

18. Set the Stage

Stage rooms to create a natural flow throughout the house. Arrange furniture in a triangle around a focal point, such as the fire place in the living room or the bed in bedrooms.

19. Give Full Disclosure

Disclose faults and negative history up front to earn the buyers trust and protect yourself legally. These things will likely be brought to light before closing anyway, and by hiding them you could be setting yourself up for trouble.

20. Entertain Offers from Qualified Buyers

Before entering into negotiations with a buyer, ask for proof that they are prequalified for a mortgage or have the funds to pay in cash. This is a common request. Make it policy and don't relent. Otherwise you could miss out on serious buyers while you waste time on a deal that will never reach the closing table.

21. Don't Be Discouraged by Low Ball Offers

For whatever reason, some buyers operate under the false assumption that low ball offers give them the upper hand in negotiations. Don't take it personally and don't take it as a reflection on your home's marketability. If you did your homework before pricing, you can be confident in your home's value.

22. Work a Low Ball Into a Contract

Now that you know not to take it personally, recognize this as the opportunity it is. Work with the buyer to reach a price that is a win for both of you. Be honest, candid and always gracious. Remember that it's up to you to justify the price. Take this opportunity to illustrate your home's value.

23. Invite Bidding Wars

Inform serious buyers of any bids you are currently entertaining and give them the opportunity to make a better offer. Be sure to let

the bidding buyers know if you are accepting other offers.

24. Keep Negotiations Professional - Not Personal

It's not personal, it's business. Check your emotions at the door so that you can remain objective and strong during negotiations.

25. Know Your Buyer's Motivating Factors

The best way to find out what motivates a seller is to ask. Ask why they are buying, what attracted them to your neighborhood, and other questions that might reveal the driving force behind their purchase. Knowing these factors will help you determine your own position while negotiating.

26. Contract is King

Create a thorough contract, making sure to cover all terms, and don't deviate from it. Don't be afraid to say no to requests to close early or to move in early. Let them know that you have made your moving arrangements according to the original contract and cannot change them.

27. Have an Exit Strategy

Decide now how long you are willing to have your house on the market and at what point you will call it quits. Be prepared for this worst case scenario with a plan. Renting is a last resort that meets many sellers' needs. Whatever your exit strategy may be, plan for it ahead of time to avoid last minute scrambles.

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SMOOTH SALE-ING



27 Steps to Selling Your Home Quickly with Less Stress

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The idea of selling a home elicits strong emotional responses from most homeowners. The process is dreaded by many as a stressful and risky undertaking. But this doesn't have to be the case. By learning from the experiences of others and following these basic steps, you'll be set for smooth sale-ing.

1. Define Your Motivating Factors

By understanding the driving force(s) behind your decision to sell, you'll be able to create a selling strategy that serves your specific needs.

2. Once Defined, Keep These Motivators Quiet

Sharing your motivating factors with others will compromise your position during the negotiating process.

3. Research Your Market Before Pricing

Research recent home sales in your immediate area to establish an average price per square foot. Use this and the list prices of comparable homes currently on the market as a guide.

4. Shadow the Competition

Know your competition by visiting open houses. Familiarize yourself with the neighborhood standard and make sure your home is up to scratch.

5. Consult an Appraiser

If you're still unsure of your home's value, pay for an appraisal. Not only will it help you set a good asking price, but you'll be able to offer this appraisal to potential buyers as proof of value. The appraiser can also recommend upgrades that will increase your home's value. Make sure you hire an appraiser that is familiar with your neighborhood.

6. Get a Preliminary Inspection

By knowing your home's weaknesses up front, you can better prepare it for market and work the cost of necessary repairs into your original asking price. A favorable inspection is also a compelling sales tool.

7. Work Incentives Into Your Asking Price

Enticing buyers with incentives will set you apart from the competition and appeal to a certain market of buyers. Consider paying buyers' closing costs or including major appliances in the sale.

8. Choose an Experienced Agent

Interview at least three agents. Compare their analysis and be wary of those that promise the moon. Look for someone who has successfully sold in your neighborhood, offers an honest approach to your sale, and is enthusiastic about your home's qualities. If you decide to sell the home yourself, it's still worthwhile to align yourself with an agent you trust should any unforeseen issues arise.

9. Have a Flexible Sales Strategy

Create a sales strategy based on your specific objections and realistic goals. Your strategy should include a detailed approach for marketing and sales negotiations as well as your rock bottom price. Create a pricing time-line that clearly defines when you will drop the price and by how much.

10. Leave Some Wiggle Room in Your Price

Arrive at an asking price that allows room for negotiation but does not exceed that of the competition by more than 5 percent.

11. Stay the Course

Once you've listed your house, you probably receive all sorts of pitches for sale schemes that promise outrageous returns and unrealistic timeframes. Ignore the distractions and stay the

course. Consult your sales strategy regularly and assess your progress.

12. Ask Family and Friends for Feedback

Assemble a group of trusted friends and family for a test open house. Invite them to tour your home as buyers and assess its strengths and weaknesses. Give them note cards to record their opinions and consider each with an open mind.

13. Make a Grand Entrance

Give your home curb appeal by keeping it clean, green and inviting.

14. Clean and Clear

Go through every room and closet, clearing clutter with ruthless efficiency. Clean each room from top to bottom so it shines like new.

15. What's That Smell?

That's not what you want buyers asking when they enter your home. Air out all rooms, clean and deodorize carpets, rugs, and upholstery and get remove sources of odor such as litter boxes, diaper bins, and pet beds. Light candles, display lilies or other fragrant flowers in the foyer, and brew a pot of flavored coffee before buyers arrive to fill the home with an inviting aroma.

16. Help Buyers See the Home As Theirs

Pare down family photographs, store the souvenir shot glasses, and redecorate rooms in a neutral, simple style. By toning down your own personal style, you help buyers envision their own décor within the rooms.

17. Appeal to the Senses

Help buyers establish an emotional connection with your home by appealing to their senses. All buyers are subconsciously aware of how a home feels, smells, sounds and appears.

