



Systems are KEY

August 1990 was the beginning of my senior year in high school. We had already been training for the soccer season for six weeks. We had a huge goal, get to the state playoffs. Our goal was an extension of last season; just a short eight months previous where we fell one game short.

It was Early November 1989; my High School Soccer Team was playing in the Super-Sectionals – one of the top 16 teams in the state, four short wins from the state championship. Our soccer program was an underdog, making it to state only one time previously, 1987 my freshman year, only to lose in the first game. I did not get to play in that big win to send them to state, so when we had an opportunity again my junior year I was prepared. Back to Early November 1989, we played: four – 20 minute quarters, tied 2-2; Two – 10-minute overtimes, tied 3-3; Two – 10-minute sudden death overtimes, tied 3-3. This game was going to be decided by twelve of the forty players involved in the game, six aside headed to penalty kicks.

Penalty Kicks Defined. Five players from each team, alternating one at a time have a chance to shoot from 12 yards away against the

opposing team's goalie. For those of you that don't know the game. A soccer goal is 24' wide x 8' tall. The average high school goalie, six feet tall with a similar wingspan. This is definitely the shooter's odds! The goalie has two options NOT to prevent the opponent from scoring; guess where the player is going to shoot or PRAY that the shooter misses the goal. That's it; there is no time to react to the shoot coming from 12 yards away at 50-60 miles per hour. Practice and Preparation are on full display in what



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seems to be a simple task for the shooter, and a much harder task for the goalie.

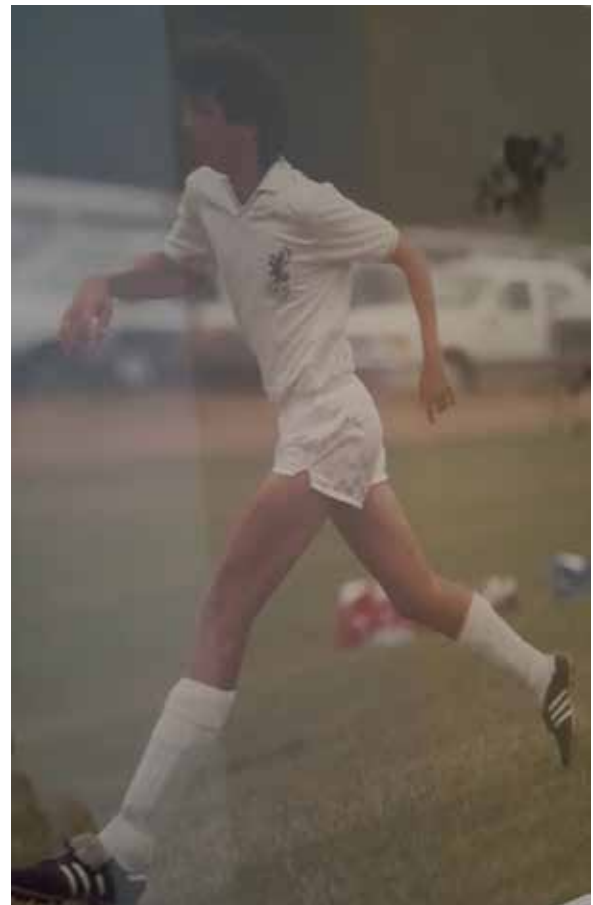
I was chosen as one of the Five shooters from our team, along with our goalie, the six of us had the game in our hands.

I grew up in an older part of Rockford Illinois, where the neighborhoods were set up in grids with all very similar lots which were narrow and shallow. Our house was not on an alley, so we had an extra ten ft or so in our backyard. Growing up the only organized sport I played was soccer, other than grade school BB. I played three seasons every year, and wherever I was, a ball was not far from my feet; homework, TV, dinner, etc. In sixth grade, I asked my dad for a soccer goal for the backyard for my birthday. Dad being who he is, did not buy me one, he made one! Remember I said a goal is 24' wide. When DAD started erecting the goal in the yard, I soon realized that our yard was only 25' wide and the goal took up the entire width of the yard. And the from the front of the goal to the rear porch and patio was only 32'. So I ended up with a space about 25'x32' surrounded by a fence on two sides, a garage on third side and house to complete the rectangle....But if I use the patio I could practice Penalty Kicks at 12 yards from the goal. I probably took more than ten thousand penalty kicks in my backyard from 6th grade until this night in November 1989 when I had our teams fate partially in my hands. It felt great to have been chosen, and I was feeling very little pressure because of the preparation I had been doing for years. Our goalie was a senior; Our five shooters consisted of two seniors and three juniors including myself. Already having played 120 minutes in the cold, crisp November air, there

are twelve players left on the field to decide which team is going to compete in the state's top eight teams for the Championship.

