



The **16 Questions**
You Must Ask Your
Next Real Estate Agent



The
New York
Times



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Trends Report

LA
Times





The 16 Questions You Must Ask Your Next Real Estate Agent

Why We Created this Guide

We created this Guide to help you make better real estate decisions.

Why? Because:

- Your home is probably your most valuable asset.
- One or two wrong decisions or poor pieces of advice from a real estate agent can cost you thousands, tens of thousands or even hundreds of thousands of dollars.
- Very often, the single biggest determinant of your real estate experience—and the amount of money you ultimately get when you sell, or the quality of the decision you make when you ultimately buy—is your agent; or more specifically, the quality, experience, skill and integrity of the agent you choose to represent you.

Those things said, this Guide is intended to help you find a “better” agent.

Because the truth of the matter is that there are more than a few lesser-quality agents out there. As evidence, a recent Harris Poll indicated Realtors AGAIN rank as the “least trusted professionals,” with only 7% “completely trusting their agent” and 20% “not trusting their agent at all.”

Ouch.

Based on our years of experience in representing buyers and sellers, and working with the agents who represented the people on the other side of all those transactions, we have a very good understanding of what makes a quality agent.

And that’s why we created this list of 16 questions you must ask your next real estate agent: to help you find a true professional to represent you in your next purchase or sale. It’s a relatively short list, but these questions directly address exactly those things that separate the good from the not-so-good when it comes to real estate licensees.

Enough with the introduction. Let’s get on to the questions!

Question 1: May I rescind our listing agreement if I am not satisfied with the quality of your service?

Purpose of question: Identify the notorious “list and disappear” specialist.

When listing your home, all Realtors will require you to sign a listing contract. One of the terms specified within the listing contract is the duration of the listing.

Most agents will try to get you to agree to the longest possible listing term, for obvious reasons: the longer the term, the more likely that your home will sell, and the longer you are contractually obligated to stick with your agent—for better or for worse.

But what happens if, for instance, 30 days into a 90 day listing contract, you discover that the agent is not doing what they promised (which, unfortunately, is not that unusual)?

You owe it to yourself to ask this hard question, straight up, because the last thing you want to do is find yourself stuck with someone in whom you’ve lost trust and confidence.

ANY answer to this question other than, “Of course, you may cancel our listing agreement at any time for any reason whatsoever, because I have no doubt that I will do EVERYTHING I’ve promised you that I am going to do to sell your home, AND I will put that in writing as part of our listing agreement,” SHOULD give you pause. True pros have no issue providing such guarantees.

Any agent who balks at this is someone you should be wary of.

Also, be skeptical of the agent who says that their “company policy” precludes them from allowing you to terminate their listing agreement prematurely. This is an age old trick that many agents use to get around this question. Our experience is that almost no company actually has such a policy. Agents are independent contractors, and therefore in control of the vast majority of the decisions they make that affect their business.

3BF96-24B2-4345-925E-C9A3D263836B Greater Metropolitan Association of REALTORS® EXCLUSIVE RIGHT TO SELL CONTRACT	
RM: Professional One Real Estate 484 Deer Street MI 48170 (248) 567-3500	SELLER'S NAME: _____ Seller's Home Address: 357 Ann Phone#: Home _____
TERM OF CONTRACT: This Agreement is entered into this <u>23</u> day of September 2015. The SELLER (the REALTOR/BROKER) and the above mentioned SELLER(S) (“the SELLER”) agree to market the Property hereinafter described and to use the best efforts to find a BUYER to purchase the Property from <u>9/23/2015</u> to 11:59 P.M. on _____.	
PROPERTY TYPE: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Residential <input type="checkbox"/> Condominium <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-Family <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial/Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Vacation Home <input type="checkbox"/> Village <input type="checkbox"/> Township <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> City of Plymouth , County of Wayne , Michigan (zip code) 48170 Legal Description: 4 ALSO E 1/2 ADJ VAC ALLEY WILLIAM A BLUNK ADDITI	
Property is being sold together with all improvements and appurtenance, if any, now in or on the premises including hardware attached floor coverings, attached fireplace doors, screens, gas logs, garage doors, landscaping, fences and mailboxes, all ceiling fans, alarm system, radio and television antennas, rotor pressure tanks, fuel in tank, incinerator, if any, and gas, oil and mineral rights.	
Up until the time Seller accepts an offer on subject property, Seller may rescind Listing Agreement at any time for any reason if Seller is dissatisfied with listing broker.	
Selling items:	
SELLER agrees to sell the Property for the sum of \$ <u>698,000.00</u> to be paid in cash at closing or upon such terms and conditions as the SELLER may hereafter accept. SELLER agrees to deliver possession of the Property to the BUYER on the date of closing, subject to the rights of tenants. Should SELLER not deliver possession of the Property on the date of closing, SELLER shall pay the BUYER the sum of \$ _____ or such other terms and conditions as the SELLER may hereafter accept.	

