

## **Business Update**

### **Real estate author offers advice on achieving riches**

By Michelle Swafford, Tribune

Real estate agents and other sales people have to think they can earn millions if they want it to happen. This was real estate veteran Gary Keller's message Wednesday to nearly 600 Valley real estate agents at the Radisson in Scottsdale and is the foundation of his new book, "The Millionaire Real Estate Agent."

Although the book was written for real estate professionals, Keller said, it offers universal principles applicable to any sales position.

"As Henry Ford said, 'Whether you think you can or can't, you're right,' " Keller said. "Usually if you can't think it, you can't do it."

Although the title is about being a millionaire and the focus groups were millionaire agents, the authors said it's not about the money. "Great success in life is rarely about gaining lots of money, but it's about getting the most out of your life," Keller said.

There are certain myths such as "It can't be done in my market," "It's too risky" and "I'll lose money" that hold people back from their potential, said Dave Jenks.

Keller and Jenks each have more than 20 years of real estate experience. Keller co-founded Keller Williams Realty in 1983, which is the seventh-largest real estate company in the nation and has 14 Valley offices.

Keller and co-authors Jenks and Jay Papasan analyzed hundreds of real estate agents' budgets and interviewed more than 25 of the top 50 agents in the United States.

The authors distinguish their book from other real estate books by providing concrete examples of how to achieve the utmost success. "We are not going to give you choices, but the best practices [used by the best real estate agents in the United States and Canada who follow very specific practices," Keller said.

Success in sales requires agents to generate leads and increase productivity through people, systems and tools. Real estate agents must also generate listings, according to the book's models.

The four business models Keller and his colleagues discovered teach sales professionals how to generate money and clients through marketing and networking and how to manage the business effectively by giving budget guidelines for each aspect of the business and tools that make a business run smoother.

For example, it's estimated that agents will net two sales — one repeat and one referral — for every 12 people in their database who is kept in contact with 33 times. The idea is for every person an agent meets or talks to on the phone, they should be contacted eight times over eight weeks to build a relationship.

Once the relationship is established, the clients should be contacted an additional 33 times

throughout the year. A database is one of many tools and resources necessary to reach peak performance, Keller said. "Until the last decade, real estate agents were perceived and believed they were just sales people and expected to work by themselves," he said.

Now, agents are encouraged to work in teams to better serve clients.

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