



This Is Why The Central Is Number One Across The Region Our Top Notch Local Columnist *Keeping You Informed*



So how's the Market?

By Theresa Grant Real Estate columnist

I was having lunch with a friend last week and as always, eventually, the question is asked, so how's the market? My first thought was to say do you watch the news? But instead of saying something sarcastic I politely responded with a general overview of what is going on in the Durham Region. He then began asking questions about the types of things in today's market that affect not only the pricing of houses but the volume and speed at which a home might sell. He mentioned that there was a house on his street in Whitby that had been on the market for

four weeks now.

The tone in which he said it made me realize that he thought that this was a long time, and it must be overpriced or there must be something wrong with it given that it hasn't sold yet. It seems that there is still some hangover from the Covid-19 craziness when it comes to the reality of the real estate market. While Covid-19 did see an absolute insanity when it came to real estate, with people buying houses not only without inspections, some people actually bought houses sight unseen, without even walking through them. Since then, there has been a return to more normal times in the real estate market. Meaning people have now gone back to the realtor recommended home inspection, perhaps a second or even third condition as well. We always used to have what they called a Spring market and a Fall market. That went out the window with the onset of Covid-19 but that may have just been a timing issue as well. Spring and Fall markets will always be a thing for Boomers, but with so many newcomers to Durham Region over the last few years, the market is active all year long. With the calming of the market, it was not unusual to see homes taking an average of forty-five days or two months to sell. Many perfectly priced homes sat on the market for three to four months before selling at full asking price. Many things can and do affect the market and the speed at which it moves. Today, without question, the uncertainty of what will go on with tariffs and how they will affect jobs, prices, and interest rates has many people pushing the pause button. In many cases people are waiting to see what happens next before they jump into home ownership and all the responsibilities that go along with it. Certain areas seem to be moving at a faster pace than others. But one thing is for sure, everyone is cautiously looking forward to more stable times.



The Timing of Your Questions During an Interview Is Everything!

By Nick Kossovan

Most interviewers appreciate candidates who come prepared with thoughtful questions. However, while your questions are important, the strategic timing of when you ask them is more crucial.

You've likely heard, "Timing is everything." This is especially true in interviews. Asking about work-life balance too early—during the initial (introductory) or second interview—can lead to elimination. Sure, work-life balance matters, but raising it

early screams: "I just want to do the bare minimum!" "I'm not a team player!" "I'm already planning my escape."

As a job seeker, understand that the hiring process is inherently a process of elimination, necessitated by many candidates vying for one role. Therefore, before you ask questions that answer, "Will this job serve my self-interests?" first, focus on establishing stickiness—a connection and trust. By demonstrating your awareness of the employer's needs, something candidates you're competing against are unlikely to exhibit; you increase the odds of your interviewer envisioning you as the ideal candidate for the role and the company.

Also, keep in mind that an interview is a sales meeting. Your initial and second interviews should revolve around selling yourself. Emphasizing the value you can bring—how you'll generate revenue, solve problems, increase savings—distinguishes you from candidates more focused on WIIFM (What's in it for me?).

The exception is the "money question." Ideally, you should know the salary range for the position. I always ask within the first five minutes of an initial interview, "To ensure we're not wasting each other's time, I'm looking for an annual salary of \$X. Is that within the range for this position?" There's no point in pursuing a job that won't meet your compensation requirements. Save everything else for later, as those details are often negotiable.

During your first and second interviews, ask:

Discovery questions:

- What's the most important thing I should accomplish in my first 90 days?
- What challenges might I face in this position?
- Will my responsibilities change in the next six months to a year?
- Can you tell me about the team I'll be working with and my direct reports?

Clarification questions:

- Can you elaborate on the day-to-day responsibilities of this role?
- What specific skills or experiences are you looking for in the ideal candidate?
- Please clarify the reporting structure for this position.
- What's the timeline for the expected projects or initiatives this role will be involved with?

Closing questions:

- What am I not asking you that I should?
- What is essential for success in this role and at [company]?
- How is performance in this role measured and evaluated?
- Is there anything valuable for me to understand about the role or [company] role that we haven't discussed?

Regarding closing questions, the purpose of asking such questions is to create a selling opportunity to emphasize that you have the skills, experience, and confidence, a critical aspect of interview success that jobseekers underestimate, to do the job. If you don't believe in yourself, then why should your interviewer?

