



## **HOW TO CHOOSE A REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONAL**

The recent real estate boom has encouraged an explosion of real estate licensees. But getting a license and succeeding as a professional in the industry are two very different things. To find a true real estate professional – one who will represent your interests and provide valuable insight and advice regarding what is likely your biggest investment – follow these steps.

### ❖ **Do your research.**

Drive around your neighborhood or the area you'd like to live in, and make note of the active real estate agents in the area. Call local brokerages for agent recommendations, and specify whether you are buying or selling a home.

Visit [www.REALTOR.com](http://www.REALTOR.com) to search for REALTORS® across the country. This site allows visitors to search for either a specific REALTOR®, or for those who specialize in specific neighborhoods or have specific certifications and designations.

### ❖ **Ask trusted friends and relatives for referrals.**

According to the *2005 National Association of REALTORS® Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers*, 44 percent of all recent buyers were referred to their real estate agent through a friend, neighbor, or relative.

### ❖ **Interview at least three agents.**

Ask each about their business approach and philosophy (do they offer full service, or will you have to assume some responsibilities in the transaction); experience; designations and advanced training; and referral network (home inspectors, lenders, contractors, etc.). Home sellers should also ask about the number of homes sold in the past year, length of time on market, average sales price in relation to asking price, and the agent's marketing plan.

### ❖ **Make sure your agent is a REALTOR®.**

A REALTOR® is a licensed real estate professional who is a member of the National Association of REALTORS® and subscribes to its strict Code of Ethics, which obligates REALTORS® to be honest with all parties involved in a transaction, whether it is the buyer, seller, or cooperating agent.

REALTORS® also have access to educational opportunities and training in real estate specialties that are not available to other licensees. This includes accredited subspecialties such as buyer's representation (ABR), residential real estate expertise (CRS), or Internet readiness (e-PRO).

Through membership in NAR's affiliated institutes, societies, and councils, REALTORS® devote themselves to continuous study of the most recent trends in their fields to stay abreast of industry developments in their specialized areas and better address industry issues.

A real estate licensee has passed an exam; REALTORS® are real professionals. Look for the "R" logo when you are ready to trust someone with your most valuable financial investment.

*Information furnished by the Montgomery County Association of REALTORS®  
in conjunction with the National Association of REALTORS®.*

