

HOUSECALLS



Melvin & Jill Upchurch Red Hills Realty (205)871-2556



Getting Naked

Ken Blanchard, coauthor of *The One Minute Manager* says about Patrick Lencioni's new book, *Getting Naked*, "You will remember the message."

Getting Naked is a self-described fable about a consulting firm that beats competitors for top clients, and it shows the importance of providing value. The title is from naked consulting, a term that refers to the idea of being

vulnerable with clients.

Many service providers feel the need to show they have the right answers and don't make mistakes. But this often makes customers feel they are being condescended to and manipulated. Honesty and humility in handling customer problems works better.

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My Interview with Lt. Col. Bruce Bright, USMC(Ret.), CCIM

Recently, I had an opportunity to interview my good friend Bruce Bright.

Bruce spent 28 years in service with the U.S. Marine Corps. His service includes four years as a Marine Infantryman and 24 years as a Marine F/A-18 Fighter Pilot. Before retiring in 2007, he logged over 3,000 flight hours including two combat tours in the Middle East.

Bruce joined the civilian workforce as Director of Business Development for. There he earned the prestigious designation of CCIM (Certified Commercial Investment Member) and was recognized as an expert in the disciplines of commercial and investment Real Estate at The Sanders Trust, one of the nation's leading medical real estate investment companies located in Liberty Park. He has personally been involved in over \$100 million in investment transactions since 2007. Founder of Bright Consulting Group, Bruce now enjoys motivating



others with his speeches, seminars and coaching.

MU: Bruce, this is a real honor. Thanks for agreeing to be interviewed. I have tremendous respect for all of our veterans. Thanks for your service to our Country. What does it mean to you to be a Marine?

Bruce: I joined the Marines at the young age of 17, my parents had to sign an approval letter. Having grown up in the Corps, I learned the Core Values of Honor, Courage and Commitment right from the beginning of my adult life. The Marines pride themselves of taking care of their own. I am a product of the unbelievable Mentor program of the finest fighting force in the world. Being a Marine is like being a member of a motorcycle gang and still having a Mother that loves and is proud of you. Once a Marine, always a Marine is a phrase we take very seriously.

MU: What is the fastest speed you have ever flown in a jet?

Bruce: Really fast! I am not allowed to answer your question directly so let me educate you on the idea of going really fast, faster than Ricky Bobby. The F/A-18 has a published top speed of 1.8 mach. On a normal dry day a jet will go 1.0 or break the sound barrier at 768 mph. 1.8 times 768 equals 1382.

MU: If any answers are going to require you to kill me, I would rather not know. So, thanks for not being specific. What has been your biggest adjustment in Civilian life?

Bruce: No F/A-18's to fly ☹ .

MU: You have really hit the ground running as a civilian. You are one of the most sought after motivational speakers in the country and you offer professional consulting and coaching. Tell me about The Bright Consulting Group and On Target Leading:

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ASK THE EXPERTS

Q. We are going to paint the interior of our house before we put it on the market. It would be easier to paint the ceilings the same color as the walls. Is this a good idea?

A. Glad you asked, because this issue of the newsletter focuses on paint colors. Here's some advice from home stagers.

First, never ignore the ceiling when you are preparing your house for sale. You might not notice the ceiling yourself but buyers do notice flaws in paint and texture in ceilings. Fresh paint on the walls always makes an old paint job on a ceiling seem dingy.

For ceilings, white bounces light to make a room look brighter and larger. Choose a shade of white that complements your wall color.

For heavily textured ceilings such as a swirled plaster, popcorn or lace finish, white is always the best color. Paint carefully so that the finish is even and no depressions in the pattern are ignored. Unpainted spots tend to stand out in patterned ceilings.

If your ceiling is smooth plaster, you can paint it in a light color complementary to the walls. A tinted ceiling can dramatically change the whole

Listed & Sold by Mel & Jill



Why are these three people so happy? Well, the lovely lady on the left is Sheila Macke and she just sold her house (See below) at 615 Broadway St. in Homewood listed and sold by Red Hills Realty(a lar-



ger company had the listing for 470 days and could not get it sold).

