



# All Real Estate Agents are the Same Right?

Such a common misconception is that all Real Estate agents are the same. We all drive black BMW's, wear expensive suits and clothes and want to take a percentage of your home for a commission at the point of sale. So why would you choose one agent over another? Why would you pay one agent more than the other, especially if one agent is offering ridiculously low fees? Why would you call in multiple agents if we all do the same thing?

## **The answer to that question is quite simple.**

Think back to when you were at school, and think about all the teachers you have ever had. I am sure that when you look back there will be one stand out teacher, one that really helped you or had a hugely positive effect on your schooling time.

Or alternatively a teacher that had a really negative effect, and made your life hell. Now even though there are stand outs in your mind with teachers, all of those teachers went to the same school and college, did the same degree and made the same money.

Real Estate agents are exactly same. Yes we all put your properties on the internet, and we all put signs up and take photos of your property, and believe it or not, we all did the same qualifying certification. BUT as the example above shows, there can be significant differences between similarly qualified individuals within a profession.

Let me give you a few tips and answers to some questions you may be thinking.

## **1. What do they offer regarding marketing options and costs?**

Some agencies in the past have decided that marketing is not important and therefore does not deserve the additional costs involved. Those companies cannot be named, as nobody knows who they are, or what they have sold.

Some agencies have a "NO SALE, NO CHARGE" mentality, however they will then only take photos of your property with their iPhone's, and put up a cheap sign and provide poor quality marketing advertisements online or in the newspaper... not the best idea in a tough market. A NO SALE, NO CHARGE statement is only of value to you if you DO NOT get a sale on your property? And what is the benefit of that?

You need to look for an agency that can offer you well priced professional photography, a professional internet presence on the nation's main real estate websites via high quality written marketing descriptions and spiels, and also one who can offer you alternative and up-to-date marketing techniques such as Facebook advertising, eNewsletter advertising, specific email adverts of your property direct to registered buyers, local flyers and everything in between.

Signs, brochures, a database of buyers, multiple major internet sites, newspaper advertising, newsletters, email advertisements, local flyers distribution, the lot. Because basically you need the best you can get in order to achieve the highest price possible in the shortest amount of time.



**2. Does the agent offer alternative and unique sales tactics that differ to what everyone else has to offer?**

Some agencies still have the philosophy of 'let the buyers come to us'. In this day and age, with 7 days a week shopping and many other sporting events and activities taking away peoples valuable time, the old fashioned approach of listing your property, running an advert, and then hoping people turn up to an open home, after you have spent all morning preparing for it, have changed.

The agent must think outside the square at all times, and one way of doing this is by ensuring your chosen agent understands that having a hit and hope approach is not acceptable to you. By holding a set time 'private viewing' where multiple people are invited to attend at the one time, not only ensures you know people are genuinely coming to view your property for the purpose of buying, but also that the agent has created a situation where they have control over the buyers in an environment of possible competition.

This is just one example of a new and positive tactic that your agent should display to you that they understand and promote.



**3. Does the agent understand the power of suitable pricing to match the market?**

Does the agent understand the importance of getting the asking price right on your property in order to achieve the best result for you.

Do they understand buyers philosophy's and how most people view a properties asking price?

Do they understand how and when buyers will act and how they will negotiate?

All the good real estate agents have excellent negotiation skills and they all have a fabulous knowledge of a buyers mentality. Creating interest and desire with quality marketing is only half the job required in achieving a sale for you.

The most important part is obtaining offers, closing the deal and achieving you what you want. The agent should be able to explain to you why they have chosen

a particular pricing structure and tactic for your property, and you need to make sure you understand how and why your property is being promoted this way.

Some agents leave buyers and sellers guessing when it comes to what the actual price of the property is? This is often created by the agent using misleading or inaccurate figures in the advertising, with the results often causing a lack of genuine offers or general interest in your property. It has been proven that buyers will steer clear of a pricing structure that they don't understand or feel comfortable with. They will simply move on to the next property.

**4. Does the agent sell homes in your region?**

This is important as a lot of agents will list properties far away from their office, which means they aren't dealing with local buyers from their other listings. Also do you really think an agent will want to do lots of showings if they have to drive an hour to get there? Probably not.

**5. What company do they work for? Are you just a number to them?**

This question is becoming more and more relevant as the world becomes less caring about you the individual customer and the customer service levels of large companies continues to decline. Larger franchised companies may claim to give you a personalised experience, however at the end of the day you may be just another number to them, as all their techniques and marketing is generated and guided from their Eastern states head office.

