



Left to right, Micaela Holden, David Cummings, Lindsay Warner talk with Dustin McQuate (back to camera) of Cummings & Co. Realtors. Photo by Lloyd Fox

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CUMMINGS & CO. REALTORS

Experience matters

BY DAVID GREISMAN

Joan Goldman had worked in real estate for a decade before taking a job as an agent earlier this year at Cummings & Co. Realtors.

“My only regret is that I didn’t do this five years ago,” Goldman said. “I guarantee you that I will work the rest of my career with Cummings.”

Founded by Dave Cummings in 2006, Cummings & Co. is a residential real estate company whose business centers in Baltimore and the surrounding counties. The brokerage grew to 100 agents by 2014, and has more than doubled to 220 agents since then.

One of the big draws that brings these employees to Cummings is its business model. While some real estate companies will take a significant cut out of the money its agents bring in, Cummings charges a flat fee of about \$300 a month, and agents are then able to rake in their entire commission. There are no franchise or hidden fees.

“My model gives them better financial success, so they can reinvest their money back into their business,” Cummings.

The company has five locations in Baltimore City and Baltimore County. A sixth office will open soon in Harford County. Agents only need a single key and wireless password to be able to meet with buyers and sellers and conduct business throughout the region.

“I believe strongly in the agents being able to interact with their clients in a professional setting, to have private conversations in a conference room and not by phone or in a coffee shop,” Cummings said.

Realty company attracts veteran agents with flat-fee business model, idea sharing via social media and fun events.

He’s been able to attract experienced agents — his staff now averages more than 15 years in the industry. Cummings doesn’t hire new agents or those who work in real estate part-time. Rather, he wants his brokerage to be a place where those who have paid their dues want to come because they can reap the rewards.

“In six months, I’ve made more money than I ever have before,” Goldman said. “Dave empowers us. He tries to give us the tools to help us do our best.”

There’s no formal training. There’s not really a need for it. But there are still monthly business development meetings and other ways that agents learn from and bond with each other. A private Facebook group, for example, enables them to seek advice, discuss problems or seek recommendations for, say, a chimney specialist in the Bel Air area.

While social media offers one way of creating a network, Cummings also strives to bring his team members together physically.

“We do all happy hours, all business development meetings, all Christmas parties as one company,” he said.

One other perk, according to Cummings: Agents know that this company has one leader, one person to go to on those occasions when they need assistance.

“I feel a lot of them really like the fact that it’s locally owned and not a corporation or publicly traded, where there would be lots of layers of management,” he said. “I built my reputation over time on being a reliable and good resource. They know I’m very serious about the business — and about making sure that their business is going in the right direction.”