

Ameen: Hi, this is Ameen Kamadia of MortgageBrokerTraining.com. Welcome to another one of our conference calls. Today on the line, I have Mary Moore of Birmingham, Alabama. Mary is a first time mortgage banker with a net branching company who also has done very well for herself lately and basically I wanted to have Mary on to tell us what she knows and how she has done so well so fast. How are you doing today Mary?

Mary: I am doing great. Thank you.

Ameen: The name of your company is Network Funding?

Mary: It is Network Funding. We are a residential mortgage bank. We are based in Houston, Texas.

Ameen: Okay.

Mary: And we have a branch here in Birmingham.

Ameen: Okay, Houston. Yes, that is where I am from. So, now I got your e-mail about all these fantastic results that you have been getting. Can you tell us a little bit about them?

Mary: Sure. Well, I have kind of been in the business for a while not exactly originating loans. How I got started was I started processing loans and then I was a closer and then I was underwriter and then I thought well I could probably originate loans and so that is when I started originating loans and I just basically started calling realtors and setting up appointments with them and they started giving me a couple of hard loans here and there. Really hard ones and I would get those done and then they started giving me easier ones, you know once they knew I could do the hard ones.

Ameen: Right. So you basically call them and go see them.

Mary: I call them on the phone and went to them and then they referred me actually to other people in their own office and those people started calling me to do some of their loans. And I just kind of built it from there and then I started also getting

referrals. Now you have to ask for those referrals because they do not just give them to you.

Ameen: Right.

Mary: So I would always ask for referrals at closing. I actually went and I felt to go to as many closings as I can because that is a great way to meet the other realtor on the other side and also ask for referrals from your client at that time because they are happy with the closing.

Ameen: But now you are doing about what four or five loans a month?

Mary: Yes, at least four or five loans. Yes, four or five loans a month is what I average right now.

Ameen: And the average loan price in Birmingham?

Mary: It is a lot lower than in the other parts of the country. So we are looking at, let us see, anywhere from \$80,000.00 up to you know you could do a loan for million but the highest that I have done a loan for has been like \$265,000.00 so I am really in the first time home buyer market with a lot of FHA loans which we had approval under. So I do a lot with FHA and credit repair and that is kind of a niche that I have pretty much picked from reading your book and everything. That is what I saw as developing a niche and first time home buyers seem to gravitate towards me for some reason but it has pretty much kind of fell into default though a little bit but that is kind of where I am at and I am kind of moving into some other niches now too.

Ameen: Once you had the first and once it is solidified then you can go ahead and branch out and do other things.

Mary: Right and I also started sending postcards out to different areas as far as I could research like Court House Retrieval that we have in Birmingham and they have all the, you can do a list of people who are in adjustable rate mortgages that are getting ready to adjust and so I got a list of county that I wanted to pursue and then I start mailing those out. At first you do not get

as many responses as you do. I think it takes like two or three times at least of the mailings to do and I do them every week. So I do like two different counties.

Ameen: So you have the same people over and over?

Mary: Yes. But I send out different postcards to them. So they get a variety of different things but they see my name all the time and then they are calling me and that is about anywhere between 500 to 700 probably postcards a week that I send out. Just closing one loan paid for all that.

Ameen: Right. And you get those leads from the courthouse?

Mary: Yes, Courthouse Retrieval.

Ameen: What you are doing, I think a title company might also be able to help you out with those.

Mary: Right, but I have that online. So I can collect it myself.

Ameen: That is even better.

Mary: I make my own list, make my own mailing labels and everything. That has been really helpful and then I also send out like farming type things. I diversify all my things so I am not just pulling from one part of the market. I have had some realtor background also. Before I moved to Birmingham I lived in Minnesota and I was a realtor for four years so a lot of my ideas and everything and with your book has helped in this business. And I was really thankful for reading your book and so I got it before I even started doing it because it did give me a lot of tips on getting started and what really helped me was doing the business plan that really made me see what numbers because it is all a number game too. I mean if you just have to see what you need to do and focus on everyday to get those numbers, how many people do you have to call to get an application, how many applications do you have to take to actually get a loan submitted and closed and funded.

Ameen: First know your numbers and your percentages when you can actually tweak on those and work those so you do not have to actually spend more money on marketing but you can actually by tweaking your percentage point you can actually make more money without spending more money.

Mary: Right and I do not spend a lot. I do not advertise in the newspaper. I do not advertise in different things but I do cheap advertising like my daughter's school. They had their directory that just came out. Their student directory had advertising space in it. For a \$150.00 I get the front inside cover for the whole school area. That is for this year so I do not know if that is going to result in a loan for me or not but at least getting my name recognition and everything out there.

