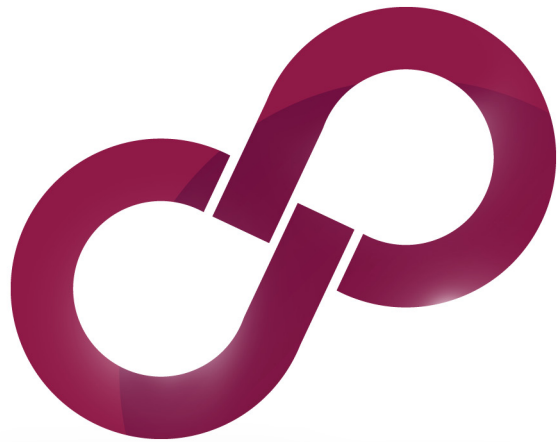




infinity  
leadership



Dear Reader,

If you've chosen real estate as your profession, you're part of a group of people who combine an intimate vertical knowledge with a tireless work ethic and selfless desire to help transact and protect the dream of home ownership. Regardless of what your precise role is in the process - broker, REALTOR®, or franchise owner, you made the conscious decision to spend your time, and a great deal of it, working in real estate.

That makes you special.

Real estate isn't a 9-5 job. It's not a 5-day a week profession. Nor six. These days, as a result of the Internet, people interact with real estate 24/7. Consumers fire off emails day and night, send requests, and can acquire a world of information at the click of a button.

To compete, to stay on top, to remain relevant and be profitable, today's real estate professional must ballet dance their way en pointe and spring into action at a moments notice.

For many, maintaining the regime to sustain such a demanding career and balance it with a healthy lifestyle is often considered the greatest challenge.

We understand. We've been there. As agents. As managers, as brokers, and as executives charged to run the largest real estate franchise in the world. We understand demanding clients, 80-hour work weeks, ever changing technologies, shifting markets and fierce competition. We know what it takes to go from nothing to building a thriving business. But we also know what can happen when someone attempts this on their own, with no support, no mentorship, no direction, outdated tools and no leadership.

We also know what can happen to a person when their rise up the success ladder is built on the rungs of personal sacrifices.

It's why we built Intero. We believe that true success extends beyond the accumulation of financial wealth which can really only ever be achieved and sustained when there is complete balance in a person's life. For us, this is a critical objective and something we feel obligated to providing those who dedicate their lives to this amazing profession.

Intero is an Italian word that translates to "entire" or "whole" and serves as the core component of basic brand promise to supply everyone attached to our company with everything needed to attain and sustain a complete career.

We chose to publish this simple manifesto to share some of our secrets, our beliefs, our passions and ideas on how we do that at Intero.

We invite you to read it and share your thoughts with us. And if desired, visit us to learn more about how we can help you achieve your greatest potential through real estate.

Gino. Bob. Tom. JT.





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# Leadership

**Who really drives a bus? Is getting from point A to point B determined by the guy who sits behind the wheel? Or by the 40 people sitting in the seats? Think of the path of a company's success as a journey...say, St. Louis to San Jose. You could say that without those 40 people who bought a ticket there would be no trip—and no reason for it. The bus would sit idle. Regardless of how well the driver knows the route.**

So. What is leadership and what is a leader's function?

Smart, famous people have waxed poetic about what leadership is. History is filled with those words. Forests have donated their trees to make the reams of paper devoted to the billions of words written on what leadership is.

We believe that perhaps the most perfect articulation of leadership came from Ralph Nader: "I start with the premise that the function of leadership is to produce more leaders, not more followers."

In its utter simplicity, this is the heartbeat of leadership for Intero.

Never mind the qualifications that describe the Executive Leadership Team who founded our firm. The education and experience they have isn't rare. The business world is filled with smart experienced people who had a vision, and built successful companies. But were they leaders? Did they inspire others within their organization to also be leaders? Or, as in so many cases, did they create an organizational chart filled with followers?

Among the many accomplishments that have occurred here at Intero, one unusual footnote regards the speed to which we have grown. This didn't occur by accident. Nor was it a result of building a revolutionary product that fascinated the world.

