

Clip this column

Sometimes the Realtor is the problem

Last week, it was reported that this writer is, in fact, a Realtor.

As a result, this column could, from time to time, have a slight bias in favor of real estate practitioners.

As matter of fact, numerous Realtors have contacted me and told me that they have sent various columns to their clients in an effort to prove that it was actually the client that was insane, not the Realtor. Using this column, as a basis of proving one's ability to rationalize one's behavior is not recommended.

However, today is payback day. Today buyers and sellers alike will be armed with damning information that they may choose to send to their Realtor, or real estate agent, as the case may be, for Realtors (with an upper case R) seldom err.

The top things real estate agents do or say that drive me crazy:

1. When the agents say, "I am not going to let my client pay that much for a house."

Who died and left them in charge? If the client wants the house, the agent should help them buy it. They should negotiate the transaction to the best of their ability and make the sale contingent on an appraisal.

REALTY CHECK



Richard Courtney

Many agents kept people from buying houses that eventually double in value and serve all of the buyer's needs because, on that particular day, that one agent felt the price was too high.

I ran into a homeowner at Oyster Easter who said that her house had doubled in value in only five years, and that she had been forced to fight with her agent to purchase the home

as the agent felt the price was too high.

Only days before the oyster conversation, that same agent had forbidden her client to make an offer on a certain listing until the price was reduced. It sold the first day on the market for asking price. The clients lost because their agent flexed as she had tried to do five years earlier. Old habits are hard to break.

2. When agents must be present at showings.

It must sound good during a listing presentation when the agent boasts that he or she will be present at all showings. Perhaps it implies a greater commitment to the listing.

What it really means is that the listing will be shown fewer times than it would otherwise. In order for the property to be shown, it must comply with the whims of the listing agent, not the buyer or the buyer's agent.

It is hard for those outside the real estate industry to believe, but there are numerous times when buyers relocating to Nashville must make a decision on their home purchase in one day. The only homes with a possibility of being purchased are those that are available at that moment. And, there's another kicker to that situation. In many instances, the agent will learn after two or three viewings that the houses the agent had scheduled for that day's showings are not what the buyer actually wants to purchase, the old "buyers are liars" syndrome. The buyer and the agent were not in synch when discussing the buyer's needs.

Then the agent must start from square one, and attempt to schedule several showings over the next few hours. In those scenarios, there is no worse response to a showing request than "you have to talk to the agent directly to set up that showing and the agent must be present."

By the time the agent returns the call, finds the seller, schedules the showing, and calls back, the buyer has climbed on board a westbound 747, thrilled to have purchased a home in the fertile, moist climes of Nashville, for it never rains in California.

The other problem with the agent being present is that they are, indeed, present, thereby stymieing conversation between the buyer and her agent. Such stymie-ization can lead to reduced time spent in the home, as the buyer can be uncomfortable with the listing agent.

3. When agents submit lowball offers on properties with the flimsy excuse that the offering price is all the buyer can afford.

If a buyer can only afford \$200,000, what in the heck is the agent doing showing him a property listed for \$300,000?

4. When an agent assumes the personality of the clients.

One reason the clients hired the agent in the first place is that the clients felt the agent was more qualified to guide them through the process. Then the agent turns chameleon and starts getting argumentative about inarguable points in the contract and making outrageous demands, all with the conviction that the requests are reasonable.

Representing the clients' wishes are admirable, but informing the clients that their requests are unreasonable is sound advice.

When the other agent begins insisting on ridiculous issues, I am more likely to form an intervention group than to recommend that my client succumb to the madness. CP

Richard Courtney is a Realtor with Fridrich and Clark Realty and can be reached through his Website, www.RichardCourtney.com. He's no better than the rest of them. But he has a column