



Pa.: Simulator Tests Real Estate Sales Skills

(December 20) -- Prospective Pennsylvania practitioners who want to assess their likelihood for real estate success and veterans who want to improve their skills can try their luck at an online "flight simulator."

The Real Estate Simulator was introduced by the REALTORS Institute of the Pennsylvania Association of REALTORS. The video simulator confronts users with realistic situations—a young man interested in purchasing a condo, for instance—and then asks the salesperson how they would respond.

The person taking the assessment chooses among several options, and this response triggers a reply from the customer, creating a continuous interactive conversation. Scenarios are based on real-life situations practitioners face. As users move through the simulation, their choices are automatically compared to top performers' responses. At the end, the system generates a personal report. Users also take a cognitive and personality test.

PAR is the first state association to offer this program to members and individuals potentially interested in a real estate career, according to Corrine Shearer, PAR education director. Shearer said the new program could also be helpful brokers as a hiring tool. Noelle Barbone, office manager at Weichert REALTORS in Paoli, Pa., has found the program effective with both current and potential salespeople. "Our industry doesn't always have the kinds of tools that typical employers do because we deal with independent contractors," she says. "This isn't something you pass or fail. But it can be helpful for salespeople who have trouble negotiating or don't know how to give a client bad news."

The program was developed by Upward Motion Inc. of Toronto, Canada, and is distributed online through <http://www.prionline.org/>, a new Web site launched by PAR in September to distribute educational materials. One copy of the program costs \$49.95, and discounts are available for multiple packages.

By Pat Taylor for REALTOR Magazine Online