



Alicia Trevino  
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“So many people are scared to make a change, but it’s so worth it! It’s worth rocking the boat.”

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and snagged a \$3.5 million oceanfront listing.

“We have to deal with numbers that we never had to deal with in the past,” says Rike. “Two years ago, we had a lot for sale for \$50,000. We couldn’t sell it. We just put it back on the market last week for \$179,000, and we have a full-price contract. It’s supply and demand.”

## Train your staff to be like you

Alicia Trevino

When Trevino left a large franchise to start her own company in November 2004, she didn’t want to be a slave to her work. At the franchise, she’d scored big—attaining No. 1 in units closed in Texas—by farming a relatively small area of 5,000 homes. Now, as a sole proprietor, she was challenged to maintain both her market share and her reputation for stellar service.

Her solution: Build a team she could trust to do things exactly as she would. That meant providing intensive training on how to negotiate, follow through, and be proactive. Trevino’s team members must maintain a strong knowledge of the marketplace, be prompt with return calls, and be courteous and respectful at all times.

Within a few months of opening her business, Trevino says, she’d climbed to No. 3 in her market. Today, she has the most

pending sales in her small farm area, Mesquite, she says.

Trevino holds weekly meetings with her 12-member staff, as well as one-on-one meetings with each team member. It’s one big happy family—literally, since almost half her staff *is* family. Her mother, Isabel Espinosa, is the broker; her husband of 20 years, Martin, handles quality control and the finances; and her sister and brother-in-law, Maria and Paul Ammerman, are both showing specialists. Even her two children, Ashley, 18, and Christian, 13, help out in the business, and Ashley is working to earn her license.

Making the change from being a top producer at a large franchise to starting a new company was the hardest thing Trevino’s ever had to do, she says. But overcoming her fear is part of what has made her current success so sweet.

Starting the business actually helped her gain more balance in her life, she says. “I used to go out on listing appointments five days a week, usually at 6:30 at night, and get home at 8:30 at night. I was the one who did everything. Now, I have a support staff and I have normal hours, yet I still meet the needs of my clients.” RM

### When should you consider building a team?

*The minute you get serious about becoming a superstar. These top performers say a team can help you overcome service gaps and take your business to the next level.*

“When you go to the doctor, he doesn’t take your blood pressure or your temperature,” says Linda Rike, who has three full-time assistants and one part-timer. “I don’t think you can do it all, unless you’re willing to do fewer transactions.”

Alicia Trevino has found that assistants with corporate experience typically have the attention to detail she’s looking for.

Bruce Hardie says he looks for “intrapreneurs”—people who are “happy to achieve their dreams within the confines of yours. They don’t have this burning desire to be the lead guy or gal.”