**Professional Home Stagers: A Great Resource for Real Estate Agents**

Many people have misconceptions about home staging and are not sure what we do. Most realtors have heard of home staging and how it can help sell a house faster and for more money. Yet, some realtors are hesitant to engage, or recommend, the services of professional home stagers because they still have questions. One of the greatest misconceptions is that we replace all of the home’s furnishings with rental furniture whereas most often we use the client’s own furniture to stage the home. I’ve spoken with real estate agents who feel they can adequately assist their clients in preparing their homes for sale. However, the time you spend doing that work with your client can take away from the time you have to focus on gaining other listings which is your bread and butter.

According to the [National Association of Realtors](https://www.nar.realtor/), for every $100 invested in staging a home, the potential return is $400. That’s a 4x return, making it a well worth the investment! Usually, professional home stagers’ fees are paid by the home seller. Realtors can help sellers see that staging costs as an investment. This investment depends upon the size of the house, if it is occupied or vacant, if the stager does a consultation with the seller having appropriate furniture and accessories to do the majority of the work, or, if the stager does the majority of the work including shopping for rental furniture and accessories. The realtor might remind the seller that this cost is less than the first price reduction. Sometimes agents offer to pay a percentage of the initial consultation fee. More recently we have seen realtors cover the cost of the initial consultation as part of their marketing plan. Though staging may not make a difference in realtor commission, the fact that the staged home tends to show better, sell for more and more quickly, this investment may be a savvy marketing expense. Soulful Staging By Design, LLC charges $400 for the initial consultation (up to two hours) and $150 for an hour if additional time is needed. Whether the initial consultation is a remote one or an on-site one, the 2 hour time frame is realistic.

So, what exactly do professional home stagers do? We help your client decorate their home to provide prospective buyers with a more welcoming environment and that much sought after move-in ready look. Preparing a home to meet this high standard is an arduous task. There are many things to consider in getting a home into show ready condition. In addition, some of the issues needing to be addressed with the seller may be sensitive (such as cleaning, religious art, odors, pets, etc.) and raising them has the potential to negatively impact upon your relationship with your client. Professional home stagers are trained to address those sensitive topics with finesse lifting that burden from you, their agent. The consultation can help reinforce information you have already provided.

Professional home stagers work with occupied and vacant homes. In most occupied hommes we use the client’s existing furniture for staging. In vacant homes we recommend furnishing each room with rental furniture. A staged home helps buyers picture themselves living in the home prompting willingness to submit an offer. This is a benefit to both the seller and the agent.

Professional home stagers provide an action plan to

* Create a showing ready appearance using the client’s own furniture
* Coordinate colors to maximize interior appeal by helping them choose paint colors to appeal to a broad audience of prospective buyers
* Freshen up their home with key new elements
* Enhance their home’s curb appeal
* Give your client the opportunity to correct or improve defects and update fixtures
* Prepare for the photo shoot
* Assist your client to be as prepared as possible to minimize their home’s time on the market, the possibility of price adjustments and sell their house at a higher price (and, maximize your sales commission).

Professional home stagers decorate a home so you can be assured the home will be show ready when we are again able to have an in-person Open House. Living under COVID-19, staging helps you present a show-ready virtual presentation. Remember, it is your name on the sign. We want to assist with your reputation for having listings that show well. The added benefit of such listings tending to sell more quickly means less need to lower prices and higher profits for you.

Contact Soulful Staging By Design, LLC if you have further questions at Info@SoulfulStaging.com