What we did and do every single day is far more sublime. It defines us and it defines what we believe leadership is all about: the empowerment of our people—our agents, our employees. This has resulted in a company filled with something more profound than independent entrepreneurs. Intero is a company comprised of leaders. Leaders who inspire their customers—the people who buy and sell real estate—to feel good about working with them.

Alan Keith, former Genentech executive, said this: "Leadership is ultimately about creating a way for people to contribute to making something extraordinary happen."

When you have hundreds, thousands or tens of thousands of people making something extraordinary, an indescribable event occurs which translates into a feeling. That collective



# Leadership

feeling creates a powerful brand. And that's the most dominant and formidable force possible in business.

We witness the power of brand every day when looking at Apple, the computer company that is literally right next door to our corporate offices. Steve Jobs, inspired leadership from everyone at his organization, and that bled into the products they built. They make every single user feel as if they are leaders in their right, simply by possessing their product.

The results of that domino effect have been witnessed across the globe.

When an Intero agent is belly-to-belly with a client, or attending a local, regional or national conference or training event, when that agent is just walking in his or her community, they are empowered to think like, act like and *be* leaders. They then

become the keepers of a powerful brand that creates new business opportunities at every turn.

We've developed something at Intero we call "F-7." Faith. Family. Friends. Fitness. Finance. Fun. Fellowship. These comprise the essence of a person. A complete being. Feeding these elements—working at them, empowering them—turns ordinary men and women who simply clock in on a job into *leaders*. Leaders in charge of every aspect of their lives.

Making extraordinary things happen is what every human being hopes to accomplish in his or her lifetime. Our job is to show how that's possible. And then sit back and watch them do it. Extraordinary things happen when leaders lead leaders. It's the perfect circle of life and the magic that makes a good business, a great company and a loved and respected brand.



# Financial Management <sup>5</sup>

**C**an't see it? Then you can't measure it. Can't measure it? Then you can't improve it. Don't improve it? Might as well close up shop. Because your fiercest competitor is most certainly measuring, improving and using what they learn to grab *your* share of the pie.

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So often in the real estate business, managers use a hope-and-pray approach to collecting and managing financial information. Trusting bookkeepers to keep track of data. And then panicking when there is a crisis.

That's like jumping from a plane and then realizing you don't have a parachute. Or piloting a ship into a typhoon with no radar... while wearing headphones and eyeshades.

A better approach is to keep your eyes and ears wide open on your plot strategy, making course changes based on current trends as they're happening. Most importantly, make sure the crew is in direct communication with command control so they execute their tasks with precision.

This approach keeps everyone focused, up to date and nips problems in the bud before they grow bigger, avoiding crises. And it nurtures growth.

At Interro, Recruiting, Retention, Personal Productivity and your Economic Business Model all have their own set of questions that must be answered when considering the Financial Management of your company. For instance, to be successful in Recruiting and Retention, a broker must have a handle on how many new contacts, appointments and new hires they have. And how many they are aspiring to.

Per Person Productivity seems obvious: you need to know each agent's number of sales, clients, listings and how those numbers fit into the goals you've set for the office. The Economic Business Model is where the overall picture is painted—where all the navigation aids—profit/loss, expenses, commissions, average sales prices, etc.—are compiled, crunched and calculated into a course that will bring your ship into port safe, sound, and successfully. In real time.

Might seem like a no-brainer. But to many it's not.

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# Recruiting & Retention

**Imagine a train. It's filled with top-producing REALTORS®. Agents, young and old, experienced and new. All are looking for—or are open to the idea of—a new place to hang their hats. A brokerage whose culture and brand gets them to where they want to go. Career-wise. And in life.**

The Talent Train. It's screaming down the tracks. Every car filled to capacity.

How do you convince these passengers to step off at your station? That's an art called *recruiting*. Once at the station, how do you get them to not re-board the train? That's called *retention*.

You can't do it with a magic pill. There's no foolproof formula. And shortcuts never lead to building a winning team. It takes hard work. Time. Compassion. And dedication.

We understood this from the first day we opened our doors in 2002. A great brand is only as good as its weakest link. And will be great when it can find the best, stimulate them, and make your brokerage their home.

