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Real Estate Investing Podcast

## Brilliant at the Basics Part 16: Barking Up the Bird Dog Tree

*Hosted by: Joe McCall*

*Featuring Special Guest: Peter Vekselman*

**Joe:** Hey everybody, welcome. Again, this is Joe McCall and Peter Vekselman. We are the "Brilliant at the Basics" guys. This is the Real Estate Investing Mastery Podcast. We're all about keeping it simple, keeping it real, and being brilliant at the basics. And, we've created this podcast series called "Being Brilliant at the Basics" where we actually pull back the curtain and show you kind of what's going on in our business, what's working well for us. Peter is a beast out of the Atlanta area. He is doing 30 plus deals a month. It's about an average of one deal a day in multiple markets.

And, I'm doing about five to ten deals a month, but I've created a lot of systems to simplify the business, to automate it, so I don't have to be involved in it. And, we've been talking in the last few episodes about marketing, about direct mail. And, on this episode, we're going to talk about one of our favorite strategies. And Peter, you've been doing this a lot longer and more successfully than I have. We're talking about bird dogs and training an army of people to start bringing you leads. And, by the time you're listening to this, I probably would have released already a video, a podcast that I did with a friend and a former acquisitions manager of mine named Rick.

And basically, that's what we do. We didn't have to do any marketing. We were getting enough other people to bring us leads that kept us pretty busy, and I love this strategy. Peter, I'll just tell you this, Sean Terry is a mutual friend of ours. I was at a mastermind with him in Phoenix just a few days ago. And he, about a month or two ago started in Phoenix a meetup group. You know, [meetup.com](http://meetup.com).

**Peter:** Uh-huh.

**Joe:** We started the meetup group to get people to come into his office and train them on how to do deals. And, he just did a second meeting a few days ago. But, his first



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meeting, I don't know how many people he had there, but he did eight deals over the next three to four weeks from just that one meetup of people that were bringing him deals, and he would either buy them and/or wholesale them. Eight deals from one meetup...

**Peter:** Hmmm.

**Joe:** Now, yeah, I mean, people listening to this may not have the big office that Sean Terry does or the recognition that Sean does, but I've done this before. Peter, you've been doing this for a long time. Talk about what are bird dogs, and then how do you get people to bring you deals?

**Peter:** Well, again the overriding theme we've always had is you got to know how to market, you got to know how to market, and you got to know how to market. And, the greatest thing about bird dogs, and when I got started in this business, I pretty much built this business off bird dogs, because what a bird dog allows you to do is it allows you to take the marketing side which has to be done unequivocally critical, and allows you to put in somebody else's hands, okay? So, bird dogs are individuals, a lot of times a little bit newer and core in this industry, and that's what they do.

Their specialty, what they are taught to do, or their kind of entry-level position into this industry is just to go out there and hit the streets and find deals. And, they're really utilizing these exact same techniques that if they don't do them, you got to do them, okay? So, a typical bird dog can put a bunch of bandit signs out there and generate calls. A bird dog I've known... We have bird dogs who do their own direct mail. A bird dog can literally go out there and they could hit the streets, and start making contacts by knocking on doors.

A bird dog is someone who goes out there to the REIA meetings, local REIA clubs or meetup groups and make contacts. And so, that bird dog's position starts and stops at the acquisition. Because whether you are new or sometimes you are even more advanced, there's a number of people in this business who for whatever reason cannot or do not want to close in a deal. Cannot, maybe because financial side. Do not, because



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maybe they don't have a comfort level to do it. They got all the marketing side. They got the marketing side down. They got the know-how and how to do that.

They just don't want close in a deal, and that's where investors like us come in who do have the ability to close on it. We do have back-ends built in it if we want to flip the deal. We do have the financial side set up if a closing does need to take place. A great thing about bird dogs, because it's such a popular position in this industry, is that they're literally all over the place. We not only built this business off the bird dogs but continued to utilize bird dogs. And, I can tell you, you can get an unlimited amount of bird dogs from no other place than Craigslist.

