

LAKESHORE APARTMENT ASSOCIATION
PO BOX 1312
SHEBOYGAN, WI 53082

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

LAKESHORE APARTMENT ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



The Lakeshore Apartment Association publishes this newsletter for its members. Information included was obtained from sources deemed to be reliable and accurate. No warranty or representation is made as to the accuracy thereof

and is subject to correction. Members are invited to submit articles and ideas for publication. Items are to be submitted by the 30th of each month prior to publication.

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<http://laa.rentals/>

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We are honored to have our new Sherriff, Cory Roeseler as this month's guest speaker. Sherriff Roeseler will be informing us on his view of the county and the role of the department in evictions. This will be a meeting you will want to attend. Bring a fellow landlord as a guest to this exciting evening.

Notes from the Monthly City meeting::

Mayor's office:

No more street assessments on paving streets in the city of Sheboygan. Please see the article in the Sheboygan Press.

Code enforcement:

Now with spring being here code enforcement will be going thru the neighborhoods not only by driving but also block by block on foot.

No cars parked on unpaved areas. No Gravel, yard or pavers. See 1967 zoning ordinance. Owner of vehicle (s) will get a ticket along with property owner.

Bushes, trees and un-kept yards will catch the attention of code enforcement first then they will look and dig deeper. Be aware of your property and its outward appearance.

Fences and garages. Any sign of deteriorating.

Electrical Inspector:

Brad Schumacher is being trained and groomed for the Electrical inspector when Mark Sommers retires in June 2018.

Landlord Training:

April 24th 2018 at the Police Department training room. 5:30-9:30pm. many landlords including your board members have attended this in the past and have felt it is worthwhile. Roger will be one of the speaker. I encourage you to mark it on your calendar. Pre-registration is \$10 payable to the city.

Rock the Block:

Working with Habitat for Humanity and sponsored in part by Alliant Energy. Going thru the neighborhood house by house.

Receive a door prize for each guest you bring to our monthly meetings.

Your calls, texts and/or e-mails are always welcome.
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Respectfully yours,

Jim Longo

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Gary Sixel 920-565-3071

General Meeting Date:

April 19th, 2018 Time: 7:00 p.m.

Place: Lakeshore Lanes Basement

Board Meeting Date:

April 26th TBD

THE LANDLORD'S ULTIMATE 34-STEP PROPERTY MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST

BY ELIZABETH FAIRCLOTH | BIGGERPOCKETS.COM



Over the past 10 years of managing properties, we have learned a lot, had successes, and have made mistakes along the way. Over the last three years, we have grown significantly and have gone from managing 30 units to managing 100 units. Along with the growth of adding units, we have added team members.

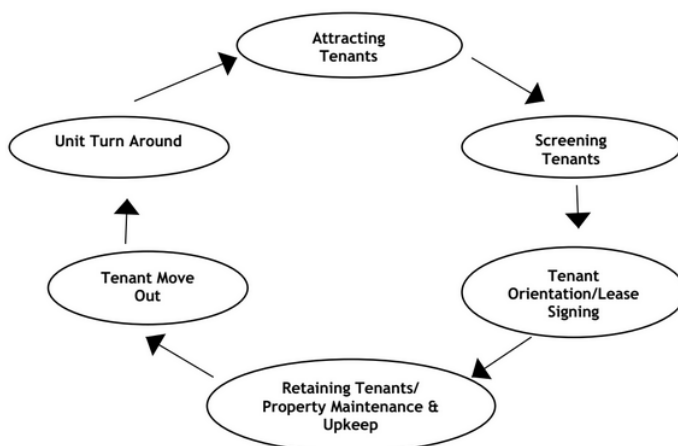
There are many people who help in the property management side of our business. As a result of having multiple people working in this process, we have realized the importance of tightening up our property management systems. For the last few months, I have been neck deep in reviewing how we currently manage properties. I have been helping make improvements and changes where needed.

Specifically, I have been working on the following areas:

- Processes/procedures
- Forms/checklists to support processes
- Proper training & inspection to ensure these new processes are happening

Ultimately, I am creating a “property management manual” that will include all of our processes,

checklists, and training procedures. I thought it would be helpful to share with you the “tenant life cycle” flow chart that we use.



