Mentorship vital to personal and professional growth

Mentorship comes in different shapes and patterns, but many REALTORS® can benefit from the guidance of others, no matter how that mentoring is delivered.

From one-on-one sessions to group meetings and formalized training programs, mentorship in real estate takes many forms. Various methods and strategies are used by REALTORS® in Ontario to encourage and support learning. The REALTOR® EDGE newsletter spoke with various professionals who talked about the importance of sharing and passing on knowledge.

Anna Vozza, a Windsor REALTOR®, entered the real estate business 15 years ago to work for an independent brokerage. Now a director at the Ontario Real Estate Association, Vozza says she has had the good fortune to be mentored informally by the brokerage owner, Bob Pedler.

“He is my grandfather’s age, and he mentored me and took me under his wing,” Vozza says. "He has been the president of organizations of every level of real estate, and I want to follow in his footsteps. I am a leader now in real estate because he pushed me.”

Each morning of the business week, Vozza has coffee and an informal chat in the office with her mentor.

“It’s one-on-one time where we talk over the coming day, the listings and the issues arising from deals that are on the go,” Vozza says. “He has taught me that nothing is unachievable if I put my mind to it. During my first commercial deal, he stood by in case there were problems, but he kept encouraging me and telling me, ‘You can do it.’ ”

Vozza believes that success in real estate “isn’t something you can learn from a book. We’re in the business of building relationships.” Having a mentor who shares his wisdom and experience has been a godsend, she says. “Depending on what’s going on at the time, he can be a listener, advisor or coach,” she says. “My mentor listens to me vent, is a sounding board in a deal, gets me back on track positively and helps me work through the next deal. He also advises me on how to deal with different personalities.”

Formal Mentorship

When Sue Symons first became a REALTOR® seven-and-a-half years ago, she was assigned to a mentor at the office where she was based. “The broker assessed people to see if there would be a good fit between mentor and protégé,” she says of the brokerage’s mentorship program. “The mentor had to have experience, but the match was based on the broker’s assessment of whether the two personalities would work well together.”
Symons was paired with the same REALTOR® who had sold her home, a woman with several years of experience. “It was the right fit for me,” Symons says. “My mentor was client-focused and she is one of the hardest workers I know. Our mentoring process was fairly informal. We discussed how to write a deal or talked about wells, tanks and technical things. She also brought me in and trained me on things like running an effective open house.”

The benefits of mentorship became very clear from that experience, says Symons. She is now the owner and broker of record at her own North Bay real estate brokerage, with 28 REALTORS® on site. Symons has established a mentorship program at her own brokerage that combines mentorship with formal training. The mentorship officially lasts a year, but informally, it can continue forever. “The value of teaching people to be true professionals is so important,” she says.

Each REALTOR® who joins Symons’ brokerage is required to attend a week of intensive training, along with scheduled weekly sales training sessions that address topics such as how to build trust and technical subjects such as understanding agency agreements. Although these sessions are mandatory for new salespeople, they are open to everyone.

“Our whole office has a mentorship focus,” Symons says. “We spend a lot of time on training and mentoring, and everyone is encouraged to ask for and provide help to others. I would call it a mentoring environment.”

Mentoring even comes into play when Symons works with a client, something she does not do often in her current role as broker of record, unless the client insists on her services. In that case, she will take the project on as a co-listing with one of her REALTORS® and use it as a teaching opportunity.

“Mentoring people through the entire sales process is a great way to help them when they’re getting started in this business,” Symons says.

**Many Minds Are Better Than One**

At the Toronto brokerage where Bill Johnston works as a REALTOR®, mentorship takes the form of collective wisdom through a process the firm calls Mastermind. Every Wednesday morning, many of the REALTORS® gather in a conference room to come up with solutions to problems posed by individual salespeople or brokers.

“For anyone with an issue or concern, that group can brainstorm,” says Johnston, who has been in the business for 33 years. “That session is the most practical and beneficial mentorship I’ve come across during my years in real estate. It is very concrete and specific, and we get a lot of input and insights.”

The session lasts one hour. The facilitator is usually one of the managers at the brokerage who keeps strict track of the time since everyone has a busy day ahead.
“I support the group approach,” says Johnston. “Although it can be helpful to have one person as a sounding board, too much one-on-one mentoring can foster dependency, and the mentor may not always be around. REALTORS® need to learn to be self-sufficient.”

