

LEADING EDGE

The Branch Manager's Resource

Volume 2 • Number 5



"A good leader improves his or her team, helping them achieve more than they would if left on their own"

—Douglas Smith
President, Douglas Smith & Associates
and creator of Performance Selling

What Makes an Effective Leader?

Throughout my years, I've learned a lot about what it takes to be a good manager—through books, people, trial and error. Like most managers, I struggled earlier in my career with the common challenges of leading other people. The experiences I've had over the years directing more than a dozen different teams have allowed me to answer the question: "What makes an effective leader?"

A good leader improves his or her team, helping them achieve more than they would if left on their own. He or she must nurture, influence, stretch and inspire each individual to reach beyond what they "think" they are capable of doing. Your job as a leader is to get a group of individuals to function as a team, and just as important, to create energy, excitement, enthusiasm and engagement.

As the wholesale organization grows, you must also grow and hone your skills to better guide your team to the next level. Here are some qualities every manager should possess for effective leadership:

- **Passion:** An effective leader is a person who is "bought in" to the program. You must possess a genuine belief that what you are doing and where you are going is correct. Passion is contagious, and you want your team to catch it.
- **Respect:** We usually think of people skills as being "warm and fuzzy." I think a leader can be of varying warmth and fuzziness, but a leader has to respect others along with their ideas and opinions. You can't lead without respect.
- **Adaptability:** Leadership is about learning how to drive your team to stay ahead of rapid changes. Keeping up with and adapting to today's evolving industry is vital. Forget that fact, and you and your team will be left behind.
- **Vision:** Great leaders are visionaries. You must be able to look beyond the day-to-day workload. You must see down the road to what is possible and dedicate yourself to bring

your team to also see the opportunities that you see.

- **Confidence:** While you can have passion, a great vision and good ideas for change, if you are not confident, then action will not occur. Leaders must be capable of getting their people to follow them, and to do that, you need confidence in yourself.
- **Education:** A leader has to be a reader and a learner with a continuous thirst for knowledge. If knowledge is power, and education brings knowledge, learning no longer becomes a luxury but a necessity for powerful leaders.
- **Communication:** None of the above assets will work for a leader if he or she can't speak or write clearly, concisely and articulate. Every great leader in history was also a great communicator. Communication gets your message across.

While you may be able to get by with only some of these qualities, generally speaking, you must have all of these qualities to lead your team to the top. It's not easy being a great leader, but the rewards are worth the effort.

— Douglas Smith
President, Douglas Smith & Associates
and creator of Performance Selling

Leading vs. Managing

To be both an effective leader and manager, it's important to understand the differences:

1. Management involves planning and budgeting. Leadership involves setting direction.
2. Management involves organizing and staffing. Leadership involves aligning people.
3. Management provides control and solves problems. Leadership stimulates motivation

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Home Asset Advisor Checklist

By Jason Bailey, Vice President, Home Asset Advisor



Jason Bailey,
Vice President,
Home Asset Advisor

With the Home Asset Advisor program in full swing, have you covered all your bases in regards to its implementation? Use this quick checklist to ensure you've completed all the required steps for a successful rollout of the program:

- ☐ Have you reviewed the Home Asset Advisor modules, the Home Asset Advisor Center and received your Mortgage Planning Advisor (MPA) designation? An effective leader always reviews the game plan before coaching their team!
- ☐ Have you helped your AEs develop their business plan for driving this program to brokers?
- ☐ Have you reviewed the broker profiles and scorecards with your AEs to determine target brokers?
- ☐ Have you reviewed the AE/Broker Acknowledgment letter with your teams and explained the commitment they both need to make to the program?

- ☐ Are you encouraging and monitoring the enrollments to ensure a smooth rollout of the program?
- ☐ Have all our AEs and BRMs taken the Home Asset Advisor quiz and become certified Mortgage Planning Advisors (MPAs)?
- ☐ Are you overseeing broker training of the program?
- ☐ Are your AEs ordering the Home Asset Advisor Broker Kits from the Marketing Portal and reviewing them with their brokers?

Continual monitoring of the Home Asset Advisor implementation is critical to its success with your branch. To reinforce any of the components to the program, access the Home Asset Advisor Modules 1 through 4 available on the A/V Library within the Intranet home page.

Are You Using the New Wholesale Events Calendar?

Located on the Wholesale Intranet, the calendar helps you keep up on the latest releases and events such as:

- Advisor Seminar Series events
- Tradeshows
- Sales Rallies
- Product Enhancement launch dates
- FHA WebEx Training
- FHA Announcements
- CMPS events
- Training Schedules
- Brunch-n-Learns
- And more!

Top Five Ranking Branches

Congratulations to the following teams that helped drive their branches in May.

