REAL-LIFE ACCOUNTS BY AN AWARD WINNING
REAL ESTATE AGENT

THE REAL ESTATE BEFORE THE

ESTATE

WHAT I WISH I KNEW BEFORE SELLING 100 HOMES

CHASTIN J. MILES

THE REAL BEFORE THE ESTATE

THE REAL BEFORE THE ESTATE

WHAT I WISH I KNEW BEFORE I SOLD 100 HOMES

CHASTIN J. MILES

DO THE MOST.

Copyright

The Real Before the Estate:
What I Wish I Knew Before Selling 100 Homes

Copyright © 2026 Do The Most Enterprises LLC.
All rights reserved.

The moral right of the author has been asserted.

No part of this book may be reproduced, distributed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, including photocopying, recording, or other electronic or mechanical methods, without the prior written permission of the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical reviews and certain other noncommercial uses permitted by copyright law.

ISBN-13: 979-8-234-26632-3

ISBN-13 (eBook): 979-8-234-26633-0

Published in the United States of America



The author has no affiliation or association with the companies, entities, and/or trademark names which may be referenced in this publication.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

A Note Before You Start

Every number in this book that comes from my business is real, and I tell you where it came from. Every other number is an example built to show you the math. Your market, your brokerage agreement, your costs and your clients are different from mine, so your results will be too. Nothing here is legal, tax or financial advice. When a question belongs to your broker, your lender, your title company or your CPA, take it to them.

The names of coaching students in this book have been changed.

That's the only time I'm going to say it. The rest of the book assumes you're a professional who can tell the difference between an example and a promise.

Contents

Introduction 7

Part I: Foundation
Selling a House Doesn't Mean You Have a Business 16
The Market Doesn't Know You Need Money 27
Know the Number That Keeps You in Business 38
Your Commission Check Is a Lagging Indicator 56
Your Calendar Will Tell You How Much You Make 71
Stop Starting Over 85

Part II: Lead Capture
You Don't Need More Leads Yet 104
Create What You're Waiting For 116

Part III: Nurture
They Didn't Say No: They Said Not Yet 134
Follow-Up Can't Live in Your Head 148

Part IV: Closing
Learn While You Earn 164
Ask for the Business 175

Part V: Back Office
You Can't Scale What Only Exists in Your Head 188

Part VI: Referral Systems
The Closing Isn't the Finish Line 212
Run the Review, Then Run the Next Ninety Days 229

Appendix 251

Introduction

The boutique luxury firm I worked at in Dallas had a big board in the office. Every agent's name was on it, and next to each name was that agent's production for the year. Every time you closed, the office manager erased your old number and wrote in the new one.

I loved watching my number change. I was making cold calls, standing outside of apartment communities and holding open houses, doing everything I'd been told to do, and every time another deal closed I could see the result in green writing on the wall. My rank was climbing too. I'd worked my way into the top ten at a luxury firm, and I wanted to keep climbing. That board told me exactly how I was doing, and it pushed me to sell more.

Then one morning in December I walked in and the board was blank.

The year wasn't even over. They were clearing it for January. Every number I'd watched grow was gone, and I was standing in front of a zero.

Of course my closings were still closed. Nobody took my sales away. But staring at that empty board, I finally understood how my business actually felt. I'd close a house, then go find the next one. I'd close that one, then go find the next one. I was selling homes, and it wasn't getting any easier to keep selling them. I'd read about agents whose businesses grew on referrals, and I'd assumed mine would turn into that kind of business on its own. It hadn't. Every January I was going to start at zero, because the only thing I'd built was a number, and numbers get erased.

The board showed one thing: houses that closed. It didn't show who I was talking to, who I'd forgotten to call back, or whether anybody I'd helped last year still heard from me. Those were the parts that would have carried forward into the new year, and I hadn't built them.

This book is about building them.

Who this book is for

My first book was about what I wished I'd known before I got into real estate. This one is about what I wish I'd known before I sold 100 homes, and it's for the agent who's already in it.

You've closed deals. You can write an offer, survive an inspection report and calm down a seller who thinks everybody's asking for too much. You've gotten better at the job and you have the closings to prove it. But the money still shows up with long gaps between checks. When somebody asks how business is going, you can tell them about the client you're working with right now. You're a lot less sure what happens after that client closes.

That's a strange place to be. You know you can do this. So you keep trying to figure out why doing it again feels so uncertain, and the answer you usually land on is that you need to work harder.

