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HOW TO SELL HOMES
OTHERS COULDN'T SELL



HOW TO SELL HOMES OTHERS COULDN'T SELL

*Why your home expired
(and what to do differently)*

• • •

**Provided By
Juli Samiec**



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PART 1: PRICING AND SELLING



CHAPTER 1

WHY SHOULD YOU READ THIS BOOK?

Ever wonder why one house sells quickly, while a similar house doesn't?

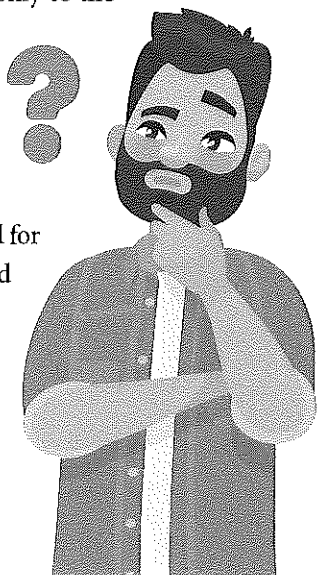
Why does one house sell for \$188,000, while another house, that's identical in every way, brings in \$202,000? It just doesn't seem to make any sense.

The truth is, similar homes sell for varying prices all the time. It takes place all over the country. It happens in markets large and small.

Surely, there must be some reason! These houses do not sell for more money by accident. No magic trick helped one seller get a better deal than the other. On the contrary, higher prices and quicker sales are the direct result of careful planning.

Sellers can command higher prices for their homes if they use the right techniques. A few simple strategies, known only to the best sellers, can make a huge impact on the success of your sale.

The following chapters break down those secrets. See how each strategy translates into real-life examples. Houses brought to market with these tactics consistently sell quickly, and for more money. Gather the information you need to apply the same formula to selling your home. When you sell, you'll be able to take advantage of these techniques. Carefully follow the same formula to get your home sold.



Thanks for taking time to look through this book. I sincerely hope it will help you make more money on the sale of your home. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask. I'd be glad to help.



Real Estate Buyer Trends

2 most common types of home buyers:

- **Married couples:** 65%
- **Single women:** 18%

Top 2 information sources used for home search:

- **Internet:** 95%
- **Real estate agent:** 89%
- **Number of buyers who found a home online but still closed on it with an agent's help:** 88%
- **Number of buyers who pay list price or higher for a home:** 42%

*Source: National Association of REALTORS®
2017 Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers*

CHAPTER 2

DOES LISTING PRICE MATTER?

Are you sick of being told the reason your home didn't sell was because it was "overpriced?"

Most people think a home that didn't sell was probably priced too high. Nothing could be further from the truth.






The reason homes don't sell is not always because of the price. It's usually because the home was not marketed properly.

It isn't easy to sell something for full market value. After all, buyers are always looking for a deal, and shoppers now have more information at their fingertips than ever. You might need to negotiate the price with a buyer, but good marketing will help bring you a *full-price offer!*

Here's a perfect example:

John was trying to sell his house. He put it on the market for \$499,900.

He hired an agent to help him sell it. The agent worked at a reputable firm and made a good effort to sell John's house.

-  The pictures of the house were top-notch quality.
-  The marketing of the house was first class. The home was advertised extensively online, in the newspaper, and other marketing avenues.
-  The agent held an open house.

Yet the agent's efforts failed to attract a buyer. John's agent suggested he adjust the price. After all, most of the similar homes in the area were priced around \$400,000 to \$450,000. He recommended dropping the price to \$450,000.

John owned one of the nicest homes in the area and his home had many features the other homes didn't have. John knew this. He was reluctant to reduce the price.

John hired another agent, who also failed to sell the home and also offered the same "advice": Reduce the price.




At this point, John had two options:

Option #1: Drop the price. Most of the agents he talked to told him his home was not worth what he wanted. They told him he should just "be reasonable" and drop the price to \$450,000.

Option #2: Hire an agent who could sell the home for what it was actually worth. This agent's marketing would need to get a buyer so excited about the home that they would be willing to pay full price.

Fortunately for John, he picked Option #2. He contacted an agent who specialized in selling homes other agents could not sell.

This agent worked at the top real estate company in his area and had a bunch of accolades. He took a closer look at the home, and launched his own *specialized marketing plan*:

-  New pictures were better than the first agent's pictures.
-  The marketing was better. There was even more advertising than before.
-  The agent didn't just do a regular open house. He also did a *Broker's Open House* and invited other agents to view the home.

The agent looked at his house and could clearly see it was worth the price. The agent put the home on the market for the same price as the previous agents did. Only this time, something different happened.

Sixty-three days later, the home sold for \$480,000.

The other agents were stunned. After all, they had told John his home was worth no more than \$450,000.

And since most homes sell for slightly less than their asking price, an asking price of \$450,000 would have most likely resulted in a final sales price of \$430,000 to \$440,000.


Yet, the new agent had sold the home for more. It had taken only two months to capture a buyer's attention. The unsuccessful agents were shocked (and a little bit embarrassed)!


What had they missed? Why did the first two agents fail to sell the home, while the third agent sold it with ease?

It's because the new agent used a marketing strategy most agents don't use. The details on this secret marketing strategy are explained within the following chapters. But first, we must be clear on one very fundamental point.

Many people believe a house sells for exactly what it's "worth." That simply isn't true. The price of a house is merely the final amount *agreed upon* by the buyer and seller. Many circumstances affect the final sale price.

Houses do NOT always sell for what they are "worth."

 Sometimes they sell for more.

 Sometimes they sell for less.


While that statement may seem like a no-brainer, it's imperative you understand this. Strip away misconceptions, such as the idea that "worth" determines the sale price of a house. Now you are free to examine the *real factors* at work. Identify those factors and you can leverage them in your favor.


Take Cheryl and Richard, for example. They owned townhouses, only five doors apart. Both put their homes on the market at the same time.

The builder had used the same floor plan for all the townhouses in their neighborhood. Both had the same layout. At first glance, each townhouse seemed to hold the same basic appeal for a buyer.

You might think they were "worth" the same amount. Nope. Cheryl and Richard sold their homes within one month of each other.

These townhouses seemed identical, but there was a *\$14,000 difference* in sale price!

 Cheryl sold her home for \$202,000.

 Richard sold his for only \$188,000.

Why the large gap in price? In a later chapter, you'll see exactly what Cheryl did to make more money on her home. For now, just know that you simply can't afford to guess the "worth" of a home!



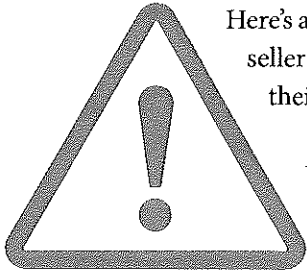
POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- ☑ Homes that don't sell easily aren't always overpriced. Houses don't always sell for what they are "worth."
- ☑ The selling price of a home is merely the final amount *agreed upon* by the buyer and seller.
- ☑ The most skilled sellers use special techniques that can help sell homes faster and for more money.



CHAPTER 3

WHAT TO AVOID



Here's another example of a stupid mistake that caused a seller to lose about \$50,000 — yes, that's \$50,000 — on their home sale.

An alert buyer was able to snatch up a \$280,000 property for only \$230,000. It was being sold by an out-of-town owner. The agent was not familiar with the area and suggested the low price.

The agent did not bother to put a sign on the property, and hardly anyone knew it was for sale.

Two buyers both wanted to buy this property. One buyer *really* wanted it because it was right next to his house. He would have a bigger yard with more room for his kids to play.

The other buyer lived in the area and wanted a larger yard. He wanted to buy this property and build a house on it.

The first buyer bought the property before the second buyer even knew it was for sale. As soon as the first buyer found out it was for sale, he made an offer immediately.

The seller accepted the offer, and the property sold soon thereafter. This buyer would've gladly paid full market value for the property. But he didn't need to, because the seller accepted the offer he made.

The second buyer never found out the property was for sale until it had been sold. Even worse, the seller never realized the mistake.

Bottom line: *The seller lost \$50,000* because of his agent's incompetence.

While stories like this don't happen every day, they happen more often than you'd think. It's a very real risk you take when you hire an agent who doesn't have a proven marketing plan.

Had a sign simply been on the property, it definitely would've attracted more interest, and possibly even started a bidding war, driving up the price.

At \$50,000 below market price, the listing would have been bid and counter-bid several times, possibly even up to fair market value.

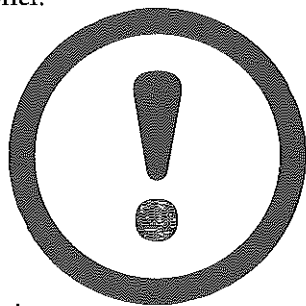
Here's a similar story.

In this case, a seller hired an agent whose incompetence cost her \$25,000. Her agent completely flubbed a "perfect offer." The buyer submitted an offer at full price for her home, no strings attached.

Her agent dropped the ball and let a little problem—one that would've been easy to resolve—ruin a perfectly good sale!

The house sat on the market for another year and ended up selling for \$15,000 less than the original full-price offer.

Even worse, the seller wound up having to make another *15 house payments* while her home sat on the market. Ongoing house (mortgage) payments are a frequently overlooked cost of not finding a buyer quickly.



Please don't become another one of these stories!

Take time to know the true value of your home. Do your homework and prepare for the sale before putting your home on the market. The good news is that by reading this book, you're already ahead of the game!



POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- ☑ A marketing mistake—such as not using a “for sale” sign—can drive down a home’s price.
- ☑ When you put your house on the market, make sure you—and your real estate agent—address any problems that could disrupt a sale.
- ☑ Continuing house payments are a hidden cost of selling a house too slowly.



CHAPTER 4

WHY IT'S SO EASY TO SELL YOUR HOME FOR LESS THAN IT'S WORTH

At a certain point, many home sellers feel like throwing in the towel. "I'm just going to drop the price and get rid of this house," they think to themselves.

Fortunately, reason (usually) prevails.

The temptation to "throw in the towel" tends to increase the longer your home sits on the market. It even happens to highly intelligent people. Here's an example:

In 1997, entrepreneurs Larry Page and Sergey Brin were looking for a seller for their Internet search engine. They called it BackRub.

The two were seeking \$1.6 million for the new online portal, and were working a deal with Excite, a popular search engine at the time.

The problem for Excite was that BackRub was far too effective a search engine. Users were finding what they wanted and moving off the site too quickly, which would be bad for Excite's advertising business.

Page and Brin cut the price dramatically by more than 50 percent. They offered to sell BackRub for \$750,000. (Yep, even geniuses cut their price.)

Excite considered the offer, but ultimately balked. There was no deal. BackRub's co-founders decided to commercialize and release the product themselves. First, they renamed it.

They called it Google.

Less than 20 years later, Google is now worth roughly \$360 billion. Excite was eventually sold to Ask.com.

Bottom line: Fight the temptation to drop your price. Just because something isn't selling does not necessarily mean it isn't worth the price you're asking.

That clearly was true for Google, and it's probably true for your home, as well. While the buyer of your dreams hasn't yet emerged, it certainly doesn't mean they won't.

Selling a home for top dollar fast is actually pretty simple. You just have to find the one person who's willing to pay more for your home than anyone else. If they want it more than anyone else, then they will be willing to pay a higher price than anyone else.



POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- Many sellers get frustrated and reduce their price prematurely.
- If your house isn't selling, it means you haven't found the right buyer yet—the buyer who wants your home enough to pay top dollar.



CHAPTER 5

WHAT STOPS “PERFECT HOMES” FROM SELLING

Have you ever wondered why no one bought your house? I know *exactly* why no one bought your house, and I’ll explain the reason in the following chapter.

Have you ever heard the saying, “Build a better mousetrap, and the world will beat a path to your door?” Even though the saying might appear to be correct—at least on the surface—it’s false.

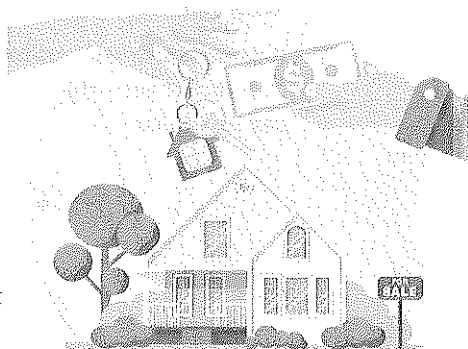
More than 4,400 people have invented what they thought was a “better” mousetrap. At least, that’s how many patents have been filed with the U.S. Patent Office.

But despite all the new mousetrap inventions, the classic mousetrap, first patented in 1894, is still the best-selling design.

I’m sure each of those inventors is frustrated. “Why won’t anyone buy my mousetrap? It’s genius!” they say to themselves. I’m sure you can relate to their frustration.

Have you ever thought the following? “Why won’t anyone buy my house? It’s a great house!” Fortunately, there’s an answer to this question:

“One cannot throw a great product out on the street and expect people to gobble it up.” This rule applies to inventions, homes, and even movies. Yes, even great movies need to be sold! Here’s an example of a great movie that didn’t do well when it was first released.



On September 23, 1994, the movie, *The Shawshank Redemption*, was released to the world. Adapted from a short story by legendary author Stephen King, the feature film centered on a pair of imprisoned men.

The film, based in a prison but built on the idea of friendship, hope, and dreams, was nominated for seven Oscars and won more than a dozen awards. The film was immediately a critic's favorite.

Over 20 years later, *The Shawshank Redemption* is now considered one of the greatest movies of all time.

In fact, it's ranked as the best movie in cinematic history on well-known and respected website Internet Movie Database (www.imdb.com), ahead of the likes of *The Godfather*; *The Good, the Bad and the Ugly*; and *Schindler's List*.

Another movie came out that year. *The Flintstones*, a live-action remake of the 1960s cartoon show, starred John Goodman, Rick Moranis, and Rosie O'Donnell.

The Flintstones, perhaps needless to say, was not nominated for Best Picture at the Oscars. "It falls flatter than a granite slab," noted a national film critic.

Though the film was praised for its costume and set design, it also won "Razzie Award" for Worst Female Performance and Worst Screenplay, and was a nominee for Worst Movie of 1994.

Its IMDb.com user reviews are roughly half of what *The Shawshank Redemption* receives, and it's rated by users as one of the worst movies of the 1990s.

A team of salespeople masterfully marketed *The Flintstones* to its targeted demographics. The result? The film grossed \$131 million in the U.S. and \$358 million worldwide. That's the power of *targeted marketing*.

On the flip side, the people at Universal Studios, who promoted *The Shawshank Redemption*, admitted they couldn't figure out how to sell the movie to the public. They had a great product; they just didn't know how to sell it.

It grossed only \$28 million in the U.S. box office and \$60 million worldwide. It ranked 51st in box office success in 1994—two spots behind *In the Army Now*, starring Pauly Shore.

Look at those numbers, then look at them again. Still don't believe good marketing and salesmanship matter?

The folks at Universal learned their lesson—even the best products need to be “sold.”

Is your home a great product that wasn't marketed properly? As we discussed earlier in this book, selling a home for top dollar fast is actually pretty simple.

