

mike flynn, CRS

John L. Scott Real Estate, University Place, Wash.

What's your niche?

My specialty — what I really work hard at — is client counseling. This way, I am able to work with clients who hold investment properties or want to change their property ownership position in some way. It's amazing how many folks own more real estate than just their primary residence. When they find out I am able to help with their entire portfolio, we usually do more business together.

What are your biggest professional challenges?

In our area, we have a lot of young and tech-savvy buyers. These people are extremely comfortable with the Internet, and that has changed some buyers' expectations. Folks now have access to a lot of raw data that all looks good. But that doesn't give them the whole story. The challenge for a REALTOR® is to turn all that data into solid information, meaningful to the client's situation, that can really help them buy a home or price one to sell promptly.

What are your greatest satisfactions?

Learning to read between the lines and to be patient with people. A lot is said about the importance of listening, but it is rarely regarded as a skill to be learned and mastered.

When folks come to you, they're usually looking for a specific type of solution: a real estate solution. They're often right; once in a while they're not. By being patient with them and *really* taking the time to figure out what it is they actually need, you can help them get clear about what they want to do. After all, it's the client who lives with the decisions in a real estate transaction, no matter who makes them. This sounds easy and logical. But I've come to realize that it's a real skill that takes effort to cultivate.

Explain the Washington REALTORS® "Quality of Life" program that you helped establish.

Quality of Life is our information and advocacy program designed to affect three things: public policy, politics and public opinion about real estate. We want to ensure that public policy provides for an adequate supply of

affordable housing, a sustainable economy and infrastructure to meet the demands of a rapidly growing population. Preserving our great natural environment is part of the program, too. We work hard to elect public officials who will help in our effort to balance these building blocks of the community.

We have had great success in the past four years with this effort. Housing affordability has become a priority in the legislature, and we stopped a concerted effort to increase the real estate transfer tax. We are becoming increasingly influential in local policy across the state.

You are a past president of the Tacoma-Pierce County Association of REALTORS® and the Washington REALTORS® Association. In 2008 you will serve as a regional vice president for the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®. How do these professional affiliations help you in your day-to-day work?

After we are grounded in our practice, some of us feel a natural impulse to use that knowledge in the larger world. We want to make improvements where we live and work. So to have been involved in these trade associations as a way to improve the world around me has been extremely satisfying and it has made me better able to serve my clients.

Besides that, for a lot of us, our day job just doesn't use all our skills. We want to do more. Using my knowledge and experience to better my community and industry completes the picture for me. What you earn makes you wealthy; what you give back makes you whole.

Why was it so important for you to attain the CRS Designation?

Before getting a license, I was involved in guerrilla real estate as a private investor with some other people. We were all poking around in the dark, pretending we knew up from down. Once I got into the business, however, I wanted to get a solid education and surround myself with people who were serious about their craft and staying at it for the long run. The CRS program has done that for me, and more. 🏠

● Years in the business: 15
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