

Welcome to my second article in THE FIELD OF REAL ESTATE.

Question: How do I find the right real estate agent?

Answer: The first thing I want to impress on you is that you DO need to pick A real estate agent. Buyers and Sellers who dart around from realtor to realtor get lower quality service. The reason for this is simple. Realtors are not paid one red cent for their work unless they successfully complete a purchase or a sale. To give of their time and service a realtor must have an expectation of profit (a wage). It does follow that a realtor will put in the most energy and expertise when they know they will get paid. For a realtor to spend time and dollars with a client who is not loyal to that realtor just isn't sensible. The realtors' time is better spent elsewhere.

Choosing a realtor via calling on an ad isn't the way to go. You could get any calibre of realtor ... poor or good.

Please know there is no need for a buyer to call individual realtors on individual listings. Technology, being what it is, means that all realtors have immediate access to all MLS listing information. A buyer needs only to work with their chosen agent who will be sorting through the listings on the buyers behalf looking for homes which match that buyers' criteria. It is almost without exception these days, that the listings are on MLS. Multiple Listing Service is an organized central source of listings. All Okanagan Mainline Real Estate Board's realtors send their listings to this one source.

I recommend that you ask around amongst your family, friends and acquaintances. They will tell you who their realtor is and how well their last real estate transaction went. Another good group of people to ask are mortgage representatives and brokers and real estate lawyers. They usually know who the really good realtors are.

Question: What qualities should you look for in your realtor?

Answer: Find a realtor who listens well. Nothing is more frustrating than looking at the wrong properties! Having said that, be sure you try to be a good communicator too. Your realtor can do a better job if she or he can know what type of property you wish to buy. There is no advantage in keeping your realtor guessing.

The next trait to look for is attitude. You have to feel that the realtor will devote the necessary energy towards your search. That realtor should be showing sincere interest in your positive outcome.

Look for experienced realtors. There is no substitute for this. The more transactions a realtor has been through, the better they know the potential for problems, the better they know our areas' idiosyncrasies, the better they know laws and by-laws, the good and not so good re-sale areas etc. A realtor knowing in advance what the problems can be, goes a long way to preventing problems for you, the consumer.

Don't fall for "come-on" advertising. Discounts and offers for guaranteed sales and free this and that most certainly do not guarantee quality service.

Choosing a realtor should be a lifetime choice, just like your dentist or accountant. Once you have bought or sold with your realtor and the experience was a good one, plan on using that realtor in the future and recommending that realtor to others. Once the loyalty is established you'll be amazed at how good your relationship with your realtor can be.

Realtors are a professional group and as a whole they are dedicated to providing a complete service with the clients' best interests at heart.

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