Ameen: Right. That is something that all parents will keep for the whole year.

Mary: Right, and they will be looking at it and so yes exactly. And also there are so many things in your book that are so good like For Sale By Owners. I have not even had time to even start with those but that is the kind of market that I would go after also just walking up to their door and handing a folder with your information and everything in it, how you can help qualify their clients and people coming into their home and now I just joined the Association of Builders in Birmingham. And I am going to be on some other committees so I can get some of those contacts.

Ameen: Yes, you told me in your e-mail that you are now doing a deal with the builder.

Mary: Yes and how I got that was...

Ameen: Can you tell everybody what the deal is if you do not mind?

Mary: Okay, one of the realtors that I developed a really good rapport with, they were talking about going to work with a builder branching away maybe from one of the main brokers here in Birmingham and I kind of researched the builder a little bit for

them and thought it would be a great idea for her to do that and then I also heard from her that the builder was trying to get an in house type thing where they wanted an in house mortgage company and now it is title company in house closing attorney like everything and I said well we are that so let us get together. So I actually set up an appointment with the builder and myself. I called him and had the realtor sit in. I also got the title company representative, my branch manager, the closing attorney, everyone in on the meeting and sat down and just went over the three different because we offer like three different levels for builders and there are different things that they can do. So that is what I put before them and they were really excited about it and now he has five subdivisions and he is working on another one and now we are the exclusive lender for that builder.

Ameen: That is big.

Mary: It is huge because they do more than a hundred homes a year.

Ameen: And you are the main contact person on those?

Mary: I am the contact person, yes. And we actually have set up in our main office in Houston, I will be like the contact person but we actually have a whole separate processing department and underwriting section and everything just allocated for that builder. So we can close them really fast. And there are a lot of things that you can offer builders and going after some other builders.

Ameen: Once you have the first one and then you can get their testimony and go to the others and say this is what we are doing for this builder they are more inclined to even listen and talk to you and like you said you brought the whole kit and caboodle to them and said you do not have an option between choosing us and choosing somebody else. You have an option of only choosing us but you can choose one, two or three options that we offer you.

Mary: Right. What different package do you want?

Ameen: It is not a yes or no decision. Right. It is not a yes or no. It is which one do you want.

Mary: Right, exactly and also we tell them what we can offer. Now, through mortgage bank we have a lot of different investors which give them more options and things for programs. We still carry a lot of products that some brokers and mortgage shop do not because we have investors that keep portfolio loans and things like that. So we can still do new notes. We can still do stuff like that and it is very attractive to some of these investors and builders and things like that. So we are lucky in that respect. I guess I am lucky in that respect. I mean with the company that does that.

Ameen: Right, especially in today's market place you have to be able, the more you can offer the better your chances.

Mary: Exactly and I also just wanted to say, I mean I have talked to people who have shopped and shopped, you know rate and some things like that and it is not the rate that is going to get the person. It is because I charge more on the front probably than other people. I have got an e-mail and fax where your closing costs are too high. You are charging me this and these people are saying they are going to pay for that and I said well, you know as far as like paying for an appraisal. The appraisal is not free. Someone has to pay the appraiser. So it is coming from somewhere either at any rate or you know it is somewhere there. So and I go into the whole spiel sometimes about what we call baiting and switching in this industry. They are just giving them an unreal good faith estimate with closing costs and rates that they cannot even get right now just to get the loan and get them in there and everything is going to change.

Ameen: When they get the closing and feel the numbers are different?

Mary: Exactly but I mean the guy that told me that my closing has to be high and I have to do more to earn his business and everything. I mean I have him locked right now and you know that was charging one in the front when everyone else was

charging half or whatever. I have him locked and he is ready to go and the reason why he is ready to go with me is because I was the one who was going out of my way for him providing him service and giving him answers to things that other people are just saying, here is a closing task, here is this, here is that. So I was actually giving him more detailed responses.

Ameen: Great, so now what you told me so far you have gotten eight months out of the year done and you have already cleared over six figures?

Mary: Yes.

Ameen: Net and that is after your splits, right?

Mary: That is after my commission split, yes.

Ameen: And technically, it is still your first year originating even though you did have...

Mary: This is my first year, yes. Well, I did not have experience originating so I mean this is my first year again, my first year originating. And I did not have the realtor contacts or anything until I started.

Ameen: What did you do from the first thing that you started out? How did you get started on getting rolling?

Mary: Okay, the first thing that I did was I sat down and figured out my numbers with my business plan and I bought your book.

Ameen: You bought the book after the business plan?

Mary: I actually bought your book before I did the business plan and then the minute I decided well I want to start originating I started looking for information on how to get started. I knew the loan programs. I knew the underwriting guidelines. I knew, but they are changing all the time but I knew other aspects like...

