

Real Estate Agent Interview Questions

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These questions make excellent interview questions for your prospective real estate agent, whether he/she is representing you as a listing agent or a buyer's agent. The answers your agent gives you to these questions will tell you so much about your agent, but don't let him/her get away with a simple "yes" or "no" to these questions. They are all narrative answers, and an experienced agent has good answers for all of them. If you ask an agent these questions in a conversation, he must spontaneously respond, and this will reveal the depth of his/her knowledge. Obviously, your discernment meter must be on and working well. [Rather than use "his/her" or "he/she" or "him/her" which hinders the flow of thought, I will simply refer to the male gender using the traditional rule of grammar.]

By the time you are done interviewing your prospective agent, you will have a pretty good idea what his personality is like. Personality is very important in sales.

1. **How many years have you been in real estate sales?**

It takes 10 years to become an expert in any field, but that's not a guarantee an agent is an expert. It depends on whether he has been teachable and seriously pursuing a full time career to become the best real estate professional he can become. If he has less than 10 years, he should have a mentor who is an expert. If you sense that his career is nothing but a hobby or a part time income source, move on to another agent without delay.

2. **Are you a full time agent or a part time agent?**

It might be nice to be a part time agent and pop a commission now and then, but you want a full time professional who takes his career seriously. Part time agents know less, have less experience, and have other priorities which do not include prioritizing you.

3. **Tell me about traditional marketing in real estate and what you do that is different.**

This may be the most important question you ask. His answer will reveal a lot about his knowledge and experience with old fashioned out-of-date traditional marketing that no longer works so well in real estate, and the new world of marketing that uses powerful technologies and the Internet.

4. **Tell me about Internet marketing in real estate.**

This is an extension of the last question. Today a successful agent must also become an expert in Internet marketing. If he is not, move on. This is that important. If you know nothing about Internet marketing yourself, you will be at a disadvantage in understanding the agent's answer, but if you have a high level of discernment, you should be able to discern insight and knowledge from a shallow answer.

5. **How many of your own listings did you also sell to buyers yourself this calendar year? In other words, in how many of your closings this year did you act as a dual agent?**

This is important. Many agents simply list, list, and list, and they let other agents sell their listings. What is more impressive, an agent who lists a lot of properties that other agents sell, or the agents who sells most of the listings, both their own and other agents' listings?

6. How many homes (that were not your listings) have you closed as a buyer's agent this calendar year? And what is your standing in the MLS as a seller's agent?

You want an agent who is successful, not just a good person. It doesn't matter if your prospective agent is number 1 or 2 or 3 or 10. What matters is that he is a top producer in this new world of marketing. But this is not the only credential. An agent can be a top producer and not satisfy many of the other important criteria.

7. How many listings do you have now? Tell me about some of them.

If an agent only has a few listings, that is troublesome, because you could surmise he doesn't have much influence or much of a network, or he doesn't have a significant footprint in the new world of marketing. Also, the type of listings an agent has tells you a lot about his market focus. If he specializes in low priced listings, the kinds of buyers he will connect with are buyers for low priced homes. If he specializes in foreclosures, the kinds of buyers he will connect with are buyers for foreclosures. Your agent should be a mover and shaker who has good listings and connects with many qualified buyers.

8. Describe the profile of your ideal clients.

You want an agent who works with clients like yourself. If you are buying or selling an \$800,000 home, you do not want an agent who specializes in foreclosures under \$150,000. You would not be his type of client, because he doesn't connect with buyers or sellers like you. Most people don't think about this. It is very important.

9. What are your values and what role do they play in your business model?

This is where a narrative answer will reveal so much to you about your agent. Honesty and integrity are absolutely critical. Never put yourself in a position of depending on an agent who is not honest to the core. The right values create loyalty, dedication, perseverance, and the kind of honesty that you expect. You will have a lot of money at stake, so these important values are not optional, but it is your job to find out if your agent possesses them before you hire him.

