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Why You Should Video Shop Your Sales Team

John Q. Topseller had been leasing for one apartment community or another for more than 10 years. Always a leader in leasing performance, he had earned the respect and admiration of his peers and superiors alike. When he first saw his leasing presentation on video as captured by a mystery shopper, he was surprised that he had leased as many apartments as he did. “I couldn’t believe how I looked and conducted myself through the eyes of the potential resident”. John was not the only one who felt this way. More and more companies across America are investing in video shops to improve their leasing effort. “I easily improved my closing ratio after seeing the opportunities I was letting slip by. After watching the videos of myself, it was almost like being able to rewind the presentation and do it right the next time”, said Topseller.

Companies of all sizes benefit from self-critiquing via video recordings of their actual presentations. Videos are powerful training tools best utilized to identify weaknesses and enhance training procedures to eliminate them. While the resulting critiques may seem negative in nature, video shops also highlight positive aspects of employee performance, such as welcoming body language, expressions, greetings, appropriate conversations, questions, etc. Even without a closed sale, the Leasing Professional may have offered a fine presentation and that will be reflected in the video. Also, good leasing people tend to appreciate the efforts and expense by management to help them become better producers.

A recent study by the University of Illinois showed that 68 % of buyers bought because of the sales agent. On the other end of the spectrum, the customer will find something wrong with the product if he finds something wrong with the salesperson.

Traditionally some Leasing Professionals have resented mystery shopping. Usually they are underperformers. Video shops should be used precisely in these cases to help improve their performance. Those who learn from their first video shop often look forward to the next one in order to gauge their improvement, thus increasing their confidence.

Results before and after shops can often be identified immediately. When leasing people know that video shops will be conducted, accountability is automatically promoted within the leasing staff. They suspect that anyone who walks through the leasing office door could potentially be carrying or wearing a hidden camera. The mere possibility that it could be the next person through the door forces the Leasing Professional to give their best performance.

Video shops have been particularly useful for independent leasing trainers. They can review the video, do a quicker and more specific evaluation of the leasing team and then implement a more precise and effective training program. This saves time and has shown to yield better results than generic training for the entire team.

In summary, Video shops provide a comprehensive, objective glimpse not only of a Leasing Professional's performance, but also of the general physical setting in which the shop is conducted. For example, a national auto parts chain was shocked to see various violations of store appearance policy that were casually observed in its Video shops. This chain prohibited its employees from hanging anything on the counter pegboard that was not for sale. The videos showed clearly that instead of tools, spark plugs and air filters hanging on the pegboard, the employees had opted to hang tape guns, personal jackets and extension cords. Put simply, Video shops are incomparable training tools and gauges of adherence to company policies and procedures.

For more information on Video shops, you can visit our website at www.epmsonline.com or contact Dave Russell.

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Ellis, Partners in Mystery Shopping

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