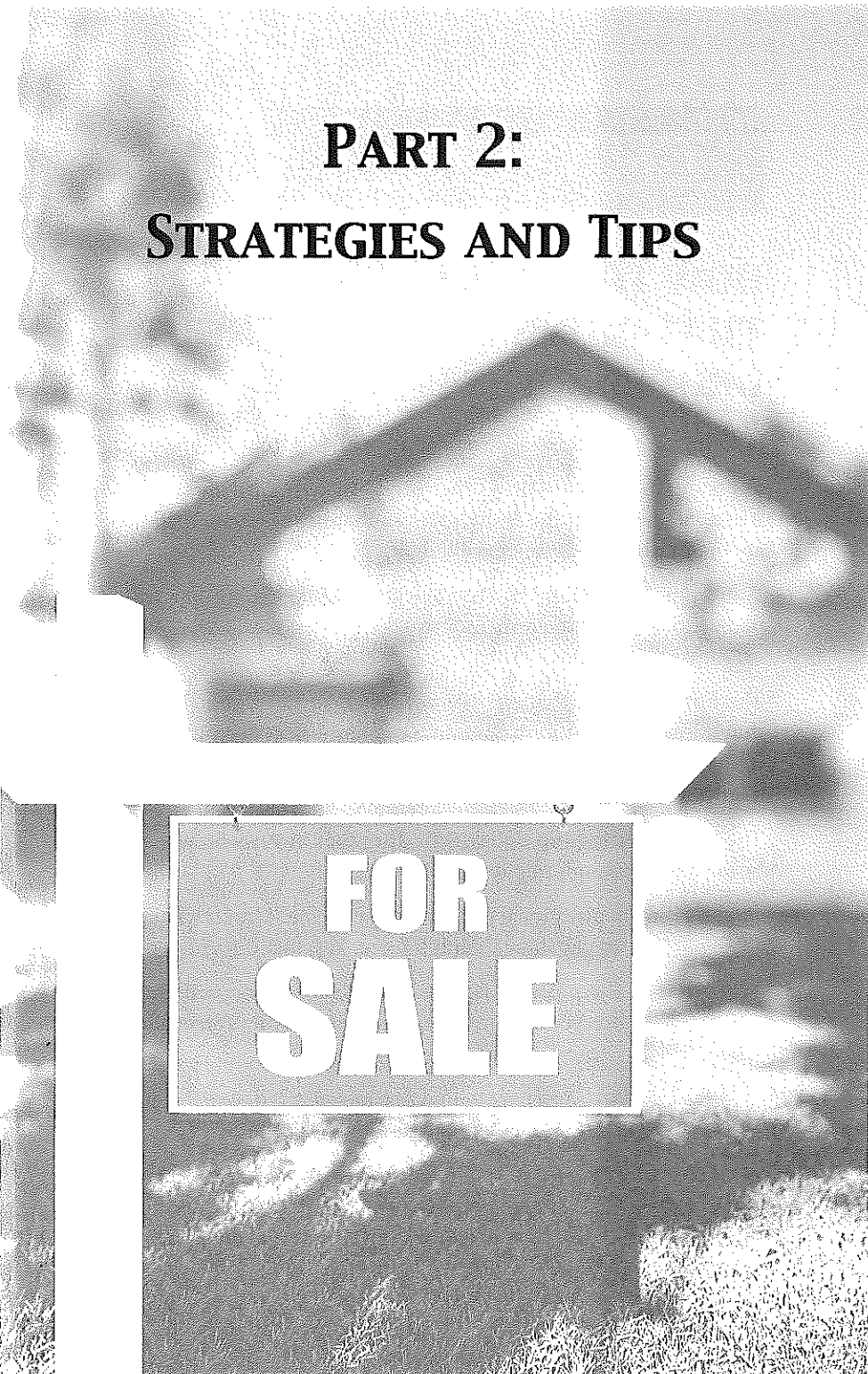
You just have to find the one person who's willing to pay more for your home than anyone else. If they want it more than anyone else, then they will be willing to pay a higher price than anyone else.



POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- Having a great product—or house—isn't enough.
- Whether you're selling films or houses, you can't beat the power of targeted marketing.



A black and white halftone photograph of a house with a 'FOR SALE' sign in the foreground. The house is in the background, and the sign is in the foreground, partially obscuring the view of the house. The sign is rectangular and has the words 'FOR SALE' written on it in large, bold, white letters. The background shows a lawn and a path leading to the house.

PART 2:
STRATEGIES AND TIPS

**FOR
SALE**

CHAPTER 6

HOW TO SELL A HOME THAT DIDN'T SELL — WITHOUT DROPPING THE PRICE

It is entirely possible to sell your home without dropping the price.

I'm going to let you in on a little secret. The standard approach is *all wrong*. It's based on the faulty premise that if you tell enough people about your house, *someone* will buy it.

Your home isn't selling? Tell more people about it. While having more people look at a home does increase the odds of it selling, *this doesn't actually sell the home*.

The bottom line is that not everyone wants to buy your home. Yes, they'd love to buy it for a bargain basement price. Even if they hated it, they'd still buy it for half price—only to turn around and sell it for a quick profit.

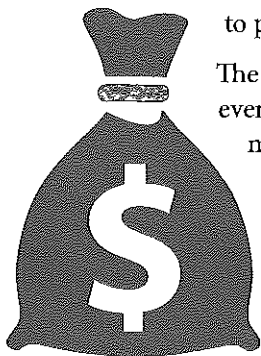
The key to getting top dollar is finding that buyer who wants your home badly enough to pay full price.

Sometimes, if you're lucky, you'll find a buyer who's willing to pay *more* than full price. Yes, that does happen.

The problem is, most people are so focused on telling everyone about a home for sale that they forget about the most important thing.

You have to find that *one special buyer*. The question is, how do you find the perfect buyer?

First, you need to understand a universal rule, discussed in the following chapter, and the role it plays in bringing in those ideal buyers.





POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- ☑ The standard selling approach is based on the faulty premise that if you tell enough people about your house, *someone* will buy it.
- ☑ In truth, you must find the *one buyer* who wants your home so badly, he or she is willing to pay full price.



CHAPTER 7

AVOID THIS RULE AT YOUR OWN RISK

The key to the successful home-selling approach is a revolutionary finding discovered by an Italian economist. His name was Vilfredo Pareto. The most important thing we can learn from him is the Pareto principle, better known informally as the 80/20 rule.

The 80/20 rule applies to all aspects of life.




In 1906, Vilfredo found an intriguing correlation. He noticed that 20 percent of the pea pods in his garden held 80 percent of the seeds.

Studying the seeds prompted him to take a closer look at this ratio. In one of his initial discoveries, he discovered that 80 percent of the land in his area was owned by 20 percent of the people.

After detailed study, he observed this ratio held true in many aspects of life. The Pareto principle—or the 80/20 rule—is a result of his findings.

The 20 percent is vital, and the 80 percent is trivial.

For example:

-  80 percent of your income is derived from 20 percent of your work.
-  80 percent of a business' income is derived from 20 percent of their customers.
-  80 percent of your value to an employer is derived from 20 percent of your work.

You might wonder what all of this means. In a nutshell, it means some things are substantially more important than other things. In other words, things aren't equal. Approximately 20 percent of what you do matters. The other 80 percent is insignificant.

It's important to understand that this isn't always split at exactly 80/20. It can be 70/30 or another percentage. The key is that the two numbers are not equal, and they are usually close to 80/20.

How can you apply the 80/20 principle to selling your home? Understanding this concept can save you time in selling your home. Unfortunately, many sellers buy into the false idea that more is more. They completely ignore the Pareto principle.

Now that you know what the 80/20 rule is, you're probably wondering how it applies to selling your home.

When you use the 80/20 principle in selling, you stop trying to sell people on the entire home. Based on the rule, only 20 percent of your home's features are important. The remaining 80 percent are trivial.

That's because they are the same features many other homes in your neighborhood have. Instead of focusing on those trivial features, you need to focus on the vital features.

When you sell your home, focus on unique features to grab the attention of buyers. These features make your home different from other homes. These features will make it easier to sell your home for the full asking price.

Let's look at a few real-life applications and examples of how the 80/20 rule can have an impact on selling your home.



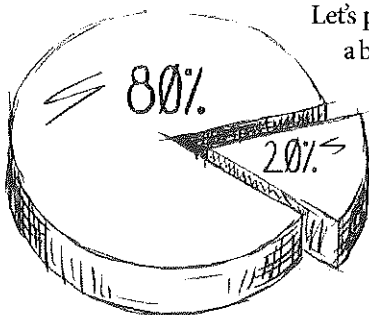
POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- ☑ According to the 80/20 rule, approximately 80 percent of effects come from 20 percent of causes.
- ☑ Following that principle, buyers will focus on 20 percent of your home's features. The other 80 percent are probably common to other homes.



CHAPTER 8

WHY THIS 20% RULE MATTERS TO HARD-TO-SELL HOMES



Let's paint a hypothetical situation. Let's say there's a buyer who's looking for a three-bedroom, two-bathroom home. Let's now assume the agent found him five houses to preview. Each meets his general criteria, and is located in the area in which he hopes to live.

He and his agent drive out to look at the five houses. All have very similar features.

The prices are comparable. In theory, you might think the buyer will have a hard time deciding between houses. In real life, that's not the case.

No matter how similar they might seem, no two houses are exactly alike.

The 80/20 rule comes into play. Imagine four of the houses don't have a pool, but one does. The buyer isn't aware of this, though, because the agent didn't mention it.

The buyer sees the four houses that don't have a pool. He isn't particularly interested in any of them. Then he sees the fifth house, and the pool! Suddenly, he's ready to make an offer. He might even pay full asking price, even though this house is more expensive than the others.

THE 80/20 RULE IN ACTION: BUYERS FOCUS ON UNIQUE FEATURES

His offer isn't based on the 80 percent of features this house shared with the rest. Instead, his bid is based on one unique attribute—a pool (the 20 percent). The 80/20 rule predicted the sale of this house.

Sadly, in this case, much time was wasted finding the perfect house. Had the agent known to look for the 20 percent difference, this could have been their first stop. As a seller, you can leverage the rule to work in your favor. Draw attention to defining characteristics in your home.

Here's a real-life example. An agent had a client visit from out of town. The client didn't have a list of criteria; he just liked the area.

She drove him from house to house. In each case, this buyer suggested offers 10 percent to 20 percent below the asking price. He would not budge. She began to worry. The whole day was turning into a big waste of time.

As the sun set, they stopped at one last house. It did not have much curb appeal. It was not a good-looking home. She was out of options. Nevertheless, this house broke the tough negotiator down.

He was suddenly willing to offer the full asking price! You might wonder what set this house apart from the others. It was not because the buyer had a "thing" for ugly houses. Nope. The 80/20 rule kicked in again.

This agent and her client spent the whole day looking at houses that shared 80 percent of the same features. He didn't care about any of those details. A bedroom was a bedroom as far as he was concerned.

This plain-Jane house had something special. And he fell in love with this one remarkable feature of the house. As you walked into the great room, there was a large window. The house sat atop a hill with a gorgeous view. And to top it off, the sun was setting below the distant tree line. That view sold the buyer. The other 80 percent could be improved.

He didn't buy the house because he liked the floor plan or the number of bedrooms and bathrooms. His decision was completely based on the hill and view. That view caused him to stop negotiating and offer full price on the spot. Such is the power of the 80/20 rule.

Learn how to tap into this rule and you'll not have to settle for less than your asking price. Leverage a unique selling point. Buyers who fall in love don't bother to haggle over pricing—they make good offers.

In some cases, the 80/20 rule even helps people make a sale without conducting a showing. This is a huge time saver. The house in the following example had languished on the market for months.

Unlike the previous house, this place was not ugly. On the contrary, it was a brand-new custom-built home. But nobody seemed to care. It sat on the market more than seven months without a single offer.

The builder was baffled when his fancy new house would not sell. He ended up firing his agent and hiring a new one. Fortunately, the new agent knew the importance of finding that special feature. He drove out to give the house a thorough investigation.

What he found changed everything. The house had a gorgeous five-acre yard. Other houses being sold in the area were all on one- to two-acre lots.

Not only was the yard bigger, it was more private than other lots available. The new real estate agent marketed the five acres. He mentioned details and a description of the house.

But the house was not the main selling point, so he shifted attention to the five-acre lot. In no time, his phone rang! A buyer was relocating. He had noticed the house was for sale, but it hadn't caught his eye.

That changed when he learned it was built on a five-acre lot. Suddenly, he was *very* interested. So interested, in fact, that he submitted an offer from 1,000 miles away. He had never even seen the property in person!

He was afraid someone else would buy it before he could, and he would lose out on the perfect house. That sale happened in 45 days.

The builder was amazed! His house had been on the market close to eight months without so much as a nibble. Suddenly it was sold—purchased sight unseen, all because of the 80/20 rule.

By shifting focus to the five acres, the real estate agent captured the interest of buyers immediately. The house was no longer unsellable. On the contrary, for a short time, it became the hottest house on the market.

Don't create an advertisement similar to the ones for every other house in the area. Instead, turn a spotlight on something different about your home. You will attract interested buyers—buyers who are willing to pay full price.

SELLING TO INTERESTED BUYERS

Find something unique about your home. Build advertisements around that one item. It will catch people's attention. Buyers who are looking for that one item will ask to come see your home in person.


As a result, you'll stop wasting time showing to people who just aren't interested. Instead, you'll show your home to buyers who are motivated to make a purchase.


You won't have to show quite so often. You also won't have to sift through lowball offers from apathetic buyers. This means less stress for you.


With that in mind, it's essential you take time to uncover your home's most attractive and unique features. Compare notes with other houses in the neighborhood to see what makes yours stand out.


POTENTIAL UNIQUE FEATURES


Each house will have its own unique features. You might already have some in mind. If not, these ideas should help to get you started:

 **Hilltop views are an excellent defining feature.** As in an earlier example, a high vantage point offers a spectacular view of the surrounding area.

 **Maybe your home looks out onto an open field frequented by wildlife.** Many people would like that view.

 **Your house might even have an unobstructed view of the sunset.** That would interest potential buyers.

 **Patios are another great feature.** Maybe the rest of your neighbors don't have patios, or their patios are smaller. That vital feature could help you sell your home.

 **Location** is something else that can set your property apart from others (not your addressed location, but rather your location compared to the surrounding homes).


A buyer once paid extra for a townhouse simply because of its location within the complex. Most of the surrounding homes had no yards. However, a few shared a large half-acre "yard area."


One of the owners whose townhouse backed up to this yard area was able to sell his townhouse for a higher price. It set his property apart from others on the market.


His home had a characteristic—the yard—shared by fewer than 10 percent of the others. He had the only available listing offering that feature. With this easy point of difference, the house sold for a higher price.


Another townhouse seller in the same complex found a different unique feature. He didn't have a yard, but he was still able to use his location to his advantage.


His property backed up to a lake and fountain. That extra feature helped him sell his townhouse quickly and for a great price.

 **You might have a private location.** For instance, your lot might be partially concealed by trees, or you might have an empty lot next to you. Use this to market your property.

 **You might have a unique backyard.** If you have a larger backyard than your neighbors do, use that to your advantage.

 **A shady backyard can also help you sell your property.** Some people like the idea of lounging in the shade, or enjoying the privacy it can bring.

 **A fenced-in backyard is also a big selling point.** People with children and pets flock to homes with fenced-in backyards.

 **You can also look at other features.** For instance, a finished basement can help you sell your home. You can also market a large attic, an extra-large garage, a swimming pool, or anything else that makes your home stand out.

Look for the 20 percent difference and find a way to market it. *That's* how you'll get results. You can't just throw the information into your listing, though. You have to take the right approach.



POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- No matter how similar they might seem, no two houses are exactly alike.

- ☑ Buyers focus on—and pay more for—unique features.
- ☑ Unique features could be almost anything—a big lot, great view, pool, finished basement, even a distinctive yard or patio.
- ☑ Look for what makes your home unique, and advertise it to potential buyers.



CHAPTER 9

GRABBING ANY BUYER'S ATTENTION

Appeal to your target market. Having the information you need to advertise your property is an excellent first step. However, it's *only* the first step. Once you have the information, you need to put it in your listing.

