

Why work with a Realtor?

By David Chesanow

In lean times, it's hard to resist the impulse to cut corners and, one hopes, costs. When selling or buying a home, that could mean acting as your own agent or being represented by a friend or relative who dabbles in the real estate market.

A Realtor, by contrast, is a licensed real estate agent who is a certified member of the National Association of Realtors (NAR), and therefore must take prescribed coursework and adhere to the NAR's extensive Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice to protect clients' interests.

"Unlike many real estate practitioners who simply hold business licenses, Realtors have taken additional steps to become members of their local, state and National Associations. Realtors choose to invest in their organization, education and professionalism in efforts to serve their clients with the highest standards," noted Cheryl O'Brien, a John L. Scott Gig Harbor agent and president of the Tacoma–Pierce County Association of Realtors. "Many people incorrectly use the term 'Realtor' in a generic way to refer to all real estate agents. However, all agents are not Realtors. A Realtor is a real estate professional who is held to our strict Code of Ethics and high professional standards."

"I think the NAR adds structure, professionalism and value to its members, which extends directly to the consumer," said Mike Larson, president/broker of Allen Realtors in Lakewood.

"A good Realtor adds value every step of the way: pricing correctly, marketing and promoting your property to buyers, handling all calls and showings while you are at work, providing feedback so you can make informed decisions, experienced negotiating of price and terms and later with inspection items; but most of all, seeing a good deal through to closing," said David Gala and the Hume Group, Windermere Professional Partners, Tacoma.

Realtors also work with elected officials to promote an improved quality of life, said Wanda Coats, executive officer of the Tacoma–Pierce County Association of Realtors: "In Pierce County we focus on community building, with home ownership as an important tool. Our Realtor leadership and staff serve on a variety of committees that promote housing affordability, job creation, transportation, parks and open space."



Learn more reasons for working with a Realtor: Visit the Tacoma–Pierce County Association of Realtors at www.tpcar.org.