



the **Savvy**Prospector

Eight Weeks to a Full Pipeline for Life!

Welcome to The Savvy Prospector™

SOI & Beyond: Eight Weeks to a Full Pipeline for Life



Part I - Getting Ready

Welcome to the Savvy Prospector!

What to expect from this course

First, expect to have fun. I'm serious. In fact, the more fun you have in this course, the more you'll get out of it. Frankly, the more fun you have in your career, the more successful your career will be.

From a practical standpoint, here's what you will have accomplished by the end of this course:

- You will have created a database, filled with the names and contact information of your raving fans (your **Sphere of Influence** or **SOI**),
- You will have written and mailed a personal, interesting, non-salesy announcement or reconnection letter to your soon-to-be raving fans,
- You will have created a business plan for implementing and maintaining your Savvy Prospecting strategy,
- You will have re-established communication with your social network (most of whom you have probably lost contact with in the midst of your crazy real estate career),
- You will have established a professional connection with "everyone else" you know (those not in your social network),
- You will have expanded your SOI to include at least 100 people, all of whom know your name and know that you sell real estate,
- You will be having fun with people you enjoy hanging out with,
- You will be meeting new people and inspiring them to care about your real estate business, and
- You will be selling some real estate!

Sound good? Then, ONWARD!

Selling Soulfully for Real Estate Professionals

My name is Jennifer Allan and I created the Savvy Prospector program. I'm also the author of ***Sell with Soul: Creating an Extraordinary Career in Real Estate without Losing Your Friends, Your Principles or Your Self-Respect.***

Sell with Soul shows real estate agents how to experience wild crazy success in their careers, not with aggressive prospecting techniques and slick closing routines, but by being GOOD real estate agents. Exceptional, even!

The ***Sell with Soul*** philosophy includes principles such as:

- Being competent, respectful and knowledgeable when dealing with customers, clients and prospects.
- Caring more about the clients you have today than the clients you hope to have tomorrow.
- Feeling good about the gobs and gobs of money you're going to make selling real estate!

Within **The Savvy Prospector** program, you'll see references to the ***Sell with Soul*** philosophies and principles. Just thought you should know what I'm talking about!

WEEK ONE

Start Building Your Contact Database

Audio Assignment

Please listen to Audio Lessons #1 & #2, welcoming you to the program, introducing you to the concepts of Savvy Prospecting and getting you started on your first assignments.

Go Shopping!

Before we officially begin our first major project, let's do a little shopping!

Ready for your list?

Here's what you need to buy:

- * Spiral notebook
- * Attractive Thank You cards
- * Index Cards

The spiral notebook will be used for two things. First, to make your list of everyone you know. We'll talk about that in detail soon. Second, to record your brilliant ideas for seducing your SOI (and later, meeting new people)

You'll want to keep this notebook with you at all times, so that whenever you remember the name of someone you forgot you knew, you can scribble it down. (You never know - that might be the person who introduces you to a builder who needs a soulful agent to list his new subdivision!). Ditto for every time you think of some fantastic way to meet new people or nurture the relationships you already have.

If you're more electronically-inclined, you can use some other fancy contraption for recording this information as long as you're comfortable with it AND it's with you all the time. Me? Spiral notebooks work great.

The Thank You cards are for... you guessed it... thanking people. The nice thing about a card is that it has an envelope, perfect for enclosing a business card. You'll want to get into the habit of thanking people on a regular basis and guess what?! The more often you're thankful, the more things you'll have to be thankful for! Get some nice cards that suit your personality.

The index cards are to track your prospects, especially your lower-priority ones. Every time you talk to someone who might have a real estate need, even if it's not this year, write down their information on an index card. Name & basic contact information on one side; real estate need on the other. Believe it or not, when you get busy, you can actually forget about these leads! Don't do that. Go through your index cards every day and touch base with the person accordingly. If you follow this advice, I guarantee you five closings in the next 12 months that you wouldn't have otherwise had. Promise.

Happy Shopping!

Review Your Business Cards

In a few weeks, you'll mail out a letter to your SOI that will include your business cards, so let's make sure that you're putting your best foot (er, face) forward.

Take a look at your card...

1. Is it 100% accurate? 100%?
2. Is the primary phone number YOUR direct line? (Never ever use your office phone number as your primary number).
3. Is the email address YOUR email address (as opposed to one through your office)? Ditto the above.
4. Do you LOVE your photo and is it a reasonably recent one?
5. Do you have any mention of how much you Love Referrals on your card? (I advise against this practice.)
6. Is the card attractive enough to inspire a perfect stranger to hold onto it?
7. Are there more than three phone numbers on your card?

Didn't think so much went into a business card, eh?

All of the above are critically important. Here's why:

1. **Is your card 100% accurate?** As we'll discuss throughout the program, you need to demonstrate to the people you prospect to that you are an RCHB (a Reasonably Competent Human Being). Scribbled out contact information contradicts that message.
2. **Is the primary phone number YOUR direct line?** Never, ever use the company phone number as your primary contact number, for two reasons. First, when someone calls, you want them to get to you as quickly as possible, so don't take the chance of a missed connection due to operator-error at your office. Second, when you leave this company (and you probably will), you want to ensure that all your contacts will know how to reach you after the move.
3. **Is the email address YOURS?** Never, ever use your brokerage email address (unless you own the brokerage). You will leave that company someday and you'd sure hate to lose any future referrals because an email was returned as undeliverable, wouldn't you?
4. **Do you LOVE your photo?** Obviously dated photos detract from your RCHB'ness. Bad. Having a picture you're proud of? Good. I once had a picture on my cards that I hated and I refused to hand out my cards. Very Bad. Invest the time and money into getting a fabulous photo. Get this done asap so your cards are ready to go in the next week or two.
5. **Is there any mention of referrals on your card?** Trust me on this one - No Referral-Begging on your

card! (or anywhere else)

6. **Is your card attractive?** Boring business cards get tossed... attractive cards get stashed. Make yours the kind of card that someone might hold onto if they found it, even if they don't know you.
7. **Are there more than three numbers on your card?** Don't clutter up your card with too many phone numbers. Your direct line, office phone (if required) and fax number should do.

