Memo

To: Professor Catherine Flynn

From: Michael Carnahan, Student

Date: February 1, 2015

Subject: Request for Permission to Pursue Research to Improve Meeting Attendance

INTRODUCTION

I write today to request your permission to research solutions that will enable me to make recommendations to a local Re/Max real estate franchise so it can better engage its employees by enabling meetings and trainings to be conducted through online, interactive technologies. In order to properly investigate the options available and to make the best recommendations to the company, I will have to research the positives and the negatives of electronic meetings, such as how challenges may be encountered when implementing such changes (Adie, 2010).

BACKGROUND

As a licensed real estate agent working with this particular franchise I have observed that the monthly meetings are not well attended. These meetings are used as a vehicle to share important industry information and to make certain the agents are sharing their concerns and questions with the owners. Additionally, the owners sometimes provide educational opportunities as part of the monthly meetings and on other occasions. Many agents are not attending the meetings and trainings, and according to Dorie (2014), the owners are wasting valuable resources. These resources could have a positive impact on the company’s agents, but the agents are missing these opportunities.

The primary reason for agents not participating in meetings is inconvenience. The company has multiple locations around the Dallas Metropolitan area, and its agents live throughout this area, so it is not always convenient for them to attend a meeting that might be held over an hour away. Agents might have other important obligations for that day, such as showing homes to a client. In this case, the combined time spent driving and attending the meeting might interfere with the timing of the showings. Agents are compensated exclusively on a commission basis, so an agent is more likely to skip the meeting to take care of the client so he or she can earn a commission.

ELECTRONIC MEETINGS

Many organizations are taking advantage of a variety of electronic communications devices and software platforms to engage their employees in a convenient and efficient manner (Dorie, 2014). They use these tools for meetings, training classes, and dissemination of information, enabling them to better share and collect information in much less time, saving the firm money while having the desired impact.

It is my intention to research how firms are currently using these options so I can find the ones that are best suited to meet the needs of Re/Max. I will consider any negatives that are discovered so I can help the company avoid these issues. Smith (2014) suggests that companies should consider solutions to potential negatives prior to implementing online meetings.

OBJECTIVES

If the company is able to create new meeting and learning opportunities, it should find that more agents are engaged and willing to participate. This will allow the company to save time and money, and it will help ensure that the information and resources are readily available to the agents. Ideally, this would mean a thoroughly prepared and trained staff to assist clients and to provide these clients with excellent, informed service.

Millar (2015) shows how online collaboration provides an opportunity to better engage and train agents, and to learn from them, while creating efficiency in meetings and trainings. By properly researching and evaluating options I will be able to create a document that will allow me to make clear and concise recommendations to Re/Max on how it can utilize electronic meetings and online education tools to increase participation.

REQUEST

For all of these reasons, I ask that you approve my request for permission to pursue research on this issue. I am available to discuss this with you further and to answer any questions. I may be reached by phone, at 555-123-4567, and by email, at michaelcarnahan@gmail.com. Thank you for your time.

References

Adie, L. (2010). Developing consistency in teacher judgment formation through online meeting Centres. *Journal of Learning Design*, 3(2), 14-26.

Dorie, L. (2014). Mitigate the high cost of unproductive meetings. *Credit Union Times*, 25(45), 12.

Millar, B. (2015). Making the most of virtual collaboration. *Forbes.*  Retrieved from http://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesinsights/2015/01/19/virtual-collaboration-tools-are-not-intuitive/2/

Smith, R. S. (2014). Collaborative bandwidth: Creating better virtual meetings. *Organization Development Journal*, 32(4), 15-35.