you don't have to raise the hourly, you can raise the bonus amount. You could start with a small bonus, per closed file. What I do with my assistants was, the files needed to close on time in order to get paid the bonus. Now, of course, if it was beyond their control, I didn't ding them for it. But the goal was to get them closed on time without any problems. So, they were really motivated to do that because of the bonus. But I didn't start with the bonuses right away. These are things that everyone does it a little bit differently, but performance bonuses can be a great incentive. It just depends on if your person is motivated by money. Some of the personality types, like High Ss are not really motivated by money. They're going to be more motivated by knowing that they're doing a really good job. So, you have to kind of play it by ear with people.

Nick: Thank you for that.

Alyssa: Yeah, you're welcome. When you're thinking about payment, another thing is vacation time. It's another thing that people ask about. That's something you'll want to identify before you make someone an offer in the offer process, is what you're going to do about that – if you're going to offer a vacation or any type of benefits at all. For myself, what I did is I offered one vacation day a month. They would earn one a month that they were with me, and that worked out really good. So, by the end of the year they had 12 days.

Nick: Paid? Where they get paid?

Alyssa: Yup, where they got paid. Yup. That was for full-time, not for part-time. For part-time you might want to do a half day or whatever. Maybe there isn't any vacation. If it's part time, I don't think that's a big expectation. What else you got?

Nick: Life expectancy. You mentioned four years for your really good hire that you had. What can we expect typically? Is that a fair question, on how long they're going to last?

Alyssa: It is. It's a fair question. It depends on how high their D and their I are, actually. So, people who have a High D or a High I, they will come in and they will either move up through the ranks with you – so they'll start out as an admin... This happened to me a lot. They would start out as an admin, then they would move into more of an inside sales role, and then they would move into a buyer agent role. That happened a lot for me, and I see that within teams that I work with as well. So, people that have a High

D or a High I, that's what they'll do. A High S or a High C can stay a long time. I had people that were with me for longer than four years. It's just that my four-year gal was really, really motivated and really good, and moved on to a lot bigger jobs and stuff. But average, for most people it's probably two to three years that they're going to need a change of some kind. Unless they're that really High S and High C – then they're pretty content. So, I'm always looking for ways to help them move up.

The other thing too, and with buyer's agents as well – whenever I hired people, I just really tried to digest that I was just a step in their path, in their life. It wasn't like an ending point for them. And that helped me to help people to find other opportunities and to maintain really good relationships with people, instead of feeling like if they left me, I was being betrayed. So, it's an important thing to kind of, I guess, get in your psyche a little bit, because we take our businesses so personally that sometimes when an assistant leaves we're heartbroken, or feel like we're in a breakup or something. Where if we can really more look at it as we're just a step in their path. And then what happens is they can become great referral sources for us down the road, even if they leave and move on.

Nick: I've been interviewing a lot of Higher Ds, and when I ask them "Where do you see yourself in five years?", most of them say, "I want to get into real estate. I want to get into sales." Is that someone you just eliminate immediately?

Alyssa: For me, yes. For me, that is not what I want. Unless I am thinking of... Maybe for a marketing position. If they had a marketing degree or something like that, then I would consider it and I would put them in the marketing role, and then I would move them from marketing to inside sales, and then inside sales to buyer's agent. But unfortunately, they're going to be there for a little while, and then they're going to want to be you. They're going to take everything that you've taught them and move on pretty quickly. It turns out you trained your competition.

Nick: So, High S and High C is what I should be leaning towards.

Alyssa: Yeah, but my opinion is that I don't think the S should be the highest. I think the C should be the highest. What is your DISC profile? Do you know?

Nick: 99D, and then I think it's like a 65... I don't have it in front of me. 65I, and then it goes down really low, like a 30S and a 40C.

Alyssa: Yeah. So then for you, I would say that what would be good for you would be, like I said, about a 70C. You probably only want about a 50S, or at least the S needs to be lower than the C. It could be equal or lower. If it's higher, unfortunately what's going to happen is you're going to hurt their feelings. Here's an example. I had a 99S, and she was great. She was the mother of one of my buyer's agents, and so I hired her. She needed a job. One day when I was walking by her desk, I said, "Hey Sheila, I saw a typo in the MLS sheet that you put in there. Can you correct it?" That's all I said. Well, there were three other people around when I said it. She felt absolutely just betrayed by me, and strung up in front of the whole team. And it was a real problem. Unfortunately, that's what happens when you have real sensitive people with a real High D, like you – a 99D. So, that would be the problem you're going to run into if the S gets too high.

