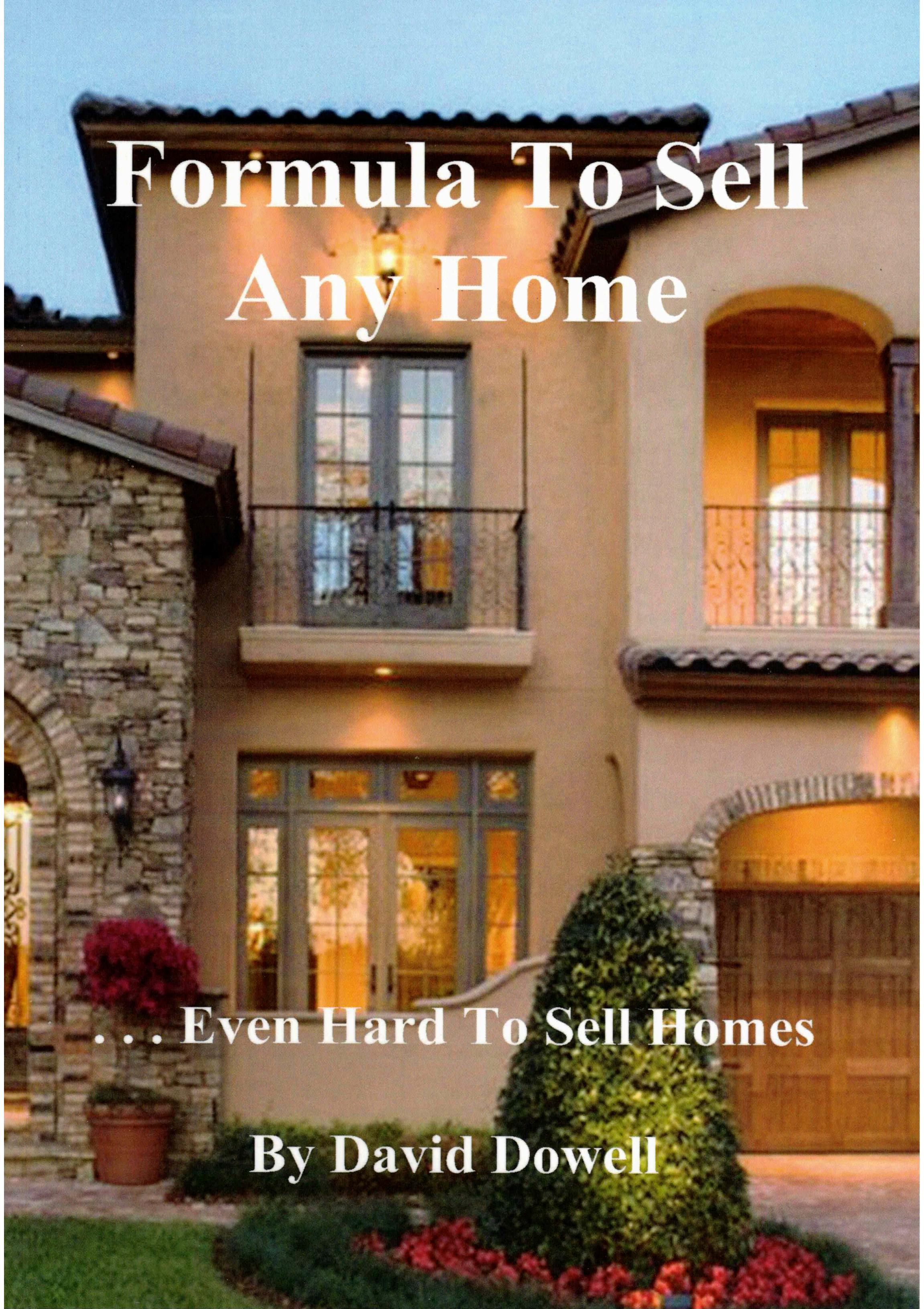
Formula To Sell
Any Home
. . . Even Hard To Sell Homes
By David Dowell

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Table of Contents

Chapter 1

About The Author

David Dowell is a Real Estate Broker in Florida and New York, and Attorney at Law in Orlando, Florida. He has written this book to help prospective home buyers maneuver through the home buying process and to buy their homes for low dollars fast.

David has laid out the top home buying steps and strategies inside this book for you to use.

If you don't have time to implement them yourself, then you can hire David to implement them for you.

David is a resident of Windermere and has lived in the Orlando area for nearly 25 years. As a graduate of the Indiana University School of Business and Indiana University School of Law, he has knowledge of all the legal aspects of real estate transactions.

David is able to assist you with the search, selection and purchase of your home, the search for any clouds or liens on title, legal contracts, and all steps through the final closing - and beyond. With all the complexities and legal pitfalls in today's real estate market, David's legal background is a necessity to successfully purchasing your ideal home for the lowest dollar with no headaches or legal sinkholes. He also has exceptional attention to detail.

David loves the Orlando area and is familiar with all of the local neighborhoods - both traditional homes and vacation homes. He puts a special emphasis on int7106ernational relations, knowing that foreign residents make up a large percentage of today's buyers.

In his free time, David likes to play golf, coach little league baseball and travel. He is happily married to his lovely wife Jackie, originally from Peru, and has two energetic 5 year old twin boys.

David owns Pan Am Real Estate LLC and Dowell Law, P.A. , and can be contacted by phone/text at (407) 864-2265 or by email at david@PanAmOrlando.com.

Chapter 2

Why Should You Read This Book?

Ever wonder why one house sells quickly while a similar house doesn't?
Why does one house sell for $188,000, while another house, identical in every way. brings in $202,000? It just doesn't make sense. The truth is. similar homes sell for varying prices all the time It takes place all across the country. It happens in markets large and small.

Surely there must be some reason!
These houses do not sell for more money by accident. No magic trick helped one seller get a better deal than the other. On the contrary, higher prices and quicker sales are the direct result of careful planning. A few simple strategies can make a big impact on a successful sale.

Sellers who use these techniques are able to command a higher price for their home.
The following chapters break down those secrets. See how each strategy translates into real life examples. Houses brought to market with these tactics consistently sell quickly, and for more money. Gather the information you need to apply the same formula to selling your home. When you sell, you will be able to take advantage of these techniques.

Follow the same formula to get your home sold.
Thanks for taking time to look through this book. My sincere hope

is that it will help you make more money on the sale of your home. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask. I'd be glad to help.

Chapter 3

Does Listing Price Matter?

Are you sick of being told the reason your home didn't sell was because it was "overpriced?"

Most people think a home that did not sell was probably "overpriced." Nothing could be further from the truth. The reason homes do not sell isn't always because of the price. It is usually because the home was not marketed properly. It is not easy to sell something for full market value.

You may need to negotiate price with a buyer, but good marketing helps bring in a full price offer!

Here is a perfect example. John was trying to sell his house. He put it on the market for $499,900. He hired an agent to help him sell it. The agent worked at a reputable firm and made a good effort to sell John's house.

- The pictures o f the house were top notch quality.
- The marketing o f the house was first class. The home was advertised extensively online, in the newspaper, and other marketing avenues.
- The agent did an open house.

The agent's efforts failed to attract a buyer.

John's agent suggested he adjust the price. After all, most of the similar homes were priced around $400,000 to $450,000. He recommended dropping the price to $450,000. But John owned one of the nicest homes in the area. And his home had many features the other homes did not have. John knew this.

John was reluctant to reduce the price.

So, he hired a new agent. This agent worked at the top real estate company in the area. Had a bunch of accolades. He took a closer look at the home, and launched his own specialized marketing plan.

- New pictures were better than the first agent's pictures.
- The marketing was better. There was even more advertising than before.
- The agent didn't just do a regular open house. He also did an Open House and invited other agents to view the home.

Even with additional marketing, the second agent couldn't sell the home either.

John was frustrated. What could he do to sell his house? Both of his previous agents had told him it was because the home was "overpriced."

At this point, John had two options:

Option #1: Drop the price. Most o f the agents he talked to told him his home was not worth what he wanted. They told him he should just "be reasonable" and drop the price to $450,000.

Option #2: Hire an agent who could sell the home for what it was actually worth. This agent's marketing would need to get a buyer so excited about the home they would be willing to pay full price.

Here's what happened.

Fortunately, for John, he picked Option #2. He contacted an agent who specialized in selling homes other agents could not sell. The agent looked at his house and could clearly see it was worth the price. The agent put the home on the market for the same price as the previous agents. Only this time something different happened.

63 days later, the home sold for $480,000.
The other agents were shocked. After all, they had told John his home was worth no more than $450,000. And since most homes sell for slightly less than their asking price, an asking price of $450,000 would have resulted in a final sales price of $430,000 to $440,000. Yet the new agent had sold the home for more. And it had taken him only two months to capture a buyer's attention. They were shocked and maybe even a little bit embarrassed! What had they missed?

Why did the first two agents fail to sell the home, while the other agent sold it with ease?
It's because the new agent used a marketing strategy that most agents weren't familiar with. The details on this secret marketing strategy are explained in the following chapters.

First, though, we must be clear on one very fundamental point.
Many people believe a house sells for exactly what it is "worth." That is not true. The price of a house is merely the final amount agreed upon by the buyer and seller. Many circumstances have an impact on the final sale price.

Houses do NOT always sell for what they are "worth."
• Sometimes they sell for more.
• Sometimes they sell for less.

While that statement may seem like a no brainer, it is imperative you understand this. Strip away misconceptions that "worth" determines the sale price of a house. Now you are free to examine the real factors at work. Identify those factors, and you can leverage them in your favor.

Take Cheryl & Richard, for example. They owned townhouses, only 5 doors apart. Both put their home on the market the same time. The builder had used the same floor plan for all the townhouses in their neighborhood. Both had the same layout. At first glance, each townhouse seemed to hold the same basic appeal for a buyer. You might think they were "worth" the same amount. Nope. Cheryl and Richard sold their homes within one month of each other.

These townhouses seemed identical but had a $14,000 difference in sale price!

- Cheryl sold her home for $202,000.
- Richard sold his for only $188,000.

Why the large gap in price? In a later chapter, you will see exactly what Cheryl did to make more money on her home. For now, just know you simply cannot afford to guess the "worth" of a home!

Chapter 4

What To Avoid

Here's another example of a stupid mistake that caused a seller to lose about $50,000 on their home sale.
An alert buyer was able to snatch up a $280,000 property for only $230,000. It was being sold by an out of town owner. The agent wasn't familiar with the area and suggested the low price. The agent didn't bother to put a sign on the property and hardly anyone knew it was for sale.

Two buyers both wanted to buy this property.
One buyer really wanted it because it was right next to his house. He would have a bigger yard with more room for his kids to play. The other buyer lived in the area and wanted a larger yard. He wanted to buy this property and build a house on it.

The first buyer bought the property before the second buyer even knew it was for sale. As soon as he found out it was for sale, he made an offer immediately. The seller accepted it and the property sold soon thereafter. This buyer was willing to pay the full market value for the property. But, he didn't have to.

The second buyer never found out the property was for sale until it had been sold. Even worse, the seller never realized the mistake.

