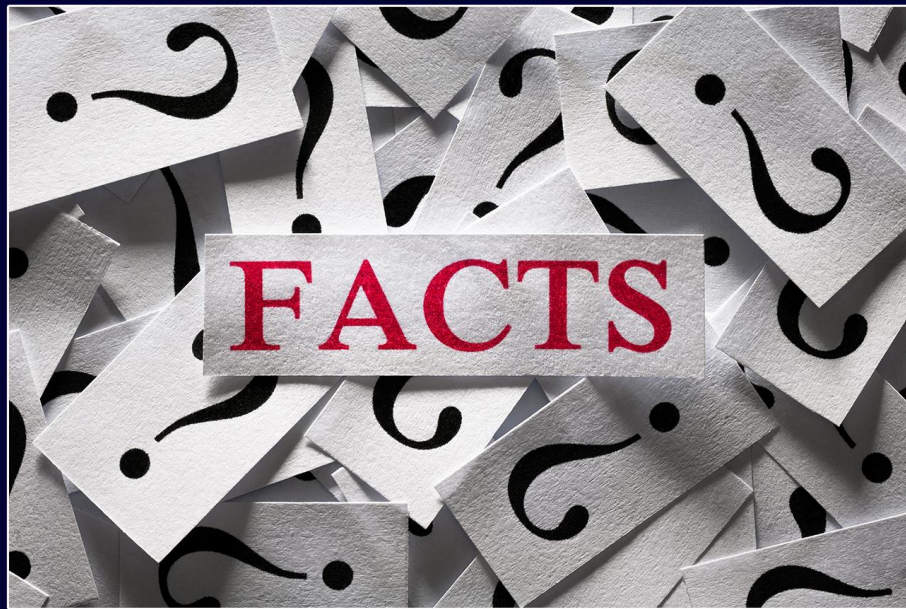


11 Questions to Ask Before You Hire An Agent



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Most of us sell only a small number of homes in our lifetime. With limited experience in real estate how are we to be capable of maximizing the profits from our home sale? This special report will educate you with valuable information that will help you make the best decision concerning: Which real estate agent should I hire?

In real estate, as in life - not all things are created equal. Picking an agent is one of those critical issues that can cost or save you thousands of dollars. Hiring a real estate agent is just like any hiring process – with you on the boss's side of the desk. It's critical that you make the right decision about who will handle what is probably the single largest financial investment you will ever make. There are very specific questions you should be asking to ensure that you get the best representation for your needs.



1. What makes you different? Can you send me some information about yourself?

It's a much tougher real estate market than it was a decade ago. What unique marketing plans and programs does this agent have in place to make sure that your home stands out favorably versus other competing homes? What things does this agent offer you that others don't to help you sell your home in the least amount of time with the least amount of hassle and for the most amount of money?

You can often get a good idea of which agents are the most professional by looking at their promotional materials. If their own materials aren't professional, how well are they going to market your home? Track how long each agent takes to respond to your request and how quickly they follow up. If they don't respond efficiently to your listing requests imagine how they'll handle potential homebuyers

2. What is the agent's track record and reputation in the market place?

It may seem like everywhere you look, real estate agents are boasting about being #1 for this or that, or quoting you the number of home they've sold. If you're like many homeowners, you've probably become immune to much of this information. After all, you ask, "Why should I care about how many homes one agent sold over another. The only thing I care about is whether they can sell my home quickly for the most amount of money."

Well, because you want your home sold fast and for top dollar, you should be asking the agents you interview how many homes they have sold. I'm sure you will agree that success in real estate is selling homes. If one agent is selling a lot of homes where another is selling only a handful, ask yourself why this might be? What things are these two agents doing differently?

You may be surprised to know that many agents sell fewer than 10 homes a year. This volume makes it difficult for them to do full impact marketing on your home because they can't raise the money it takes to afford the advertising and special programs to give your home a high profile. Also, at this low level, they probably can't afford to hire an assistant, which means that they're running around trying to do all the components of the job themselves, which means service may suffer.



THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

ranked The DeSelms Team #1 in TN and #16 in the nation for transactions in 2013!