For instance, if you ask, "What are the biggest challenges I will face in this position?" and your interviewer answers, "Rimway is currently implementing a new company-wide software program called GLaDOS, which will greatly enhance our ability to interface with our customers and inventory; therefore, Rimway employees are in a steep learning curve." You can respond in one of two ways:

1. That you're familiar with GLaDOS, having used it extensively while working at [company], this would be the ideal answer, or
2. Recount a STAR (Situation, Task, Action, and Result) story in which you were successfully part of an implementation, be it new software, change in process, new government regulations, etc., to demonstrate (sell) your ability to adapt to changes and learn new technology, processes, regulations, a mindset not everyone has.

During your first and second interviews, focus your questions on the company, its people, and how the role contributes to its overall success. More than ever, your entire job search, not just when you're interviewing, but your resume, LinkedIn profile, and how you present yourself during a networking opportunity, needs to clearly (keyword) demonstrate—this is where your quantifying results and achievement numbers (revenue, savings, time, amount, size, percentage) come in—how hiring you will add value.

An interview is your chance—never easy to obtain—to demonstrate (read: sell) what you can do for an employer. As the job seeker, you're trying to land the job, not vice versa. (In today's job market, an employer will have many viable candidates per position. You're not an employer's only option.) More than ever, especially as employers are understandably increasingly running their business on lean, a job exists because the employer believes that by creating the job and having it occupied by the right person (key), they'll make more money than by not having it.

Strategically timing your questions is a crucial factor in achieving interview success. Asking about benefits, flex hours, vacation, sick days, professional development offered or "Can I work from home?" (despite the job posting stating the job is on-site) too early in the interview stage is perceived as an indication that you're focused on what the employer can do for you, not on what you can do for the employer

Nick Kossovan, a well-seasoned veteran of the corporate landscape, offers advice on searching for a job. You can send him your questions at artoffindingwork@gmail.com



Mayor Dan Carter's Statement on General Motors Canada announcement

Mayor Dan Carter

Today, we learned that General Motors' Oshawa Assembly will return to a two-shift operation in light of forecasted demand and the evolving trade environment. On behalf of the City of Oshawa and City Council, I extend our compassion and support for those workers and their families who will be impacted. We are here for you, and alongside GM we are working together with our business community to support you as you transition to new job opportunities over the next several months.

The City of Oshawa has proudly embraced GM's evolution for generations, rooted in over a century of automotive history. Our great city has achieved remarkable milestones in Canadian history, thanks to visionary leaders such as Robert McLaughlin and Colonel Robert Samuel McLaughlin, founders of McLaughlin Carriage and McLaughlin Motor Car Company, which led to the development of General Motors Canada.

Since 2020, GM has invested \$1.5 billion in new products and upgrades in Oshawa. GM's investments have created approximately 2,000 manufacturing jobs and thousands of indirect jobs at Canadian suppliers across Durham Region.

We are proud of the award-winning Oshawa Assembly plant that continues to produce both heavy and light-duty Chevrolet Silverado pickups – the only plant of its kind. Oshawa continues to play a central role in GM's largest and most important market segment across the continent, where thousands of talented Oshawa workers continue to help GM meet demand for its leading family of pickup trucks. Current manufacturing operations are complemented by renowned research facilities with the McLaughlin Advanced Technology Track at Oshawa's Canadian Technical Centre. We look forward to collaborations that will continue our tradition of automotive innovation and global leadership in advanced manufacturing.

At the same time, we are pleased to share that over the years, Oshawa's economy has grown and diversified, providing a stable and resilient economic base during these challenging times. Oshawa is home to over 75,000 jobs with an employment base that has grown by 15% since 2011. Our top five sectors – health care, retail trade, educational services, accommodation and food services, and professional services – account for about 50% of all employment, with manufacturing accounting for approximately 3%-6% of jobs.

In these dynamic economic times, communities across Canada, including the City of Oshawa, are facing challenges and uncertainty. However, in Oshawa there is much to be grateful for. Oshawa is a vibrant and diverse city, home to four globally-recognized post-secondary institutions, state-of-the-art healthcare and research facilities, and outstanding amenities. Major industrial companies are establishing their global operations and creating quality new jobs at Oshawa's Northwood Business Park. Our robust economy has made Oshawa a community of choice for tens of thousands of new residents who are discovering Oshawa's vibrancy and opportunities.

We are a resilient city that never gives up on itself or each other. As Mayor, I encourage all of us to come together to support those impacted by today's announcement. Let's uphold our tradition as a caring community and assist our talented workforce, the backbone of our community.

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