

We've been in the real estate industry for almost twenty years. A lot has changed. In the past, only licensed brokers or agents had access to the MLS. Now, it's syndicated on the Internet delivering "self-search" and "self-listing" to your fingertips. So why do you need an agent and how do you decide?

Interview them. Buying or selling a property can be a long, overwhelming process. Agents manage this process to ensure its success. If you believe in hiring coaches and advisors for sports, career, legal issues, or investments, think of your agent in the same capacity. They know the ins and outs of buying and selling property - and they look out for you.

Agents play the role of project manager for a litigious, time-constrained, and unfamiliar process that also carries liability. A good agent can navigate these waters successfully. Some agents have backgrounds in loans or home improvement along with connections to those industries to save you time. Good agents anticipate and avoid pitfalls that could kill a deal. They also work to save them when things go sideways.

At the end of the day, an agent's job is to service and represent their client's best interest - not their own. For most people, their home is their largest investment and should not be left to the internet or amateur to manage. So, if you are thinking of buying or selling, use this list of questions to help find the right agent.

**WHO ARE THEY AS A PERSON?**

- Is the agent personable, professional, and compassionate?
- Why are they in real estate for a living?
- Do you like them? They will be in your home, so make sure your agent is someone you trust around family.
- Does your agent know your needs versus wants, your situation, and time frame?
- Does your agent know the area? The community? The schools? The lifestyle?
- Can you be honest with the agent and know they are honest and confidential in return?

# THE MCCURDY MINUTE

## Real Estate Topics Everyone Can Relate To



**REPUTATION & TACTICS**

- What is the agent's reputation in the area?
- What is their strategy for finding buyers or sellers? Do you endorse it?
- Are they focused on volume and if so, how does that affect you?
- Do they work well with other agents to get a deal done? Which agents?
- Does the agent or agent team have a history of "dual agency" (representing both the buyer and seller in the same transaction) and why? Though unusual but not illegal in California, dual agency raises questions about an agent's ability to remain a neutral party, which is their fiduciary duty. For transparency and ethics, agents should disclose and seek approval of the buyer and seller.

**COMMUNICATION**

- Is the agent easy to reach *and* responsive?
- How quickly does the agent respond to *other* agents?
- Does the agent respond to clients personally or use an assistant?
- How often do they provide regular updates and check in with clients?

**HOME PREPARATION**

- Does your agent help prepare your home for sale at no upfront cost to you? Services like staging, landscape and painting can help sell a home over 50% faster and at a 5-10% increase in value. The median home price in Point Loma is \$1 million so that's \$100,000 more in your pocket!
- Does your agent have an eye for simple improvements to better show a property?
- Does your agent provide a list of trusted vendors they can refer?

**MARKETING & NETWORK REACH**

- Does your agent have a dedicated marketing budget for your property?
- Do they have a marketing strategy and plan?
- Is the marketing professional, high quality, and stand out amongst competition?
- How often do they provide a dashboard to show which marketing efforts are working?
- How does your agent build public interest in a property before it's MLS syndicated?
- Does your agent have a strong personal and professional network local and nationwide?

**CLOSING PROCESS**

- Does your agent cooperate and communicate well with other agents?
- Does your agent understand contracts, the intricacies of loans, contingencies?
- Does your agent have seasoned professionals they work regularly to create a smooth and efficient escrow, title, and transfer process?

We hope this article helped you learn more about the value of an agent and the importance of finding the right one for your needs. If you have questions or want to learn more about The McCurdy Team, visit: [mccurdyrealtor.com](http://mccurdyrealtor.com) | [@mccurdyrealtor](https://twitter.com/mccurdyrealtor) | [#mccurdyrealtor](https://www.instagram.com/mccurdyrealtor) | call 858.225.9243

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