

Property managers must be quick to observe, take action

The capacity of being “quick to observe” is one of the most important traits that a property manager can acquire. In fact, the future success and happiness of a property manager will in large measure be determined by the development of this great character trait.

The word “observe” has two primary uses. One use denotes “to look,” “to see” or “to sense.” The second use of the word suggests “to keep,” “to conform” or “to inspect or take note.”

When we are quick to observe, we promptly look or notice and take note. Both of these fundamental elements – looking and taking note – are essential to being “quick to observe.”

The following are several examples and the lessons that can be learned when we are quick to observe:

■ Be quick to observe the inherent good within each person we work with and what he can become. Are we really interested in the individual development of each member of our staff? Are we providing opportunities for all to expand and to grow and to be and to become? Remember, education is the key to the door of opportunity.

■ Be quick to distinguish the relevant from the irrelevant, the important from the unimportant. With the many demands and time constraints that property managers face daily, being quick to distinguish the relevant from the irrelevant and then taking action is the key to success as a property manager. Remember, great property managers are



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great time managers and very effective in delegating tasks.

■ Be quick to observe how you take in and send out information with others, especially owners. Quite often, property managers think they know what clients want of them, but frequently this differs from what the client truly wants (or at least expects). I have seen client relationships go by the wayside due to a property manager not being in tune with the manner in which owners want to receive communication. For instance, one owner commented about his frustration with a property manager: “Bill was too much of a systems guy for me. He was always bombarding me with memos and reports. I didn’t want to read. I wanted a partner, someone I could talk to each day and bounce ideas around. But he seemed to be much more comfortable shoving paper at me.” Remember, how you take in and send out information is a near-flawless predictor of how you will thrive in a business relationship.

■ Be quick to sense when there is a problem or conflict at the office or at home. There is a book just out that I recommend: “The Arbinger Institute - The Anatomy of Peace – Resolving the Heart of Conflict.” It is a

brilliantly written piece that awakens reflection and compels action! Remember, great property managers will purchase this book and will study it intently and will come away with the secret!

■ Be quick to see or sense the struggles and successes of your tenants. Great property managers are in tune with their tenants. They work hard to understand them, their business plans and their successes and failures. Visits to the properties become much more than mere janitorial or landscape inspections. Remember, visits take on greater importance when you are meeting one-on-one with your tenants and listening carefully to what they are saying and not saying.

■ Be quick to see and note risk issues during property inspections. Are we actively looking for damaged and uneven sidewalks and curbs to avoid tripping hazards? Are we verifying that there is proper lighting in all interior and exterior common areas and that emergency lighting is functioning properly? Remember, great property managers are great risk managers. They are continually on the lookout to alleviate the causes of trip and fall occurrences.

Yes, the ability to quickly observe, see, feel, understand, inspect and take note clearly differentiates property managers. Thankfully, this character trait can be learned – in fact, must be learned – and implemented!▲