

HOW TO CHOOSE YOUR REAL ESTATE AGENT

7 TIPS



7 Tips for Choosing the Right Real Estate Agent.

1. Ask Around.

One of the best ways to find a trustworthy and successful real estate agent is to ask around. Talk to friends, neighbors and coworkers and ask them to suggest real estate agents they may have worked with in the past. Then compile a list of prospects. Do some research on each of them and the company they work with, to find out their reputation in the area. What kind of marketing does the agent do, as well as the company? Go to their websites and read reviews, testimonials, and gather as much information as possible. In today's world there is so much information online to help you in your search. How long has the company been in business? Why did this agent pick this company to work for? What makes them different or better than the agency down the road?

If you are familiar with the city, and have an idea where you want to live, another practice is to drive around and take note of "for sale" signs. Which Realtor's name do you see consistently? If you continue to see the same name time and again, typically that means the agent is a specialist in the neighborhood. Alternatively, if you want to sell your house, keep an eye out for signs in your own neighborhood. Then pop in to an open house and see how the agent conducts business. If your instinct feels right, it may be a match.

2. Interview your Top 3 Choices.

Once you've narrowed down your search to the top two or three agents, ask questions. Find out as much as you can upfront about each candidate so there are no surprises down the road.

Are they the right fit for your goals and interests? Do you feel they will do what's in your best interest? You want to be sure to get a qualified agent with a solid track record.

Below is a list of common questions to consider as you interview:

-Are you licensed? Is your license up to date?

Every agent is required by law, to have a real estate license. This should be an easy answer. If not, look elsewhere.

-How long have you been in the business?

This will tell you how much experience the Realtor has in the field. While new up-and-coming agents may be eager, an agent who has been in the business for a few years typically will be more skillful and knowledgeable.

How long have you been in the area?

Find out how well they know the neighborhoods, and the city. Can they tell you about the schools in the area, restaurants, or entertainment venues? If you have a special interest or need, for example, perhaps you are a boater and are looking for a waterfront home. It will do you better justice if your Realtor is also a boater. Chances are he knows the waterway system, the neighborhoods, and can find you the perfect home for your boating passion.

-Is this your full-time job?

You want to make sure you get the attention you deserve. An agent who is only working part-time may not be able to devote the appropriate amount of time needed to get your house sold or to find you your dream home.

-What is your marketing plan or strategy for my needs?

How does the agent plan on selling your home or finding the perfect home for you? Get this information in writing. This is the ideal way to find out how organized your agent is, and what kind of marketing plan he/she has developed.

-How often will I hear from you?

How often does the agent typically communicate with their clients and how do they reach out to them? Phone? E-mail? Fax? If you don't like the answers they provide, this is your opportunity to discuss some possible alternatives.

-Can I have a list of references?

What better way to find out about your agent than by talking to their past clients? It's an easy way to get a lot of information in a short amount of time.

-How many houses did you sell in the past year?

This will provide you with an idea of how successful the agent was in the past year and how fast they may be able to sell your house.

-What is your commission structure?

Before you choose your Realtor, make sure their cost is compatible with your budget.

3. Find a Personality Match.

Finding an agent that meshes well with your personality is key. You may be spending quite a bit of time with your agent, and you want it to be productive, yet enjoyable. Be sure they are working to do what's in your best interest; and not theirs. Remember, you want to work as a team where you both have the same vision. Be sure to choose an agent who listens to your needs, and one who not only knows the answers to your questions, but takes the time to explain them in a manner you'll be able to understand. The industry jargon can get confusing with so many terms to learn and retain. A good agent will sense when you need clarification or more explanation and help you get over that learning curve. As a result, you will feel more comfortable and confident with the choice you make.

4. Determine Their Level of Expertise.

It's extremely important that your agent is not only familiar with the real estate business, but also familiar with the region. Do they know the neighborhood? Do they know the market in the areas you're looking to buy or sell? Do they understand the benefits of building a new home vs. a buying an existing home? How well do they understand the real estate process? Agents who know the area well will know what's available and for what price. If you're looking to sell, agents should know the market well enough to set a fair price that is attractive to both the buyer and the seller. Listen carefully and ask about the market prices.

5. Communicate Openly.

Communication is the best way to avoid any problems throughout the buying and selling process. Therefore, it is best to disclose any pertinent information to your Realtor upfront so they know what to expect from you, and what you expect of them. For example, if you know you are an indecisive shopper and need to see dozens of houses before making a decision, let your agent know. That way they won't grow impatient, or wonder if you've had a change of heart. Or, if you have a list of features for your next home that you simply can't live without, write down every detail and provide your agent with a copy. Then you're both on the same page and you don't waste each other's time. Similarly, if you're selling your home, give your Realtor a list of your home's best features and qualities that would make it appealing to potential buyers. Let them know your budget and any credit challenges. They can help you find the right lender for your situation.

A real estate agent is your teammate in a huge financial investment, and one of the most rewarding experiences of your life. Be sure that agent is always willing to work and readily available. Keep the communication lines flowing and you're sure to have a peaceful and exciting real estate venture.

6. Choose an Agent Who Works with Your Time Schedule.

Talk to your agent about when they work. If you work long hours, five days a week, is your agent willing to work on weekends or show you homes in the evening? Will they spend their Saturday touring houses with you or showing the house you want to sell? Are they willing to hold Open Houses at your home? It's also helpful to find out how accessible they are if you need to reach them after normal business hours. What are their office hours? Can you call them at home? Can you call after 8:00 pm at night? Determining when you can meet and contact your agent early on in the process will help make for an easy, stress-free journey.

7. Do They Provide Other Services?

What level of service is your agent willing to provide? Do they do more than just the standard job description? Some agents will help you find a lender, follow up to get the loan approved, arrange a home inspection, and contractors to fix up your home. Realtors can refer you to real estate attorneys, or conduct a study of the property's value. Still others will charter a boat for you or take you on city tours. Discovering the little extras they may offer, will help you save time and money down the line.

Why Choose Miloff Aubuchon Realty to help you with your Real Estate Goals.

Miloff Aubuchon Realty was founded on the philosophy that buying or building a home should be a rewarding experience that resonates with satisfaction for years to come. Miloff Aubuchon offers their clients a unique one-stop shopping experience for all of their real estate needs.

Our pledge is to give your property the exposure it needs to sell at a comparable market price. Count on our agents to provide solid guidance to help you meet all your real estate goals. Contact us 239.542.1075, info@teamaubuchon.com, and via www.miloffaubuchonrealty.com.