You don't. Not yet. First you need to look at how your business actually works, because I'll bet some of its parts were never built. More sales alone won't build them for you. They didn't for me.

How I got from there to here

I've been on both ends of this. I've sat in a dark apartment because I couldn't pay the electric bill while I was holding open houses for a listing that wouldn't sell. I've had a seller back out on closing day while I was driving to the title company. I've paid for a refrigerator with my own money to save a closing I almost broke myself.

I've also built a team that closed 121 homes in 2020 and 113 in 2021, a coaching company that teaches agents to do the same, and a YouTube channel that more than 90,000 people subscribe to. Today my team operates in every major market in Texas. I built a statewide team by running it like a corporation. Area Directors support Area Leaders, and Area Leaders lead our agents. Day to day, I work mostly with the directors. Our agents average five or more years in the business.

The difference between those two versions of my business wasn't talent and it wasn't luck. It was a set of systems I didn't have at the beginning and had to learn one painful piece at a time. Here's one example of what that looks like when it works. Years ago I posted a 31-second video aimed at homeowners trying to sell without an agent. I had fewer than 250 subscribers. Leads came in by Sunday, and that campaign produced three listings that sold. The video wasn't magic. The path behind it was. You'll see that path in Chapter 8.

How the book is built: The PULSE Method

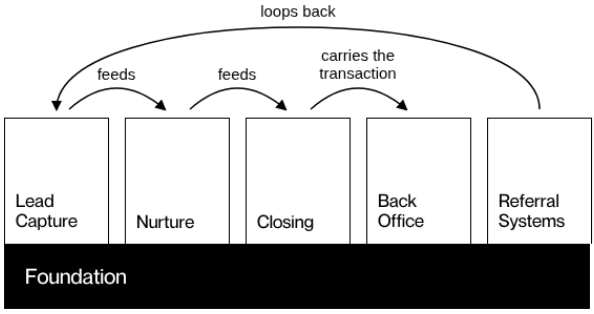
I teach the business in six parts. I call it the PULSE Method, and the book follows it. The six parts, in order, are Foundation, Lead Capture,

Nurture, Closing, Back Office and Referral Systems.

Part	Pillar	The question it answers
I	Foundation	Can you see your business: the money, the time and the activity?
II	Lead Capture	Can a prospect get into your business without falling through a crack?
III	Nurture	Can a conversation survive a busy week?
IV	Closing	Can you move someone from interest to a decision?
V	Back Office	Can the work keep moving correctly when you're not the one carrying it?
VI	Referral Systems	Does a relationship have a next stage after closing day?

Most agents are strong in one or two of these and missing two or three others. The trouble is that the missing ones don't announce themselves. A broken back office looks like a bad month. Broken nurture looks like bad leads. You keep buying the wrong fix because you're diagnosing from the bank account, and the bank account only tells you what happened months ago.

You'll notice that Foundation gets the most chapters, because it's where most agents break first, and it's where everything else gets measured.



Foundation	Can you see your business: the money, the time and the activity?
Lead Capture	Can an inquiry get into your business without falling through a crack?
Nurture	Can a conversation survive a busy week?
Closing	Can you move someone from interest to a decision?
Back Office	Can the work keep moving correctly when you're not the one carrying it?
Referral Systems	Does a relationship have a next stage after closing day?

How to use this book

Every chapter ends with a section called **Do The Most**. It's a short exercise you do on paper or digitally, using your own records. Do The Most doesn't mean being busy. Doing the most means putting your effort into the work that builds your business.

Three beliefs run through everything I teach. You decide when you're ready, and nobody hands that to you. You don't need permission to start. Most of your limits are programming: rules you picked up and never checked.

None of that means guessing. I move on a plan I can measure. I write down what I'm doing, how often and what would make me stop, then let the records tell me whether the move worked.

Movement you can't check is just busyness.

The exercises build on each other, so keep the pages you make. By the end you'll have a diagnosis of your business, a ninety-day plan and a record of whether you actually worked it.

Don't skip them. Reading about follow-up doesn't do any follow-up. The exercises are where this book stops being information and starts being a business system.

Every chapter also ends with a rule. They're short on purpose. Write the ones that sting on a card and put it where you work. You can also download a printable sheet of them at therealbeforetheestate.com.

By the way, the office was always going to erase the board in December. I simply wanted the work I'd done and the people I had helped to give me a stronger place to start in January.

