

A person wearing a blue and white striped business shirt and a dark tie is shown from the chest up. Their hands are held together in front of them, cupping a large, glowing white question mark. The background is dark, making the person and the glowing question mark stand out.

7 Questions
to Refine your
BUSINESS

About The Author

Dirk Zeller

Real Estate Champions



You can contact Dirk at:

Real Estate Champions
5 NW Hawthorne Ave., Ste. 100
Bend, OR 97701
1-541-383-8833
Info@RealEstateChampions.com



Real Estate Champions was founded in 1998 by Dirk Zeller after a successful career as a top ten agent in a 4-State region for a large international real estate organization. Real Estate Champions has become a global coaching and training company specializing in the strategies and systems to increase sales for real estate companies, real estate teams and real estate agents. Real Estate Champions has created and delivered custom training and coaching solutions for Century 21, Coldwell Banker, Prudential, Berkshire Hathaway Home Services, RE/MAX, Better Homes and Gardens and ERA throughout the United States and the world.

Dirk Zeller, founder and CEO of Real Estate Champions has been an agent, investor, speaker, coach and bestselling author for more than 25 years. He has been a featured speaker at sales and success conferences on six continents. He is a ten-time bestselling author. Dirk is one of only a handful of authors worldwide to have written multiple books for the "For Dummies" brand. His sales, success and time management books have been translated into multiple languages.

If you are desiring more success and income in your life, we encourage you to also visit our website at www.RealEstateChampions.com for more resources to improve your success.

Because teams are a growing trend in real estate, more agents want to create a team or be on a team. For agents wanting to establish or grow their team one consideration is, what is the right size of team for me?

Asking a question like that should be done early in the team building process. It's a question to be reevaluated annually to make sure you are on the right track for you. You must be willing to get out of the answers and into the questions. You need a general idea of the size of your business and team even before you hire the first team member.

You may be thinking, how could I know that? It's more effective to start with the end in mind. By having more clarity than "I want to build a team"; to have clarity on the size and scope of the team. In understanding the balance between administrative team members and sales team members, it will enable you to execute your vision more effectively. My goal is to give you seven key questions to help you better define your business and create a better pathway to success.



In coaching and training more teams from The Wall Street Journal's top 250 real estate teams list than any other coach, speaker or trainer, I have seen the common practice I refer to as "Real Estate Remodeling".

Real Estate Remodeling is the wholesale change in plan, vision or process for a real estate team. The vast majority of real estate agents and teams are built to achieve an annual production targets. The systems, strategies and process are built to align with production goals. Don't mistake my words for advancing a strategy, system or goals without production targets. You must have an annual business plan with production targets broken down.

What most team leaders are missing is lack of long term goals. In coaching clients one of the first things I do is create a Business Blueprint. This blueprint lays out the longer term objectives, with short term objectives. I then review systems, lead generation strategies, training needs, skills, system needs, and behavioral styles of key personnel.



One of the most important questions is:

1.) What does your business look like 5 years from now?



Being able to envision your production, sales volume, percentage of revenue from buyers and sellers, transaction units, source of leads, conversion rate of leads, and net profit goals will help you achieve a clearer picture of the size of the team you need. It will allow you to build a team to a fixed point of reference in the future. Then you can create a plan of action, points and strategic steps to arrive at your desired result.

These are the core questions to help you fix a target that is clear, concise and compelling. That target will draw you toward it.

2.) How much do you want to sell in units and sales volume as a team and individually?

The key is really transaction units. To me, what makes a Champion Team's business is an annual increase in unit volume. Did you grow the number of units sold in a year by 20, 30, or 40 percent? You can increase sales volume by raising your average sales price more easily as an individual agent than you can by building a team from the ground up.

A Champion Team has the goals and objectives of raising units sold as well as sales price. As an individual agent, you might be at capacity in terms of number of units sold, or at least at the point of diminishing returns. For a team, a focus on increasing the number of units sold yields more income stability and greater referral value in the future.

Notice the last part of the question...individually. What level of production are you personally going to create and convert? At this time the most valuable producing asset in your business is you. Your individual personal productivity cannot be sacrificed if you are early in the team building process. Your business needs your skills in sales, lead conversion and revenue.



By having a personal production plan as you transition from a single agent, small team to mega-agent team is paramount.

- How many units are you going to produce?
- What is the percentage of listing sides to buyer sides for your production?
- How does that shift in the next 5 years?



3.)What's the size of your marketplace?