Below I have listed all the steps needed for each of these areas. I hope the following checklist helps you improve your internal processes of managing property; that way, you'll have the right systems in place to support your growth.

THE ULTIMATE 34-STEP PROPERTY MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST

ATTRACTING TENANTS

1. Determine ahead of time your "rental rates" (establish high and low rates).
2. Create an unique rental ad that stands out.
3. Take pictures with a great camera (not just with your phone).
4. Create flyers with unit information and your contact information.
5. Market your unit online (Craigslist, Postlets, vFlyer, local area websites).
6. Market your unit offline ("For Rent" signs, etc.).
7. Schedule showings or open houses (we have traditionally scheduled one on one showings, but we are moving away from this strategy and implementing open houses instead).

SCREENING TENANTS

8. Complete phone screen questionnaire (prescreen BEFORE showing unit).
9. Complete showing of unit.
10. Follow up with interested parties.
11. Have prospective tenants complete Rental Application (we charge \$35 to cover our cost).
12. Process a criminal, credit, and background check.

13. Reach out to previous landlord to ask questions about prospective tenant.

14. If landlord will not answer questions over the phone, send a landlord verification form for them to fill out and fax back to you.

15. Make decision based on your rental standards (be consistent).

16. If accepted, reach out to new tenant to schedule move in date/lease signing meeting.

17. If declined, send a standard letter declining them. File the application and denial letter in a safe place in case they ever apply again (which does happen!).

NEW TENANT ORIENTATION

18. Meet with new tenant to complete the *Lease Signing Checklist*, which includes:

- The lease: signed & initialed on each page (always a good idea to have two people reviewing this document to ensure nothing has been missed)
- A copy of Driver's Licenses of all occupants of the unit
- Security Deposit (we typically collect one and half month's rent)
- First month's rent
- Signing of the "Utility Transfer Agreement" (tenant agrees to move over the utilities before move-in)
- Providing a "Truth in Renting" book to tenants (we do this in NJ and have them initial that they received it from us; this probably varies by each state)
- Initialing a "Lead Based Paint Notification" & providing a "Lead Based Paint Booklet" to tenant
- Initialing "Move Out Charges" document
- Filling out a "Tenant Emergency Contact Information" document
- Signing a "Pet Agreement" if applicable
- Providing "Property Management Team" contact information

- Signing W-9 form (form that is sent to bank along with security deposit)
- Handing over keys

19. Office process & checklist:

- Enter all tenant information into your rental management system (we use Rent Manager) — i.e. tenant contact information, security deposit, rent, etc.
- Make a copy of all Lease Signing Documents and mail to tenant within a week, so they have a copy of everything they initialed and signed
- We create a tenant file in the office, as well; that way, we have a file on each tenant, both physically and electronically

20. Reaching out to new tenant:

- One week follow up call to tenant to see how things are going and to manage any issues
- Three week follow up letter to serve as a reminder about transferring utilities and other rules

RETAINING TENANTS

21. Tenant appreciation program: We created a contest where we enter all tenants who have paid their rent on time for three months in a row. If their name gets pulled, they win a gift card. End of the year, we enter all tenants who have paid their rent for an entire year on time, and the winner gets a flat screen TV.

22. Property maintenance and repairs: Every time a tenant calls in with an issue, we create a work order to take care of the issue. Work order has a priority assigned to it. It is all done through our rental management program.

23. Conduct preventative maintenance: Every quarter, we conduct a “walk through” to check on the unit and see if there are any issues and/or problems that need to be addressed. We then create work orders if work is needed to be done.

24. Collection of rent & eviction process: Establish your rules up front, and the best advice is to **STICK BY THEM** no matter what!

25. Tenant renewal process: We are starting to send “renewal letters” out 90 days before their lease ends; that way, we are ahead of the curve if the unit is vacant.

26. Tenant communication: We document everything (calls, letters, etc) and put these communications in their electronic file; that way, if you ever have to go to court, you will have everything you did in writing.