Checklist for Savvys

Eliminate all “I Love Referrals!” (and related messages) from all of your marketing and communications.
Peruse your:

- Email autoresponder
- Outgoing voicemail message
- Website
- Email auto-signature

If you find any mention of loving, appreciating or being humbled by referrals, please remove it for now.
If, after a few weeks you feel as if you’re losing referral business by not begging for it, you may put it back in, but for now, take it out.

Read The Seduction of Your SOI

Please read (or listen to) *The Seduction of Your SOI*.

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Why “Seduction?”

Why do I use the term “Seduction” in conjunction with my SOI philosophy?

Well, first, I like it because it’s sexy, it’s provocative and it grabs your attention. But on a deeper level, it’s quite appropriate. While the term “seduction” may have negative connotations for some, overall, I think it’s quite a positive word.

Personally, I LOVE to be seduced, don’t you?

Even if I’m aware I’m being seduced, I certainly enjoy the ride. I mean, if my husband were to come home tonight and outright announce that he was expecting some action, I might be put off by his approach. I might feel a little used. However, if he came home with roses, gave me a big hug and kiss, helped me clear the table and then took out the trash, his chances of getting lucky just dramatically increased, didn’t they? So what if I know what he’s up to?

So, let’s compare a romantic seduction to the process of seducing your SOI. Fact is, you want something from your SOI. You want their business and referrals. You want to be invited to their parties. You want to be their favorite real estate agent, don’t you?

Well, you could always call up everyone you know and tell them that, couldn’t you? Remind them on the first Monday of each month that You LOVE Referrals! Ask them if they know of anyone buying or selling real estate? Maybe even ask them for an invitation to their next social gathering?

But do you think they’d look forward to hearing from you? Do you think they’d appreciate your approach? Probably not; in fact, they might start avoiding your calls.

But what if you were to call up your friends every month or two and ask how they’re doing? And really listen? And...maybe even offer to help? Or if you sent out periodic informative emails or newsletters that were interesting to them instead of All About You? What if you invited your friends to your Super Bowl party? Or sent them a postcard from your vacation in Cancun?

Would your friends realize you want their business and referrals? Maybe. But they won’t care - you are making them feel special and cared about.

Make Your List!

Let's get started on your first major project.

Remember back on your first day of real estate when your broker asked you to make a list of everyone you knew so that you could send out a Dorky Announcement Letter?

Well, it's time to do that again. Make the list, I mean, not send out the D.A.L.

Your assignment for today (and probably tomorrow, too) is to make a list of everyone you know. Here's an excerpt from my book, *The Seduction of Your SOI* about who belongs on your list:

So, who belongs in your SOI? Let's start with the obvious suspects. Your friends. Your family. Your current prospects. Your current clients. Your past clients. Your past prospects who never bought or sold.

And how about your spouse's family? Your spouse's work associates. Your dog-groomer, your house-cleaner, the nurse at your chiropractor's office, your Spanish tutor. Your pest-control guy. Your renters. Your landlord. The receptionist at your real estate office (yes, her business is up for grabs too. I sold 6 houses to/for the receptionist at my very first office; she said I was the only agent there who treated her with respect).

Go through the business cards you have scattered around your house and in your desk for more names. Go through your email address book. If you've sold some listings, look up the names of the people who purchased your listing, even if they had their own buyer agent. Might as well add them too. Can't hurt.

As you make your list, you'll probably notice that two distinct groups are naturally emerging. The first being your social network (friends and family) and the second being... well, everyone else who knows you and knows that you sell real estate.

Your social network consists of those people you'd probably invite to your wedding. "Everyone else" includes clients, prospects, work associates, service providers; people who aren't really "friends," but who would recognize your name if you called them up.

Some TIPS for Creating Your List

- Use your spiral notebook to make your list. Carry it with you everywhere so that you can scribble down names you remember while in the grocery store or even the names of people you meet during the list making process.
- When making your list, don't worry about the details, such as addresses, phone numbers or even last names. We'll get to those later. Right now... we're looking for sheer volume! Don't bog yourself down doing research.
- If you hesitate to write down someone's name because you don't much like them, go ahead and include them for now. Don't worry; you can delete them later if you want!
- Don't rule out someone who lives out of town, especially if they used to live in your town and moved away. These folks can be fantastic referral sources for you.

STOP!

Please complete your list before moving forward. Even if it takes you a few days or even a week. I'll be here when you get back, promise.

HOW'D YOU DO THIS WEEK?

Did you:

- Purchase your supplies?
- Review your Business Cards?
- Read or listen to The Seduction of Your SOI?
- Start Making Your List?

NOTES

WEEK TWO

Finish Your Contact Database

Audio Assignment

Please listen to Audio Lesson #3 which continues the discussion from Audio #2 about building and organizing your contact database.

Commit to a Contact Management System

Remember in the beginning when I promised you that this would be FUN? Well, this next bit may not be your idea of fun, but I promise, once you're through it, you'll be glad I made you do it.

Yes, we're talking about the dreaded Contact Management System decision.

In other words, you need to figure out how you're going to organize your database.

It has to be done.