We shot first, Junior, Goal, 1-0; Their first, Saved, 1-0; Our Second, Senior, Saved, 1-0; Their Second, Goal, 1-1; Our third, Junior, Goal, 2-1; Their third, Goal, 2-2; Our fourth, ME, it's my turn.

I have done this thousand's of times before in practice, and I have never missed in game situations. I had a routine, an approach that I did not deviate from. I took the same action, in the same order EVERY Time.



I would walk past the ball and stare at the goalie until I made eye contact; pick up the ball in my hand and tuck it under my arm, walk over to the referee and ask some meaningless question; never looking toward the goal "place the ball" after tufting the grass with my cleat; I would then proceed to take 2.5

steps forward getting behind the ball ready to shoot; Still with my back to the goal I would alert the ref that I was ready, the goalie would alert the other ref the same; Once the whistle blew, I would pause 1-2 seconds, slowly turn around and face the goalie (in soccer the goalie can not move until the ball is kicked); I would once again make eye contact with the goalie, and as soon as I did I would quickly look to the side of the goal that is was NOT shooting towards and quickly look away like the goalie “caught” me looking; I would proceed to shuffle my feet a bit and then take two strides and strike the ball; most times the goalie would “guess” the wrong the side; so the goal was wide open. But most times I could place the ball so tight to the side netting that goalies didn’t have a chance anyways. As the thousands of practices before and the multiple game situation before I EXACTLY followed my approach...and as many times before the result of the practice has lead to a positive outcome. I scored, we are now winning 3-2!

Their fourth player, scores, 3-3.

Next up, our fifth and final shooter, a senior, who had already been named to the All-Conference team, the All-Section Team, the All-State Team and was on the ballot for the All-American Team. He should be automatic, but something is different tonight. He is rushing, not using his routine or approach that he normally uses. Why, Is he too confident, too nervous, too tired? I’m not sure what happened that evening with him, but he sent the ball 5 yards over the crossbar. He MISSED. His outcome was not usual because of his pattern; his approach was not the same. He did not follow his own system.

Their fifth and final shooter, If he scores

we turn in our uniforms on a season that fell short of our team goals. Now the pressure turns to our goalie to guess correctly and make the save. If he makes a save, we remain tied and move on to the next shooter for each team until there is a winner. They Score on their final attempt; we lose 4-3. They get rewarded by going to “state, ” and we go home emptied handed. We started practicing in July that year; we had at least two practices a day until school started, then daily. We played 20 games that season; some losses but mostly wins. We had a goal to reach the “state finals.” We fell short because one person on the team didn’t use his system, his approach. If I had to go back to that cold November night in 1989, I can easily remember my state of mind. I had just turned 16, hundreds of people watching, but I felt NO pressure. I could have easily missed, or the goalie guesses correct and saves the shot. But before I took the shot, I could visualize the outcome. The visualization comes from the repeated practice of the act; I had a system.

Aaron was the senior that missed that night. He was a talented player, no question. He went on to play Division I soccer the following year. But he only lasted one season. If I had to guess, his weak work ethic and his failure to follow the system ended up being his demise. Of the six players from our team that night, five earned at least all-confernece or all-state that year or the next. All five players played college soccer; 3 Div III, 2 Div I. I was the one that ended up not playing after high school....but that is a story for another day.

The ending my Junior year in High



School Soccer was not a positive note for the team, but for me it was the first time I can remember that I knew that team was how you win games but the team had to be 100% committed 100% of the time. I'm now more prepared to tackle my Senior year and the rest of my life.

Fast forward to 2005; I became licensed to sell Real Estate, first in Illinois then Indiana. I started from the beginning; I needed to learn the industry and practice the skills. Over the first few years, I used the systems of the company I worked for. Those systems were ok, but then in 2009 when I opened Versatile Real Estate Solutions, I began developing my own systems. Through practice, trial & error, and time I had formed a solid platform of systems to operate in. At the end of 2015, I meet a group of people with similar systems to mine; we began collaborating. Along with these other individuals and a writer we put together a book that documented our systems, our documented approach to selling real estate. **The Value-Driven Approach to Sell Real Estate.** *A practical guide to protect*

yourself from REAL ESTATE GREED & bank an extra \$30,000 profit by thinking like the great WARREN BUFFETT.

