

## What is the *Least* You Should Expect from YOUR Agent?

**ANSWER:** The easy answer is that you *should* be able to expect that your agent will do what they told you they would do (isn't that why you choose them in the first place?). There are two potential issues with this. Most Sellers and Buyers are not Real Estate agents so they *really* do not know what we do, let alone understand the legal and ethical requirements that we have. In addition, some agents don't (or won't) take the time to explain their role and *your* role. In reality many have no plan! **I have a plan and I guarantee** that I will do what I tell you that I am going to do! I will take the time to discuss your plans and make suggestions to help you. Once I am hired I will keep you *informed* throughout the process. I will respond in a timely manner when questions arise. You deserve nothing less!

Let me describe what I consider to be the *basic* level of service to a client. I will discuss the Real Estate issues from the selling and buying perspectives, not the potential interpersonal issues.

**SELLERS:** an agent should explain anything you are asked to sign so that you feel comfortable (especially the listing contract and agreement of sale). If you are not comfortable you should seek legal advice, You should be given copies of everything you sign when you "hire" an agent; you should be advised about the "market" conditions and what to expect during the process; a CMA (Competitive Market Analysis) should be provided for pricing; there should be a game plan/ strategy; a "For Sale" sign should be installed (if desired) in a timely manner; there should be a discussion about scheduling appointments and obtaining feedback (many problems arise from showings); you should be kept informed about evolving "market" conditions; you should be given an opportunity to re-evaluate the strategy if a sale does not occur. Your agent should be **accountable** to you for the results. When you sign a Buyer's offer there will be additional issues but the proper foundation will *minimize* your inconvenience.

**BUYERS:** an agent should explain anything you are asked to sign so that you feel comfortable (especially the buyer contract and agreement of sale). If you are not comfortable you should seek legal advice, You should be given copies of everything you sign when you "hire" an agent; you should be advised about the "market" conditions and what to expect during the process; an agent should ask questions to learn about your "wants" and "needs" so they can help you identify a properties to consider; there should be a game plan/ strategy (this should include a conversation about financing alternatives); there should be a discussion about scheduling appointments; you should feel comfortable about the process and understand what is involved in making an offer and proceeding to settlement; you should be kept informed about evolving "market" conditions (this includes learning about new listings to consider); you should be given an opportunity to re-evaluate the strategy if you do not find something you like. Your agent should be **accountable** to you for the results. When you execute a purchase agreement there will be additional issues but the proper foundation will *minimize* your inconvenience.

The bottom line is that an agent *should* be evaluated on two levels. One is how they provide "client-level" *service* (how dedicated are they to your needs); the other involves their level of *expertise* (how capable are they in terms of getting the job done: how well do they represent your interests; do they have a logical plan that makes sense?).

In Real Estate *both* are critical (is there anything that you would be willing to sacrifice?). Make certain that you know what you can expect and what you can do if those expectations are not met! **Hire wisely!**