And while most companies and agents do allow you to prematurely terminate listing agreements, many of them charge some sort of termination or cancellation fee for allowing you to do so. Make sure you ask about this as well so there are no unpleasant surprises awaiting down the road.

The bottom line: any agent who won't guarantee your satisfaction might not be the best choice for you.

Question #2: If I list with you, will I deal with YOU, or someone else?

Purpose of question: Identify the agent whose entire focus is on listing procurement.

Probably the most common “agent type” that causes real estate to have such a poor reputation is what we call the “list and disappear” (or “list and run”) specialist.

This agent focuses on one thing and one thing only: getting listings. And, if you don't care much about ethics or clients, this actually is a great strategy, if you are an agent. But if you DO care about ethics and clients and things of that nature, then this is a terrible approach.



Because properly serving clients requires work. And speaking with those clients from time to time. And speaking with other agents from time to time.

But the “list and disappear” agent just can't be bothered with things like that.

We see this all the time with some of the biggest names in the business: they charm you and promise you the moon during the listing presentation, they get your name on a long-term listing contract with no option for early termination (now you see a little better

why Question #1 was so important), and then—like a ghost in the night—they disappear, never to be seen by you ever again.

From that point on, you're dealing with the second string, low-paid assistant(s) who are tasked with the responsibility of doing the bulk of the job once the ink has dried on your long-term listing contract.

In fact, we even know of one mega-producer in our market who doesn't even get personally involved in deals at all. He literally does nothing but "get listings." And make TV commercials. And pose for photos that appear on his billboards.

Worse yet, his assistant—who is the only person you'll ever speak with if you happen to be on the other side of a transaction with that agent—is not even a licensed agent! (If you only understood how easy it is to get a real estate license, that revelation would shock you.)

We recently did a deal with this agent, and we had to stop our client from calling him directly on a number of occasions (to threaten him), simply because we could not get him (or his unlicensed assistant) to respond to critical issues and questions in a timely fashion during the transaction.

It was truly a nightmare, and all too common for the "list and disappear" specialist.

In all fairness, there are legitimate real estate teams we know that do function well. And it is not unreasonable or illogical to separate responsibilities among a group of people and have those people specialize in some narrow aspect of the business. However, the lead listing agent should always be available should you need them to be.

We've had plenty of experience where we meet another agent's client at closing, and that very unhappy, disappointed client was all too willing to tell us about how they never heard from their agent and how they always got pawned off on someone else.

So, be sure to ask this question, and make it very clear that you expect the agent to be available for you at all times, and that anything less will not be acceptable to you. (And, again, make sure you get the right answer to Question #1, just in case!)

Question 3: Do you use professional photography for your listings?

Purpose of question: Identify agents who understand the importance of presenting their listings in the most optimal light possible, and who are willing to spend money to ensure that happens.



Professional photographs are worth the money. With so many people looking at homes online, when attempting to sell your home, you absolutely must use top-notch photos to put your best foot forward. What you cannot risk is losing the right buyer because the photos they found on Zillow, Trulia or Realtor.com were not good enough, or they didn't portray your home in the most positive light possible.

As examples, using the right lenses and lighting is crucial, and most amateur photographers (or real estate agents with cameras) lack the experience and equipment to create photos a real professional can shoot with ease.

If an agent is not using professional photography to help their listings stand out among the competition, that means they either (1) don't understand how much that matters, or (2) aren't willing to spend money to represent their clients to the fullest. Or maybe both. Whatever the reason, avoid an agent who thinks like this.

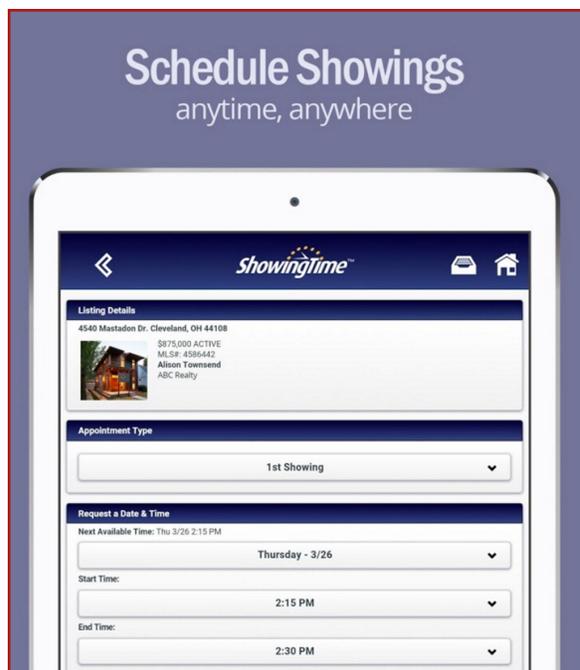
Question 4: Do you use an automated showing service to handle the logistics of showings?