If your marketplace is on the small side, you building a team will be challenging. You will have to acquire a large segment of the marketplace. In a small town of, say, 75,000 people, unless it's a resort area, building a large team would require you to own 30 percent of the sales that happen annually in that small marketplace. For an individual team to own 30 percent of the marketplace is a rare occurrence. I have a few clients who have achieved this in small markets, but it has been a challenge at each step. They could have achieved the same number of units far more easily in a larger marketplace.



4.) How long do you plan on being a real estate agent?

You might not want to waste a lot of energy and mistakes in building a large team if your answer is a few years (fewer than five). You would be better served by being lean and mean in your size and approach. Establishing a team of one or two administrative people with a buyer's agent or two would take you a few years. The extra effort and risk might not provide a large enough return. Your time would be better invested in deepening your relationships with your past clients and working to generate more referrals and higher-quality referrals out of your database. Investing your time in readying your business for sale would be the highest and best use of that time.



5.) Are you a good teacher, manager, and coach?

Being a great leader and coach is more important than being a good manager. Competent managers are really a dime a dozen. A good leader is truly priceless.

- Do people work with passion for your vision of success?
- Are you able to hold people accountable to standards and set actions?
- Do you have the ability to stay calm when the entire world is falling apart?
- Are you willing to correct wrong thinking, behaviors, and actions?
- Are you able to encourage others to raise their performance?

Leadership is one of the biggest challenges in running a team. The ability to articulate the vision, create accountability systems and implement them with consistency, and the ability to train and coach members on your team will separate you from others.



6.) Do you have other business interests, either now or in the future?

I fell squarely into this category. I am often asked, “Why did you stop growing your business at 150 units per year?” It was because I had other business interests. I was faced with the fact that in order to go beyond 150 units, I would need to add additional staff, refine my systems, do further marketing, and either train and educate or hire someone who could manage the whole sales operation at its increased size. There were really a number of evaluations, challenges, and problems that would need to be addressed in order to achieve additional growth. I wasn’t willing to take on new risk, reduce my net profit in the short run, and invest more of my time.

For me, it was really a business and life decision: how did I want to spend some discretionary time that I had acquired through the proper care and execution of my business plan? I chose to select two areas that I was interested in, and that I felt would be far more lucrative for myself and my family in the long run than adding another 50 or 100 units of production. I invested more of my time in land development, home building (Joan, my wife, had a construction company), and building investment property for our personal portfolio. I am not saying that not growing beyond a certain point would be the right decision for you. It was the right one for me and my family.

7.) Where do you see your income coming from in 10 years?

Is it from sales commissions earned by you and your team? Is it from owning a brokerage business where you are the broker/owner with 20 agents, 200 agents, or 2,000 agents working for you? Is it from investment properties? If it's from a combination of these, what percentage comes from each source?

Each of us has a limited amount of energy that can be invested daily, weekly, monthly, and annually. For you, what creates the greatest return in personal satisfaction and income based on your goals, your desires, and how you are wired?

Most of us began our real estate career to become financially independent. I have traveled the world speaking to agents, brokers and team leaders and I have never met one who didn't want to achieve financial independence.

That's why I ask you the question about your income. What is your financial independence number? What would allow you to live the lifestyle you desire without work? That doesn't mean you pull the plug, it just gives you the option. It creates the opportunity to work from the joy you receive rather than the income.





There are as many models, trainers, and philosophies of how to be successful in real estate as there are people. Each one of these people, including myself, has strong beliefs, concerning the path that one must take in order to be successful. The truth is, there isn't just one pathway to achieving success in real estate sales. There isn't one way to build a team. There are a number of ways to prosper in the business. That is one of the exciting aspects of real estate sales. If anyone (agent, trainer, manager, or sales guru) tells you that her way is the only way, run in the other direction.

The real question is: what will be your way? There is a right model or right pathway for you to use to build your team based on your experience, database size, market, commitment level, behavioral style, sales skills, and competitive nature. The way to ensure your success is to evaluate yourself based on the factors I just listed and build your business and your team in a complementary way.

By taking the time to ask yourself these 7 key questions you can craft a more complete plan and strategy to insure your success.

To your Success



Dirk Zeller, Founder, CEO and Author

www.realestatechampions.com

www.facebook.com/realestatechampions

info@realestatechampions.com

877-732-4676

Books by Dirk Zeller

CEO and Founder of Real Estate Champions:

Your First Year in Real Estate

Success as a Real Estate Agent for Dummies®

Telephone Sales for Dummies®

The Champion Real Estate Agent

The Champion Real Estate Team.

Successful Time Management for Dummies®

Thriving in the Marketplace for Dummies®

Selling all in One for Dummies®

Effective Time Management for Dummies®

Running a Great Meeting in a Day for Dummies®

