

SELL YOUR HOME FOR MORE

Creating the “WOW! Factor”

Before potential buyers start arriving with their checklists in hand, know this: Their decision to buy will be based primarily upon emotional considerations. Your informed efforts can elicit the emotional "buying" responses you want. Creating the “WOW! Factor” of a glowing presentation, as outlined below, will encourage the buyer's attention, intrigue and desire. Eliciting these emotional states will be your primary job as a seller. The simple procedures outlined below can help turn heads and create the desire to purchase.

Start With A GREAT First Impression

First impressions are the most lasting and important factors in the sale. You gain a powerful competitive edge when you invest some time, money and effort toward making your home as attractive as possible. The results? A home that "pops" with possibilities in the buyer's eye.

Curb Appeal

The exterior of your home is the first thing a buyer sees. Walk into the street and take a look. Does your property convey impeccable order, cleanliness and good repair? This is referred to as “curb appeal.” If your curb appeal is less than the desired “WOW! Factor”, consider:

- Are your flower gardens neatly planted and weeded? Putting down some fresh bark is a great touch.
- Are your lawns green, neatly mowed and trimmed around the edges? Hire someone if you don't have the time or equipment to do it yourself.
- Are your shrubs healthy and trimmed? Remove and replace anything unhealthy or unsightly.
- Are your fences and gates in good repair and freshly painted?
- Remove hoses, sprinklers, toys, garden tools or debris – anything lying around that isn't where it belongs.
- Does your paint and trim look fresh and sparkling? Paint or power wash. Anything dull, cracked or dusty kills the “WOW! Factor” in a heartbeat.
- Are the gutters and downspouts clean and in good repair?
- Is the roof in good repair?
- Are your windows, screens and ledges clean? Replace torn screens or cracked glass.
- Is your driveway oil stained? Clean it up.

Here are some inexpensive touches to really put on the sparkle:

- A clean, shining mailbox. No dents, no dust.
- A brass kickplate on the bottom of the front door.
- A new doormat.
- Impeccably polished and functioning doorknobs, door knocker, doorbell and front light.

A Glowing Interior

You got their attention at the curb, now keep the “WOW! Factor” going with a glowing interior. Start with a full housecleaning from top to bottom. *Do not* store unused or unnecessary items in closets and storage areas. Before putting your home on the market, remove clutter by donating items to charity, storing them offsite, or selling them at a garage sale. Eliminate clutter and your home will be noticeably more spacious.

Even minor improvements will often yield as much as three to five times the repair cost at the time of sale. Ask your Realtor to point out what repairs will significantly increase the value of your home. Seemingly small fix up jobs can have quite an impact.

Take an inspection tour of your home as if you were a potential buyer. Is it clean and uncluttered? Does it sparkle? Does it smell fresh? Make sure that:

- Walls are clean and free of nail holes or dents. Paint them if necessary.
- Woodwork and wallpaper are clean and in good condition.
- Old furniture is removed.
- Curtains and drapes are clean.
- Rugs and carpets are shampooed and floors are waxed.
- Loose doorknobs and window fixtures are repaired.
- Leaky fixtures are fixed, water discoloration in sink and toilets is eliminated.
- Loose banisters are tightened and steps are free of objects.
- Light fixtures work and old switch plates are replaced.
- All closets, shelves and drawers are organized to display spaciousness.
- Clothing is hung neatly and shoes and other objects are neatly arranged.
- Bathrooms are sparkling clean, and tub and shower caulking is repaired.
- Bedrooms are neat, bedspreads and curtains are attractive.
- The kitchen is clean and tidy, including cupboards, stove and oven.
- The basement, attic and garage are clean and well organized.
- Mirrors, picture frames and glass covering pictures are clean.
- Mirrors are strategically placed to create an impression of added space in problem areas.
- Lamp shades are in good condition.
- Houseplants are healthy and dust-free.
- Does electrical lighting create cheer and a sense of spaciousness?
- Are your garage and basement neat, clean and orderly? Consider applying a coat of fresh white paint to these areas.

For "space-creating" ideas, visit a model home or apartment . Notice how the rooms are sparsely furnished to make small rooms appear larger. Traffic patterns are appear more open and accessible. You can easily apply this strategy at home!

Ask your Realtor for additional staging and decorating tips!