



How to Find Real Estate Clients

Where the Opportunities Actually Live

A practical guide to recognizing conversations, building trust, and creating real estate opportunities in the places you already go.



Career College Group



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Where Does Real Estate Business Come From?

It is one of the most common questions asked by new agents, experienced agents, and students preparing to enter the industry: **How do I actually find clients?**

Most real estate business starts much earlier than people realize. It begins in ordinary conversations — when someone mentions that their home is becoming too small, their commute is becoming difficult, their landlord is frustrating them, or their parents may need a different living arrangement.

These comments may not sound like real estate opportunities. The person speaking may not even think of themselves as a buyer, seller, landlord, tenant, or investor yet. But they have started thinking about change. **That is where the opportunity begins.**

Why Agents Misunderstand Opportunity

Most agents wait for visible leads — but the real opportunity starts weeks or months earlier.

Where Conversations Begin

Five environments where trust and visibility develop naturally in your everyday life.

How to Recognize Clues

Learn to hear the signals people give you before they ever search for an agent.

A Weekly Plan

A simple, repeatable system you can begin using immediately.



The goal is not to turn every conversation into a transaction. The goal is to become more aware of the business that may already be developing around you.



Stop Asking "Where Do I Find Leads?"

Most new agents begin with the same question: **"Where do I find leads?"** It sounds practical. It sounds like the question a serious real estate professional should be asking. But the question begins too late.

The word *lead* usually describes someone who is already taking visible action — searching for listings, requesting a home evaluation, speaking with a lender. By that point, they may have been thinking about real estate for weeks or months. During that time, they may already have:

What They've Already Done

- Asked friends or family for recommendations
- Noticed agents in their neighbourhood
- Followed local market discussions
- Read online reviews
- Started forming impressions about who seems credible
- Had an informal conversation with another agent

A Better Question to Ask

If you wait until the person officially becomes a lead, you may arrive after another agent has already started building the relationship.

Ask instead: **"Where do conversations begin?"**

- A complaint about rent
- A comment about a difficult commute
- A discussion about a growing family
- A concern about aging parents
- A question about what a home might be worth

Do not wait only for people who are already looking for an agent. Pay attention to the conversations that happen before they reach that stage.



What Opportunity Really Means

The traditional definition of opportunity is easy to recognize — a referral, a form filled out, a buyer asking to see a property. These are real opportunities, but they are opportunities at their most visible stage. Everyone can see them. Everyone can compete for them.

Opportunity is repeated exposure in environments where trust forms.

Trust usually does not develop from one perfect conversation. Someone sees you more than once. They recognize your face. They remember your name. They notice that you are helpful, informed, calm, and comfortable talking about the local market without turning every interaction into a pitch.

The Passive Agent

Moves through the week without noticing much. Visits the same gym, coffee shop, school, grocery store. Hears someone mention rent, a renovation, a possible move — but the significance never registers. Continues waiting for a clear lead to appear.

The Intentional Agent

Moves through the same week with greater awareness. Does not force conversations. Does not treat every person as a prospect. Simply pays attention — notices familiar faces, remembers names, recognizes small comments about housing, family, work, and future plans.

- ✓ The difference is not always extra time or effort. The difference is attention. Once you begin looking for the early signs of real estate decisions, you start seeing what was already there.



Environment One: Everyday Places

The first source of opportunity is the places you already go. These environments are powerful because of repetition — the same people appear week after week, and brief interactions become conversations, and conversations become relationships.



Fitness & Wellness

Your gym, fitness class, yoga studio, or walking route. Regular faces become familiar, and familiar becomes trusted.



Your Regular Cafe

The barista knows your order. The regulars know your face. These are the seeds of real estate conversations.



School Pickup

Parents waiting at school drop-off and pickup are often thinking about space, commutes, and neighbourhoods.



Condo Lobby & Elevator

Your own building is a micro-community. Neighbours talk about their units, their landlords, and their plans.

Because these are casual settings, people are often less guarded. They may mention where they live, how long they have lived there, their commute, their landlord, their renovation plans, or a neighbourhood they would rather live in. These comments are not formal leads — they are clues.



Do not treat the gym, cafe, or school pickup like a prospecting event. The goal is not to enter the room with sales energy. The goal is to stop being invisible.



Environment Two: Community Anchors

Community anchors are places built around belonging, learning, service, or shared identity. These spaces are especially valuable because trust is already present — people have chosen to gather around a shared purpose, value, or local identity.

