

## **27 TIPS TO SELL YOUR HOME FAST** **(And for Top Dollar)**

1. Know why you are selling.

What is more important to you? A) The money you walk away with or

B) The length of time your property is on the market

2. Once you know why you are selling, keep it to yourself.

Your reasons for selling will affect how you negotiate the sale of your home. For example, a prospective buyer who knows you must move quickly has you at their mercy in the negotiation process. When asked, simply say that your housing needs have changed or that you are moving to another location for purposes of employment.

3. Do your homework before setting a price.

If you start out by pricing your home too high, you risk not being taken seriously by prospective buyers and their agents. This can result in your home sitting on the market and becoming market worn. Your realtor can assist you in the process, doing research and proving you with comparable home sales. This will show where your home should be priced to best meet your goals—a fast sell, maximum profit, etc.

4. Go home shopping yourself.

The best way to get to know your competition is to check out other houses. Be sure to make note of the floor plan, condition, appearance, size of lot, location and other features. Your home must be priced competitively, in order to move.

5. Know when to get an appraisal.

Sometimes you can use a good appraisal to your benefit in marketing your home. If you get an appraisal, you can let prospective buyers know that your home can be financed. However, an appraisal does cost money. It also has a limited life. And, you may not like the figure you hear.

6. Your tax assessment is truly just a guideline.

Some people look to tax assessments to assign a value. However, tax assessments are based on a number of criteria that often don't necessarily reflect the true value of your home. Two identical homes in the same neighbourhood can be assessed dramatically differently because one was purchased more recently than the other.

7. Find a good realtor.

Selling your home yourself usually consumes much more time and effort than is initially expected. A great realtor can help you set a market-worthy price, assist with marketing and alleviate any safety and liability concerns. A great realtor will supply you with information on past sales, current listings, a marketing plan, something on their own background and references from past clients.

8. Allow room for negotiation.

9. Maximize your home's sales potential.

Price your home to sell and remember a prospective buyer reacts to what they see, hear, feel and smell.

10. Rely on other people's judgement as well as your own.

Be sure to take note of your realtor's suggestions with regards to getting your home sale-ready.

11. Clean like you've never cleaned before.

Pick up, straighten, unclutter, scrub, scour, dust... If your living room feels crowded, take out every piece of furniture you can get away with. If your home is not "magazine ready", then clean some more.

Remember: your house is not just competing against other people's homes, you're competing against brand new homes as well!

12. Fix everything, no matter how insignificant it may appear.

The step that squeaks, the light bulb that needs to be changed and the loose handrail leading to the basement. These may be minor annoyances to you but they can also be deal-killers. You never know what will turn a buyer off. To a buyer, minor problems that have gone unattended can suggest that perhaps there are bigger, less visible problems present as well.

13. Declutter, de-personalize.

Make your home as neutral as possible. Prospective buyers need to be able to visualize themselves living in your home. Minimize ornaments and family portraits. Avoid unique or trendy colour schemes—paint and carpet should be neutral tones.

14. Don't let smell be your downfall.

Odd smells kill deals quickly. All traces of food, pet and smoking odours must be eliminated.

15. Disclose everything.

Smart sellers go above and beyond the law to disclose all known defect to their buyers—in writing.

16. The more prospects, the better.

By maximizing your home's marketability, you will increase your chances of attracting more than one prospective buyer. Why is this better? Because several buyers compete against each other, a single buyer competes against you.

17. Don't get emotional during negotiations.

Negotiate logically, not emotionally.

18. Know your buyer.

In the negotiation process, your objective is to control the pace and set the duration. The better you know your buyer, the more easily you can maintain control.

As a rule, buyers want the best property they can afford for the least amount of money.

19. Find out what the buyer can pay.

As soon as possible, try to determine the maximum dollar value/down payment of the buyer. If they make a low offer, have your realtor inquire about the purchaser's real ability to pay.

20. Find out when the buyer would like to close.

When a buyer would "like" to close is often when they need to close. Knowing this gives you their deadline for completing negotiations—again, an advantage in negotiating.

21. Don't move out before you sell.

If you must vacate your home prior to selling it, keep it minimally furnished.

22. Don't give yourself a deadline.

Forcing yourself to sell by a certain date adds unnecessary pressure and puts you at a serious disadvantage in negotiations.

23. Don't take a low offer personally.

The first offer may be well below what the buyer will end up paying for your property. Don't get angry or feel insulted. Evaluate the offer objectively. The first offer is often the best offer.

24. A really low offer may mean the buyer is testing the waters.

25. Don't take a low-ball offer to heart.

Rather, counter the offer and see what happens from there forward.

26. Make sure the contract is complete.

The best way to avoid problems is to ensure that all terms, costs and responsibilities are spelled out in the contract sale. A contract should include the date it was made, the names of the parties involved in the transaction, the address of the property being sold and the purchase price.

27. Don't deviate from the contract.

Now, relax and allow your realtor to do their job!