

Questions to ask a potential Buyer's Broker:

1. How long have you been a real estate broker? How many active clients do you have? Not under contract?
2. Are you a part time or full time broker?
3. How many buyer transactions have you done in the past 12 months?
4. How much support do you have from your managing broker or team leader?
5. Do you practice dual agency?
6. Do you require a contract for your services (exclusive buyer's agent agreement)?
7. Can I have three buyer references that have closed in the past 12 months? Do you have any reviews on Yelp / Zillow / other rating sites?
8. Are you planning any vacations in the next 4 months? If so, what is your back up plan for us to see properties while you're out of town?
9. Why should we use you to buy our first home?
10. What are you passionate about outside of real estate and your family?

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StartingPoint Realty's opinion on answers:

1. The length of time wouldn't matter all that much to us. New agents can be hustlers, they are looking to make a name for themselves. Experienced agents are great too, but good ones are busy especially January through August. Their workload does matter. You're hoping for a truthful response and also a response that states once they get to a certain number of buyers, they have to turn people away. This is responsible and important.
2. Real estate is hard for part time agents. Some can pull it off, some have a hard time thus their performance can be affected. A lot of brokers do not hire part time agents for this reason. The answer to the number #1 question plays an important role here as well as #4. That being said, we hire certain part agents. We select only those that have a flexible enough schedule and a mutual understanding of client workload. Therefore, we won't say part time agents are bad, just understand their situation.
3. It's not so much the amount, rather how they answer the question. A typical full time real estate broker might do 5-10 buyer transactions a year, so this is a baseline. Some do a lot more, some much less. We like those that are out and hustling, they have their finger on the pulse but again, that could be just in the past 6 months so gauge the reaction.
4. VITAL. Most agents would argue the importance of this question, we'd welcome that debate. A lot of agents out there are alone. Their sponsoring broker signs them up, takes a portion of their commission, that's about it. Initial and on-going training lacks. More importantly, manager

support lacks. Agents need a back up for conflict resolution and hard to answer questions. Having two sets of eyes are better than one.

5. Dual agency is not good. Imagine you sue your neighbor because they built a fence on your lot. You and your neighbor hire the same lawyer. Make sense? It doesn't. Same when you have an agent that practices the dual agency, meaning that if your agent has a listing that fits your criteria and you want to buy that home, that agent would represent you as the buyer's agent and the seller as the seller's agent, Makes no sense.

6. Exclusive agent agreements are not necessarily bad, just decide if you want to be in one. We do not require one, we think first time buyers have enough to think about.

7. This one is self explanatory. Call the past clients, ask about their experience AND the agent's partners (attorney, inspector, lender).

8. Vacations aren't bad. As agents, we need them in to make up for the nights / weekends away from the family.

9. Here is where you looking for the feel of the person. How much are they talking about you and your needs, as opposed to them giving you a Lifetime special on spanning their birth until present day. This is about you. How can they fit, how responsive will they be?

10. This part is more about them. This question will throw them off, notice their honesty. Take it as a moment to converse with the person. You're going to be spending A LOT of time with this person, making a connection might be important.