

The exceptional  
agent's guide to

# Handling enquiries



Every phone call or email you receive could be from your client's dream buyer or tenant. Or it could be your next vendor or landlord. How your team handle enquiries could be the difference between success and failure.

# What does it take to be Exceptional?



For the 2019 Best Estate Agent Guide, the Property Academy has undertaken over 50,000 mystery shops of estate agency branches to see how the very best agents handle email and phone enquiries. Combined with Rightmove's assessment of over 1 million property listings, this is the largest independent assessment of the industry. The top 5% of agents are then listed in the Guide as "Exceptional".

**When it comes to telephone enquiries, some of the things an exceptional agent does are:**

- Answers every call
- Asks a caller's name, phone number and email address
- Asks about a caller's current situation
- Asks about their property requirements
- Gives their own name

**For email enquiries, an exceptional agent:**

- Responds to all emails and, usually, within a working hour
- Sends a personalised email - not just a generic response
- Thanks the person enquiring
- Suggests next steps and provides contact details

**This guide is designed to help your branch make steps towards becoming exceptional at handling enquiries. Or if you're already exceptional - how to stay on top.**

# 9 things to do on every phone call



**Penny Blake** - International customer experience trainer

**You're only as good as your worst colleague on a bad day. Do you want that to be the experience someone has when they contact your agency?**

Here are 9 things to do on every phone call to move towards delivering an exceptional experience, every time.

- 1 Pick up within 3 rings.** Even if you're not in the office, it's easy to divert calls to your mobile. That's easy to set up on any phone system.
- 2 Give your name** as part of a polite greeting. Ask for their name, too.
- 3 Acknowledge the customer's situation**, e.g. "I'm sorry you have experienced xyz," or "Certainly I can help you with xyz".
- 4 Make listening noises throughout.** Without the benefit of body language, this is one of the main ways you can reassure somebody you're listening.
- 5 Clarify and confirm points** where appropriate, to show that you're listening and understanding the caller.
- 6 Use the customer's name** to build rapport – but use it sparingly. Up to 3 times works best – at the beginning, during and at the end of the call.
- 7 Offer a solution at the end** and state the way forward. The customer shouldn't have to ask you about next steps, they should be clear.
- 8 Ask if there's anything else** you can help with.
- 9 Remember your manners** at the end of the call. **Say thank you** and use their name.



Watch a recording of Penny's full 30 minute training webinar at:  
[hub.rightmove.co.uk/pennyblake](https://hub.rightmove.co.uk/pennyblake)

# 7 questions to truly understand every applicant



**Julian O'Dell** - Agency trainer

With sales harder to come by, can you afford your staff who pick up the phone to be merely polite dispensers of information? By asking the right questions they can be effective salespeople instead – getting you to a point where more of your applicants make you money instead of costing you money.

Your staff shouldn't let any caller off the phone without doing a full qualification of their needs. These **7 questions** can help you unpick a caller's full situation and help you to deliver an exceptional service.

*"What's prompting you to consider moving?"*

*"What sort of timescale are you working to?"*

*"What's the situation regarding your own property?"*

*"How far have you got in arranging finance on your purchase/ did you go about calculating the likely rent you will pay?"*

*"Describe your ideal home to me..."*

*"What if the property didn't have X, might you still consider it?"*

*"If I found you the absolutely perfect property, what is the very maximum you'd be prepared to pay for it?"*



Watch a recording of Julian's full 45 minute training webinar at:  
[hub.rightmove.co.uk/Julian](https://hub.rightmove.co.uk/Julian)

# Hear 'buyer', think... 'vendor or landlord'

Handling applicant enquiries well is not only going to give you a better result for your vendor or landlord. It could also help you unearth your next vendor or landlord, just by asking the right questions.

Did you know? Only **27% of agents** acknowledge an instruction opportunity from a buyer in their patch that was made obvious from the email lead<sup>1</sup>.

All the opportunities you need could already be in front of you. Here are 3 ways you can make the most of them using your Rightmove tools.

