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# 6 STEPS TO 7 FIGURES

We sit down with Billion-Dollar Agent Pat Hiban to discuss how he created his own destiny.

Pat Hiban, a real estate agent out of Baltimore, is often referred to as the “Billion-Dollar Agent.” Early in life, Pat was labeled as learning disabled with speech deficiencies. But he found his niche in real estate after graduating from college. Pat sold 10 homes his first year, earning a total of \$13,200. Today, he has sold more than 4,000 homes totaling \$1 billion in volume.

**“Affirmation without discipline is delusion.”**

Fortunately, he doesn’t keep secrets about how he became a top real estate agent. He shares the steps he takes to achieve his business and personal goals in his New York Times best-selling book, “6 Steps to 7 Figures.” Here are his proven steps for success:

## 1 Affirm

Pat once read a very telling statistic: The average 2-year-old is given a negative statement, such as “no” or “don’t touch that,” on average 40 times per day. He believes that people are automatically conditioned with negative affirmations during their important childhood development years. He says most people who set goals and then quit them before fruition believe deep down that they’re not meant to achieve that goal even though they want it.

To recondition yourself from many years of negative affirmations, Pat says you must replace these negative affirmations with your own positive affirmations. And these affirmations must be repeated every day. Every big goal that Pat has set — including how many homes he

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**Pat Hiban**  
“Billion-Dollar Agent”  
Baltimore, MD

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wants to sell a year, the car he wants to drive and the vacations he wants to take — start out as affirmations, which are statements written in the present tense stating you have already achieved your goal, even if you have not. For example, “I sell five homes per month.”

“The **more** I copied my **first mentor**, the more he wanted to **share**.”

From there, Pat warns that you can’t simply rely on saying something to make it come true. “Affirmation without discipline is delusion,” he says. So you have to take a small step to get to the big step. If you want to sell five homes a month, you need to figure out how many people you need to call every day. To meet this goal, you need another affirmation: “I call 20 past clients per day.”

### 2 Track

Pat bases this step on the saying: “That which is measured is accountable.” When you have a goal, tracking lets you easily see if you’re achieving that goal. For example, if you want to sell five homes per month, which entails calling 20 past clients per day, you need to track how many calls you made, whom you called, and the call’s outcome.

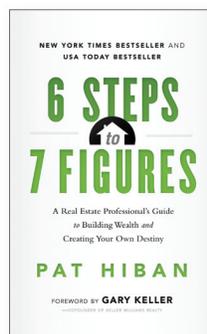


Detailing this information motivates you, shows where you’re at, and reveals whether you’re on target to achieve your goal.

### 3 Learn

At his first real estate job, Pat latched on to a top-producing real estate agent who helped him learn the business. “The more I copied my first mentor, the more he wanted to share,” says Pat, who quickly learned how important it was to have career advice.

Over the years, Pat has had more than 50 mentors who helped shape his understanding of the business. When choosing a mentor, Pat suggests that you get one who is an expert on the topic you’re trying to learn. For example, if you want to learn more about REOs, find a mentor who specializes in REOs. The more specific your mentor’s expertise is, the better your experience will be.



### 4 Work

Every year, Pat challenges his team to meet a particular goal (such as sell a certain number of houses) and rewards his team by allowing them to make him do something unconventional, such as shave off all his hair, eat live bugs or have a pie thrown in his face. In the height of the market, his team met a goal and made Pat put up 162 open house signs in one day. The point of the challenge is to show that you really can’t get too far in any business without working hard, and that nothing great comes without sacrifice, be it working overtime to close a deal or even losing your hair to reach a goal.

“You can’t get anywhere without working,” says Pat. “Nothing great comes without sacrifice. It’s what you hear over and over again: You

have to pick up the phone, you’ve got to call people, you’ve got to lead generate every single day or you just won’t succeed past a certain point.”

Bottom line: the greater the dream, the greater the goals and the harder you are going to have to work to succeed. But the longer you strive to achieve, the more likely you will have fewer people to compete with because they will likely fall off along the way.

### 5 Build

When Pat wants to achieve a goal, he first builds a blueprint for success that shows how he will achieve it. He figures out how he will get there by creating a map to follow. Whenever he can, Pat looks for things he has already succeeded at and builds on them, which can make a goal easier to achieve. For example, if he wants to sell a million-dollar home, it would be easier for him to build his plan based on a neighborhood where he has previously sold a million-dollar home rather than start out in a new neighborhood.

### 6 Invest

Pat says many agents fail because they perpetuate the illusion that they’re more successful than they actually are. They dress, drive and pursue a lifestyle that can easily lead to financial hardship. Instead, you should minimize your expenses and invest the savings.