Handwritten names in a notebook will not do. At the very least, you'll need to input the contact information into a spreadsheet program like Excel or Quattro Pro.

Some agents use Outlook, which is probably already on your computer.

Many agents swear by Top Producer (that's what I use and I love it). But even TP's most ardent fans often complain about the monthly subscription cost of \$39 and the steep learning curve.

Other popular systems are Agent Office, Advantage Xi, REST and Wise Agent. I have no experience with them, but I know someone who does.

Gary David Hall's [website](#) is a wealth of information on this topic. Check it out and feel free to contact him with any questions you may have.

This decision is important, but don't let it paralyze you. If you simply don't want to make such an important decision right now, just use Excel or even Word to input your data. I don't want you to lose your momentum!

Consider Getting Help

Before we continue with this project, I'm going to advise you to get some administrative help. The next part of the project is pretty labor-intensive and is where many agents run out of steam. I'd hate to see that happen to you!

Find someone who can help you with data-entry and contact information research, and later, printing, stuffing, addressing, stamping and mailing your announcement/reconnection letter. The entire project may take 30 hours or more and as a busy real estate agent, you should not have this kind of time on your hands!

If you can get free help, that's great. If you must pay for help, consider paying \$0.25 per correct name entered and \$0.15 for every labeled, stuff and stamped envelope. This project will probably change your career forever, so it's worth the cost!

Start Socializing

While we haven't yet dived into the socializing part of the Savvy Prospector program, it's still a good idea for you to get used to the idea of that socializing IS working. Ask a friend to lunch, organize a little Happy Hour party or attend a neighborhood event. Show up with your antenna up and a smile on your face!

Gather Contact Information

As you get your list somewhat completed, it's time to start tracking down and/or verifying contact information. Here are some tips to do so:

What contact information do you need?

Name, mailing address, email address. Phone numbers are not critical at this point; when and if you need to call someone, you can look up their number then. If you have someone's birthday, include it; if not, don't worry about it.

Where to find contact information?

- <http://www.whitepages.com> or other online telephone directories
- Facebook, Linked-In or other social networking sites
- Company websites
- Your local tax assessor's database, if it's online
- Mutual friends
- Phone book

What if I can't find contact information for someone?

Go through your list and identify all the missing bits of information. You have two choices as to what to do about the missing bits.

You can do nothing and move forward with your Savvy Prospector Campaign without them. That's fine, and probably preferable.

Or, you can begin your Savvy Prospector Campaign RIGHT NOW with these people.

Here's what I mean by that. To get the contact data you're missing, you're going to have to contact someone and ask for it. Maybe you can get it through a mutual friend or maybe it's easiest just to call person him or herself. However, this must be handled properly or you'll be toast with your SOI before you even get started.

You don't want to come across as a SALESperson right off the bat. The whole point to all this brain damage is to get away from the idea that pursuing business from the people you know is just a slightly warmer version of cold-calling and door-knocking.

I'll let you make the final decision on this. If you have no qualms calling your SOI and respectfully gathering contact information from them, you have my blessing. I trust your judgment.

However, if you simply can't think of a way to do this within your comfort zone, don't. It's okay, really! We'll get back to these folks later, probably. If not, that's okay too because you'll be adding lots more warm bodies to your SOI over the next few months!

Group Your Contacts

The final step in this project is to group your contacts. As you created your list, you probably noticed that two (maybe three) different groups naturally emerged.

The first group (Group One) is made up of people you know socially, including some members of your family. These are people who you would enjoy spending time with and would likely invite to your housewarming party or wedding. You will spend the majority of your business-building efforts on this group. Strive for at least 30 Group One contacts, but of course, more is better.

The second group (Group Two) is comprised of "Everyone Else," that is, people you know, but whom you would not be as comfortable socializing with. Your business-building strategy with Group Two will be less intense than with Group One, but don't underestimate the business-generating power of these contacts.

Some agents have a Group Three. It might be made up of contacts in another city or state, or perhaps members of a club or church or association they belong to. That's fine, but try not to go beyond three groups unless absolutely necessary. Most contacts will fit nicely into either your social network or your "everyone else" group.

TIP!

If your Contact Management System allows you to group contacts according to type, give your Very Important Group One's their own category and give it an exciting name, such as *My Gold Mine* or *The World's Coolest People*.

CONGRATULATIONS!

You have an updated contact database!!!!

If you've made it this far, you've done more than most real estate agents ever do.

If it took you six days... or six months, it was well worth the effort.

Onward.

Designate an SOI In-Box

Now that your list is somewhat complete, you should strive to add names to it on a regular basis (we'll talk about this more later).

This will be much easier if you create a special place on your desk to toss business cards, scribbled napkins, emails, etc. into to remind you to add the names to your database. Then you can make your updates all at once without forgetting anyone.

HOW'D YOU DO THIS WEEK?

Did you:

- Choose your Contact Management System?
- Find Help?
- Start Socializing?
- Track Down Contact Information?
- Group your Contacts?
- Designate an SOI In-Box?

NOTES

Week Three

Write Your Announcement/Reconnection Letter

Read Dorky Announcement Letters - DEDorked!

Included in this program is a downloadable guide to writing effective announcement or reconnection letters called *Dorky Announcement Letters - DEDorked!* Please read through the material before continuing.

Please listen to Audio CD #4 about writing a Non-Dorky letter.

Create a List of Topics for Your Letter

As discussed in Audio #4, the first step in writing your announcement or reconnection letter is to brainstorm a list of topics you might include in your letter.