Nick: Okay. Very helpful.

Alyssa: So, go for a High C.

Nick: Okay.

Alyssa: Any other questions, since you are kind of in the thick of it?

Nick: I don't want to hog up all the time here. I don't know if anyone else has a question. Sounds like a no.

Alyssa: Yeah, go ahead.

Anne: Can anyone hear me?

Alyssa: Yeah, I can you hear you.

Anne: Hi, I had a question. I jumped in a little bit late. My name is Anne, I'm in Newport Beach.

Alyssa: Hi!

Anne: Hi! You were talking about unpaid college intern. That's of interest to me. So, the question I have is, where would you... I know that you'd probably go straight to the college, or I'm assuming you go straight to the college and there are some... I jumped in late, so I apologize if you've covered this already.

Alyssa: That's okay. Sure, let me cover it a little bit more. So, unpaid interns, the way that they work is they usually need to have a project. It's a per-project thing. Maybe you want to develop your listing presentation, and so an unpaid intern could come and help you develop the 12 to 20 pages of your listing presentation. And they would do that as a project for graduation from college. They would present that to their professor, and then you would have a product that came from it. And there are lots of different things that you could do with an unpaid intern – maybe as database management, helping you get your database set up. But I have found it's more for a finite period of time – 20 hours or something like that. And then they earn an unpaid internship, where you'll fill out the report and it'll be presented to the college professor. They get class credit for it and it helps them to graduate. In a lot of business degrees, that's the case. You're not probably going to find a long-term unpaid intern, but you could find one for project-based.

But you can get interns that are inexpensive – \$10 to \$12 an hour – marketing interns, business interns that are willing to work 10 hours a week ongoing for you. Say you wanted to do a weekly email out to your database – then the intern could create the email for you and send it out once a week for you at the specified time, or have it sent to you in a draft form so that you can make all the modifications and corrections, and then they get it out for you every week. Or they could do your social media. There are lots of things that they could do for you. And they are excited about it. But again, you've got to do the report.

Where you find them is either on the job boards... In fact, there's even a website called Internship.com. If you Google "college internships", you'll find there are lots of places that you can post ads and you can find them. But also, you can go straight to the college, you can go straight to the professors. A lot of

colleges have job boards that you can post on for internships, or college professors might have it, based on the criteria that you're looking for. Most of the time it's going to be a marketing internship or a business internship. Does that help?

Anne: Okay. It's very helpful. Very helpful. I think the social media is what I was mostly looking for. So, it sounds like they do that kind of thing. But it probably would be more on a longer-term basis. Is that what you're saying, for something like that?

Alyssa: Well, I think so. It would be nice if you could find somebody that would be able to do it for you for six, eight, 12 months, instead of having to train somebody every month, like a free one. The other thing is with social media, if you want to do that type of a thing, you're going to want to have set up a calendar. This is really important. And that's where an intern could help you too, is setting up the marketing calendar, and then setting up what your categories are for your social media. That really helps to come up with content, so that they could research content for you if needed, or things like that. So, it's a wonderful thing to do.

Anne: Are some of the interns paid, did you say?

Alyssa: Yeah. So, the free ones would be really more for just project-by-project. And then the paid ones are ones that would do ongoing projects for you – almost like a part-time job, but probably a maximum of 10 hours a week.

Anne: And are they paid what you suggested for the other admins, at \$20?

Alyssa: It depends on where you are. Now, you said you're in Newport, so you probably are looking at \$12 to \$15 an hour, I would imagine where you're at, because they can easily go get a part-time job for that, right?

Anne: Right, right, probably. Okay, thank you so much. Very helpful.

Alyssa: Yeah, you're welcome. Any additional questions? If you're muted, just press *7 to unmute. Nick, anything else on your end?

Nick: No, we're good here. Thank you very much! Very informative.

Alyssa: Yeah, you're welcome! Good. Excellent. Well, I thank you all for joining the call. And if you do have additional questions, feel free to send them in to samantha@forwardcoaching.com. She'll get them to me and I'll get you an answer. And hopefully you find some help from this, and good luck! I hope you consider finding an admin to help you to grow your business. Alright, have a wonderful day, everybody!