Community Centres & Libraries

Workshops, events, and programs draw engaged local residents who care about their neighbourhood.

Religious & Cultural Spaces

Deep trust already exists in these communities. Your consistent presence speaks louder than any advertisement.

Charity & Volunteer Organizations

Showing up to give back positions you as someone who contributes — not just someone who sells.

Neighbourhood Meetings & Block Parties

These are where people openly discuss housing affordability, who recently bought or sold, and who may be thinking about moving.

Real estate decisions are rarely only about a property. They are usually connected to a life change — a growing family, an aging parent, a young adult preparing to move out. Community spaces are often where those life changes are discussed before anyone begins formally searching for real estate help.

Participate. Do not prospect. Show up because you care about the community. People can usually tell when someone is genuinely involved and when someone is only looking for business.



Environment Three: Transaction-Adjacent Places

Transaction-adjacent environments are places where real estate may not be the official purpose, but property, housing, money, or renovation is already part of the conversation. You do not have to introduce real estate from a cold start — you are entering a thought process that is already underway.

Where These Conversations Happen

- Mortgage seminars and first-time buyer workshops
- Broker open houses and builder sales centres
- Pre-construction launches
- Home improvement stores
- Design and renovation showrooms
- Real estate investment meetups
- Bank and lending events

A Specific Opportunity: Realtor Day at a Bank

Build a genuine relationship with a mortgage advisor. Learn about their business. Meet for coffee. Refer people when appropriate.

Once trust has developed, there may be an opportunity to be hosted at the branch with a small table, banner, and informational materials. People entering the bank are already thinking about money, mortgages, and financial planning.

When your clients need mortgage guidance, you have a professional you know and trust. When the advisor's clients need real estate support, they know someone credible to recommend.



A useful answer, thoughtful question, or small piece of local knowledge may be enough to help someone remember you. Transaction-adjacent environments allow you to enter conversations already connected to property, money, or future plans.



Environment Four: Digital Communities

Digital communities are not the same as general social media marketing. They are online spaces that function like real communities — neighbourhood Facebook groups, condo and building groups, school parent groups, WhatsApp and Telegram groups, local subreddits, and community forums.

People often speak more openly online than they do in person. These conversations reveal what people in your community are thinking about — common concerns, local frustrations, questions people do not know how to answer, and misunderstandings about the market.

✗ What Does Not Work

- Posting listings in general community groups
- Leading with your logo or headshot
- Commenting "DM me" on every question
- Turning every discussion into a sales pitch
- Appearing only when you want something
- Treating the group like an advertising channel

✓ What Works

- Answering real questions clearly
- Sharing useful local information
- Being respectful and consistent
- Helping without expecting an immediate return
- Correcting misinformation politely
- Showing up before you ever need anything

Most members of an online group may never comment. But they are still reading. They notice who is useful, who is informed, who is generous with information, and who appears only to advertise. A helpful answer today may not produce a client tomorrow — but it can create recognition and credibility that lasts.

Digital communities reward patience. Consistent usefulness usually creates more trust than frequent self-promotion.



Environment Five: Situational Moments

The fifth environment is not a location. It is a moment. These moments appear in ordinary social situations — weddings, birthday parties, family dinners, holiday gatherings, school events, barbecues, sporting events, and casual coffee with a friend.

Because these settings do not look professional, agents often stop paying attention. But they are often the places where people speak most honestly.

"Our place is getting really tight."

"My landlord is driving me crazy."

"We have been thinking about moving."

"We do not know if this is the right time."

"My parents are getting older."

"We are not sure what to do with the family home."

None of these comments sounds like a formal lead. Every one of them may be an opening. The person may be describing a problem that will eventually require a housing decision.

- ❑ One agent hears the comment and changes the subject. Another agent notices that the person may be facing a real estate decision, even if the decision is still months away. Your job is not to force the conversation — your job is to recognize that the conversation may already have begun.



When Someone Gives You a Clue

Agents often make one of two mistakes when someone mentions a possible housing need.

Mistake One: Freezing

The agent worries about sounding pushy. They say nothing. They change the subject. They let the comment pass. The person may later speak with someone else simply because that person was willing to continue the conversation.

Mistake Two: Becoming Too Aggressive

The agent immediately offers a market evaluation, asks for contact information, or starts promoting their services. A casual comment becomes a sales pitch. The person becomes guarded.

A better approach uses three simple steps:

1

1. Acknowledge

Respond like a person before responding like an agent.
"That sounds frustrating."
"That sounds like a big change." Show that you listened.

