



News You Can Use

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Get What You Want by Using the Right Words

Thanks to the marvel of modern-day technology, most of us are writing more than ever. Whether it's disputing a billing error or simply sending out a corporate email, it's essential to write compelling, clear and concise text. Following are some essential tips to achieve maximum results in minimum time:

1. Use the KISS Method: KISS stands for Keep It Simple, Stupid. George Orwell's rules for effective writing state that you should never use a long word when a short one would do, and you should avoid jargon and eliminate extra words whenever possible. By avoiding filler, fluff and other hyperbole the message is clear and easier to read.

2. Get the Goal in Mind: Before you begin writing, determine the main objective or goal of the message. People are bombarded with too much information, so make it easy for readers to understand the main purpose by presenting it early in the message. Support the position with relevant facts, figures and data, then provide an actionable ending with complete contact information.

3. Read and Review: Do a last-minute review by carefully reading through the entire text prior to printing or sending. Spelling, synonyms and syntax errors, incorrect contact information, or other simple mistakes can destroy a message and reflect negatively on the sender. When sending messages by email, check the recipient list and use a relevant title for the subject line. It makes email easier to find and helps prevent unpleasant surprises.

Considering a New Mortgage? Get These Essential Tips



Mortgages are getting ever more complex. And if you don't have the right advice, you could end up making an expensive mistake.

To save yourself potentially thousands of dollars, get my free guide, "How to Choose a Mortgage Loan That's Right for You."

Just call me at 1-888-693-1439 and I'll send it right out to you.

3 Myths about Money That Make You Feel Poor

People, it seems, often have misconceptions about money.

While many of the things people actually believe are just plain wrong, some are detrimental to a person's financial health.

Following are some of the most popular money myths and a few simple tips to improve your financial attitude - and fiscal outlook:

1. Money Is Scarce

Surprisingly, this is probably one of the most common money myths in existence. Fact is that money is simply a unit of exchange for those things that are scarce, such as time and commodities. You can create more money by providing value for someone who is willing to pay for it.

2. Money Is the Root of All Evil

This often-quoted myth is erroneously attributed to the Bible, but even that is incorrect. The actual quote is: "The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil." The quote is from the book of 1 Timothy in the New Testament. Money itself is neutral. It can be used for good or bad, depending upon the priorities of the person using it.

3. It's All about Money, He Who Dies with the Most Toys Wins, Get Rich or Die Trying:

All these sayings reflect an attitude where money is the ultimate goal in life, but it's rarely that simple. Wealthy people tend to exhibit as much, or even more, depression, sadness and feelings of insignificance. So, as it turns out, "money can't buy love" might be a more appropriate money-related quote.

What You Need to Know about Second Home Financing

The changing lifestyles of Canadians are affecting how and where we live. Fortunately, mortgage lenders and insurers have created mortgages that meet these needs.

The lowest possible down-payment is 5% of the purchase price. Down-payments can come from a number of sources and can include savings, Registered Retirement Savings Plan withdrawals, borrowed funds, gifts, sweat equity and cash-back mortgages from the lender.

Different lenders have different guidelines, and a mortgage professional can help you choose the right lender.

The source and amount of down-payment affect the minimum credit score the mortgage lender will allow. If the mortgage is high-ratio, the

minimum credit score is 620. If you're using nontraditional sources of down-payment, the minimum credit score is 650.

Debt service ratios are a major consideration for these mortgages. If your score is less than 680, the maximum debt service ratio is a gross debt service (GDS) ratio of 35% and a total debt service (TDS) ratio of 42%. If your score is 680 or over, GDS ratio doesn't apply and the maximum TDS ratio is 44%.

The property requirements for a second family home are that it be located in Canada and be suitable and available for year-round living. The last requirement is that when the mortgage closes, the property must be lived in by you or a relative on a rent-free basis.

Quick Quiz

Each month I'll give you a new question.

Just email me at mymortgage@giuseppestrazzeri.com or call 1-888-693-1439 for the answer.

A riddle for you this month: What thing can you keep after giving it to someone else?

Why Not Pass Me to a Friend?

If you've enjoyed this newsletter and found its information useful, please pass it to a neighbor, friend or co-worker.

And if you have any comments about it, don't forget to give me a call or send me an email!

Are You Managing Your Finances Wisely?

Are you paying too much for your mortgage?

Is your money being invested wisely?

If you are curious about how you could save money every month, why not see if I can help you?

Just give my office a call for a no-fuss, professional consultation.

I will not try to push you into making any quick decisions and I will not waste your time.

I will just give you the honest facts about your financial situation.

And maybe I will save you a few dollars along the way!

Just give my office a call at 1-888-693-1439 to arrange an appointment.

Alternatively, stop by at the office. The address is on the back page of this newsletter.

Useful Tips for around the House

- Pick up broken glass shards with a wet cotton ball. It can collect even the smallest of pieces.
- To retrieve something from a heat register or under the fridge, put an empty paper towel roll over the vacuum attachment. It can be bent or flattened to get into narrow spaces.
- Plumbers suggest turning off the water to each toilet twice a year to ensure that the taps move with ease. If you don't plan ahead, the faucets may let you down during your next toilet emergency.
- Ease wax off carpet by placing a paper bag over the wax and ironing it with an iron set on medium heat. It comes right up.