“It’s up to the facilitator to keep the discussion moving so that topics don’t get left behind or beaten to death,” Johnston says. “It’s fair to say that there is at least one answer offered for every problem. Even after 33 years, I still learn new things at these meetings.”

**Mentoring Advice for Brokers:**

1. **Set up a mentoring program.** These programs help new people and enhance the professionalism of the industry across the board.

2. **Reach out to other brokers who have programs.** Sharing knowledge reduces the need to re-invent the wheel.

3. **It doesn’t have to be complicated.** A mentorship program is simply an opportunity for people to learn from others and apply those lessons. It can be as simple as you make it.

4. **Mentoring programs support ongoing learning.** Continuous learning is worthwhile even for seasoned professionals. These programs get everyone thinking and involved.

5. **REALTORS® are honoured to be asked to participate.** They see it as a responsibility and take it seriously.

6. **Emphasize the value of seeing other REALTORS® as part of the family.** Help other agents and learn from them. The more you give back, the more you gain, ten-fold.

7. **Mentorship teaches the importance of being a good self-manager.** This business provides a great deal of freedom but there is also lots of room to fail. Mentorship keeps the focus on self-discipline, professionalism, due diligence and good work habits.

*Story by Elaine Smith*

**Sources:** Bill Johnston, Sue Symons, Anna Vozza

For more information on mentorship in real estate, the OREA Real Estate College has produced *A Mentoring Kit for New Salespeople*. The kit contains chapters on resources, planning, sales, skills and professionalism, along with CDs and information on how real
estate is structured in Ontario. It can be purchased for $10 plus tax. To purchase the kit through OREA’s e-Store, visit www.orea.com and click on OREA Real Estate College and then on Learning Tools to find A Mentoring Kit for New Salespeople. You can also order the kit by telephone by calling (416) 391-6732 or toll-free 1-866-411 6732 and speaking with one of OREA’s customer service representatives.

Video and webinar teach you how to use new form

A short video tutorial and online web seminar are now available from the Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA) to help you understand Form 801. This is the new form that has been created to help you comply with legislation aimed at preventing phantom offers – fabricated bids that spark extra bidding.

The video and webinar describe in detail how to use Form 801: Offer Summary Document for Use with Agreement of Purchase and Sale.

The provincial government introduced new regulations that took effect on July 1. Amendments to the Real Estate and Business Brokers Act, 2002 (REBBA), were passed as part of Bill 55, The Stronger Protection for Consumers Act, 2013. This legislation was intended to address the issue of phantom offers in the marketplace. The introduction of phantom offers by registrants is considered to be a breach of ethics by the real estate industry’s regulator, the Real Estate Council of Ontario (RECO).

Under the new legislation, all offers must be in writing and signed by a buyer. As well, the listing brokerage must keep for at least one year a copy of all unsuccessful offers received to present to a seller, or an “equivalent prescribed document.” OREA’s new Form 801 meets the criteria for an “equivalent prescribed document” but it is a summary, so it is much shorter than the normal agreement of purchase and sale.

Look for the video tutorial and webinar in the Members section of www.orea.com in the “Standard Forms” section. The association has also produced a blog post of frequently-asked questions about the new Form 801.


If you have more questions or comments about Form 801, send an email to: standardforms@orea.com.
Complaints service helps you through a stressful time

The discovery that you are the subject of a complaint to the Real Estate Council of Ontario (RECO) can be an intimidating experience.

That’s why the Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA) created a service to help Ontario REALTORS® navigate the process of handling a complaint to RECO.

Members who are the subject of a RECO complaint can speak with Diana Russo, a lawyer in OREA’s legal department, to learn more and get information about the RECO complaints and discipline process.

“We realize that finding yourself on the receiving end of a RECO complaint can be stressful,” says Russo. “Our role is to serve our members, and so we’ve put in place a service that provides information and helps you to understand the process as much as possible.”

Since the inception of the service three years ago, OREA has received more than 325 queries. As well, OREA has organized seven information sessions for members across the province, with about 250 people attending. Recently, the legal department gathered up some frequently-asked questions and offers tips to help members through RECO’s investigative and adjudicative process.

Q: What should I do if I have received a complaint?

A: First and foremost, stay as calm as possible and ensure that you read and thoroughly understand the contents of the complaint. Second, your broker of record will receive copies of any complaints, so schedule time to meet with him or her and discuss the circumstances that led to the complaint.