Purpose of question: Identify agents who use technology to help transactions happen more efficiently and more effectively (and to make their clients' lives easier).

In the market in which we operate (the northern and western suburbs of Metro Detroit), our MLS (the database of listings real estate agents use to market their for-sale properties) uses something called “ShowingTime.”

Long story short, in an industry infamous for its lack of agreement on much of anything, AND for its resistance to technological change and innovation, this is the most universally loved tech tool of which we’re aware.

Why? Simple: because it has done so much to improve the quality and efficiency of one of the historically most problematic parts of the entire home sale process: scheduling appointments.



Before this kind of system came into existence, the small act of scheduling a single showing could take multiple phone calls back and forth between agents, offices, sellers and buyers. Now, this process has been automated to the point of absolute maximum efficiency (as a seller, imagine just replying to a text or an email to confirm a showing).

At this point, this system has become somewhat ubiquitous, in the sense that it’s been around for a while, and it’s (finally) been embraced by (most of) the masses.

And that’s why this question is important: because any agent NOT using this system is very out of step with the times. VERY.

And that is not who you want representing you.

Question 5: We occasionally get water in our basement, but we just repainted everything down there, so buyers probably won't be able to tell. That's cool, right?

Purpose of question: Identify agents with marginal ethics.

You might not want to start with this one—and you might not be comfortable asking it at all—but we cannot think of a better question to get at the core issue of integrity.

Any ethical agent will immediately say, “No, that’s not OK. You are required by law to disclose that you’ve had water in your basement.”

Do not work with any agent who does not answer in this (or similar) fashion. Because any agent who would agree to break the law with someone they just met probably breaks the law consistently. And not only that, but the number one cause of litigation in real estate is a seller's intentional lack of proper disclosure of a known defect. So, it's not just the fact of being dishonest - it's also that they would willingly allow you to put yourself in harms way.

Question 6: Some variation of "I insist on overpricing my home. You're good with that, right?"

Purpose of question: Identify agents who "buy" listings by knowingly overpricing them.

One of the most common tactics agents use to get listings is to "overprice" them. They go along with whatever price the seller demands just to get their signature on a (non-cancelable) listing agreement, and then they count on the fact that the seller will wise up at some point and reduce the price.

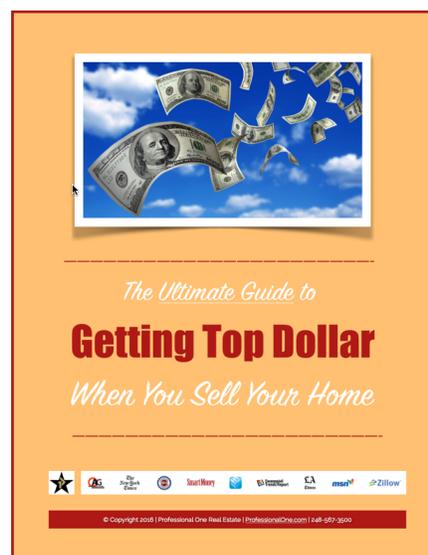
We think that is a poor way to do business. We say this because the number one thing that causes clients to not get top dollar when selling is making that exact critical mistake: pricing their home too aggressively, and missing out on that "sweet spot" when the chances for getting a high sales price are at their very peak.

(If you want to know just how important this is, be sure to download our FREE ***The Ultimate Guide to Getting Top Dollar When You Sell Your Home.***)

So, to figure out if the agent you're considering is prone to this, just tell them you want to list your home at a clearly ridiculous price and see how they react.

They should say, "I am sorry, but I'd be doing you a grave disservice if I agreed to put your home on the market at a clearly unrealistic price. This will harm you in the long run, you'll end up upset and frustrated, and you'll end up wasting a lot of time, and—very likely—leaving a lot of money on the table when you ultimately sell your home.

A quality agent will refuse to list your home at a price that is clearly unrealistic. An agent who is more interested in his or her own income than in doing right by you and your interests will. We suggest you're better off avoiding the agent who would knowingly allow you to make this critical mistake.



Question 7: I'd like whomever lists my home to accompany showings. Will you do that?

Purpose of question: Identify a “yes man” (or woman) agent, or one who may advocate an approach that can actually harm you as a seller.

