

AGENT SPOTLIGHT

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1. Where did you grow up? Right here in River City. My family moved here in 1966, when I was in grade school. Yo, Schwegler Elementary!

2. What area do you live in now? Sunset Hills. Near the Orchards Golf Course. **What do you like most about it?** The views, the trees, and the central location, in the geographic center of town. I can be anywhere in town in 10 minutes. Plus, we've lived in the same house now for 14 years, and inertia has set in. Couldn't move if the house was on fire. Truthfully, Cindy and I will eventually move closer to downtown, because we love going there for walks with the dog, music, entertainment, dining, people watching, and hanging with friends.

3. What do you enjoy doing when you're not working? Looking for work. Seriously. When I am not actively engaged with a client in either buying or selling, I update and review market information to see what new opportunities can be identified. By staying close to what's happening, I can make connections between people, places, and needs, and that leads to more work. That's what I do, and it's fun. And walking our sweet Golden, Carrie.

4. How long have you worked in Real Estate? 35 years. When I started, Abraham Lincoln was my lawyer. We showed houses by horse and buggy. My computer was coal-fired. Three years ago, my wife started working with me. Cindy is crazy-organized and detail-oriented, which frees up my brain for creative thinking. And naps.

5. What did you do before that? I earned a four year degree from KU in just 7 years. BS in Journalism. Yeah. How did that work out for ya, Cory? I'm good at the BS part. While I was a KU student, I worked at several jobs: writer, graphic artist, pet store clerk, and property manager. By the time I graduated KU, I was married, and had a kid and a mortgage. I decided groceries and good credit trumped self-expression and self-gratification, so I went into real estate. That turned out to be a good decision. I use my creative side for problem-solving,



marketing, and Halloween costumes.

6. What is your specialty? Real estate comedy. Have you heard the one about the guy who wanted to be a builder? He had some plans, but not a lot. Boom! Nailed it! What does a real estate agent use for birth control? His personality. Bam! How do you get a real estate agent out of a tree? Cut the rope. Swing! And finally, what's the difference between an accountant and a real estate agent? The accountant knows he's boring.

7. What designations do you have and what does that mean for the people you work with? My business card says. "Cory Brinkerhoff, Broker, Brinkerhoff Real Estate." Then, you look at the wrinkles on my face, and that says, "This guy's been around a while." This combination – that I'm the boss, and I run my own business, and I've been doing it for a long time – this provides reassurance and comfort to a lot of folks.

8. What is the most challenging/gratifying aspect of what you do? I have clients that love the house I helped them buy. Every home purchase should fit the buyer well, but when you positively love your house, that's like magic, and it's very gratifying for me. One common challenge: the buyer who says "I know what I want," almost never does. They surprise themselves when they fall in love with a property that is very different from what they thought they wanted. When that happens, most of the time, they later thank me. Sometimes, they think I'm psychic. My favorite challenge, though, is the "unique" property, the one that looks or seems weird, odd, goofy, different, too one-of-a-kind, outside the box. I like that challenging property and I want to find its new owner, because that new owner will love it like no other.

9. What is the most unusual thing you've encountered while working in Real Estate? A realistic seller – one who acknowledges that their property needs to be prepped for sale – clean it, fix it, paint it, mow it- and then, priced appropriately. Sounds obvious, but this rarely happens in the wild. Many sellers just want what they want, period, without regard to the facts, current sales data, timing, or preparation. Those folks can become very frustrated. I explain to sellers the realities about how their property fits in the current marketplace, and if they understand and agree, we do business. As a result, when I list a property, I am working, almost exclusively, with the rare and elusive realistic seller.

10. What is the most unique property you've listed or sold? Back in 1981 or 82, I listed the Lawrence Opera House, now known as Liberty Hall, along with the retail/office building beside it on 7th Street. The list price was \$300,000 for the whole enchilada. I didn't get the property sold, but I got my name on the front page of the paper about 12 times, as the City considered the purchase for a community performance space. That fairy tale went on for almost a year, and boy, did I get schooled big time. Investors laughed at me when I proposed the buildings as a private investment. One guy, a prominent businessman, told me, "That building is a dinosaur. Downtown is dead. In a couple of years, downtown will be for sale BY THE ACRE." Really. True story. Since then, I have worked a hundred very unusual or unique properties. Don't get me started! We don't have time or space here.

11. What are the top 3 things that separate you from your competition? First, I'm older than most Lawrence Realtors, by a lot. So, I'm not in a mad hurry. I move at a calm, easy pace toward the goal. It's not a race, it's a process. Do it right, and you win. Second, I like to keep things positive and light-hearted. Real estate, done right, is fun, or at least it can be. Lighten up, relax, smile, enjoy. Be happy. Third, I am small-time. I have never won, and have no desire to win, a contest for most houses sold, or most dollars totaled at the end of the year. I have fun, and do my best work for a smaller number of quality folks. Fewer clients on a closer, more personal level. It's important to me to have time to take a call from a client, or at the very least, to respond quickly. I don't want to be so busy that I don't have time to stay closely connected, and to be highly responsive and available to my clients.

12. What is one tip you have for someone looking to buy or sell a home? Buyers, get your ducks in a row. Where is your down payment money? Line that up. Have all the money in one account three months before you plan to buy. Where will you get your mortgage? Apply with a local lender- avoid the on-line, big national, and out-of-town lenders- and get a pre-approval letter. Sellers, months before you plan to put your house on the market, start cleaning out the closets, garage, and basement. Remember this: when the time comes to actually move, many of those treasures will suddenly look like junk, and you will toss them in the trash bin anyway. Especially your spouse's stuff, which was junk all along. Do it now. Your home will appear less cluttered, will sell quicker and for more money, and, you and your spouse will have less to fight about while you're moving.

13. What do you see in the future for real estate sales/prices? Likely, prices will go up. Probably, sales will be OK over the long term. Certainly: Landlords want you to rent.

14. Why should someone choose you as their real estate agent? I drive a fancy car and wear expensive shoes. Capiche? Plus, Cindy is really good with feelings and such.