Ameen: You have the basic training that is needed, right?

Mary: Yes, I have the basics. Right, I just needed to know how to get into getting the loans because I have all that but what do I need to get the loans and that is why I was looking for books and I came across your website and got your book then start reading it and perfect. I was trying to follow like setting up a business plan, developing a niche type thing and also marketing because like when you start you do not have a lot of money to market so you have to do things that do not cost a lot of money. The one thing that I did do was getting out there and trying to meet with different realtors and get their business by trying to promote the services that I could offer them and I went in there with like give me bad loans, see if I can do them and I now have hired a credit repair guy who can repair people's credit within 30 to 60 days so that their score will go up. So in the meantime they are doing that and then I can get them into something later and then I would throw them back to the realtor. I did later on buy your Marketing the Realtor Kit. Now, I have not done as much as I should have probably on that because I have been pretty busy but I did try it and I did send out several. I did get one realtor out of 300 letters I send out I got one realtor. So that is good. I mean for me I think that is pretty good and I did not follow up with it as I should have. So I probably could have gotten some more if I were to follow that.

Ameen: You did get one and he is working with you?

Mary: Exactly.

Ameen: So I mean it paid for itself, right?

Mary: It paid for itself exactly but I have that I deal with people really well face to face. So when I go to the closing that is where I have gotten a lot of realtors from just being at the closings and a lot of times when I do get referrals from past client and things I send them on to maybe some new realtors that I want to get in with or the realtors that I worked, that I am working with currently. So I throw back at them and then they are impressed by that because there are not very many mortgage companies

out there that will do that. They are just waiting for the realtors to give them business instead of giving back to the realtors. I think that helps solidify that realtor relationship.

Ameen: I mean if you can give a lead to a realtor that really sets you apart.

Mary: It is huge. It is very huge, yes.

Ameen: The book that we are talking about is the Jumpstart Your Mortgage Career, right?

Mary: That is right and it jumped my mortgage career,

Ameen: How much would you say that book was worth to you?

Mary: In dollar fee?

Ameen: Yes.

Mary: I mean basically all that. I probably would have made under like what you would make at an hourly job somewhere something like that. There is no way that I would have made this much. The other loan officers in this branch I am way above them right now.

Ameen: Are they looking at you and saying "What is she doing?" Are they coming after you where did you get all these ideas from, where are you getting all this business from?

Mary: Of course, I mean when I started sending the postcards and doing that kind of things they started doing that but I am not showing them your book. I am sorry you have to market it somewhere else.

Ameen: Okay, we will stay out of that a bit.

Mary: It is a little competitive here but anyway I gave them the same things and like you have to diversify. You cannot just pull off of the adjustable rate mortgage leads. You cannot just do one

thing and like you said in your book you can never stop marketing because I had done that one month where I was like really busy and into my loan not like working on the business and everything and just trying to work the loans and make sure they go through and then the next month I have a slump. So in order to stop those peaks and valleys like you even said in your book you really have to keep it going the whole time that is why I send out my cards every week, that is why I do that every week no matter what and I am tired usually by the end of the week and I cannot wait for the weekend but...

Ameen: A lot of loan officers start off like you have. You know they worked at it, they worked hard to get the marketing on and then the loans start coming in and then they are basically out of time. You know they say, well I can either do the marketing or I can do work on the loan not both. And when you get to that point that is when you have to decide okay now I need to bring in somebody. You need to hire an assistant.

Mary: That is where I am at.

Ameen: And then you got to let that person take over and do the marketing side mostly and you work on the loans or have them. Once you set up the systems to do the marketing like what you are doing now is fine but what we need to do is systemize it and documenting, step 1, step 2, step 3, step 4, get it done on paper and then you can hire anybody. You can hire some minimum wage high school kid off the streets and then he should be able to follow your plan exactly and bring in the same results that you have been bringing in.

Mary: And that is what I am looking at right now because it is getting to be too much for me to handle. I do not want to be working late hours every night. I have family. I have two small children and my husband has been able to quit his job basically now so we do not have to have daycare or anything which is nice. I want to be able to spend time with family. Not just at the job. That is why I need to hire someone to do all these different things that are time wasters for me where I can be out getting loans and getting more business.

Ameen: Well, you are going to figure out what is it worth per hour? What is your time worth per hour? And then once you have that number you can say, okay I am doing this. Is this worth my time? Yes or no. If it is not then it is time to delegate that particular aspect. And there will always be some things that you like to do then make sure there is a part of the business that you want to do and you do not want to give it up or is that choice then you do it. You just have fun. That is why we are in the business anyway. We are not in the business, you know we want to make money and this is our livelihood but we cannot do it in a way where we give up the things that are really important like our family things like that. So, I think you are going on the right track.