We work at this. Hard.

Railroad crossings in sparsely-populated rural areas used to have X-shaped signs that said: "Stop. Look. Listen." These worked. Similarly, we believe in three-part approach to recruiting. But our words are "Source. Engage. Follow through."

*Sourcing* is done through networking to generate leads. Attending local realty board, Chamber of Commerce and community events. We use social media wisely with planned-out strategies that include Facebook, LinkedIn, etc. Like the train's conductor, a good recruiter has his or her eyes everywhere, constantly on their toes, aware of where the talent is, who on the train has it and how to escort them to your brand once they disembark at the station.

*Engaging* is like storytelling. Your brand needs a protagonist. Someone the reader or the recruit can relate too. Believe in. And buy



# Recruiting & Retention

into. We've learned that pairing current agents with potential ones provides the means of articulating our story in the most profound and personal way. Maybe it's an invite to a sales meeting. Or a training and education seminar.

When talent eventually asks "Why Intero?" The goal is having them answer it themselves.

*Following through* is more passive, but essential. Add a potential recruit to an email campaign. Engage them in social media. Friend them on Facebook. These tactics keep the brand top-of-mind, while not being overly aggressive or pushy.

Remember that bringing gifted people into the fold is not a one-time event. It's a process, one that requires constant attention. It can take days, weeks, months... sometimes years.

Know also that the Talent Train is chugging down the tracks, whistle-stopping by dozens of other stations. Others are looking to greet them as well. We've learned that most of the others don't view recruiting as a full-time job. We do.

All Aboard!



# Technology

**T**echnology. We toss that word around as a catch-all for everything new and exciting. Seems sensible. Because this digital world of ours is powered by “technologies” that didn’t even exist a generation ago.

While we all understand the implications of the word, it’s used with everything from hardware (like phones and computers) to work flow processes (QuickBooks, contact management, online marketing, social media—even branding).

But sometimes, the word can create apprehension—if not panic and rejection—for people in the real estate industry. Especially sales professionals. And rightly so. We’re not techies. We are service and information providers. People people. And we help those people buy and sell real estate. That’s not a technological event.

Intero’s Silicon Valley corporate office is literally within whispering distance of Apple’s main campus. Right next door. And while we certainly use the modern tools available to us, we view technology differently than most. It should be invisible. Even if we don’t understand it or how it

ticks, it should make our lives easier and more productive.

We believe in that approach for a reason: technology is *scary*. It’s a big concept that describes too many things, many of which we can’t see or hold.

Do you view an elevator as technology? Probably not. You simply know it as a box. You get in, push a button and Presto! You’re way up in the air. Who cares how it happened. It *did*.

Right?

Thinking of an elevator as just a box with buttons that takes you up and down allows you to forget about the *how* and concentrate on the *what*. No matter how fancy the elevator gets, it just moves you up and down.

The very same thing holds true when it comes to the many tools in real estate that we refer to as “technology.” Actually, they’re just boxes with buttons too. Really.



# Technology

Over the last few years we in real estate have been confronted by tons of technology. Web based. Mobile. Cloud-based. On and on...No wonder Realtors wait too long to adopt to these tools. We are paralyzed by the thought of having to learn how to work with all that new stuff.

So why not make things simple? Life is complicated enough.

In the nine years since we started our firm, we've held one thing sacred: don't complicate things for our agents. And this includes our approach to technology.

Of course, Intero is heavily vested in technology. We employ vendors and consultants who build applications and software that enable our agents to be competitive. Websites. Contact management. Email. Simple tools. Click a mouse: a file is

stored online. Shared with clients and colleagues. Right this instant. Saves time, saves money.

These are the simple — yet profound — things that technology can give us.

At Intero, we've given our technology a name. We call it Intero Andare ("on the go"). It's like that box you enter, press a button and end up 20 stories above the ground, Andare simplifies the technologies you need in today's business world and puts them in a neat, beautiful box that serves as our retail office space. Smart. Eco-friendly.

You step inside, turn on a switch. It lifts your career. Simple.

Sure. We *could* call that "technology." We just don't.



