



6 client types every new agent should mentally prepare for

As a new agent, you'll likely meet all sorts of different clients and personalities. Knowing how to approach each personality type will help you better communicate and navigate obstacles

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I joked with one of my office managers that if it weren't for the people and paperwork, I probably would like my job. Of course, I was kidding. I do like my job! But there are days when clients can [drive you over the edge](#).

It might be the phone call from a client shouting on the other end because an agent just showed their house to a buyer but forgot to close the back door, which allowed the owner's cat to escape. Or, maybe your patience has worn thin with the clients who can't make up their minds about making an offer on a property because they lack the confidence needed to move forward.

What about the [seller clients](#) who obnoxiously tell you precisely what to do to get their home sold?

Client behaviors and the issues they can cause for agents, brokers and others in a real estate transaction are becoming more significant and [challenging to manage](#). For agents and their brokers, it's essential to know the personality of clients and prospects.

You must know whom you are dealing with and how to interact and [communicate with them correctly](#), so your relationships are not negatively impacted because of something you say or do.

Numerous types of personalities become our clients. They often require us to become chameleons to work effectively with them and see them through to the [end of the transaction](#).

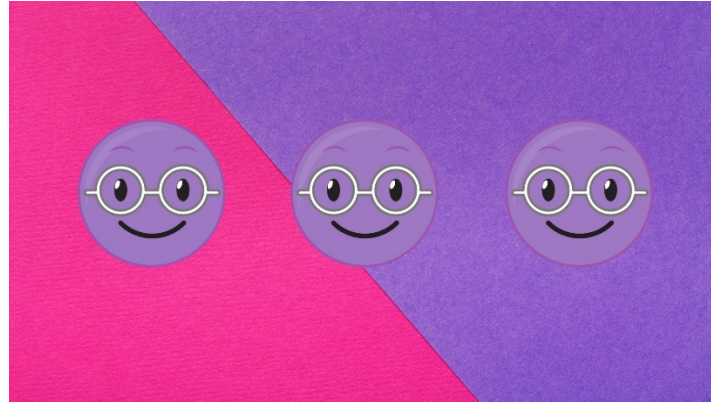
6 types of challenging clients

Several years ago, I wrote a course called "Managing Transaction Behavior." I wanted to provide [a class for agents](#) to understand client behavior better and learn how to work with challenging and problematic individuals.

In developing the course, I identified six types of challenging clients agents might face in their businesses. The six categories have personality traits that range from quiet and reserved to loud and explosive.

At some point in your real estate career, you will more than likely have to work with one or more of these client personality groups. The following is a brief overview of each personality type and ideas on how you can best work with them.

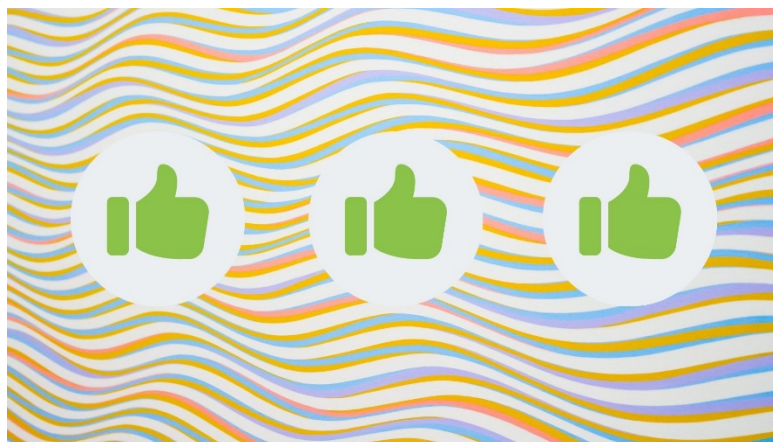
1. The 'know-it-all' client



- This type of client will come across as knowing everything about anything, and they will be the dominant voice in any conversation.
- You can provide these clients with your expert counsel and professional experience, but they will always want you to know they know more than you do. These clients' know-it-all attitudes bring their egos front and center.
- Ask a lot of questions about what they say and how they say it. The keywords are “a lot” because you will find they will quickly “hit bottom” as they will have nothing else to throw at you. They do not have the depth of knowledge you possess as a real estate professional.
- Take a “curious attitude” and ask more specific questions until they start making big generalizations. Eventually, they will realize they don't know as much as they thought they did.

Be careful in how you handle the “know-it-all” client. You must be careful not to step on their egos. The ego is enormous, and if they feel you are trying to deflate it, they will quickly turn away from you. You want to derail bad ideas, but you do not want to embarrass them.