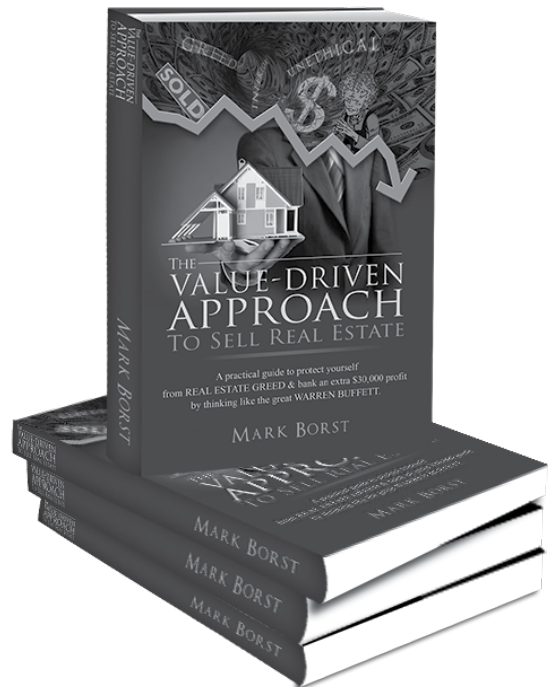
Over the years in sports, operating restaurants and selling real estate; one thing holds true, success is achieved when there are systems in place, and the systems are followed. Systems are always needing adjustment, and upgrading but it seems foolish to go into any situation on "a wing and a pray" to get something accomplished. The real estate market is hot right now, but hastily trying to sell your home without a documented approach is dangerous. Don't leave money on the table like this seller did in this real life example of real estate greed!

I recently finished two intense days of Continuing Education for my Real Estate license. The main topic was the duty we owe our clients as real estate brokers, set forth by state law and the ethics of our association. Not 48 hours later, I'm reading the daily hot sheet, the newest listings in the MLS. I see a property I'm interested in buying to rehab. I immediately schedule a showing and begin

to prepare the offer, as I know I'm going to want to offer on the property. I normally don't blindly offer on properties in this price range; I need to take a peak at least first. My schedule gets denied! The reason, "we are only going to look at the offers we have received so far." I'm sure they did get multiple offers, and in this situation, Real Estate Professionals should want to gather ALL the offers possible. The house has been listed for less than 12 hours! I try to call this listing agent, her office gives me her mobile number. When I call you mobile, she doesn't pick up and her Voice Mailbox is Full! I refresh my page and Pending! The offer on the house, the multiple offers, is great for the seller. But the fact the agent didn't want to take ALL offers on the house is a disservice to the sellers, a hit to the integrity of our profession, and violates license law.

Let me illustrate something. So this particular house was listed for 99k, and typically a contract is seeking 5-7% in commission from the seller, half being shared by the listing agent and half by the selling agent, who brought the buyers. For ease of calculation, let's say \$100,000, and 6% split 3 and 3. So each agent is due \$3000 making the seller net (without any other fees) \$94,000. But what if the agent put a Date 3-4 days in future that asks for highest and best offer from all interested parties. More offers would have raised the potential selling price for this investment property. Let say the highest offer conservatively is \$120,000. Let's look at the commission; each agent is due \$3600 making the seller's gross \$112,800. So by not doing the job, the agent was hired to do, she potentially cost the seller \$18,800...why because it only netted her an extra \$600. So

in less than 12 hours, this agent potentially LOST almost twenty thousand for her client but made \$3000! This behavior goes back to the reason why Real Estate agents are looked down upon. For 3-4 extra days time and no more real work, the SELLER is the one that loses based on GREED! This is another example why I have collaborated on the book **The Value-Driven Approach to Sell Real Estate**. A practical guide to protect yourself from REAL ESTATE GREED & bank an extra \$30,000 profit by thinking like the great WARREN BUFFETT. To get your free copy of my book visit www.MakeImpactMondays.com or email me Mark@MakeImpactMondays.com





Our debut episode was with Kristen La Rocca, one half of a mother/daughter business duo who have established their unique brand of goods in Crown Point. Though the two sell vastly different products, the end result is a complementary mesh of style and function. Celebrating their first year of business, Mink 64 owner Kristen La Rocca dishes out advice on entrepreneurship, motherhood, and perseverance. You can download the episode at www.TriTownAdviceGivers.com or search on iTunes and Stitcher.

If you or someone you know would be a great guest for the show. Go to www.TriTownBooking.com for more info



Versatile RES
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Our Move is Complete. It has been a long couple of months of buildout and moving. But, As of April 1st we are officially out of our old space and settling into our new office. The space is filled with warm earth tones that are inviting and relaxing. While most of our days are spent with clients visiting houses it is nice to have a place to invite clients and guests back to execute contracts and/or perform closing. Stop in and see us. We are next to Livio's across from Lake Central High School

Masterful Deception

Are real estate agents masterful at selling properties, quicker, for more money? Or are they simply masters of deceiving people into thinking that?

