

Real Estate Today

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Here's Some Practical Advice on Interviewing an Agent to List Your House

BY JIM SMITH, REALTOR®

Having been interviewed so often for the job of listing agent, I have come to appreciate how difficult it must be for sellers to distinguish among candidates for this job. Let's face it — you typically sell a home every five to ten years, and you may not be practiced at what questions to ask and how to interpret the answers you get from agents.

This week I want to empower you to be an effective interviewer so that you have the best possible experience listing and selling your home.

Having lost many listings to other agents over the years, I have come to recognize some choices on which sellers have based their selection of a listing agent.

Choice #1: Listing with the agent who recommends the highest listing price. We agents don't control what your house sells for. The market determines that. Yet sellers still fall for this tactic.

Look for the agent who has the best understanding of your neighborhood's market and can prove it. It does no good to list your house for more than it can appraise for, because, unless your buyer is paying cash, it has to appraise for the contract price. Why waste time listing it for a price that won't appraise? List it for what it can appraise for, and it will sell quicker — and probably for more money.

Choice #2: Listing with an agent who claims to have buyers for your house. When an agent makes this claim, don't list with him or anyone else. Instead, offer to hold your house off the market for one week so he can show your house to these buyers and earn 2.8% commission. If he fails to produce those buyers, he's not your agent. Then list your house with an agent who doesn't make this all too common claim.

Choice #3: Listing with an agent who bad-mouths another

agent. We agents should be able to sell ourselves on our strengths, not others' weaknesses. If the claims are of illegal or unethical behavior, check them out with the agent himself, the Realtor association and the Colorado Real Estate Commission, because making unsupported allegations about other agents is itself unethical and illegal and should be prosecuted.

Choice #4: Not checking out how the agent markets his other listings. Get addresses of his/her other listings and look for them on realtor.com. Google their addresses. Look at the agent's own website. Remember, job #1 is to market your listing well. He or she will market your home no better than he markets his other listings.

Choice #5: Not choosing an agent who is a REALTOR®. Not all agents are members of a Realtor association. Only Realtors have a Code of Ethics. Most of the times I've had trouble with an agent, it turned out he/she wasn't a Realtor.

This Week's Featured New Listing:

Penthouse Condo Offers Mountain Views

This 2-bedroom, 2-bath condo at 10350 W. 55th Lane (unit 202), is in a pool community known as Skyline Estates, just west of Kipling Street on that ridge south of 58th Avenue and north of I-70. This particular condo has several nice features, not the least of which is its panoramic view of the mountains which you get from its west-facing balcony and bedroom. It also has an extra-deep attached garage — many condos here have detached garages. To fully appreciate it, take the video tour online, then call for a showing.



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