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8 Tips to Successfully Sell Your Home

Selling your home doesn't have to be a hassle. If you are informed and take the right approach, you can avoid unnecessary stress and bumps in the road. Below are 8 tips for a successful sale.

1. Hire A Realtor®

You may consider selling your home yourself to not have to pay a real estate commission. Yes it can be done, however before taking on this challenge alone, you should keep in mind a few facts. The most recent statistics by NAR show that For Sale By Owner sales accounted for only 8% of all sales last year. On average, these homes sold for 15% less than real estate agent sold homes. When asked which were the most difficult tasks for sellers, they were in order:

- Understanding and performing paperwork
- Getting the right price
- Preparing/fixing the home for sale
- Selling within the planned length of time
- Having enough time to devote to all aspects of the sale

If you have a great understanding of all the forms and disclosures, know how to determine the market value of your home, and have the knowledge and time to navigate the showings, offers, negotiations, inspections, and due diligence, by all means sell your home yourself. If you don't, then it's best that you have a professional take care of it for you.

2. Price the Home Right from the Beginning

A mistake a lot of sellers make is to price the home too high from the start, hoping to get a home run sale, and then reduce it if it fails to sell. The first month or so on the market is when your home will receive the most activity. If your house is overpriced, many buyers will

stay away assuming you are not serious about selling or unwilling to negotiate. By the time you reduce the price, your home will be seeing less activity, and you may receive even lower offers than you would have at the beginning, since a lot of buyers assume that homes that have been on the market a long time have something wrong with them.

3. Make it Presentable

Buying a home is an emotional decision for most people, and making a good first impression can be the reason someone chooses your home over another. There are certain things about your home you can't change, such as its size or location. Also there are expenses you probably can't or wouldn't want to incur to make your home more marketable. However, there are some relatively inexpensive and even free things you can do to enhance your home's curb appeal and overall presentation, such as:

- Putting new sod, flowers, mulch and/or mailbox in front yard
- Clean or pressure wash the front porch and walkway
- Paint the home if necessary, or at least the front door and trims
- Remove excess furniture and clutter, less "stuff" makes the home look bigger
- Keep the home clean, it will show better
- Make sure all the lights work
- Clean the windows

4. Keep it Neutral

You want the buyer to be able to envision the home being theirs, not yours, so try not to have objects that are very personal when buyers are viewing your home, such as religious or political posters or displays. Also, if at all possible keep the decorations and colors in the house neutral. Perhaps you love purple and have painted the walls in your den this color, but some buyers may find it unattractive. The more neutral the home looks, the easier it is for a buyer to imagine what their personal touches will look like in it.

5. Make Sure You Have Good Photos

Buyers usually decide which homes they want to see after viewing the information and photos online. A good agent knows this and will take many high quality photos of all the main areas of the home, including the front of the house, kitchen, living room, bathrooms and yard. All lights should be on when photos are taken, toilet seats down, and windows open. Dark, blurry or low resolutions photos will make the house look grim and undesirable.

6. Be Flexible Showing It

It can be difficult coordinating showings if you work or have a busy schedule. However, the truth is, the more flexible and accommodating you are about showing your property, the more people will be able to see it and the more likely you are to receive an offer. Buyers work and have busy schedules as well, and they may need to see the house early in the morning, in the evening, or with little notice. Try to have a contingency plan so the home can be seen at all reasonable times, which could include giving a key to a family member, neighbor or your agent to allow access when you're not home.

7. Don't Be Present During Showings

It's common knowledge that when a buyer is viewing your house, you should leave. Go for a short drive or at least go for a walk outside. A seller's presence can make the buyer feel like an intruder and prevent them from being able to envision the home as theirs and talk about the home honestly while in it. If you are worried about your valuables, store them somewhere safe during showings. Also if you listed your home with a Realtor, your agent will be present during the showing.

8. Know Your Home's Condition

You should have a good understanding of the condition of your home, particularly important things like the structure, roof, plumbing and electrical system. A buyer is going to have an inspection done anyway and if the home has issues they will come up, so you might as well be proactive and be aware of them beforehand. This way you have the option of repairing the issues or at least being aware of them and disclosing to buyer from the start. In Florida you are required by law to disclose any material property defect you are aware of that may not be readily observable to the buyer, such as if you know the roof leaks or any issue that would impact the home's value. Disclosing is not only required by law, but will also help you in negotiations. You're better off telling the buyer that a few things are old or in need of repairs and that's why you've priced the house accordingly, than them finding out during the inspection period and asking for an outrageous reduction in price or even canceling the contract.

In summary, selling a home is a process that requires knowledge of the market, real estate forms and procedures along with negotiation and sales skills. In addition, taking certain actions like the tips above increases the likelihood of a quicker and better sale. Knowing what does and doesn't work comes from experience selling homes. If you have a good grasp of all the aspects involved in selling a home, it's something you can take on your own. Otherwise, a real estate expert by your side that will guide you through the process from start to finish is your best bet for a smooth and successful closing.

Do you have questions about selling your home? Contact Ivan today at (305) 588-3750 or email ivan@305expert.com.