Simply adding it in isn't enough. You need to make sure people see it, or it will not help you.

BEGIN WITH A PICTURE

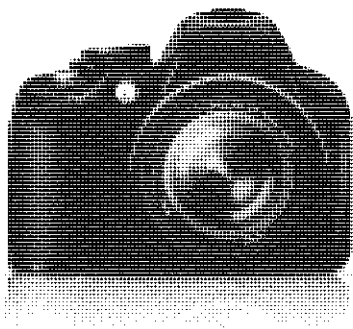
When people visit a real estate website, it takes them just a split second to decide whether they're interested in a property. That's because they see a picture of it. Before they even know it, their brains tell them "yes" or "no."

If their brains tell them "yes," they click on the listing. If their brains tell them "no," they move on to the next property.

It's your job to ensure people's brains say "yes" when they see your picture. You do that by photographing your home's unique feature and using it as the display picture.

Of course, some people won't be interested after they see your display picture. That's okay. Remember, you want to focus on appealing to those who will buy your property—not to the masses.

You're just wasting your time if you appeal to people not interested in your unique features. With that in mind, this will also help you weed out people who aren't interested.



BE DESCRIPTIVE

Focus on your description. Put one or two special features right at the beginning of the description so people will see them immediately. You can also put them in your headline.

This will help attract the right people. If you do this, you'll notice the quality of your leads improve. You will show your home to people ready to make a purchase.

You will also get more offers close to or at your asking price. While all of this is great news, you still have one more thing you can do to increase your sales.

TURN A NEGATIVE INTO A POSITIVE

Nothing kills a sale like a big negative. Fortunately, you can often turn a negative into a positive. Consider this example.

Let's imagine you own a house built 10 years ago. You want to sell your home, but there's a problem. A nice, new development recently opened in the area. Builders are selling brand-new houses.

The houses are roughly the same, but the current price for the new properties is about \$40,000 more than the asking price of your home. Nevertheless, buyers will choose the brand-new houses just because they are new. They hold a greater perceived value.

Buyers don't stop to consider that in five years, it won't matter. Their house will be five years old, and your place will be 15 years old. But that's not all.

Their five-year-old place will **not** fetch an extra \$40,000 compared to your 15-year-old house. When the buyers of the no-longer-new house decide to sell, they will actually end up *losing money*. The appeal of a new house is gone, and they won't recoup the extra \$40,000 they spent buying new.

Show them what they are missing. Fortunately, you can educate buyers and get them interested in your house. You just need a way to capture their attention, and highlight the positive aspects of your property.

Create an ad with a headline that says, "Don't buy a new house in (Development Name) until you see this house." Then you could go over reasons people would benefit from buying your home.

The cost is an obvious reason you should certainly include. It's far from the only reason, however. Jot down a list of every feature you can think of for both your house and the newer ones. Then, compare different perspectives.

For example, compare yards. Newly built houses typically don't have established trees or landscaping. They might have freshly platted grass. That requires more work and more money.

Here's another idea: Think of the traffic and commotion in a new development where homes are still under construction. Focus on the positive by talking about how quiet your neighborhood is. Mention a peaceful home. Some buyers will see this as a point of attraction.

These are just a few examples. You can turn any negative into a positive by reframing it. Remember, *you* control *your* story. It's up to you to feature your home in a positive light. Do a good job of attracting buyers specifically interested in features your house offers, and you no longer have to compete against those new homes!

Instead, you'll be working with buyers already excited about something in your home. Taking this approach cuts out the competition, speeds up the sales process, and makes you more money.

Just keep the 80/20 rule in mind during the selling process, and look for a point of difference to feature in your home. Focus on what makes the most impact, and you'll be successful.



POINTS TO REMEMBER:


- ☑ For your advertising, photograph your house in a way that emphasizes its best unique features.
- ☑ Highlight desirable differences in your ad in descriptive terms.
- ☑ Even a negative feature can help differentiate your home from others on the market.




CHAPTER 10

LUXURY HOME-SELLER STRATEGY SELLS HOMES FOR 15% MORE MONEY

The rich and famous use this secret strategy to sell their homes. In one instance, a real estate agent reported that using this strategy caused one condo to sell for \$110,000 more than a similar condo in the very same building!

 The seller using this strategy sold their condo for \$549,000.

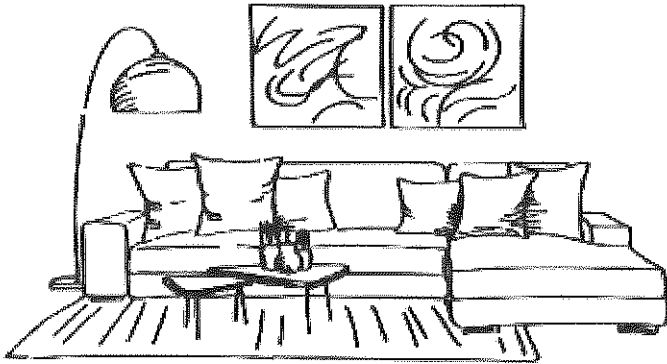
 The other did *not* and sold their condo for \$439,000.

Why did one condo sell for more than the other? In reporting, the real estate agent mentioned having intimate knowledge of both condos. Neither listing was bank owned, a short sale, or a distress sale. The only plausible explanation that one home sold for more than the other was the seller's use of this *secret home-selling strategy*.

This strategy is effective in any market. No matter what type of property is being listed, this approach works. It applies equally to homes, apartments, townhouses, or condos. Agents and sellers using these tactics have a greater chance of closing a sale, and for more money.

Here's how this particular real estate agent discovered the secret strategy—almost by accident. He met a wealthy executive who was interested in selling his condo. However, the man had a special request.

He was willing to hire the agent, but on one condition. The real estate agent needed to agree to use the man's secret method to sell the condo. It sounded crazy, and the agent was naturally skeptical.



On the other hand, selling the condo would bring a handsome commission. Conversely, if it didn't work out, their agreement would expire, and he would walk away.

The real estate agent decided to give it a shot. He helped prepare the listing. They priced the condo at \$554,900. (For reference, two similar condos in the same complex were listed much lower, for \$479,000 and \$439,000.)

The agent was skeptical that the condo would sell for the asking \$554,900 price. On the other hand, the owner's secret strategy was intriguing, and he really wanted to see how it worked out. The condo went on the market, and he waited to see what would happen.

Almost immediately, he began to doubt the strategy. The condo was showing regularly, but no one was making offers. People were just walking through and leaving.

To make matters worse, most visiting agents thought the condo was overpriced. They couldn't understand why the owner was asking for so much money. After all, a similar condo just around the corner was available for \$100,000 less! They counseled their buyers to keep looking, and left without making offers.

This story is real. The condo had no special attraction that set it apart from the others. This unit was not a penthouse. It was on the sixth floor of a 10-floor complex. The top floor units were not penthouses either. And the other agents were not wrong. The price *was* high.

Still, the owner stood firm. One day, four months and many showings later, another buyer walked in. This time, it was different. This buyer loved the condo the moment he stepped through the doorway. The buyer made an offer before he even finished the tour.

The agent could not believe what he had heard! He rushed to call the owner. The owner accepted the man's offer, while the agent began to worry. Maybe the buyer would find out they were overpaying. Maybe it would all fall apart. But no, everything worked out.

The place successfully sold for \$549,000, which was a record high!

The seller's strategy was a huge success! Naturally, the real estate agent was thrilled. So was the owner, who made a substantial profit.

The price was \$110,000 higher than the previous condo that had sold two and a half months earlier for \$439,000. The higher price was not because prices were rapidly increasing.

The next unit that sold (28 days later) went for \$435,000. It was a less-desirable second-floor unit. Five months later, another similar condo sold for \$450,000.

Would *you* like to use this secret strategy to sell your home for more money? It does take some extra time and some extra work. But, as you can clearly see, the payoff is well worth the effort.

What's the secret strategy? What was the special request the wealthy home seller had for his agent? It was simple. He wanted to *stage* the condo.

Staging is the act of sprucing up a home to make it as visually appealing as possible. It might sound crazy, but it causes homes to sell for more money. In fact, *a whole lot* more.

Many agents encourage sellers to stage their homes. However, very few of them could ever show you a case study proving it will actually help your home sell for more money.

Fortunately, this real estate agent knew he was onto something. He began researching everything he could find on staging, and the impact it had on sale prices.

He put his findings together in a big write-up sharing the tactics the

wealthy seller had taught him. He included all the examples he had found as case studies.

The next chapter is an excerpt from his report, with one of the case studies he recorded.



POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- Staging a home to look visually appealing can be the secret to selling a home for more money.



CHAPTER 11

WHY HOME STAGING REALLY MATTERS

Dear Reader,

I wanted to give you the most convincing proof possible. Many people find it hard to believe the simple act of staging helps one home sell for more than another similar home.

In my research, I looked for examples of similar houses being sold for differing amounts of money where only one of the two houses were staged.

The clearest example I could find was in these two listings.

This development has 200 equivalent townhomes.

Every single townhome in the neighborhood is 3 stories with 3 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms. Every single unit has the exact same floor plan.

I looked for two sales there, and found these:

- Townhome A **sold on August 26.**
- Townhome B (5 doors down) **sold on July 26, for 40,000 dollars less.**

I personally visited this neighborhood, and I am familiar with these properties. You could not find a better example of two identical properties that sold for different prices.

The details show these two homes are identical in every substantial way:

- The lots the units sit on are identical as far as the desirableness of the location.
- Both units had the same kitchen plan with the same cabinets and a tile floor.

- Both units had nice hardwood floors in the living room, and carpeted bedrooms.

Every important detail of these two townhomes was identical. I studied every aspect of these sales to find what made the difference.

There are two reasons one home sold for \$40,000 more than the other:

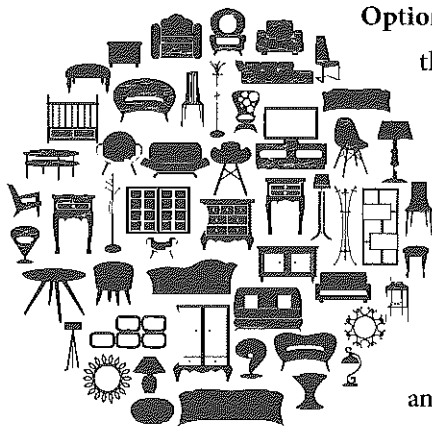
- Townhome A was professionally staged, giving it a more appealing appearance.
- The agent selling Townhome A took higher quality, more attractive photos of the home.

Those two seemingly small actions made the \$40,000 difference! The buyers of Townhome A made a higher offer because the agent presented the home in a more appealing and attractive way.

--- End of Staging Report ---

Even simple things can make a big impact on the final sale price of a home. Staging done well is one of those things!

You have two options for staging a home:



Option 1: Do it yourself. Learn how in the following chapter.

Option 2: Hire a professional home stager. If you're considering hiring someone to handle your staging, contact me for a list of references. I'd be happy to share recommendations and send you information on stagers who will do a good job for you.



POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- ☑ Staging has been documented to increase a home's selling price.
- ☑ After a home is staged, it's important to take high-quality pictures that show results to the best effect.
- ☑ You can learn to stage a house yourself, or you can hire a professional to do it for you.



CHAPTER 12

WHY BUYERS SKIPPED YOUR HOME

Buyers decide in the first eight or so seconds of seeing a home whether they're interested in it or not. That's why it's so important to stage it.

You can hire someone to do much of the hard work for you, but some things you can handle yourself:

CLEANING:

Spotless is the name of the game.

It's vital to do a thorough, deep cleaning of your home. It works for people selling a car (they get more money), and it will work for you on a bigger scale when selling your home.

For a good deep cleaning, you should do the following:

Declutter: Begin with decluttering. This is the standard rule: go through your home, and get rid of 50 percent of your belongings.

Look for items such as photographs, highly personalized items, out-of-season clothes, random junk, and excessive furniture. These all need to go.

To be clear, you don't have to throw the stuff out! Donate it. Sell it at a yard sale. Give it away. Someone can use what you don't need. Put the precious items, such as family photos, into a safe, offsite storage location. After you declutter, you'll be amazed how much roomier and friendlier your home feels.

The goal is to de-personalize the home so potential buyers can envision themselves living there.

Hardcore Cleaning: Now that the clutter is gone, move on to hardcore cleaning. Be meticulous. Tidy each room from top to bottom.

Make sure you don't forget to:

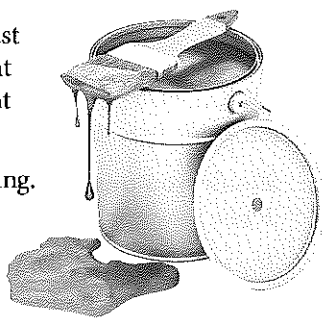
- ☑ Get rid of cobwebs first. This keeps you from getting dust bunnies all over freshly cleaned floors and furniture.
- ☑ Dust ceiling fans and lighting fixtures while you clean out the cobwebs.
- ☑ Dust your blinds.
- ☑ Wash walls, unless you plan on painting.
- ☑ Clean all glass surfaces: mirrors, television screens, patio doors, and windows.
- ☑ Polish all wooden surfaces.
- ☑ Wipe down any leather furniture.
- ☑ Clean out and reorganize the closets and cabinets.
- ☑ Attack all appliances (especially in the kitchen) with cleaning fervor. Make them shine!
- ☑ Sinks, toilets, tubs, showers, faucets, and countertops need to be impeccable. Every room is important, but the kitchen and bathrooms will take you over the top. They need to be eat-off-of-the-floor clean.
- ☑ Vacuum rugs, shampoo carpets, and mop as if your life depends on it.
- ☑ Side note: Focus on these tasks last, or you will inevitably have to do them twice.

PAINTING:

Fresh paint provides a clean canvas.

If you haven't painted your house in the last year, consider doing the entire interior right now. If you have painted it, you still might want to repaint.

When planning to repaint, include everything. Paint the ceilings. Paint the trim and window casings. Paint the doors. Don't forget to paint inside the closets. And, of course, paint the walls.



Just make sure you paint the right way. An artist creates a new painting on a plain, primed canvas. Through your efforts with painting, you're hand-delivering your potential buyers a clean, primed canvas through which they can imagine their family in your home.

Keeping all of this in mind, proceed with your home's canvas using neutral colors. That doesn't mean everything must be lifeless or stark white. That can have a negative effect as well. Rather, you want your colors to be unobtrusive.

Stick with gray, beige, tan, off-white, and white. Even if you just painted the master bath turquoise and added cute polka dot trim—change it! Remember, a blank canvas opens the imagination to endless possibilities. (Polka dots do not.)

KITCHEN AND BATH:

Focus on these high-impact areas.

Buyers are most turned off by dirty, grungy bathrooms and kitchens. Let's face it. Nobody wants to eat in a place they feel is nasty. Likewise, no one wants to be naked in a disgusting place.

That doesn't mean you can create stunning bathrooms and kitchens, while leaving the rest of the home a mess, and still expect to sell your house for top dollar. Just be sure to address your bathroom and kitchen first, and give these areas the attention they require.

Keep this in mind: Potential buyers might forgive a less-than-stellar child's room, but a questionable bathroom or kitchen could cost you a possible sale.

So, let's get started. Now, you've done a deep clean of the whole house, and you most likely painted it, as well—including the bathrooms and kitchen. It's time to move on to another important issue: appliances.

This can be a good idea or a money pit. Fortunately, you can follow a few guidelines to make the big decisions.

