

WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A REALTOR®

A career in real estate may seem like a dream job given today's hot real estate market. But if you're thinking becoming a REALTOR® is an easy ride, think again.

Like other professions, a career in real estate is highly specialized and demanding. Before you set out on your career path, it's important to ask yourself if you have what it takes to succeed.

REALTORS® in Ontario must complete a rigorous learning program required for registration under the Real Estate and Business Brokers Act. These licensing education courses are offered by the Ontario Real Estate Association (OREA) on behalf of the Real Estate Council of Ontario (RECO) which administers the Act.

Once you have successfully completed the required courses, you must embark on a two-year, hands-on training period under the supervision of a registered broker. This part of the process is called "articling."

But that's not all. Even after you've obtained your registration, you will need to continually upgrade your skills through continuing education and professional development.

Basically, a career in real estate takes perseverance, flexibility, hard work and a major investment of time and money. However, the financial and emotional rewards for your efforts can be great. There is nothing quite like the satisfaction of successfully negotiating a real estate transaction and helping to make someone's dream of home ownership come true.

So do you have what it takes. The following are the basic attributes a REALTOR® should possess.

Good communication skills -- especially good listening skills. This is most important in order to understand the needs of consumers and provide the best possible service. Other personal traits of a good REALTOR® are confidence, objectivity and a positive, service-oriented attitude.

Strong negotiation skills -- A REALTOR® must be able to negotiate well and in a manner that is mutually acceptable to all parties involved. In order to be a good negotiator, a REALTOR® must possess strong "people skills" and genuinely enjoy working and dealing with various types of people.

Self-motivation -- Listings don't just appear. A REALTOR® needs to be prepared to work hard on obtaining lots of referrals in order to build a strong client base.

Flexibility -- Real estate is not a 9 to 5 job. Often REALTORS® are required to work evenings and weekends and long hours.

Patience -- Selling a house can be an emotional experience and buying can be very stressful. One of the attributes highly prized in a REALTOR® is thoroughness and attention to detail.

Knowledge -- A basic grounding in the fundamentals of math is necessary for measuring and appraising property and arranging mortgage financing. Basic computer skills and research skills are also required for access to the Multiple Listing Service® and searching for legal documents.

Ability to handle pressure -- A REALTOR® needs to be able to keep many balls in the air at once such as showing properties, taking listings and handling offers.

Trustworthiness, diligence and helpfulness -- Buyers and sellers must be able to trust a REALTOR[®], know that he or she has a passion for the business and that they are helpful and not intrusive.

Buying or selling a house is a complicated transaction requiring a great deal of knowledge and skill. Consumers can feel confident when they deal with a REALTOR[®] who is well-educated, skilled and professional that they will receive the best possible service and advice. For more information about a career in real estate visit www.orea.com.

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