



## **Education keeps Realtor standards high**

When consumers choose a Realtor to help them buy or sell a property, they are placing their trust in someone who is knowledgeable and who will protect their interests. A Realtor's role is to provide clients with sound, effective, timely advice and professional service.

More than ever, in today's fast-paced, high-tech world, Realtors are being challenged to continually improve their professional standards by keeping informed of developments and trends in real estate. Buying and selling a property today is a complex undertaking that involves large sums of money, stringent legal requirements and a tremendous depth of knowledge and experience. Along with accountability and high moral conduct, education has become a cornerstone of the real estate profession.

## **Real estate licensing changes**

Realizing the need for real estate education that emphasizes consumer protection and the development of increased skills and knowledge, a new integrated learning system for real estate licensing education was recently introduced in Ontario. The new system, spear-headed by the Ontario Real Estate Association, recognizes the need to standardize learning across all provinces and incorporates innovative techniques, new program designs and diverse delivery systems. Already serving as a model for other provinces, Ontario's new system includes a Real Estate Encyclopedia and CD Rom (which integrate all textbooks and materials into one easy-to-use resource), course changes and a new curriculum. The system places an emphasis on multi-media communication and hands-on learning.

## **Keeping standards high**

Public expectations of the real estate profession today are higher than ever. Ontario's new approach to real estate licensing education and emphasis on ongoing educational development by real estate practitioners continue to uphold the profession's commitment to fair dealing and high integrity.

The individual receiving his or her real estate licence today has been through an intensive process of interactive learning, self study and examination. People are going into real estate today with ever-increasing levels of education. A recent U.S. study showed that 30 per cent of people entering the real estate profession had a college degree and 20 per cent had a graduate degree.

The purchase or sale of property is a business transaction of tremendous complexity. There are distinct advantages to having a Realtor who is well-educated, knowledgeable, experienced and sincere. A Realtor also has access to an array of services, including the Multiple Listing Service, which can provide you with instant, thorough and accurate information on properties that might interest you or issues that concern you.

If you are selling, a Realtor will not only fairly assess your property, but listen to you and develop a marketing plan that best meets your needs. He or she will give you tips on how to improve the marketability of your home and make a first good impression to potential buyers.

If you are buying, a Realtor will act as an intermediary and help you deal at arms length with potential vendors. He or she will assess what you can realistically afford, target appropriate neighborhoods, provide facts on the costs of running a home and what to look for when considering a particular property.

A Realtor can also provide you with a list of lenders, lawyers, mortgage brokers and other professionals whose expertise you may require to complete a real estate transaction. In addition, he or she can help you evaluate all the mortgage options available today to help you obtain financing at the most attractive prevailing rates and terms.