“Accompanied showings” are real estate showings where the listing agent is required to accompany the buyer’s agent and the buyer any time the listing in question is shown.

Here’s why this is a terrible idea:

- **It makes the showing agent and the potential buyer uncomfortable** - Agents want to be able to speak freely with their clients, and vice versa. If your agent is hovering around in the background, that simply is not going to happen.



- **It tends to rush buyers out the door prematurely** - When agent and potential buyer are not comfortable, they tend to rush. You do not want the person who might end up buying your home to feel anything but comfortable, unhurried and relaxed. When buyers like homes, they tend to hang around longer. Sometimes, a lot longer. And, as a seller, that is exactly what you want. If any other parties are present, it makes people feel like they have to get in and out quickly.
- **It can send you the wrong signals** - One of the reasons listing agents tend to want to accompany showings is because they feel they can gain “intelligence” about

potential buyers. Can that happen? Of course. But only if the showing agent and the buyer are somewhat naive and or not very smart. Most agents and buyers are savvy enough to say nothing that might damage their negotiating position if they end up wanting to make an offer on your home. And, because of that, they often say the exact opposite of what they really think. Your agent then repeats that misinformation to you, and now you're operating on bad intelligence. When we show homes with the listing agent present, we counsel our clients in advance to make sure they say and do nothing that might hurt them in negotiations. Ergo, the odds of your agent picking up truly valuable intelligence are quite low.

- **Homes tend to sell themselves** - Another reason listing agents sometimes give for suggesting accompanied showings is so they can “sell” your home to the prospective buyer. This is another terrible idea, for several reasons. First, because it can so easily offend the showing agent (and that is the last thing you want to do; you want the showing agent feeling good about your home and everything relating to the showing process), and second, because the truth of the matter is that houses almost always end up selling themselves. We've been doing this a long time, and it's simply the truth of the matter. We almost never convince anyone to buy anything they didn't already want on their own.

Any agent who has your best interests at heart will refuse your request here. And that is exactly what you want them to do. If they go along with the request, then they are a “yes” person, and you do not want a “yes” person when it comes to real estate. You want—you *deserve*—someone who will be 100% candid with you 100% of the time. Or they simply don't understand that such an approach can be very detrimental to your selling prospects. Either way, avoid this agent!

Question 8: What is your position on open houses?

Purpose of question: Identify agents who may be placing their interests above yours.

Open houses are one of real estate's “dirty little secrets.”

Why do we say that? Because:

- **They are not effective** - Per the most recent study we read from the National Association of Realtors® (NAR), open houses end up being the reason a home sold about 1% of the time. That is a very low success rate, and simply not worth the time, given the other reasons they are not a great idea.



- **They can be dangerous** - There has been a rash of crimes in recent years involving open houses: valuables have been stolen, agents have been attacked and, in one recent high-profile situation, an agent was murdered. Given the low success rate, we don't believe its worth it to put your home and (quite frankly, our agents) at risk.

OK, if they don't work, and they can be dangerous, why do so many agents suggest you have open houses?

Because it's a great way for them to pick up new clients!

In other words, in many of the situations where agents tell their clients they should allow their home to be held open, they are making that suggestion for reasons that may have literally nothing to do with your best interests as a seller. They are doing it just hoping they'll connect with a new buying client or two.

And that's a lousy reason, in our opinion.

So, ask about open houses, and see what they say. If they tell you the truth, that's a great sign you're dealing with an honest agent who truly has your best interests at heart. If they tell you how important it is to hold open houses, proceed with caution...

Question 9: On average, about how many homes do you show a buyer before they select one to purchase?

Purpose of question: Identify agents who just want to make a quick sale.

Another "agent type" that gives the industry a bad name is the kind of agent who pressures people, and this is one of the best questions to get at that issue. Having said that, there is no right answer here, so some judgment will be required on your end.

What you are listening for here is the *nature* of the response, which will likely come in one of two flavors:

- A *quantitative* response focused on speed and or a low number (probably less than 10 houses, for example), OR
- A *qualitative* response focused on doing whatever was necessary to satisfy the client.

Obviously, the agent focused on satisfying the client is the one you want.

Question 10: What digital signature solution do you use?

Purpose of question: Identify agents who work efficiently.

Similar to our earlier question about using an automated showing solution, this addresses whether the agent is “current” and doing the job as efficiently as possible. This matters to you simply because it affects your experience directly.

As an example, which would you prefer:

- Signing a real estate offer by pressing a few buttons on the screen of your smartphone or tablet, OR
- Signing a real estate offer by having your agent come to your home and having you physically signing multiple copies of a physical contract (or, worse yet, you driving to the agent’s office and doing that same thing)?