# Marketing

**N**ame a coffee shop. A brand of handbags. A DVD rental service. The immediate images of products and manufacturers that form in your mind result from an imprint that occurs in a relationship people have with these brands. The deep relationship you have with a brand or a product is never accidental. It's a result of a long, thought-out process that begins before an idea is launched. And continues throughout its lifespan.

The goal of any brand is to create that connection with its user which invariably includes knowing exactly who that is, what motivates them and what must occur to get the product, the service or the brand to resonate with its targeted customer.

How does a company do this? How do they know who their customer is? How do they ensure that their messaging will resonate? This is all accomplished through a complex process that we simply understand as marketing.

Marketing doesn't begin and end with the message. In fact, the message is simply the communication that occurs as a result of the research any firm does to achieve the kinetic knowledge they need about their customer base. This knowledge can be accumulated in numerous ways. Through tried, true and tested methods like surveys, focus groups and user testing. New digital processes include heat maps, analytics, forms and online surveys.

The bottom line is, when a firm learns about who their audience is and what they want and then folds that knowledge into their products and services...*that's* what marketing is about.

There's no question that a snazzy logo, a pretty package—whether it's a Tiffany & Co. blue box, a beautifully designed web site or an ear-worm jingle—can illicit an emotional response. But if any of these are going to actually work and create a deep emotional connection with the user, the marketer must be sure that what is being done is resonating.

Today, as a result of how many consumers are interacting with web sites rather than walking into stores, marketers have to go to greater marketing lengths to nail that connection. Especially since interactions with users and their brands often take place through a computer monitor rather than in person. In the scope of a real estate brokerage—fundamentally a belly-to-belly business—the reality is that much of the interaction between consumers



# Marketing

and real estate brands happens online. That's before they even meet face-to-face with a brokerage or agent.

So more than ever, marketing isn't relegated to how you present your company—or yourself—in an ad, a post card or a PR campaign. The deeper place to go is how brands—big brands or individual brands—interact with the public on many different, almost micro levels.

Take for instance a call to action on your web site that requires a user to fill out a form and click a button to send it in. Thinking through the elements of that form—from the copy that invites the user in, to the number of fields, to the color of the “send” button to the call-to-action copy—can make the difference between no one ever clicking it and enticing 30 percent of the page's visitors to fill out the form.

Knowing what works and applying it is what marketing is. Applying marketing to every pixel, every word, every element...everything you do. Making what you do very attractive to the user is the very thing that creates revenue.

Yes, this is intense. And not typically done by real estate

brokerages. But it is done by the very brands that spring to mind the minute you begin to associate things like coffee shops to Starbucks and hand bags to Coach and online video to Netflix.

We all know that real estate has changed a lot in the last five years. And it's not only the market conditions that have been radically altered. Among other paradigm shifts, use of the Internet among consumers has exploded. And that has required all of us to make fundamental changes to the way we think of and position ourselves in the ether.

Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and other social media have given us the gift of global reach. And along with that increased reach comes a need for greater brand development and maintenance. At Intero, we realized a few years ago that the consumer of the future was already among us. Online. So we took steps to reach out to that base.

We megaphone our message. And we encourage our agents to do so as well. Even better, we teach them how to do it.

So when someone says “name a real estate company,” you want to hear the answer: “Intero.”



# Productivity

**P**roductivity is the life's blood of a business. No productivity, no business. Period. Ford doesn't produce cars? No Ford. Apple doesn't produce goods; we revert back to the technological Stone Age. Grey Goose's distillation process breaks down, they're dead ducks.

## You get the picture.

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But productivity doesn't relate to the stoppage of production. The gears that drive productivity involve an array of processes that include organization, efficiency and leadership. It's also a function of how well trained people are in operating the tools that make them productive.

You'd be surprised at the number of businesspeople in our industry who don't grasp the magnitude of this idea. And that's compounded by the lack of truly efficient systems in place for measuring performance, training and time management. Without mastering these elements, a business will stall and grind in place, dulling the edge off the gears required to move them forward into the future.

Consider the many brokerages right now filled with agents who don't produce clients, transactions and sales.

Consider the many managers that continue to run offices laced with inefficient tools and systems and technology solutions that

enable better lead generation, contact management, marketing and the movement of simple real estate processes that grind their top producers down to a halt.

