



## Hello again fellow agents



Four days before the ANZ raised rates in February, 24 of 27 economists surveyed by *Bloomberg News* predicted the RBA would cut interest rates at its February meeting. It was all set to be good news for variable rate borrowers. But when the RBA decided to do nothing, mainstream commentators were shocked. Especially when most of them had claimed a cut was certain.

So, when we continually hear from economic and "Property experts" who say the recent market downturn will stop, and continue to "talk the market up" based on their so called "educated" opinions, you would have to question their predictions. Agents are doing it tough. Sales are harder to get, and in some areas 2011 numbers were half of 2010. This looks like continuing. Why? Because Australian's pay over 40% of their income financing property loans. At last potential borrowers are looking to the future where global uncertainty looms.

## THE TENTH COMMANDMENT OF SUCCESS

**THOU MUST NOT BE ANYONE BUT THYSELF.**

**TO BE WHAT YE ARE AND TO BECOME WHAT YE ARE CAPABLE OF BECOMING IS THE SECRET OF A HAPPY LIFE.**

There is a certain aspect of us called "self efficacy" which is our capacity for producing a desired result or effect; or our effectiveness. Self efficacy determines to what we will give our best shot; how hard and for how long we will persist to attain the goal.



How often do we give up on achieving what we want? We come up with all sorts of excuses when we quit. But if we push ourselves that little bit harder the last few yards are easy.



And, if we do need a rest after banging against the door that won't open, rethink our approach and maybe tackle it differently. If you can't go through it, go around it, or jump over it. Don't get focused that the outcome you seek is only achieved one way, there are always other means, you only need to tap into your inner self and seek the answer. Locked within us all is the secret to happiness.

## WHAT COMES FIRST- SERVICE DELIVERY OR THE \$\$\$?

Some staff have only one focus, and that is the \$\$\$ reward at the end of the deal. The delivery of quality, professional service should be the main aim, and the result of that is the financial reward.

Putting deals together is just part of the process, and the seller and buyer must be made to "feel" you have worked in both their best interests. Remember, this is a very emotional time for both parties

From the outset of obtaining the listing the sales person must build on the trust and confidence the seller has placed in them by giving them the listing. The way to do that is daily contact with the seller either by phone, personal visits, meetings or correspondence.

That level of contact will give the seller the "feeling" that the salesperson is really providing great communication so they know, not once a week, but almost daily of the progress of the marketing and the results of enquiries and inspections. And when you do put the deal together you can be assured that the sellers will still "feel" you did not do a good job. How many referrals will you get from them? How many people will they complain of you to?

You are not going to be able to get sellers to "feel" you have been doing your job properly if you get an offer for them and you have given them no or little feedback since you listed the property. All they will "feel" is that you are just trying to put the deal together to make your fee, with scant interest in the reality that you were supposed to be working for them and delivering quality, professional service. So they will not be satisfied with the offer, and you will start to lose their trust and confidence to your own detriment.

Disgruntled people tell at least 7 times more people when a service provider doesn't do a good job than they do when a good job is done. The salesperson who puts the sellers ahead of the \$\$\$ will negotiate a better result. The salesperson who gets them \$560,000 when they know they will accept \$550,000 will get plenty of referrals, as will a property manager who gets the landlord \$420 pw when they know they will accept \$400 pw.

## TEN GOOD REASONS WHY EMPLOYERS COULD CONSIDER IMPLEMENTING FLEXIBLE WORK PRACTICES.



By Charles Power-Editor-in-Chief,  
*Employment Law Practical Handbook*

There is no doubt that the decision to implement more flexible work practices in your workplace will have a positive impact on your business.

Flexible work practices help to create a workplace culture that incorporates choice, understanding and adaptability. Flexibility helps to take pressure off employees and creates a more productive and enjoyable working environment.

Here are 10 reasons why implementing flexible work practices in your workplace can pay dividends:

1. It can help to reduce absenteeism, lateness and staff turnover.
2. It will help create happier, healthier employees who are less prone to stress.
3. It can increase levels of customer satisfaction.
4. It will provide you with a greater ability to meet business demands. For example, flexible work practices can help you to deal with increases and decreases in workloads and staffing issues.
5. It will significantly reduce the risk of your employees burning out physically and mentally.
6. It will increase employee motivation and commitment.

