

Finding the right employer for you

A resource guide for students

Selecting the right employer is crucial for the success of your real estate career. There are many considerations when deciding which path you wish to pursue, and there are some basic guidelines that you can follow to give you the best chance of success.

Keep in mind that a good real estate agent doesn't automatically make a good employer. A good real estate agent knows how to list, sell and manage property. A good employer knows how to manage people and run a business.

In this profession, it's best to find work with someone who's both a good real estate agent and a good employer.

Prior to commencing your search for employment, we recommend you undertake some research about potential employers and spend sometime considering what you're looking for in your career.

REIQ Recruits

REIQ Recruits is an option offered exclusively to REIQ students and REIQ Accredited agencies.

Through REIQ Recruits our Registration students have the opportunity to attend Career Networking Lunches with agents from REIQ Accredited agencies that are looking for well-trained, enthusiastic real estate rookies to join their team. These events are an opportunity for students and accredited agencies to connect in a casual environment and enable you to mutually benefit from your affiliation with the REIQ. These events are free of charge to both REIQ students and REIQ Accredited agencies. Career Networking Lunches are held between 12.30pm - 1.30pm at REIQ Head Office in Coorparoo and our Regional Centres. For more information phone (07) 3249 7370 or email aconnor@reiq.com.au

Research

Before approaching potential employers:

- Visit the REIQ website and use the; 'Agents' search function then 'Find an agent' to locate REIQ accredited agencies in the geographical area you are considering working in.
- Consider if you would like to work within a franchise network (i.e. the Australia wide recognisable names

in real estate), or with a successful independent agency, and research these options.

- Identify which agents have the most prominent signage on properties, and the most prominent offices within your chosen geographical area.
- Read the advertising for agents in the area, including the local paper, colour magazines, internet listings, etc.
- Which offices appear to have a stable workforce and prominent, long term salespeople?

What do the signs, window displays and advertising tell you about each agent's effectiveness in the area? This geographically based research will give you an indication of what marketing presence your potential client base of sellers, buyers, tenants and landlords will be exposed to if you are working for one of these offices.

Questions to ask during an employment interview

During the employment interview, don't be afraid to ask a potential employer questions. Before you ask any of the questions below that relate to legal issues, make sure you familiarise yourself with the relevant legislation and know the answers you would find acceptable. Examples of some questions include:

- How many employees does the agency have?
- Have the agency's employees been with the organisation long?
- How much time is invested in employees' training?
- What will the starting wage or salary and other entitlements be (e.g. commission, allowances, annual leave etc)
- Does the agency reward higher achievers with better than average commissions?
- Is a vehicle required for the position, who pays for its usage, and what insurance cover should be held by employees?
- Is a mobile phone required for the position, and who pays for its usage?
- Who pays for advertising and marketing?
- What are the office requirements in terms of working hours?

- Does the agency restrict employees from obtaining alternative employment in real estate once they leave their employment at the agency, and if such restraint exists, to what extent?
- Who owns the data (the personal contact list) that employees bring into the business? Does the agency provide a written undertaking that personal contacts can be taken with individual employees and used elsewhere in the industry if they leave?
- Does the agency have formal policies about the allocation of buyer and seller enquiry?
- Prior to commencement of employment, can the agency provide potential employees with a copy of the employment agreement for consideration?

Undertaking your research regarding potential employers sets the foundation for establishing a rewarding real estate career.

Wages or commission only?

The Federal *Real Estate Industry Award 2010* ("the Award") stipulates minimum weekly wage levels for newcomers into the real estate profession. Employers and employees in the industry may also agree to commission, bonus or incentive payments in addition to the minimum weekly wage, and any such agreement must be in writing (further stipulations apply). Under the Award, a person may only be a commission only employee when all the following conditions have been satisfied:

- The employee has agreed in writing with the employer to be remunerated on a commission only basis;
- The employee has been issued with a real estate agent's licence or is registered;
- The employee has been engaged as a real estate salesperson (with any licensed real estate agent) or was an active licensed real estate agent for an aggregate period of at least 12 months in the five years immediately prior to entering into the commission only agreement;
- The employee is at least 21 years of age;
- The employee is not engaged as a casual, junior, property sales associate (as defined in the Award), or a trainee; and

- The employee can demonstrate (with the present or any past employer) that they had achieved above the minimum income threshold (as defined in the Award).

The only exemption applicable for these conditions is if the individual employee has operated their own real estate business within the last five years.

Both the (Federal) *Real Estate Industry Award 2010* and the (State) Property Management Property Sales Awards require all property management & property sales employees in Queensland to have an agreement registered with QPIR (Queensland Property Industry Registry).

Visit the APSA website www.myapsa.com.au and the QPIR website www.qpir.com.au for more information on wages, conditions and industrial relations matters.

The REIQ acknowledges the significant contribution of the APSA in the authoring of this information sheet.