

## **Advice for Vetting a New Home Builder's Sales Professional**

### **A home shopper should know that a builder's sales professional is there to help!**

The title of sales professional can be a misleading one. In new homes sales, a sales professional truly acts as an information consultant. Our goal is to provide a home shopper with the most relevant information ranging from pricing and size to community surroundings and amenities. Regardless of whether a home shopper is still in the researching phase of buying a home or is ready to purchase, a builder's sales professional will meet the needs of the shopper and provide them with the information they need to make an informed, educated decision. By knowing that the sales professional is there to help, it encourages the shopper to trust and be honest about their needs and budget with a new home. In turn, our primary function is to meet those needs and budget with honest and accurate advice.

### **Prepare a list of leading questions to ask the Builder's Sales Professional**

Each home shopper is different, some will have an extensive list of questions and others will have just a few. Here are some basic questions that each shopper should have addressed during their initial consult with the sales professional:

- 1) **Does the home-site location meet my needs and why?** Consider commute, proximity to family and friends and local conveniences and schools.
- 2) **Does this builder have a product that fits my timeframe?** Consider constraints concerning sales contingencies, and the type of home desired. A Quick-Move-In (QMI), production or semi-custom home can typically be completed more quickly than a fully custom home, for instance.
- 3) **Does this builder have a product that fits my budget?** Inquire about additional costs like property taxes and energy bills. Don't be afraid to ask about a custom build. A creative builder sales professional can possibly engineer a custom design that may be affordable, or they may be able to personalize your production floorplan to meet your budget.
- 4) **Does this builder have a product that meets my wants and needs?** So often people get caught up in getting everything they want versus a home that meets their needs and makes them happy to live in, so it's important when working with a specific budget to help the buyer separate and consciously identify absolute needs versus desires.
- 5) **Is new construction the right option for me and why?** I find that most buyers after having considered new construction versus resale, choose new because from day one it is built to their personal needs, fits their lifestyle, the warranties equal less maintenance and risk, and new construction lowers out-of-pocket expenses upon move-in because there is no need to remodel.
- 6) **Ask the builder what sets them apart as the best?** Energy efficiency, health aspects, durability of product, what makes this builder's home unique? Check licensing/credibility of the builder, are they a contractor, remodeler or actual home builder? Are their homes independent building components built to meet third party verification or stringent building standards? High Performance Homes are built to

the U.S. DOE Zero Energy Ready Home Program Standards, for instance, ensuring a quality built home. Is it a smart-home that allows you more control to monitor your homes energy, performance and security?

7) **What is inside the walls of the home that I cannot see?** How is the home insulated, how is the envelope of the home built and with what materials? Does the builder meet the buyers quality and specifications such as low or on VOC products?

8) **Can this home stand the test of time in regards to energy and technology measures or will it be quickly outdated?** - is it coded for the future so that it will be of greater value over the course of the mortgage?

9) **Can I see a portfolio of homes, tour a model or already built home, and get homeowner testimonials/referrals?**

These are basic questions and there are many variations and directions these questions can lead into. If you don't know your precise budget or desired location, that is okay. The sales professional is there to offer you advice and information on every piece of the home buying process.

**Sales professionals are trained and licensed on the products they offer, meaning they are experts.**

Their approach to helping you purchase a home should give you that impression and make you feel comfortable with their level of knowledge with what is probably the largest purchase you will ever make. A builder's sales professional is there to guide you through each step of discovering the perfect product from the time you meet until move-in, and even after with warranty information. A builder's sales professional can handle challenging questions regardless of whether you are a first-time buyer or an experienced home buyer.

**One of the best ways to find the right builder professional to work with is to hit the pavement and check out model homes.** Remember as you visit models and meet company representatives you are there to not only find out about the product but also to interview the representative. You will likely be spending at least six months working closely with this person, so making sure you like, respect and trust them is important. If you want to first let your fingers do the walking, online resources abound as well.

**A builder sales representative can help with each and every aspect of the home buying process.** From helping the buyer identify the right loan program, to delivering a list of utility contacts, and everything in between. The sales professional should be able to take you through the construction practices/methods, the energy efficiency, the durability, strength, health advantages and resale value of their new construction product (homes). Building or buying a home is usually a series of compromises unless there is an unlimited budget. Allow the sales professional to help you uncover your wants versus needs list in your new home. By doing this, the sales professional can make sure to provide you with a home that will fit your needs and budget and ideally deliver on many of the wants aspects too!