

Steps to Successful Showings

by Joel Ward

You've worked hard to get your home ready to sell both on the inside and the outside. Now, its time to make sure that your home will be presented to potential buyers in the best possible way.

You need to be gone. There is no easy way to say it, but a successful showing is nearly impossible if you are in the home. The focus of a successful showing is not just on your home but rather on the buyer's perception of how your home will meet their needs. Buyers will ultimately select the home that most closely meets their needs, but every buyer will have some objection to every home. It is critically important that the buyer express their objections openly, so that they can be addressed and, hopefully, overcome. This cannot happen with you in the home.

Schedule for the buyer's convenience. The easier we can make it for buyers to see your home, the more of them will do so. And with each showing, the probability of an offer on your home increases. The "best" showing instruction is "Use key box and go show!" The "worst" showing instruction is "Always call one day in advance for an appointment. No key box. Dogs." The home with this showing instruction is very unlikely to be shown at all! We understand that having your home on the market is relatively inconvenient, but sometimes a showing under less than perfect circumstances is better than none at all. Also, keep in mind that we can easily change showing instructions. So, if you're going to be out of town for the weekend, let us know and we can make your home more accessible for that period of time.

Let the sunshine in! Rooms look larger and more attractive when they are bright. Open curtains and blinds, and turn on all the lights prior to having your home shown. Don't forget the basement lights as well. If you have some rooms with no lights, or few lights, consider purchasing additional lighting to illuminate that room or area. Also, make sure that you have no burned-out light bulbs.

Keep it cool! In the summertime, or even on marginally warm days, be sure to run your air conditioner to create a cooler temperature in your home (72-74) for the time of the showing. On really hot days, a nice cool home immediately creates a good impression on your buyer. Likewise, in the winter keep your home comfortably warm.

Remove distractions. We want buyers to be able to focus on your home, not on the housekeeping. Clear off counter tops; make the beds; straighten up coffee tables, desks

and dressers. If you have a pet, either take your pet with you or place them in a crate in the garage or backyard.

Feature our Highlight Sheets: Be sure to place a supply of our custom-designed “Highlight Sheets” for your home on the kitchen counter or dining room table, or some other location where they can be easily seen by prospective buyers. We want them to take this “reminder” of your home with them. At the end of the day, when buyers are trying to sort out which of the homes they liked best, its very helpful for them to have this reminder of your home in front of them.

Contact us after every showing. Be sure to call or E-mail us after each showing so that we can follow-up with the showing REALTOR. Feedback from showing REALTORS and from their buyers is critically important in judging the market’s response to your home.