

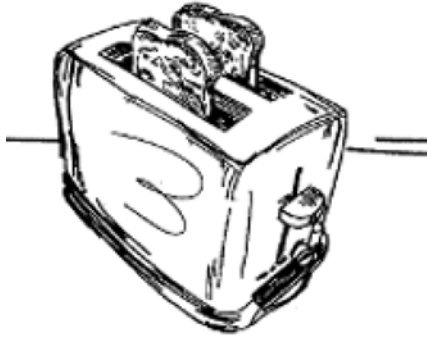
From the Law Office of Ronald H. Gitter, Esq.



Addressing the Realities of Residential Real Estate

A Lawyer is not a Toaster

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When Choosing an Attorney, Avoid Creeping Costco-ism:

Folks sometimes think that all legal services are the same irrespective of cost. Nothing could be further from the truth. An apartment or house purchase can be the largest financial transaction of your life, so it pays to have the best representation you can afford. Think of it this way, if you needed bypass surgery,

would you want the best cardiologist or the cheapest?

All Lawyering is Local

Some lawyers work well outside their zip codes and speak the legal language of all the boroughs... others need a Michelin guide. Make sure your lawyer understands the customs, practices and rules of engagement where the property is located.

Your Attorney Should Practice Law, Not Process Law

If you have that queasy assembly line feeling, you should probably go in another direction. Here's a good rule of thumb: If the attorney is not responsive from the first phone call, it never gets any better and it usually gets worse.

The Internet Can Be Helpful

Most lawyers have websites and some have blogs, as I do. An attorney's online presentation can tell you a lot about his or her background, ability and sensibilities. There are also legal directories such as Martindale Hubbell where lawyers can be located. That being said, picking a lawyer from an online white pages can be the equivalent of flipping a coin.

When A Dispute Arises

Despite the best efforts of the parties, sometimes a dispute arises after the contract is signed, at closing or thereafter. Always weigh your potential damages against the possible cost of litigation. Fighting over a principle can get expensive very quickly. When litigation is unavoidable, be

certain your attorney has the background and significant experience for your particular issue, the time and resources available to handle the matter and enthusiasm about the case.

Residential Reality: Retain the Best Counsel Your Budget Will Allow

An apartment or house purchase should not be rocket science. But sometimes there is trouble at lift-off or at landing. Your attorney should have the intelligence, competence and creativity to resolve problems expeditiously and with your best economic interests in mind.

For more on this topic, see "[Tips for Choosing a Real Estate Lawyer](#)" on NY1.

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