Q: What happens after I file my response to RECO? How long will the process take?

A: There is no set timeline or typical duration for the complaints process. After you file your response, numerous factors may affect the speed of the process, including the nature and complexity of the matter. Nevertheless, you will be advised of the next steps and you may follow up with the RECO complaints officer assigned to your file.

Q: What are the penalties following a complaint?

A: A range of outcomes is possible. Sometimes the file will close with no further action required. At other times, the matter may proceed to a pre-hearing or hearing. At the hearing, a registrant may be ordered to pay a fine of up to $25,000, take educational courses or pay costs. Visit the RECO website at www.reco.on.ca and click on “Complaints and Enforcement” and then on “If you are the subject of a complaint.”

Tips for OREA Members:

- If you receive a complaint from the Office of the Registrar, take it seriously and respond to it fully. This may be your only opportunity to defend yourself during the process.
• Be prepared, give yourself time to respond, and ensure that you gather all relevant paperwork and contacts that will assist with your response to the Registrar and in defending the complaint.

• OREA strongly recommends that you consult with your broker of record and independent legal counsel before you respond to the complaint.

• Pay strict attention to timelines and due dates. Make note of the deadline to respond to the Registrar, any scheduled pre-hearings or hearing dates. During these stressful times, it is easy to forget or mix up the dates.

• As difficult as it may be, try to remain professional at all times throughout the discipline and complaints process.

If you are an OREA member who is the subject of a RECO complaint or you want more information about this service, contact Diana Russo at dianar@orea.com.

*Story by Mary Ann Gratton*

**Fall technology events enhance your skills, knowledge**

A series of tools and technology events designed to develop your technical skills and knowledge is being offered this fall through the Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA). Come to one or more of the six events that comprise *Emerge: Moving you Forward with the Tools for Tomorrow.*

This dynamic series is a fast-paced opportunity for learning and sharing that aims to inform REALTORS® about the latest strategies, tools and technologies in the real estate industry. Top performers and industry experts assemble at each event to share insights on a variety of strategies and technology topics. The sessions feature a consumer panel of buyers and sellers plus a panel discussion on electronic signatures and the agreement of purchase and sale. Breakout sessions and a networking reception are also part of the day.

The cost of each event is $79 plux tax for OREA members; $109 plus tax for non-members. Confirmed speakers to date are as follows:

• **Debra Trappen**, personal branding guru, is a U.S. educator, speaker and author who helps entrepreneurs by defining strong brands. When you register for any Emerge event, you will receive a complimentary copy of Trappen’s book, *Fire Up Your Brand.*

• **Ara Mamourian** is a real estate entrepreneur and manager of a group of REALTORS® at Spring Realty. In 2010 he co-founded the Owners of East movement, which has grown to a membership of 200 energetic entrepreneurs. He will speak on the topic, “Make yourself shareable.”
• Jeff O'Leary is a real estate blogger and award-winning Mississauga REALTOR®. His popular blog, The Village Guru, has enabled him to establish a strong online presence. He will speak on the topic, “Lead generation: Leverage your neighbourhood.”

• John-Ross Parks is a third-generation REALTOR® serving the Bay of Quinte area. He went “practically paperless” more than three years ago and has not looked back. He will speak on the topic, “Top five roadblocks to going paperless.”

• Cassandra Agnew Walker is OREA’s senior manager, standard forms. She enjoyed decades of success in every real estate sector, including involvement serving as a former OREA director-at-large and real estate college instructor. She has logged 20,000 hours of facilitation for brokerages, boards and associations. She will speak on “Adding integrity to your trading with forms and everything you need to know about Form 801 and e-signatures.”

Emerge events are being offered in all six of OREA’s provincial regions. Details are as follows:

Thursday, Sept. 17  Ottawa  (Shaw Centre, formerly Ottawa Congress Centre)
Thursday, Oct. 8  Peterborough  (Holiday Inn Peterborough Waterfront)
Wednesday, Oct. 21  Sudbury  (Holiday Inn)
Thursday, Nov. 5  Burlington  (Holiday Inn)
Thursday, Nov. 26  Stratford  (Arden Park Hotel)
Tuesday, Dec. 8  Mississauga  (Mississauga Convention Centre)

To register or for more information, visit www.orea.com/emerge
Ad campaign to promote REALTOR® value continues

Promoting the value of using a REALTOR® is the focus of advertisements this fall by the Ontario Real Estate Association. Due to the success of the campaign in conveying REALTOR® value to the public, advertisements will be running again across the province. Television commercials that were shown this past spring are scheduled to air again for three weeks at a time in two rounds, the first from Oct. 5 to 25 and the second from Nov. 9 to 29. The TV commercials will air on major prime time networks. As well, billboard advertisements are scheduled to be displayed in centres across Ontario, starting in late October. The advertising is all part of the REALTORS® we do the homework™ campaign. Social media and a consumer website, www.wedothehomework.ca will also be used to promote the importance of using a REALTOR®.

