**The Consumer’s Guide to Hiring an Amazing Real Estate Agent**

When you’re buying or selling a home, it’s crucial to work with a qualified real estate agent. Not just a professional, but an amazing agent and a market expert. *So how do you ensure you’re hiring an amazing real estate agent?*

There are currently more than two million real estate professionals in North America.1,2 With so many options to choose from, how does a prospective home buyer or seller choose the right agent or broker? According to the National Association of Realtors®, trust and reputation are the top deciding factors consumers use when hiring an agent.3

But how do you measure trust and reputation ... and what criteria can be used to help you make your decision?

In this guide, we've outlined the top attributes that amazing agents possess, as well as the questions you can ask to make sure you’re working with the right market expert to achieve your real estate goals.

**5 ATTRIBUTES OF AN AMAZING AGENT**

Not all real estate professionals are the same. Following are five key attributes of amazing agents to help you understand what makes top agents and market experts stand apart from the competition:

**1. A Pricing Specialist:** For buyers, amazing agents have a strong understanding of market trends to help you identify and secure a deal to ensure you get the home you want, within your desired budget. For sellers, market experts have experience pricing homes optimally for the market, helping you sell for your desired price, and avoid costs like additional mortgage and utility payments.

*Takeaway: Whether buying or selling a home, pricing can be tricky. Market experts can help navigate best-possible pricing strategies, and also secure the home you want within your budget.*

**2. An Effective Time Manager:** The average agent may not be utilizing the latest tools and technology to make the transaction easier and more cost effective for you. Market experts have tools and strategies at their disposal to minimize the amount of time you spend on the process. For sellers, they can also ensure you only deal with qualified buyers, not “window shoppers” who waste your time. For buyers, a market expert knows how to prioritize your needs and wants to find you the ideal home within your budget, without wasting your time on houses that aren’t a fit or are likely turn up major issues in an inspection.

*Takeaway: Even a well-intentioned agent may not have the skills, tools or technology to make the experience easy for you. There are lots of hidden activities that may take up unexpected time, and a market expert will save you time and energy.*

**3. A Market Insider:** While most agents can pull market stats about a neighborhood, community or city, they may not understand important trends or developments that would affect your transaction. Market experts live and breathe local real estate and know the trigger points for buying and selling in your market. We also stay current on effective marketing and negotiation practices, resulting in our track record of success.

*Takeaway: An experienced real estate agent is often the best source of information about a city, neighborhood, or even street … we’re literally conducting market research every day.*

**4. A Strong Negotiator:** Amazing agents truly set themselves apart in their ability to negotiate. Real estate negotiations take skill, experience and a knowledge of how to fight for your client’s best interests. While any agent can enter negotiations to buy or sell a home, experienced Realtors understand what to do before entering negotiations (establishing the upper hand), as well as during the process (when to offer or accept concessions) in order to set up the best outcome.

*Takeaway: Working with a market expert will help ensure you get the best deal on your terms, not just the fastest deal.*

**5. An Effective Closer:** Closing a deal fast is often a good thing. However, top real estate professionals know how to not only achieve your real estate goals quickly, but in the right way to avoid pitfalls. Just like negotiations, the paperwork and process of closing a real estate transaction are complicated. Market experts have a strong understanding of the contracts, timelines, clauses and contingencies within the closing process.

*Takeaway: Real estate transactions often involve a significant investment, so even a small mistake can mean serious trouble. With that in mind, it’s best to work with a true market expert.*

**5 QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR REAL ESTATE AGENT**

The first step would be to “shop around.” Many people work with the first agent they come across without a firm understanding of their level of experience. It’s always a good idea to interview a number of agents before selecting one. If you’ve gotten referrals from people you trust, then you may only need to interview 2-3 agents.

However, it can be tough to know what to ask in the interview process. Here are some questions that can help you qualify the best agent to help you achieve your real estate goals:

***1. Can you send me some information about yourself?*** Look for professionalism and consistency. What are their accomplishments? See how they approach their work. If they’re a newer agent, ask about their team’s dynamic and accomplishments.

***2. How long have you been in real estate?*** While longevity is important, even more telling are the number of transactions they have closed or been involved in. So feel free to also ask: “How many homes have you sold in this area?”

***3. What will you do to keep me informed?*** Will the agent be able to meet your expectations? Determine how much communication you want, and then find an agent who will give you the attention and time you deserve.

***4. Can you provide me with further resources I may need?*** From market reports and pricing trends to school performance and crime statistics, top agents should have resources at their disposal … or know where to find them.

***5. Seller only: Can you share with me your plan to market my property?*** Many agents will simply put your home in the MLS and wait for it to sell. An amazing agent should have a detailed plan of how to get your home exposure on social media, to their local networks, and more.

**GET STARTED**

Now that you’re armed with the *5 Attributes of Amazing Agents* and the *Top Questions* to ensure you work with the best possible real estate agent, you’re ready to start interviewing agents.

We’d love an opportunity to win your business. Schedule a free consultation with us to find out how true market experts can help you achieve your real estate goals!

Sources:

1. National Association of REALTORS – <https://www.nar.realtor/field-guides/field-guide-to-quick-real-estate-statistics>
2. Financial Post – <http://business.financialpost.com/personal-finance/mortgages-real-estate/canada-housing-bubble-agents/wcm/b49d4e3a-bd8d-4d1c-9566-bd3d80c8e23a>
3. National Association of REALTORS –

<https://www.nar.realtor/reports/highlights-from-the-profile-of-home-buyers-and-sellers>