27. Create template letters: Create a library of letters you can use as templates; that way, you don’t have to “reinvent the wheel” every time [i.e. lock out, lost keys, noise violations, tenant renewals (90, 60, 30 days), etc.].

MOVE OUT PROCESS

28. Fill out a thorough Move Out Inspection, and then create a “scope of work” on what will be needed to turn around the unit. Take pictures during the walk through. We are looking into automating this process of inspections by purchasing an “app” through Rent Manager.

29. After assessing repairs, determine what normal “wear and tear” is and what will be charged to the tenant and subtracted from their Security Deposit.

30. Mail security deposit check and letter to forwarding address within 30 days of move out.

UNIT TURN AROUND PROCESS

31. Once the “scope of work” and work orders have been created, set a schedule and get your team (in house or sub-contractors) quickly turning around the property.

32. Once complete, have someone clean the unit and do a “final walk-through.”

33. Once “tenant ready,” we take pictures to use for marketing purposes, put baking soda in refrigerator, and put an air freshener in the main room.

34. Now you are back to the “Attracting Tenants” part of this process!

Just like everyone else in this crazy business, we continue to make things better and are working hard to create more automation and simplicity in our business. I am sure I am missing something!

About Author

ELIZABETH FAIRCLOTH



- Website

Liz Faircloth has been managing and investing in real estate since 2004, along with her husband, Matt. We have built our business from scratch and now own over five million dollars in residential and commercial assets. We love to help and educate investors. Our YouTube Channel, The Landlord’s Chronicles, offers short, yet educational videos that covers topics such as flipping houses, rentals, rehabs, property management, and lessons learned along the way.

<http://www.youtube.com/c/DerosaGroupTrenton>



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Mastering the Mindset for Negotiation

by [Andrew Syrios](#) | [BiggerPockets.com](#)



I've discussed negotiating quite a bit (see [here](#), [here](#), [here](#)—and in more depth, [here](#)) but I've yet to come across a book on this topic as helpful as *Never Split the Difference* by former FBI hostage-negotiator Chris Voss.

As one might suspect, a hostage negotiator doesn't exactly get the option of splitting the difference. Instead, Voss digs deeper into human psychology, all the while highlighting how these various techniques work with practical anecdotes from both hostage negotiating and business.

Voss notes that classic negotiating books such as *Getting to Yes* had a lot of great advice in them—particularly with regards to negotiating based on interests instead of positions (which devolves into bartering back and forth over price) and trying to find win-win solutions where possible. But advances in our understanding of psychology (which are best highlighted in the great book *Thinking Fast and Slow*) and real-world experience doesn't always

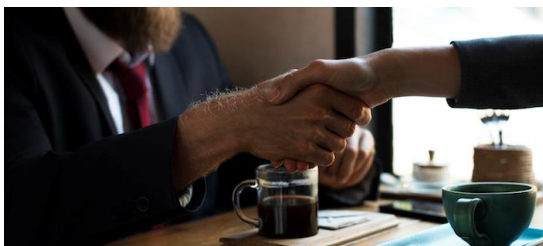
follow the textbook theories. Voss then combines the practical and scientific for a tour-de-force book on negotiating.

First off, the most important part of negotiating is to go in with the right frame of mind. As Voss puts it,

“People who view negotiation as a battle of arguments become overwhelmed by the voices in their heads. Negotiation is not an act of battle, it's a process of discovery. The goal is to uncover as much information as possible. To quiet the voices in your head, make your sole and all-encompassing purpose the other person and what they have to say.”

Instead of a battle, “The language of negotiation is primarily a language of conversation and rapport.” This “language” includes smiling and being positive and friendly. This is important because it puts both of you in a positive frame of mind; you both are “more likely to collaborate and problem solve instead of fight and resist.” In fact, just slowing down can aid the process of rapport building. If you go too fast, you will 1) skip most opportunities to build rapport, and 2) make people feel like they are not being heard, and thus they may get defensive.