Should you buy new appliances? It depends on your situation. No doubt, new appliances make an impact with buyers.

The National Association of REALTORS® did a survey of buyers in the market over the past several years and found:

- 🏠 Buyers were somewhat or very concerned with buying a home that featured new appliances.
- 🏠 Roughly 17% of the respondents preferred stainless steel.
- 🏠 The most important factor: appliances were available.
- 🏠 Most buyers who were unable to get their sought-after appliances said they would've been willing to pay, on average, nearly \$2,000 more for them.

Potential buyers want appliances included and will pay more for them, especially if they are new, or at least in excellent condition.

If you can afford it, new appliances might be the feature that sets your house apart from the home for sale across the street. If new appliances are out of your reach, offer buyers your immaculately clean, fully functioning existing ones.

Updating hardware: Stop and take a long look at your bathroom and kitchen hardware. You'll likely notice they look well used.

It's not that big of a deal for you, until you put yourself in a buyer's shoes. They are looking at your old house as their potential new home. Old, worn-out fixtures aren't going to speak to them the way that shiny new hardware will.

That doesn't mean you should run out to buy all new fixtures. Unless your knobs, pulls, handles, and hinges are broken, there's no real reason to replace them.

Get that "new" look by thoroughly washing and repainting them. There is spray paint made specifically for this reason. The project is incredibly inexpensive.

Here are some ideas of household hardware you can make look almost new with a paint overhaul:

- 🏠 towel bars
- 🏠 toilet paper holders
- 🏠 door handles
- 🏠 old light fixtures

THE MOST IMPORTANT ROOMS TO BE STAGED

- **Living Room**
- **Kitchen**
- **Master Bathroom**
- **Dining Room**
- **Children's Bedroom**
- **Guest Bedroom**

The goal is to patch your home up nicely with as little cash as possible. This is a great way to do it.

If you have broken or completely worn-out hardware, you should replace the whole set, unless you can find matching pieces. You could paint the old and new to match. You could also combine the good parts in one bathroom, and replace all the hardware in another.

Warning: Make sure that if you end up replacing your knobs, you get matching exposed hinges for cabinet doors. Consistency is good when selling a home.

Other cheap upgrades for the bath and kitchen:

- ☑ Buy a new toilet seat.
- ☑ Refurbish worn-out looking cabinets with a faux paint project.
- ☑ Replace an old, ugly bathroom sink with a pedestal variety.
- ☑ Repair grout in tile backsplashes, floors, and tub surrounds.



POINTS TO REMEMBER:

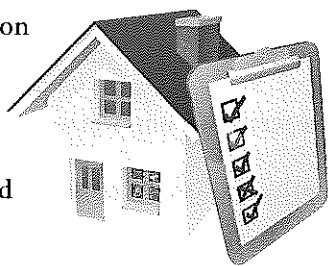
- ☑ Buyers establish interest in the first eight seconds.
- ☑ Start with decluttering and a thorough cleaning.
- ☑ Repaint walls, ceilings, and closets in neutral colors.
- ☑ Focus especially on kitchens and bathrooms.
- ☑ Replace or rejuvenate worn hardware.



CHAPTER 13

DETAILS WIN HOME SALES

According to the National Association of REALTORS®, a majority of recent home buyers would have preferred improved and greater closet space, as well as other storage opportunities. People have lots of stuff, and they need somewhere to hide it all.



OVERCOME NEGATIVES WITH POSITIVES:

You can never have enough storage!

Give buyers great storage, and you've won their hearts. If you can easily add new closets to your home, it's a huge bonus for you on the selling front.

Building a simple closet isn't difficult if you are even moderately handy. If you're selling an older home where closet space is typically at a minimum, this will help!

However, putting in new closets is not always possible. For instance, if your rooms are already small, you might not want to take any square footage away from them.

You might not have the skills or the funds to hire someone to build new space. This is when we turn to closet organizers for help. For instance:

- ☑ You can easily design your custom closet kit online with a storage solution company, such as Closet Maid.
- ☑ Your standard superstore or hardware store often has exactly what you need in an inexpensive, pre-fabricated form. Organizers might not enlarge your closets, but maximizing vertical and horizontal space is a good substitution.

Don't stop there; after all, storage isn't restricted to closets. Storage improvement opportunities apply to all your cabinets, clothes closets, linen closets, and attic and basement spaces.

It's important to make sure you organize your cabinets. The same places that provide closet organizers can help you with this. Take a good look at your laundry room or linen closet. Adding extra shelving in these places makes a big impact.

Look for any places you can add attractive and inexpensive storage. Be sure your improvements are tasteful. Buyers really love this stuff.

ADDING A BEDROOM

Use the bedroom addition trick. Who doesn't want to add tons of extra value to a home? Here's an easy way: you can add another bedroom relatively inexpensively.

Okay, before you start laughing, take a minute to consider your options. Not every home will benefit from an extra bedroom. But in special cases, it can really set your home apart from others in the market.

This doesn't mean you need to add square footage to your home. Simply create space for another bedroom. For example, add a closet to an extra junk room. *Voilà!* You have a bedroom.

You can easily convert a den, office, spare room, or conditioned attic into a third or fourth bedroom by building a closet.

But before rushing off to build closets, take time to compare your home with other similar houses available in your area:

- ☑ If three-bedroom homes are the norm in your neighborhood, a fourth bedroom might give you a real advantage.
- ☑ However, if buyers in your area are looking for one- or two-bedroom homes, an additional bedroom would be a waste of money.

Do some homework. Find out configurations of rooms in nearby homes. Talk with a real estate agent about buyer preferences. They can help you determine whether you would benefit from a simple bedroom addition.

Bottom line: If you need a significant boost to your home's worth, adding another bedroom is one great way to do it.

Mechanical maintenance is a must. It's very easy to get wrapped up in the more eye-pleasing aspects of getting a home ready to sell. But never overlook the upkeep of all the mundane aspects of your home.

Take a closer look at these mechanical features:

- electrical boxes and wiring
- natural gas lines
- plumbing
- central heating and air conditioning system

If these components of your home are old, outdated, or not working properly, you'll be lowering your home's price significantly.

According to the National Association of REALTORS®, 65 percent of home buyers surveyed were very concerned about whether their new home had a working central air system. Of the 31 mechanical features inquired about in the survey, this was the most important one.

It's true that people buying homes want to purchase something that reflects their aesthetic tastes and lifestyles.

However, they also want a home that's safe and sound. Faulty electrical systems don't provide a feeling of safety. Leaky plumbing arouses concerns of mold infestation.

These areas are no fun to fix, but they are extremely important. Overlook these areas in the preparation stage, and you run the risk of trouble later with inspections and appraisals.

Buyers are attracted to a house with beautifully updated cosmetic details. They also want to know they are buying a safe, secure home for their family. Take care of the many mechanical features of your home, and you'll profit from it.

Obviously, professionals should do most of the mechanical work. Having a professional inspection is a big plus to most buyers, as well:

- ☑ Have a certified plumber inspect your entire water system for leaks. Check the well and septic field, if applicable.
- ☑ Hire an electrician to check your wiring.
- ☑ Call your local HVAC company, and have their technicians perform a thorough service checkup.
- ☑ Contact your natural gas supplier and have them double check the mechanics of your tank and lines.

There's an alternative to calling and arranging all these different inspections. Certified home inspectors usually can cover all the different items related to mechanical issues, and more. They can identify possible trouble spots you need to address. Many *buyers* hire an inspector, so you might even be saving them a step.

Replacing antiquated wiring and plumbing isn't cheap. If you have mechanical issues and decide to sell your home as is, you might have to lower your selling price.

Turning to a professional for an opinion can help. As with the extra bedroom step, it pays to know what competition you're facing. You can also choose to wait and negotiate with buyers.

Sometimes, you'll get lucky and find a buyer who's already interested in remodeling. Sometimes you find a buyer who has certification in that area, and will buy the house for a lower price and plan to do his or her own work. If you're unable to update and repair, be honest, upfront, and flexible. An interested buyer will work with you.

If you can update, highlight fixes you can handle. Then, note any fixes requiring professional work. Finally, note anything you wish you could fix. Start with the easiest items and work down the list.

Remember the 80/20 rule, and focus your efforts on the updates and repairs that bring the greatest returns!



POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- ☑ Adding inexpensive storage can increase your home's appeal to buyers.
- ☑ Often, creating another bedroom is as simple as adding a closet to an unused area.
- ☑ Before making additions, study what other homes in your market have to offer.
- ☑ Consider hiring professionals to maintain or upgrade plumbing, electrical, HVAC, or other mechanical systems.



CHAPTER 14

HOW BUYERS PICK HOMES TO PREVIEW

Floors can be an important selling point for your home. Buyers will be sure to notice how worn they are and whether they need to be replaced. Replacement can be expensive and difficult.

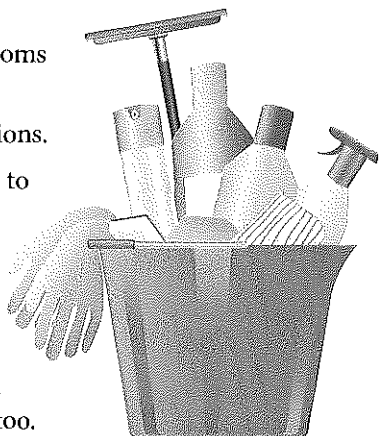
Installing new floor coverings of any kind, including carpeting, hardwood, or tile, can get pricey. Costs vary widely, based on the size of your rooms and the flooring material used. Fortunately, replacement isn't your only option. Use these cleaning tips to avoid expensive flooring work.

Carpeting: Carpets take a beating. General traffic, pets, children, muddy shoes, coffee, and wine all leave their calling cards on your carpeting. Unless you have been extremely fussy about your carpet, it shows signs of use. This job calls for more than a good vacuum.

Shampoo: Often, you can rent or purchase a carpet shampooer inexpensively. If your carpet doesn't have stains, spruce it up with a good washing.

- ☑ Move the furniture out of the rooms you need to shampoo.
- ☑ Follow the shampooer's instructions.
- ☑ Go over the carpet thoroughly to remove all soap residue.
- ☑ Keep all traffic off the carpet until it's completely dry.

You should see a significant difference in both the smell and look of your carpet. Buyers will notice the fresh, clean feeling, too.



Steam Clean: Stained carpets need more in-depth treatment than a regular carpet shampooer can offer. If that's the case, go with a steam cleaning and spot treatment. Either rent a steam cleaning shampooer or hire a professional carpet cleaner.

If you're dealing with severe stains or damage, get a cleaning estimate first. Then compare the price to replacing the carpet. Cleaning can make a tremendous difference and save the cost of replacement.

Sometimes deep cleaning works, but cannot remove an extra stubborn stain. You might be able to cover up isolated bad spots with rugs. Adding a tasteful area or throw rug makes the room a little more attractive for showings.

Don't be dishonest about a trouble spot, though. If your carpet was in such bad shape that a steam cleaning didn't remove all the stains, it will be evident to buyers that the carpet will need to be replaced.

Even if your carpet is beyond the help of professional cleaning, you might not want to replace it. New carpeting is a big expense for most people to fit into their budgets. Carpet, like paint, is a very personal choice. It would be a shame to re-carpet, only to discover a family loves everything about your house but the carpeting you just purchased!

Instead, work with what you have. Clean it and put down rugs. Keep it vacuumed. Stop people from eating and drinking on it—effective immediately. Confine pets to rooms with slick floors for easy mopping. Do everything you can to keep the carpet from getting worse.

If a buyer loves everything in your home except the ugly carpeting, they might overlook it. They might be willing to negotiate a lower price or accept a flooring allowance in your final contract.

Obviously, a clean carpet is best. These options can help you keep costs low, and still make a good impression.

OTHER FLOORING TYPES

No matter the material, if you have a floor that's a little worse for wear, clean it thoroughly. Pay attention to special details that vary by the type of material.

Take tiny steps until you find the right fix. Your hardwood floor can probably get by with a good waxing. Vacuum the joints where dirt accumulates. Refinishing is a *last* resort. Give tile floors a heavy scrubbing. Clean the grout joints in between the tiles. If that doesn't work, have it re-grouted.

In some instances, you might feel the only option is to replace flooring. Make this a last resort. You might be pleasantly surprised how some tender-loving care can make a floor shine!

When these non-carpet flooring types need more than cleaning, consider repairs. However, in some cases, it's cheaper to replace your floor than to have it repaired.

If your current flooring is damaged beyond repair, you might have to replace it. When you do, consider less-expensive flooring options. For example, vinyl, self-stick tiles are inexpensive, easy to install, and simple to replace when damaged.

BRIGHTENING YOUR HOME

Lighting is an essential element to update when prepping your house for sale. As with flooring, tackle lighting improvements by repairing what you can and replacing the worst fixtures.

The most important key to lighting is to be moderate and practical with your updates. Why? The National Association of REALTORS® reveals many home buyers will replace lighting fixtures as one of the first changes to their new home.

There's no need to go overboard in spending on lighting fixture updates. Help existing fixtures look their best.

Here are some cost-saving ideas to refurbish the good light fixtures you already have. Follow these tips to save cash:

- ☑ Use the same spray painting principles you practiced on your handles, pulls, and knobs.
- ☑ New globes give an old fixture an updated look.
- ☑ If repairing an old fixture will cost more than replacing, just replace it with something tasteful, but simple.

- ☑ Replace any light fixtures that are broken, damaged, or dangerous in any way.
- ☑ Put in new light bulbs to brighten rooms.
- ☑ Thoroughly clean fixtures you aren't updating.
- ☑ Don't forget the outside lights!




Great lighting is important when showing a home. When potential buyers walk into a bright, well-lit house, they get a feeling of openness and trust. Plus, you put in a lot of hard work cleaning. Light everything up, and let your home shine!

Bright lighting also makes an area look more open and attractive. This will make closets and rooms in your home feel larger.

One more tip: Change old, haggard ceiling fan blades. Look for inexpensive ones at any hardware superstore.

Revamp the front entrance: Step outside onto your front lawn. Don't feel bad if you've gotten so wrapped up in updating and improving the inside of your home that you have neglected the outside. It happens to all of us.



You can rectify the situation quickly and effectively. First, address the front entryway, starting with the lock and knob of your front door. What do you see?

-  Is it a mousy little knob from decades past?
-  Is it dented or rusted? Does the key stick? Is it hard to open?
-  Could someone break in with a bobby pin and patience?

If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, you need to replace your door handle with a heavy-duty deadbolt and knob combination. Why? The knob is the first point they touch on your home.

A flimsy lock and handle on your front door tells potential home buyers your home isn't secure. It makes them feel uncomfortable, and they won't even know why. Get a big, sturdy set, and they'll feel your home is as safe as can be.

Now, take a good look at your door. Is it pleasing to look at? Or is it weathered and dinged up? Has your metal door never seen a coat of paint? Is the paint peeled and flaking? It's time for a change. Here are two simple ways to put a new face on your house:

-  Add a dash of color. Choose paint that complements the color of your home.
-  Use faux painting techniques to transform your metal door into a wood grain look-alike.





If your door is severely damaged, have it fixed or replaced entirely. As always, go with whichever costs less.

You've addressed the living area inside of your home. Your front entrance is inviting. Now is the time to take a critical look at your front yard.

Curb appeal: Curb appeal—how your home looks from the road—is the most important image of all. You want to make an amazing first impression. A well-prepared house can even catch the eyes of buyers who never even intended to visit your home.

Drive-by buyers who look at your home should immediately feel as though they want to go inside. This won't happen if you have poor landscaping, a dingy exterior, or an unkempt yard.

Look around your yard and list everything that needs a little work.