Here are some ideas:

- Do you want to apologize to your friends for losing touch?
- Do you want to talk about the local real estate market?
- Do you want to announce a significant change in your business philosophy or describe a new special service?
- Do you want to share a funny story about your real estate career?
- Do you want to brag about your fantastic husband, wife or kids?
- Do you want to offer a drawing or contest?
- Do you want to beg for referrals? (NO!)
- Do you want to offer cash for referrals? (NO!)

Your letter can be funny or serious, sappy or dry (as in sarcastic), as long as it's sincere. And remember, nobody cares much about your real estate company, they care about you.

Write down your ideas in your SOI notebook. Don't throw this list away; you might be able to use some of the ideas in subsequent SOI communications.

Decide how many different letters you want to write

You may want to write one letter for your Group One and another, less personal letter for your Group Two.

However, it's not necessary; one letter will usually work just fine.

Write your first draft when you're feeling energetic and enthusiastic!

Are you a morning person? Write your letter at the crack of dawn. A night owl? Write it after everyone has gone to bed.

If you're most alert after your first cup of coffee, write it then.

You know when you're feeling sparky, confident and sexy. That's when you'll write a great letter!

Just put something on paper. It doesn't have to be perfect or even all that good. Yet.

Some Tips for Writing Your Letter

- Visualize one person when you write - preferably someone you like. Don't try to write something suitable to your entire SOI... it'll just shut you down.
- Don't try to write your letter if you've been sitting at your computer all day. Get up, take a walk, dance around the room; do something active before you attempt to be creative & witty!
- If you aren't feeling good about the direction your letter is taking, step back and let it sit for a day or so. It's really important that you are proud of the letter you're sending and feel comfortable with it. You need to be excited about sending the letter out. If you aren't, something is wrong and you need to identify what it is. Perhaps you wrote something that didn't come from you, but rather from some old sales training material. A good letter is one that you can't wait to send out and are confident your audience will enjoy reading it.

Write the final draft of your letter

Proofread, proofread, proofread. It must be 100% error free! Ask for proofreading help if necessary.

Stock up on Mailing Supplies

Here are the supplies you'll need to send out your letters:

- Nice paper or company letterhead
- Nice envelopes
- Stamps (NO POSTAGE-METERED LETTERS!!!)
- Return address labels
- Toner for your printer
- Business cards (enough to include two per letter)

Please make sure you are fully stocked before you begin the printing, addressing and stuffing process. It's a real drag to start running out of stuff in the middle of it. You want to be able to sit down and finish it off all at once so you don't get yourself confused.

Print out, sign, stuff, address and mail your letters

Don't forget to include 2-3 business cards in each.

Put them in the mail!

What to Expect from Your Letter

You may get a tremendous response to your letter or you may not. Some agents experience an overwhelming outpouring of support from their friends, while others only get one or two phone calls. The more letters you send out, the more likely it is that you'll see an immediate return.

Even if you don't get much response at this point, don't become discouraged. In this busy world, people don't often take the time to respond to written communication, but that doesn't mean your letter didn't make an impression. It probably did. Probably a much stronger impression than you imagine.

CELEBRATE!

Have a glass of champagne... or two. Treat yourself to a massage. Heck, buy a new laptop if you've been wanting one. Your life is about to change!

Congratulations!

HOW'D YOU DO THIS WEEK?

Did you:

- Read DEDorked?
- Create a list of possible topics for your letter?
- Decide whether to write one letter or two?
- Write a draft of your letter(s)?
- Write your final letter(s)?
- Proofread your letter(s)?
- Mail 'em out?

NOTES

WEEK FOUR

Create your Savvy Prospector Business Plan

What do you like to do?

Please listen to the audio #5 for details on our next major project - creating your Savvy Prospector business plan.

Make a list of Stuff You Like to Do... from both a business and personal perspective.

Here's what I mean by that. What prospecting activities do you enjoy? Which are you good at? (Most of the time, we enjoy what we're good at!) Do you do good Open House? Are you a Master on Floor? Do you enjoy business networking events?

From a personal perspective, what SOI-building activities do you or would you enjoy doing on a regular basis? Lunch/coffee dates? Catch-up phone calls? Chatting on email? Hosting housewarming parties? Shopping? (Yes, shopping can be an SOI activity!)

This next week's project is to create a spreadsheet of the activities you will commit to doing on a regular basis. Here's a list of activities/goals you might consider:

- * Lunch/Coffee/Margarita/Dinner dates
- * Personal phone calls
- * Personal emails
- * Handing out business cards
- * Move Group Two's to Group One
- * Adding names to your SOI
- * Floor time
- * Monthly get-togethers
- * Mass emails
- * Postal mailings
- * Thank you cards
- * Join a new group
- * Preview
- * Blog about your neighborhood
- * Get Out There in the World
- * Go to the Office
- * Open Houses
- * Attend PTA meetings
- * Attend neighborhood meetings

Give it some thought.

Create a Spreadsheet of Your Business Plan

Once you've made your list of activities and goals you'd like to include in your business plan, create a simple spreadsheet of the goals, target audience and frequency.

Here's a sample of what a business plan spreadsheet might look like:

ACTIVITY	TARGET AUDIENCE	GOAL
Lunch/coffee/dinner date	Group One	2 per week
Personal Phone Calls	Group One	2 per week
Personal emails	Group One	3 per week
Monthly Get-Together	Group One +	1 per month
Add names to SOI	Groups One and Two	3 per week
Mass Emails	Groups One and Two	1 per month
Postal Mailings	Groups One and Two	2 more this year
Thank you cards	Anyone	3 per week
Join a "Group"	n/a	1 per month
Attend a community event	n/a	2 per month
Hand out business cards	Anyone	5 per day
Collect business cards	Anyone	1 per day

NOTE: The activities and goals above will be used as the “default” plan in the second half of the program and will form the basis for your activity assignments.

