

Survival In The Home Inspection Business

By

Michael Del Greco, President of Accurate Inspections, Inc.

In 1993 I graduated a home inspector training program and went into business. I soon found that survival in the home inspection business required a home inspector to choose one of the following two paths:

1. Knowingly be unethical and under report issues or gloss over major problems in order to obtain continued referrals from unethical real estate sales people. This method requires virtually no marketing efforts or expense. It is a cheap way to make a great amount of money in a short period of time. After a few years the claims start coming in, errors and omissions insurance gets canceled, sleep gets lost over the impending law suits and claims, phone messages are not returned because the inspector knows or fears they are complaints, the home inspector's license then gets suspended (in the few states that require insurance) due to the lack of insurance, pressure mounts, bankruptcy is declared and former clients get stuck defective houses with no compensation for the flawed house inspection.

For a few years an unethical home inspector could make a fortune by dealing with fellow unethical people, which in turn harms home buyers and destroys the integrity of honest home inspectors. Inspectors who choose this path must be on the lookout for former clients and client's attorneys.

2. An inspector can take the honest professional business approach by telling clients what they need to hear. This drastically increases marketing efforts and expenses costs which must be passed on to clients. Clients must be made aware of the reason for the additional costs and why the benefits they will obtain outweigh the additional expense. The long term benefit is that the ethical home inspector will still obtain some referrals from ethical sales people and a lot of referrals from previous clients. Clients will pay a little more for the inspection however; they will save huge amounts of money. Short term savings will occur during negotiations with the seller and long term savings will be realized since problems with the home would have been disclosed and remedied earlier.

By choosing an inspector who is a member of the Independent Home Inspectors of North America (<http://www.ihina.org/>) consumers can be confident they are dealing with an inspector who chose the latter method of conducting business. The inspector they hire is working for the client (buyer), not the seller or agent. The inspector they hire will be well rested because he/she can sleep at night with a clear conscience.

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