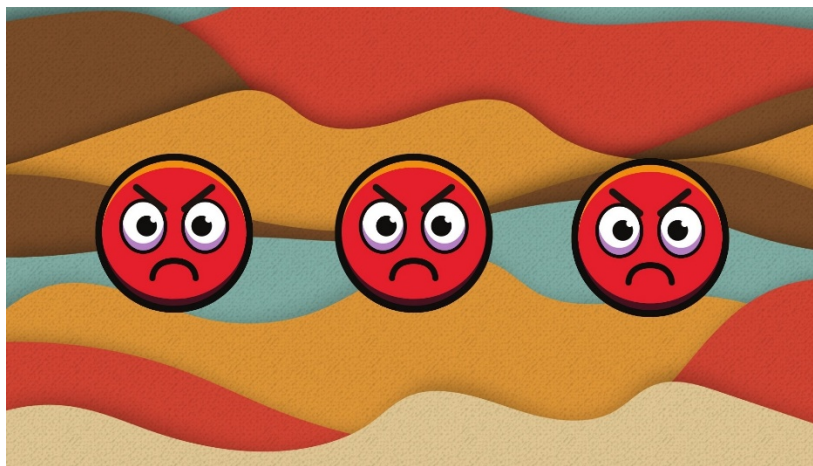
2. The 'yes, of course' client



- These clients tend to be highly agreeable to everything but slow to make up their minds on a decision that they must make. They have a people-pleasing tendency that might hinder their ability to provide you with honest, valuable feedback to move forward in a transaction.
- To handle this group the right way, make it safe for them to be honest with you. They need to feel they can trust you.
- There will be no relationship consequence if they say something contradictory to you or about something or someone.

It will be important you provide a safe environment for them, so they perceive you as sensitive. For example, you might want to say, "If the houses we look at this afternoon are not a good fit for you, Mr. or Ms. Jones, it's OK to tell me."

3. The 'no way!' client

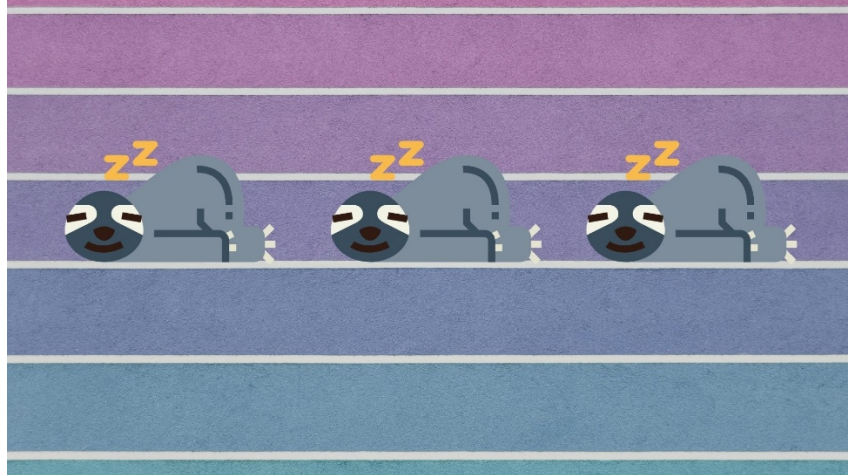


- This client will probably find something wrong with every property you show him or her.
- Talk about glass-half-empty types! These clients always tend to be discouraging and pessimistic. As [buyers](#), they will probably not be happy with any home you present to them. As sellers, they might dismiss any idea you give to them to market their house.
- You need to break them out of their negativity. These clients will always lean to the negative side of things. Try to steer them toward the positive.

I have found the best way to work with them is to use what I call the "pen and paper approach." To get them to make a smart decision, use a pen and paper, and list the positives and negatives of whatever subject you are addressing at the time.

They might be contemplating a home they are thinking about purchasing or a [specific marketing plan](#) you are presenting to get a buyer to make an offer on their house. Always begin with the negative points first when creating the list. Then, refocus their attention on the positives so they will be better able to make a more objective decision.

4. The 'do nothing' client



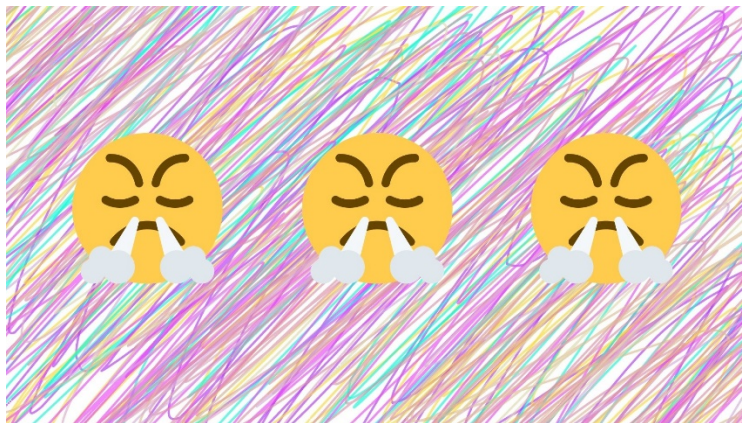
- This client tells you nothing and provides no feedback, verbal or nonverbal. They will stay quiet, and they will drive you crazy with their silence.
- Their first response to any question you ask them is often, “I don’t know.” At times, you will feel like you need a crowbar to get anything out of them. If you are a conversational person, you might become frustrated with this group.