Big-Screen Quiz

What movie is this line from?

"1964. When America was at war with itself."

What disease did Sean Connery find a cure for in Medicine Man?

Which "Friend" played baseball with a chimp in Ed?

Who played Albert Brooks' mother in Mother?

Which actor's real name was Marion Morrison?

Who starred in the Canadian movie Rubberface?

What 1951 film co-starred Vivien Leigh, Marlon Brando and Kim Hunter?

(Answers: Mississippi Burning, cancer, Matt LeBlanc, Debbie Reynolds, John Wayne, Jim Carrey, A Streetcar Named Desire)

The Pros and Cons of Refinancing Your Home

Mortgage rates are low and property values are good, so it may be a good time to think about refinancing your home.

Many people refinance their homes to get lower interest rates, pay off debts with higher interest rates, invest in Registered Retirement Savings Plans (RRSPs), get a down-payment for a property, pay tuition for children or grandchildren, buy a car or recreational vehicle, or do renovations. The maximum loan-to-value percentage for a refinance mortgage is 90%.

The Costs of Refinancing

The costs of refinancing your home will include lawyer's fees, title searches, title insurance, registration of the new

mortgage and taxes. An appraisal may be necessary. The payout penalty of your current mortgage can often be a large cost. You can find the prepayment terms and penalties in your mortgage contract. Your current mortgage lender can tell you or your mortgage agent the cost of paying out the mortgage.

The Benefits of Refinancing

Now that you know the costs, it's time to look at the advantages. Only you can decide if the cost of refinancing is worth it. When refinancing, many people lower their monthly bills and improve their monthly cash flow. Cutting monthly debt payments will reduce stress and give you the freedom to make other choices.

Using the equity in your home to top up your RRSP may trigger a tax rebate for more than the cost of refinancing, while boosting your retirement income.

Using the equity in your home for large purchases means you get a better interest rate than if you financed the purchase through other means.

Other uses of equity include helping your children or grandchildren with tuition, buying a second home, or renovating your current place of residence.

Talking with the right professionals will help you make an informed decision.

Millions to Take Part in Earth Day

April 22 is the 40th anniversary of Earth Day.

The special day was founded in 1970 by Gaylord Nelson, a U.S. senator from Wisconsin, to shake up the American political establishment and force the issue of the environment onto the national agenda.

In 1990, two million Canadians joined 200 million people in 141 nations in celebrating the first International Earth Day.

In Canada, Earth Day has grown into Earth Week and even Earth Month to accommodate the profusion of events and projects. They range from large public events, such as Victoria's Earth Walk (5,000 participants), Edmonton's Earth Day Festival at Hawrelak Park (30,000 participants), and Oakville, Ontario's Waterways Clean-up (2,000 participants) to the thousands of small, private events staged by schools, employee groups and community groups.

To learn how to participate, visit www.earthday.ca to sign up for more information or to register your own organized event.

A Facelift for the Empire State Building

The Empire State Building in New York City turns 80 this year and will undergo a restoration.

Once renovations are completed, visitors will be treated to a more energy-efficient and environmentally friendly vista, thanks to an overhaul of the windows, ventilation system and instrumentation that's expected to cut energy costs by 38% per year for annual savings of more than \$4 million.

Open vistas, increased space and lots of lighting will completely transform small offices into ultra-lush spaces.

A complete restoration of the original Art Deco lobby is planned, complete with marble concierge desk and celestial-themed ceiling mural.

Everything from a Starbucks to a wine bar will be included in the renovation.

Worth Quoting

April, thanks to April Fool's Day, is Humour Month. Here are some quotes about that funniest of subjects.

Humour is just another defence against the universe.

Mel Brooks

Humour is a rubber sword - it allows you to make a point without drawing blood.

Mary Hirsch

A sense of humour is just common sense, dancing.

Clive James

The love of truth lies at the root of much humour.

Robertson Davies

Humour is by far the most significant activity of the human brain.

Edward De Bono

Humour is also a way of saying something serious.

T. S. Eliot

Recipe: Cheesy Bruschetta

- Good-quality crusty bread, in thick slices
- Sun-ripened tomatoes or cherry tomatoes, chopped
- Basil
- Sun-dried tomato paste
- Parmesan cheese, thinly sliced or grated
- Clove of garlic, peeled
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Balsamic vinegar
- Salt and pepper

Lightly toast the bread until light brown around the edges.

Halve the clove of garlic and lightly smear it over the bread.

Spread a thin layer of the sun-dried tomato paste over the bread, and then sprinkle or lay the cheese in a thin layer on top. Grill the bread in a toaster oven.

Mix the chopped tomatoes with torn-up basil leaves. Season.

Take the bread out of the toaster oven when the cheese has completely melted and turned slightly brown. Top with the tomato mixture.

Drizzle some extra virgin olive oil and add a dash of balsamic vinegar.

Thanks for reading! If you'd like to tell me what you think about this newsletter, or if you're thinking of buying or selling real estate, please get in touch.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

1-888-693-1439

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Sudoku instructions: Complete the 9x9 grid so that each row, each column, and each of the nine 3x3 boxes contains the digits 1 through 9. Contact me for the solution!