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What A Real Estate Expert Can Do For You

by Phoebe Chongchua

Decades ago, you had to go to a real estate agent in order to get information on property listings. Huge books filled with all the local real estate listings were distributed to real estate offices. The agents would review the books and find homes that matched their clients' needs. Then the address was given to the clients so they could do a "drive by" to see, at least, the outside of the home. This information was not readily available to the public.

The times have drastically changed. Today, much of the once-private information is now public. So does that mean you can handle the entire real estate transaction on your own? Not likely... especially if you want a highly successful outcome.

Understanding the value of an agent: Expert real estate agents are trained to help streamline your real estate transaction. Good agents are highly knowledgeable about the industry. They bring to the table more than just good listings for you to view. They help you understand the information that you're getting. They help you sort through comparable properties and decipher information listed in the Multiple Listing Service. They can help you spot potential issues and make you aware of important documents. Having an agent guide you through the process of buying your home can help save you time and money.

Pricing experience: One of the biggest values an experienced agent can offer has to do with pricing. Whether you're buying or selling your home, having an agent help you understand the current market conditions is vital. Agents can craft negotiation strategies to help ensure that your interest is protected. The negotiation skills of a highly knowledgeable agent can be critical to your transaction. When you hire agents to work on your transaction, they have a vested interest in the sale. However, their commission is far less than the amount of interest you have in the property. Therefore, experienced agents can leave emotional interest out of the negotiations and work for the best outcome by presenting their client's situation in the most appealing way possible. They also must keep their client information confidential.

Coordinating the process: Another very useful function of real estate agents is the assistance they provide with coordinating the complex home-buying and home-selling process. Real estate transactions require an enormous amount of paperwork. Real estate agents can't provide legal advice about the documents, but they can point out important papers and disclosures, and alert you to the filing time-frame for when these materials must be signed. They typically also have a good network to direct you to other experts for more specific answers to your questions. Agents also are very used to coordinating and keeping on schedule things like hiring inspectors, staying in touch with the other party's agent, explaining how repairs will be fixed and who should pay for them, and directing you to resources for financial matters.

In today's market, there isn't any industry that I say you should rely 100 percent on the experts. For example, if your health is compromised, it's my belief that you should do your homework and learn

more about what is causing the suffering. The same is true for buying or selling a home. Get educated. Read articles and watch videos from as many sources as possible. Study the market and prepare questions to ask the experts when you meet with them. This will make you more prepared to interview and hire an expert. Ultimately, you'll find having an expert to help guide you through the real estate transaction will be a good investment.

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