## 1. Spot opportunities in your inbox

If a Rightmove email applicant says that they have a property to sell or let that isn't yet on the market, we flag this in the subject line of the email so you can jump on these valuable leads straight away. It'll drop into your inbox with "Potential Valuation" and the outcode in the subject line.

Train your staff to contact these applicants and qualify them as soon as possible – before your competitor does.

**Subject:** Potential valuation: Kings Avenue - Buyer from MK4


**From:** Rightmove User Manager [mailto:[autoresponder@rightmove.com](mailto:autoresponder@rightmove.com)]  
**Sent:** Monday, 24 September 2018 12:45 PM  
**To:** sales  
**Subject:** Potential valuation: Kings Avenue - Buyer from MK4

**rightmove**

**Contact details**  
Mr John Smith  
of 23 Townner Hall road  
[john.smith@gmail.com](mailto:john.smith@gmail.com)  
077345 87312

**Your opportunities**

Has a **property to sell**: yes, it is not yet on the market  
Wants to **view this property**



4 bed semi-detached house for sale  
765, Burnage Lane, Heaton Mersey, M19 1RW  
Guide Price £395,000  
Status: Available  
6888\_101669004492  
[View property on Rightmove](#)

Most recent search criteria: Properties from Joules Estate Agency, Heaton Mersey

**Additional Comments**  
"Hello - are you doing viewings this weekend (29th/30th September)? I'm in work this afternoon so might not be able to pick up the phone if you try to call. Please email instead. Thanks John."

**Contact Mr John Smith now**  
[john.smith@gmail.com](mailto:john.smith@gmail.com)  
077345 87312

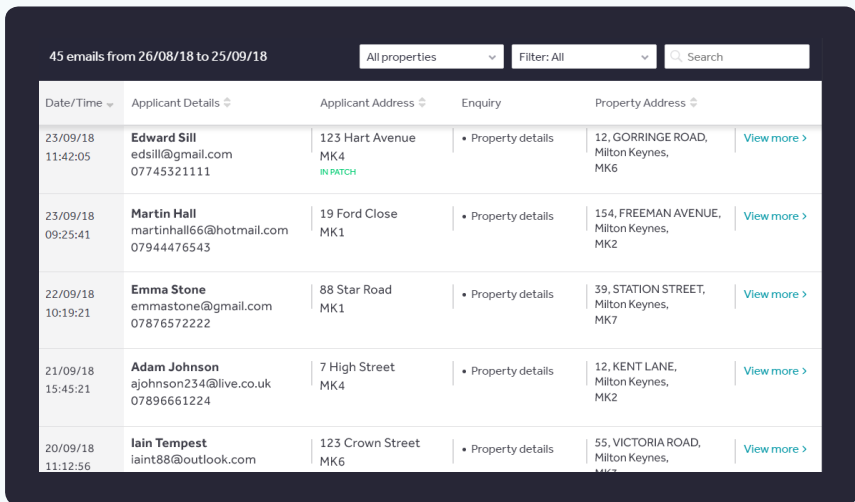
Source: 1. Rightmove mystery shopping of over 500 agents, 2018.

## 2. Revisit all your applicants

Your Leads Report summary makes it easy to see at a glance how many people sending you a Rightmove lead have requested an appraisal, so that you can prioritise them for follow up.

We know, though, that most people won't admit they have a property to sell or let. To help you prioritise who to call, we highlight where an applicant is living in your branch's patch. We also include all the notes submitted in the enquiry so you can scan through for any that mention needing to sell first.

Your Lead Reports can come in handy as a calling list to truly qualify every applicant and identify those "hidden" vendors or landlords. The data stays available for 12 months so it's a great source of data to revisit for a calling list when you're looking to drum up new business.



The screenshot shows a web interface for a 'Leads Report'. At the top, it displays '45 emails from 26/08/18 to 25/09/18'. Below this are filters for 'All properties' and 'Filter: All', along with a search bar. The main content is a table with five columns: 'Date/Time', 'Applicant Details', 'Applicant Address', 'Enquiry', and 'Property Address'. Each row represents an applicant, with a 'View more >' link at the end of each row. The first row for 'Edward Sill' has 'MK4' in green with 'IN PATCH' below it. The other rows do not have this highlight.

