

# Six Quick Steps to My Best Year

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## 1. The ABC Whiteboard

Simple but powerful in keeping me focused. I have a dry erase whiteboard directly across from my desk with A, B, C client columns. **A clients** are going to purchase or sell in the next 30 days. **B clients** will buy or sell in 30-60 days (they're going through the loan process, preparing their home for sale or waiting for some event to happen like the start of a job or end of a lease). **C clients** are going to buy or sell in the next 6 months. **D's** are on my radar but incubating. These ABC's keep me laser focused on the right people. All incoming leads get an ABC ranking. It's great fun to move them up the ranks to pending then sold.

## 2. Refined and Expanded Affiliate Team

My affiliate team includes a lender, an inspector, an appraiser, a general contractor, a designer, a photographer and a title officer that closes my transactions. I met with each one and discussed **roles, expectations and systems** that could streamline our transactions. By deepening these relationships, we saved tons of time and I was able to delegate many time-consuming tasks on my checklists. For example, once a listing is signed, my designer meets with my clients, develops a list to prepare the home for the market then meets with the contractor or necessary subs and supervises the work. Having the right affiliate team members working together made a huge difference this year. Synergy mattered.

## 3. Keeping Score

I'm highly competitive and want to have running totals of my sales so I can see where I am at all times. We created a computer program to track all of our business on a monthly basis with yearly totals. So we record each month in columns: date closed, type (buyer, seller, tenant, referral), source of business, street address, zip code, sold price, total commission, agent dollar, company dollar, E&O (etc), referral amount paid out. The program totals by month and year to date and will store the data over time so we can see how we do year over year. Measuring led to increase.

## 4. Market Reports

Every month we pull **market sales data** by price band and zip code. We post them on our website ([www.WestAustin.com](http://www.WestAustin.com)), use them at buyer consultations, and listing appointments, blog the summary and send as a drip to past clients.

Knowing these numbers keeps me on top of the market and helps me negotiate and win business. Tracking data kept us sharp and attracted buyers and sellers.

## 5. Social Media

I've had a blast with social media last year and did a good bit of business from my personal sites. Facebook can be a time suck if you aren't disciplined, but it can also keep you in front of clients and your sphere when a phone call, visit or note is important. Real estate happens with life changes—births, deaths, weddings, job changes. All of these get posted on Facebook. I keep real estate to a minimum on my personal page and keep it focused on my real friends, past clients, high school friends, etc. Reconnecting with old friends and past clients was golden this past year.

## 6. Removed Road Blocks

This past year, I got rid of two things that were slowing me down, draining my energy and refocusing my attention. I hired a new property manager and a new yard crew. Small changes made a HUGE difference. If it bugs you, change it. We all know who or what those roadblocks are. Time to start afresh.

I hope this year is one of your best ever. Please let me know if I can do anything to help you achieve your goals, and keep me in mind when you have an Austin referral.

Fondly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laura". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "L" and a trailing flourish.

Laura Duggan, CRS  
Austin, Texas

Laura Duggan, CRS is Broker/Owner of West Austin Properties in Austin, Texas. She is former President of the Council of Real Estate Brokerage Managers, a StarPower Agent, a national speaker and a trainer and mentor to agents across the country. Laura provides a MONTHLY email on real estate, focusing on successful strategies, trends and lessons on how to live a balanced life. More information on Laura can be found at [WestAustin.com](http://WestAustin.com).