Branch	Branch Manager	Ops Manager	Units
1. Maitland	Joseph Milleson	Candace Burke-Robertson	1,081
2. Chantilly	Tina McKay	Sheila Kavanagh	731
3. Chesterbrook	Anthony Catanese	Dawn Stoler	550
4. Charlotte	Teri Gettings	Elaine Middleton	506
5. Folsom	David Waddell	Roxanne Mazarakis	482

Sales Meeting Topics

Review these key initiatives with your teams during your next branch meeting to keep your sales and ops teams on track with ABC's overall vision.

- **Redesigned UniFi Workflow:** The wholesale workflow in UniFi has been streamlined for easier navigation and now follows the true order of a 1003. This internal redesign allows your ops team to ensure a more efficient process for getting loans approved and a more consistent end experience for the broker out on the web (*see article on next page*).
- **The Advisor Center:** Many brokers surveyed were still not familiar with this vital online resource. This is a perfect training opportunity for your AEs and BRMs.
- **e-Docs:** Another training opportunity for your sales team. Many brokers did not know how to leverage this key enhancement. Make sure your team is up to speed on how this online feature works. Is e-Docs integrated into your process?
- **Home Asset Advisor:** Are all your AEs certified? Have you scheduled time to review the target list of brokers with your AEs to determine which ones will use this program? Review your AEs' action plans on how they are implementing HAA with their brokers.
- **FHA Rollout:** Your AEs have a great opportunity to target our FHA-approved brokers and drive greater segment penetration. Promote our existing FHA/VA products to improve branch profitability.
- **CARL Rollout:** With Wholesale soon to be offering Construction to Permanent "One Time Close" loans to brokers, bring your AEs and BRMs up to speed on how they can start bringing CARL business into your branch.
- **Performance Selling:** Continue to reinforce Doug Smith's principles using these strategies:
 - Monthly one-on-one reviews with AEs using coaching scripts from your Coaching Sales Performance manual
 - Monthly all-staff branch meetings using agenda ideas from the Sales Resource Guide
 - Ride-alongs with AEs using the Coaching Effective Sales Call evaluation form.

"Leadership should be born out of the understanding of the needs of those affected by it."

—Marian Anderson

An Action Plan to Increase Branch Productivity and Leadership Skills

Improving your branch's performance and individual employee productivity are two important goals for any manager. Here is a step-by-step action plan to achieve these results while building your leadership skills.

Plan

The first step is to plan which objectives you need to emphasize. Here are two such examples:

- **Set an Example for Continuous Education.** As a branch manager, you set the tone in establishing a culture of continuous education and development. If your team sees that development is important, they make development a priority. The best leaders see learning not as an expense, but an investment. When you stop learning, you stop leading!
- **Clearly Communicate Branch Goals.** Effective leaders establish clear performance expectations. Use your communication skills to produce enthusiasm and foster an atmosphere of open exchange and support.

Execute

As you put your plan into action, make sure you incorporate the following tips:

- **Promote Employee Development.** The leaders who are most effective at developing their employees see a rise in morale, resulting in a team that is more satisfied with the job, more committed to the organization, and more productive overall.
- **Provide Coaching Opportunities.** Effective leaders provide one-on-one coaching and mentoring to apply skills needed on new initiatives—such as Home Asset Advisor—and relate these "teachable moments" back to the overall vision or strategy. The appreciative support of helping others grow contributes to a high-performing branch.
- **Build Interpersonal Skills.** Promoting open and transparent dialogue demonstrates a true concern for the perspective of others and a commitment to listening rather than trying to convince. Your team needs to see that you care and are willing to listen to them. When people see that you are committed to them—they will commit to you.

Evaluate

Evaluating your plan—and your team's performance—is a critical component of your action plan and helps keep you on track.

- **Review Employee Performance.** Most would say that this is a no-brainer, yet studies show that only 30 to 40 percent of employees report that their managers communicate performance standards and provide fair and accurate feedback to help them do their jobs better.

When people see you are committed to them—they will commit to you

- **Provide Immediate and Positive Feedback.** Most managers view formal performance reviews as an administrative requirement rather than as a powerful lever to positively influence employee performance. Great leaders catch their people doing something right and point it out to them in a detailed and timely fashion.
- **Recognize and Leverage Strengths.** Positive leaders are well known for recognizing, emphasizing and leveraging strengths and what is working rather than focusing on weaknesses and what isn't working. Focusing on success creates positive energy, which produces greater engagement and momentum for change. That doesn't mean that you never discuss performance gaps, but when you do, focus on specific suggestions for improvement.

Establish a performance-based culture within your branch—one that involves a coaching environment and conscious attempts at continuous dialogue with your teams to achieve improvements in your employee relationships and on-the-job results.

Redesigned UniFi Workflow: Increasing Branch Efficiencies

By Michele Newsham, Senior Vice President, Operations



Michele Newsham,
Senior VP,
Operations

As branch managers, you know that technology helps drive the way your branch meets the needs of our broker clients. That's why we have redesigned and streamlined the workflow in UniFi.