7. It will save you money on recruitment and re-training costs.
8. It will Increase the likelihood of employees returning from parental leave.
9. It will potentially improve your workplace health and safety records.
10. It will attract a wider pool of candidates to your business who may not have been able to work otherwise. This will give you the potential to tap into a more skilled workforce.

Here is an example of a flexible working arrangement you might want to implement in your workplace - and its potential benefits and some considerations you might need to keep in mind:

### Working from home (also known as teleworking or telecommuting)



This type of flexible working arrangement involves employees working away from the office, usually at home. It can occur on a full-time, part-time, temporary or permanent basis.

### What are the benefits?

Studies have shown in Australia and overseas that employees who have the opportunity to work from home have better concentration, less travel time, reduced stress and higher job satisfaction. Working from home can also result in increased productivity and can save on office space.

### What do you need to consider before implementing this arrangement?

Before allowing an employee to work from home, you must have clear objectives and outcomes in mind. Safety considerations are important, and you will also need to consider how equipment will be maintained. Remember that in most cases, at least some time in the office is beneficial to the employee and co-workers.

### HOW TO RETAIN AND MOTIVATE GOOD STAFF



In the preface of his excellent book *The Staff Cycle*, published in the 1990s, Rex Ward made three pointed statements about the real estate industry, and it's no different today:

- (a) There is a 100% turnover of staff every three years in Australia. One of the reasons for this is the temptation to put bums on seats, because the seats are available.
- (b) More money is spent on office maintenance than on the development and maintenance of staff.
- (c) Success will come to those who help others become successful.

Rex also said that the biggest single problem confronting the industry is its inability to retain good staff, the reasons being:

- (a) Poor staff selection criteria
- (b) Poor staff management.
- (c) Lack of ongoing training and development

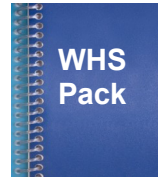
The actual monetary cost to an office when staff need replacement is many thousands of dollars. As well, the inconvenience of going through the staff cycle again is soul-destroying and team spirit in the office is affected.

So more effort must be used to retain good staff. They must be made to feel part of the business; they should be motivated (based on what motivates them), rewarded, and given career opportunities, and access to good industry training.

### NEW WORK HEALTH & SAFETY LEGISLATION

Following the Federal Government's national requirements, the NSW and Queensland Governments have already introduced the new Legislation effective from 1 January 2012 and the other States and Territories will soon follow. Fines for non compliance can be up to **\$3 million**.

**The Legislation places many more obligations on staff (including Commission Agents), Contractors and Company Directors, as well as Management.**



If you haven't already updated your current **WHS Procedures and Policies to comply** then we can assist with a WHS Pack containing:

1. A summary of the new Legislation as it applies to Agents (44 pages for NSW and 55 pages for Queensland of the 250+ page Acts)
2. A Procedures Manual (24 pages), and
3. A **WHS** Policy Manual which all staff & management need to sign off on (36 pages).

**Answering "NO" to any of the following questions alone means you will be non-compliant** and need to review your existing position.

1. Do you have a formal WHS Policy Manual that management and staff have agreed to and signed that complies with the new Legislation?
2. Have you established a consultation process with your employees to discuss at least quarterly WHS issues?
3. Do you have a risk assessment process for identifying, assessing and controlling hazards in the workplace, including all properties managed and for sale ?
4. Have you developed safe work method statements for each job type?
5. Do you have a clearly defined office procedures that cover all WHS issues that can exist in the office and "out of office" situations?
6. Is training in OH&S provided to all staff?
7. Is your First Aid Kit compliant, and up-to-date?
8. Do you have a return to work program in place in the event of an injury occurring to employees, contractors or the public?

Cost of the WHS Pack s just **\$330.00** (a small investment to secure peace of mind) and it is sent by email with a 14 day Invoice which you can pay by EFT or cheque. Just advise your billing address when ordering, preferably by email.

For details on the Pack just go to our Website or send us an email.

Until our next Newsletter, best regards.

*Alan Fleming*