-  Are your shrubs, trees, flower gardens, and walkways tidy?
-  Is there trash or just a general mess in your yard?
-  Does everything (front light, garage door, porch rails, etc.) function properly, and look its best?
-  Could outdoor features, like patio furniture or the garage door, be updated with a quick coat of paint?

Chances are, you'll have some improvements to do. Take heart: Just think of how many people are going to beg to view the inside of your home when they see how beautiful it is from your curb!

This might seem like an overwhelming list, but it truly takes hard work to get a home ready to sell. Anyone can put a house on the market. But not everyone sells quickly or with great profits.

Thankfully, you now have a big advantage over other sellers. You know what it takes. Follow these guidelines to gain the best advantage for your home to sell quickly, and for the best price.

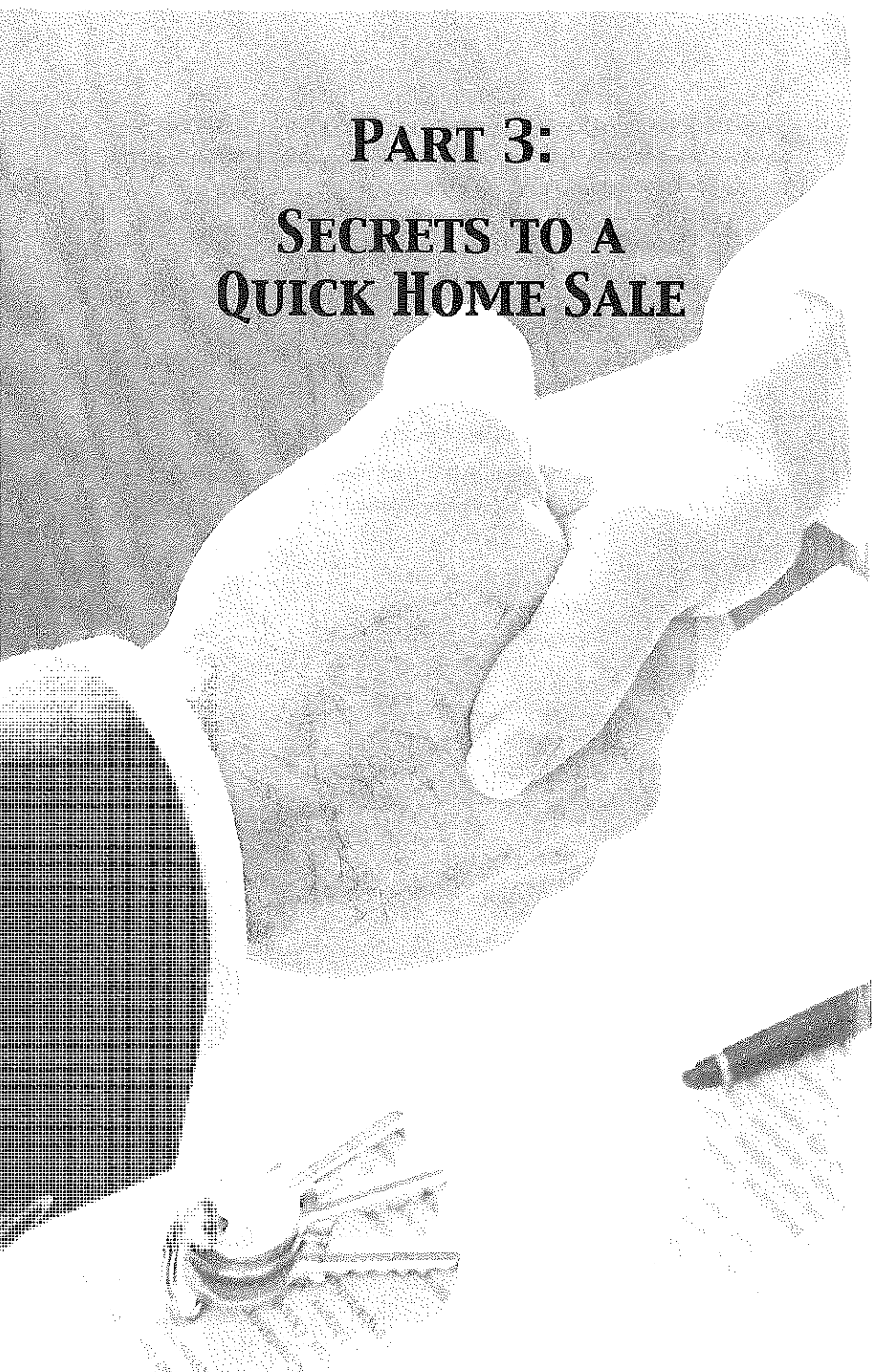


POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- ☑ Decide whether flooring needs repair, replacement, or special cleaning and care.
- ☑ Brighten your home, inside and out, with new lightbulbs. Improve or replace worn fixtures.
- ☑ Upgrade worn or outdated doors, knobs, and locks.
- ☑ Optimize curb appeal. An initial view of your home should make visitors want to see the inside.



PART 3:
**SECRETS TO A
QUICK HOME SALE**



CHAPTER 15

WHY PICTURES OF YOUR HOME CAN STOP IT FROM SELLING

Are you the victim of a common mistake that stops your home from selling? What else can you be doing to ensure your home will sell?

In this chapter, you'll discover the biggest mistake real estate agents make, a proven marketing secret, and how to "sweeten the deal" for buyers.

These topics are crucial to selling your home, and quite honestly, most others are oblivious to these proven methods.

A common mistake most agents make is not having professional pictures of the home!

**THIS IS A REALLY BAD PICTURE
OF A REALLY NICE HOUSE.**



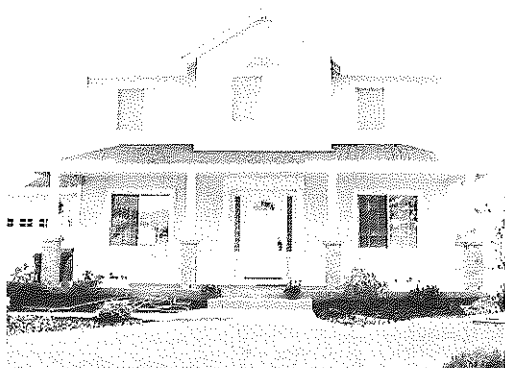
Most real estate agents don't invest the time or energy to get decent pictures. They'll show up with their point-and-shoot approach, take a few shots, and call it good.

Good photographers know what to do to make their subject look its absolute best. Whether it's a cute puppy, a newly married couple, or a home for sale, professional pictures are necessary.

You must view your house from a buyer's perspective. If you owned the house in the picture above, you might not notice the trees that dominate the photo, the bland coloring, or the bad angle from which this was taken.

Even if you don't hire a photographer, at least get someone to touch up the pictures and make them look their absolute best.

Here's a picture before and after a touch-up:



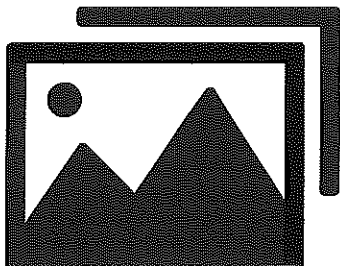
BEFORE



AFTER

Pictures sell your home. It's the first thing buyers notice and it's what will keep them interested. Get professional pictures taken!

What can you do to sweeten the deal for the buyer? Everyone is looking for a deal. This includes you, me, your mom, everyone. If people think they are getting a bargain, they are going to hear that little voice inside of their head saying, "Do it—don't pass it up!"



Marketers have been using this method for centuries, because it works. If you want to persuade someone to buy your home, offer them something no one else is offering. Even something that seems insignificant to you could close the deal for the buyer.

For example, an agent had been trying to sell a home for almost a year, and was ready to give up. In fact, he had come very close to selling the house at one point, but the deal fell through.

Getting people interested in the home was not a problem. Buyers were looking at a lot of homes in the neighborhood. This listing was even one of the nicer ones in that area. *That was a problem.*

Yes, the house was nice, but so were a few other houses in the neighborhood, and this house was priced above the others. The agent just couldn't seem to close the deal on this house, because everyone would eventually turn their interest to one of those other homes.

Luckily, he talked the owner into "sweetening the deal." He needed something that would make the house stand out. Buyers needed an incentive to buy this house instead of the ones that were almost just as nice right down the street. Finally, the owner agreed to give it a try.

The following week, a new buyer came to look at the house. As usual, they planned to visit other houses in the area, after this one.

So, before they moved on, the agent told them he had something special to share. The owner had agreed to pre-pay the entire first year of property taxes! That's a sweet deal in any sale.

The buyers came back later that day and wanted to buy the house! All it took was a little incentive to make one house stand out from other similar homes in the area.

See the power of a good incentive? It doesn't have to be much, and it doesn't have to be a discount on property taxes. You could include free cleaning or lawn care, or pest control services.

The list is as endless as your creativity. Put yourself in your buyer's shoes and ask yourself what kind of deal you would like to get when buying a home. Be ready before the first buyers to come. If they show interest, it might be the right time to sweeten the deal with one of your incentives.



POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- A common mistake is not using a professional-looking picture of your home in marketing.
- In a competitive market, offer buyers an incentive, such as a discount on property taxes, free cleaning or lawn care, or pest control services.



CHAPTER 16

THE 3-STEP FORMULA I USE TO SELL HOMES OTHER AGENTS CAN'T SELL

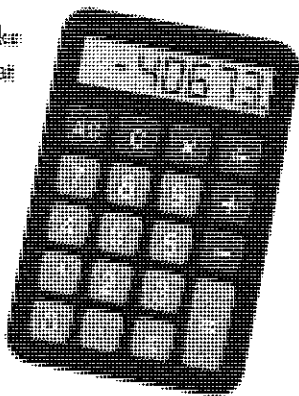
These techniques will sell homes that other agents have failed to sell. You might not realize it, but small details make a big difference.

Here's a small sample of homes other agents weren't able to sell. After applying these techniques, they all sold successfully:

- 🏠 Home was listed for more than 11 months with two other agents. Neither of them could sell it. Listed and sold in 45 days using the strategies outlined here.
- 🏠 Home was up for sale for six months with another agent. Not much happened. A few showings had resulted in no offers. Listed and sold three months later.
- 🏠 Home was for sale more than 18 months with two other agents. Neither of them could sell it. Listed and sold 65 days later. The owners were thrilled!
- 🏠 There are countless more stories, just like these. (These are just a few examples that come to mind.)

Three basic things a good agent can do to succeed where other agents have failed:

#1. Improve the marketing. Take better pictures and write better descriptions. Perform an in-depth "marketing analysis." This helps identify marketing opportunities other agents might have missed.



#2. Solve any problems holding back the sale. Yes, sometimes a problem is holding the sale back. Here's an example:

Contrary to what most people think, price isn't always the reason a home doesn't sell. One sale was held back 12 months by a pending municipal lien. A little creative thinking and consultation with some experts solved the problem. That home sold a week after the problem was resolved, without lowering the price.

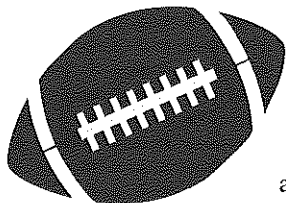
Bottom Line: Good agents are problem solvers. Solve the problems, and the home sells. Unfortunately, not all agents are good problem solvers.

#3. Improve the showing condition of the home. A staged home will sell for 10 percent to 15 percent more. A home in good showing condition (but not staged) can still sell for *up to* 10 percent more than an average listing.

Have you ever wondered why foreclosures are a "bargain?" Well, there's your answer. Some foreclosures are complete dumps. They are dirty, stinky, and don't show well at all. The foreclosure in perfect condition is a rarity. (They rarely sell for a discount.)

So, why do so many people think that the only reason a home doesn't sell is because it's overpriced? Because it's just the accepted wisdom in the marketplace.

This might seem absurd. After all, everyone wants a magic formula to solve their problems. But sometimes, simple things can solve seemingly impossible problems.



Few people knew and taught the basics better than Vince Lombardi, considered one of the greatest football coaches of all time.

He started coaching the Green Bay Packers when they were consistently losing one game after another. He turned the team around and won five NFL championships.

Those unfamiliar with Lombardi's coaching tactics might assume he was successful because he had complex strategies and completely unheard-of methods.

Actually, the opposite is true. Lombardi believed for the Green Bay Packers to become a great team, they would have to go back to the basics and relearn even the simplest aspects of the game.

In his first preseason speech, he shocked every single one of his new players. He stood in front of them, held up something in his hand, and announced, “Gentlemen, this is a football.”

He then proceeded to revisit all the basic rules of the game of football, what the different lines on the field were for, etc.

Some might have thought he was going overboard. But his results proved them wrong. Lombardi led the Packers to five NFL championships as well as two Super Bowl wins. His back-to-the-basics approach paid off, and the team got to enjoy its rewards.

The same philosophy should be used to sell your home. You can bombard social media, list your home on every website imaginable, beg your friends to put up fliers on the notice board at work, and so on. But if you don’t start with the basics, everything else is just a waste of time.

Time is valuable, so most people looking to buy a house won’t waste even a second on a listing that hasn’t mastered the basics.

If they must ask questions such as, “Why are all the photos so dark?” or “Is it a house or a condo? I can’t tell!” — then they’ll just move on to the next listing. The first impression must be perfect.

Even a great home can’t sell itself without proper marketing. A great agent is needed to make sure your home is showcased in the best way possible.

Just as Vince Lombardi knew that going back to basics would help his team, a qualified real estate agent will know the basics of marketing are crucial to selling your home.

Every home has a base, and without that base, the whole structure could fall flat. A selling strategy for your home works the same way. Hurrying to post an ad for your home on Facebook will do little good if it’s a rushed job that shows more of the neighbor’s garage than your beautiful front porch and garden.

A successful real estate agent knows that basic strategies are the foundation of a marketing plan to sell your house. Give me a call and I'll show you my strategies for marketing your home and finding the perfect buyer.



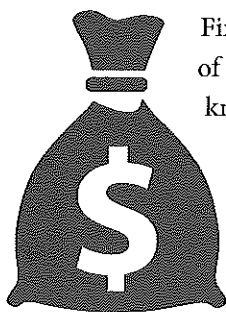
POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- ☑ A skilled real estate agent can do three things to sell a home when others have failed:
 - Improve the marketing
 - Solve problems that pose barriers to sale
 - Improve the showing condition of the home
- ☑ It's important to ensure the basics are covered. For example, a poor-quality photo of your home can ruin even the most aggressive marketing efforts.



CHAPTER 17

WHY EVERY BILLIONAIRE HOME SELLS



First, the bad news. There's a good chance the buyer of your home will be a great negotiator. If you don't know anything about negotiating, you risk having them take advantage of you.

Now for the good news. *This book reveals how an average negotiator can avoid being taken advantage of by a better negotiator.*

Two things determine who wins a negotiation:

- 🏠 The **motivation** of the people negotiating.
- 🏠 The **skill** they have or don't have negotiating.

Here's a story that plays out every day, across America. There is a good chance this could happen to you.

A seller has a home on the market. He's an average negotiator—not great, not horrible.

Unfortunately, he is a *motivated seller*.

- 🏠 He has had the home on the market for eight months.
- 🏠 He has already relocated to another city.
- 🏠 The home and upkeep have been stressing him out.
- 🏠 He is super busy at work and doesn't have the emotional energy to deal with another problem.

A buyer wants to buy his home. This is the perfect home for her. She has been looking for a home just like this for a long time. Therefore, the buyer is highly motivated to buy this home. In fact, her husband is scared that if they negotiate too hard, they will lose this house!