That’s just one example of how digital signatures make your life so much easier. Insist on working with an agent who values your time enough to use such a great tool.

Also, just FYI, the primary digital signatures technology providers are DocuSign, AuthentiSign and DotLoop.

Question 11: What expenses will I be responsible for at closing?

Purpose of question: Identify agents who are well-rounded professionals with a reasonable amount of financial acumen.

The costs that a seller is typically required to pay when selling a home in the state of Michigan are as follows:

- Realtors' commissions, as negotiated with the applicable Realtor(s)
- State transfer tax, calculated as .0075 (or .75%) of the sales price
- County revenue stamps, calculated as .0011 (or .11%) of the sales price
- Title insurance, which varies depending upon sales price and is state-mandated / regulated
- Occupancy escrow, if applicable, as negotiated per the transaction
- Water escrow, if applicable, as negotiated per the transaction (typically \$200 to \$300)
- Payoff of any existing mortgages or liens on the property

Our experience is that many agents cannot answer this question off-the-cuff. Every self-respecting quality professional should be able to answer this question without hesitation. Any agent who cannot is either inexperienced or not truly focused on client satisfaction.

Further, you should NEVER sign a listing agreement until AFTER your agent has reviewed all of these costs with you so that you know exactly which you are going to be paying if you list with that agent. This is traditionally done in the form of something called a "Seller's Net Sheet" that delineates all of these costs at various potential price points so that you can see how much money you will net at each of those potential price points. Our experience is that many agents don't go through this exercise with their clients.

The bottom line: the well-rounded professional will be able to answer this question easily. And you want the well-rounded professional.

Question 12: Give me an example of a situation in which you talked a client OUT OF doing something.

Purpose of question: Identify agents who take their fiduciary duties very seriously.

Real estate agents are notorious for pushing their clients into decisions.

And we feel that type of behavior is a direct violation of the fiduciary duties that an agent almost always has with respect to their clients.

The definition of "fiduciary" appears to the right. Note that highlighted part: "The best interest of the beneficiary" (that is you) "must be primary, and absolute candor is required of the fiduciary."

What that means in lay terms is that the agent's interests are SECONDARY to YOUR interests.

If agents take this as seriously as they should, they realistically SHOULD be talking clients out of making bad decisions from time to time. We know we do this quite often, and it always seems to shock our clients. Here's an example of how that conversation usually goes:

fiduciary

1) n. from the Latin fiducia, meaning "trust," a person (or a business like a bank or stock brokerage) who has the power and obligation to act for another (often called the beneficiary) under circumstances which require total trust, good faith and honesty. The most common is a trustee of a trust, but fiduciaries can include business advisers, attorneys, guardians, administrators of estates, real estate agents, bankers, stockbrokers, title companies or anyone who undertakes to assist someone who places complete confidence and trust in that person or company. Characteristically, the fiduciary has greater knowledge and expertise about the matters being handled. A fiduciary is held to a standard of conduct and trust above that of a stranger or of a casual business person. He/she/it must avoid "self-dealing" or "conflicts of interests" in which the potential benefit to the fiduciary is in conflict with what is best for the person who trusts him/her/it. For example, a stockbroker must consider the best investment for the client and not buy or sell on the basis of what brings him/her the highest commission. While a fiduciary and the beneficiary may join together in a business venture or a purchase of property, the best interest of the beneficiary must be primary, and absolute candor is required of the fiduciary. 2) adj. defining a situation or relationship in which a person is acting as a fiduciary for another.

Us: *"I think you need to seriously reconsider your decision. I know you can do better if*

you just wait a little longer. More homes will come on the market in the next few weeks, and I am confident you can find something that will satisfy more of your needs.”

Client: *“Wait. What? Are you actually trying to talk us OUT of buying something?”*

Us: *“It’s not that so much as it is just wanting to make sure you make an optimal decision. It feels like you’re making a decision just to make a decision, and the reality is you DO have more time. I know this process can be frustrating, but you’re going to live with this decision for a long time. It’s imperative you make the right one.”*

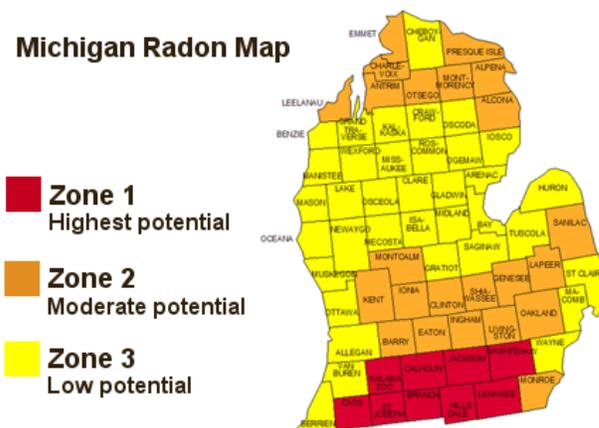
The bottom line: if the agent struggles to answer this question, odds are quite good that they are not as invested in honoring their fiduciary duties as they perhaps should be. Proceed with caution!