After you've slowed things down and built rapport, the next mind frame change is: "Don't commit to assumptions. Instead, view them as hypothesis and use the negotiation to test them rigorously." The idea here is that instead of trying to barge your way to some conclusion, see the negotiation as a fact-finding mission. This will take much of the pressure off, but it also puts you at the advantage. The person who talks more, loses. The person who listens more, wins. This is because the person who's talking is giving up information that could be useful in figuring out if a deal makes sense. Maybe, for example, a seller will let loose that they need to sell very quickly, and would thereby consider a lower price—or maybe they have the ability, and thus possibly the willingness, to owner finance. Or perhaps they have another property to sell. If you're too busy talking, you may miss these valuable insights.



Mirroring is one of the best ways to "get the other person to talk" and steer the conversation the way you want. Voss describes it as such:

"Repeat the last three words, or the critical words, of what someone has just said. We fear what's different and are drawn to what's similar. Mirroring is the art of insinuating similarity, which facilitates bonding. Use mirrors to encourage the other side to empathize and bond with you, to keep people talking, to buy your side time to regroup, and encourage your counterparts to reveal their strategy."

Voss also notes that "mirroring will make you feel awkward as heck when you first try it. That's the only hard part about it. The technique takes a little practice. Once you get the hang of it, it will become a conversational Swiss Army Knife—valuable in just about every professional and social setting." As with most things, practice makes perfect.

Here's an example he provides of a technophobic boss who always wanted everything in hard copies. He was also one of "those" bosses, who always wanted things his way and saw recommendations to do something a *better* way as recommendations to do something the *lazy* way. One of Voss' clients was on the receiving end of one of these requests to copy thousands of documents in what would have been a week worth of work.

“Popping his head into her office, her boss said, ‘Let’s make two copies of all the paperwork.’

“I’m sorry, two copies? She mirrored in response... [delivering]the mirror in an inquisitive tone. The intention behind most mirrors should be ‘please help me understand.’ Every time you mirror someone they will reword what they said. They will never say it exactly the same way they said it the first time. Ask someone ‘what did you mean by that?’ and you’re likely to incite irritation or defensiveness. A mirror, however, will get you the clarity you want while signaling respect and concern for what the other person is saying.

“Yes,’ her boss responded. ‘One for us, and one for the customer.’

‘I’m sorry. So you are saying that the client is asking for a copy and we need one for internal use?’

“Actually, I’ll check with the client. They haven’t asked for anything, but I definitely want a copy. That’s just how I do business.’

“Absolutely. Thanks for checking with the customer. Where would you like to store the in-house copy? There’s no more space in the file room here.’

“It’s fine, you can store it anywhere,’ he said, slightly perturbed now.

“Anywhere?’ When another person’s tone or body language is inconsistent with his words, a good mirror can be particularly useful. In this case, it caused her boss to take a nice long pause. Something he did not often do.

“As a matter of fact, you can put them in my office. I’ll get the new assistant to print it for me after the project is done. For now just create two digital backups.’

“A day later, her boss emailed and put simply, ‘The two digital backups will be fine.’”

The interesting thing about this otherwise banal negotiation is that I highly doubt her boss even considered it to be a negotiation.

Mirrors are thus a great way to gain more information and also get the other side to either re-evaluate their request or perhaps even negotiate with themselves. And when someone starts to negotiate with themselves, it’s always going to end ugly.

You’ll also notice that the mirrors are peppered in with questions. Just as with talking and listening, the person who asks the questions is at the advantage over the person who answers them. You can’t give in a negotiation by asking a question, but you can certainly give by answering one.

I will pick up with more lessons from *Never Split the Difference* next week.

But for now, remember to be positive and build rapport. Go into a negotiation as an investigator would, not as an inquisitor would. Then use mirrors and questions to clarify the

other side's position, wants, and needs, and gain as much information as possible. Information is knowledge, and knowledge, after all, is power.

ABOUT AUTHOR

[Bio](#)**ANDREW SYRIOS**

Andrew Syrios is a real estate investor in Kansas City and a partner in [Stewardship Properties](#) along with his brother and father. Their company owns just over 500 units in four states.

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