Serving buyers in the pre-construction phase

by Arun Kumar Rajalingam

I started my real estate career working for a marketing company that represented many reputable builders of new homes and hi-rise condominium projects. Initially I was representing builders. Since then, as a REALTOR®, I have also helped home buyers purchase pre-construction units. My exposure to both sides of the transaction leads me to believe there is room for greater transparency and due diligence to serve our buyers better.

In a resale transaction, we are trained to do our due diligence as buyer representatives. We strive to protect our buyer’s best interests by obtaining a home inspection, land registry search, insurance claim history and so on. However, the sales process is very different when the actual product is not yet built. The old saying comes to mind: “If you can't touch it, don’t buy it,” yet pre-construction prices may save buyers thousands of dollars or get them the best choice of suites or lots in a sub-division. With that in mind, here are some issues to watch for.

Closing Dates and Occupancy Dates: As industry professionals, we know that new home and condo projects are often delayed, yet consumers aren’t always aware of this. Ask the developer about potential delays in closing dates and manage your buyers’ expectations accordingly to save a lot of anguish. You can also ask about pending approvals to understand what hurdles lie ahead for this project. In my experience, high-rise condominium projects are more likely to face delays than low rise projects.
Marketing Hype versus Reality: The marketing for any new project includes glossy brochures, stunning architectural renderings, high-resolution photos with panoramic views, and so on. However, during the actual construction phase, there is a huge possibility of disconnect between the architect’s vision, the developer’s approved plan, and what is structurally possible. Before the buyer signs the Agreement of Purchase and Sale (APS), ask the builder’s representative about everything that can possibly change in floor plans, renderings, amenities, parking, etc. You should also research existing and future buildings nearby that might obstruct the view from your buyer’s unit once built. The more approvals the builder has already received for a project, the less likely it is that drastic changes or nasty surprises will confront your buyer.

Expectations on Space and Finishes: I have witnessed first-time buyers’ expressions of surprise when they finally took possession of their new condo. The actual room sizes did not match the amount of space they had imagined, their furniture didn’t fit, or the ceiling heights had been measured from the sub-floor. Buyers said they felt helpless because they got much less than they bargained for. There were also instances when the entire floor plan was flipped to the opposite orientation, changing their unit’s layout in a way they did not expect.

Buyers often expect their unit to match the dimensions of the model suite at the builder’s sales centre. However, model suites are not always built to scale and can appear larger due to extra lighting, condo-sized furniture and the absence of a ceiling. As well, many buyers assume that “what you see is what you get” -- not realizing that model suites can contain upgraded finishes and extras that are not part of the standard package offered on signing.

Closing Costs: These can be another surprise for buyers who don’t fully grasp the range of expenses they may encounter. I have seen buyers stunned by the final bill for development costs, HST on new appliances, utility hookup fees, sub-meter charges, and other expenses for which they had not budgeted. During the 10-day rescission period, I urge my buyers to get the APS and condominium documents reviewed by a lawyer who has experience dealing with pre-construction transactions to understand any possible charges and fees that can arise during closing. As diligent REALTORS®, we are within our realm to ask the developer about anticipated costs and to negotiate caps on levies for our clients.

Educating Buyers: Now that I am a REALTOR®, I work hard to put myself in the shoes of my buyers. I try to anticipate possible hurdles that might be thrown their way when purchasing a unit still in the development stage, and these vary with each project and developer. During the initial consultation, I explain and educate them on the process, timelines, costs, possible delays, deposit structure, etc. I also ask about their lifestyle and expectations from this purchase to make sure this project works for them. I also recommend that my buyers talk to other consumers who have been through the complete purchase cycle on a new property to understand potential hurdles and challenges.
I accompany my buyers to the project’s presentation centre to help them visualize the finished space of the actual property or even show them a resale condo unit with a similar layout. I ask many questions about timing, closing costs and upgrades to help them to figure out the bottom line on all expenses. I also explain the Tarion warranty for new homes and condos and I specify the key dates, putting particular emphasis on what is covered under the builder’s warranty and what is not.