That’s what we’ll start building first.

Part I
Foundation

Chapter 1

Selling a House Doesn't Mean You Have a Business

You can get a house sold and still have no idea where your next client is coming from.

Most agents who feel that gap blame themselves. They decide they aren't working hard enough, aren't confident enough, or aren't as good as the agents who seem to have it figured out. Hold off on that. Before you decide you need to work harder, look at how your business actually works. Where do people come from? What happens after you meet them? What keeps happening when you're buried in a client's transaction? And once you've sold somebody a home, what happens to that relationship?

When I finally asked myself those questions, I found that I was closing homes and putting in the effort, but parts of a truly scalable business had never been built. Those parts were where the next client was supposed to come from.

When I got my first listing, I was sitting at an office computer because I didn't own a laptop. I'd borrowed a script from another agent. I had my notes, the script and my calendar laid out in front of me.

My calendar was blank. I don't know why I had it out like I needed to check my availability, but there it was.

I found owners selling their own homes online and started calling. On this particular call, one owner got on the phone and wanted to know what I thought his house was worth. I told him I'd need to look at other sales and call him back. I didn't know how to run a CMA yet, so I asked another agent in the office for help, worked through the pricing and called him back with exactly what he'd asked for.

He told me other agents had called him too. The difference was that I'd done what I said I would do. He gave me the listing. He was an investor, and later he gave me another one.

In my first book, the lesson of that story was getting started and following through. Here I

want you to look at the work inside the sale. I found a person to call. We talked. I learned what he needed. I got help with something I didn't know how to do, and then I came back with it. That sequence gave him a reason to trust me with his house.

That's a process I could repeat, and it gave me far more to work with than "I got a listing."

Your last few sales have clues like that in them. If a client found you through a video, what did the video help them understand? If someone sent you a referral, why did they think of you? If you met a buyer at an open house, what happened between that first conversation and the day they hired you? When you know those answers, you know which work to keep doing. When you only count the closing, you miss them.

Costco is a store where customers pay an annual membership fee to shop. Its warehouses sell groceries, household goods and other products, often in large packages. The company's model centers on offering low prices while keeping operating costs down.

That takes work behind the scenes. Costco buys products in volume, limits its selection and uses simple warehouse stores. Those choices help it offer value that gives members a reason to return.

But selling a cart full of groceries isn't the only result Costco watches. It also tracks whether members renew.

When a membership comes up for renewal, the customer makes another decision about whether shopping there is worth the fee. The original purchase doesn't settle that question forever.

In its 2024 annual report, Costco reported a worldwide membership renewal rate of 90.5 percent. In the United States and Canada, it was 92.9 percent. Membership fees produced about $4.8 billion in revenue that year.

Costco's records showed both the purchases happening inside its stores and whether customers chose to maintain access to them. The relationship had a measurable next stage after the first sale.

Picture your next open house.

You get there early, put out the signs, turn on the lights and set your papers out. A couple walks in. They ask about the neighborhood and tell you they've been looking online. They don't have an agent. Their lease ends in a few months, and they're trying to decide whether to buy. You have a good conversation. They give you their contact information and agree to let you send homes that fit what they're looking for.

That's a real opportunity. They told you their plans and agreed on the next step.

Then the open house ends. You pack up the signs. An active buyer needs to see a house. A question comes in about an inspection. Before you know it you're back working for your other clients, and the couple's information is left sitting in the pile with all the other open house papers.

You send them a few homes when you get a minute. They don't respond. You decide they weren't serious and go back to your other clients. A few months later things slow down, you remember the couple and you reach out. Maybe they're still looking. Maybe they've bought a house with another agent. You don't know, because you weren't a part of whatever happened during those previous months.

Three things were missing. Their information needed to live somewhere where you'd actually use it. Everything they told you needed to be written down. And the plan for getting back in touch needed to survive a busy week. Write down when the lease ends and what they're trying to decide. Send what you promised. Put the next contact on the calendar. When you talk again, start from what's changed instead of making them tell the whole story over.

Whether they buy, rent again or hire someone else is still their decision. Judge the open house by what you did after you met them, and you'll learn far more than you will by waiting to see whether somebody buys.

Now let's say you've fixed that. The couple's information is in the right place and you know when to call. Then you get busy. Another one of your buyers finds a house and you're writing the offer. Another client has an inspection. A lender calls while you're trying to get a form signed. You look up and the time you'd set aside for follow-up is gone.

