

Why Use a REALTOR®?

All licensees are not the same. Only real estate licensees who are members of the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® are properly called REALTORS®, and may proudly display the REALTORS® logo on business cards and other marketing materials. REALTORS® are committed to treat all parties to a transaction honestly and subscribe to a strict Code of Ethics. The REALTOR® Code of Ethics requires REALTORS® to maintain a higher level of knowledge and standards in the process of buying and selling real estate. An independent survey reports that 84% of home buyers would use the same REALTOR® again.

Real estate transactions involve one of the biggest financial investments most people experience in their lifetime. Transactions today usually exceed \$200,000. If you had \$200,000 income tax problem, would you attempt to deal with it without the help of a CPA? If you had a \$200,000 legal question, would you handle it consulting with an attorney? Considering the small upside cost and the large downside risk, it would not be in your best interest to consider a deal in real estate without the professional assistance of a REALTOR®.

If you still aren't convinced as to the value of a REALTOR®, here are a dozen more reasons to use one:

- 1) **Your REALTOR® can help you determine your buying power** – that is, your financial reserves plus your borrowing capacity. If you give a REALTOR® some basic information about your current financial status (savings, debt etc.) he or she can refer you to a lender best qualified to help you. Most lenders – bankers and mortgage companies – offer limited choices.
- 2) **Your REALTOR® has many resources to assist you in your home search.** Sometimes the property you are seeking is available, but not actively advertised in the market or on the internet, requiring some investigation by your agent to find available properties.
- 3) **Your REALTOR® can assist you in the selection process by providing objective information about each property.** Agents who are REALTORS® have access to a variety of informational resources. REALTORS® can provide local community information on utilities, zoning, disclosures and much more! There are two things you'll want to know – First, will the property provide the environment I want for a home as an investment? And 2nd, will the property have resale value when I am ready to sell?
- 4) **Your REALTOR® can help negotiate.** There are a myriad of negotiating factors, including but not limited to price, financing, terms, date of possession and often the inclusion or exclusion of repairs and furnishings or equipment. The purchase agreement should provide a period of time for you to complete appropriate inspections and investigations of the property before you are bound to complete the purchase. Your agent can advise you as to which investigations and inspections are recommended or required.
- 5) **Your REALTOR® provided due diligence during the evaluation of the property.** Depending on the area and the property, this could include inspections for termites, dry rot, asbestos, faulty structure, roof condition, septic tank and well tests, just to name a few. Your REALTOR® can assist you in finding qualified, responsible professionals to do these investigations and provide you with written reports. You will also want to see a preliminary report on the title of the property, which indicates ownership of the property. Ownership can be mired in the confusing status of past owners and rights of access. The title to most properties will have some limitations, for example – easements (access rights) for utilities.
- 6) **Your REALTOR® can help you in understanding different financial options and in identifying qualified lenders.**
- 7) **Your REALTOR® can guide you through the closing process and make sure everything flows together smoothly.**
- 8) **When selling your home, your REALTOR® can give you up-to-date information on what is happening in the marketplace and the price, financing, terms and conditions of competing properties.** These are key factors in getting your property sold at the best price, quickly and with minimum hassle.

- 9) Your REALTOR® markets your property to other real estate agents and the public.** Often, your REALTOR® can recommend repairs or cosmetic work that can significantly enhance the salability of your property. Your REALTOR® markets your property to other real estate agents through marketing meetings, the Multiple Listing Service, and open houses, as well as through the internet to other agents and to the public, acting as the marketing coordinator. In many markets across the country, over 50% of real estate sales are cooperative sales; that is, a real estate agent other than yours brings in the buyer. The REALTOR® Code of Ethics requires REALTORS® to utilize these cooperative relationships to benefit their clients.
- 10) Your REALTOR® will know when, where and how to advertise your property.** There is a misconception that advertising sells real estate. The NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® studies show that 82% of real estate sales are the result of agent contacts through previous clients, referrals, friends, family and personal contacts. When a property is marketed with the help of your REALTOR®, you do not have to allow strangers into your home. Your REALTOR® will generally prescreen and accompany qualified prospects through your property.
- 11) Your REALTOR® can help you objectively evaluate every Buyer's proposal without compromising your marketing position.** This initial agreement is only the beginning of a process of appraisals, inspections and financing. Your REALTOR® can help you write a legally binding, win-win agreement that will be more likely to make it through the process.
- 12) Your REALTOR® can help close the sale of your home.** Between the initial sales agreement and closing (or settlement), questions may arise. For example, unexpected repairs are required to obtain financing or a cloud in the title is discovered. The required paperwork alone is overwhelming for most sellers. Your REALTOR® is the best person to objectively help you resolve these issues and move the transaction to its close.