Bottom line: The seller lost $50,000 because of his agent' s incompetence. Stories like this don't happen every day. But, they happen more often than you think. It's a risk you take when you hire an agent who doesn't have a proven marketing plan. Had a sign been on the property, it would definitely have gotten more interest and possibly even started a bidding war. The $50,000 below market price would have been bid up… maybe all the way to fair market value.

Here's another similar story.
I talked to a seller the other day whose agent's incompetence cost her $25,000. Her agent completely flubbed a "Perfect Offer" for full price that came in about 15 months ago. The agent dropped the ball and let a little problem (one that would have been easy to resolve) kill a perfectly good sale!

The home sat on the market for another year and ended up selling for $15,000 less than the original full price offer. Even worse, she wound up having to make another 15 house payments while the home sat on the market. Yep, that's another one of those overlooked costs o f not finding a buyer quickly.

Please don't become another one o f these stories! Take time to know the true value o f your home. Do your homework, and prepare for the sale before putting your home on the market. The good news is by reading this book, you are already ahead o f the game!

Chapter 5

Why It's So Easy To Sell Your Home For Less Than What It Is Worth

At a certain point, many home sellers feel like throwing in the towel. "I'm just going to drop the price and get rid of this house," they think to themselves.

Fortunately, reason (usually) prevails.
The temptation to "throw in the towel" tends to increase the longer your home sits on the market. It even happens to highly intelligent people

Here's an example. In 1997, entrepreneurs Larry Page and Sergey Brin were looking for a seller for their internet search engine. They called it BackRub (BackRub eventually morphed into today's Google Search Engine). The two were seeking $1.6 million for the new online portal, and were working a deal with Excite, a popular search engine at the time.

The problem for Excite was BackRub was too effective of a search engine. Users were finding what they wanted and moving off the site too quickly, which would be bad for Excite' s advertising business. Page and Brin cut the price dramatically... more than 50%. They offered to sell BackRub for $750,000.

Yep, even the Google Geniuses cut their price.
Excite considered the offer, but ultimately balked. There was no

deal. BackRub's co-founders decided to commercialize and release the product themselves.First they renamed it.They called it Google. Less than 20 years later, Google is now worth roughly $360 billion. Excite was eventually sold to Ask.com.

Bottom Line: Fight the temptation to drop your price.
Just because something isn't selling, does NOT mean it isn't worth the price. That clearly was true for Google, and it goes for your home as well. While the buyer of your dreams has not yet emerged, it certainly doesn't mean they won't.

Selling a home for top dollar fast is actually pretty simple.
You just have to find the one person who is willing to pay more for your home than anyone else. If they want it more than anyone else, then they will be willing to pay a higher price than anyone else.

Chapter 6

What Stops "Perfect Homes" From Selling?

Have you ever wondered why no one bought your house? I know exactly why no one bought your house... and I'll explain why.

Have you ever heard the saying, *"Build a better mousetrap, and the world will beat a path to your door?"* Even though the saying might appear to be correct - at least on the surface - it's false. Over 4,400 people have invented what they thought was a better mouse-trap. At least that is how many patents have been filed with the U.S. Patent Office.

But, despite all of the new mousetrap inventions, the classic mousetrap (first patented in 1894) is still the best selling design.

I'm sure every single one of those inventors is frustrated.
"Why won't anyone buy my mousetrap? It's genius!" They say to themselves. They're frustrated, no doubt.

I'm sure you can relate to their frustration.
Have you ever thought the following, "Why won't anyone buy my house? It's a great house!" Fortunately, there is an answer to this question:

"One Cannot Throw a Great Product Out On the Street and Expect People to Gobble It Up."
This rule applies to inventions, homes, and even movies. Yes, even great movies need to be sold. Here is an example of a great movie

that didn't do well when it was first released.

On Sept. 23, 1994, the movie, *"The Shawshank Redemption",* was released to the world. Adapted from a short story from legendary author Stephen King, the feature film centered on a pair of imprisoned men. The film, based in a prison but built on the idea of friendship and of hope and of dreams, was nominated for seven Oscars and won more than a dozen awards.

The film was immediately a critic's favorite.

Twenty years later, "*The Shawshank Redemption*" is now considered one of the greatest movies of all time. In fact, on respected website Internet Movie Database (www.imdb.com), it is ranked as the best movie in cinema history, ahead of the likes o f *"The Godfather," "The Good, The Bad and The Ugly*" and "*Schindler's List."*

Another action movie came out that year.

The Flintstones, a live-action remake o f the 1960s cartoon, starred John Goodman and Rick Moranis. It, perhaps needless to say, was not nominated for Best Film at the Oscars. "It falls flatter than a granite slab," noted a national film critic. Though the film was praised for its costume and set design, it also won the "Razzie Award" for Worst Female Performance and Worst Screenplay, and was a nominee for Worst Movie of 1994. Its IMDb.com user reviews are roughly half that of *"The Shawshank Redemption"* and is rated by users as one of the worst movie o f the 1990s.

The true power of targeted marketing.

The Flintstones, behind a team of salespeople, masterfully marketed the film to its targeted demographics. The film grossed $131 million in the U.S. and $358 million worldwide. The people at

Universal Studios, who promoted *"The Shawshank Redemption',* admitted they couldn't figure out how to sell the movie to the public.

They had a great product, but they didn't know how to sell it.
It grossed $28 million in the U.S. box office and $60 million worldwide. It ranked 51st in box office success in 1994 - two spots behind *"In the Army Now",* starring Pauly Shore.

Look at those numbers, then look at them again. Still don't believe good marketing and salesmanship doesn't matter?

The folks at Universal learned their lesson: Even the best products need to be "sold."
Is your home a great product that wasn't marketed properly?

Selling a home for top dollar fast is actually pretty simple.
You just have to find the one person who is willing to pay more for your home than anyone else. If they want it more than anyone else, then they will be willing to pay a higher price than anyone else.

Chapter 7

How To Sell A Home That Didn't Sell . . . Without Dropping The Price

It is possible to sell your home without dropping the price.

I'm going to let you in on a little secret.
The standard approach is all wrong - based on the faulty premise "if you tell enough people about your house, someone will buy it". Your home isn't selling? Tell more people about it. And... while having more people look at a home does increase the odds of it selling ... it doesn't sell the home.

The bottom line is not everyone wants to buy your home. Yes, they'd love to buy it for a bargain basement price. Even if they hated it, they'd still buy it for half price - only to turn around and sell it for a quick profit.

The key to getting top dollar is finding the buyer who wants your home bad enough… they are willing to pay full price.
Sometimes (if you are lucky), you will find a buyer who is willing to pay MORE than full price Yes. that does happen. The problem is most people are so focused on telling everyone about a home for sale ... they forget about the most important thing. Find one buyer who wants the home so bad they are willing to pay full price.

The question is, how do you find the perfect buyer? First, you need to understand a universal rule, and the role it plays in bringing in those ideal buyers.

Chapter 8

Avoid This Rule At Your Own Risk

The key to this entire home selling approach is a revolutionary finding discovered by an Italian economist. His name was Vilfredo Pareto. The most important thing we can learn from him is the Pareto Principle, better known informally as the 80/20 rule. I talk about this in most of my books.

The 80/20 Rule applies to all aspects of life.

In 1906. Vilfredo found a very intriguing correlation. He noticed 20% of the pea pods in his garden held 80% of the seeds! Studying the seeds prompted him to take a closer look at this ratio. In one of his initial discoveries, he found 80% of land in his area was owned by 20% o f the people. After detailed study, he observed this ratio held true in many aspects of life. The Pareto Principle, or the 80/20 Rule, is a result of his findings.

The 20% is vital and the 80% is trivial.

For example:

- 80% o f your income is derived from 20% o f your work.
- 80 percent of a business's income is derived from 20 percent of their customers.
- 80 percent of your income is going to be derived from 20 percent of your work.
- 80 percent of your value to an employer is derived from 20 percent of your work.

You might wonder what all of this means. In a nutshell, it means some things are substantially more important than other things. In other words, things are not equal. Approximately 20% of what you do matters. The other 80% is insignificant. It is important to understand this is not always split at 80/20. It can be 70/30 or anther percentage. The key is the two numbers are not equal and they are usually close to 80/20.

How can you apply the 80/20 Principle to selling your home?
Understanding this concept can save you time selling your home. Unfortunately, many real estate agents and sellers buy into the false idea that more is more. They completely ignore the Pareto Principle.

Now that you know what the 80/20 Rule is, you are probably wondering how it applies to selling your home. When you use the 80/20 principle in selling, you stop trying to sell people on the entire home. Based on the rule, only 20% of your home's features are important. The remaining 80% are trivial. That is because they are the same features many other homes in your neighborhood have. Instead of focusing on those trivial features, you need to focus on the vital features.

When you sell your home, focus on unique features to grab the attention of buyers.
These features make your home different from others. These features will make it easier to sell your home for the full asking price. Let's look at a few real life applications and examples of how the 80/20 Rule can have an impact on selling your home.

Chapter 9

Why This 20% Rule Matters To Hard-To-Sell Homes

Remember that buyer in the market for a 3 bedroom/2 bath house? Let's assume the agent found him five houses to preview. Each meets his general criteria, and is located in the area he hopes to live. He and his agent drive out to look at the five houses. They all have very similar features. The prices are comparable. In theory, you might think the buyer will have a hard time deciding between houses.

No matter how similar they may seem, no two houses are exactly alike.
In real life however, that is not the case. The 80/20 Rule comes into play. Imagine four of the houses don't have a pool, but one does. He is not aware of this though, because the agent didn't mention it. The buyer sees the four houses that don't have a pool. He isn't particularly interested in any of them. Then he sees the fifth house - and the pool! Suddenly, he is ready to make an offer. He may even pay full asking price, even though this house is more expensive than the others.

The 80/20 Rule in action: Buyers focus on unique features.
His offer isn't based on the 80% of features this house shared with the rest. Instead, his bid is based on one unique attribute - a pool.
The 80/20 Rule predicted the sale of this house. Sadly, in this case, much time was wasted finding the perfect house. Had the agent known to look for the 20% difference, this may have been their

first stop. As a seller, you can leverage the rule to work in your favor. Draw attention to defining characteristics in your home.

Here’s a real life example. A real estate agent I know had a client visit from out of town. He didn’t have a list of criteria - he just liked one certain area. She drove him from house to house. In each case, this buyer suggested offers 10-20% below the asking price. He would not budge. She began to worry. The whole day was turning into a big waste of time.

As the sun set, they stopped at one last house. It didn't have a lot of curb appeal. It was not a good looking home. She was out of options. Nevertheless, this house broke the tough negotiator down. He was suddenly willing to offer the full asking price! You may wonder what set this house apart from the others. It wasn’t because he had a thing for ugly houses. Nope. The 80/20 Rule kicked in again.

The 80/20 Rule in action: Buyers pay more for unique features. This agent and her client had spent the whole day looking at houses that shared 80% of the same features. He didn’t care about any of those details. A bedroom was a bedroom as far as he was concerned. He fell in love with the one remarkable feature of this house. This plain jane house had something special.

As you walked into the great room, there was a large window. The house sat atop a hill with a gorgeous view. And to top it off, the sun was setting below the distant tree line. That view sold the buyer. The other 80% could be improved. He didn't buy the house because he liked the floor plan or the number of bedrooms and bathrooms.