Rank	Name	Transactions
1	Terry DeSelms and The DeSelms Team	669.00
2	The Ashton Real Estate Group of RE/MAX Elite	566.00
3	Turner Victory Team of Bob Parks Realty, LLC	243.00
4	Terri Rutherford with RE/MAX Fine Homes	228.00
5	Ann Hoke & Associates of Keller Williams Realty	222.10

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DreamHomeTN.com

Terry DeSelms | TheDeSelmsTeam.com | 615.550.5565 | Tara DeSelms

3. How long have you been in business and what professional designations have you obtained?

The length of time a real estate agent has been licensed is not a sure fire sign that they've been an active seller. They may have been in business for 10 years but only part time, whereas an agent who's been in business for 2 years may be a real top producer. So first look at their sales history but also take into account what professional designations they have obtained. The minimum should be a licensed professional who's a member of the local real estate board and multiple listing service as well as the state and National Association of Realtors. Local community groups and associations are also pluses in terms of networking and commitment. Most importantly, see if they have designations like Certified Residential Specialist (only the top 1% are able to obtain this), Accredited Buyer Representative, and Graduate, Realtor Institute to name a few.

4. What are your marketing plans for my home?

Will they take professional pictures of your home? How many websites will your home be featured on? How many buyers are they currently representing that they will send your home to? How much money does this agent spend in advertising the homes they list versus the other agents you are interviewing? In what media does this agent



advertise? What they know about the effectiveness of one medium over the other? Agents who are innovative and offer new methods of attracting homebuyers will measurably outperform agents who rely on methods of the past.

5. *Do you have an assistant or support staff?*

By employing someone to handle the details of their business the agent can spend more time servicing your needs, marketing your home, finding the right buyer for your home and negotiating the sale. A full-time staff will also ensure that you have access to information about your listing and closing all throughout the day, even if your agent is working with another client.



6. *On average, when your listings sell, how close is the selling price to asking price?*

You will want to know that your agent is skilled at pricing homes to sell. You don't want your home priced too low so that you're missing out on profit but you don't want it priced too high so that it becomes stale on the market. Their performance on this measurement will help you predict how high a price you will get for the sale of your home.



7. *On average, how long does it take for your listings to sell?*

Don't automatically assume the shorter time on the market the better. That could reflect selling homes quickly at low prices. Look at what the asking price was compared to the selling price. An agent who sells close to the asking price and quickly is effective at helping clients determine the right price and helping them get it.

8. What listing price do you recommend and what is that price based on?

Pricing is the most critical step to selling your home. Take great care in choosing an agent with the knowledge to price your home effectively. Keep in mind the selling price should attract prospective buyers to your home, get you top dollar in the current market and reflect the condition of your home. Be realistic and avoid 'yes agents', who will say 'yes' to any request or price while your home languishes on the market. Lowball agents will try to talk you into an artificial price simply to sell as fast as possible.



9. How many buyers are you currently working with?

Obviously, the more buyers your agent is working with, the better your chances are of selling your home quickly. It will also impact price because an agent with many buyers can set up an auction-like atmosphere where many buyers bid on your home at the same time. Ask them to describe the system they have for attracting buyers.

10. Do you have a reference list of clients I could contact?

Ask to see this list and then proceed to spot-check some of the names. An experienced agent will likely have a list of people who are their raving fans and should have quotes from happy customers.

11. What does the listing agreement entail, what are the beginning and expiration dates, and what are the fees I will be paying?

Have your agent go over every detail in the listing agreement with you until you understand it completely. Make sure the beginning and ending dates are on the agreement; a good standard for length is six to twelve months. Know exactly what fees you will be paying and remember that less is not always better. If the agent stands to make very little commission you can bet it will be reflected in the amount of time and effort that is spent marketing your home. If the agent reduces their commission to get the listing, what does that say about their negotiating strategy? If they have a hard time negotiating their own commission, how well will they negotiate for your profit? How confident is your agent in the service they will provide you? Will they allow you to cancel your contract without penalty if you're not satisfied with the service provided?



Evaluate each agent's responses to these questions carefully and objectively. Who will do the best job for you? These questions will help you decide.

To find out what your home is worth, please fill out the form below:

Name: _____

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