

SEARCH

SITE SEARCH:

- Enter search term, hit enter key
- Click here for advanced search

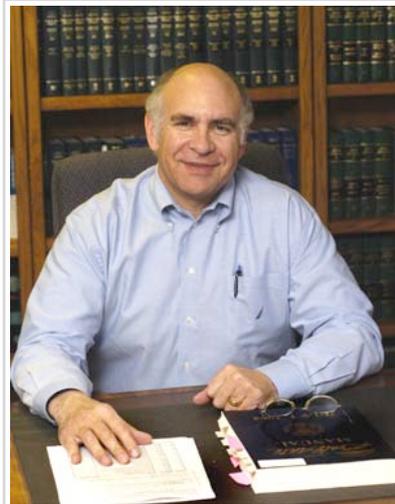


Q&A: Kent Levine

A conversation with the chairman of the Special Advisory Committee to the Colorado Real Estate Commission on Standard and Approved Forms

By The Denver Post

Q: Why have you devoted nearly 30 years, without pay, to writing and revising real estate forms for millions of Colorado home sellers and buyers?



Post / Glen Martin

"I like to think what I'm doing is making a difference for the buying and selling public," Kent Levine says of his work revising Colorado real estate contracts without compensation.

A: First, things are constantly evolving in all industries, and paperwork always needs to be adjusted to reflect those changes.

Second, it's a never-ending challenge a lot like newspaper writing. The goal is to clearly and completely state what needs to be said so that no one will have to scratch their head. It's so much easier to write contracts that run page after page after page than to work within space limitations and come up with something devoid of confusion and ambiguity.

Third, I enjoy the collective effort it takes to write these contracts. Brokers, lawyers, administrators, regulators, lenders and title-insurance professionals also give their time and share their expertise to make this happen.

Advertisement

ENTER TO WIN

A House Full of Windows



Fourth, I like to think that what I'm doing is making a difference for the buying and selling public, for the real-estate brokerage community, for the lawyers who use the forms and for the courts.

Q: Are you the kind of guy who also reads product labels, instruction manuals and the fine print on movie posters?

A: Yes, I guess so. My wife and I were once buying a

new car, and the friend who ran the dealership gave us the contract. He started to explain what it meant. My wife stopped him and said, "It doesn't matter what you say because he's going to read it first." He got really quiet.

Q: Do any other states approve and issue standardized forms for real estate transactions?

A: The great majority of states do not have forms approved by their respective real estate commissions as Colorado does. If we weren't the first, we were one of the first states to choose this route. Today, a handful of other states use our work as a template and even verbatim. When you're using the same forms, there's a much better chance that everyone involved in a transaction has a better understanding of what's going on - including people who choose to sell or buy property without assistance from a broker or attorney. All of our contracts are available online at www.dora.state.co.us/real-estate.

Q: What contract changes are you most proud of?

A: We have made less more. In the early 1980s, there were more than 25 contract and addendum forms. People would choose and hope they picked the right one. We had a separate form for residential condominiums, a separate form for single-family homes, a separate form for third-party financing, a separate form for purchase with a new loan. And then we repeated all of those forms for the commercial and ranch, farm and vacant-land markets. We boiled all of that down to three forms: one for residential, one for commercial and one for farm, ranch or vacant land. People can literally check the boxes that apply to their transaction.

Q: What important changes are on the horizon?

A: If things go my way, then less will continue to be more. A proposal will be presented at a Colorado Real Estate Commission meeting in early April to combine more forms.

Q: What are the most important things homebuyers and sellers should do to protect themselves?

A: I have shared three rules throughout the years: 1. Read all contracts and documents before you sign any of them. 2. If you don't understand or agree with a contract or document, don't sign it. 3. Keep a copy of the contract. When there is a problem, people usually discover that they failed to follow one of these three simple rules. There's also a fourth rule to consider: Buy my book, "Guidebook to Colorado Real Estate Contracts."

Q: Where's your dream home?

A: I'm in it: a 1960s-era ranch that backs up to a small pond in Littleton. It's so peaceful.

Q: As head of the University of Denver's Burns School of Real Estate and Construction Management, your brother, Mark Levine, spends a lot of time making speeches and working rooms filled with high-powered people. You labor in relative obscurity in a nondescript office building. How do you explain your similar career interests but very different styles?

A: We're different people, yes, but we really do have similar styles. We've both been engaged in the practice of law and real-estate education. But at this point, I have cut back to a couple of primary jobs instead of three or four because life sure is nicer that way.

Q: What's your motto?

A: Keep it simple.

Edited for space and clarity from an interview by Denver Post staff writer Christine Tatum.

[↑ RETURN TO TOP](#)

Related Advertising Links

BUY A LINK IN MARKETPLACE

DENVERPOST.com

All contents Copyright 2005 The Denver Post or other copyright holders. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed for any commercial purpose.

[Denver Post Ethics Policy](#)
[Terms of use](#) | [Privacy policy](#)

Go to Section

DenverPost.com A to Z 

Save up to \$1000 on major cruise lines at The World's Largest Cruise Sale.
CheapTickets.com **▶▶ just click. you're there.™**

Sponsored Links			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel Guides • Siebel CRM Software • Cadillac • Tenerife 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home & Auto Insurance Quotes • Payday Cash Advance Loan • Classified Web 677 • Reverse Osmosis Filters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Billiard Cues Pool Tables • Denver Real Estate & Homes • Travel & Hotel Guide of Budapest • Find Electronic Components 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find a Realtor receive a free vacation • Auto Insurance • Health & Diet Supplements • Home Mortgage Loans