You tell yourself you'll handle it tomorrow, and that seems fair. Your clients need you. The trouble starts when tomorrow keeps moving. Pretty soon most of your time goes to the people closest to getting you paid, and the people still deciding get whatever's left of your time. And we both know that on a busy day there isn't anything left.

So look at the week you just had. When your planned calls got bumped, did you move them to a specific new time, or did they become something you'd get to later? Moving work to a clear time gives it another chance to happen. "Later" means it has to fight everything else that comes up, and it'll lose.

You're going to have busy days. That's the job. What you need to decide now is how this work gets done during them.

What you can actually depend on

I can hear somebody saying, "Real estate's always going to be up and down." Yes. A buyer can lose a job. An inspection can blow up a deal. A sale can fall apart even when you did everything right. Nobody gets to choose the day each check arrives.

When I talk about a business you can depend on, I mean knowing what's going on and having work you can keep doing. You know how you meet people, who you're helping, what each of them needs next and how you'll stay in touch. When one deal falls apart, you can look past it and see everything else that's moving.

You can also see when something needs to change. If you've kept reaching out and several buyers pushed their plans back, that's one situation. If you haven't reached out in weeks, that's a different one. Both give you a quiet month, but they call for completely different decisions.

Maybe you're thinking, "I'm still new. I need more time." Some of the people you meet today won't buy for a year. That's real. The question is what you do with that year. If someone tells you

they're a year from selling, you have twelve months to be useful: learn what they're worried about, agree on when you'll talk again, and keep track of the conversation so you can pick it up when the time comes. If you lose their number and hope they remember yours, the year passes either way.

And if most of your business already comes from referrals, pay attention to how that happens. Getting sent a client once doesn't tell you how well you're taking care of the people who sent them. Do those people still hear from you? Do you know how they're doing since the move? You can't pick the day somebody's friend needs an agent. You can only choose whether you're still a part of the lives of people who've already trusted you.

You earned every closing you have. None of them built the parts of the business that are missing.

Do The Most: The Business-or-Transactions Test

Put your business on paper. You'll need your closing records, your calendar and whatever you use to keep client information. A notebook or a spreadsheet works. Pull up the records instead of trying to remember the year. If it takes more than one sitting, schedule the second one before you stop.

Map the last twelve months. Write down each of the last twelve months and the number of homes you closed in each one, including the zeros. If you've been licensed less than a year, use the months you've been in business. Count how many months had at least one closing. Then look at the shape. Were your sales spread out, or bunched into a short stretch with long gaps around it?

Trace where each client came from. For every closing, write the client's initials, how you first met and what you did between meeting them and working with them. "Open house lead" isn't enough. Something like this is: *"Open house. Lease ended in September. Sent homes, talked again the next week, set a buyer meeting."* For a referral it might be: *"Past client introduced us. I'd stayed in touch with that client since their move. Called the new buyer and set a time to talk."* Don't add steps because they sound good. If you can't remember the source, write "unknown." That's useful information too.

Mark what you can repeat. Beside each closing, mark "yes," "partly" or "unknown" for one question: *Can I name the work I did to create or develop this opportunity, and can I do that work again?* You're not asking whether the same person will buy twice. You're asking whether you can repeat your part. Count the

yeses and write that number next to your total closings.

List who's in motion right now. Make a second list of everyone you're working with or staying in touch with today. Beside each name, write what they've told you about their plans and the next step you've agreed on. *"Thinking about buying"* is a start, and if that's all you know, your next step is a conversation to learn more. A useful note looks like this: *"Lease ends in June. Wants to review options in March. Call March 3."* Then look for names with no next step. For each one, put a step on the calendar.

Name the gap. Look at both lists together and finish this sentence:

The part of my business I keep leaving to chance is _____.

Be specific. "Getting more business" is too broad to act on. *"I meet people at open houses but don't have a set time to follow up"* is something you can fix. So is *"I always stop prospecting whenever I have a buyer under contract,"* or *"My past clients only hear from me when I need a referral."*

Keep these pages. Every chapter after this one builds on them.

Months with at least one closing: _____ of 12

Closings with work I can repeat: yes _____ partly _____ unknown

_____

People in motion right now: _____

Names with no next step: _____

The part of my business I keep leaving to chance is

_____

_____

Rule: If you have to start a search for business every time a deal closes, you have transactions, not a business.