Create a system to keep you on track

Once you've created your goals, you'll want to create a system to remind you to do them. You have several options.

You can enter your goals and activities into your contact management system as to-do's on a daily, weekly, monthly or quarterly basis. When you check your to-do list in your CMS, you'll be reminded of your "obligations" to make phone calls, schedule lunch dates, send personal emails, etc.

Or, you could manually write down your goals in your daily planner.

Or, you could print out your spreadsheet and post it above your computer or on your mirror or anywhere else you'll see it on a daily basis.

Your system doesn't have to be complicated and you won't have to use it forever. Within a few months, you will have developed good habits that will carry you throughout the rest of your real estate career.

HOW'D YOU DO THIS WEEK?

Did you:

- Create your business plan spreadsheet?
- Decide how to track your goals?

NOTES

Guess what...???

It's time to..... HAVE SOME FUN!!!

Now that your business plan is created, it's time to put it in play, so to speak. Start scheduling lunch dates, send out some personal "catching up" emails, pick up the phone and call a few friends. Schedule an open house for this weekend. Start thinking about a casual get-together with friends. Accept invitations you might otherwise decline. Get out there in the world with your antenna up and a smile on your face.

HOWEVER, all fun aside, never forget that your primary obligation is to your current clients who have honored you with their business. Even the best laid SOI plan will fail if you provide lousy service. Your prospecting activities should always be secondary to the needs of your active buyers and sellers.

The Savvy Prospector

Part II - Implementing Your Plan

Welcome to the second half of The Savvy Prospector program!

Your next four week's assignments are designed to GET YOU and KEEP YOU in the habit of staying in front of the Very Important People Who Know You. Four weeks should be enough time to get you in the Savvy groove and to start seeing results.

The business plan you created in Week Four will form the basis for your assignments here in the second half of the program. For purposes of the program, we will use the activity goals outlined in the sample business plan (e.g. 2 lunch dates per week), but please substitute your own activity goals where they differ from the sample.

Another major goal of the Savvy Prospector program is to expand your Sphere of Influence database by meeting new people... and inspiring them to care about you and your real estate business, so that they're comfortable hiring you or referring you to their friends and acquaintances. Therefore, many of your upcoming assignments will be geared toward Being Out There in the World with Your Antenna Up and a Smile On Your Face!

Ready?

Onward!

Dig out your SOI Notebook

You are now an SOI-building machine (with a great personality). To keep track of the people you meet in your day-to-day wanderings, you need an easy system in place to record their names and any other contact information you can get.

Do this diligently for a few days and you'll be surprised how many people you meet... and would have forgotten about. Keep this notebook with you at all times.

Did you designate an SOI Inbox? If not, do so now!

This is where you will toss any emails or scribbled notes with updates for your client database. Take an hour every week or two to go through the SOI inbox and update your Contact Management System with the changes.

The Numbers Game of Real Estate

Please listen to Audio #6 about the Numbers Game of Real Estate where you'll learn, among other things, how much more effective it can be to "impress" the people you know and the people you meet, rather than just simply striving to "meet" or "touch" them. The more people you impress, the more real estate you shall sell!

Keep your antenna up for opportunities to impress someone on a regular basis, by going above and beyond what you have to do or what's expected of you.

Who might you strive to impress? Well, new prospects, of course (DON'T blow off that buyer because he's not-yet-qualified!), but also lenders, inspectors, appraisers, repairmen, bank tellers and even your broker and other agents! After all, you never know when your broker might have a juicy referral for you or that agent on the other side of the deal might decide to go out of business and need someone to refer to.

From Your Savvy Business Plan (Week Five)...

Here are your assignments¹ to complete during the next seven days.

Schedule Lunch Dates with two Group Ones

A “lunch date” doesn’t necessarily mean you have to go to lunch. It can be coffee, dinner, drinks or even a date to go to the dog park. Just contact two people from your Group One and arrange a casual get-together.

Call Two People from Your Group One

Don’t call your friends looking for business. Don’t even mention real estate unless you have a darn good reason to. Topics for conversation might include:

- Searching for a handyman (or house-cleaner, or pet-sitter or massage therapist)
- To check in on a friend who lost her pet last week
- To check in on a friend whose mother is in the hospital
- To borrow a cup of sugar
- To ask for a recipe for ceviche
- To ask for vacation suggestions
- To say THANKS for... whatever!

Send personal emails to three Group One Contacts

Not infomercials, not jokes or mass-forwards, not online flyers for your new listing. PERSONAL emails.

If you’re chatty, be chatty. If not, a one-liner is fine, as long as it’s true to your personality. CHECK your spelling and grammar! Remember, your SOI needs to be reassured that you are a Reasonably Competent Human Being, and sloppy emails may put doubt in their minds of this fact.

When your friends respond... respond back. Don’t spend all day at this, but do spend enough time to make your friends feel cared about.

Send out three thank you notes

Snail-mail these notes, with your business card. Who are you thanking? ANYONE who did anything for you this week! The nice lady at the utility company who helped you figure out your absentee client’s delinquent bill, the locksmith who helped you unlock your car door after you locked your keys inside at the gas pump, the lender who got your buyer’s difficult loan closed on time.

Hand out five business cards a day

Five a day, 35/week, in addition to your Thank You cards. Don’t ever push your card on anyone, just find

¹ The business plan assignments shown from here on are based on the sample plan outlined in Week Four and are illustrative only. Please substitute your own activity goals if they differ from the ones assigned.

opportunities to get them distributed. Even if you're only using the card to write on the back of!

