GREGG PERRAH
PROPERTIES

CRITICAL MISTAKES TO AVOID

What NOT to Do

When Selling the Family Home

The costly mistakes families make, and how to avoid every one of them.

PREPARED EXCLUSIVELY BY

Gregg Perrah

Over 30 Years of Local Real Estate Knowledge and Expertise

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A PERSONAL NOTE

Why I Wrote This Guide

Gregg Perrah
Executive Real Estate Advisor

In over three decades of helping families buy and sell homes in Southern California, I've watched good, caring people make the same preventable mistakes over and over. Not because they weren't smart or capable, but because selling a family home is an emotional experience, and emotions cloud judgment.

When the home belongs to an aging parent, or when it needs to be sold as part of a major life change, the stakes are even higher. The equity in that home often funds care, retirement, and the family's financial future. Leaving money on the table, or worse, making a mistake that derails the sale, can have real consequences.

This guide is my attempt to give you the insider knowledge that typically only comes from experience. Read it carefully. Share it with your family. And when you're ready to talk through your specific situation, I'm always just a phone call away.

Warmly,

Gregg Perrah

Knowledge Is Your Best Protection

The families who come in informed make better decisions, experience less stress, and almost always walk away with more money in their pocket.

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

What You'll Find Here

After 30+ years helping families sell their homes, Gregg has seen the same mistakes made over and over. This guide exists so your family doesn't have to learn these lessons the hard way.

1 **A Personal Note**
Why this guide was written

2 **The Most Costly Mistakes Families Make**
Mistakes 1 and 2

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A one page quick reference

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How to reach Gregg

MISTAKES 1 AND 2

The Most Costly Mistakes Families Make

Each of these mistakes has cost families thousands of dollars, and sometimes tens of thousands. Read carefully and share this with every family member involved.

1

MISTAKE 1

Pricing the Home Based on Emotion, Not the Market

This is the single most expensive mistake a seller can make. Families often have a number in their head, whether it's what they paid, what they've put into it, or what they need to fund care, and price accordingly. But the market doesn't care about any of those things. It only cares about what comparable homes have recently sold for. Overpriced homes sit on the market, become stigmatized, and ultimately sell for less than they would have if priced correctly from the start.

> **✓ Do This Instead**
>
> Ask Gregg for a Comparative Market Analysis (CMA) built on real sales data before settling on any number. Pricing it right the first time attracts more buyers, creates competition, and almost always results in a higher final sale price.

2

MISTAKE 2

Making Expensive Renovations Before Selling

Families often feel compelled to update the kitchen, replace the flooring, or remodel the bathrooms before listing. In most cases, these improvements do not return their cost at resale. A $40,000 kitchen remodel might add $25,000 in perceived value, which means you just spent $15,000 to net less. Buyers also frequently want to choose their own finishes, so your renovation may actually turn them off.

> **✓ Do This Instead**
>
> Focus only on improvements that pay you back: fresh neutral paint, professional cleaning, landscaping, and addressing any obvious deferred maintenance. Gregg will walk you through exactly what to do, and what to skip, before you spend a single dollar.

MISTAKES 3 AND 4

Legal Risks and Emotional Decisions

Two mistakes that can derail a sale before it ever gets going.

3

MISTAKE 3

Selling the Home “As Is” Without Proper Disclosure

Some families, eager to close quickly, choose to sell “as is” and disclose nothing. This is a serious legal and financial risk in California. Sellers are legally required to disclose all known material defects. Failing to do so can result in the buyer rescinding the sale, a lawsuit after close of escrow, or both. “As is” does not mean “no disclosure.” It simply means the seller won't make repairs.

> **✓ Do This Instead**
>
> Work with an experienced agent who understands California disclosure requirements. Complete all required disclosure forms honestly and thoroughly. Transparency protects you legally and builds buyer confidence.

4

MISTAKE 4

Letting Emotions Drive Negotiations

When a buyer makes a low offer or requests repairs, it's easy to take it personally, especially when the home holds decades of family memories. Sellers who react emotionally often reject reasonable offers outright, counter aggressively, or dig in on terms that don't serve their financial interest. This can kill deals that would have otherwise closed successfully.

> **✓ Do This Instead**
>
> Remember that negotiation is a business transaction. Your agent's job is to advocate for your interests with a clear head. Let Gregg handle the back and forth so you can stay out of the emotional fray and make decisions from a position of clarity.

MISTAKES 5 AND 6

More Mistakes That Derail Home Sales

These mistakes are just as common, and just as preventable.

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MISTAKE 5

Not Preparing the Home for Showings

First impressions are made in seconds, and they're nearly impossible to undo. Homes that are cluttered, odorous, poorly lit, or filled with personal photos and collections make it hard for buyers to picture themselves living there. This is especially common with longtime family homes where decades of belongings have accumulated. Every showing that leaves a buyer unimpressed is a missed opportunity.