If you've bought and sold real estate, whether that's a single house or dozens of investment properties, you undoubtedly have heard the *promises* that agents make.

Prominently advertised on the radio, there is this one: "Call John Smith today. 1-800... He's so confident he can sell your home fast and for top dollar, in just 39 days, guaranteed, that if he can't, he'll step in and buy it himself." Of course, I can't know or predict your gut reaction to hearing this. Maybe your B.S. detector is firing on all cylinders.

Or do you buy into it hook line and sinker? And think, "Damn, that's a great sounding deal. I should give John a call."

The assumption is, on behalf of the homeowner, "If John is so confident that he's willing to guarantee my home sold, in just 39 days, or he'll buy it himself, then "man John must be good." And while that may be true, the skeptical, less trusting and shrewder homeowners says, "fine print."

Every day though, I see homeowners taken by this promise. Only to be disappointed when the "promise" doesn't turn out to be credible. The FTC has a term of this. You might call it bait-and-switch. But really it's not illegal; it's just deception.

You expect fine print and the use of asterisks in situations where terms and conditions are obvious. The lottery. Publisher's Clearinghouse. Or in Vegas, where you know and are pretty certain going in, that you're going to lose.

But in something like real estate, where the person you hire is supposed to have your back, the use of fine print and asterisks seems oddly out of place. As a result, the homeowner who falls for this promise, ends up being disappointed. Feeling misled. Sometimes they feel stupid. "Why did I believe that?" they ask. In the process, they learn the truth about agents, the commission-driven business, and what many are willing to do to make the phone ring.

Then comes the next promise, "Mr. and Mrs. Homeowner, the reason we can guarantee that your home will sell fast, and for top dollar, is because of our Marketing Arsenal and proven 113-point marketing plan." Again, I can't know your gut reaction. Maybe you're impressed by the "113-point marketing plan."

Or maybe you're not.

Maybe your B.S. detector again is firing off, so loud it sounds like a howler monkey, causing a ringing in your ears and can be heard by all around you.

Maybe you say to yourself, "Really, you have a marketing arsenal? That's what you call it?" And maybe inside, or if you're more vocal, you demand to see of this "113-point unicorn," to be able to scrutinize its legitimacy for yourself. Again, I can't know your response (or anyone else's) to the *promises* that agents

make. I can only share with folks, something powerful that I learned about sorting fact from fiction, truth from deception.

In his book, *How to Fail at Almost Everything and Still Win Big*, author Scott Adams outlines six filters for truth—in essence, to hone your B.S. detector. He points out that each of the six filters, individually, is a complete train wreck.

- 1) Personal Experience (Human perception is iffy)
- 2) Experience of people you know (Even more unreliable)
- 3) Experts (They work for money, not truth)
- 4) Scientific studies (Correlation is not causation)
- 5) Common sense (A good way to be mistaken w/complete confidence)
- 6) Pattern recognition (Patterns, coincidences, and personal bias look alike.)

But here is the magic of these six filters, when you use at least 2, preferably more. Adams writes, "In our messy flawed lives, the nearest we can get to the truth is consistency. Consistency is the bedrock of the scientific method. Scientists creep up on the truth by performing controlled experiments and attempting to observe consistent results. In your every day, nonscientist life you do the same thing, but it's not as impressive, nor as reliable. For example, if every time you eat popcorn, one hour later you blame the dog for smelling, you can reasonably assume popcorn makes you gassy. It's not science, but it's still an entirely useful pattern. Consistency is the best marker of truth, imperfect though it may be.

He then writes, "When seeking the truth, your best bet is to look for confirmation on at least two of the dimensions listed. For example, if a study indicates that eating nothing but chocolate cake is an excellent way to lose weight, but your friend who tries the diet just keeps getting fatter and fatter, you have two dimensions out of the agreement. (Three if you count common sense). That's lack of consistency."

In closing, if you have real estate needs. I urge you to utilize two or more of these *filters* to sort truth from deception. Identifying consistency can be your savior against the promises of deceptive agents. ■

Mark Borst is a collaborator of *The Value-Driven Approach: A practical guide to protect yourself from REAL ESTATE GREED & bank and extra \$30,000. He is the Broker/Owner of Versatile Real Estate Solutions and a local entrepreneur as well. For a free copy of his book, visit: www.MakeImpactMondays.com*

