

Want to Sound Natural? Use a Script

When you learn to adapt scripts to your style and internalize them, you won't sound like a salesperson anymore.

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When I started in real estate in August 1999, I told myself that I wasn't going to be one of those “sales-y” agents. I was a natural, so I wanted to sound natural. I took in everything around me, including the conversations my colleagues were having with their clients, as best I could and went about my business having meaningful client interactions and learning how to handle objections. I didn't study scripts because I didn't like them, and they didn't sound like me.

I did listen to real estate coaching CDs in my car, replaying them probably 10 times. But I didn't replay them on purpose; I was just a zombie behind the wheel not paying attention to the fact that I had listened to the same thing over and over for four weeks. And then a beautiful thing happened — and it changed the trajectory of my business.

I was in a client meeting. I don't remember the client, the place, or the topic, but what I do remember is that they asked me a tough question, and all of a sudden, these beautiful words — ones that didn't feel like my own — simply flowed from my mouth. I nailed the answer to the client's question and realized that what I said — which happened to be the right words the client needed to hear at exactly the right time — were an exact recitation from the CDs I'd been listening to. I *had* been practicing scripts without knowing it, and it made me sound like a pro. And it converted that skeptical prospect into a trusting client.

That experience completely changed my perspective on scripts. I understood what my mentors and colleagues had been saying about them, and I started spending time focusing on internalizing what to say. It catapulted my business.

“Script” isn’t a bad word. When you first read a script, that’s exactly what it is. A script is someone else’s words — until you internalize it. Once you internalize it, you own it. It’s the language of successful real estate, so process it and make it your own.

Every business has scripts. If you were in a different field before becoming a real estate professional, think about your last job. There were probably half a dozen phrases or explanations you used all the time in your role. (Even “Would you like fries with that?” is a script.) Those repetitive phrases make things consistent, predictable, and professional. The same happens in real estate. The faster you learn that, the better.

Adapt to be authentic. You have permission to adapt scripts to your own style and wording. In fact, lack of adaptation is when you start to sound sales-y. Here’s a tip: Read a script multiple times exactly as it is written. Then ask yourself, “How would I say this to my best friend?” Boil the main message down to the precise point you want to make, and then try using it in a conversation. Also, search “scripts” on YouTube and watch half a dozen videos until you find someone whose style resonates with yours. Your ability to adapt and be authentic will play a big role in your success.

Knowing versus winging it. You have started a new business, and you need to gain clients and build a pipeline as quickly as possible. But what if, after weeks of building rapport with a prospect, they ask you one tough question — “Will you lower your commission?” — and you totally stumble through your answer. Your confidence takes a hit, and they stop returning your phone calls. Stop winging it. Have a plan for what you’ll say in these instances.

Practice. There is no way around this. Put the time in. Grab your calendar, and block out one or two hours every day to practice scripts, dialogues, and your consultations. Some of my favorite scripts are in the [“What What”](#) category of my blog.

Twenty conversations. I have this theory that there are only about 20 types of conversations we ever have with our real estate clients, give or take a few variations. Those conversations have to do with why the client should hire you, why you take the commission you do, why being a FSBO won't get them a good deal, what price they should sell at, and so on. The faster you internalize those 20 conversations, the better your conversion rate, the stronger your confidence, and the faster your pipeline will build.

Power questions. In my opinion, every new agent needs to internalize these scripts ASAP. I call these the power questions because they are designed to generate leads. Own these and start tracking how many of these conversations you have every day:

- Are you anticipating any real estate needs this year? Is there anyone you know who may need our services? I wouldn't be doing my job if I did not ask this question every now and then. It's my job to know the real estate needs of my friends and family, as well as their friends.
- Is this the only property you have to sell or are there others?
- Who do you go to when you have a real estate question?
- Are you still working with the agent who helped you purchase the property?
- Have you considered buying?
- Who do you call when you need a plumber, electrician, roofer, or any other professional related to your property?