This buyer is an incredible negotiator. She's cool and collected. First, she gathers all the facts. She finds out the home hasn't been shown in two months. Then, she discovers the seller has already moved.

She looks the seller up on Facebook and stumbles across a rather revealing Facebook post. The seller vented about real estate and how badly he wants to sell the house. Now, let's ask ourselves a question.

Who do you think is going to win this negotiation? Yep. The buyer. Both parties are motivated, but one did a better job at negotiating. As a result, she wins! She buys the home for \$43,000 less than the fair market value.

Don't let this happen to you! In the upcoming chapters, we'll take a closer look at negotiation. Take time to prepare, and you'll be ready for whatever comes along!



POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- ☑ Negotiation outcomes are determined by the *motivation* and *negotiating* skills of the parties involved.



CHAPTER 18

NEGOTIATION MUSTS

Let's start with some negotiating mistakes to avoid. After all, what you don't do is going to be more important than what you do! One slip of the tongue can result in a negotiating mistake (and hurt your pocketbook, too!).

COMMON NEGOTIATING MISTAKE #1:




Not Learning the Other Party's Motivation

Price isn't the only reason people buy. They might really like a certain feature in your home. They might be willing to pay more because of that feature.

Sometimes they might *absolutely love* that feature. They've been hunting for a while and finally found a home meeting their needs completely. That means they're willing to pay more for your home.

If you meet the buyers, you should *ask them why they are buying a home*. They might tell you they are being transferred and must find a home by a certain date.

If you know that, you'll be able to negotiate a higher sales price. If the buyers have an agent, ask the agent for information. Here are some questions you can ask:

-  Why do the buyers like this home?
-  Where are they moving from?
-  How does this home compare to other homes?

You shouldn't be as blunt as that, but often you can find answers to these questions in a roundabout way.

For example, you could say, "You will love our town because of the X (insert a unique feature of your town.) Do they have an X where you live now?"

That will start the conversation about where they are moving from. You can learn a lot from what they say. It will be helpful during the negotiations. You would be amazed at what some people will tell you.

COMMON NEGOTIATING MISTAKE #2:

Meeting in the Middle

This is the most common mistake novice home sellers make. It's the easiest way to sell your home for \$10,000 less than you should. Meeting in the middle is never a good strategy.

The problem is that everyone thinks they have to do it. Compromise, right? But there's no rulebook that says you have to meet in the middle.

Here's a quick story that illustrates this. A home was on the market for \$240,000. The buyers made an offer of \$220,000.

The seller's agent told him to reject the offer and told the buyer's agent they should come back with a better offer. (The house had been on the market for only two days.)

The buyers came back and *met in the middle* with a \$230,000 offer. The seller's agent knew they were serious buyers and really wanted the house.

The seller thought the buyers were being good people by meeting in the middle. He was willing to accept their \$230,000 offer.

The seller's agent advised him to give a little, maybe counter with \$237,500 to see what would happen.

The buyers came back with \$235,000, and after more negotiations, the buyer and seller agreed on \$237,000. So, what can you take from this?

Don't meet in the middle! Instead, give 10% to 20% and let the other guy give 50%. You'll gain a little more in each round of negotiations.

COMMON NEGOTIATING MISTAKE #3:

Talking Too Much

This is the worst sin of negotiating. Don't tell the buyers or their agent your life's story.

What do you think would pop into a buyer's head if they heard this out of a seller's mouth? "We must sell the home because it's in foreclosure, and if we don't sell it by June 23, the bank will foreclose on it."

Immediately, the buyer would think the seller is desperate. "I wonder what they owe on the house. Because if it doesn't sell, they will have a foreclosure. The sellers probably just want to get what they owe on the home, so they can avoid foreclosure."

This is an extreme example, but it shows you how a simple slip of the tongue could cause a seller to lose a large amount of their hard-earned equity. A seller facing foreclosure might be desperate enough to get out with none of their equity just to avoid foreclosure.

But, what if the buyer would've been willing to pay the market value for the home? That seller just lost all their equity! When a buyer asks why you're selling, answer without giving away any extra information.

You could say, "Oh, we would like to move to Omaha." (Or wherever you're moving to.) You don't need to say much more than that. Don't divulge details. Don't imply desperation. And don't tell them you have a job transfer!

COMMON NEGOTIATING MISTAKE #4:

Making the First Move

Many buyers will ask what your bottom line is. They know they can usually negotiate a home seller down to an even lower price.

Don't fall for it. You've already made the first move by setting a price for your home. Tell the buyers you need to think it over and get back to them.

Then, ask them what they like about your home. If they tell you, you can determine their motivation to buy it. After that, ask them what they're thinking of offering on your home.

This rule is important because in some negotiations, you may offer more at the beginning than the other party is willing to accept.

Here's an example. A person I know was trying to buy equipment. He thought the best price he could get was \$1,500, but he was willing to pay up to \$2,000.

He asked the seller what he wanted for the items. The seller responded that he didn't know what he wanted. My friend offered to pay \$1,500, and the seller accepted it.

Later, my friend learned that the seller had been desperate and had expected to be paid only \$800 to \$1,000.

If the seller had mentioned an opening price first, my friend would've saved \$500! Instead he *lost* \$500.

COMMON NEGOTIATING MISTAKE #5:

Letting Your Ego Get Involved

What's your final goal? You want to sell your property quickly for top dollar, right? Keep that goal in mind during the entire negotiation.

I have seen people kill a potential top-dollar sale simply because they didn't like the buyer. Or the buyer started negotiations with a lowball offer, and the seller got offended. *Most lowball offers can be negotiated to a higher price.*

Some buyers have a big ego and think they are great negotiators, when they aren't. Their definition of a great negotiator? Someone who tells people off and walks around as though they own the world. They confuse rudeness for tough negotiating and throw around "take-it-or-leave-it" offers.

I can tell you from personal experience most buyers are willing to pay more than their so-called take-it-or-leave-it offer. Keep the negotiations going, even when you're a little unhappy or angry with what they're doing.

I have seen home sellers tell off a buyer who said something rude. That buyer might have bought their house. The buyer actually might be a very nice person. Don't get distracted by petty things. Getting top-dollar feels more satisfying than telling someone off!

COMMON NEGOTIATING MISTAKE #6:

Failing to Take Time on the Counteroffer

Often, you'll be pressured to reply right away to an offer. Buyers are impatient, and if they really like your house, they will want an immediate

answer. But do you know what else that means? *They are probably willing to pay more for your property.*

Take the time to think, and consider consulting a real estate expert. Have you been able to find out any information about the buyers? Use that to put yourself in the buyer's shoes. A little space and an objective third party will lead to more effective decision making.



POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- Try to discover the buyer's motivation, while not talking too much about your motivation to sell.
- Never automatically meet in the middle.
- Don't let your ego interfere with negotiating.
- Lowball and take-it-or-leave-it offers are rarely firm and often can be negotiated upward.
- Don't be pressured into hasty decisions and counters.



CHAPTER 19

SIMPLE NEGOTIATION IDEAS

Now that you know what mistakes to avoid, here's how to negotiate for the highest price possible.

You've worked yourself senseless updating your home, cleaning it, and creating an appealing abode for home seekers.

Next, you get your first viewers. Yes! Now you're at another "first," with someone making an offer on the property. You suddenly realize you're in a precarious situation, and you have no idea how to proceed.

Don't sweat it. Realize this is one of the most important financial decisions of your life. (I know, I just told you not to sweat it, and then I throw that at you!)

Most people don't come into this kind of money more than once or twice in their lives. So, make the very best of your situation, for your future and for your children's futures. The more money you make, the better off you'll be.

I want to see you come away from this deal with fewer debts, a wonderful new home, and some extra cash.

While there are times when the offer/counteroffer approach works best, there are times when you could come away with thousands more through simple strategic planning.

Let's explore your options, and then you can choose which is best for you.

NEGOTIATION TECHNIQUE #1:

The Typical Negotiating Approach

You're probably familiar with the way most people approach the buying and selling process. The home is put on the market, and when an interested buyer comes by, they make an offer to the homeowner.

The homeowner usually will make a counter offer, which can be accepted or rejected by the bidder. Sometimes this back-and-forth goes on a while. There are both pros and cons to this situation.

>PROS



One positive to the typical negotiating method is the transaction is straightforward and easy to understand. It makes the seller seem flexible and willing to work with the buyer's needs.

This strategy can work well for folks who are willing to take lower offers to simply be rid of a home.

>CONS

A serious negative to this approach is that once you accept and sign off on the low offer, *your house is off the market*. Let me put that in perspective.

Let's suppose Sally Sue, who checked out your home last week, calls with a much higher bidding price five minutes after you reluctantly signed off on a low offer. You are now legally bound to put Ms. Sue on hold until you see if your current accepted contract works out.

You could make substantially less money, and there's not a thing in the world that you can do about it.

Another con to the standard approach is that you might feel pressured to take lowball offers from deal seekers out of fear that nothing better will come along.

If the cons outweigh the pros in your situation, let me ease your mind. You don't have to go through those negatives, because there are many negotiating approaches you can take.

NEGOTIATING TECHNIQUE #2:

Reject an Offer, but Throw the Bidder a Bone

Let's just say a buyer comes around, loves your property, and makes an offer. You're happy they want the home, but you're less than thrilled with their bid.

You wonder whether you should get the deal over with and take what you can get, or hold out for a better offer. Go ahead and reject their offer. That's right. Take a step most folks have a hard time taking and simply say that one dreaded word, "No."

Saying "no" can sometimes take you exactly where you want to go. Just don't stop there. Reject their offer, but invite them to resubmit a higher bid. That takes some of the pressure off you. A deal like this can go several ways.

The potential buyers usually won't expect you to take their first bid, and they might be throwing out a lowball offer just to see how far down you're willing to go.



You can send your own little message by rejecting that less-than-desirable offer, but keeping them in the loop.

They'll realize they ventured far too low. If they sincerely want your property, and not just a bargain, they will probably come back with a much higher bid.

In the event the bidders *really* do want your property, out of all the properties available, this procedure can work well.

However, you're likely to lose the deal if this is just a person gobbling up cheap real estate the way some people gobble cookies. While that might seem bad at first, in retrospect, it leaves you completely open to better offers in the future. And, let's be honest, you want someone who wants your home, and proves it by being willing to pay your asking price (or more)!

>USEFUL TIPS

-  It's most desirable to use this approach when your home has just come on the market or if you have an open house scheduled soon.
-  Keep in mind that whole legal counteroffer thingamajig, too. The instant you accept and sign off on a low contract offer—which could be a real estate vulture on the prowl—you're tied to that contract.




While you and your bidder are working on the accepted contract, you can't entertain any other offers. That wastes your valuable time, and could cost you better bids.

NEGOTIATION TECHNIQUE #3:

Bring on the Bidding War

Did you know there is such a thing as a bidding war? This is usually a carefully crafted situation that can bring the bid on a home above the price the homeowner asked for in the first place. Allow me to explain.

>THE PROCESS

-  The first thing you do is to put your desirable home on the market.
-  You ideally schedule an open house for just a few days later.
-  As you put your home on the market, you also put in a disclaimer that you're not going to entertain any bids made on said home until after the completion of the open house.

You're probably thinking this is ludicrous! How is going through all this trouble going to help you sell your home quickly, and for top dollar? You could be missing out on real bids!

But there's more to this story. Human nature will take over. We've just created a prime situation for competition to abound.

Everyone who sees the home and loves it will want to make a bid. Some competitive players will bid just to see if they can win the prize! They'll know from the start that you're potentially getting offers from countless other people.

You have just been set up to take multiple bids at once, and this gives you the freedom to go with the best one.

Potential homeowners who really want your house for their own are going to start bidding high, and they might keep overbidding each other.

In this type of situation—a bidding war—it isn't uncommon at all for the seller to come away with more than their asking price.

The reality is, you might get one bid out of the whole shebang. However, the bidder isn't privy to that information. The fact they know they could be competing against other offers also works in your favor.

They'll try to make an offer better than everyone else's, because they don't have a clue that no one else is bidding. Who does the winner turn out to be? You!

BENEFITS
OF A SHORT
EXPIRATION
DATE

- **First, a short expiration date motivates your potential buyers to make a speedy decision. Either you'll go into a contract with them, or they'll move on to greener pastures.**
- **If the bidder moves on, you are free to negotiate with other bidders quickly.**
- **If they accept your terms in short order, you sell your property faster.**

NEGOTIATING TECHNIQUE

#4:

An Expiration Date for Extra Motivation

Remember, once you and the buyer agree to an offer and sign the contract, you are legally bound to see the process through until you and the buyer close the deal or agree to cancel the contract.

This means you can't take a higher offer if one comes along. However, there's a way you can counteract this problem. You can set yourself up for a higher selling price and a shorter waiting time. To help sell your home quickly for the most money possible, *put an expiration date on your counteroffer.*

It means you give your bidder a certain amount of time to either accept or reject your terms. This benefits your outcome in a couple of ways.

I encourage you to be reasonable. The last thing you want to do is turn your buyer off by making the timeframe *too* short, particularly if their current offer isn't far from your ideal price.

However, feel free to go below the standard time used in your state. If the typical deadline is three days, make yours two.

The potential buyers will know you mean business, but you also recognize this is a life-changing decision for them, as well as for yourself.

There's another reason to expedite these contracts besides quickly closing a deal or being free to negotiate with other buyers. The longer your home is on the market, the less desirable it appears to potential buyers.

If the deal falls through, you've extended the number of days your home has been on the market. Valuable time has been wasted. By shortening that time, you shorten your overall number of marketed days if this deal doesn't go through.

NEGOTIATING TECHNIQUE #5:

Pay the Piper, but Raise the Price

Buyers are increasingly asking sellers to pay their closing costs, which are normally around 3 percent of the actual price of the home.

I know it makes you shudder to even think of handing out that kind of cash. However, this kind of deal could work to your benefit.

>THE BUYER'S PERSPECTIVE

Let's look at this from a buyer's perspective for a moment. Many home buyers just can't afford to come up with those kinds of additional costs.

Often, they are strapped for cash after coming up with the down payment for your home, money for new appliances, moving expenses, and décor needs.

>YOUR PERSPECTIVE

On the other hand, it isn't fair for you to come up with that much cash just so they can buy a home. After all, they not only want you to pay the closing costs but also to come down on your original price.

You should pay those closing costs. Wait! Before you decide I've lost my marbles and toss this book out the nearest window, allow me to show you how paying those costs will work for you in the long run.

You should pay the closing costs, but you should also increase the price the buyers pay for your home by the same amount. Let me restate that.








If the only thing preventing you from selling your home is the out-of-pocket cost for closing fees, and you're able to pay it, it would be beneficial for you to do so. You should recoup that money by raising the price on your home by the same amount.

You see, buyers might not be able to come up with extra cash for closing costs, but they often can *borrow* more money with their loan.

Many buyers don't realize that if you pay their closing costs, you're giving up some substantial profit on your home's sale. You should help them realize that fact in your counteroffer.

Here's how you handle the situation. When the buyer submits an offer that includes you paying the closing costs, simply counter with an offer that says you'll do that. That is, you'll do it, as long as they agree to the higher price you're proposing for your home.

>SHOW ME SOME NUMBERS, PLEASE!

-  Let's say, for instance, your asking price is \$250,000.
-  Closing costs would be approximately \$7,500.
-  Your bidder makes an offer for \$240,000 and additionally asks you to pay the closing costs.
-  We understand this means you would be letting your home go for \$17,500 less than you asked for it. That's a nice chunk of change, and often more than anyone with a brain and a house worth the asking price is willing to sacrifice.
-  So, you make a more reasonable request. Simply counter by agreeing to pay the \$7,500 in closing costs, but only if the bidder is willing to pay the original price of \$250,000 for the property.
-  You've reduced your loss to a more reasonable amount at \$7,500.
-  The bidder is still getting a deal, and you're getting a fair price.