Collect business cards - at least one per day

While handing out your business card is nice, collecting contact information from others is even better!

Plan your monthly SOI get-together

Here's how this works. Every month, you either attend or host some sort of get-together with friends. If you will be attending a wedding this month, that counts. If you're taking your child's softball team out for pizza after a game, that counts. If you're going to a candle party, that counts. If you have no social plans on this month's calendar, then you must initiate the get-together.

A small dinner party at your house? Great! Happy hour at your new favorite restaurant with friends? Perfect! A birthday party for your spouse? Yeah!

During the event, take on the role of the Party Pic Guy. After the party, post the photos on an online photo-sharing site and send the link to everyone who attended.

Get Out There with Your Antenna Up (Week Five)

Make a goal for yourself to attend two or three local events a month. By "events" I don't mean "networking events;" I mean... festivals, street fairs, homecoming parades, music festivals, dragonboat races, farmer's markets, county fairs, winery grand openings, First Friday Art Walks, Taste of {insert your city name}....

If the event is in your target market area, so much the better!

How do you find out about such things? Well, here in Denver, since it's a metropolitan area, there are plenty of websites that post local events. I googled "Denver Festivals" and "Denver Events Calendar" and came up with enough stuff to keep me busy the rest of the year. As I've said once or twice... put your antenna up and see what happens!

So, see what you can find online for your community. Some may even offer the ability to sign up for notifications of events, or at least a weekly/monthly newsletter.

Audio Assignment

Listen to Bonus Audio #7 about being a Master of Your Market and an RCHB.

Master Your Market (Week Five)

Being a Master of Your Market is a great way to attract business from friends and strangers.

If you haven't spent much time out in your market, you'd be surprised how much social confidence it gives you to be able to speak intelligently about it when the topic of real estate comes up in social conversation.

The best way to become a market expert is to be out IN the market. Sure, doing research online and memorizing facts & figures is nice, but nothing beats seeing the properties that make up those facts and figures. If "previewing" is allowed in your market, by all means do it regularly. (Previewing means to look at listed homes on your own, without a buyer.) Visit other agents' open houses and attend broker luncheons. If your office tours office listings, show up for the tour. Read neighborhood newspapers and visit neighborhood parks and grocery stores.

Commit to spending a few hours a week learning about your real estate market. It will do wonders for your prospecting efforts!

From Your Savvy Business Plan (Week Six)...

Here are your assignments to complete during the next seven days.

Schedule Two Lunch Dates

What if you can't afford all this lunch-dating? Again, you don't actually have to eat together, but even if you do, don't feel that you always have to pick up the tab. Your lunch dates are opportunities to reconnect with a friend, not to deliver a sales pitch. It's just fine if your friend insists on paying or if you split the bill.

Call Two People from Your Group One

Make these calls when you're feeling chipper. Or even a little crazy-busy!

Nothing says SUCCESS like enthusiasm... and that enthusiasm is contagious. If you just got a great referral or listed a terrific FSBO, feel free to call a friend to brag a little. Sincere excitement is not an infomercial and perfectly acceptable to share!!

Send personal emails to three Group One Contacts

You may be wondering how exactly you're supposed to smoothly open an email dialogue with people you haven't been in touch with lately.

If I haven't been emailing someone on a fairly regular basis, just start out with a "Hi, how are things - was just thinking about you" and suggest some sort of get-together. Be on the lookout for a real estate-related tidbit to mention - like a house that just went on the market near them. Or if you ran into a mutual friend... or read a book that made you think of them... or had a dream about them... whatever excuse you can come up with to justify a note. It will come naturally with a little practice (and a little success!).

Send out three thank you notes

Sending these via the mail is more effective than emailing because you can include your business card. However, if you aren't keeping up with your 3/week commitment and would do better via email, that's better than nothing!

Hand out five business cards a day

If your cards are attractive enough, just leaving them "around" might actually scare up a prospect or two. Accidentally "drop" some in the grocery store or at Wal-Mart. If they're boring old real estate cards, this strategy probably won't work, though.

Collect business cards - at least one per day

At your next social gathering, conveniently "forget" to bring your business cards. Make it a point to collect cards from others.

Get Out There with Your Antenna Up (Week Six)

Is there an activity you've always wanted to try, but never got around to? Or a group you've thought about joining, but haven't? Now that you're looking for opportunities to meet new people, maybe now would be a great time to try some new things.

How about...

- Attending a weekly yoga class?
- Joining Toastmasters?
- Participating in the PTA?
- Joining a softball or volleyball league?
- Finding a local meditation group?
- Volunteering at a local animal shelter?
- Taking a cooking class?
- Signing up for Spanish lessons?

If you don't like it, you don't have to keep doing it - just try something new next month!

Master Your Market (Week Six)

If you live in or near a resort area, you should strive to be a master of the area's most desirable real estate communities or property types. For example, if you work near the ocean, you should be familiar with the properties on and near the water. If you live in a ski community, you should know the cost of properties on or within walking distance to the slopes. Even if you don't specialize in these particular types of properties, you should be able to speak intelligently about them.

Creating a Mass Email Campaign - Choose Your System

The next major project is to begin your SOI mass email campaign. **Please listen to Audio #8 for details.**

The first step is to choose your system for sending out your emails. Outlook Express will work, as will your webmail system, or Constant Contact (or some other similar system). If you use a real estate-specific contact management system, it probably offers mass email distribution as well.

Once you've chosen your system, you'll need to import/load your email addresses. Don't let the technology of this step delay the project - if you have to enter the addresses one by one - then just DO IT. So it might take you an hour or two... it's worth it!!

Creating a Mass Email Campaign - Choose Your Topic(s)

Begin thinking about your first SOI mass email. What topic or topics would you like to include?