Question #13: What is radon, and why does it matter when buying or selling a home?

Purpose of question: Identify agents who are serious professionals.

Radon is an invisible, odorless gas that is considered a carcinogen by the EPA. Virtually every home in Michigan has radon. Below is a map that shows how prevalent it really is.

For your general edification, you should always have any home that you are considering buying tested for radon. Even if you are not concerned about the health risks (radon is often compared to second-hand cigarette smoke), you should still perform the test as this could affect your ability to sell your home in the future (as some people won’t buy a home that has a radon problem).



Sadly, many agents don't advise their clients to have a radon test when they buy a home. Why? Because they don't want to introduce another variable that could end up derailing a transaction and costing themselves a potential commission check in the

process. Or, because they are simply not knowledgeable on a topic that every agent should know inside and out.

The agent's answer to this question will tell you a lot about their overall level of ethics. An ethical agent who represents his or her buyers properly will be very familiar with this issue. One who does not will not be.

Question #14: How much experience do you have?

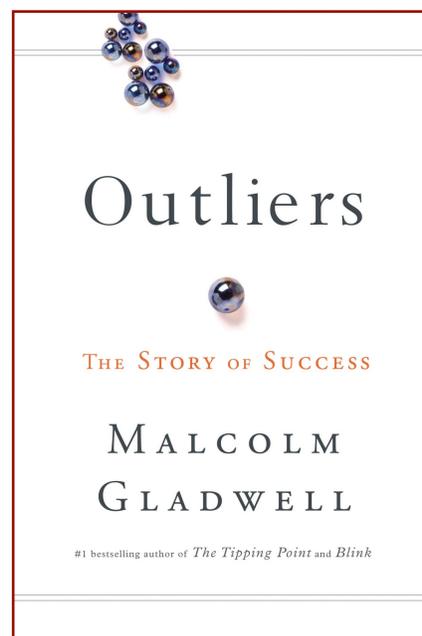
Purpose of question: Identify agents who have logged enough hours to be proficient.

You may be familiar with Malcolm Gladwell, who's written a number of excellent books, including one called *Outliers*. In that book, Gladwell examines the factors that contribute to high levels of success, and he repeatedly mentions the "10,000-Hour Rule," claiming that the key to success in any field is, to a large extent, a matter of practicing within that field for a total of around 10,000 hours.

We happen to agree. Real estate is very much an experience-based business, and we know that it takes at least five years (which correlates about to that 10,000 hour mark) for the typical agent to reach a reasonable level of proficiency. There is so much more involved to being great at selling real estate than meets the eye, and people who downplay that simply are probably not fully dedicated to the mastery of the job.

To be clear, we are not suggesting that everyone who has 10,000 hours of experience is a great agent, nor are we saying that everyone with less than 10,000 hours is a bad agent. There are exceptions to every rule, for the better and for the worse, for sure.

However, in most cases, for most real estate agents, we believe there IS a fairly solid correlation between experience and expertise. And, in general, "more is better." The bare minimum is for your agent to be both full-time and experienced.



Question #15: Assuming you bring the buyer for a home you already have listed, what do you do?

Purpose of question: Identify agents who are more interested in money than in honoring their fiduciary duties to the fullest.

When presented with this dilemma, agents must make a choice: do they go for the option that has the most income potential for themselves (which would typically involve something called “dual agency,” in which they attempt to “represent” both sides of the deal equally), or do they honor their original fiduciary commitment to their selling client and refer the buyer to someone else?

This one decision tells you so much about the agent.

Also, before we continue, let us be clear that disclosed dual agency is perfectly legal in Michigan (and in many other states, which sometimes have different names for this practice), as long as both parties agree in writing. Also, sometimes both buyer and seller more or less insist that an agent play the dual agency role (occasionally, both clients really like and trust the agent and don't want to use another party).

But just because something is *legal* doesn't not mean it's *optimal* for you, or for anyone else, for that matter. And while we do not mean to suggest that agents who do dual agency transactions are dishonest or unethical, the truth of the matter is that, as consumers, we would probably not select an agent who would choose dual agency over single agency.

Question 16: How many listings do you typically carry at any given point in time?

Purpose of question: Identify agents who are likely stretched too thin and or not truly focused on client satisfaction.

Speaking as “insiders” in real estate, this is probably our biggest disappointment: agents who carry so many listings they provide poor service to most if not all of their clients.