(Keep in mind these numbers are only approximations. I'm a real estate agent, not a mathematician. I think you can see the point, though.)

Ideally, this approach allows you to come out smelling like a rose, because you'll get back the money you invested for closing costs as soon as the deal is done.

However, there's one major hurdle that could hinder you. In the event your home won't stand for the amount of money you're asking, you'll have to go back to the drawing board.

A bank isn't going to lend more money than your home is worth, especially in today's economy.

However, paying closing costs in many situations can be a great way to close a deal. It can mean the difference in your possible buyer choosing to go into debt for your home rather than a home down the street.

It's just a matter of asking a fair price for an outstanding home from the very beginning.

A FINAL TIP: HOW TO IMMEDIATELY GAIN THE UPPER HAND IN ANY NEGOTIATION.

If you ever feel you are getting “taken advantage of” in any negotiation, do this. Tell the buyer that you're changing your mind. Yes, that's right. You're taking your home off the market.

The dynamics of the negotiations will change right away. The buyer will now have to sell you on why you should sell the home to them. In addition, they will have to make a sweet offer to have any chance of you accepting it.

I'm not saying you should use this tactic in *every* negotiation. However, this is a very effective strategy when you feel you are *losing* the negotiation. I only recommend using it in that type of a situation.

If the buyer doesn't buy the house, you can always change your mind and continue to try and sell it.

After all, lying, cheating, and stealing are wrong. But there's nothing wrong with changing your mind!



POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- ☑ Accepting a lowball offer locks you into a contract, preventing you from accepting further offers.
- ☑ By rejecting a lukewarm offer, you encourage competition and higher bidding.
- ☑ Consider rejecting a low offer if your house is newly listed or you're planning an open house soon.
- ☑ Refusing to accept bids until after an open house could create a bidding war in your favor.

- ☑ Setting an expiration date for your counteroffer encourages a buyer to either complete a quick sale or release you to accept more lucrative offers.
- ☑ Paying closing costs for the buyer—usually 3 percent or so—can work in your favor, if the buyer is willing to pay a higher price for your home.
- ☑ If you're being taken advantage of in a negotiation, you have the right to take your home off the market, at least temporarily.



CHAPTER 20

WHY YOUR DOG WANTS YOU TO HIRE ME TO SELL YOUR HOME

(This only applies if you have a dog.)

A LETTER FROM YOUR DOG:

I still get chills when I think about selling our home. I still remember the last time someone wanted to look at our house.

I got locked in my crate. I was trapped here all by myself for four hours. I was so scared that I cried.

I whimpered and barked. After exhausting myself, I started thinking about what we could do to sell this house. Then, I had an idea.

What if there were a way to only show the home to buyers who were actually interested in buying it?

We could sell our house faster. I wouldn't have to spend so much time in this horrible crate! I have an idea that might do that.

What if buyers were presold on the home before they ever saw it? Would you be open to trying that?



This is how it would work. We would tell buyers everything about the house before they ever looked at it.

It would cut back on showings. However, the people who did look at the home would be more likely to buy it.

I know I'm being selfish, but I think you would be happier, as well.

You wouldn't spend three hours cleaning the house whenever a buyer wants to see it.

Remember the buyer who told you they were going to come at noon and then didn't show up? That was so ridiculous.

It breaks my doggy heart to see you struggle to sell this house. I think it's time to try something different.



I think your dog might be onto something. Pooch must have found out about the selling strategy laid out in detail in this book. This home-selling strategy enables you to sell your home for more money with fewer showings.

Here's a quick overview of another case when it worked. Jane had her home on the market for 18 months. She hired two agents and neither could sell it.

Then, she hired a new agent, who tried a new marketing strategy. They "presold" potential buyers on the home before they even saw it.

The home sold 65 days after Jane hired the new agent. The buyers saw the ad and bought the home the same day. They were ready to buy as soon as they saw the ad for the home.

These buyers were tough negotiators. They had worked their way up from nothing and owned a thriving business with more than 30 employees. Even though they were tough negotiators, they really wanted Jane's house.

The home sold for a record high. The final sales price was \$57,500 more than a similar home located seven doors down on the same exact street.

Why did the buyers pay a record high price for a home that had been available for 18 months with no offers?

It sold because Jane's real estate agent had recently implemented the "Sell It before You Show It" Marketing strategy.

It wasn't because she lowered her price. Jane didn't drop the price one dime!

It wasn't because buyers didn't know about it. (The home had been on the Multiple Listing Service for 18 months.)

I've got good news. Would you like to use the same "Sell It Before You Show It" Marketing Strategy to Sell Your Home? You can. I laid out the entire strategy right in this book. And I can implement the entire strategy for you. Simply jump to the last page to view my contact information.

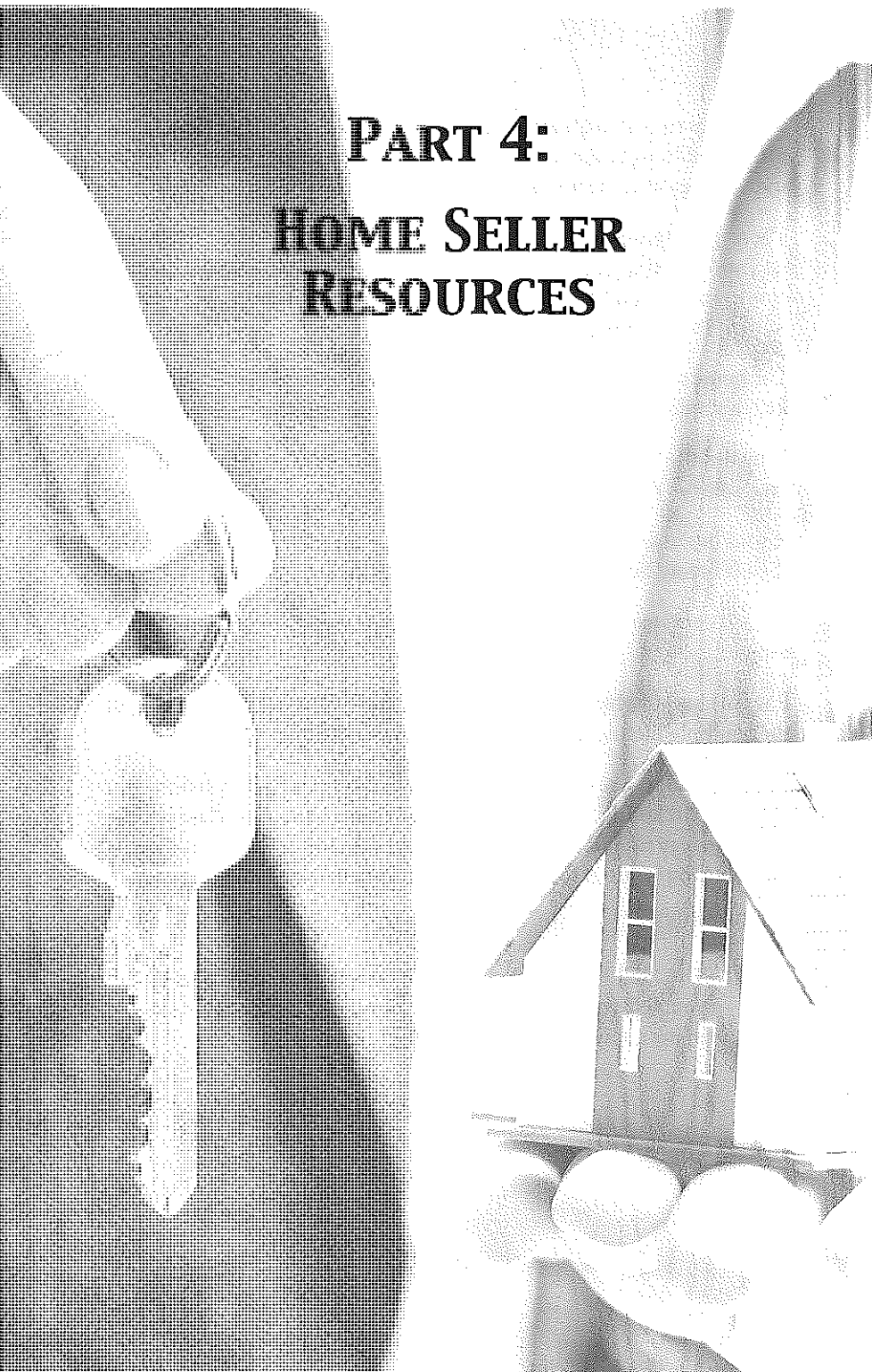


POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- The "Sell It Before You Show It" marketing strategy can help you sell your home for more, while avoiding the hassle of many showings.



PART 4:
HOME SELLER
RESOURCES



CHAPTER 21

THIS BIG MISTAKE COST ONE HOME SELLER \$36,000

Chuck wanted to sell his home. A real estate agent contacted him and told him that someone wanted to buy the home. The buyers were offering \$285,000 and were approved for a loan. “Will you sell your home to them?” the real estate agent asked.



On the surface, it seemed like a great deal. Chuck could sell his home quickly and avoid the inconvenience of the normal home-selling process. Chuck accepted the \$285,000 offer and moved on with his life.

A few weeks later, Chuck's neighbor sold his house for \$321,000. The neighbor's house was a little bit smaller, but otherwise very similar to Chuck's. It wasn't in better shape than Chuck's house.

Why did Chuck sell his house for \$36,000 less than his neighbor? Why did he work so hard to pay down his mortgage? Why did he work so hard to keep his house in tip-top shape, only to sell it for less than it was worth?

Because he didn't know what his house was actually worth! Unfortunately, Chuck never checked with anyone to find out the value of his home. He didn't get an appraisal or a second opinion from another real estate agent.

Here's how to avoid having this happen to you. Obtain a second opinion of the value of your home, *before you put it on the market*. If you don't price your home correctly, you take the risk of:

-  Selling your home for less than it's worth.
-  Wasting time while your home sits on the market (because it's not priced correctly.)

Price your home so it sells quickly and for the highest price possible.

We probably all have skewed ideas of the worth of our homes. Either we think it's far more marvelous than it really is, or we're so tired of it that we think it's a horrendous cross to bear.

Add to that your hopes and dreams of what to do with your money once you sell, and pricing your own home is a complete danger zone. This is one area where the aid of a real estate agent really comes in handy.

DANGER ZONE #1: PRICING BELOW VALUE

It's possible that a home priced too low could eventually aid a seller to start a bidding war so that the price is driven above what the sellers wanted to make in the first place.

However, conditions must be ripe for this kind of arrangement to work. Well-laid-out and professional plans are also crucial to this maneuver's success.

On the other hand, when a home is priced far below market value, potential buyers are left feeling as though there's some hidden, ominous fault with the property—even if there isn't.

That kind of mentality can leave a home hung out to dry, which wastes valuable time. The longer a property stays on the market, the less money sellers are likely to make.

DANGER ZONE #2: PRICING ABOVE VALUE

Pricing too high, obviously, leaves your home sitting stagnant while all your neighbors' homes are snatched off the market. Why would anyone purchase your home if one very similar is priced thousands lower nearby?

Common sense says that your home isn't going anywhere anytime soon. Now you're playing the waiting game while your peak selling time is slowly dwindling away.

These dangers are the reasons that getting an accurate price on your home from the get-go is imperative to your selling for top dollar.

There are several ways you can discover this elusive figure, but it isn't necessarily a simple or cost-free endeavor.

Avoid the most common mistake novice home sellers make. They don't check comparable sales and just put the home on the market. It sounds too simple to be true, yet it happens all the time.

At other times, they don't check the highest and best value of the property and sell a prime development property for pennies on the dollar.

One savvy investor bought a prime development property for \$275,000 and resold it for more than \$1 million! The sellers made the mistake of selling their property without checking out all their options.

HOW TO PRICE YOUR HOME IN A SELLER'S MARKET

Sold homes don't matter that much. You should price your home to be competitive with the other homes on the market. But, you don't have to match the price of what homes have sold for.

For example, a home recently sold that was seemingly \$100,000 overpriced. Comparable homes were selling for about \$525,000 to \$550,000. However, home prices in the area were increasing rapidly.

Nothing similar was available for less than \$650,000. The seller owed \$650,000, so they priced the property at \$699,900. And guess what? It sold three months later for \$674,000.

HOW TO PRICE YOUR HOME IN A BUYER'S MARKET

Is your local market a buyer's market? One where the supply of homes for sale exceeds demand or where prices are abnormally depressed? If so, then look at all the other homes for sale and make sure your home is priced competitively.

If your home isn't selling, you'll need to adjust the price until it sells. This is never fun.



HOW TO DETERMINE YOUR HOME'S EXACT VALUE

There's more than one way to find out the value of your home. You can use the following method by itself. However, a combination of some or all these suggestions will probably give you the best pricing direction.

Hire an appraiser: One way you can get an accurate valuation is by consulting a professional. Many appraisers will charge hundreds of dollars to give you a reasonably accurate home price estimate.

Let me help you: Do you know there's a simple way that's 100 percent free? As an agent, I have access to the same information. I'd be happy to put together a Comparative Market Analysis (CMA) for your home!

The CMA will provide you with the following:

-  **Detailed information on each house sold in your area** during the last six months, along with the **final sale prices**. If you are thinking of selling, this will help you price your home realistically.
-  **Detailed information on all houses for sale in your area** and their **asking price**. These homes are your competition.

Skip ahead to the last chapter if you would like more information on how to request a free home valuation.

Do your own homework: There's a free way of getting a decent valuation of your home, but it's risky and time-consuming.

You can use the Internet to scout other homes that are for sale in your area, and narrow them down to those that are similar to yours. The prices on these homes can give you a good benchmark for setting your own price.

HOW TO FIND ACCURATE COMPARABLE SALES AND USE THEM TO DETERMINE YOUR HOME'S EXACT VALUE

Search Internet sites such as Zillow or Realtor.com, which can show you comparable sales. To search for homes similar to yours, enter criteria such as square footage, the number of bedrooms, etc.

The key to finding accurate comparable sales is to find the properties that are closest in location, condition, square footage, features, etc.

HOW TO DETERMINE WHICH COMPARABLE SALES YOU SHOULD USE AND WHICH TO IGNORE

The following comparable sales should *not* be used. Very few of these properties sell for a fair value. Here is why each of these property types is *not* good for comparable sales.

Bank-Owned/REO Properties: Banks always sell their homes for less than they are worth. I don't know exactly why this is. But, they do it so often that I know it's true.

The average bank-owned home in today's market is selling for 5 percent to 10 percent less than its fair value. This is true even for homes that are in good shape.

Short Sales: Buyers and their agents hate short sales, because they are tricky and unreliable. A buyer will often fall in love with a short-sale home, only to find out the banks won't approve the short sale.

Agents don't like to show them for the same reasons. As a result, the pool of buyers for a short sale is much smaller than for a regular listing.

Ugly Homes: These are homes that are unappealing and aren't kept up. People buy homes because of emotion. Logic doesn't always apply. As a result, a well-kept-up home will sell for more money.

We have seen well-maintained homes sell for 10 percent to 15 percent more than an unappealing home. We have seen professionally staged homes sell for 20 percent more than an unstaged property.

Yes, the condition of a home counts. Don't use an ugly home as a comparable.

Are you in a buyer's or seller's market? While you're scouting other homes for sale in your area, pay attention to how long they've been on the market.