For example:

- Help me choose a tagline for my business!
- Check out my new website!
- The market is HOT!
- Help me choose the photo I should use in my advertising

Or...?

Write down your ideas in your SOI notebook. If you'd like to see samples of my personal SOI mass emails, just send an email requesting them to Jennifer@sellwithsoul.com.

Creating a Mass Email Campaign - Write and send your email

Draft up your email and, like with your reconnection letter, proof-read, proof-read, proof-read. It must be 100% error-free!

Send a test email to yourself before you send it out - I promise you'll be glad you did!

How's Your Socializing Going?

How are you doing with your Savvy business plan?

Have you set up your lunch dates/coffee dates/open houses/floor time etc. for next week? How about your community events activity(ies)?

Did you go on any lunch/coffee dates this last week? If so, did you talk about anything with your friend that could be followed-up on? (for example, did she just get a new puppy? Ask for pictures! Is he starting a new job? See how it's going. Stuff like that).

What are your plans for the weekend? None yet? Make some. Do an open house on one of your listings or offer to do one for someone else. Find something outdoorsy to do... where there are other people. Invite some friends over on Sunday to watch football (and go to Sam's Club for a big bag of shrimp).

GET OUT THERE!

From Your SOI Business Plan (Week Seven)...

Here are your assignments to complete during the next seven days.

Schedule Two Lunch Dates

Note for the shy from Jennifer Allan...As you take your friends to lunch, don't lose touch with them. Start up an e-mail dialogue; give yourself a reminder to call them up in a few weeks. Invite them over to watch a football game or help you rearrange your furniture. In other words, continue the friendship. We introverts go inside our own heads and forget about the rest of the world. Real estate can bring you out of that to some degree and I promise you, you'll enjoy it, especially if you start getting business from all your friendliness!

Call Two People from Your Group One

Whom to call? What to say?

- How about calling someone you sent a Thank You card to, saying Thanks, again?
- How about calling one of your recent lunch dates to follow up on something you talked about at lunch? (big bonus points!)
- If you've recently had an embarrassing experience, call up someone you know would appreciate it.
- Call Mom or Dad or Brother or Sister

The more you stay in touch with your Group One, the more you'll know about their lives and the easier these calls will be. Just remember to be a friend when you call... not a real estate agent looking for business.

Send personal emails to three Group One Contacts

Do you have a friend who is doing work on their home - a kitchen remodel, building a deck or adding a bathroom? Ask how it's going. Did you dream about a friend of yours last night? Tell 'em about it (as appropriate!). Someone planning a wedding or having a baby soon? Check in to ask if there's anything you can do for them.

Send out three thank you notes

If you're struggling to get these done, here are a few tips to make it easier on you:

- Get in the habit of making notes in your SOI notebook of people who are nice to you
- Pre-stamp and return-address the envelopes
- Make sure your thank-you cards are ones you're proud of, not embarrassed by
- Don't worry about writing a novel in your card - just a few sincere lines will be fine

Hand out five business cards a day

Eight ways to get your card out there

1. Put a card in the envelope when you pay your bills
2. Use the back of your card to write down contact information for a referred provider
3. If you see someone taking pictures of something you're interested in, give them your card and

- ask them to send you copies
- 4. Anytime someone asks for your phone number (e.g. to call you when your car is ready), hand them your card
- 5. Thank a great waiter or waitress on the back of your card (and leave a big tip)
- 6. If someone offers you their card, always offer one of yours back
- 7. If you help someone (e.g. change a tire for them or let them use your cell phone), give them your card "in case they're ever in need of your assistance in the future."
- 8. If your card is striking enough, just try "dropping" them around - you never know!

Collect business cards - at least one per day

Get Out There with Your Antenna Up (Week Seven)

Practice making eye contact with strangers. If you're an extrovert, this may come naturally to you, but if you're like me - more reticent and introverted, it probably doesn't. Usually when I go out in public, let's say to Wal-Mart, I avoid eye contact. I look at the floor, the ceiling, the apples, my shopping cart... anything but the other people in the store.

However, I notice a big difference in my shopping experience when I make a concerted effort to LOOK at the other people I'm shopping with. Wow - it's fun! When I smile, they smile back! What a concept.

One day I went to a big box liquor store and using my make-eye-contact-with-strangers campaign, I struck up conversations with eight different people! Okay, so I didn't sell a house to any of them, but you never know.

Next time you go shopping, pay attention to the people around you. Smile cheerfully at the workers; acknowledge the cashier who checks you out. You never know... your next client may very well be at Wal-Mart!

Open Houses

If Open Houses are a part of your Business Plan, please listen to Audio #9 for some great tips on maximizing the effectiveness of your open houses.

Master Your Market (Week Seven)

If you aren't holding your own Open House this weekend, go visit some others in your neighborhood, especially if you're a rookie. It's a great opportunity to see how other agents handle their open houses and of course, to learn something new about your market.

Here's an excerpt from **Sell with Soul** regarding Open Houses:

Check Out the Competition

Before you attempt to hold your own open house, you should probably spend a Sunday afternoon visiting other open houses. Subtly check out the styles of the agents holding the open houses.

Do they look enthusiastic when they greet visitors? Or bored? Or scared?

Do they follow visitors around or do they barely look up from their novel?

Do they ask guests to sign in?

Do they attempt to prospect to visitors? If so, at what point? When the visitor walks in the door or as he's leaving?

Do the agents provide refreshments? Do they display promotional material?

How about the signage, both directional arrows leading you to the open house and in front of the home?

Which agents made you feel comfortable in the home and why? Which agents made you feel nervous...and why?