Date/Time	Applicant Details	Applicant Address	Enquiry	Property Address	
23/09/18 11:42:05	<b>Edward Sill</b> edsill@gmail.com 07745321111	123 Hart Avenue MK4 IN PATCH	• Property details	12, GORRING ROAD, Milton Keynes, MK6	<a href="#">View more &gt;</a>
23/09/18 09:25:41	<b>Martin Hall</b> martinhall66@hotmail.com 07944476543	19 Ford Close MK1	• Property details	154, FREEMAN AVENUE, Milton Keynes, MK2	<a href="#">View more &gt;</a>
22/09/18 10:19:21	<b>Emma Stone</b> emmastone@gmail.com 07876572222	88 Star Road MK1	• Property details	39, STATION STREET, Milton Keynes, MK7	<a href="#">View more &gt;</a>
21/09/18 15:45:21	<b>Adam Johnson</b> ajohnson234@live.co.uk 07896661224	7 High Street MK4	• Property details	12, KENT LANE, Milton Keynes, MK2	<a href="#">View more &gt;</a>
20/09/18 11:12:56	<b>Iain Tempest</b> iaint88@outlook.com	123 Crown Street MK6	• Property details	55, VICTORIA ROAD, Milton Keynes, MK2	<a href="#">View more &gt;</a>

## 3. Set up call recording to train your team

By setting up free call recording, you can join the **40% of agents** who get invaluable insight into every one of their Rightmove calls. Agents find listening back to calls a useful way to coach staff and identify best practice.

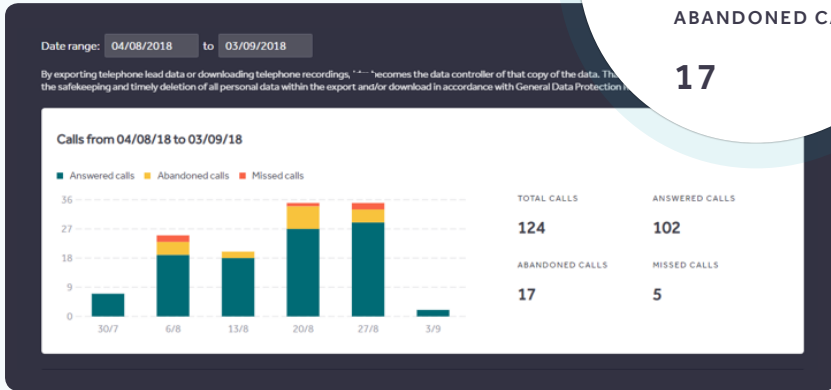
Your Telephone Leads report also highlights your number of missed calls, so you can identify where your business' systems and processes might require improvement to help you maximise every opportunity.

MISSED CALLS

**5**

ABANDONED CALLS

**17**



**EXPERT'S VIEW**

**All the leads you need could be under your nose**

Josh Phegan - Global real estate trainer



Many agents are struggling to get through the door against agents advertising low headline fees. To get around this, focus on the potential business you've already got in your lap.

Call your past clients for an annual check-up. Contact everyone that's ever sent you an enquiry. Ask if they've found anything yet. No? Then help them. Yes? Ask if it's rented, or what happened to the place they moved from. Asking the right questions can unearth any number of opportunities.



Watch the replay of Josh's webinar on how to compete against lower fee agents: [hub.rightmove.co.uk/josh](https://hub.rightmove.co.uk/josh)

# Train your team to handle enquiries more effectively

We run a regular lead handling webinars using expert industry trainers. They go into a lot more detail on the points mentioned here and are ideal for new members of staff or experienced employees in need of a refresher.

Encourage your team to sign up for a free training session at:

[Hub.rightmove.co.uk/webinars](https://Hub.rightmove.co.uk/webinars)



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