His decision was completely based on the hill and view. That view caused him to stop negotiating and offer full price on the spot. Such is the power of the 80/20 Rule. Learn how to tap into this rule, and you won't have to settle for less than your asking price.

Leverage a unique selling point. Buyers who fall in love don’t haggle over pricing, they make good offers. In some cases, the 80/20 Rule even helps people make a sale without conducting a showing. This is a huge time saver. The house in the following example had languished on the market for months.

Unlike the previous house, this place was not ugly. On the contrary, it was a brand new custom built home. But nobody seemed to care. It sat on the market over seven months without a single offer. The builder was baffled. His fancy new house wouldn’t sell. He ended up firing his agent and hiring a new one. Fortunately, the new agent knew the importance of finding that special feature.

He drove out to give the house a thorough investigation. What he found changed everything. The house had a gorgeous 5-acre yard. Other houses being sold in the area were all on 1 -2 acre lots. Not only was the yard bigger, it was more private than other lots available.

The new Realtor marketed the 5 acres. He mentioned details and a description of the house. But, he focused attention on the lot. The house was not the main selling point, so he shifted attention to the 5-acre lot. In no time, his phone rang! A buyer was relocating. He had noticed the house was for sale, but it hadn't caught his eye.

The 80/20 Rule in action: Buyers are searching for unique features.

That changed when he learned it was built on a 5-acre lot. All of a sudden, he was very interested. So interested, in fact, he submitted an offer from 1,000 miles away. He had never even seen it in person. He was afraid someone else would buy it before he could, and he would lose out on the perfect house. That sale happened in 45 days.

The builder was amazed! His house had been on the market close to eight months without so much as a nibble. Suddenly it was sold. Purchased sight unseen, all because of the 80/20 Rule. By shifting focus to the 5-acres, the Realtor captured the interest of buyers immediately. The house was no longer unsellable. On the contrary, for a short time it became the hottest house on the market.

Don’t create an advertisement similar to every other house in the area. Instead, turn a spotlight on something different about your home. You w ill attract interested buyers. Buyers who are willing to pay full price.

Selling to Interested Buyers

Find something unique about your home. Build advertisements around that one item. It will catch people’s attention. Buyers who are looking for that one item will ask to come see your home in person.

As a result, you will stop wasting time showing to people who are not interested. Instead, you will be showing your home to buyers who are motivated to make a purchase. You won't have to show quite so often. You also won't have to sift through lowball offers from apathetic buyers. Less stress for you.

With that in mind, it is essential you take time to uncover your home's most attractive and unique features. Compare notes with other houses in the neighborhood to see what makes yours stand out.

Potential Unique Features

Each house will have its own unique features. You may already have some in mind. If not. let me share some ideas to get you started:

• **Hilltop views are an excellent defining feature.** Like the example from earlier, a high vantage point comes with a spectacular view of the surrounding area.
• **Maybe your home looks out on an open field frequented by wildlife.** There are many people who would like that view.
• **Your house might even have an unobstructed view of the sunset.** That would interest lots of potential buyers.
• **Patios are another great feature.** Maybe the rest of your neighbors don't have patios, or their patios are smaller than yours. That vital feature could help you sell your home.
• **Location** is something else that can set your property apart from others. I'm not talking about your location in town but rather your location compared to the surrounding homes. I once saw someone pay extra for a townhouse because of its location in the complex. Most of the surrounding homes did not have any yard. However, a few shared a large half-acre "yard area". One of the owners whose townhouses backed up to this yard area was able to sell his townhouse for a higher price. It set his property apart from others on the market. His home had a characteristic shared by fewer than 10% of the others. He had the only available listing offering that feature. With this easy point of difference, the house sold for a higher price. Another townhouse seller (in the same complex) found a different unique feature. He did not have a

yard, but he was still able to use his location to his advantage. His property backed up to a lake and fountain. That extra feature helped him sell his townhouse quickly and for a great price.

• **You might have a private location.** For instance, your lot may be partially concealed by trees, or you might have an empty lot next to you. Use this to market your property.

• **You might have a unique backyard.** If you have a larger backyard than your neighbors, use that to your advantage.

• **A shady backyard can also help you sell your property.** Some people like the idea of lounging in the shade.

• **A fenced in backyard is also a big selling point.** People with kids and pets flock to homes with fenced in backyards.

• **You can also look at other features.** For instance, a finished basement can help you sell your home. You can also market a large attic, an extra-large garage, a swimming pool, or anything else that makes your home stand out.

Look for the 20% difference and find a way to market it.

That is how you will get results. You can't just throw the information into your listing, though. You have to take the right approach.

Chapter 10

Grabbing Any Buyer's Attention

Appeal to your target market.

Having the information you need to advertise your property is an excellent first step. It is just the first step, though. Once you have the information, you need to put it in your listing. Simply adding it in is not enough. You need to make sure people see it or it will not help you.

Begin with a picture.

When people visit a real estate website, it takes them a split second to decide if they are interested in a property. That is because they see a picture of it. Before they even know it, their brains tell them yes or no. If their brains tell them yes, they click on the listing. If their brains tell them no, they move on to the next property.

It is your job to make sure people's brains say "yes" when they see your picture. You do that by photographing the unique feature and using it as the display picture. Of course, some people will not be interested after they see your display picture. That is okay. Remember you only want to appeal to people who will buy your property. You are just wasting your time if you appeal to people not interested in your unique features.

With that in mind, this will also help you weed out people who are not interested. That means you are not wasting time on showings for people who do not intend to purchase your property.

Be descriptive.

You also need to focus on your description. Put one or two special features right at the beginning o f the description so people will see them immediately. You can also put them in your headline. This will help you to attract the right people. If you do this, you will notice the quality o f your leads will improve. You will show your home to people who are ready to make a purchase. You will also get more offers close to or at your asking price. While all of this is great news, you still have one more thing you can do to increase your sales.

Tum a negative into a positive.

Nothing kills a sale like a big negative. Fortunately, you can often turn a negative into a positive. Let me go over an example so you understand how this works.

Let's imagine you own a house built ten years ago. You want to sell your home, but there is a problem. A nice, new development recently opened in the area. Builders are selling brand new houses. The houses are roughly the same, but the current price for the new properties is about $40,000 more than the asking price of your home. Nevertheless, buyers will choose the brand new houses just because they are new. They hold a greater perceived value. They don’t stop to consider that in five years, it won't matter. Their house will be five years old, and your place would be fifteen years old.

But that’s not all. Their five-year-old place will NOT fetch an extra $40,000 compared to your 15-year-old house. When the buyers of the no longer new house decide to sell, they will actually end up losing money. The appeal of a new house is gone, and they won’t recoup the extra $40,000 they spent buying new.

Show them what they are missing.
Fortunately, you can educate buyers and get them interested in your house. You just need a way to capture their attention, and highlight the positive sides of your property. Create an ad with a headline that says, "Don't buy a new house in (Development Name) until you see this house." Then you could go over reasons people would benefit from buying your home.

The cost is an obvious reason you should certainly include. It is far from the only reason though. Jot down a list of every feature you can think of for both your house, and the newer ones. Then compare and contrast different perspectives. For example, compare yards. Newly built houses typically do not have established trees or landscaping. They might have freshly planted grass. That requires more work and more money.

Here is another idea, think of the traffic and commotion in a new development where homes are still under construction. Focus on the positive by talking about how quiet your neighborhood is. Mention a peaceful home. Some buyers will see this as a point of attraction.

Attract buyers excited to see your home.
These are just a few examples. You can turn any negative into a positive by reframing it. Remember, you control your story. It is up to you to feature your home in a positive light. Do a good job of attracting buyers specifically interested in features your house offers, and you no longer have to compete against those new homes! Instead, you will be working with buyers already excited about something in your home. Taking this approach cuts out the competition, speeds up the sales process, and makes you more money.

Just keep the 80/20 Rule in mind during the selling process, and look for a point of difference to feature in your home. Focus on what makes the most impact, and you will be successful.

Chapter 11

Luxury Home-Seller-Strategy Sells Homes For 15% More Money

The rich & famous use this secret strategy to sell their homes. In one instance, a Realtor reported using this strategy caused one condo to sell for $110,000 more than a similar condo in the very same building.

- The seller using this strategy sold for $549,000.
- The other did NOT and sold their condo for $439,000.

Why did one condo sell for more than the other?

One seller knew the secret strategy, and the other did not! In their report, the Realtor mentioned having intimate knowledge of both condos. Neither one of the listings were bank owned, short sales, or a distress sale. The only plausible explanation why one home sold for more than the other was the seller's use of this secret home selling strategy.

This strategy can be used in any market. No matter what type of property is being listed, this approach works. It applies equally to homes, apartments, townhouses, or condos. Agents and sellers using these tactics have a greater chance of closing a sale for more money.

Here's how this particular Realtor discovered the secret strategy, almost by accident. He met a wealthy executive who was interested in selling his condo. However, the man had a special request.

He was willing to hire the agent, but on one condition. The Realtor must agree to use the man’ s secret method to sell the condo. It sounded crazy, and the agent was naturally skeptical. On the other hand, selling the condo would bring a handsome commission. And if it didn’t work out, their agreement would expire, and he’d walk away. The Realtor decided to give it a shot. He helped the owner prepare the listing. They priced the condo at $554,900. For reference, two similar condos in the same complex were listed for $479,000 and $439,000.

Two similar condos for sale were priced much lower than this listing.

The agent was skeptical the condo would sell for the $554,900 price. But, the owner’s secret strategy was intriguing, and he really wanted to see how it worked out. The condo went on the market, and he waited to see what would happen.

Almost immediately, he began to doubt the strategy. The condo was showing regularly, but no one was making offers. People were just walking through and leaving. To make matters worse, most visiting agents thought the condo was overpriced. They could not understand why the owner was asking for so much money. After all, a similar condo just around the comer was available for $100,000 less! They counseled their buyers to keep looking, and left without making offers.

The story is real. The condo had no special attraction that set it apart from the others. This unit was not a penthouse. It was on the 6th floor of a 10-floor complex. The top floor units were not penthouses either. And the other agents were not wrong. The price was high. Still, the owner stood firm. One day, 4 months and many showings later, another buyer walked in. This time it was different.

This buyer loved the condo the moment he stepped through the doorway. Made an offer before he finished the tour. The agent couldn’t believe what he had heard! He rushed to call the owner. The owner accepted the man’s offer, while the agent began to worry. Maybe the buyer would find out they were overpaying. Maybe it would all fall apart. But no, everything worked out.

The place successfully sold for $549,000, which was a record high!

The price was $110,000 higher than the previous condo that had sold two and a half months earlier for $439,000. The higher price wasn't because prices were rapidly increasing. The next unit that sold (28 days later) went for $435,000. It was a less desirable second floor unit. Five months later, another similar condo sold for $450,000.

This all sounds crazy. I didn’t believe it until I checked the sales data myself. Everything checked out. Would you like to use this secret strategy to sell your home for more money? It does take some extra time and some extra work. But, the payoff is well worth the effort.

What is the secret strategy?