By the way, don't be afraid to tell the agent holding the open house that you're a new agent just checking things out. But whatever you do, DON'T make conversation with other visitors--the agent may interpret this as an attempt to "steal" her buyer prospects!

At the end of the day, put it all together and come up with your own plan for the Perfect Open House...YOUR way!

From Your SOI Business Plan (Week Eight)

Here are your assignments to complete during the next seven days.

Schedule Two Lunch Dates

Are you keeping a record of your lunch dates? You should - you may be surprised a year from now when you realize how many of these casual lunches resulted in business for you.

Excerpted From Sell with Soul:

I found that the majority of my early business (over 50%) stemmed from just one social encounter I had my first year. I met David (an agent from Aspen) at a continuing education class and we went to lunch during the break. He referred me to Brian, who was looking for investment properties in Denver. Brian referred me to Steve, who was selling his house next door to Brian and was also an investor. While listing one of Brian's fix-n-flip townhouses, I met Chris, who was looking for fix-n-flip properties and was a custom home builder. While showing Steve a duplex downtown, I met Deborah, the seller of the duplex, who was an out-of-state real estate agent looking for someone to refer business to in Denver. Deborah referred me to Samuel, who referred me to Ken, who referred me to....you get the point.

Just from that one lunch with David-from-Aspen in 1996, I made over \$150,000.

Brian	12 Sales	\$43,000
Steve	8 Sales	\$28,800
Chris	7 Sales	\$30,240
Deborah	5 Sales	\$21,600
Deborah's referrals	10 Sales	\$43,200

Call Two People from Your Group One

So... who do you want to call this week? Are you feeling ambitious and confident? Maybe you should try calling someone who scares you a little. No? Okay then. Why don't you call a family member just to chat. (although sometimes those are the scariest!!)

Remember, people like to help. So if there's something in your life you need help with, don't hesitate to ask your friends.

Send personal emails to three Group One Contacts

Try to respond to all emails you receive, from anyone you know. Yes, even those pesky joke emails (but please don't forward them on to anyone you want to get business from). A simple - "This is Hilarious! Thanks for sending!" will make the sender's day. And, if your contact information goes with your reply, so much the better!

Send out three thank you notes

Don't forget to thank the people who are involved in your day-to-day real estate transactions. Even your broker, if he or she has been helpful lately. He'll probably faint from shock to receive appreciation from one of his agents! Brokers are people, too!

Hand out five business cards a day

How's your stock of cards doing? Be sure you have plenty on hand at all times.

Collect business cards - at least one per day

Get Out There with Your Antenna Up (Week Eight)

We live in a world of convenience. You can do your banking from home, you can pay at the pump, you can have your dinner delivered to you.

However, when you take advantage of these conveniences, you limit your interaction with the outside world (which is one of the benefits of such conveniences!). But when you're looking for opportunities to meet new people, consider doing things the old fashioned way. Go into the bank instead of using the drive-thru. Pay for your gas inside instead of at the pump. Find a great local restaurant and go there once or twice a week (and tip well!). Drive to Staples for your office supplies instead of ordering them online.

Another idea... get your CE credits live instead of doing them online. Sure, you'll be in a class with a bunch of other real estate agents, but you never know who you might meet. You could be sitting next to an out-of-town agent who might have a juicy referral for you (this is how I met my biggest client ever) or perhaps next to an agent who specializes in another segment of the industry.

Master Your Market (Week Eight)

If you have a social event with friends coming up, schedule some time to preview “around” the event. For example, if you’re attending a Super Bowl party at a friend’s house, check out all the houses for sale in your friend’s neighborhood. Familiarize yourself with the pending sales and the recent closings. Be able to quote facts and figures, such as the average Days on Market and average List to Sold prices. If there’s a major project in development nearby, make sure you can speak intelligently about it.

While there’s no guarantee you’ll get the opportunity to use the knowledge you gain at the event you prepared for, you never know. And it certainly won’t hurt to gather additional market knowledge you didn’t have before. You’ll probably have a use for it someday.

Go Through Your Group One & Your Email In-Box

This is an assignment you should do on a regular basis - once a month or so.

Print out your Group One. Go thru it name by name and think about if there's anything you can contact each person about. To follow up on a situation they told you about last month? To say Happy Birthday? Maybe they have a painful anniversary coming up (death of a dog or a parent, or a cancer diagnosis)? Did they get a new puppy last spring? When I go thru my list of Group One's I'm always surprised at how many conversations were left hanging and offer great opportunities to re-open a dialogue.

Same thing with your emails, if you communicate with your friends via email. Clean out your email inbox, which will very likely result in your discovering many opportunities to reconnect. (This is a great project to do if you're sitting at a slow open house!)

Go thru your own website

Here's another assignment you should do on a semi-regular basis (at least twice a year).

Go through your website (if you have one) with a fine-toothed comb. Make sure all the information there is current, accurate and without error. Check your links. Verify that your contact information is up-to-date.

What does this have to do with Savvy Prospecting? Well, if your website is full of outdated information and erroneous links, it might put doubt in the minds of your SOI and your future SOI that you are an RCHB (Reasonably Competent Human Being).

Okay, you should be getting the hang of this now...

They say that it takes 21 days to create a habit. So, since we've doing this for a month now, I'm going to assume that Savvy Prospecting has become a habit for you - perhaps even a passion. And, a habit created out of passion will be a tough habit to break.

Sooooo.... you're off! And Running! And Selling! And Laughing! And having a terrific time while your business keeps growing.

That's the goal of a Savvy Prospecting business model. To help you MIX business and pleasure, effectively and efficiently.

Life's too short to have it any other way!