

Home Buyers - How To Scare Them Away

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A look at how sellers scare away home buyers. Learn from their mistakes.

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Why look at how sellers scare away home buyers? Because there is a lot to learn from other's mistakes, especially if you want to avoid making them yourself. Here are four such errors to watch out for.

Selling What YOU Like

{bot_wrgoogle}One of the reasons that a real estate agent is a good idea, is that most home owners are not good salespeople. They make a lot of mistakes which (hopefully) a seasoned pro wouldn't make. Perhaps the most common of these is the error of telling home buyers about all the great features that the seller values in a home.

Guess what? The fact that you love that first-floor laundry or that sliding glass door doesn't necessarily mean they are of any value to the buyers. Don't make the mistake of trying to sell them on what you like about your home.

What should you do then? Ask them what they are looking for, and see if your home can accommodate their needs in some way. If they say they are looking for something close to shopping, tell them where the closest stores are. If they say they want something with an office, suggest that the third bedroom could make a great office (if it's true). In other words, sell them on what they want and need.

Overlooking First Impressions

Here is what my wife and I did before we bought our most recent home. We narrowed down the possibilities to about seven or eight that the agent was going to show us. We set up a day to see them all. Then, when we arrived in town the day before the showings, we drove around and looked at the homes on our list. A phone call later, four were off the list for the showings.

First impressions matter. An ad that says, "must see inside to appreciate" doesn't overcome the prejudice created by a front yard disaster and a broken front door. We may have missed out on some homes that were just beautiful inside, but our reaction is typical. You can't show buyers how great your home is if they never go through that door.

I have even seen this mistake on those house-flipping shows. The poor young investor runs out of money before getting to the landscaping, and then wonders why nobody wants to see the beautiful work she did inside. Be sure that when people drive by your home they have a good feeling about it. Buyers really might overlook problems inside a house they like, but they can't like if they never come to see it.

Taking Offense

Have you ever looked at homes where the seller gets annoyed with critical questions about the home he has lived in and loved for so long? Most of us have. What happens then? We hesitate to ask more, which means we leave questions unresolved and lose interest in the house.

Don't make this mistake. Selling never should involve getting angry at buyers. It is about listening carefully to their complaints and objections to see if there is a way to resolve them. If you can't listen patiently as buyers say the most awful things about your home, you need to hire a real estate agent and stop trying to be a salesman.

Unresolved Problems

Suppose you leave that roof unrepaired and when they ask about how much it will cost to fix it, say, "I don't know." Good luck! Nobody likes to uncertainty when buying a home. This is why leaving problems with the house unresolved is one of the surest ways to scare away home buyers.

The more you can eliminate uncertainties, the better the chance of selling fast. Fix what you can before the house is listed for sale. If there are things which you don't want to fix for whatever reason, get a quote or two on the cost of resolving these problems. A known \$5,000 problem will scare away fewer home buyers than an a problem of unknown cost which later costs just \$2,000.

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