You can run a very basic unsophisticated ad, and it's a very straightforward ad, "Hey, I'm a local investor. I have the ability and the willingness to close on deals. I need deals so I want to bring a couple of bird dogs on to work with me." Again, the good thing about bird dogs is they're looking for people like us. I mean, they need people like us, so they don't hide from us. If you have the ability to close in a deal or if you have the ability to do something with the deal, like Sean or you or myself, bird dogs are very easy to find.

And, the way we work our process is we basically run some very basic ads on Craigslist, letting bird dogs know that we are looking for them. We then drive them to very basic simple landing page that just talks a little bit about us, our ability to close, that we're looking for more deals. They opt in. We have somebody from our office call them. You want to build the relationship with the bird dogs, because I don't care how much money you have or how much credentials you have. You're not the only show in any town of the United States. So, the key is first you want to bring him in and identify them, and again Craigslist is good enough.

Then, you want to build some kind of relationship with them. And, what you are doing in that relationship is you are just solidifying. You're making the bird dog feel comfortable, that you are who it is that they are looking for. Now, you are going to fund the deal. You do have the ability to close in a deal. You will pay him a commission if they bring you a deal. So, you're building the relationship with them. And again, because you are not the only game in town, you want to maintain that relationship.



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The way we do it again, because we drive them through a website. We just basically have a contact management system in the back-end that sends them ongoing emails, so every day they're hearing something from us. And so, when they're waking up in the morning, they're opening up another e-mail so that reminds them, "Okay, Peter has got... Peter, Peter, Peter." If you're not in a position that you're technology savvy enough to set a system up like that, call them up.

When you get a bird dog, you make the initial contact and if that conversation goes well, and you feel like you're working with someone who's experienced, somebody that has access to deals, somebody that is going to get you deals, don't let that be the last contact you make with them. Call on the next day. Call on the next day. Call on the next day. And then, all of a sudden, a week or two down the road when they get their next deal, because they've talked to you five or six times between now and then, all of a sudden they're calling you. And so, that's the second step. You want to maintain a relationship, and you want to build a relationship.

And, the third step, which is what our responsibility is make sure you can do what you tell these bird dogs you're going to do. You know what I mean? Don't tell a bird dog you have a million dollars if you're broke. Don't tell a bird dog you can close in three weeks if realistically you're using financing and you already know your financing is going to take you six weeks. Do what you say you're going to do, because in the end, the great thing about bird dogs is they have the ability to bring you ongoing business. Most bird dogs is not a one and done. You don't become a bird dog to find a grand slam deal and then retire from being a bird dog.

Bird dogs are usually... especially the better ones, they have ongoing supply deals because they're constantly out there. So, if you're going to tell them you've got money, make sure you've got money. If you tell them you're actually going to close, make sure you're going to close. Sometimes people tell these bird dogs things they think they want to hear. Don't do that. Tell them what the reality is. And, if the reality is you only have \$50,000, tell them that. "Look, I'm looking for the right deal, okay? And, when that right deal comes along, I'll buy it. I can't buy 50 of your deals, but I could buy the next one or



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two of your deals." If the way your money works is that it takes you four weeks to fund, don't tell those bird dogs you can close in three days because you can't.

So, do what you say, you know, that last piece. Because remember, you now work through this whole thing. You found them. You built the relationship. You've cultivated the relationship. You got a deal. The last thing you want to do is kill that relationship after all that work. And, the only way that I've found that you're going to kill these relationships with these bird dogs is just simply overpromising and under delivering. Because again, the good news is, you do not have to be someone you're not because you're not the only game in town for them.

So, a bird dog who got a legitimate profile on you will get you the right kind of deals. Don't think that, "Wow, if I can't buy... If I don't tell this bird dog, I can take a hundred deals now and he's never going to bring it to me any other deal." Totally not true, because you're not the only guy in town. There are guys out there that can take five, ten, twenty deals now, okay? So, as long as... Say, your acquisitions. You're finding them. You're building relationships. You're doing what you say you're going to do. The great thing about them, there's no shortage of bird dogs. I don't care if you live in a tiny little town or in a huge metropolitan area like we do here. Every city and town has them.

