

# Stay above the fray: 3 ways to raise the bar in real estate

To help consumers, you must first be a good neighbor



*Nina Strehl on Unsplash*

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To be a good neighbor among so many [angry](#), [sad](#), [financially stressed](#) and [sick people](#) will be the biggest challenge our industry might ever face. To make sure that consumers are protected, have a fair chance of finding a home in [low-inventory markets](#), and that we continue to fight for affordable housing in our communities is — and will be — our most important calling.

Here are three ways to continue to raise the bar of professionalism with ourselves and those around us.

## Check your emotions

If you are feeling overly [emotional](#), take a break. [Stay away from social media](#), and gather your thoughts. Not only could venting your thoughts on social media have short-term consequences, such as someone “unfriending” you, but also long-term effects that can impact your career.

Screenshots could prevent you from being hired in the future or create [reputation](#) damage for you to manage for years to come.

## Stop sticky marketing

For years, advertisers and digital marketing teams have told us we need to “capture” consumers into giving us their information. Then we will have the opportunity to sway them to buy or sell a home with a compelling drip email or text message campaign over other agents in the market.

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We can do better.

Become a resource for consumers seeking information for homes. Take the time to answer questions despite knowing it will not end up in a sale.

Know [your local market](#). Practice your craft. Make marketing about what you learn and the experience of real estate. Consumers need the best marketing we can provide to stay inspired and be excited about owning a home in the future.

## Accountability

If you plan to run your business today as you have run it for decades (or even as you did in 2019), you need to change your plan. The needs of consumers, agents, vendors and the sophistication of the transaction’s nuances have changed.

If you do not change and adapt, you will not be able to maintain your best people. Why? Our profession's best people are demanding change, transparency, safe office environments and [better consumer experiences](#).

If you have not had an emergency meeting about culture, mission statements, social media policy, increasing COVID-safety protocol, creating a code of conduct, and the recent code of ethics changes — you are already behind.

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I've written in the past that I had listened to a podcast series, "[Finding Fred](#)" in 2019. I have often referenced that it's possibly one of the single best things I have come across in my professional career.

This podcast exploring Fred Rogers' (yes, Mr. Rogers) legacy impact on the children who watched him speaks volumes for the argument that respecting humanity should be at the core of everything we do to help people on their journeys to homeownership.

In the podcast, they reference a letter that Rodgers wrote to himself. I've printed this letter out, and I often look at it before I sit down to write. In the letter, he [wrote in frustration](#):

*"Am I kidding myself that I'm able to write a script again? ... After all these years, it's just as bad as ever."*

In the housing industry, we have been called to be a good neighbor to the entire neighborhood. We have to make sure that consumers are not discriminated against and have a fair chance of finding a home in low-inventory markets. We have to continue to fight for affordable housing in our communities. Homeownership is the American dream. What does that dream look like right now for many consumers?

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This calling is more important than telling the world which “side” you are on. It’s a privilege to help people make this dream come true. Home is more critical than ever. Be a good neighbor, and don’t let Fred Rogers down. He always believed that we should look after each other and do more. Do better. We are capable of so much more when we work together.

*By day, Rachael Hite helps agents develop their business. By night, she’s tweeting and blogging. Feel free to tweet her @rachaelhite.*