You will need to determine how they feel about a particular situation and offer statements to force an answer out of them. Like the “no way” clients, use the pen and paper approach with these individuals.

You will likely need to guess the “pluses and minuses” on the lists you create rather than relying on them to tell you.

For example, you might want to say to them, “This home has an open floor plan with the kitchen and living room. I’m guessing that’s a positive for you, right?”

5. The ‘pit bull’ client



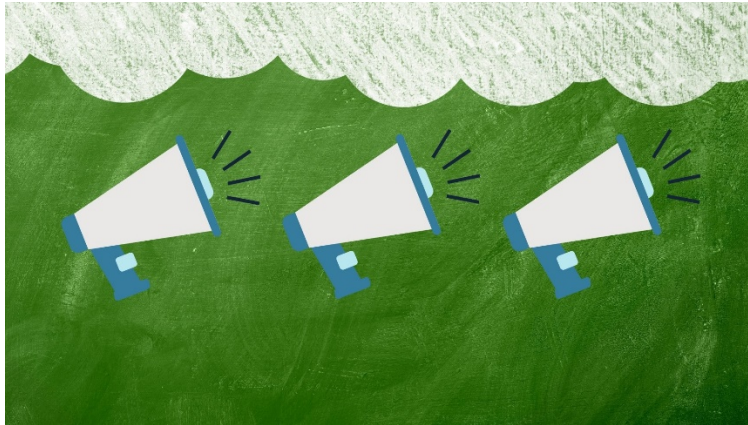
- I decided to name them Pit Bullies because their characteristics are similar to a pit bulldog. Pit bulls are loud barkers, and they never stop making noise when they are upset or want something. These clients are always going to be pushy, ruthless and loud.
- They will go off on a rant when something upsets them.

- They demand immediate action.
- They will be impatient in waiting for you to give them an answer.
- If they call you on the phone and leave you a voicemail, I am confident their message will have an upsetting tone because you could not take their call.

To work with this type of client, I would encourage you to give them 60 seconds to vent — no more, no less. After the 60-second tirade, interrupt your client, and highlight some of their points to show [you were listening](#) and reassure them that you're on the same side.

For example, “Mr. Smith, we both care about getting the most for your property. I heard you say ...” Then, repeat three of the statements you heard. Why three? Because after three statements, they will feel you are hearing what they are saying.

6. The ‘thermo-nuclear’ client



- These are the most difficult of the six client groups. Like a nuclear explosion, all hell breaks loose! You will want to find shelter immediately. They have unprovoked rages that seem disproportionate to the issue at hand.
- Their rants can be about anything, anyone or everything.
- You cannot give them any time to vent. They will feed on negative energy, and it will only provide them with [more fuel to get angrier](#).
- You will need to immediately raise your voice to interrupt them, using their name. For example, “Mrs. Baker, I care. You don’t have to feel this way. We’re going to work this out.”
- Don’t tell them to calm down, as you will only make them more furious. Instead, you should step back, and take a deep breath, then interrupt the client so it breaks the venting. Continue the conversation in your normal tone, and use a statement like, “Let’s take a moment and talk about it.”

It’s rare, but sometimes a [client will become abusive](#). They could be mentally or emotionally unstable and might place you at either professional or personal risk. Please consult your broker if you feel physically threatened or abused in any way. Contact 911 immediately if you fear imminent danger.

11 tips for all clients

With all six of these groups, you must listen to determine their needs, wants and concerns. It also might take some creative solutions to make them happy and get them to a decision or other significant point in their real estate transaction.

With all of them, you should:

- Listen to them. Listening should be your biggest priority in any conversation.
- Find out what are their concerns, fears, hopes, etc.
- Allow them to express their emotions.
- Educate them on the market and the current market conditions by sharing specific information on active, pending, and closed houses.
- Ensure they clearly understand the real estate transaction process — from initial offer to closing.
- Remember that you are a professional, and you know what you are doing. Your clients rely on you for your expertise.
- Develop a creative solution to address an issue with your client.
- Ask for assistance from others who are experts in a particular area or skill.
- Do not be afraid to try something different to get the result you and your client want.
- [Be empathetic](#) to their needs. Try to put yourself in their shoes.
- Try to relate to a client and set your preferences aside.

Being armed with the knowledge of the different types of clients will equip you to serve them well. Understanding how best to navigate obstacles to [better communicate](#) with the different types of people in the world is yet another critical contributing factor to your real estate success.