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# What to Look for in a Realtor

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You're on the hunt for a realtor.

You've gotten referrals from coworkers, friends and friends of friends. You might be feeling a little overwhelmed by all the options. And there are many, many good options out there.

Here are a few things to think about on the way to your decision.

## What's your situation?

Are you under pressure to buy or sell? Be as upfront about your situation as you can, legally and emotionally, so your agent can provide the best possible guidance. If you're going through a divorce or illness or financial trouble, your agent's advice on how to price or fix-up your home may be different than for those under no pressure to sell. The same is true for buyers.

Empowering your agent with important information can save you precious time and avoid further hardship and heartache. Is it possible that an agent may decline the opportunity to work with you? Yes, but it's better to know early on, especially if you're in desperate need of quick results.

## What are your expectations?

Licensed real estate agents are all bound by laws and ethics, but the business style each brings to the table is uniquely their own. Having a sense of what excellent service means to you can help your relationship start strong and stay that way.

Buyers, do you want an agent to check-in frequently or to wait until you reach out for info? Sellers, will you get anxious if you don't have showings every day? How quickly do you expect (or hope) that your home will go under contract and close?

If you have expectations, let them be known upfront. Agents tend to follow certain steps that have been successful in the past. However, most will be happy to accommodate your specific requests if they are able.

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### **Do you want “specialty knowledge?”**

As someone who’s bought and/or sold two single-family homes, a mountain cabin and a condo, I understand why having an agent with certain expertise can be helpful. The areas I’ve seen specialties matter most is in short sales, foreclosures and lease-purchase agreements, all of which may benefit sellers or buyers in difficult financial situations.

Some realtors specialize in luxury homes, others in city living or high rises. I happen to serve a wide range of clients, from first-time buyers to seniors preparing for a lifestyle change, and every step between. But if I feel you’d be better served by another realtor, I won’t hesitate to refer you to someone I feel can help you.

In the end, your search may start with referrals and research, but it will likely end with instinct. Trust your gut. Check references. Millions in sales and targeted expertise won’t matter if, deep down, you’re not convinced they’re one-hundred percent, completely and *totally* invested in helping you reach your goals.

*Steve Jamski is an Atlanta-area realtor with Keller Williams First Atlanta. All opinions and insights expressed are Steve’s and reflect his experiences as a 25+ year homeowner in the Atlanta metro area.*

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