And then, the only other thing I'll mention about bird dogs is there are two types. There is the brand-new that you got to educate, and there's one that already knows what he's doing, and I've been in both sides of the equation. We actually used to have a huge, huge program that we would educate our bird dogs. Right now, we're on the opposite side. We're only working with experienced.

So, decide that ahead of time that, "Are you going to invest your time, and price, and money, and effort in educating them? Or, do you only want to work with the experienced ones? In that, you can just write or run right in your ad. Let them know that hey, you offer some preliminary training, which if you're just getting started, you might have to. I mean, that could be the price you pay for getting someone interested in bird dogging for you. When you get to certain levels like us, we kind of want to work with



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people that are already experienced and know what they're doing. So, that's how you do bird dogs.

**Joe:**

Bird dog is the best way to leverage your marketing because you can start getting an army of people to submit leads, and that's one of the things we do for our partners and apprentices that work with us, is we set up their entire bird dog system. We give them a website that they can start advertising, get people onto the website with a video. They can put in their information that puts that bird dog into Podio.

It puts them into an email autoresponder series where that bird dog starts getting an email every couple of days for about three months from you. And, it gives them a place where they can actually submit property leads online into your own Podio account, and then from in there, you can communicate and e-mail back and forth with that bird dog to show them the status of the lead and communicate with them.

But, I think that what you said is really important too that when these bird dogs sign up with you, if you do your marketing, if you do your meetup groups, and you start spreading the word and get people in, you've got to communicate with them. You need to get on the phone and let them know, "Hey, thank you so much. This is... I'm a real person. This is what I do. This is how we do it." And, when they submit deals, give them feedback. "This is not what I'm wanting. I don't want any deals that are on the MLS, but this is what I'm wanting.

So, you train them and you just spend some time. I can tell you with my experience, one of the how we built our list of bird dogs is we just started collecting e-mails of everybody in the industry that we came across: Realtors, property managers, other wholesalers, investors, people at the REIA groups. Anybody and everybody that we could get a name and a phone number and e-mail, we started adding them to our list. And once a week, we'd send out an email.

We knew our buyers wanted these properties and these zip-codes. Every week we sent out e-mails, "Hey, we're looking for properties in 63119, that are three plus bedrooms, that don't need any more than \$5 grand in work, or \$10 grand in work, whatever. And,



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we would start sending that out, and what was amazing to me is I was finding a lot of professional bird dogs. A lot of them are realtors, people that are out there finding deals. They were happy just to make \$1,000, \$2,000 bucks. That was it, while we were making \$8 to \$10 on those deals.

So, the bird dogs are out there, and they're great. You train them on how to do the marketing. Oh, one more, this thing that we do for our partners, Peter, is we actually have a back office that will train the bird dogs for you. So, we will train them on how to do the direct mail on their own, or the Craigslist stuff on their own, or even Post-it notes, driving for dollars and looking for vacant houses. So, there are systems in place that you can use to start training your own army of bird dogs.

Awesome, really good. So guys, if you're interested in getting more information about how to partner with us, and let us train your bird dogs for you, and show you the power of that, go to [PeterandJoe.com](http://PeterandJoe.com), [PeterandJoe.com](http://PeterandJoe.com), and you can learn more about the coaching and the partnering, marketing program that Peter and I have. We are actually partnering with people all over the country. We're doing the marketing for them. We're setting their systems up, giving them the websites, the bird dog systems, all that good stuff, in a complete done-for-you package, and it's really awesome.

I'm proud of it. I've got a lot of people doing a lot of deal. And, you fill out that application on that page, and Peter will call you, get on the phone and see if you're a good fit, and I encourage everybody to do that. Go to [PeterandJoe.com](http://PeterandJoe.com). So, Peter, another good episode, Brilliant at the Basics. You are my friend the most brilliant person I know at the basics.

**Peter:** Thank you. Thank you. I appreciate that.

**Joe:** All right, guys, thanks a lot. Well, take care, and we'll see you later. Buh-bye!

**Peter:** Thanks.