> **✓ Do This Instead**
>
> Declutter thoroughly before the first showing. Depersonalize by removing family photos, collections, and anything that makes the home feel like “someone else's house.” Make sure the home is spotlessly clean for every showing. Consider professional staging, which consistently yields a measurable return.

6

MISTAKE 6

Choosing the Wrong Agent, or No Agent at All

Some families choose their agent based on the highest suggested list price (a common tactic called “buying the listing”) or because they're a neighbor, friend, or relative. Others try to sell on their own (FSBO) to save the commission. Data consistently shows that FSBO homes sell for significantly less than homes sold with an agent, often by more than the commission saved. The wrong agent can cost you just as much.

> **✓ Do This Instead**
>
> Choose an agent based on a proven track record, local market expertise, and a clear marketing plan. Ask how many homes they've sold in the past 12 months, how their sale prices compare to their list prices, and how they plan to market your specific property.

Mistakes That Happen After Accepting an Offer

Getting an offer is only the beginning. These mistakes happen in escrow, and they can be just as costly.

7

MISTAKE 7

Accepting the Highest Offer Without Reading the Terms

The highest offer is not always the best offer. A high price with a long contingency period, shaky financing, or excessive repair requests built into the contract can result in a deal that drags on for months or falls apart entirely. Meanwhile, you've taken the home off the market and lost other potential buyers.

> **✓ Do This Instead**
>
> Look at every offer as a whole: price, contingency periods, financing type, closing timeline, and any special requests. Gregg will help you compare all the terms side by side and identify which offer truly represents the best outcome for your family.

8

MISTAKE 8

Ignoring the Tax Implications of the Sale

Many families are surprised to learn that a significant portion of their sale proceeds may be subject to capital gains tax, especially if the home has appreciated substantially over many years. While the primary residence exclusion ($250,000 single, $500,000 married) protects most sellers, some situations can trigger unexpected tax liability. These include estate sales, inherited properties, and homes that were not always used as a primary residence.

> **✓ Do This Instead**
>
> Consult with a CPA or tax advisor before closing. Understand the tax basis of the property, any applicable exclusions, and whether the timing of the sale could affect your tax situation. We can refer you to trusted tax professionals who specialize in real estate transactions.

The Final Stretch, and the Biggest Mistake of All

We saved the most important one for last.

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MISTAKE 9

Moving Out Before the Sale Closes

Vacant homes show poorly. They feel cold, they echo, and they make every flaw more visible. They are also more vulnerable to vandalism, theft, and insurance complications. Some sellers feel relieved to move out early, only to discover that the vacant home languishes on the market or receives lower offers.

> **✓ Do This Instead**
>
> If possible, keep the home furnished and ready for showings until close of escrow. If you must move out, invest in professional staging to keep the home warm and inviting. Make sure the property is properly insured for vacancy and that someone is checking on it regularly.

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MISTAKE 10

Trying to Navigate This Alone

Selling a family home, especially during a major life change, involves real estate, finances, legal matters, family dynamics, and deep emotion all at once. Families who try to coordinate all of this themselves, without an experienced advisor, consistently face more stress, more mistakes, and worse outcomes. This is not the time to wing it.

> **✓ Do This Instead**
>
> Partner with an experienced local real estate advisor who has navigated this exact situation hundreds of times. One call to Gregg connects you with 30+ years of expertise, a trusted network of professionals, and a calm, steady guide who has seen it all and knows exactly how to get your family through it.

QUICK REFERENCE

The 10 Mistakes at a Glance

Keep this page handy and share it with everyone in the family who is involved in the sale.

#	THE MISTAKE	THE FIX
1	**Pricing based on emotion**	Get a CMA built on real sales data
2	**Overdoing updates before selling**	Focus on paint, cleaning, and curb appeal
3	**Skipping or hiding disclosures**	Disclose everything. It protects you.
4	**Letting emotions drive negotiations**	Let your agent handle the back and forth
5	**Poor home presentation**	Declutter, depersonalize, deep clean, stage
6	**Wrong agent or no agent**	Choose on track record, not relationship
7	**Taking the highest offer blindly**	Evaluate all terms, not just the price
8	**Ignoring tax implications**	Consult a CPA before closing
9	**Moving out before close**	Keep it furnished and ready for showings
10	**Going it alone**	Partner with Gregg. One call changes everything.

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NOW YOU KNOW WHAT NOT TO DO

Let's Make Sure You Do Everything Right

Selling the family home is one of the most significant financial events your family will navigate. Don't leave it to chance, or to the wrong hands. A complimentary consultation with Gregg costs nothing and could protect your family from the costly mistakes in this guide. In one conversation, we'll assess your situation, answer your questions, and map out a strategy designed to get you the best possible outcome.

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