The young lady on the right is Elizabeth LeBeau and she is smiling because she is the new owner. The goofy guy in the middle is smiling because he has two satisfied clients. Well, the commission check may be a small factor.

I had a chance to speak

to Elizabeth about the house buying experience.

MU: Elizabeth, tell us about yourself.

Elizabeth: I grew up in the Homewood area & attended Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School and John Carroll Catholic High School. I graduated from Auburn University in Nutrition and Food Science and am currently a graduate student at the University of Alabama in Birmingham in Collaborative Teaching. I am currently a Special Education Aide at Cherokee Bend Elementary School working with children in grades Kindergarten through 3rd grade.

MU: How did you find this home?

Elizabeth: I found the home over the internet. After searching for several months, I viewed the photos on the website and fell in love with the distinct charm of the home and the area.

MU: (Warning-Shameless Plug: Naturally, the 57 websites where we post our listings, the website for the property etc. were key in the sale). Well tell us about your experience with Red Hills & their

charming Broker.

Elizabeth: The home buying experience was a breeze. Melvin and the Red Hills Realty team went above and beyond to ease the process and provide a comfortable transition. Being a first time home buyer, Melvin was very knowledgeable and helpful in describing the real estate process and all the information along the way. Melvin's ability to communicate was exceptional across the board. His responses were always well researched and thorough. I would highly recommend Melvin and the Red Hills Realty team to anyone seeking a highly qualified real estate professional.

MU: Obviously, you are a very astute and smart young woman with a keen insight for business. It was my pleasure to represent you. Good luck with your new home. (My Prayer Chapel partner, Trudy Harden, referred Sheila to me. We have built our business on personal referrals and they are always appreciated. The best thing you can do for a friend is refer them to Melvin & Jill. (Again, shameless plug)).

look of a room, so make sure the color you choose is not too dark or unusual.

If your ceilings are high, you can paint any color that goes with the rest of the room. To make ceilings feel lower, and if you have enough light in the room, consider painting them a slightly darker color than the walls.

For average height or low ceilings, consider using a lighter tint of the wall color. It makes the ceiling part of the decor.

Always choose neutral colors for walls

when you are planning to sell your home. It doesn't matter how much you love your wall colors. When you are planning to sell, you have to start looking at your home with the eyes of a stranger. People have different opinions about color. Don't make your home stand out because a potential buyer hates the wall color.

For our listings, we always provide a checklist for preparing your home to sell fast. If needed, we will pay for the initial consultation from a professional stager and/or an professional interior decorator.



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Customer service providers, says Lencioni, have three fears:

*** Fear of losing business:** This is what keeps many from having the difficult conversations that actually build loyalty and trust. Clients want to know that servicers are more interested in helping than in protecting their revenue.

*** Fear of being embarrassed:** This is rooted in pride. Naked service providers are willing to ask questions and make suggestions even if they turn out to be wrong. But clients trust them more, because they will not hide their mistakes.

*** Fear of being inferior:** It's about preserving social standing with the client or their need to feel important. But they should focus on client needs, even if that calls for the provider to be over-

looked or temporarily looked down upon.

Consultants and service provider firms that practice the naked approach will find it easier to retain clients through greater trust and loyalty. They will also be more successful in attracting clients. The service firms can be more open, more generous and less desperate in the sales process with a new customer.

Getting Naked: A Business Fable About Shedding The Three Fears That Sabotage Client Loyalty, by Patrick Lencioni, Jossey Bass, 220 pages.

So, when I say at Red Hills we believe in the "Getting Naked" approach, just remember, it means we place honesty ahead of pride when we deal with our clients. So, if you are in business, we want to encourage you to get naked too.

'The Bum'

A bum asks a well dressed gentleman on the street for two dollars. The gentleman asks, "Are you going to spend it on liquor or gambling?"

"No, sir. I don't drink or gamble."

"You wouldn't waste time and money at a golf course, would you?"

"Never," says the bum.

"Would you like to come home with me for a nice dinner?"

"But won't your wife be angry?"

"Probably, but I want her to see what happens to a guy who doesn't drink, gamble or play golf!"

Focusing on Color : Painting Your World

Wherever we go, we respond to color, though its effect is often underestimated. Color use is important to us in our homes and workplaces.