2

2. Ask One More Question

Invite the person to explain.
"How long has that been going on?" "What is the hardest part right now?" One thoughtful question reveals more than an immediate pitch ever will.

3

3. Stay Curious

Do not rush. Do not immediately pull out a business card. Listen. Let the person explain what they are thinking. Your role may come up naturally.

Successful agents do not need to manufacture every opportunity. They recognize the opportunities already appearing in ordinary conversations and respond thoughtfully.



Better Conversations: The FORD Method

FORD is a simple framework for moving a conversation beyond surface-level small talk. It helps you learn more about the person without making the interaction feel like an interview.



F — Friends

"Who do you know here?" "Do you have family in the area?" "Are you originally from this neighbourhood?" These questions reveal roots, relationships, and local connections.



O — Occupation

"What do you do?" "Do you work from home?" "Has your work situation changed recently?" These questions may reveal location needs, lifestyle patterns, or future changes.



R — Recreation

"What do you do for fun?" "Are there activities you wish were closer to home?" These questions reveal what someone values in a neighbourhood or home.



D — Dreams

"What are you working toward?" "Where do you see yourself in five years?" "Is there anything you are hoping to change this year?" These questions reveal motivation, timing, and possible life transitions.

You do not need to ask every question. You do not need to move through the categories in order. The framework simply gives you a way to have richer, more natural conversations. Friends, work, recreation, and future goals often reveal the changes that eventually lead to a move.



Ask Questions That Reveal Timing

Many agents follow up with weak, general questions — "Just checking in," "How is everything?" These questions are polite, but they rarely reveal anything meaningful. The other person can answer with "Everything is fine" and the conversation ends.

Stronger, Specific Questions

- "What has changed since we last spoke?"
- "What is the one thing you would change about your current home?"
- "If you had to make a move this year, what would that look like?"
- "What would need to happen for you to seriously consider selling?"
- "Has anything changed in your situation during the last six months?"
- "What is making you hesitate right now?"

A Simple Timing Rule

Zero to Three Months: This is an active situation. The person may already be gathering information, comparing options, or preparing to act.

Three to Twelve Months: This may be closer than it appears. Timelines often accelerate when someone understands their options or when a life event becomes more urgent.

"We Are Just Watching": This is later, but still worth tracking. Do not pressure the person. Stay useful. Continue the relationship. Provide relevant information when appropriate.

Surface questions reveal very little. Specific questions reveal motivation, obstacles, and timing.



Language Shapes the Conversation

The words you use affect how clients feel about the market and about working with you. Consider the difference between these two descriptions.

"It Is a Slow Market"

This suggests that nothing is happening. It may cause clients to believe that there is no reason to act, explore, or even ask questions. It can push a possible decision farther away.

"It Is a Selective Market"

This suggests that opportunities still exist, but they may require more careful evaluation. It tells the client that conditions are different, not impossible. It positions you as someone who can help identify where the opportunities and risks may be.

People still relocate. Families still grow. Couples separate. Parents age. Estates are settled. Jobs change. Businesses open and close. Life continues in every market. Real estate activity may be distributed differently, but the reasons people move do not disappear.



Your role is not to create false urgency. Your role is to help clients understand the conditions accurately and make decisions with confidence. Choose language that explains the market rather than language that shuts the conversation down.



Do Not Chase. Attract.

Desperation is visible. Clients can often see it in an agent's tone, pace, body language, follow-up, discounting, or willingness to agree to anything simply to secure the deal. Even when the agent has experience, desperation can make them appear uncertain.

Position is also visible. An agent who is calm, informed, helpful, involved in the community, and knowledgeable about the market sends a different signal. People are more likely to trust someone who appears prepared, steady, and useful.

1

Be Hired Third

The natural result of being useful and known.

2

Be Known Second

Familiarity and trust built through consistent presence.

3

Be Useful First

The foundation of every lasting client relationship.

Every environment discussed in this guide supports that principle. Everyday environments create familiarity. Community anchors build trust. Transaction-adjacent spaces connect you with active topics. Digital communities allow you to demonstrate knowledge. Situational moments help you recognize real needs.

Your goal is not to pressure people into choosing you. Your goal is to become the kind of agent they already want to choose.



Your Weekly Intention Plan

The ideas in this guide become useful only when you apply them consistently. You do not need to redesign your entire business in one week. Begin with a simple, repeatable plan.



Choose One Everyday Environment

Pick one place you already visit. Show up consciously. Notice familiar faces. Start small conversations. Learn names. Pay attention to the topics people raise naturally.



