

QUESTIONS TO ASK

When Choosing a REALTOR®

How long have you been in residential real estate sales? Is it your full-time job?

Like most professions, experience is no guarantee of skill. But much of real estate is learned on the job.

How many homes did you and your real estate brokerage sell last year?

This will touch on how much experience they have, and how up-to-date they are on the local market.

What designations or certifications do you hold?

Real estate professionals have to take additional specialized training in order to obtain these distinctions. Designations and certifications help define the special skills that an agent can apply to your particular real estate needs. One designation sellers might for is the CRS®, or Certified Residential Specialist, but there are also specialists for military customers, seniors, and those who are considering a short sale, among others.

How many days does it take you to sell a home? How does that compare to others?

The REALTOR® you interview should have information about their performance on hand and be able to present market statistics from their local MLS to provide a comparison.

What's the average variation between your initial listing and final sales price?

This is one indication of a REALTOR®'s pricing and negotiating skills.

What specific marketing systems and approaches will you use to sell my home?

Your agent should have an aggressive, innovative plan and understand how to market property online.

Will you represent me exclusively, or might you also choose to represent the buyer?

While it's usually legal to represent both parties in a transaction, your REALTOR® should be able to explain his or her philosophy on client obligations and agency relationships.

Can you recommend service providers who can help me obtain a mortgage, make home repairs, and so on?

Practitioners should be able to recommend more than one provider and let you know if they have any special relationship with any of the providers.

How will you keep me informed about the progress of my transaction?

The best answer here is a question. A real estate agent who pays attention to the way you prefer to communicate and responds accordingly will make for the smoothest transaction.

Could you please give me the contact information of your three most recent clients?

Ask their former customers if they would use the agent again in the future.