Most of these agents carry large inventories of listings. Many carry 20, 30 or even 50 listings at a time. Let's assume that the Realtor indicated that they work 50 hours per week, and that they currently have 50 listings. Do the math: that means that they are spending, on average, ONE hour per week attempting to sell each of their listings! And that assumes that they are working with no buyers, which tend to require a lot more time than do listing clients. And since many agents tend to have more buying clients than listing clients...well, you get the idea.

Does that seem like an optimal arrangement for you, if you are to be listing number 51? Trust us when we tell you that you cannot properly service a listing in one hour per week. A good agent will not take on more work than they can handle, because that is a recipe for dissatisfied clients.

Sadly, many within the general population are impressed when an agent speaks about the massive volume of business that they do. What you should keep in mind is that many hours go into each and every successful real estate transaction. When you do too much business, by definition, the quality of the service provided suffers.

And yes, many agents will defend their mega-listing loads by telling you they have a team behind them, and there is some validity to that (or there can be some validity to that).

However, our point still applies: you hired an agent assuming that agent was going to work hard on your behalf. If he or she has made the same promises to too many people all at once?

You do the math.

The bottom line: our experience is the best agents limit how many clients they serve at any one time. With or without a team supporting them, an agent owes you real time, focus and attention to do the job well....and to earn their commission.

Concluding Thoughts

We'll start with the same thing with which we began: your home is a huge financial investment. You must make great decisions, whether selling or buying. And that all begins with the quality of the professional you choose to represent you. Choose wisely!

Warm Regards,

Your Friends at Professional One Real Estate

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About Professional One Real Estate

It's All About the Service

The principals of Professional One Real Estate are refugees of a sort: they escaped from traditional, “bigger is better,” “we’re #1,” “it’s all about transactions, not clients” brands because they just didn’t fit. Money didn’t motivate them. Serving clients to the fullest did. Watching many “#1” agents and teams for the past 30+ years, they saw agent incomes skyrocket—and client service and public opinion of the real estate industry steadily decline.

They came from professional backgrounds—one a CPA from the #1 accounting firm in the world, another the director of the online arm of a Fortune 10 company, and the third a Hall-of-Fame member of one of the top three brands in real estate—and they shared a common vision and a common obsession: to provide the best possible service to each and every client.

Inherent in that larger goal were these significant supporting philosophies:

- People matter more than transactions.
- Every client situation is unique and should be served uniquely.
- Do nothing from a short-term perspective.
- Do what is best for the client, no matter what.
- Customer satisfaction is the only metric that truly matters.

They understood they could follow the now-well-established formula of (team formation + series of self-aggrandizing self-promotion campaigns + focus on sales + more self-aggrandizing self-promotion campaigns + more focus on sales = huge personal incomes), or they could focus on serving each and every client obsessively and completely, and enjoying the fruits of that labor (which are more than enough, truth be told).

They chose the latter.

And you can be the beneficiary of that decision.



Proud of Our Priorities

At Professional One, we focus on things that are not as easily measured: valuing relationships more than money, creating lifelong connections with people and on client satisfaction.

We're proud to have those as our priorities.

We think we reflect them in our Mission Statements & Core Values.

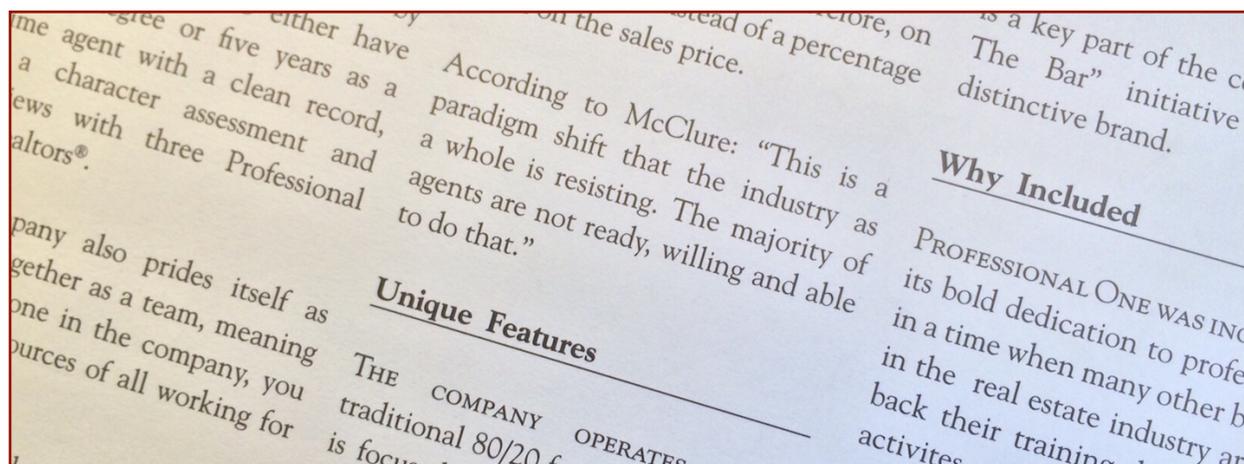
We love serving our clients.

