

Professional or Hobbyist – Who is Your Realtor®?

The Professional

- **Full time** – Typically 40 to 60+ hours a week.
- **Years and depth of experience** - The Professional is often a multi-year veteran of the profession, someone with sufficient experience, skill and sophistication to add significant value to the transaction process. The true professional has actually closed hundreds of sales and can demonstrate his or her sales track record.
- **Professional designations** – this indicates the Realtor® has taken the time and expense to increase their knowledge and education in the profession.
- **Professional office** – the Professional is affiliated with an office or company that maintains fully equipped technology and can provide appropriate privacy and confidentiality within an attractive office environment.
- **Full time support staff** answering the telephone during all normal business hours. Walk-ins greeted and accommodated during all business hours.
- **Website is highly developed** with ease of use, interactive features, access to all area wide inventory using IDX and registration capability for instant feeds of new listings to registered users.
- Professional **takes their business seriously** and diligently and their responsibilities to their clients in the same vein.
- Most professionals are much more concerned with serving their clients diligently than becoming “friends”. Professionals earn their reputations and as such **derive a considerable amount of their business from professional referrals and by word of mouth** based on excellence of performance.
- **The real cost of using a Professional can frequently be lower.** Due to superior skill, knowledge, experience and dedication, the final outcome with the Professional is usually a better one for the client, yielding a higher return, even if the nominal brokerage fee may sometimes be higher.
- The Professional **always carries Errors and Omissions insurance.**
- The Professional is totally dedicated to conducting their business with **absolute integrity**, committed personally and professionally to serving the public’s interests above their own, insuring that their client is always achieving the best outcome possible.
- The Professional **understands and offers all forms of representation**, from traditional “agency” to the newest option in the marketplace, Facilitation.

The Hobbyist

- **Part time** – has another job or serious outside interests such that they spend on average less than 20 hours a week in professional real estate activities
- The Hobbyist may be **new or relatively new** to the business.
- Typically **no designations** – the part time hobbyist is doing the minimum necessary to remain licensed within a state.
- Work in group setting **lacking private office or meeting space** thus all aspects of a client’s confidential business can be compromised.
- **Sporadic or no office staff** – phone calls often answered by machine, walk-ins may find the offices temporarily closed during normal business hours.
- **Minimal internet presence.** The site offers only the most basic of information, often limited to only listings of that one agent or agency thus greatly reducing its effectiveness in marketing client inventory.
- The hobbyist may make claims about “experience” but their actual experience and track record is **limited to only a few sales each year** or a limited scope of types of real estate.
- The hobbyist is **in the business because its “fun”** and they “love houses” or it may be an avenue for them to cherry pick properties they then “flip” for their own profit.
- Hobbyists can be much more expensive - fees can vary between Professionals and hobbyists with the latter sometimes being nominally lower, but not always. Negotiation skills may be weak, motivation to get a sale at any price, much higher **with the hobbyist and costly mistakes are more likely.**
- Hobbyists sometimes do not carry Errors and Omissions insurance thus **exposing their unaware clients to uncovered exposure.**
- The hobbyist **lacks the commitment** quite frequently to the highest and best outcome for their clients, sometimes sacrificing the client’s best interests for a selfish motive – putting their own buyer first for example, in order to get the “full commission” instead of insuring the best buyer for a property outcome for themselves.
- The hobbyist has only the most **basic understanding of their legal responsibilities** as an agent and not understanding or offering the alternatives such as Facilitation.