We understand the pitfalls related to evolving a business, finding solutions and training people. But we believe they're worth the risk because the payoff is in the details. And that result is not only better productivity, but a happier and more complete and balanced agent who doesn't struggle doing the things he or she needs to be as productive as possible.

We understood this from day one. That's shown by the investment we made in building digital systems that permits Intero Real Estate to run like a well-oiled machine - lubricated by what we call our F-7 philosophy of life: Faith, Family, Friends, Fitness, Finance, Fun and Fellowship.

By applying F-7 to every aspect of their lives, we've seen productivity grow. And this isn't just related to real estate sales. It carries over



# Productivity

into all aspects of our agents' lives. This plays to the strength of our Intero brand, based on our holistic approach which includes nurturing the overall well-being of our employees and agents. It's tightly woven into the fabric of our culture.

How do we measure productivity? The easy part is looking at the outcome of what happens to people after they spend time at Intero. We begin to define what productivity means from day one. Training is filled with topics and courses that help our people

consider what their income goals are. Or what average price of homes they should focus on in able to hit their goals. And of course, learning how to use their time wisely.

And this is where it begins and ends for us. Education. Training. Ongoing. Creating smart, resourceful, competent, *productive* agents, which lead to profitable offices and a strong company able to support that process going forward.



# Culture

**A**pple, Zappos, Whole Foods and Starbucks. All successful companies who have changed the way we live our lives. One on hand, these iconic brands succeeded because they each had a great idea. They were also led by a team of spirited founders who believed in a vision and understood how to execute it. These are the ingredients required to launch an idea. And get a business off the ground.

No business settles at just getting off the ground, though. If their idea or products find favor with the consumer, expansion is inevitable. Then the workload increases. People are needed to join the company and take on tasks and jobs to support that expansion.

For a business to grow and sustain—or as in the case of the examples above, innovate beyond belief—synergies need to exist that will keep everyone in that organization wired to the same vision. But if a company yearns to go even beyond that and create an atmosphere where people want to work, and give everything they have to it, the company also needs to be wired to the individual needs and wants of the people they employ.

How does a company create this, enable it, fuel it? Well, that's what is known as *culture*.

Culture is an almost indescribable thing. Yet it's as real as rain. Its existence isn't just a happy accident, though it does evolve organically. It's what happens

when a company is made up of people who are not there just to grab a paycheck and run. It's what happens when a group of likeminded people who share values and sensibilities pull together and toil toward a common goal. A goal of excellence.

It's like a road map. It defines the organization. Gives a universally clear and easily understood encapsulation of the vision and ethos the company founders brought to the table in the beginning.

Enables each person employed in the company to reach his or her full potential through training and support. Allows leaders to empower those employees to go beyond their potential and achieve greatness by instilling a strong sense of purpose and direction. Gets us from Point A to Point B. And beyond.

Rock composer Frank Zappa developed a concept he called "Conceptual Continuity." The idea is that an artist weaves themes and ideas into his work that refer back to previous work.



# Culture

It's a concept that applies to business as well. If at its inception a company creates a body of knowledge that contains not only its practices and standards but also its beliefs, ethics and values, it sets a clear course for the future. Because that becomes its culture. And as succeeding generations of employees are absorbed into the company and steeped in that culture, the concept becomes continuous. It lives on and feeds on itself.

What's at the bottom of all this? A living, breathing, constantly-evolving organizational culture based on the fluid communication between all of us. It's powered by core values that aren't just words on a page but are the code by which we live our lives. And a standard of how we treat our people.

This Intero culture, based on the sum of entire parts, is the very essence of how we do business. It's the internal actions we take that inspire it within the company. Outwardly, the public behaviors we introduce to the world through our actions form the perceptions created within the communities we serve.

How those who choose to spend their careers under the Intero brand umbrella feel about themselves and about their company is critical to us. It not only defines us. It's what makes us tick.

We're committed to maintaining a culture of the highest integrity. Today and tomorrow.





 infinity leadership

# Make the Intero Story Your Story

Intero Real Estate Services offers ownership opportunities across the United States and around the world.

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