“You can’t get **anywhere** without working. **Nothing great** comes without **sacrifice**.”

“I always said to myself that I was going to be a millionaire. So I set out to save as much money as I could,” says Pat. “I tell real estate agents that rather than trying to save 10% of every check, you should determine your monthly expenses and then save every dollar you possibly can.” ■

## Make Things Happen: Visualizing for Success

Continually visualizing your goal by keeping a physical reminder handy is an important strategy in seeing your success come to fruition. When Pat Hiban first got into real estate, one of his mentors asked him to create a keychain with an attached picture of his goal. Pat chose a small image of the first home he wanted to buy, a description of it, and his signature. Every time he reached for his keys, he was reminded of his goal.



Another way to visualize your goal is by building a collage of images that represent what you desire. Use the

middle of the page to paste pictures of what your goal looks like when achieved. Use the space around these images for graphics representing your journey and sacrifice to attain your goal.

Place the collage in a prominent spot that allows you to look at it morning and night. Remember, the more you visualize your goal, the closer you will get to realizing it.

Finally, surround yourself with people whom you can talk to about your goals and who share your passion and vision. Ask them to help keep you accountable throughout your journey. ■



## Big Idea

### Finding a Mentor

With more than 50 different mentors influencing Pat Hiban over the years, he lists using mentors as one of his six steps to success, covered in his best-selling book, "6 Steps to 7 Figures."

To find mentors, Pat suggests first looking in your office. Who was the "Rookie of the Year" last year? Who has won other accolades for performance? Those people could be excellent mentors. Simply ask them if they're willing to help you become a better agent.

If you're looking to ask people to be your mentor who are not in your office — or not even in your state — consider first "friending" them through social media (such as Facebook) and then send them a message. Most successful agents love attention and would be honored to help you. Start by asking them a question or two. Later, prove to your mentors that you keenly listened to their suggestions and tell of your success achieved by following their advice.

"When someone tells me they took my advice and it worked, that makes me feel great and I'm flattered," says Pat. "What most successful agents don't want is someone taking up their time and then not acting on anything they recommend. So when you contact your mentors, let them know how you have succeeded by acting upon their advice. Then, you can ask for additional advice." ■

## News You Can Use: Reenergize Your Career

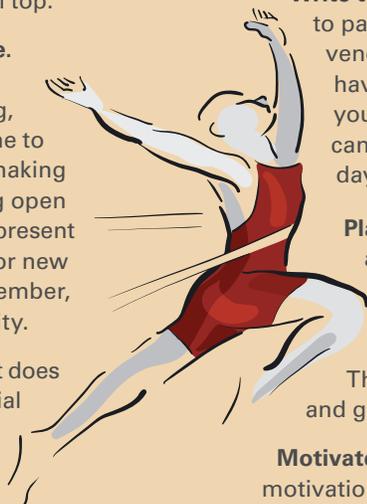
In a career spanning many years, there are bound to be times when activity slows down and you feel you're not at your best. Pat Hiban has been there and shares his experience for getting back on track and back on top.

### Be proactive, not reactive.

Successful people are productive every morning, so don't wait for the phone to ring. Make sure you are making prospecting calls, holding open houses, and calling past, present and future clients. Look for new business every day. Remember, activity breeds productivity.

### Get back to the basics.

Pat does this by going after potential targets that for him have been revenue-generating activities. These include calling FSBOs to see if they will consider hiring an agent and calling expired listings to see if the owner would like to put the home back on the market.



**Don't turn down any business.** Small jobs can lead to big jobs, so why not take them if you're not too busy? The goal is to stay active and keep your momentum moving forward.

**Write thank you notes.** Consider writing to past and present customers, vendors, and anybody else you have an address for. Putting your name in front of people can help turn a slow business day into a busy business day.

**Plan your week.** If you don't have appointments with potential clients, make appointments with someone who might be a source for referrals.

This gets you out of the office and generating potential leads.

**Motivate yourself.** Go to as many motivational seminars as you can, listen to motivational downloads, and read motivational books. Basically, inject as much motivational energy into your career as possible. ■

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## Smart Tip of the Season

### Breaking into REO Sales

Top-producing real estate agent Pat Hiban didn't have any experience when he decided to break into the REO market. So he started with a small local bank and begged them for an REO property to sell. The bank gave him a "dog of a house" that he sold for \$8,000 in a bad neighborhood. Pat didn't care that he made only \$200. He knew he could build from that point and could now say, "I have experience!" Pat says that anybody starting out should do the same. Go to your personal bank, where they know you, and ask whom they give their foreclosures to. Start with small banks where you can get to people easily. Build your portfolio. With that, you're on your way to becoming an REO expert. ■



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