

BONDING WITH YOUR CLIENT

by

Bob Mulloy

The topic of this article "BONDING WITH YOUR CLIENT", was spirited by comments by Bill Sutton during a recent ASHI New England chapter meeting. I hope to review and emphasize the importance of what Bill said and elaborate a little further.

Bill began by saying that he encourages his clients to attend the home inspection and that he endeavors to make the client a valuable part of the process. A happy client is a satisfied client and bonding with your client is the way to achieve those goals.

Firstly, a client must be educated to prevent false expectations. You should tell the client that you will not find every little problem during the limited time available and that instead, the inspector will focus on the important deficiencies that may influence a purchase decision.

Once the expectations are understood, bonding with the client should be an unconscious objective, an automatic part of your methodology - the sign of a professional and a experienced home inspector. The process of bonding begins by simply "being nice". Be nice to people and the bonding process starts. Wear a smile and tell a joke. Certainly you should orchestrate the inspection process for efficiency, but take the time to be nice and "listen to your client."

Bond by stopping at the end of each major system and asking your client if they have any questions? Bond by suggesting that the client stop you and ask questions when there is confusion, uncertainty or overwhelming fear. Remember that the client is very nervous, so direct them to focus their questions to the system being evaluated. Calm their fears with your kindness and the assurance that you care and are representing their best interests through your experienced powers of observation and your willingness to "go-slow" and explain things. Ask if there are any questions before proceeding to the next system.

Just like a doctor's "bed-side-manner", your "house-side-manner" should be professional, understanding and caring. Make the client feel that they are important by giving them an occasional role to play during the inspection. Ask the client to hold the flashlight or to go upstairs and run the water while you monitor the pipes for leaks. Give them something to do and the bonding process is off to a running start.

Take a moment during the inspection to ask the client what they do for a living. I have often been surprised to lean that my client is an engineer, electrician or plumber. Bond with your client by briefly discussing their occupation.

In summary, bonding with your client will gain a friend, win their respect and prevent complaints. Bonding will keep you out of court and will earn a referral. So be nice already, wear a smile and bond.

[Back HOME](#)