**VIP Launch Events and Limited Time Offers:** The marketing of new properties can be extremely slick, and I advise buyers not to succumb to developer tactics that urge them to sign something, right here, right now, in a limited time offer or because there’s a so-called “lineup” of other buyers and the units are “almost all sold out by now.” In these instances, buyers end up hardly having time to think, and they get caught up in the moment. As a REALTOR®, I don’t give in to these pressure tactics and I urge my buyers to take time to review things with me and with their lawyer. Builders do not use OREA forms, but that does not change the fact that most parts of the agreement are negotiable.

**Builder’s Reputation and Industry Regulation:** I feel that checks and balances must be put in place on the new home industry to reduce the likelihood that consumers will feel misled. Currently, developers can start marketing and selling a project on paper even before all the necessary approvals have been obtained, leaving the door open for many changes to the final product. Also, purchaser deposits for low-rise freehold products are not held in trust, nor is there a 10-day rescission period.

Some reputable builders value customer loyalty over the bottom line. These developers have taken voluntary steps to improve transparency, point out upgrades in model suites, and obtain approvals on many levels before they market a project. Yet other developers use the status quo to their advantage. I value my relationship with developers, and I realize that they may pay commissions to co-operating agents. However, we as REALTORS® can’t allow a potential commission cheque to cloud our judgement. Our buyer’s interests must always come first and we must do our due diligence at all times.

As REALTORS® who are representing our client’s best interests, it’s up to us to help our buyers navigate the process. As an industry, we all benefit when our buyers are well briefed, get what they expected, and have no surprises.

*Arun Kumar Rajalingam is a Toronto REALTOR® and a volunteer on the marketing and communication committee at the Ontario Real Estate Association.*
Legal Beat: REALTORS® don’t have a crystal ball

by Merv Burgard, Q.C.

In this case, the seller took legal action against her REALTOR®, claiming that the latter provided advice that led her to sell her property at a price below market value.

Prior to this, the buyers of the same Toronto property sued this seller and her REALTORS® for failure to disclose the fact that the property contained knob and tube wiring, an outdated system of electrical wiring that is no longer considered safe.

That action about the wiring was settled but the seller, Cameron, a sophisticated and knowledgeable property owner, then claimed against the REALTOR® and her brokerage, based on that alleged misrepresentation and for insisting that she sell at a below market value during the 2009 market.

Around the same time, this seller was simultaneously involved in selling homes in British Columbia, Toronto and Barrie. The judge carefully assessed the evidence of the seller, Cameron, and the REALTOR®, Roman. In the end, the judge found that the seller was not credible and preferred the evidence of the REALTOR®.

Conflicting evidence was introduced in the case as to the state of U.S. and Canadian markets at that time. As well, there was disagreement over the obligations that a REALTOR® owes regarding advice on future market conditions, especially during turbulent markets.

The judge concluded that, “On the facts as I have found them, I hold that [the REALTOR®] did not breach any duty to [the seller] to act in her best interests. She did not misstate information about the state of the market or the relevant sales data. It should have been obvious to Cameron that Roman did not have a crystal ball and could not predict the future.”

“I have held that the statements Roman made were not misrepresentations. Cameron decided to list and then sell all three properties she was concurrently selling. The sold price for each property was lower than the initial listing price. [This REALTOR®] was not her agent on the other two properties. I find Cameron was not relying on Roman to predict the future course of the Toronto real estate market, and Roman was not purporting to be able to do so. Roman’s statement did not amount to contractual warranties.” The seller lost this case.

Battersby v. Roman 2015 ONSC 1083 (CanLII)
MERV’S COMMENTS

The evidence presented by the REALTOR® was understandable and backed up by timely documentation. She provided written market information during three listings and numerous showings of this home and kept notes and copies of conversations and mails.

Even if the REALTOR® had done so, giving forecasts of the future may not amount to a representation. The seller had three different homes on the market at the same time in B.C. and Ontario, and also sought advice from other REALTORS® and friends. After she was sued by these buyers, she foolishly decided to blame her REALTOR® and put her through the expense and emotional impact of litigation. At first, she acknowledged it was not Roman’s fault: “I had control… I don’t blame you, Gina, I blame myself.” As the judge noted, “I find that at some time after [the seller] agreed to sell the property, she started to suffer from seller’s remorse.”