Choose One Community Anchor

Attend one local event, workshop, meeting, fundraiser, or community activity. Participate genuinely. Do not arrive with a sales agenda. Focus on being useful and becoming part of the community.



Choose One Digital Community

Select one local group connected to your building, school, neighbourhood, or city. Contribute useful information several times during the week. Answer questions. Share local knowledge. Avoid advertising.



Have Five Real Estate Conversations

Aim for five meaningful conversations across the week — fewer than one per day. Do not force the subject. Listen for natural openings and ask thoughtful questions when they appear.



Track What You Hear

At the end of the week, write down who you spoke with, what they mentioned, any clues you noticed, what questions you asked, when you should follow up, and what you learned about your community.



Tracking helps you become more intentional. You may discover that one environment produces more natural conversations than another, or notice recurring concerns in a particular neighbourhood. Consistency allows small interactions to compound.



The Business Is Closer Than You Think

Building a lasting real estate business is not only about working harder. It is about working with more awareness, presence, and intention.

Your Gym

The opportunity may already be in the room where you work out every morning.

Your Community Centre

The volunteer event you attend every month may be where your next client is already showing up.

Your Bank Branch

The quick errand you ran last Tuesday may have placed you next to someone thinking about a mortgage.

Your Neighbourhood Group

The Facebook group you have quietly followed for two years may be where your credibility is already building.

A Family Dinner

The conversation that did not sound like business at all may have been the beginning of your next transaction.

Your job is not always to create business out of nothing. Your job is to recognize the business that may already be developing around you. Listen carefully. Notice the clues. Ask one more question. Be useful before asking for anything in return.

Real estate is not only about houses. It is about people, conversations, presence, and trust built one interaction at a time. Those are skills you can develop — and they can support you throughout your entire real estate career.



About This Ebook

This guide is based on the Career College Group presentation, **How to Find Real Estate Clients: Where the Opportunities Actually Live.**

It is designed for current real estate students, future students exploring the profession, and new agents beginning to build their businesses. The ideas focus on awareness, relationships, communication, and consistent participation in the environments where trust naturally develops.

Awareness

Recognize the early signs of real estate decisions in ordinary conversations.

Relationships

Build trust through repeated, genuine presence in the environments you already inhabit.

Communication

Use language, questions, and frameworks that open conversations rather than close them.

Consistency

Apply a simple weekly plan that compounds over time into a lasting client pipeline.

Watch the Webinar

Click the link or use the QR code to watch the webinar this ebook is based on:

<https://careercollegegroup.com/realestate/how-to-find-real-estate-clients/>



About the Author

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I started my real estate career about 12 years ago with a hands-on approach, learning everything I could about the industry, from the fine print in contracts to the people-first mindset needed to serve clients at a high level. Early on, I gained experience managing transactions, building relationships, and navigating the compliance side of the business. That foundation shaped how I lead today.

Over time, I moved into leadership roles, including Broker of Record and Director of Operations at several brokerages across Toronto. I've developed training programs, built systems for compliance and efficiency, and supported agents in both residential and commercial real estate. I have mentored and provided consultation to high producing teams, brokerage owners, and other industry professionals.

Today, I'm proud to serve as Director of Operations at The Agency, Brokerage, where we focus on luxury properties with values over \$10,000,000+. I manage compliance, training, onboarding, and day-to-day operations, ensuring the office runs smoothly and agents have the support they need to succeed.

I bring a mix of operational strategy, technical knowledge, and a strong belief in mentorship to every project I take on. Whether it's improving systems, coaching agents, or leading compliance, I aim to raise the bar, one interaction at a time.

For nearly five years, I also mentored and trained learners and educators as a Facilitator at Humber College, helping shape Ontario's real estate education landscape. That journey has continued with my current role as Lead Facilitator at Career College Group, where I help deliver RECO's real estate program to new aspiring agents across the province.

 I am excited to help you on this journey — from mastering the course material to developing the mindset and skills needed to thrive in the field. Expect a learning experience that's interactive, practical, and focused on your growth.

Take the Next Step in your Real Estate Training



Professional confidence grows faster when it is supported by practical training, structured learning, and real-world preparation. Strong communication habits, professional judgment, and client presence can all be developed through focused practice and guided education.

To learn more about Career College Group's real estate program, visit: careercollegegroup.com/realestate

You can also explore the program's flexible monthly payment option and learn more about how the training supports professional readiness from the very beginning.

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