



Nedra Jenkins' Story

Knowledge is the key to success in today's real estate environment, according to Nedra Jenkins, one of the top RE/MAX agents for over 20-years in South Orange County, California. Her bubbly enthusiasm can be seen in her attitudes about the real estate business, as well as her active commitment to the Orange County community and family.

"I really believe you need to go into any business 100 percent and not give up," Nedra says, now in her twentieth year in real estate. Based in RE/MAX's Monarch Beach office, Nedra has already received RE/MAX's highest honors before age 40. In 1997, she was inducted into the RE/MAX Hall of Fame. Only 10 percent of all RE/MAX agents reach this milestone internationally. Nedra is also a member of the 100 Percent Club, which invites only the top 1 percent of all RE/MAX agents. Last year, she achieved the Platinum Club designation awarded to less than 7% of all RE/MAX agents.

Much of Nedra's success can be attributed to her strong real estate marketing and sales skills and her genuine interest in other's needs, desires, and dreams for a home. Her vitality and passion for her work are the key ingredients to her success. She also credits her clients for their loyalty and trust they have placed in her over the years with their past and repeat real estate business.

Born and raised in the Colorado Rocky Mountains, Nedra graduated from the University of Colorado, Boulder, in 1979. There she met her future husband, Chris, now a CPA and Financial Advisors. After college, Nedra was hired by Multi-List/McGraw-Hill Real Estate Information Systems and soon relocated to Austin, Texas. This marked Nedra's first entry into the world of residential real estate.

"Multi-List/McGraw-Hill was one of the companies that automated the Multiple Listing Service (MLS)," Nedra recalls. She not only sold new computers, but also trained real estate agents to use McGraw-Hill's new online MLS. Unfortunately, she chuckles, many of them rejected the idea, preferring then to carry their heavy MLS directories. During her tenure she also chose to transfer to the milder climate of Huntington Beach.



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A gold square containing the name "Nedra Jenkins" in a white, elegant cursive script.

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About five years later, Nedra decided to further her career by, joining TRW Real Estate Information Systems. This TRW division was also on the cutting edge in developing new computer services, Nedra says. "We were beginning to offer automated services to all parts of the real estate industry, including lenders, title companies and major agency franchises," she explains. "We were doing beta testing on several online services designed to streamline the whole real estate transaction." She began in sales, covering San Diego County, and was later promoted to manager of the marketing department.

Nedra believes this marketing experience provided the foundation of many of the strategies she uses today. She was responsible for managing and training customer service reps, as well as introducing new products and services, creating advertising and coordinating promotional activities at all conventions.

Despite enjoying this fast paced environment, Nedra began to feel dissatisfied. "Even though I was moving up in the corporate world, I was missing the sales side," she says. "I realized that I loved organizing conventions, because there I was with customers, having personal contact with them instead of being in an office, where I was separated. Being in management was a challenge, but I longed for the excitement of being in the field again."

She decided to enter the University of Southern California's Extension program and earned her broker's license in 1984, at first to boost her credentials at TRW. "I just worked on the weekends, when I had time," Nedra says. However, soon she decided to take the plunge and became a full-time REALTOR®. She found herself with three properties in escrow before she even left the company, based on referrals from friends.

"I knew right away it was the right decision," Nedra recalls. "It just came. I knew nothing about farming, but I did a lot of door knocking." Like many first-timers, Nedra found her first transaction the most difficult, but also "hilarious." It was a three-way short sale, so she had to work with three lenders "I didn't know any better, so I drove down and asked to meet with the vice-president of the real estate loan department," she recalls. "I assumed you had to go to the top to get something done. He was so shocked I think he just forgave the note."



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Once Nedra decided to move beyond weekend dabbling in the market, she linked up with RE/MAX in South Orange County, based on the suggestion of her mother, also a RE/MAX agent in Colorado Springs, Colorado. She instantly “clicked” with the whole RE/MAX concept. When the Mission Viejo office split a few years later, she moved to the Monarch Beach location.

Like most new agents, Nedra started with cold calling and open houses to build a customer base. She set some goals, the first of which was “to sell one house a week,” Nedra says laughingly. She still sets higher, but realistic, goals for herself each year. “I am a really driven individual and tremendously oriented towards measurable results,” she adds.

She tracks her business by using the PRFA method, cataloging business based on past clients, referrals, farm clients or Advertising calls. “Every quarter I stop and look at what I have sold so I can see where my business is coming from and where I need to focus,” Nedra says. Direct mail to both new and former clients has always been a key priority. Currently, most of her business is from repeat clients and their referrals. Now she is investing in the Internet in order to provide greater exposure to her listings and provide an avenue for buyers to be kept informed on the changing Orange County real estate marketplace.

Nedra also takes pride in “target marketing” each property listing based on its strengths and potential buyers. “I treat a home like a product,” she explains. “Each one has to be marketed differently.” For example, for a high-end listing, the target market and direct mail is completely different than for a home in a retirement area. “There is a buyer for every home,” she says. “The key is staying excited and positive.”

In addition to the property, Nedra spends hours evaluating its target audience. For example, she recently listed a \$1 million home across from San Clemente Hospital. So she looked at the statistics and conducted a direct mail campaign to the doctors working in the hospital. In another case, she had a listing in Laguna Hills and discovered in her research that many new residents were coming from Irvine. So she did heavy marketing into the Woodbridge area, and it paid off. Nedra’s ability to think out the box is another key to her success.





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Nedra is also unique in that she markets directly to other agents. "We are what makes things happen, so we have to work together," she says. More than just handing out brochures, she does "whatever it takes." For example, she often hosts "previews" of her listings, offering catered food, prize drawings and music tailored to the style of the property. "I go all out," she says. "It's fun and it gives agents a chance to see each other and discuss our current properties and clients. At the same time, it presents the property in a positive light."

She recently hosted a major event introducing a three-compound estate in San Juan Capistrano to other brokers. It started with a three-week direct mailing of personal invitations to agents selling \$1 million homes or above. Over 75 agents came to the gala. "You have to work on their emotions because real estate is a very emotional thing," Nedra says. "Agents can get as emotional as buyers."

Even though her current territory is coastal estates, much of Nedra's business is also inland South Orange County because of her start in Saddleback Valley. She believes this helps her determine her clients' real needs and desires. She also often works with relocation companies and large corporations to move employees from other parts of the country. One year she sold homes to three executives from the same company near each other in Coto de Caza and Dove Canyon. Currently Nedra is active in the gated golf course community of Shady Canyon where homes start at \$3 million and run to \$15 million.

If Nedra has a weakness, she says it's her difficulty with delegating. She has no assistant because she likes working directly with her clients. "People want one-on-one communication," she says. "When clients list their home with you or select you to help them find a property, they expect to work with you".

While Nedra says she usually works seven days a week and is never far from her pager, she particularly appreciates the flexibility she has working in real estate sales. "My goal is to be the best that I can be in both my personal and business life," she says. "If I want to volunteer at school or in my children's activities, I do it and work around it."



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The Jenkins are definitely an active, outdoors-loving family. Nedra particularly enjoys traveling with her 17-year-old daughter, Ashley, to gymnastics competitions and with her 15-year-old son, Justin, to tennis events where he competes at the highest level . She splits these trips with her husband, who owns his own accounting and financial consulting practice in Laguna Hills. Tennis is also on the calendar whenever possible.

“What’s most important to me is not just to be successful, but to feel as though I have been able to help and encourage other people, “ Nedra says. Today some of her best friends are past clients. “ This is the real key to her long term success in residential real estate.



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