Mary: It has really been helpful and that is why we really appreciate that I was able to get this book.

Ameen: Do you have any advice for the other loan officers out there today?

Mary: I would tell them to just keep at getting their referral bases and things like that and diversifying and get your book and keep going back to it. I keep going back to it all the time just because I want to pick up maybe some new things and I forget something that were said in there. Always, always, always be positive because that reflects on how you feel about the business and it comes across when you are talking to people. If you are negative about "I do not think I can get this one." My biggest thing sometimes is cold calling people and...

Ameen: You still do that?

Mary: Yes. I make myself to do it and I hate but I will do it. It is not really a cold call. It is kind of a warm call because it is...

Ameen: But you are calling a lead or you are just calling out of the phone book?

Mary: No, I am calling leads actually.

Ameen: Okay.

Mary: So, I am not like cold. That is why I am saying it is more of a warm call but there is still, I mean you are in competition with whoever else got the lead. It is not just one person getting the lead. But I do not spend that much on leads. I cover and make more than what I spent on anything. So I think that is kind of what you have to look at though. How much you are going to spend in marketing and things like that and what you are getting, what you are making from it because you do not want to spend all your money that you are making on marketing, leads and everything else then you are not making anything.

Ameen: It is funny that you said that the biggest thing you got out of the book was the business plan. I hear a lot of other comments about the book that there are so many marketing tools and I did not know about the unique selling propositioning concept or I did not know about this. But not too many people say about the business plan and the conversion percentages. They do not really talk about that. A lot of people they just gloss over that and I think they miss that but it is one of the most important aspects of the book.

Mary: I think it is the most important thing because you have to know what your goal is. I mean you have to set your goal and you have to know what it is. If you are not focused on what you have to do to get there then how are you going to get there?

Ameen: Right, exactly. So it does seem that you do have a couple of niches that you are working and you are bringing in a couple more. You might even be a little bit over extended right now then you get some help in.

Mary: I am overextended.

Ameen: But it is a good problem to have.

Mary: It is until it starts affecting your service. That is the only thing that I do not want it to do is affect because if it starts affecting your service then you are not really helping yourself.

Ameen: Now have you created a unique selling proposition?

Mary: A unique selling proposition as to how I sell the loan when I get the application or?

Ameen: Like the reason a prospect should choose you over any other mortgage company?

Mary: Of course, because we are mortgage bank and we have so many more lenders and so many loan programs and can get the lower rates in the whole country basically from all the lenders that we have versus other brokers and mortgage shops that have to shot the rate out to those lenders plus we only pull your credit once versus brokers and mortgage shops that have to pull it and then send it to the lender who would then return. Usually, he had to pull it again because they cannot use that credit report that was hold before and so our credit report is good for 120 days on existing, 180 on the construction and we have a lot of other things too like they can lock and do a free float down 15 days before closing if the rates get better. So I mean there is a lot. It depends on the person I am talking to and how I feel it.

Ameen: What are you planning for the future?

Mary: I am planning on taking a vacation. Actually, I am planning on hiring an assistant who can take over a lot of the things that I am doing so I can go out and make more contacts. Do these committees that I am going to be on with this Association of Home Builders in Birmingham and do more things and if I need to hire two assistants if I get that much business then I will. My goal is to not just double income next year but make more than that, probably triple or more than what my income was last year.

Ameen: Yes, I am sure you can afford a couple of assistants if you triple.

Mary: Right, I am just going to branch out. I am just going to have fun. That is the whole thing. I like it. I love the business. I like working with people. I love helping them get out of a bad situation. What really irritate me are some other loan people that have just to get the loan and have put people in a bad situation that it is hard for them to get out of. It just makes me feel good to help those people out.

Ameen: One thing I got from one of your e-mails was that the business is actually better now because of the way market is and the way the mortgage industry is going.

Mary: For me. It is for me because there are so many business, brokers and mortgage shops going out of business and like a realtor would call their mortgage person and they are no longer there or the shop is closed. This is the best time to pick up people right now. I am telling you just get your flyers and everything out on what you can offer those realtors and get them out there because they are looking right now. They are looking and the best time to convert him to over to you.

Ameen: Okay, that is all I have for you today, Mary. I really appreciate you taking the time and answering all of my questions.

Mary: Well, thank you.

Ameen: And I wish you the best luck and if you need to anything, please let us. Now we are here to support you.

Mary: Okay, thank you so much.

Ameen: Alright, thanks Mary. Have a good night.

Mary: Okay. Bye, bye.

Ameen: Bye.