With local boutique agencies, you are far more likely to be guaranteed a higher quality personalised service, and the chances of achieving a sales from another member of the team will also be increased as everyone within the office will be well aware of your property and your needs.





## **6. Do you need to feel really comfortable with your agent?**

This is not a trick question, basically the answer is yes. At the end of the day you need to feel confident in the agent's ability to sell your property for the highest possible price, whilst best looking after your needs along the way.

Trust is a very important factor when it comes to choosing an agent. You need to feel comfortable enough to speak freely with your agent, and have an agent who feels the same. Do they genuinely care about you, or just your commission payment?

Honesty, caring and trust are words not commonly associated with Real Estate agents, so if you find someone with these traits - sign them up!



## **7. Does the agent consider the safety and protection of your property and valuables?**

In this day and age, your agent must be more and more aware of the dangers involved with property scams and the showing of your property to strangers.

Under the disguise of being 'a prospective buyer' viewing the property in an 'open' home situation, some people have been known to use this time to do some opportune thieving. Another benefit of the structured private viewing process is the added security of the agent having full contact details of the potential buyers prior to them even arriving at the property.

The agent can confirm the potential buyers identity either by a call or an sms rather than simply opening the front door and allowing complete strangers to wander through your home.

## **8. Does your Agent actually follow up potential buyers who have viewed the property?**

With identity theft and general harassment from telemarketers ever present, it seems more and more people are refusing to register their details on a home open sheet at an open home viewing.

Privacy is important to people so they will either lie about who they are, give false phone numbers or simply refuse to leave their details. If the agent is a good one, they will secure the details of the enquirer prior to them viewing the property. That way the agent will have a 'genuine' list of registered buyers to follow up accurately with.

Having received the potential buyers details prior to actually showing them the property, will of course also allow the good agent the opportunity to 'pre-qualify' them to ensure they have pre approval finance or the ability to raise the funds required to purchase prior to showing them the property in the first place.

## **9. Does the agent communicate to you regularly?**

One of the biggest complaints from people selling their home is the distinct lack of communication that they received from their chosen agent from the time following the listing of the property, through the times of showing the property and up until the final settlement... if it gets that far.

The agent must make you comfortable in the fact you feel that they will communicate clearly with you at all times throughout this difficult and stressful time. Once again this comes back to having complete trust in the agent you ultimately choose.





## 10. Does your agent have integrity?

Do you really just want anyone representing you and your property on the open market? In this day and age, the obligation of not only the agent, but also you the owner to act and perform within all legal requirements is becoming more and more critical.

Gone are the days of the sly or sleek agent being able to 'sell ice to an Eskimo' via any means available in order to achieve a result, that is finalised once the property has passed hands.

Buyers have more rights than ever before, and the ability to bring about a class action after the sale has been completed, if something comes to light whereby the buyers feel as though they have been misled or tricked, has become quite easy and very acceptable.

Make sure your chosen agent knows what they are talking about, knows the industries laws and obligations and knows how to best use them in order to achieve the perfect sale for you from the beginning, right through to well after the very end.



So as you can see from these 10 questions and answers, there can be a huge difference between agents, and this is just the tip of the iceberg!

Negotiation skills, pre-qualification of buyers, arranging suitable and relevant viewings, offering unique and plentiful marketing options, professional presentation, a caring and trusting manner, experience, their care factor and their general overall skill level all also play a large part in what your agent has to offer.

My suggestion would be, if you are looking for an agent to sell your home, find the one who best suits

the answers to the questions above. Don't just look at who is cheapest and or who says your home is worth the most. This is an important decision, and you need to work out who will achieve the overall best result.

You may pay less for the agent who just wants to buy your listing with a cheap selling fee, but if they can't negotiate the highest price for you, or once they provide you with a service level to match their fee, was it worthwhile?

You may be impressed with one agent who has told you that your home will achieve a figure higher than all the others, but when you obtain no interest in your property, and it is still on the market months later, or worse you have waited so long for an offer that now you have to drop your price below what you originally thought your home was worth, you have to once again ask yourself, was it worth it? You have to wonder why a company has to lower their fees so much or promise you an unrealistic expectation in order to win your business in the first place?

When picking your agent, you need to make the decision based on what is best for your home and what is best for YOU?

Thanks again for your time! Please call me if I can be of further assistance.



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