10. Are you a member of both the Olympic Listing Service and the Northwest MLS? If not, why not?

Don't be fooled. Any agent who is not a member of both is not promoting his listings to the largest number of buyers, and as a buyer's agent is not reaching the largest number of qualified buyers.

11. Tell me how you market listings? What do you do that is traditional, and what do you do

that uses technology and the Internet?

This and the next question are the core of what a successful real estate agent does. Turn on your discernment meter and listen carefully. If you have to, record all the answers here so you can find out later from someone who is knowledgeable if the answers are credible.

12. How do you connect with buyers? What kind of marketing do you use to reach qualified buyers?

This is the number one key to success for an agent today. Some agents only list because they don't know how to market to buyers in this new world of marketing. But there are agents who not only know how to list and market those listings, they also know how to market successfully to qualified buyers and are closing transactions as a result. This is a prerequisite for any agent you hire today.

13. What is your experience with negotiating? How do you negotiate for your clients?

Negotiating the price and negotiating the terms is not for inexperienced agents. It's your money, so be certain you hire the best negotiator.

14. What is your experience level with contracts and addendums and drafting unique language for special situations?

This might seem like a small matter compared to the other questions, but as they say, "The devil is in the details." You need an agent who can cross all the T's and dot all the I's for your sake on every aspect of your transaction.

15. How do you help your clients through all the due diligence steps between mutual acceptance and closing?

If there is anything wrong with your purchase, you need an agent who will stand up for you and help you terminate the transaction. You need an agent who is extremely knowledgeable about all aspects of the inspections and who knows how to represent you no matter what comes up.

16. Do you help your clients understand the preliminary title report?

This is important, because the title report and the attached documents will reveal all the restrictions on the property, the easements, and any recorded mortgages, liens, and encumbrances. You should not have to hire an attorney for this. And your agent doesn't have to be an attorney to acquire this kind of knowledge after 10 years in the business.

17. Do you help your clients understand the CC&Rs? Is this part of your service to your clients?

This is a relevant question, because many agents don't help their clients understand what they can and cannot do on their property. What if you cannot park your boat or your motor home on

your property?

18. Do you help your clients with home inspections, well inspections, and septic inspections? Do you schedule them and do you attend them?

If not your agent, then who? These are critically important inspections. A good agent will go above and beyond to make sure you are taken care of all the way to closing and beyond. Actually, a professional will consider it part of the customer service he gives every client.

19. Tell me about your customer service and how you communicate with your clients.

The biggest complaint today across the country is that listing agents “put my listing in the MLS and then I never heard from him again,” or words to that effect. Promises, promises, promises. Agents make them all the time. You must have discernment when you listen to the answers, because talk is cheap, but the agent who actually does what he says he will do is the one you want to hire.

20. What advantage do you offer me that no other agent can offer?

This is a narrative opportunity for an agent to sell himself. If he can't sell himself persuasively to you, don't expect he can sell real estate well. On the other hand, just because he talks smooth doesn't mean he will automatically satisfy all the other criteria. Be discerning. Be wise in your selection.

21. Tell me about your public MLS site and your real estate blog.

Your agent should have a very large and effective Internet presence. Nearly every buyer is using the Internet, and that's where almost 95% of buyers start their search. Your prospective agent should have an excellent MLS site and a very good, content rich real estate blog. For examples of two MLS sites and a real estate blog that set the standard on the Olympic Peninsula and in the State of Washington, see:

<http://www.Sequim4Sale.com>
<http://www.SequimForSale.com>
<http://SequimRealEstateNews.com>

22. Can I see some testimonies of past clients, preferably including at least one listing client and at least one client you represented as a buyer's agent?

What past clients say will tell you volumes. It would be great if you could call a past client on the phone, but most clients won't want to keep getting phone calls from strangers asking for testimonies. An agent should have at least a dozen great testimonies for you. They may be posted on his blog.

Apart from these questions, you should do your own independent research online. You can find out all about a real estate agent if you know how to search online. For help on how to do your online research,

go to: [online research](#).