

Right candidates must give your project their undivided attention

Because commercial real estate properties often have hefty price tags, looking for the right broker is a serious undertaking. One of the safest ways is to deal with a specialty person, a person with specialized training and who has networks to draw upon. Since commercial brokerage can include such issues as contract negotiation, handling rental space, financial and market analysis, fee negotiation and dealing with attorneys, whom you choose should ultimately be based on your specific needs, and what you want to accomplish.

The next step is to look at the broker's experience level, track record and any additional licenses or certifications they may hold. Experience is critical. Education gives you the tools, but it's the license and the experience that give you the practice of using those tools. Conduct personal interviews. Meeting face-to-face is important, to get a feel for how the broker responds to your individual needs. Customer service and a good rapport are two essentials in a good broker. Expertise and level of service are absolutely crucial. Find someone who can handle all the pieces of a commercial transaction. A good commercial broker can interface with other brokers, the client, attorneys and others involved. Look for someone with all those skills.

According to the Professional Report published by the Society of Industrial and Office Realtors (SIOR), there are seven characteristics to look for in a broker:

- People skills**
- Understanding of corporate economics**
- Administrative skills**
- A strong ethical and legal sense**
- Professional appearance and manner**
- Deal experience**
- The character of a soldier/statesman - to be aggressive but patient**

While some companies may hire an in-house broker to handle all their commercial real estate transactions, for most people their best bet is to find one individual who specializes in the type of transaction they're looking for and who will offer their undivided attention to the project. Most folks today are looking for more than a broker who just drives them around and shows them five properties. The broker has to be involved in the entire process, as well as offering excellent customer service.