What was the special request the wealthy home seller had for his agent? It was simple. He wanted to stage the condo. Staging is the act of sprucing up a home to make it as visually appealing as possible. It might sound crazy, but it causes homes to sell for more money. In fact, a whole lot more.

Many agents encourage sellers to stage their homes. However, very few of them could ever show you a case study proving it will actually help your home sell for more money.

Fortunately, this Realtor knew he was on to something. He began researching everything he could find on staging, and the impact it had on sale prices. He put his findings together in a big write up sharing the tactics the wealthy seller had taught him. He included all the examples he had found as case studies.

The next chapter is an excerpt from his report, with one o f the case studies he recorded.

Chapter 12

Why Home Staging Really Matters

Dear Reader,

I wanted to give you the most convincing proof possible. Many people find it hard to believe the simple act of staging helps one home sell for more than another similar home. In my research, I looked for examples of similar houses being sold for differing amounts of money where only one of the two houses was staged.

The clearest example I could find was in the case of these two listings.

This development has 200 equivalent townhomes. Every single townhome in the neighborhood is 3 stories with 3 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms. Every single unit has the exact same floor plan.

I looked for two sales there, and found these:
4438 Capital Dome Drive **sold on August 26th, for $202 ,000 .**
4456 Capital Dome Drive (5 doors down) **sold on July 26th, for $188,000.**

I personally visited this neighborhood, and I am familiar with these properties. You could not find a better example of two identical properties that sold for different prices.

The details show these two homes are identical in every substantial way:

• The lots the units sit on are identical as far as location desirability for a buyer.
• Both units had the same kitchen plan with the same cabinets and a tile floor.
• Both units had nice hardwood floors in the living room, and carpeted bedrooms.

Every important detail of these two townhomes was identical. I studied every aspect of these sales to find what made the difference.

There are 2 reasons one home sold for $14,000 more than the other:
• Townhouse #4438 was professionally staged, giving it a more appealing appearance.
• The agent selling #4438 took higher quality, more attractive photos of the home.
Those two seemingly small actions made the $14,000 difference! The buyers of #4438 made a higher offer because the agent presented the home in a more appealing and attractive way.

— End of Staging Report ---

Even simple things can make a big impact on the final sale price of a home. Staging done well is one of those things!

You have two options for staging a home:
Option 1: Do it yourself. Learn how in the following chapter.
Option 2: Hire a professional home stager. If you are considering hiring someone to handle your staging, contact me for a list of references. I'd be happy to share recommendations and send you information on stagers that will do a good job for you.

Chapter 13

Why Buyers Skipped Your Home

Buyers decide in the first eight seconds of seeing a home if they are interested in it or not. That is why it's so important to stage it. You can hire someone to do much of the hard work for you, but there are some things you can handle.

Cleaning

Spotless is the name of the game.
It is vital to do a thorough, deep cleaning of your home. It works for people selling their car — they get more money — and it will work for you. By deep cleaning, I mean you should do the following:
De-clutter: Begin with de-cluttering. Here' s the standard rule of thumb: Go through your home and get rid of 50% of your belongings. Items like photographs, highly personalized items, out-of-season clothes, random junk and excessive furniture — all need to go. Don't get upset. You don't have to throw the stuff out. Donate it. Sell it at a yard sale. Give it away. Someone can use what you don't need. Put the precious items (i.e. family photos) into a safe, offsite storage location. Once you de-clutter — Wow! It's amazing how much roomier and nicer your home feels. The goal is to de-personalize the home so potential buyers can envision themselves living there.
Hardcore Cleaning: Now that the clutter is gone, move on to hardcore cleaning. Be meticulous. Tidy up each room from top to bottom.

Make sure that you don't forget to:

• Get rid of the cobwebs first. This keeps you from getting dust bunnies all over freshly cleaned floors and furniture.

• Dust ceiling fans and lighting fixtures while you're cleaning out the cobwebs.

• Dust your blinds.

• Wash walls, unless you' ll be painting.

• Clean all glass surfaces: mirrors, television screens, patio doors and windows.

• Polish all wooden surfaces.

• Wipe down any leather furniture.

• Clean out and reorganize the closets and cabinets.

• Attack all appliances with cleaning fervor. Make them shine!

• Sinks, toilets, tubs, showers, faucets and countertops need to be impeccable. Every room is important, but the kitchen and bathrooms will take you over the top. They need to be eat-off-of-the-floor clean.

• Vacuum rugs, shampoo carpets and mop like your life depends on it.

• Side note: Attack these tasks last, or you' ll inevitably have to do them twice.

Painting

Fresh paint provides a clean canvas.

If you haven't painted your house in the last year, consider doing the entire inside of the home right now. If you have painted it, you might want to repaint a second time. When I say repaint. I mean repaint everything. Paint the ceilings. Paint the trim and window casings. Paint the doors. Don't forget to paint inside the closets. And, of course, paint the walls.

Just make sure you paint the right way. An artist creates a new painting on a plain, primed canvas. Through your efforts with painting, you are hand delivering your potential buyers, a clean, primed canvas where they can imagine their family in your home. Keeping all o f this in mind, proceed with your home's canvas using neutral colors. That doesn't mean everything must be completely lifeless or stark white. Rather, you want your colors to be unobtrusive. Stick with gray, beige, off white and white colors. Even if you just painted the master bath turquoise and added cute polka dot trim - change it! Remember, a blank canvas opens the imagination to endless possibilities. Polka dots don't.

Kitchen and Bath

Focus on these high impact areas.
Buyers are most turned off by dirty, grungy bathrooms and kitchens. Let's face it. Nobody wants to eat in a place they feel is nasty. Likewise, no one wants to be naked in a disgusting place. Now that doesn't mean you can create stunning bathrooms and kitchens, while leaving the rest of the home a mess, and still expect to sell your house for top dollar. But you do need to address your bathroom and kitchen first. Keep this in mind: potential buyers might forgive a less than stellar child's room, but a questionable bathroom or kitchen could cost you a possible sale.

So, let's get started. Now, you' ve done a deep clean of the whole house, and you most likely painted it as well — including the bathrooms and kitchen. Now it's time to move on to a pressing issue: whether or not to get new appliances? Good idea or a money pit?

Should I Buy New Appliances? It depends on your particular situation. No doubt, new appliances make an impact with buyers.

When the National Association o f Realtors did a survey, most buyers surveyed between 2010 and 2012 were:

- Very concerned with buying a home that featured new appliances
- Roughly 17% of the respondents preferred stainless steel.
- The most important factor: appliances are available.
- Most buyers who were unable to get their sought after appliances said they would have been willing to pay, on average, nearly $2,000 more for them. Potential buyers want appliances included and will pay more for them.

If you can afford it, new appliances might be the very act that sets your house apart from the home for sale across the street. But, if new appliances are a bit out of your reach, offer them your used, immaculately clean and fully functioning ones.

Updating Hardware. Stop and take a nice, long look at your bathroom and kitchen hardware. You' ll probably notice they look well-used. The truth is they are.

It isn't that big of a deal until you put yourself in a buyer's shoes. They're looking at your old house as their potential new home. Old, worn out fixtures aren't going to speak to them the way nice, shiny, new hardware will. That doesn't mean you should run out to buy all new fixtures.

Unless your knobs, pulls, handles and hinges are broken, there is no real reason to replace them. That's right. Get that new look simply by thoroughly washing and repainting them. I'm not kidding. There is spray paint made specifically for this reason. The project is incredibly cheap.

Here are some ideas of household hardware you can give a paint

overhaul to:
• towel bars
• toilet paper holders
• door handles
• old light fixtures

The goal is to patch your home up nicely with as little cash as possible. This is a great way to do it. On the other hand, if you do have broken or completely worn out hardware, you're better to replace the whole set unless you can find matching pieces. You could then cleverly paint the old and new to match.

Warning: make sure if you end up replacing your knobs you get matching exposed hinges for cabinet doors etc. Consistency is a good thing when selling a home.

Other Excellent and Cheap Update Ideas for the Bath and Kitchen:
• Buy a new toilet seat.
• Refurbish worn out looking cabinets with a faux paint project.
• Replace an old, ugly bathroom sink with a pedestal variety.
• Repair grout in tile backsplashes, floors and tub surrounds.

Chapter 14

Details Win Home Sales

According to the National Association o f Realtors, a majority of recent home buyers would have preferred improved and greater closet space, as well as other storage opportunities. People have lots of stuff, and they need somewhere to hide it all.

Overcome negatives with positives: You can never have enough storage!

So give them the storage to do just that! Give buyers great storage, and you' ve won their hearts. If you can add new closets to your home with ease, it is a huge bonus for you. Building a simple closet isn't really all that difficult if you are even just moderately handy. If you are selling an older home, where closet space is typically at a minimum, this will help!

However, putting in new closets isn't always a possibility. For instance, if your rooms are already small, you might not want to take square footage away from them. You may not have the skills or the funds to hire someone to build new space. This is when we turn to closet organizers for help. For instance:

• You can custom design your closet kit online through a place like Closet Maid.
• Your standard superstore or hardware store often has exactly what you need in an inexpensive, pre-fabricated form.

Organizers may not enlarge your closets, but vertical and horizontal space will be maximized that way. Don't stop there, "storage" is not restricted to closets. Storage is actually all of your cabinets, clothes closets, linen closets, and attic and basement space. It is important to make sure you organize your cabinets. The same places that provide closet organizers can help you with this. Don't be afraid to add extra shelving in your laundry room or in the linen closet. Wherever you can attractively and inexpensively add storage solutions will eventually be to your benefit. Buyers really love this stuff.

Use the bedroom addition trick.
Who doesn't want to add tons of extra value to a home? Here's an easy way: add another bedroom relatively inexpensively. Okay, before you start laughing at me, let me explain. I didn't say you should add square footage to your home. No. Add another bedroom. "Now, how am I going to manage that?" you ask. Simple: add a closet to that extra junk room. Voila! You have a bedroom.

That's right. Make your den, your office, spare room or attic into a third or fourth bedroom by building a closet. Before you start building new closets, keep these two little piece of information in mind:

• If three bedroom homes are selling well in your neighborhood, a fourth bedroom might give you a real advantage.

• However, if people in your area are looking for one or two bedroom homes, what good is a fourth bedroom? Don't waste your money if that is the case.

You should do some homework before you start. Ask your real estate agent about this. If your agent doesn't know or if you don't have an agent, I'd be happy to help you determine whether or not you'd benefit from a simple bedroom addition.

Back to the point: if you need a significant boost to your home's worth, adding another bedroom is one great way to do it.

Mechanical maintenance is a must.

It is very easy to get wrapped up in the more eye-pleasing aspects of getting a home ready for sell. However, you should never overlook the upkeep of all of the mechanical aspects o f your home.

Mechanical features you should take a close look at:

- electrical boxes and wiring
- natural gas lines
- plumbing
- central heating and air conditioning system

If these components of your home are old, outdated or not working properly, you are lowering your home's price significantly. According to the National Association of Realtors, 65% of home buyers surveyed were very concerned with whether or not their new home had a central air system. Of the 31 mechanical features inquired about, this was the most important one across the board.

