



Alaska REAL ESTATE BY DAVE WINDSOR

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THE BATTLE BETWEEN INTEGRITY AND GREED



This article is inspired by increasing inquiries and/or complaints I am receiving about changing standards of behavior in the Real Estate industry.

The stories not only come from the consumer in the marketplace, but also from seasoned operatives within the real estate community somewhat alarmed by the practices of others in the industry.

It seems as though the money-making machine concept of practicing real estate has overtaken the previous business model where service and genuine customer concern was the model that produced success for both industry and the consuming public.

The bottom line is that you, the consumer, are entitled to certain expectations of the industry, the main one being that the licensee you hire will be there for you, and vigorously on your side, for the entire real estate transaction from start to finish.

You, the home buyer, or the home

seller, are entitled to:- 1. A single key representative to walk you through the complexities of the buying/selling process. The so-called "Teams" in excess of 3 to 4 characters who are supposedly representing you cannot function in the personal manner you as a consumer need for the safe and smooth navigation of your transaction.

Before signing up with a listing to sell, or with a buyer broker arrangement to buy, you must protect yourself, unfortunately, by asking some probing questions on the subject. Who, specifically, is representing you in each phase of the transaction? How experienced is each member of the team? Do the team members communicate between each other, or will you have to repeat your question or concern to several team members wondering which one will resolve the problem?

On the other hand, there are still a vast array of licensees who operate individually and will be the single representative of your real estate transaction, intimate with your total

well-being as opposed to the "team".

To be fair, there are many efficient and successful smaller "teams" doing an excellent job. The key for you as a consumer is not to be fast-talked into a situation where you will not be well served.

It also is increasingly evident to me, in the evolving standards of real estate industry behavior, that it is more important than ever to work with a Realtor, not just a State Certified Licensee.

Only 70% of Licensees are Realtors. That is, they belong to the National Association of Realtors, supervised locally by a Municipal Board of Realtors - in Anchorage, the Anchorage Board of Realtors.

Unless you are working with a Realtor (i.e. an NAR member), your licensee representative is not obliged to follow certain ethical behaviors enforced vig-

orously by the National Association through the Local Board.

A Realtor must complete rigorous and repeated training in these ethical standards. At the heart of the Realtor Code of Ethics is the core belief that the Consumer is the key person and their rights and interests must at all times, and in every way, be paramount.

Behavior between Realtors is also regulated and, although this article is not about those issues, the general public or consumer should be aware that the last few years of hybrid real estate business models has seen increasing conflicts between licensees and offices, and the State Real Estate Commission is currently wrestling with the Statutory means to regulate evolving practices.

If you work with a Realtor you also have access to a low cost Mediation facility to resolve disputes, disputes with a Realtor or disputes with the other party in the transaction. You also have access to a Professional Standards Committee, authorized to mete out justice if professional standards have not been met. The telephone number of the local Board is 907-561-2338. If Arbitration is necessary, the Board of Realtors has even that facility available to Realtors and their clients.

The Real Estate industry, as well as the National culture, is going through a transition where traditional values appear to be changing to new greed models. I support the Capitalistic system where effort and innovation reap reward for the entrepreneur, but that does not replace the integrity which retains a

healthy respect for others, especially others who are also customers.

The purpose of this article is to encourage you, the consumer, to reflect upon this but, as a consumer, in any event, you must demand the highest possible standard of conduct from your Real Estate representative.

The best way for you to protect yourself in the situation is not to hire someone until you have examined their credentials - that is, Experience, Value System and References.

Dave
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