

# How to Interview an Agent

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**The biggest mistake a homeowner makes in selling their home is hiring the wrong agent. Hiring the best agent allows you to sell your home quickly and for top dollar.**

**1. How long have you been selling real estate?**

Only hire an agent with at least 10 years of full time real estate experience. Nothing replaces experience. Suggestion: Do not be someone's "On the job training".

**2. Are you a full time Realtor (no other sources of income)?**

Only work with a successful full-time agent. Part time agents are not successful and will not dedicate all their time to selling your home.

**3. What professional designations do you hold?**

To become a real estate agent, it only takes a 40 hour class and a simple test. Professional real estate agents take on additional education and classes. The GRI designation (Graduate of the Real Estate Institute) is the most respected designation. Only work with an agent that has continued their education.

**4. Do you have a real estate sales person licenses or a broker licenses?**

I suggest only hiring a real estate broker. To become a broker requires another level of education and experience – this is a specific license that is issued by the state. There are only a limited amount of real estate agents that possess the brokers or associate broker's license. Hiring a real estate agent who is a broker in addition to someone with a GRI designation is the only way to know you are working with a true professional. If you have a choice, why not hire the most educated and experienced agent possible.

**5. Do you have a written plan of action to sell my home with specific steps?**

This is extremely important. Any professional should have a written plan of action if they are serious about marketing your home. Be very cautious if the agent cannot produce this. This plan of action must be specific and must offer marketing strategies beyond a sign, the MLS, and ineffective marketing on the internet.

**6. Do you know the difference between active and passive marketing?**

This is essential – most agents will just list a home – they put it on the local MLS (Multiple Listing Service) (often with poor descriptions and pictures) and then ineffectively upload it to free websites. Almost all agents rely on passive marketing where the agent is effectively waiting on something to happen – another agent to show the home or a buyer to call. Active Marketing is doing specific activities to create buyers.

**7. If so, what active marketing practice do you do?**

This should be illustrated in their written action plan to sell your home – make sure you get specifics – this is probably the most important question of the interview.

**8. How long will you require my initial listing to be?**

Many agents and companies try to lock someone into a long contract – 6 months or more. If the agent and/or company had confidence they would not require this. Question - if they have confidence they can sell your home quickly, why do they need such a long contract?

**9. Do you belong to a team?**

There are single agents and then there are teams. To properly market your home, negotiate a great offer, and facilitate a hassle free closing requires many talents. The benefits of a team are that there are members that specialize in every aspect allowing the entire process to be as close to perfect as possible. A single agent is limited in both time and skills thus limiting the success of your sale.

**10. Do you have a full time marketing assistant with a college marketing background?**

One of the benefits of hiring a successful agent is they can afford to spend the money to properly market your home. Unsuccessful agents who only sell a few homes cannot afford to make this investment. In today's technology driven marketing environment, it takes a specific set of skills to market a home at a higher level than other properties. Only an experienced marketing professional who has the education and the experience can accomplish properly marketing your home. Make sure the agent has someone involved that has these skills.

**11. How many homes do you sell a year?**

Agents who are experienced and have a high level of success possess skills that are necessary for you to have a successful transaction. Skills such as negotiating, understanding legalities, marketing, and experience at dealing with stressors are only some of the issues that require experience. Only successful agents with a high level of production can afford the investment into the marketing that is required to give your property the exposure required to sell quickly.

**12. Do you have a list of referrals?**

Any good agent should always provide you with a list of referrals from past clients.

**13. Will you feature my home on major web sites? Will you pay for extra advertising?**

Every home listed is displayed on the major websites such as Zillow, Realtor.com, Trulia, etc. This activity is free for all agents. In order to get your home properly exposed, these companies require an investment from the real estate agent to feature the house and to display the house more aggressively than the other properties. This marketing is very expensive but extremely important to those agents who make the investment. Important: the agent should demonstrate to you what additional internet marketing they are doing on these websites.

**14. How often will you communicate with me?**

Communication is a very important. The National Association of Realtors have conducted studies for years and these studies conclude that the lack of communication is the number one complaint consumers have about Realtors. Most agents possess very poor skills when it comes to communicating with their clients. Make sure the agent communicates with you at least every week during the listing period (this is another reason not to sign a long listing).

**15. How do you provide feedback on showings?**

Feedback on showings is very important. It is important to know what the buyers are thinking about when they see your home. It is also important to understand how your home compares to other homes on the market. Make sure your agent has a specific system in place that provides written feedback (companies such as Showing Time provide this service).

**16. Do you have a system that markets towards people who are renting homes or apartments in my area? If so, please explain.**

Often people like to buy a home in the same area, same schools, and close to things they are familiar with such as: shopping – restaurants – churches – etc. Based on my experience and studies by the National Association of Realtors, a high percentage of home sales were a result of a buyer who rented a home or an apartment in close proximity to the house that sold. Important: Do you market to these potential buyers, and if so, what specifically do you do?

**17. Does the agent possess good integrity, honesty and is well experienced?**

This last point can only be determined by interviewing – this is not so much what the agent said but how you felt about the agent and their answers.

I would be happy to spend approximately 30 minutes with you, to demonstrate how my aggressive marketing strategies will sell your home quickly and for top dollar. I can provide you answers to any questions you may have with my 25 years of experience and a history of selling 100 homes a year. I have helped literally thousands of families and individuals in accomplishing their goals. If you have questions, please call me directly.

*David Thompson*

27 Years of Experience!  
Serving all of Southwest Michigan!

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