It is true people buying homes want to purchase something that reflects their aesthetic tastes and lifestyles. However, they also want to buy a home that is safe and sound. Faulty electrical systems don't provide that. Neither does leaky plumbing that causes mold infestations. These areas are not necessarily entertaining or fun to fix, but they are extremely important. If these areas are overlooked, you could run into some trouble with inspections and appraisals.

Obviously, some o f these particular home updating projects should be left up to the professionals:

• Have a certified plumber come in and inspect your entire water system for leaks.
• Hire an electrician to check your wiring.
• Contact your local HVAC Company and have them provide a thorough service on your heat pump.
• Call your natural gas supplier and let them double check the mechanics of your tank and lines.

Buyers love a house that' s been worked on and updated beautifully. However, they love safe, secure homes for their families even more. Take care of these mechanical odds and ends, and you' ll profit from it.

Having antiquated wiring and plumbing replaced isn't cheap. I' ll admit. If you would rather not tackle this stuff, and you do have mechanical issues, it may be necessary to drop your selling price. It might remedy the situation for you. Then again, it may not. In that case, you will need to decide to come to an agreement with a buyer on repairs, or choose to part ways and move on.

Sometimes, you will get lucky and find a buyer who is already interested in doing some remodeling. Sometimes you find a buyer who has certification in that area, and will buy the house for a lower price and plan to do his own work.

Bottom line here? There are a lot of ways you can work with what you have. Take time to give your home a thorough review. Note anything that you can easily fix. Note anything that you can fix with a little more work. Finally, note anything you wish you could fix. Start with the easiest items and work down the list. Remember the 80/20 Rule, and put your most effort toward the small amount that will bring the greatest return!

Chapter 15

How Buyers Pick What Homes To Preview

Floors are not only something buyers notice in your home, they can be quite expensive and difficult to replace.

Everyone notices flooring, should you clean or replace?
The truth is, you might not even want to replace them. You see, putting down new floor coverings of any kind, including carpeting, hardwood or vinyl, can get pricey. It all depends on the size of your rooms and the flooring material used. If you want to get around replacing it, here's some tips.

Carpeting

Everybody's carpet takes a beating. Pets, young children, muddy shoes, cups of early morning coffee all have up close and personal acquaintances with your rugs. It is very, very evident, too. There is no way that a good vacuum is going to handle this mess. Therefore, you should:

Shampoo: Luckily, you can either rent or purchase a carpet shampooer fairly inexpensively. If your carpet just needs a good washing and doesn't necessarily have set in stains, this is a great place to start.
• First, move all of the furniture out of the room you're working on.
• Follow the shampooer' s instructions.

• Lastly, make sure that you don't walk on the carpet again until it's completely dry.
• You should see a significant difference in both the smell and look of your carpet.

Steam Clean: Your rugs may need more juice than a regular carpet shampooer can offer. You need to step up your game a little bit, and go with a good steam cleaning.
• Rent a steam cleaning shampooer.
• Hire a professional carpet cleaner such as Stanley Steamer. Yes, it' s a little more expensive, but it can also make a tremendous difference in your carpeting.
• What steam cleaning can't remove, cover with rugs. Please don't misunderstand me. Do not be dishonest. If your carpet is in bad enough shape a steam cleaning doesn't take out all of the stains, it will be evident to buyers the carpet needs to be replaced. Area and throw rugs can just make it a little less unattractive.

Why Not Replace It? I know what you're thinking. You think you probably should just replace your carpet, but that really isn't a great idea most o f the time. First, replacing carpeting is very, very expensive for most people to fit into their budgets. It would be an absolute shame if you went through the trouble of re-carpeting only to discover a family loved everything about your house but the new beige wall-to-wall carpet.

My advice is work with what you have as best you can. Clean it and put down rugs. Keep it vacuumed. Stop the kids from eating and drinking on it effective immediately. Pets need to find rooms with slick floors for easy mopping to roll around in. Do everything you can to keep the carpet from getting worse. It will pay off.

If a buyer loves everything you've done in your home, except for the ugly carpeting, they might overlook it. They may try to negotiate a lower price or ask for a flooring allowance in your contract. I' ll admit that isn't ideal. But, you have to spend less money and do less work right now.

Other Flooring Types

Take the same approach with all of your floor types. If you have tile that's a little worse for wear, clean it thoroughly. Pay special attention to the grout joints in between the tiles. If that doesn't work, have it re-grouted. Take tiny steps until you find the right fix. Your hardwood floor can probably get by with a good wax. Does your linoleum shine when you use a really good mopping solution on it?

There are some instances where you might feel your only option is to replace your flooring. Make this a last resort. All your floor might need to look great is some tender loving care. Work on that baby until in gleams.

On the other hand, if it is cheaper to replace your floor than to repair it, go ahead and put in a new floor covering. If your current flooring is damaged beyond repair, consider replacing it. If you do, look to less expensive flooring options. For example, vinyl self-stick tiles are inexpensive, easy to put down and a breeze to replace when damaged.

Brighten up the house with new bright light bulbs.
Lighting is an essential element to consider updating when prepping the house for sale. Similar to the flooring, it is an area you want to address by repairing what you can and replacing what is

completely falling apart. Just remember to be moderate and practical with your updates.

Why? The National Association of Realtors tells us many home buyers will replace lighting fixtures as one of the first things they do in their new homes. With this in mind, don't go too overboard to make the lights look as nice as possible.

Here's a cost saving idea: refurbish the good light fixtures you have. Follow these steps to save much needed cash:

- Use the spray painting principles you did on your handles, pulls and knobs.
- Try new globes for an updated look.
- Replace any light fixtures that are broken, damaged or dangerous in any way.
- If repairing an old fixture costs more than replacing it, just replace it.
- Purchase new fluorescent light bulbs to brighten the place up.
- Make sure the lights you aren't updating are impeccably clean.
- Don't forget the outside lights!

Great lighting is important when showing a home. When potential buyers can get a really good, bright look at your house, they feel they can trust you. Bright lighting also makes an area look more open and attractive. This will make your home feel larger!

One more tip: change old, haggard ceiling fan blades with inexpensive ones which can be bought at any hardware superstore.

Revamp the front entrance.

OK, my friends, take a step outside of the house and onto your front lawn. Don't feel bad if you've gotten so wrapped up in updating and improving the inside of your home you have neglected the outside. It happens to all of us.

It is now time to rectify the situation quickly and effectively. Here is what to address first: the front entrance. The first things we are going to work on are the lock and knob. Take a hard look at your doorknob. I'm serious. Look at it.

- Is it a mousy little thing from the 1970's?
- Is it dented or rusted?
- Could someone break in with only a bobby pin and concentration?

If "Yes" was the answer to any of these questions, you definitely need to replace your door handle with a heavy duty deadbolt and knob combination. Why? A less-than sturdy looking door knob on your front door tells potential home buyers your home isn't secure. It makes them feel uncomfortable, and they won't even know why. So, get a nice, big, sturdy set and they' ll feel your home is as safe as can be.

Now, take a good look at your door. Is it pleasing to look at? Or is it weathered and dinged up? Do you have a metal door that has never seen a coat of paint? It is time for a change. Here are two simple ways to do this:

- Add a dash of color to it. Choose one that compliments the color of your home. Or go with a faux painting technique that allows you to transform your metal door into what looks like a wood grain door.
- If your door is beyond hope, and you can't touch it up, have it fixed or replace the door entirely. Go with whichever costs less.

Curb Appeal is very important.

You've addressed the living area inside of your home. Your front entrance is inviting. Now it's time to really take a good hard look at your front yard. Curb appeal (how your home looks from the curb) is really important.

Buyers should drive by. look at your home and immediately feel as though they want to go inside. This will not happen if you have poor landscaping, the outside of your home looks dingy, the front porch steps are broken and your mailbox is hanging on by a thread. Look around your yard and list everything that needs a little work.

- Are your shrubs, trees, flower gardens and walkways tidy?
- Is there trash or unsightly elements in your yard?
- Does everything (front light, garage door, porch rails, etc.) work properly?
- Could any element, like patio furniture or the garage door, be updated through quick painting projects?

Chances are excellent you' ll have to do at least a little improving here. Take heart: just think o f how many people are going to beg to view the inside o f your home when they see how beautiful it is from your curb!

This might seem like an extensive list, but here' s the truth: it takes hard work to get a home ready to really sell. Anyone can put their house on the market. But not everyone sells their homes quickly or with great profits.

Chapter 16

Why The Photos Of Your Home Can Stop It From Selling

Are you the victim of a common mistake that stops your home from selling? What else can you be doing to ensure your home is going to sell?

In this chapter, you'll discover the biggest mistake agents make, a proven marketing secret, and how to "sweeten the deal" for buyers. These topics are crucial to selling your home, and quite honestly, most other real estate agents are oblivious to these proven methods.

A common mistake most agents make is not having professional pictures of the home!

THIS IS A REALY GOODE PICTIISE OF A REAU.Y MICE HOUSE, ' :

Most Realtors don't take the time or use the energy to get decent pictures. They will show up with their point and shoot approach, take a few shots and call it good. Professional pictures will make your home look much better. Photographers know what to do to make their subject look its absolute best.

Whether it's a cute puppy, a newly married couple, or a home for sale, professional pictures are a complete necessity in my book.

You have to view your house from a buyer's perspective. Even if you don't hire a photographer, at least get someone to touch up the pictures and make them look their absolute best.

Pictures sell your home. It's the first thing a buyer notices and it's what will keep them interested. Get professional pictures taken!

What can you do to sweeten the deal for the buyer?

Everyone is looking for a deal. This includes you, me, your mom. Everyone. If people think they are getting a bargain, they are going to hear that little voice inside of their head saying, "do it, do it, don't pass it up!"

Marketers have been using this method for centuries, because it works. If you want to convince someone to buy your home, offer them something no one else is offering. Even if it's something that seems insignificant to you, it may be the closing deal for the buyer. Take this example. An agent had been trying to sell a particular home for almost a year and was ready to give up. In fact, he had come very close to selling the house at one point, but the deal fell through.

Getting people interested in the home was not a problem. Buyers were looking at a lot of homes in the neighborhood. This listing was even one of the nicer ones in that particular area. That wasn't a problem. Yes, the house was nice, but so were a few other houses in the neighborhood and this house was priced above the others. The agent could not seem to close the deal on his house, because everyone would eventually turn their interest to one of those other homes.

Luckily, he talked the owner into “sweetening the deal”. He needed something that would make the house stand out. He needed an incentive to buy this house instead of the ones that were almost just as nice right down the street. Finally the owner agreed to give it a try.

The following week a new buyer came to look at the house. As usual, they planned to visit other houses in the area, after this one. So before they moved on, the agent told them he had something special to share. Based on his agreement with the owner, he gave them something to consider. Told them the owner had agreed to pre-pay the entire first year of property taxes! That is a sweet deal in any sale.

The buyers came back later that day, and wanted to buy the house! All it took was a little incentive to make one house stand out from other similar homes in the area. See the power of a good incentive? It doesn’t have to be much, and it doesn’t have to be a discount on property taxes. You could include free cleaning or lawn care or pest control services.