We have removed many redundant screens and unnecessary fields to make it easier to navigate through UniFi. The Setup/Validation workflow now follows the true order of an actual 1003, making information easier to find. The changes to the UniFi workflow will provide a much needed pick up and lead the way to a variety of benefits for your branch:

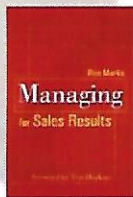
- Easier navigation equals increased productivity
- Greater efficiency equals time savings and cost savings
- Ability to process more loans in less time
- Internal improvements result in quicker turn times for broker

It's important for you to ensure your ops team members leverage this new workflow. Make sure they understand these changes and the necessary timing of their input to help our brokers have a consistent online experience each time they log into our website.

The redesign reflects ABC's goals and supports the direction we as a company have been moving toward—to bring technology to the forefront of our processes and deliverables. Embracing this change will lead to increased efficiency and cost savings—allowing us to raise the level of superior service to our broker clients.

Management Resources

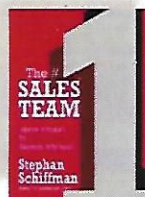
Expand your knowledge using the following resources to help increase your branch management skills:



Managing for Sales Results: A Fast-Action Guide to Finding, Coaching & Leading Salespeople

By Ronald B. Marks

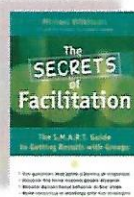
A guide on how to motivate salespeople, providing practical tips to improve productivity, increase employee satisfaction, and ensure that you hire smart instead of hiring often.



The #1 Sales Teams: Superior Techniques for Maximum Performance

By Stephan Schiffman

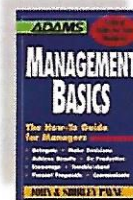
Designed to help any manager improve sales performance, this book delivers surefire strategies to coach and manage any sales team to achieve maximum results.



The Secrets of Facilitation

By Michael Wilkinson

Delivers a clear vision of facilitation excellence and offers proven techniques in conflict resolution, consulting, managing, presenting, teaching, planning and selling.



Management Basics: The How-To Guide for Managers

By John Payne and Shirley Payne

Profiles more than 100 effective ideas that will help you streamline the management process and keep up with the competition. The book focuses on 11 key management skills, including: setting objectives and managing time.

Branch Manager Spotlight:

Wes Meyer, Branch Manager, Cranford, New Jersey



Wes Meyer,
Branch Manager

Branch managers today have a whole slew of challenges and obstacles when it comes to achieving branch goals, motivating their teams and moving business forward. However, office space issues are not usually among them.

But that's just what Wes Meyer, Branch Manager,

Cranford, New Jersey, had to deal with.

As a recent addition to the Wholesale branch management team, Wes had the daunting task of opening a new branch from scratch. "Our office opened almost two months behind schedule due to circumstances beyond of our control," explained Wes. Despite Wes' real estate hiccups, his branch was able to more than double its volume recently, and continues to keep growing.

"We went from approximately \$20 million to \$40 million in fundings in a span of one month," noted Wes. "I'm proud that we have been able to meet our goals in spite of the location problems we experienced." According to Wes, organizing an office in such a short amount of time while achieving his goals could not be done without all the tools, resources and ABC support available.

Product Advisor and DU/CDU made a huge impact, allowing AEs and BRMs to get a jump start on

business. "Product Advisor" answers 95 percent of the basic day-to-day questions an AE or BRM might typically encounter with relative certainty," shared Wes. "The DU/CDU function approves loans with 'real' findings that you can bank on. Providing that the broker is accountable on his or her end, both of these functionalities are especially helpful to new hires."

According to Wes, the efficient e-Docs process is another great tool that his branch leveraged. "It gives us structure since brokers are required to schedule loan closings online. e-Docs accounts for fee and pricing confirmation, and lock expiration. If a broker schedules a closing, the broker has agreed to all fees, pricing, etc. so there are no surprises at closing."

The only issues Wes and team experienced at the beginning were due to eMagic/DU import problems. "My office was not familiar with the broker experience when using emagic/DU; this was a process we had to learn on the fly," said Wes. "We are certainly looking forward to the launch of e-Submit!" With the release of e-Submit, ABC broker partners can run their findings within the ABC website, rather than having to log onto to any third-party web sites.

"Our website is terrific," summed up Wes. "Between Product Advisor and locking capabilities, a broker has no excuse but to lock online. Not having a

manual lock process, frees up the office quite a bit—not to mention the liability we would have if it were a manual onsite process. The website is really like a 'mortgage company in a box'—it's all in there!"

Additionally, Wes attributes his success to his ability to provide positive reinforcement to his team,

"The website is really like a 'mortgage company in a box'—it's all in there!"

—Wes Meyer

allowing him up to keep up morale and maintain a healthy relationship with his new staff. He is also a firm believer in "over communicating." "With clear, open and honest communication, you can't go wrong." Wes also feels that Operations Manager, Sujata Bhojani, has been an invaluable partner in setting up and driving the branch forward.

"While I consider what we have done a success, there are more goals to accomplish. I will consider my branch a success and a benefit to the company once we fund \$100 million per month," concluded Wes. "Only then will I feel that I have done my job."