If you are selling a house, you will want to choose different colors than those you might use for your own home.

If you just purchased a house, you can add some of your own personality

with paint.

HGTV's Shari Hiller says color accounts for 60 percent of our response to a room. Here is some advice.

* Living room: Start with colors you love from something in the room. Consider colors from artwork, a rug, dishes, an accessory or furniture for a main color or accent. Buy two or three quarts of paint. Paint sample boards to hold up to the furniture, fabrics and surfaces you choose.

If you aren't sure where to begin with a color, experiment in a bathroom, a small hall or area between rooms.

* The dining room: Do you want the area to feel social and stimulating or be formal and quiet? Warmer, contrasting and somewhat brighter colors add to a sociable atmosphere. Deeper blue-greens and neutral colors make the dining area more formal.

* The monochromatic color scheme:

In any room, one color need not be boring. You can create bold or subtle variations within one color group with contrasting paint finishes. It helps to use matte finish paint for walls and slightly shiny eggshell paint for wood trim. The paint will appear to be a slightly different color. It can be attractive to paint an entire wall in a lighter or darker hue of the same color.

White or off-white tint can be a striking accent when used as trim with a monochromatic color group.

- * For bedrooms: Softer, cool colors and neutrals create a quiet feeling.
- * Children's bedrooms: Stay away from bright and intense wall colors, which are said to lead to unrest and irritability.

For an accent color in any room, select a warmer color, more toward reds, or a cooler color more toward blues, to compliment your main color group.

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Bruce: Today I use three modalities to transmit my message of High Energy Leadership: [Speaking](#), [Consulting](#) & [Coaching](#). When I am hired by a company, I normally

begin with a speech to present the message and the new ideas that On Target Leading is going to bring to the company. **Speaking** is generally a one way conversation, I speak and the audience listens. The more engaged methods I use to make change happen are **Consulting** and the ultimate change process, **Coaching**.

MU: Tell me the benefits of coaching.

Bruce: The third and most powerful process we offer at On Target Leading is Coaching. Companies are made up of individuals, change the individuals and the company change is automatic. The best and quickest way to get your employees engaged is to bring on a Certified Coach to work with them individually and as a group. Think of the energy

in a company as the company's potential output. By working with On Target Leading we use a process that helps people be more aware of their energy level. Every person is a Leader either by choice or default. Teaching Leadership with reference to Energy levels is the process that develops a personally effective style of leadership, one that positively influences and changes not only yourself, but also those with whom you work and interact, as well as your organization as a whole. Studies that rated 14 indicators of success with respect to raising the energy level of an individual or company showed that you could expect a 20% increase in financial success, 15% increase in self-described leadership ability, 14% more personal time and feeling of freedom, and 12% greater feeling of engagement/excitement at work only to name a few. We would love the opportunity to share all of the other benefits of working with On Target Leading as a High Energy Partner with anyone interested.

MU: Now for my most important question, which realtor do you always recommend & why?

Bruce: Hands down that would have to be Jill Upchurch. Jill and her group at Red Hills Realty are superb across the board with respect to upholding the values I expect from the people I recommend or do business with myself. As an

Eagle scout since 1974, I have always found it easy to rate businesses and business associates according to the Boy Scout Laws. Let me share these laws I was taught many years ago and tell you that Red Hills Realty scores high marks in all 12 laws. They are, trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous, kind, obedient, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean and reverent. Oh and by the way, that guy that Jill works with is a pretty good guy as well. If you need anything real estate related I recommend you call on Melvin and Jill, they will not let you down.

MU: Well, thanks Bruce for the recommendation (& the abuse), I certainly won't argue with a Marine Colonel. By the way, what do you say to those Navy guys that say the Marines are just a Department of the Navy?

Bruce: Yeah,

THE MEN'S DEPARTMENT!



Melvin & Jill Listing Coming Soon

2821 Stratford Road

\$2,250,000 List Price

This historic Redmont home sits atop Red Mountain and provides spectacular panoramic views of the city. Its amenities include a heated pool, guest house and detached 3 car garage. Showings begin on March 15th. Call Melvin for details.