The list goes on and on and the only thing stopping it is your creativity. Put yourself in your buyer’s shoes and ask yourself what kind of “deal” would you like to get when buying a home. Be ready before the first buyers come. If they show interest, it might be the right time to sweeten the deal with one of your incentives.

Chapter 17

The 3-Step Formula I use To Sell Homes Other Agents Can't Sell

These techniques will sell homes that other agents have failed to sell. You may not realize it, but small details make a big difference!

Here is a small sample of homes other agents weren't able to sell. After applying these techniques, they all sold successfully:

• Home was listed for over 11 months with two other agents. Neither of them could sell it. Listed and sold in 45 days using the strategies outlined here.

• Home was up for sale for 6 months with another agent. Not much happened. A few showings had resulted in no offers. Listed and sold 3 months later.

• Home was for sale for over 18 months with two other agents. Neither of them could sell it. Listed and sold 65 days later. The owners were thrilled!

- There are countless more stories, just like these. (These are just a few examples that come to mind.)

3 basic things a good agent can do to succeed where other agents have failed:

#1. Improve the marketing. Take better pictures and write better descriptions. Perform an in depth "marketing analysis". This helps identify marketing opportunities other agents have missed.

#2. Solve any problems holding back the sale. Yes, sometimes a problem is holding the sale back. Here is an example:

Contrary to what most people think, price is not always the reason that a home doesn't sell. One sale was held back 12 months by a pending municipal lien. A little creative thinking and consultation with someone who is an expert, like me - I am a real estate attorney - would have solved the problem. That home could have sold once the problem was resolved, without dropping the price.

Bottom Line: Good agents are problem solvers. Solve the problems and the home sells. Unfortunately, not all agents are good problem solvers.

#3. Improve the showing condition of the home. A “staged" home will sell for 10-15% more. A home in good showing condition (but not staged) can still sell for 1-10% more than an average listing. Have you ever wondered why foreclosures are a “bargain”? Well, there is your answer. Some foreclosures are complete dumps. Others are dirty, stinky, and do not show well at all. The foreclosure that is in perfect condition is a rarity.

So, why do so many people think that the only reason a home doesn't sell is because it is “overpriced?" **It's just the accepted wisdom in the marketplace.** This may seem absurd. After all... everyone wants a magic formula to solve all their problems. But, sometimes simple things can solve seemingly impossible problems.

In fact, few people knew and taught “the basics” better than football coach Vince Lombardi. He is considered by many to be one of the greatest football coaches o f all time. He started coaching the Green Bay Packers when they were consistently losing one game after another. He turned the team around and won 5 NFL Championships. Those unfamiliar with Lombardi's coaching tactics might assume that he was successful because he had complex strategies and completely unheard-of methods.

Actually, the opposite is true. Vince Lombardi believed that for the Green Bay Packers to become a great team, they would have to go back to the basics of the sport and re-learn even the simplest aspects of the game. In his first pre-season speech, he shocked every one of his new players. He stood in front of them, held up something up in his hand, and announced, **"Gentlemen, this is a football".**

He then proceeded to revisit all of the basic rules o f football, what the different lines on the field were for, etc. **Some might have thought he was going a little overboard. His results proved them wrong.** Lombardi led the Packers to five NFL Championships as well as two Super Bowl wins. His "back to basics" approach paid off, and the team got to enjoy its rewards.

The same philosophy should be used to sell your home. You can bombard social media, list your home on every website imaginable, beg your friends to put up flyers on the notice board at work, and so on.

If you don't start with the basics everything else is just a waste of time. Time is very valuable, so most people who are looking to buy a house will not waste even a second on a listing that hasn't

mastered the basics. If they have to ask questions like, “Why are all the photos so
dark?”, or “Is it a townhouse or a condo? I can’t tell!”, they’ll just move on to the next listing The first impression has to be perfect.

Even a great home cannot sell itself without the proper marketing. A great agent is needed to make sure that your home is being showcased in the best way possible. Just like Vince Lombardi knew that going back to basics would help his team, a qualified Realtor will know the basics o f marketing are crucial to selling your home.

Every home has a base, and without that base, the whole structure could fall flat. A selling strategy for your home works the same way. Hurrying to post an ad for your home on your Facebook page will do little good if it’s a rushed job that shows more of the neighbor’s garage than your beautiful front porch and garden.

A successful Realtor knows that basic strategies are the foundation of a marketing plan to sell your house. Give me a call and I’ ll show you my strategies for marketing your home and finding the perfect buyer.

Chapter 18

Why Every Trump Home Sells

First, the Bad News. There is a good chance the buyer of your home will be a great negotiator. If you don't know anything about negotiating, you risk having them take advantage of you.

Now for the Good News. This book reveals how an average negotiator can avoid being taken advantage of by a better negotiator.

There are two things that determine who wins a negotiation.
• The **motivation** of the people negotiating.
• The skill they have or do not have negotiating.

Here is a story that plays out every day, all across America. This happens over and over again. **There is a good chance this could happen to you.**

A seller is selling his home. He is an average negotiator. He is not that great. But he is not horrible either. **Unfortunately, he is a motivated seller.**
• He has had the home on the market for 8 months.
• He has already relocated to another city.
• The home and upkeep have been stressing him out.
• He is super busy at work and doesn't have the emotional energy to deal with another problem.

A buyer wants to buy his home. The buyer is highly motivated to buy this home, because it is the perfect home for him. He has been looking for a home just like this for a long time and couldn’t find it. Therefore, the buyer is highly motivated to buy this home. In fact, his wife is scared if they negotiate too hard, they will lose this house!

This buyer is an incredible negotiator. He’s cool and collected. First, he gathers all the facts. He finds out the home hasn’t been shown in 2 months. Then, he finds out the seller has already moved. He looks the seller up on Facebook and stumbles across a rather revealing Facebook post. The seller vented about real estate and how badly he wants to sell the house. Now, let’ s ask ourselves a question.

Who do you think is going to win this negotiation?
Yep. The buyer. Yes, both people are motivated. But one did a better job at negotiating. As a result, he wins! He buys the home for $43,000 less than the fair market value.

Don’t let this happen to you!
In the upcoming chapters, we’ ll take a closer look at negotiation. Take time to prepare and you’ ll be ready for whatever comes along!

Chapter 19

Negotiating Musts

Let's start with some negotiating mistakes to avoid. After all, what you don't do is going to be more important than what you do! One slip of the tongue can result in a negotiating mistake (and hurt your pocketbook too!)

Common Negotiating Mistake #1

Not learning the other party's motivation.
Price isn't the only reason people buy. They may really like a certain feature your home has. They might be willing to pay more because of that feature. Sometimes they might absolutely love that feature. They have been hunting for a while and finally found a home meeting their needs completely. That means they are willing to pay more for your home.

If you meet the buyers, you should ask them why they are buying a home. They might tell you they are being transferred and have to find a home by a certain date. If you know that, you will be able to negotiate a higher sales price. If the buyers have an agent, ask the agent for information. Here are some questions you can ask:

- Why do the buyers like this home?
- Where are they moving from?
- How does this home compare to other homes?

You shouldn't be as blunt as that. **However, you can often find the answers to these questions in a roundabout way.** For example, you could say, "You will love our town because of the X (insert a unique feature o f your town.) Do they have an X where you live now?"

That will start the conversation about where they are moving from. You can learn a lot from what they say. It will be helpful during the negotiations. You would be amazed at what some people will tell you.

Common Negotiating Mistake #2

Meeting in the middle.
This is the most common mistake novice home sellers make. It's the easiest way to sell your home for $ 10,000 less than you should. I don't want to come across as cocky, but meeting in the middle is really lame. It's the most common thing everyone does and the problem is everyone thinks they have to do it. That's a big mistake. There is no rule book that says you have to "meet in the middle'.

Here is a quick story that illustrates this. A home was on the market for $240,000. The buyers made an offer for $220,000. The agent told the seller to reject the offer and told the other agent they should come back with a better offer. (The house had only been on the market for 2 days.) The buyer came back and "met in the middle" with a $230,000 offer. The agent knew they were serious buyers and really wanted the house. The seller thought the buyer was being a good person by "meeting in the middle." He was willing to accept the $230,000 offer.

The agent told him to give a little, but not "meet in the middle”. He recommended that he counter at $237,500 and see what happened. The buyers came back with **$235,000** and after some more negotiations the buyer and seller agreed on **$237,000.**

So, what can you take from this? Don't meet in the middle. Instead, give 10-20% and let the other guy give 50%. You'll gain a little more in each round o f negotiations.

Common Negotiating Mistake #3

Talking too much.
This is the worst sin of negotiating. Don't tell the buyers or their agent your life's story. What do you think would pop into a buyer's head if they heard this out of a seller's mouth? "We must sell the home because it is in foreclosure, and if we don't sell it by June 23rd, then the bank will foreclose on it.”

Immediately they will think, "I wonder what they owe on the house. Because if it doesn't sell, they will have a foreclosure. The sellers probably just want to get what they owe on the home so they can avoid foreclosure.”

This is an extreme example, but it shows you how a simple slip of the tongue could cause a seller to lose a large amount of their hard earned equity. A seller facing foreclosure in that situation might be desperate enough to "get out" with none of their equity just to avoid foreclosure.

But. what if the buyer was willing to pay the market value for the home? That seller just lost all of their equity! When a buyer asks why you are selling, answer them without giving away any extra information. You could say. "Oh, we would like to move to Omaha" (Or whatever place you are moving to). You don't need to say much more than that. And don't tell them you have a job transfer!

Common Negotiating Mistake #4

Making the first move.
Many buyers will ask what your bottom line is. They know they can usually negotiate a home seller down to an even lower price.
Don't fall for it. You've already made the first move by setting a price for your home. Tell the buyers you need to think it over and get back to them. Then, ask them what they like about your home. If they tell you, you can determine their motivation to buy your home. After that, ask them what they are thinking of offering on your home.

The reason this rule is so important is in some negotiations, you may offer more at the beginning than the other party is willing to accept. Here is an example of this. A person I know was trying to buy something. He had a price in mind he was willing to pay. He thought the best price he could get was $1,500, but he was willing to pay up to **$ 2,000.** He asked the seller what he wanted for the item. The seller responded he didn't know what he wanted. He offered the seller $1,500 and the seller accepted it. He later learned that the seller was desperate. The seller had a price in mind of $800 to $ 1,000.

If the seller had mentioned an opening price first, he would have saved $500! Instead he lost $500.

Common Negotiating Mistake #5

Letting your ego get involved.
What is your final goal? You want to sell your property quickly for top dollar, right? Keep that goal in mind during the entire negotiation. I have seen people kill a potential top dollar sale simply because they didn't like the buyer. Or, the buyer started negotiations with a low ball offer and the seller got offended. "I refuse to negotiate with someone who insulted me with that lowball offer", they said. And a good buyer moved on to buy another house.

Most lowball offers can be negotiated to a higher price.
Some buyers have a big ego and think they are great negotiators (when they actually aren't.) Their definition of a great negotiator? Someone with a big ego that tells people off and walks around like they own the world. They think being abrasive and rude will get them a better deal. They'll throw around "take it or leave it" offers.

I can tell you from personal experience most buyers are willing to pay more than their "take it or leave it" offer. You just have to keep the negotiations going, even though you might be a little unhappy or angry with what they are doing. I have seen home sellers tell off a buyer that said something rude. That buyer could have bought their house. The buyer might actually be a very nice person.

