

RAISING THE BAR

with **CLARE FLETCHER TRAINING**



Clare Fletcher Training (CFT) is today one of the foremost training providers serving the UK property industry. With a client list that reads like a who's who of the most successful and respected names in estate agency, the company provides first-class development programmes for customers from Newcastle to Penzance and from Colchester to Cardigan Bay.

First established in 2002, CFT was restructured and relaunched last year with the backing of Russell Manning of Manning Stainton. Since then, success has already prompted a substantial expansion in training capacity, and further growth on track for the coming year.

This level of success, and the widespread respect in which CFT is held within the industry, are founded on one deceptively simple premise: that it is only by getting the basics right, and by focusing on genuinely improving the customer experience, that real success can be assured. Or, as Clare herself puts it: "Basically, the only way you're ever going to be able to justify charging 5-star fees is by consistently delivering 5-star service."

Clare began her career in estate agency in the late 80s, in a market suffering from negative equity and rising interest rates. From the beginning, it was clear to her that even the most gifted salesperson needs a strong customer service ethic to order to gain loyalty, repeat business and recommendation. "It's hard for any estate agent to prove that they can sell houses faster or for higher prices," she explains. "This must all be taken on trust by the seller. What can be demonstrated and measured, however,

is the level of service and expertise provided for customers at all stages of the property transaction."

As a result, all Clare Fletcher Training development programmes are designed to "raise the bar" in terms of customer experience. However, this is not simply confined to the public-facing aspects of the business. It's just as important to ensure that the highest standards of professionalism also apply throughout - so the company's courses cover every aspect of estate agency business, from applicant registration to management training and teamwork.

Aside from their unique focus on enhancing the customer experience, the other major factor that sets CFT programmes apart from those offered by other industry trainers is Clare's insistence on making learning fun. "I have been on so many courses where the trainer simply uses endless slides and talks at the delegates," she recalls ruefully. "As soon as they switch on the dreaded Powerpoint, you know you're in for a hard time. In such cases, I invariably struggle to remember much after as little as 2 days - except how many times I looked at my watch!"

Unsurprisingly, Powerpoint presentations play no part whatsoever in Clare's programmes. Instead, a unique and refreshing blend of humour, down-to-earth common sense - even the occasional bit of magic! - is used to communicate the key messages in a way that keeps people amused, engaged and receptive to learning new skills and insights, almost without realising it. Real life analogies are used to encourage understanding and illustrate how

the lessons learned can be applied back at the office. "Involving people in group activities and discussions helps ensure that everyone stays interested - and awake!" says Clare. "In fact, most people are pleasantly surprised at how quickly the time passes, how much ground has been covered - and how much they have retained."

A logical outcome of Clare's passion for professionalism and service excellence in estate agency is her active involvement in campaigning for licensing - to which end she is due to meet David Cameron in the autumn in order to gain support for a future government-approved training standard. Clare believes that estate agents who take the trouble to invest in training should receive public recognition for their efforts - and many of the most respected names in the industry already agree with her!

If you would like to find out more about **Clare Fletcher Training**, call **Clare** personally on **07793 317467**, or visit our website - **www.clarefletchertraining.co.uk**. ↑



Clare Fletcher