

5 non-real estate classes that'll make you a better agent

From improv to MasterClasses on persuasion, negotiation and, yes, even feeling confident in your own skin, these education programs will help you find self-assuredness and give you a leg up on your competition



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As real estate agents, it's so easy to see just how big of an impact we have on our clients' outcomes. We determine how many potential relationships turn into trusting clients, how long [a client's journey takes](#) and what it looks like.

We play a big part in whether our clients feel prepared to act with confidence when the opportunity presents itself, and we're the ones who step in and have the [tough conversations](#) needed to get things back on track.

In your business, you need to take the reins in the same confident manner as you do in your sales role. That's why having that confidence in the first place is so important. And much like confidence, there are some skills that agents need to have that you don't necessarily learn with [traditional real estate classes](#).

If you want to hone your public speaking abilities, work on your listening skills, enhance your person-to-person interactions or even engage in some on-the-spot storytelling, consider taking these five non-real estate classes that'll make you a better salesperson, business owner and leader.

These classes can help get over your fear of [sounding too "salesy,"](#) and allow you to show off your knowledge and value with self-assuredness and authenticity instead.

1. DiSC personality assessment

A [DiSC profile](#) is a personality assessment that gives you insight into human behavior by measuring "tendencies and preferences, or patterns of behavior, with no judgment regarding value or alignment with a skill set or job classification."

That's why it's used across a host of companies and teams in an effort to improve communication, reduce [\(or resolve\) conflict](#) and understand each other's work styles. It's also quite beneficial to salespeople because it helps them better understand their customers.

As an agent, doing a deep dive into DiSC profiles will give you the edge you need to better understand and service your clients. You'll be able to comprehend what they might need to make a decision, how to put those needs into words and what their preferred communication style might be.

2. MasterClass

There's no better time than now to expand your expertise with online learning, and [MasterClass](#) is the perfect hub for virtual classes that span different industries and cater to all skill levels.

Here are a few classes that might not be *directly* related to real estate but still offer a lot of useful information and best practices that apply to our people-focused industry.

- **Daniel Pink Teaches Sales and Persuasion:** “The NYT-bestselling author has a science-based approach to motivating, influencing, and convincing.”
- **Robin Roberts Teaches Effective and Authentic Communication:** “Learn how to communicate effectively, whether it's in front of an audience, at work, or with those you love.”
- **Jeff Goodby and Rich Silverstein Teach Advertising and Creativity:** “As the minds behind the ‘got milk?’ campaign, the Budweiser lizards, and countless other ads that have permeated pop culture, Jeff Goodby and Rich Silverstein never stop reimagining the possibilities of advertising.”
- **Chris Voss Teaches the Art of Negotiation:** “As an FBI hostage negotiator, Chris Voss persuaded terrorists, bank robbers, and kidnapers to see things his way. Now he's teaching you his field-tested strategies to

help you in everyday negotiations, whether you're aiming to improve your salary, the service you receive, or your relationships.”

- **Bobbi Brown Teaches Makeup and Beauty:** “You’ll learn how to choose the right foundation, do a smokey eye and a statement lip, and take your look from day to night. But most of all, you’ll learn how to feel confident in your own skin.”
- **Doris Kearns Godwin Teaches U.S. Presidential History and Leadership:** “For more than 50 years, historian Doris Kearns Goodwin has studied great American presidents. Now the Pulitzer Prize winner teaches you leadership through the lens of U.S. presidential history. Manage a crisis, craft a message, and guide a team like extraordinary leaders of the past.”
- **Bob Iger Teaches Business Strategy and Leadership:** “In an era of disruption, former Disney CEO Bob Iger led one of the world’s most beloved brands to unprecedented success with the acquisitions of Pixar, Marvel, and Lucasfilm. Now, through case studies and lessons from 45 years in media, Bob teaches you how to evolve your business and career.”
- **Sara Blakely Teaches Self-made Entrepreneurship:** “The inventor, entrepreneur, and founder of Spanx teaches you to open doors and close deals. Learn Sara’s customer-first approach and her tactics for prototyping, branding and building awareness, and bootstrapping your way to success.”
- **Howard Schultz Teaches Business Leadership:** “Former Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz rose from a childhood in public housing to leading a company that revolutionized the way the world drinks coffee. In his 90-minute video series, Howard shares what he’s learned about business leadership and being an entrepreneur.”
- **David Axelrod and Karl Rove Teach Campaign Strategy and Messaging:** “David Axelrod and Karl Rove reach across the aisle to offer an inside look at winning campaign strategies. Find the inspiration and tools to get involved at any level, or simply become a more informed, engaged citizen.”

3. Improv

As agents and humans, we've definitely found ourselves in a predicament or two where we had to improvise. Improvisational theatre, otherwise known as "improv," allows you to think on the spot and become creative with your responses.

A lot of CEOs (including Twitter's [former CEO Dick Costolo](#)) admit to using the skills learned in improv classes to become better, more engaging and more effective leaders. How? Well, it's simple.

Any improv class will first teach you the fundamental step of "Yes, and ...". This is a basic rule in improv that allows you to accept what another participant has just stated and then expand on it. With neither party saying "no" and both building on each other's ideas, the conversation flows.

This fundamental principle alone will allow you to pivot in your conversations with clients. Improv also [allows you to listen](#) and then talk. It's crucial to listen to what's been said and pay attention so you can react appropriately.

If you're not focused, you miss an opportunity to build the scene — and as an agent, you miss an opportunity to build relationships and ultimately, your business.

4. Toastmasters

[Toastmasters is an organization](#) that helps you find your voice. It allows you to cultivate your own courage and confidence, so you can be a better agent and a better leader.

With a focus on acquiring confidence while speaking, Toastmasters offers classes that help you “practice public speaking, improve your communication and build leadership skills.”

Some classes can even delve into motivational strategies, team collaboration and how to weave humor into your communications. Toastmasters also teaches persuasive influence, [presentation mastery](#) and strategic relationships — which as we know are all important skills.

Though it's headquartered in Colorado, the organization boasts membership that exceeds “364,000 in more than 16,200 clubs in 145 countries.” (Of course, due to COVID-19, Toastmasters clubs are now holding virtual meetings.)

All to say, these classes can help you nurture your confidence, become a better public speaker, and develop your communication and leadership skills which will only benefit your business and interactions with your clients.

5. Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP) classes

Another non-real estate class you need to invest in if you want to service your clients to the best of your abilities, is neuro-linguistic programming (NLP).

As outlined on [The Knowledge Academy Training](#), NLP “looks at the way that humans think and process thoughts, and how language and behavior are used to express these thoughts and interact with others.”

The training will help you identify observable behaviors associated with various personality styles and how to successfully connect with each one by customizing your communications — which is important when it comes to interacting with our real estate clients.

We have found that Evolved NLP Practitioner by [Avalon Empowerment](#) is an effective training program for “impact-driven leadership, empowerment and success.” As a brand we've worked with and trust, it offers all the traditional NLP practitioner tools plus evolved scripts and curriculum — all online with live interaction.

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