Keep your eye on the goal and don't get distracted by petty things. You want to sell your house for top dollar. Let anything a buyer says that is rude, or otherwise offensive, roll off like water off a duck's back. It means more money for you in the end. That is the best feeling of all, far better than telling them off!

Common Negotiating Mistake #6:

Failing to take time on the counter offer.

Many times you will be pressured to reply right away to an offer. Buyers are impatient and if they really like your house, they will want an answer to their offer right away. But, do you know what else that means?

They are probably willing to pay more for your property.

Take the time to talk to your Realtor. You need to take a little time and consider the situation. Have you been able to find out any information on the buyers? Use that to put yourself in the buyer's shoes. A little space and an objective third part will lead to more effective decision making.

Chapter 20

Simple Negotiation Ideas

Now that you know what mistakes to avoid, here is how to negotiate for the highest price possible.

Finally, you are where you want to be in the home selling business. You've worked yourself senseless updating your home, cleaning it and pretty much creating an appealing abode for home seekers. Then, you get your first viewers. Yes! Now you're at another first, with someone making an offer on the property. You suddenly realize you're in a very precarious situation, and you may have no idea how to proceed.

1 can help you with that, so don't sweat it. Try to realize this is one of the most important financial decisions of your life. I know, I just told you not to sweat it, and then I throw that at you. But, in truth, most people don't stand a chance of coming into this kind of money more than once or twice in their lives, if that. So, you want to make the very best of this situation for yourself, for your future and for your children' s futures. The more money you make, the better off you' ll be. But you already knew that part. That is why I'd like to guide you through more than just the standard approach to negotiating the sale of your home.

I want to see you come away from this deal with a few less debts, a wonderful new home and some extra cash under the mattress. While there are times when the offer, counter offer, deal approach works best, there are also times when you could come away with thousands more through simple strategic planning.

Let's explore your options, and then you can choose which is best for you.

Negotiation Technique #1

The typical negotiating approach.

You are probably familiar with the way most people approach the buying and selling process. The home is put on the market, and when an interested buyer comes by, they make an offer to the homeowner. The homeowner will typically make a counter offer, which can be accepted or rejected by the bidder. Sometimes this back and forth can go on for a while. There are both pros and cons to this particular situation.

Pros

One positive to the typical negotiating method is the transaction is fairly straightforward and easy to understand. It makes the seller seem flexible and willing to work with the buyer's needs. It's a bang, bang, boom sort of situation, and everybody knows exactly what's going on. This strategy can work quite well for folks who are willing to take lower offers to simply be rid of a home. It's a pretty straight forward process. That is as much as any home purchasing transaction can be straight forward.

Cons

A serious negative to this approach is once you begin this back and forth negotiating tactic, your home is off of the market until the deal is either sealed or discarded. Let me put it in perspective for you. Let's suppose Sally Sue, who checked out your home last week, calls with a much higher bidding price five minutes after you make a counter offer to your current bidder. You are now legally bound to put Sally Sue on hold until you see if your current negotiations work out or not.

The bottom line is you could be making substantially less money and there' s not a thing in the world that you can do about it. Another con to the standard approach is you might feel pressured to take low ball offers from deal seekers out of fear nothing better will come along. If the cons outweigh the pros in your situation, let me ease your mind. You don't have to go through those negatives, because there are many negotiating approaches you can take. Allow me to share.

Negotiating Technique #2

Reject an offer, but throw the bidder a bone.
Let's just say a buyer comes around, loves your property and makes an offer. You are happy they want the home, but you're a little less than thrilled with their bid. You find yourself on the fence. You wonder if you should get the deal over with and take what you can get. or if you should hold out for a better offer in the future.

That's a valid concern, and there is a way to handle this. Go ahead and reject their offer. That's right. Take a step most folks have a hard time taking and simply say that one dreaded word, "No." Saying no can sometimes take you exactly where you want to go. Just don't stop with the negative answer. Reject their offer, but invite them to resubmit a higher bid. That takes some of the pressure off of you. There are several ways a deal like this can go. The potential buyers are not usually going to expect you to take their very first bid. and they might be throwing out a low ball offer just to see how far down you're willing to go.

You can send your own little message by rejecting that less than desirable offer, but keeping them in the loop. They' ll know without a doubt they ventured far too low. If they sincerely want your property, and not just a bargain, they are likely to come back to you with a much higher bid.

As always, there are two sides to every coin. In the event the bidders really do want your property, out of all of the other properties available, this procedure can work well. However, you are liable to lose the deal if this is just a person gobbling up cheap real estate the way some people gobble cookies. While that may seem bad at first, in retrospect it leaves you completely open to better offers in the future.

Useful Tips
• It's most desirable to use this approach when your home has just come on the market or if you have an open house scheduled soon.
• Keep in mind that whole legal counter offer thing-a-ma-jig, too. The instant you make a counter offer to a low bid, which could just be a real estate gobbler on the prowl, you've tied yourself to dealing only with that bidder until you come to a consensus. During the time you and your bidder are coming to a common decision, you can't entertain any other offers. That wastes your valuable time, and could cost you better bids.

Negotiation Technique #3

Bring on the bidding war.
Did you know there is such a thing as a bidding war? This is usually a carefully crafted situation that can literally bring the bid on a

home above the price the homeowners are asking for in the first place. Here, allow me to explain how this can happen.

The Process

• The first thing you do is to put your desirable home on the market.

• You also ideally schedule an open house for just a few days later.

• As you put your home on the market, you also put in a disclaimer that you're not going to entertain any bids made on said home until after the completion of the open house.

Well, you're probably thinking this is ludicrous! How is going through all of this trouble going to help you sell your home quickly, and for top dollar? You could be missing out on real bids! Hold on to your horses, cowboy, because there's more to this story. The answers to your questions are simple as can be. Human nature will take over, my friend. You and I have just created a prime situation for competition to abound.

Everyone who sees the home and loves it will want to make a bid. Some really competitive players will want to bid just to see if they can win the prize! They'll know from the onset you are potentially getting offers from countless other people, too. You have just been set up to take multiple bids at once, and this gives you the freedom to go with the best one.

Potential homeowners who really want your house for their own are going to start bidding high, and they might keep overbidding each other. In this type of situation, or a bidding war, it is not uncommon at all for the seller to come away with more than their asking price. The reality of the situation is you might only get one bid out of the whole shebang. However, the bidder isn't privy to that information. The fact they know they could be competing against other offers also works in your favor. They are going to try to make an offer that’s better than everyone else, because they don’t have a clue there is no one else at all. At the end of the day, who does the winner turn out to be? You do!

Negotiating Technique #4

An expiration date for extra motivation.
Let me remind you. Once a buyer makes an offer you don’t want to accept, and you then make a counter offer, you are legally bound to see the negotiation process through until you and the bidder either come to agreeable conditions or agree to part ways.

This means you can’t take a higher offer if one comes along. That is a rotten situation to be in. However, there is a way you can counteract this problem. You can set yourself up for a higher selling price and a shorter waiting time all at the same time. To help your cause, in order to sell your home quickly for the most money possible, put an expiration date on your counter offer. It means you give your bidder a certain amount of time to either agree or disagree with your terms. This benefits your outcome in a couple of ways.

Benefits of a short expiration date
• First, a short expiration date motivates your potential buyers to make a speedy decision. Either you’ ll go into a contract with them, or they’ ll move on to greener pastures.
• If the bidder moves on, you are free to negotiate with other bidders quickly.
• If they accept your terms in short order, you sell your property faster.

I encourage you to be reasonable about this. The last thing you want to do is turn your buyer off by making the timeframe too short, particularly if they aren't that far off from your ideal price with their current offer. However, feel free to go below the standard time used in your state. If the typical deadline is three days, make yours two.

The potential buyers will know you mean business, but you also recognize this is a life changing decision for them, as well as for yourself. There's another reason to expedite these contracts besides quickly closing a deal or being free to negotiate with other buyers. The longer your home is on the market, the less desirable it appears to potential buyers. If the deal falls through, you've extended the number of days your home has been on the market. Valuable time has been wasted. By shortening that time, you're shortening your overall number of marketed days in the event that this deal doesn't go through.

Negotiating Technique #5:

Pay the piper, but raise the price.
Buyers are increasingly asking sellers to pay their closing costs, which are normally around 3% of the actual price of the home. I know it makes you shudder to even think of handing out that kind of cash. However, this kind of deal could actually work to your benefit. Let me explain.

The Buyer's Perspective
Let's look at this from a buyer's perspective for a moment. Many homebuyers just can't afford to come up with those kinds of

additional costs. Often, they are strapped for cash after coming up with the down payment for your home, money for new appliances, moving expenses and re-decoration needs.

Your Perspective

On the other hand, it isn't quite fair for you to come up with that much cash so they can buy a home, now is it? After all, they not only want you to pay the closing costs but also to come down on your original price. I' ll give it to you straight. You should pay those closing costs.

Wait! Before you decide I've lost my marbles and toss this book out of the nearest window, allow me to show you how paying those costs will work for you and not against you in the long run. You should pay the closing costs, but you should also increase the price the buyers pay for your home by the same amount. Let me restate that.

If the only thing preventing you from selling your home is the out of pocket cost for closing fees, and you're able to afford it, it would be beneficial for you to do so. You should recoup that money by raising the price on your home by the same amount. You see, buyers may not be able to come up with extra cash for closing costs, but they can often borrow more money with their loan. Many buyers don't realize if you pay their closing costs, you are giving up some substantial profit on your home's sale. You should help them realize that fact in your counter offer.

Here's how you handle the situation. When the buyer submits an offer that includes you paying the closing costs, simply counter with an offer that says you' ll do just that. That is, you' ll do just that as long as they agree to the higher price you're proposing for your home.

Show me some numbers, please!

• Let's say, for instance, your asking price is $250,000.
• Closing costs would be approximately $7,500.
• Your bidder makes an offer for $240,000 and additionally asks you to pay the closing costs.
• We understand this means you would be letting your home go for $17,500 less than you asked for it. That's a nice chunk of change, and often more than anyone with a brain and a house worth the asking price is willing to go.
• So you make a more reasonable request. Simply counter offer by agreeing to pay the $7,500 in closing costs as long as the bidder is willing to pay the original price o f $250,000 for the property.
• You've reduced it to a more reasonable amount of loss at $7,500.
• The bidder is still getting a deal, and you're getting a fair price.

(Keep in mind these numbers are only approximations. I'm a Realtor, not a mathematician. I think you can see the point, though. Thanks!)

Ideally, this approach allows you to come out smelling like a rose, because you' ll get back the money you invested for closing costs as soon as the deal is done. However, there is one major hurdle that could hinder you. In the event your home won't actually stand for the amount of money you're asking, you' ll have to go back to the drawing board. A bank is not going to loan more money than your home is worth in any event, and especially in today' s economy. However, paying closing costs in many situations can be a great way to close a deal. It can actually mean the difference in your possible buyer choosing to go into debt for your home rather than the guy’s down the street. It’s just a matter of asking a fair price for an outstanding home from the very beginning.