Consumer confidence in Ontario’s markets growing: Research

More Ontarians now have a favourable opinion of the real estate market in their local city or town, according to new research.

Six out of 10 Ontarians (60 per cent) described the current residential real estate market in their city or town as favourable, up three points from this time last year. That is among the findings of the Ontario Home Ownership Index, a bi-annual research study commissioned by the Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA) and conducted by Ipsos Reid.

When asked to compare their local real estate markets to one year ago, once again Ontarians showed a positive shift in sentiment:

- 41 per cent of Ontarians surveyed say they view the residential resale market in their own neighbourhood as stronger than it was a year ago (34 per cent said so last year);

- 39 per cent say they view the real estate market in their city or town as stronger than it was a year ago (35 per cent last year).

“What we’ve noticed with this wave of research is that, on the whole, Ontarians’ perceptions of the provincial economy and real estate market have remained stable year over year,” says Patricia Verge, OREA president. “It’s when we asked Ontarians about their perceptions of their local markets – their neighbourhood, city or town – that we saw a more significant change in sentiment. Naturally, Ontarians are more in tune with what their local markets are doing. This overall increase in positive sentiment, therefore, is encouraging.”
When asked about their city’s future real estate market, once again Ontarians appear more optimistic than a year ago:

- 40 per cent of Ontarians said that their city or town’s real estate market will be stronger in the next year, compared to 34 per cent this time last year
- Looking ahead to the next ten years, 49 per cent said their city or town’s real estate market will be stronger, compared to 46 per cent this time last year

“According to the research, Ontarians expect growth in local real estate markets,” says Verge. “GTA residents, for example, exhibited a considerable upswing in sentiment where local real estate markets were concerned.”

For other survey highlights, visit www.orea.com. Click on “About” and then look in the “News and Press Releases” section in the left-hand scroll bar.

**Miss Real Estate Manners: Courtesy is paramount**

_This is the third installment of tips on courtesy in real estate, taken from guidelines produced by the London and St. Thomas Association of REALTORS® (LSTAR). The following article in the REALTOR® EDGE newsletter is excerpted from the guidelines with permission from LSTAR._

Real estate is a reputation business. What you do today may affect your reputation and business for years to come. Bear this in mind: in professional life, where career and business depend on the way you deal with your peers and clients, courtesy is of paramount importance. Here are 12 tips to help you observe the three Cs in real estate: courtesy, communication and common sense.

- Ensure that your Open House and For Sale signs are in compliance with municipal by-laws. (A professional knows better than to post signs that aren’t.)

- Use sidewalks and paths. Avoid unnecessary walking on the grass and through flowerbeds.

- Don’t smoke, eat or drink in a home while showing it. Encourage your prospects to wait until they are outside before lighting up or cracking open that can of pop. And don’t let them bring their pet to the viewing.

- If occupants are home during showings, ask their permission before using the telephone or bathroom.
• Extend a courteous and positive attitude to your administrative staff and the administrative staff of other offices, clients, colleagues and the public.

• Ring the bell or knock on the door before entering a home (this also applies to a home that has a lockbox), since the owner may still be home. Call out when you enter a home if you were unable to reach someone by knocking on the door. Let them know who you are. You don’t want to give the sellers a heart attack … or be savaged by their pit bull.

• Knock and announce yourself loudly before entering any closed room. It might be closed for a reason. Inform occupants that you are leaving after showings so they don’t have to wonder whether you’re still there.

• Communicate clearly; don’t use jargon or slang that may not be readily understood.

• If your lockbox is in an unusual place, inform the showing REALTOR® where it is.

• Remove shoes or boots upon entering a home and encourage your customers and clients to do so as well. (Remember, we live in Canada; our shoes and boots are yucky a good part of the year!)

• Do not tell people what you think. Tell them what you know.

• Promise only what you can deliver and keep your promises.

The above tips are excerpted with permission from the London and St. Thomas Association of REALTORS®. Real LSTAR’s full Miss Manners document at: http://www.realtorlink.ca/content/dam/realtorlink/on/london-st-thomas/association-information/miss-manners/Miss_Manners_2015.pdf