

Communicate Confidently

Foreclosures, homelessness, no job. You hear these words everyday. But these words are not abstractions, they are the faces of the people you serve as tenant managers, agency staff, and owners.

Distance negates responsibility, someone said. But, you can't escape responsibility because you are right there day-in and day-out, managing your property, and having to tell a desperate family that in order to get housing, they will have to add their name to the waiting list that's two years long.

Here are a few tips on ways to communicate in person and in writing with tenants, staff, owners and the public. These are difficult times for everyone, most especially for those who need shelter...and hope.

This is your opportunity to deliver enormous doses of patience, empathy, and compassion, for no one knows the worry and suffering others carry. Every person we meet deserves our respect. We are all in this together...and together we will survive.

Respond with Empathy

Listen Deeply

Listening with your whole being and giving total attention, says clearly “I think you are special.” Listening is a gift that I give you now. To listen without resistance and be willing to be influenced by what we hear is a great gift. Perhaps the greatest gift we can give in a lifetime. To show you're listening:

1. LOOK directly into people's eyes as you listen and speak. Try to really “see” the person's eyes as you talk. For a real connection, try to identify the person's eye color (not to remember it or to say it), but just to create a deeper connection. (But, don't stare.)
2. LIFT your eyebrows, offer a friendly welcoming face. Let your face (and your words) say, “I'm happy to see you.”
3. LEAN your upper body slightly forward from the waist if you're seated. Sitting equalizes. To say “Let's sit down and talk” is smart.
4. TAKE NOTES when you must remember the information. “The faintest ink is stronger than the best memory.” (Chinese proverb.) Deliberately repeat what the person says and take notes of their requests. Let the person know WHAT you are writing. WHY you are writing (your motive), and HOW you will use the information.

Complaints

Complaints are requests. We complain and get angry when we don't get what we want or something happens to us that we don't want. Expectations create suffering: Be careful what you promise people. If you can't deliver as promised, convey the truth immediately. “Bad news is better than no news.” We can adjust to reality if we know it.

Respond First to Feelings, then to facts

A person who complains wants to hear first, not an apology, but a genuine statement of compassion: Not I'm sorry I...(was wrong, we

Merry Christmas Happy, Prosperous New Year

Dear Clients and Friends,

This year we are once again truly grateful for a year of abundance born from hard work and close relationships. How satisfying it is to know that Orca serves some of the most professional and ethical landlords and property managers in this industry. Ethical – a word that, I am proud to say has value for my clients. A virtue that I hear discussed and highlighted at many organizational meetings. A virtue I see glowing in your faces, woven in your expressions and conversations – a quality that exudes from your presence because it originates and burns at the core of your being.

When so many in government and private enterprise use the word ethics loosely and for selfish personal gain, I give thanks that Orca remains steadfast to serving those with a conscious and with the vision of a better life not just for self but for the greater good of mankind.

We, the Orca Pod are grateful for you - your families, and the professional contributions you make that uplift this world. Right does make might and I am proud of each and every one of you. You have enriched our lives beyond description. I am profoundly grateful for the gift ofyou.

Many Blessings This Holy Season,
Rebekah and John Near
The Orca Pod

Our office will be closed on:
December 24th close at 3:00PM
December 25th and
December 26th close at 3:00pm
January 1st, 2010



FOR SALE

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Dan Folsom

Real Estate Broker (& Rebekah's Brother)
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Goofed), “but ‘I’m sorry YOU...suffered.’ ‘I’m sorry you had to wait.’ ‘I’m sorry you had that understanding.’ This must be said with a sincere voice. If you have to apologize, here are nine words that can change the world: ‘I’m sorry, I made a mistake. Please forgive me.’ When you say ‘Please forgive me,’ you get the other person involved in your situation and the burden is not on you alone.

To Say No: Try “Yes...if...” (permission with conditions). “Yes, I will consider renting to you, if you can send me a list of references.”

Write Excellent E-Mail

Subject Line

Write it like a newspaper headline. Write it after you know what you have said in the body. Include enough information to make retrieval easier later. Write a fresh new line every time you reply, often including key words from the original subject line.

