

# **BALANCING EMOTION AND BUSINESS FOR OPTIMAL HOME VALUE**

As you embark on the journey of selling your home, I understand that it can be an emotional process. It's natural to feel attached to the memories and personal touches that make your home special. However, I'd like to suggest a perspective shift that can help you navigate this transition with compassion for your feelings while still achieving the best possible outcome.

Consider approaching the sale as a strategic business move, not to diminish the sentimental value but to enhance your chances of securing the highest price. By stepping back emotionally, you allow for a fresh viewpoint that can highlight your home's strengths in the eyes of potential buyers.

Think of this as a collaboration to present your home in its best light, with the ultimate goal of ensuring you receive the value your property deserves.

# CURB APPEAL



It's important that your home makes a good first impression. When potential buyers drive up to your home, you want them to think, "Wow! I could live here!" To make sure buyers want to see the inside of your home, make sure the outside is well-kept, tidy and inviting. It's important to touch up or completely repaint the trim, keep the grass cut, edge along sidewalks and paths, maintain flowers and shrubs and keep the yard tidy. You never know when curious buyers will drive by.

# DECLUTTER



Resist the urge to roll your eyes at this one. It is imperative that your home looks livable. Potential buyers may not be able to see past your clutter. Think of it this way—don't move things you no longer want or need. Make decisions now and your house will sell faster and your move will be easier. It's no secret that getting started is the hardest part of decluttering. Take one room, or even part of one room, at a time and dive in. Recycle or shred paper. Donate books, toys, clothing and duplicate household items. If you're getting frustrated and you can't deal with one more stack of papers or shoebox of old photos, put them in a plastic tub, label the tub and stack it somewhere out of the way. A stack of tubs doesn't look like clutter.

# NEUTRAL COLORS



Stick to neutral colors. You've heard it before, but it's the truth. Neutrals don't distract and they allow potential buyers to imagine their things in your home.

# CLEAN



This may be the most important step you take toward getting your home ready to sell. For a home to live up to the "move-in condition" description, it has to be clean. If you already keep a clean house, simply keep up the good work, checking to make sure you don't overlook little-used closets and other nooks and crannies that aren't part of your weekly routine. This needs to be a deep cleaning. For the rest of us, it's time to get serious. Start at the top (the attic or second-story rooms) and work your way down. Clean ceiling light fixtures first, scrub walls and woodwork and finish with floors. As you work your way from top to bottom, don't leave one area until it is completely clean and then move on. Don't drag dirt from one area back into the place you just cleaned. Finally, don't underestimate the power of clean windows. Buyers won't walk in and think, "Wow, clean windows!" But freshly cleaned windows look great from the outside and with the lights on, they sparkle on the inside.

# REARRANGE YOUR FURNITURE FOR AN OPEN FLOW



Your furniture is arranged the way it best suits you and your family. Avoid having furniture lined up along the walls. Also, you may need to remove some furniture so it's easy for people to walk around in the rooms. You are trying to create an open flow. Less is more!

# LET THE SUN SHINE IN



Opening the shades or blinds to welcome in natural light is a simple yet effective way to enhance a home's appeal for potential buyers. A bright, well-lit interior not only creates a warm and inviting atmosphere but also highlights the architectural features and colors of the space. Buyers are naturally drawn to homes that feel spacious and filled with light, making it a key factor in leaving a positive and lasting impression on those considering the property.

# PLANT FLOWERS OR BUY POTTED PLANTS



If the weather allows, plant flowers or put flower pots around your entrance way. Pay close attention to the plants, keeping them watered and trimmed. Inside the house, fresh flowers in vases add color.

# CREATE A FIRST IMPRESSION



The potential buyer's first impression takes place at the front door. Curb appeal is important, but a negative impression as a buyer steps up to and through the door could be a deal killer. Be sure the steps and/or walkway up to the front door are in good repair with no big cracks or overgrown weeds. Check that the door (and storm/screen door, if you have one) is in good shape and is working properly. Also, check the lock, you don't want the real estate agent to fumble trying to open the door. Replace any dangling or loose weather stripping and finally, put a wreath on it, hokey or not, a simple wreath on the front door is an inviting and welcoming sign of good thing to come inside.



## MAKE REPAIRS



Now is the time to fix all of those nagging things that you just lived with. Inside the house, look for things like stained ceilings, missing tile, broken windows and doors, heavily scratched floors and other signs of neglect. Outside, look for broken or missing shingles, patio pavers and tuckpointing. If you have a deck, check for cracks in floor boards and loose railings. Make a list of everything you see and then decide which things you're going to tackle. A real estate agent can be very helpful in determining what needs to be done and what doesn't.

# LIGHT UP THE HOUSE WITH LOW VOLTAGE



Low voltage lighting can dramatically improve your home's nighttime curb appeal, and by lighting walkways and dark corners, it can improve safety and security as well. Lighting can be grouped into three basic categories: downlights, up-lights and specialty lights. Buy a transformer that includes a timer or light sensor so the lights automatically turn on and off.

# LEVERAGE YOUR MIRRORS



Utilizing mirrors can be beneficial as you prepare to sell your house because it can optimize your space. Mirrors give the illusion of extra depth while also bouncing natural light around the room, making it appear brighter and larger than before.

First, consider the placement of the mirrors to achieve the desired effect.

For example, hanging a large mirror in a small room can create the illusion of more space and placing a mirror across from a window can reflect natural light and brighten up a room.

You can also add mirrors near focal points, such as fireplaces or artwork, to draw attention to these features and make the room feel more balanced. The important thing to consider is what the mirror will reflect to ensure they highlight attractive features of the room.

Make sure the mirrors aren't creating any distracting reflections or cluttering the space and be sure to select mirrors with frames that complement the style of your home.

With a little creativity, this can be a simple yet effective way to help get your home ready.

# **SOME MORE HELPFUL HINTS**

## **TURN ALL OF THE LIGHTS ON**

A dark house is just sad. Maximize the light in your home. Take down the drapes, clean the windows, and swap the lampshades and up the wattage in the bulbs. Be sure to replace the burnt out light bulbs. Do whatever it takes to let the light shine down on potential buyers!

## **MAKE MINOR REPAIRS**

Patch holes in the walls and replace broken appliances, No problem is too small in the eyes of a potential buyer! Small issues send the message the home has not been well taken care of. They could also indicate to a potential buyer that there is other more costly repairs.

## **MOVE YOUR PETS OUT**

Not everyone is an animal lover. If a potential buyer walks in and sees a dog bowl, smells a litter box, or is picking hair off their pants hours after the Open House, they will think the house is not clean. A potential buyer shouldn't even be able to tell if a four-legged friend lives there or not. Plan and get your furry friend to a pet hotel the day you plan to show the home.

## **ELIMINATE BAD SMELLS**

You should be able to eliminate any unpleasant odors after a good clean. Even if it's winter, open the windows and give the home time to air out.

To add a pleasing smell, bake before an open house, or light a fresh-smelling candle. Keep it subtle because anything too overpowering will smell suspicious, like you're trying to hide something.

## **ALWAYS BE READY TO SHOW**

Your house needs to be "show ready" at all times because you never know when a buyer will walk through that front door. You want your home to be available whenever they want to come and see the place. Keep the dishes clean and put away, beds made, and immediately clear clutter. It may seem annoying, but will get your house sold!

## **LEAVE YOUR HOUSE**

Removing yourself is the ultimate depersonalization. You want to give buyers the freedom to open closets, inspect the rooms, and ask questions without feeling like they are snooping around. Before someone comes for a showing, open the windows, turn on all the lights, light a candle, and get yourself out!