

# TOP AGENT MAGAZINE



ANNIE SMITH

Annie Smith always knew that she wanted to be a REALTOR®. While many agents transition to the industry later in life, Annie had a passion for people and for homes since childhood. After graduating from Portland State University in 2005 with a degree in psychology, Annie leapt headlong into the market. Now, a decade later, she is a Portland Magazine Five Star Agent for five years running and a 2014 recipient of America's Most Honored Professionals.

Of course, launching her dream career right out of college didn't come without challenges. To account for her age and limited experience, Annie worked tirelessly to prove herself to potential clients. With every successful transaction, Annie was able to point to evidence of her talents and determination. Having purchased her own home before launching her career, she also enjoyed some practical exposure to how the process worked—knowledge she put to good use as she accrued her client base. "I sold myself on being energetic and hardworking," she recounts. "Although I looked young and was just getting started, it ultimately was a good lesson. I really had to earn my business."

Not long after Annie joined the industry, the economic downturn took its toll. Having learned from the outset that securing business required measures above and beyond, Annie pushed through and came out successfully on the other side. "I have a lot of respect for agents that made it through the downturn," she reflects. "I know that I became a better agent for it. You really had to work extra hard to stand out and earn your successes. Just like today, you have to get creative."

Creativity, diligence, and personal connection are the pillars of Annie's professional success. With 90% of her business coming from referrals, it's clear that Annie makes a personal impact on those she serves. Whether it's creative holiday mailers like her recent send outs—a small bottle of Sriracha hot sauce enclosed with a mailer that reads If you like things hot and spicy, you'll love the

current real estate market!—or whether it's her relaxed yet confident demeanor, Annie values quality over quantity when it comes to her business. "I want clients to feel comfortable, like they have a friend in their corner trying to get them the best deal," she says. "No matter how many offers we have to write, I won't push clients just to get a paycheck. I'm in it for long-term results and the satisfaction of my clients."

In the spirit of putting customers first, Annie doesn't limit her territory or the type of transaction she undertakes. "I aim to work with good people, wherever they may be and whatever they're looking for," she says. Whether it's fielding calls seven days a week, coordinating with photographers, negotiating a deal, or assigning market value, Annie's decade of success was built upon an irrepressible work ethic and recognition of the multifaceted nature of the business. "There's a lot more that goes into being an agent than what's on paper. It's more than just showing a few houses over the weekend. It's a 24/7 commitment to your clients."

While Annie has spent a decade building her business, today her childhood exuberance for the industry remains intact. "If you find the right home for a family, it becomes a part of who they are, their everyday memories, what their kids look back on," she says. "That's why I do this job. It helps me sleep well at night knowing I'm making a difference in people's lives."



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