1. Write to ONE reader (never write to groups). Reading is a private act. We read as individuals, one person at a time. Therefore, you are always writing to only one person, even if 1,000 people read it. Never write, “Dear Tenants.” Better: “Dear Tenant.” Not “Dear Friends,” but “Dear Friend.” To send e-mail to a team, word it as if writing to one team member. You can say: “I’m sending this to you and other members of the team.” Think of each e-mail as you would a love letter: would you write “many of you” or “all of you?” I hope not. Make the reader feel special, important.
2. Put “YOU” in sentence one. To connect immediately with that individual reader, include the word “you” or “your” in the first sentence of everything you write:
 - ◆ “Thank you for...” “Thanks for your...”
 - ◆ “I have a favor to ask you.” “I could really use your advice.”
 - ◆ “You asked me when the apartment would be ready.”
 - ◆ “Your ad on the Internet caught my eye.”
 - ◆ “In this report, you will find...”

Note: This is a friendly you, not a “blaming” you as in: “What’s wrong with you? You are an idiot.” Can you compliment the reader? To the basic message, “Remember, your report is due Friday” add an honest, sincere compliment: “I always look forward to reading what you’ve written.” This communicates respect, builds relations.

3. Get your message out within the first 3 sentences. Tell the reader right away what you want him to KNOW (be aware of, understand), or to DO (response you want, action). Busy readers want to know quickly what you want or what this is all about in the first 2 or 3 sentences. Use the rest of the e-mail or attachments to explain, elaborate, justify, prove, or give benefits. To encourage action, state the benefits first: TO before DO (benefits or reasons before action): “To get rich, save part of each paycheck.” “To lose weight, eat smaller portions.” “To get the best seats, arrive early.”

Businesses Must Provide Victims and Law Enforcement with Transaction Records Relating to Identity Theft

The Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA) spells out rights for victims of identity theft, as well as responsibilities for businesses. Identity theft victims are entitled to ask businesses for a copy of transaction records — such as applications for credit — relating to the theft of their identity.

Indeed, victims can authorize law enforcement officers to get the records or ask that the business send a copy of the records directly to a law enforcement officer. The businesses covered by the law must provide copies of these records, free of charge, within 30 days of receiving the request for them in writing. This means that the law enforcement officials who ask for these records in writing may get them from your business without a subpoena, as long as they have the victim’s authorization.

The Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the nation’s consumer protection agency, enforces the FCRA including this requirement, which is known as Section 609(e). Here is some additional information to help your business comply with this provision of the law:

Q. Who must comply with Section 609(e) of the FCRA?

A. The law applies to a business that has provided credit, goods, or services to, accepted payment from, or otherwise entered into a transaction with someone who is believed to have fraudulently used another person’s identification. For example, if your business opened a cell phone account in the victim’s name or extended credit to someone misusing the victim’s identity, you may be required to provide the records relating to the transaction to the identity theft victim or the law enforcement officer acting on that victim’s behalf.

Q. What documents must my business provide?

A. Your business must provide applications and business transactions records, maintained either by your business or by another entity on your behalf, that support any transaction alleged to be a result of identity theft. Records like invoices, credit applications, or account statements may help victims document the fraudulent transaction and provide useful evidence about the identity thief.

Q. What are the procedures for requesting these materials?

A. Requests for documents must be submitted in writing. Your business may specify an address to receive these requests. You may ask the victim to provide relevant information, like the transaction date or account number, if they know it. You also can require that victims provide: 1. proof of identity, like a government-issued ID card, the same type of information the identity thief used to open the account, or the type of information you are currently requesting from applicants; and 2. a police report and completed affidavit. Victims can use the FTC’s ID Theft Affidavit, available at ftc.gov/idtheft, or another affidavit you accept.

Q. Is it ever appropriate not to provide documents?

A. You can refuse to provide the records if you determine in good faith that either you cannot verify the true identity of the person asking for the information or the request for the information is based on a misrepresentation or the information requested is Internet navigational data or similar information about a person’s visit to a website or online service.

Your business may not deny disclosure of these records based on the financial privacy provisions of the Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (see Subtitle A of Title V of Public Law 106-102). Nevertheless, you may refuse to disclose them if state or another federal law prohibits you from doing so.

Q. Are there recordkeeping requirements of Section 609(e)?

A. Section 609(e) does not require any new recordkeeping procedures for your business.