Sites such as Zillow and Realtor.com often have a little section under each home that tells how long it has been up for sale in their systems, although not necessarily how long they've been on the market.

If homes in your neighborhood are getting snatched up right and left, you stand a good chance of the same happening for you, as long as your home is priced right.

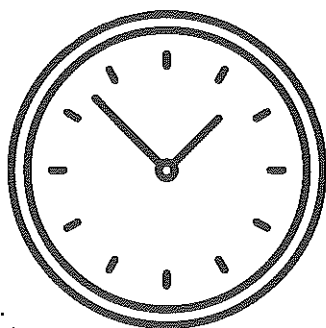
This is referred to as a seller's market, and you could get more profit from your home's sale.

On the other hand, if the "Home for Sale" signs in your area seem to be growing roots and taking up permanent residence, you might benefit from setting a little lower price than your competitors. You might not make as much profit as you would have liked, but some profit is better than none at all.

IT'S ALL IN THE TIMING

Timing is a slippery slope for sure. If you take too much time going through with a sale, holding out for the perfect offer, you're probably doing yourself a disservice.

What's more likely to happen is that buyers will notice your home is just sitting there, and only offer lower prices. Market statistics suggest that the first offer is most often the highest, anyway.



Conversely, if you need to sell quickly, you don't have a lot of wiggle room when it comes to negotiating. You need to get out of the home, and you're limited to taking whatever bids are thrown at you.

TO ALL THINGS THERE IS A TIME AND A SEASON


More often than not, the best seasons to put a house on the market are spring and fall. Keep this in mind as you prepare your home for sale. If timing allows, aim for your next hot season to begin the marketing process.


For instance, if you decide in June that you want to sell, plan to put your home on the market in the fall. Use the intervening months for the necessary preparations.


A LITTLE NUDGE

It isn't uncommon to get to a place where you're desperate to get this selling business over with, and yet, there are no takers. Give your prospective buyers a little nudge. Make them feel as if they're getting the deal of a lifetime!

Everyone loves a bargain. There are several ways you could use this psychological tendency to your advantage.

-  Offer an allowance for decorating, new appliances, or even landscaping. Look at the flaws of your home, and instead of trying to correct them with more improvements, correct them with money. Buyers love being able to pick out all their own, new stuff.

 Consider paying for a home warranty. They aren't typically astronomically expensive, usually just a few hundred bucks, and they give a new homeowner the peace of mind to buy your used home.

 Think about paying the closing costs. While this might seem a little unfair, if you can sell your house quickly, you'll benefit tremendously. Remember, the longer your home marines on the market, the less you're going to make, anyway.



POINTS TO REMEMBER:

- ✓ Not checking comparable home sales in your area can result in a costly mistake when setting the price.
- ✓ Check to see what opportunities are allowed under the “highest and best use” of your property.
- ✓ Incorrect pricing can result in wasted time and selling your home for less than it's worth.
- ✓ Market conditions affect price. Know whether you're in a buyer's market or a seller's market.
- ✓ Online sources such as Zillow and Realtor.com provide useful market and pricing information.
- ✓ An appraiser or real estate agent can help you determine an accurate price.
- ✓ Bank-owned/REO properties, short sales, and “ugly homes” aren't useful for price benchmarking.
- ✓ Try sales incentives, such as decorating allowances, home warranties, or offering to pay closing costs.



CHAPTER 22

READ THIS BEFORE YOU SIGN A CONTRACT WITH A BUYER

Imagine taking your home off the market for 60 days while a prospective buyer tries to buy it. Then, 60 days later, the buyer finds out they can't get a loan. *You just wasted 60 days of marketing time!*

Now, imagine that during the 60 days, another buyer wanted to buy your home. But the buyer couldn't purchase it. Why? Because you signed a contract with the first buyer.

By the time you find out the first buyer could *not* obtain financing, the other buyer had already bought a house! Ouch! You just lost a sale! This is why it's so important to make sure a buyer is able to obtain financing *before* you sign a contract.



Fortunately, I can help *prequalify* any prospective buyers. I will tell you whether they'll be able to obtain financing.

It costs you nothing to have me prequalify them. I can help them get a loan with the most competitive interest rates available. You can rest easy, knowing they will be able to obtain financing.

This is a free service. The buyer is under no obligation to use me to get a loan. I'll help them select the best loan for their financial needs:

Conventional—Refinancing your conventional mortgage can lead to a low fixed rate or adjustable rates used for your primary home, secondary home, or investment property.




FHA—If you currently have an FHA mortgage, the refinance process can be streamlined, with no appraisal and reduced loan documentation to qualified applicants.

VA—Refinance your current VA mortgage into a lower-rate VA loan with a streamlined process.

USDA—USDA mortgages provide a low-cost insured home mortgage loan that allows you to refinance your current USDA loan into a new USDA loan with a lower rate.



POINTS TO REMEMBER:

-  If you sign a contract with a potential buyer, you take your home off the market for a time.
-  While you're under contract, you run the risk of the buyer's financing being rejected. You also risk losing other potential buyers.
-  A better way is to prequalify your buyer before you sign a contract. The author of this book can help you with that for free, and can even assist your buyer in finding the right source for a loan.



CHAPTER 23

HOW TO FIND OUT EXACTLY HOW MUCH MONEY YOU WILL RECEIVE ON YOUR SALE

Request a free closing-out estimate. The free estimate will itemize all your projected closings costs and fees.

I'll provide you with a free, no-obligation closing cost estimate that will show how much money you'll receive from your home sale.

Here's a sample of the Closing Statement Estimate that I'll send you. Of course, your numbers would vary based on sales price, etc.



K. Summary of Seller's Transaction	
400. Gross Amount Due To Seller:	
401. Contract Sales Price	62,000.00
402. Personal Property	
403.	
404.	
405.	
Adjustments for Items Paid by Seller in Advance:	
406. City / Town Taxes	
407. County / Parish Taxes	
408. Assessments	
420. Gross Amount Due to Seller:	62,000.00
500. Reductions in Amount Due to Seller:	
501. Excess Deposit (see instructions)	
502. Settlement Charges to Seller (Line 1400)	5,356.52
503. Existing Loan(s)	
504. Payoff of First Mortgage	
505. Payoff of Second Mortgage	
506. Purchase Money Mortgage	
Adjustments for Items Unpaid by Seller:	
510. City / Town Taxes	
511. County / Parish Taxes Jan 1, 2013 thru Jun 26, 2013	103.85
512. Assessments	
520. Total Reductions in Amount Due Seller:	5,460.37
600. Cash at Settlement to / from Seller:	
601. Gross Amount due to Seller (line 420)	62,000.00
602. Less Reductions Amount due Seller (line 520)	5,460.37
603. Cash To Seller:	\$56,539.63

CHAPTER 24

SHOULD YOU CONSIDER HIRING A REAL ESTATE AGENT?

I'm sure you've wondered why people even bother hiring a real estate agent. Well, here are a few reasons.


REASON #1: WE CAN SELL HOMES FOR MORE MONEY.

In fact, most sellers net more money in their pocket, even after they pay the agent's commission.

The typical home sold by an agent sells for \$230,000, while the typical For-Sale-by-Owner (FSBO) home sells for \$184,000.


That doesn't mean every agent is going to sell your home for more. But the numbers do show agents typically sell homes for more money.

In fact, many sellers actually *make money* hiring a real estate agent to sell their home. Here are a couple of real-life examples:

 Brandon had his home on the market for \$220,000. He wasn't getting much activity. The buyers who did look at it were not serious.

They showed little interest in buying the home and made lowball offers. He then listed his home with an agent for \$240,000.

Three weeks later, he received an offer from a buyer willing to pay full price. He ended up with more money in his pocket, even *after* paying the commission.

 Jimmy and Kaye had their home on the market for \$380,000. It wasn't selling. After a few months, they hired a real estate agent and increased the price to \$420,000.

A few months later, the home sold for \$408,000. They made more money, even after paying the real estate commission.

Do these stories happen every day? No. Does this happen to every FSBO that hires a real estate agent? No.

But, they happen more often than not. In most cases, the agent can sell the home for more money than the seller could sell it for on their own.

REASON #2: THE WHOLE PROCESS IS EASIER WHEN YOU HIRE A REAL ESTATE AGENT.

Let me give you a concrete example. I talked to a title company manager who handles both FSBO closings and real estate agent closings.

He told me when an FSBO sells their home, it takes about *30 to 45* days for the two parties to sign off on the sale contract.

He said sometimes they don't even sign it until they sit down for the closing. When a property is sold by a real estate agent, the sales contract is usually signed in *45 hours*, not days.

Why does this matter to you? Have you ever heard of "buyer's remorse?" It's what happens when a buyer decides to buy your home, only to immediately begin questioning their decision.

It doesn't matter whether the decision was good or bad. I've seen buyers get buyer's remorse when they were practically *stealing* homes. And, sometimes they still freak out and change their mind.

If you've a signed contract, you can hold them to it. If not, they may walk away, and you'll have to sell your home all over again.

This isn't to say that you can't sell your home yourself. You probably can. But, unless you have sold a lot of homes yourself, then you probably aren't set up as well as a professional real estate agent is. Doesn't that just make sense? You likely hire professionals for many areas of your day-to-day living or business, so why not with home selling? Selling your home is a big deal and potentially worth a lot.

REASON #3: A GOOD REAL ESTATE AGENT CAN SAVE 80-100 HOURS OF YOUR TIME.

That's because we handle all the work for you. We are experts at financing, loan conditions, home inspections, surveys, title work, termite inspections, appraisals, negotiating, etc.

Some people have estimated there are 189–213 different things an agent does to sell a home. That list is shorter or longer, depending on the property. I haven't familiarized myself with every single item on that list. But, I do know from personal experience that selling a home does take a lot of time.

REASON #4: WE SOLVE PROBLEMS.

This is the most important thing an agent can do for you! After all, just because a buyer is interested in your house doesn't mean they will actually be able to complete the purchase.

Here's a story that illustrates this perfectly. A seller put her home on the market. The perfect buyer came along and made a full-price offer for the home. The seller and the buyer signed a contract, and the buyer started working on financing. However, the buyer ran into a problem with the financing and canceled the contract.

The seller told the story to an agent. It turns out the problem the buyer had was completely solvable. However, the seller didn't know how to solve it. As a result, the buyer couldn't obtain financing to buy the home.

The agent is confident that if he had been involved in the sale, the buyer would have obtained financing and bought the home.

Unfortunately, the seller had to put the home back on the market. It took another five months to sell. The seller had to pay an additional five months' worth of mortgage payments, property tax payments, and homeowner's insurance premiums.

In addition, she had to maintain the lawn, pay the electric bill, and take care of the property.

This reminds me of the old story of the importance of “Knowing Where to Tap.” Have you ever heard the story? Here’s the short version: A huge steamship boiler system was not working properly. The steamship captain hired a top boiler expert to fix it.

The expert asked a few questions and inspected the boiler room. He looked at the pipes that twisted and turned every which way and listened to the boiler and all the machinery.

He studied the problem, reached into his tools, and grabbed a small hammer. He gently tapped one valve, and—*voilà!*—the problem was fixed. He sent a bill for \$1,000 to the owner of the steamship.

When the owner saw the \$1,000 invoice, he was mad as a hornet’s nest! He called the expert and confronted him about the bill. “You were only there for 15 minutes! How dare you charge me \$1,000!?” he demanded. The expert heard him out and told him he would send a new bill.

The owner received another bill the next day. The bill was itemized, as follows:

Tapping the valve: \$.50

Knowing where to tap: \$999.50

Total: \$1,000.00

Specialized knowledge is one of the most valuable resources in the world. Fortunately, for you, I have specialized knowledge. I know how to sell homes for more money. I know precisely where to “tap the valve” and to solve any potential problems that could come up.

In fact, you will usually make more money when you hire me to sell your house.

I know that sounds crazy. But it’s true. The fact I can sell your home for more money is usually enough to pay my commission.

This is how you make money hiring me. I save you countless hours chasing down surveys, handling inspections, etc.

What is your time worth? If it isn't worth anything, you should sell your home yourself. But, I know that isn't the case. Your time is valuable to you!

I know from personal experience that most homeowners are successful, hardworking individuals. You have probably spent many hours becoming skilled at your own profession. I'm sure you have considerable *specialized knowledge* in your area of expertise. An outsider might look at what you do and think it's easy. It's not. You know it, and I know it.

Run the numbers. Consider the valuable insight I've shared with you. When you're ready to hire a highly skilled, professional real estate agent, give me a call. I'll be glad to help you.




When you're ready to have me do all the work required to sell your home, contact me. I'll help you take the first critical step: determining your home's true value. With that number in hand, we'll be ready to talk about listing and selling your home. And you'll be able to make well-informed decisions.



The next page has all my contact information. I can't wait to help you get started!



POINTS TO REMEMBER:

-  Statistics show that, on average, real estate agents sell homes for much more than For-Sale-by-Owner sellers.
-  A highly skilled real estate agent can save the seller 80–100 hours during a sale.
-  Real estate agents have the knowledge and expertise to solve problems that can disrupt home sales.



What is Your Home Truly Worth?

To Find Out What Your Home is Worth For Free

Call Me At:

(419) 550-1220

This is all 100% free with no obligation. After you request your free home evaluation, I will send you a free report with information that will help you determine your home's value. I recommend printing it out and taking a drive to see the homes I've identified as comparable to yours. See how your home measures up. This will help you get an even more accurate idea of what your home is worth.

An appraiser would charge between \$300 and \$500, but I will provide one at no cost.

If you would like my free, professional opinion on the value of your home, I'd be glad to help. We can talk over the phone, or I can meet with you in person. I look forward to helping you!

Email me at jsamiec@danberry.com

Call me at (419) 550-1220

Best Regards,

Juli Samiec

Danberry Realtors

About Juli

I offer a diverse background with integrity and compassion which benefits me as a Realtor® in assisting my clients beyond just the real estate process. I believe everyone should have a safe place to come home to and in addition to helping people, I rescue animals and help them find a sanctuary to be safe in. Being Vegan aligns with my value system of doing the least amount of harm while caring for the environment and helping people and animals find a safe space to call home.

It is said that integrity is doing the right thing especially when no one is looking. To me, Veganism is about ethics – doing the right thing . . . always. Veganism and integrity are interwoven.

If you wouldn't want it done to you, don't do it to others. In real estate, I would want someone who stands up for my rights and educates me on the process, so I am empowered through it. It is my fiduciary duty to my clients to do what is in their best interest, not mine. Doing the research and providing my clients with the information to make an informed decision lets them be confident in the process because no matter what, they are the decision makers.

It is my hope that the content provided within this book helps to make the process of buying or selling your home an easy and enjoyable one. And, if you are ever in need of assistance, please don't hesitate to reach out to me as I'd welcome the opportunity to work with you.

Juli Samiec, Vegan Realtor® Toledo


Tired of **not being able to sell** your home? Tired of trying hard with no success at all? This book specifically details **how to sell any home in any market** with specific attention to detail in order to **make the most money** out of your home in the quickest time possible. These strategies and advice have **helped sell thousands of homes** and now it's time for you to implement them and sell yours today! This book contains:

- How to sell a home without dropping the price
- A big mistake that cost one home seller \$36,000
- What stops "perfect homes" from selling
- How buyers pick what homes to preview
- Why buyers skipped your home
- And much, much more

Juli Samiec, is a Realtor® with The Danberry Co. serving Northwest Ohio. This book was written to help sellers quickly sell their homes for top dollar. It lays out proven marketing strategies for you to use. If you don't have time to implement them, then you can work with Juli to help implement them for you. Contact her today to receive a complimentary real estate review.



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