And it shows in everything we do.

Proud to Be Recognized

We're proud to say that others have noticed, too, as we were named a "Beta Brokerage of the Future" at Inman Real Estate Connect in San Francisco, and also one of the "Most Creative Brands of the Decade" in the definitive resource of the real estate industry, the Swanepoel Trends Report." The quote below is from that source.

"Professional One was included for its bold dedication to professionalism."





About the Author

Michael McClure founded Professional One in 2002 with a clear vision of what he wanted to create: the most PROFESSIONAL real estate company and brand in America. Having worked as a CPA at the #1 accounting firm in the world for nearly 10 years before entering real estate, he knew what was possible with high enough standards and a relentless commitment to excellence.

Michael has since become nationally recognized for his passion for “raising the bar” in real estate, creating one of the largest online real estate groups dedicated to that objective (called “Raise the Bar in Real Estate” and featuring over 25,000 members worldwide), and also a podcast that has been written about in national publications. He’s co-authored books on the use of technology in real estate, operated as the Chief Operating Officer of a company dedicated to training real estate agents (in partnership with the #1 speaker, author and trends analyst in real estate in the world, Stefan Swanepoel) and been recognized on a number of “most influential” lists in the North American real estate industry. He’s conducted large-scale trainings for Keller Williams, Coldwell Banker and even for the #1 real estate portal in the world, Zillow. He is the Co-Founder of Curaytor, a digital marketing firm that was named one of Inc’s 500 Fastest Growing Companies in America in 2017.

He’s been quoted in many national-level media sources, including the LA Times, MSN, Smart Money Magazine, Inman News, the Detroit News and others. He’s been recommended by the head of real estate product development at the New York Times, and called “the best at using technology in real estate” by the author of the #1 book about the use of social media in the world, Socialnomics. He has over 100,000 friends, followers and members online.





Why Professional One?

We're proud to be nationally recognized. But we're even prouder of the service we deliver to every client.



Competency

We have one overriding objective in everything that we do: **provide the highest level of competency and professional service** in the real estate industry; we were formed explicitly for this purpose.



Experience

We have one of the most experienced teams in this market; our small group of agents has **120+ cumulative years of selling experience and over \$500 million—more than \$.5 BILLION—**of closed sales.



Education

In an industry with literally no educational requirement, **we have graduates** from the Michigan, Michigan State, Northwestern, Ohio State, Kalamazoo College and even Moscow State University.



Intangibles

Our staff includes a **CPA, MBAs, a licensed builder, a linguistics expert that speaks six languages fluently**, a former director of advertising for a division of GM, a mortgage processing expert and an interior designer, among others.



Standards

We have the **highest-barrier-to-entry of any company in real estate**. In the entire world. Very few agents qualify to be Professional One agents. In fact, because our barrier is so high, we don't actively recruit agents, because so few meet our standards.



Technology

Our founder has literally **written books on the use of technology in real estate!** Along with Stefan Swanepoel—the leading author, speaker and trends analyst in the real estate industry—he co-authored the Swanepoel Technology Report and the Swanepoel Tech Guide.



Reach

Our audience in terms of social media is greater than many of the largest real estate companies in the world! With over 55,000 followers, we ranked in the top 6 of all real estate **BRANDS** in the world in terms of reach on Twitter, as one example. As another, our founder created one of the most prominent real estate Facebook groups in existence, featuring over 15,000 members. **We know how to create "private audiences" as well as any company on earth.**



Reputation

Our founder has spoken nationally on the topics of professionalism in real estate, the use of technology in real estate and how to build audiences using social media. He's been quoted in Smart Money magazine, the LA Times, MSN, the Detroit Free Press, Inman News and many other news sources. He has been named among the 50 Most Influential in real estate. In addition, Professional One was named **"One of the Most Creative Brands of the Decade"** and a "Beta Brokerage of the Future."



Risk-free

We literally **guarantee our services**. This is the real icing on the cake. **No other company in the industry has this aggressive of a policy.** Obviously, we could never offer this guarantee unless we do what we tell our clients we're going to do. And, you can be assured, we do. The bottom line: if you list with Professional One, there is no risk to you. If we don't do everything that I promise we'll do, you can simply take the listing back from us.

