

A Message from the President of the Youngstown Columbiana Association of REALTORS®

Choosing the Right Real Estate Agent...Beyond the Listing Agent

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When it comes to buying or selling a home, choosing the right real estate agent can make all the difference in your buying and/or selling experience. One of the biggest misconceptions (that we hear OFTEN) is that many people assume they must work exclusively with the listing agent to purchase a property. Yes, the listing agent knows a lot about the property, but the **fact is that clients have the freedom to choose any real estate agent they would like to view a property and/or write a contract.** We feel this topic is important enough to explore and explain why it is essential for clients to have options regarding who represents them in a transaction.

What is a Listing Agent?

Listing agents (aka seller's agents) are responsible for representing the seller in a real estate transaction. They work to get the best deal for the seller, which includes negotiating the selling price and ensuring the property is marketed effectively. In some cases, the listing agent can function as a dual agent, representing the seller and buyer in a transaction.

What is a Buyer's Agent?

A buyer's agent, on the other hand, represents the buyer exclusively. They focus on finding properties that match a buyer's criteria, negotiating on their behalf, and ensuring they get the best possible deal. The buyer's agent works for the buyer and their goal is to make the buyer's real estate journey as smooth and successful as possible.

Benefits of choosing your own agent when buying a home...

Full Attention: When you choose an agent separate from the listing agent, you can be confident that you are getting the agent's full attention. Your agent's loyalty is to you in a transaction, and they will guide you accordingly.

Customized Property Search: A buyer's agent will listen to your preferences and search for properties that meet your specific criteria. They can also offer insights into neighborhoods, market conditions, and potential issues you might not be aware of.

Negotiating: Negotiating a real estate deal can be difficult. Your agent will negotiate on your behalf to secure the best possible price and terms.

Paperwork and Legal: Real estate transactions involve a significant amount of paperwork and legalities, on both sides of the transaction. Your agent will manage these aspects, ensuring everything is to protect your interests. While it is perfectly okay to work with a listing agent to purchase a property they have listed, it is important to ensure that they also have your best interest in mind. Be sure that they are communicating with you often and giving you equal representation during the entire transaction. Also keep in mind that if you are already working with an agent that you like and who has already worked hard on your home search, it is best to contact that agent to view properties and write up your contract...not the listing agent. They have already worked hard for you so it is essential to let them represent you the whole way through.

So, the truth is...clients have the freedom to choose any REALTOR® they would like, not just the listing agent on a home. Finding the "right" REALTOR® is an important FIRST STEP in your home buying process. If you are searching for homes, find a dedicated agent who takes the time to get to know your wants and needs, who listens and communicates regularly, and who negotiates on your behalf. There is peace of mind knowing that someone is looking out for your best interests during one of the largest financial transactions in your life!

Michael Stevens is the 2023 President of the Youngstown Columbiana Association of REALTORS®