A Final Tip: How to immediately gain the upper hand in any negotiation.

If you ever feel you are getting "taken advantage of in any negotiation, do this. Tell the buyer you are changing your mind. Yes, that's right. You are taking your home off the market. The dynamics of the negotiations will change right away. The buyer will now have to sell you on why you should sell the home to them In addition, they will have to make a really sweet offer in order to have any chance of you accepting it. I'm not saying you should use this tactic in every negotiation.

However, this is a very effective strategy when you feel you are losing the negotiation. I only recommend using it in that type of a situation. If the buyer doesn't buy the house, you can always change your mind and continue to try and sell it. After all, there is nothing wrong with changing your mind. Lying, cheating, and stealing are wrong. But changing your mind isn’t! Does that make sense?

Chapter 21

Why Your Dog Wants You To Hire Me To Sell Your Home

(This only applies if you have a dog!)

"Please stop locking me in this crate when buyers come to look at our house. “

A Letter from Your Dog:
"I still get chills when I think about selling our home. I still remember the last time someone wanted to look at our house. I got locked in my crate. I was trapped here all by myself for 4 hours. I was so scared that 1 cried. I whimpered and barked. After exhausting myself, I started thinking about what we could do to sell this house. Then, I had an idea.

What if there was a way to only show the home to buyers that were actually interested in buying it?

We could sell our house faster. 1 wouldn’t have to spend so much time in this horrible crate! 1 have an idea that might do that. What if buyers were pre-sold on the home before they ever saw it? Would you be open to trying that? Here is how it would work. We would tell buyers everything about the house before they ever looked at it. It would cut back on showings. However, the people that did look at the home would be more likely to buy it. I know I’m being selfish, but 1 think you would be happier as well. You wouldn’t spend 3 hours cleaning the house whenever a buyer wants to see it.

Remember the buyer who told you they were going to come at noon and then didn’t show up? That was so ridiculous. It breaks my doggie heart to see you struggle to sell this house. I think it’s time to try something different.
— End of Letter —

Personally... I think your dog is onto something. It must have found out about the selling strategy laid out in detail in this book. The home selling strategy enables you to sell your home for more money with fewer showings.

Here is a quick overview o f another case where it worked. John had his home on the market for 18 months. He hired two agents and neither could sell it.

The home sat on the market for 18 months without selling. Then, he hired a new agent. The new agent tried out a new marketing strategy. They "pre-sold" potential buyers on the home before they even saw it.

The home sold 65 days after he hired the new agent.
The buyers saw the ad and bought the home the same day. They were ready to buy it as soon as they saw the ad for the home. These buyers were tough negotiators. They had worked their way up from nothing and owned a thriving business with 30+ employees. Even though they were tough negotiators, they really wanted John’s house. The home sold for a record high. The final sales price was $57,500 more than a similar home located seven doors down on the same exact street.

Why did the buyer pay a record high price for a home that had been available for 18 months with no offers?

• It sold because John's realtor had recently implemented the "Sell It before You Show It" Marketing Strategy.

• It wasn't because he dropped the price. John didn't drop the price one dime!

• It wasn't because buyers didn't know about it. (The home had been on the Multiple Listing Service for 18 months.)

I've got good news. Would you like to use the same "Sell It Before You Show It" Marketing Strategy To Sell Your Home?

You can. I laid out the entire strategy right in the book. And I can implement the entire strategy for you. Simply jump to the last page and you will see all of my contact information.

Chapter 22

A Big Mistake That Cost One Home Seller $36,000

Chuck wanted to sell his home. A realtor contacted him and told him that someone wanted to buy his home. The buyers were offering $285,000 and were approved for a loan. "Will you sell your home to them?” the realtor asked. On the surface, it all seemed like a great deal. Chuck could sell his home quickly and avoid the inconvenience of the normal home selling process.

Without further ado, Chuck accepted the $285,000 offer and moved on with his life. A few weeks later, Chuck's neighbor sold his house for $321,000. The neighbor's house was very similar to Chuck's home. It was a little bit smaller but otherwise comparably to Chuck's. It wasn't in better shape than Chuck's house.

Why did Chuck sell his house for $36,000 less than his neighbor?

- Why did he work so hard to pay down his mortgage?
- Why did he work so hard to keep his house in tip top shape only to sell it for less than it was worth?

Because he didn't know what his house was actually worth!
Unfortunately, Chuck never checked with anyone to find out what his house was worth.

He didn't get an appraisal or a second opinion from another realtor.

Here is how to avoid having this happen to you. Obtain a second opinion of the value of your home - BEFORE you put it on the market.

If you don't price your home correctly, you take the risk of:
• **Selling your home for less than it's worth.**
• **Wasting time** while your home sits on the market (because it's not priced correctly.)

Here is how to avoid having this happen to you. Price your home so it sells quickly and for the highest price possible. If we're being honest here, we probably all have skewed ideas of the worth of our homes. Either we think it is far more marvelous than it actually is, or we're so tired of it that we think it is a horrendous cross to bear. Add to that your hopes and dreams of what to do with your money once you sell, and pricing your own home is a complete danger zone. This is one area where the aid of a realtor really does come in handy.

Danger Zone #1: Pricing Below Value

It is possible that a home priced too low could eventually aid a seller to start off a bidding war so that the price is driven above what the sellers wanted to make in the first place. However, conditions must be ripe for this kind of arrangement to work. Well-laid out and professional plans are also crucial to this maneuver's success.

On the other hand, when a home is priced far below market value, potential buyers are left feeling as though there is some hidden, ominous fault with the property - even if there isn’t. That kind of mentality can leave a home simply hung out to dry, which wastes valuable time. The longer a property stays on the market, the less money that sellers are likely to make.

Danger Zone #2: Pricing Above Value

Pricing too high, obviously, leaves your home sitting stagnant in the water while all of your neighbors’ homes are snatched off of the market. Why would anyone purchase your home if one very similar is priced thousands lower nearby?

Common sense says that your home is not going anywhere anytime soon. Now, you’re sitting and playing the waiting game while your peak selling time is slowly dwindling away. These dangers are why getting an accurate price on your home from the get-go is imperative to your selling for top dollar. There are several ways that you can proceed with discovering this mythical figure, but it isn’t necessarily a simple or cost-free endeavor.

Avoid the most common mistake novice home sellers make.
They don't check comparable sales and just put the home on the market. It sounds too simple to be true. But, it happens all the time. At other times, they do not check the highest and best value of the property and sell a prime development property for pennies on the dollar.

One savvy investor bought a prime development property for about $275,000 and re-sold it for over a million dollars! The sellers made the mistake of selling their property without checking out all their options.

Understand how different market settings affect how you should price your home.
First, you need to determine whether or not you are in a buyer or seller’s Market. While you’re scouting out other homes for sale in your area, you should also pay attention to how long they’ve been on the market.

Places like Zillow and Realtor.com often have a little section under each home that tells how long it has been up for sale in their systems, although not necessarily how long they’ve been on the market. If homes in your neighborhood are getting snatched up right and left, you stand a good chance of the same happening for you if your home is priced right.

This would be referred to as a seller’s market, and you could get more profit from your home’s sale. On the other hand, if the ‘Home for Sale ’ signs in your area seem to be growing roots and taking up permanent residence, then you are probably in a buyer's market.

How to price your home in a seller’s market.
Sold homes don't matter that much. You should price your home to be competitive with the other homes on the market. But, you don't have to match the price of what homes have sold for. For example, a home recently sold that was seemingly about $100,000 overpriced. Comparable homes were selling for about $525,000 to $550,000. However, home prices in the area were increasing rapidly. Nothing similar that was available for less than $650,000. The seller owed $650,000, so they priced the property at $699,900. And guess what? It sold 3 months later for $674,000.

How to price your home in a buyer's market.

If your local market is a buyer's market, then you should look at all of the other homes for sale and make sure that your home is priced competitively with them. If your home is not selling, then you will need to adjust the price until it sells. This is never fun.

How to determine your home's exact value.
There's more than one way to find out the value of your home. You can use the following method by itself. However, a combination of some or all of these suggestions will likely give you the best pricing direction.

Hire an appraiser: One way you can get an accurate valuation is by consulting a professional. However, many appraisers will charge hundreds of dollars to give you a reasonably accurate home price estimate.

Let me help you: Do you know there is a simple way that is 100% free? As a real estate agent, I have access to the same information. I'd be happy to put together a Comparable Market Analysis (CMA) for your home! The CMA will provide you with the following information:
• **Detailed information on each house sold in your area** over the last 6 months along with the **final sale prices.** If you are thinking of selling, this will help you price your home realistically.
• **Detailed information on all houses for sale in your area** and their **asking price.** These homes are your competition. Skip ahead to last Chapter if you would like more information on how to request a free home valuation.
Do your own homework: There is a free way of getting a decent valuation of your home, but it is risky and time consuming. You can use the Internet to scout out other homes that are for sale in your area, and narrow them down to those that are similar to yours.

The prices on these homes can give you a good benchmark for setting your own price.

How to find accurate comparable sales and use them to determine your home's exact value.
Go to Realtor.com and click on the "Recently Sold" button on the top. To search for homes similar to yours, enter criteria, such as square footage, the number of bedrooms, etc. The key to finding accurate comparable sales is to find the properties that are closest in location, condition, square footage, features, etc.

How to determine which comparable sales you should use and which to ignore.
The following comparable sales should not be used. Very few of these properties sell for a fair value. Here is why each of these property types are NOT good comparable sales.

Bank Owned / REO Properties. Banks always sell their homes for less than they are worth. They are not in the business of selling homes and just don’t want to carry the inventory. The average bank owned home in today's market is selling for 5-10% less than its fair value. This is true even for the homes that are in good shape.

Short Sales. Buyers and their agents hate short sales, because they are tricky and unreliable. A buyer will often fall in love with a short sale home, only to find out the banks won't approve the short sale. Agents do not like to show them for the same reasons. As a result, the pool of buyers for a short sale is much smaller than for a regular listing.

Ugly Homes. These are homes that are unappealing and aren’t kept up. People buy homes because of emotion. Logic doesn't always apply. As a result, a well-kept up home will sell for more money. We have seen well-maintained homes sell for 10-15% more than an unappealing home. We have seen professionally staged homes sell for 20% more than an un-staged property. Yes, the condition of a home counts. Don't use an ugly home as a comparable.

It’s all in the timing

Timing is a slippery slope for sure. If you take too much time actually going through with a sale, just holding out for the perfect offer, you’re probably doing yourself a disservice. What is more likely to happen is that buyers will notice your home is just sitting there, and only offer lower prices. Market statistics suggest that the first offer is most often the highest, anyway.

Conversely, if you need to sell quickly, you don’t have a whole lot of wiggle room when it comes to negotiating. You need to get out of the home, and you’re limited to taking whatever bids are thrown at you.

To all things there are a time and a season

More often than not, the best seasons to put a house on the market are in the spring and fall. Keep this is in mind as you prepare your home for sale. If the timing allows, shoot for your next hot season to begin the marketing process. For instance, if you decide you want to sell in June, plan to put your home up for sale in the fall. Use the intervening months for the necessary preparations.

A Little Nudge

It isn’t uncommon to get to a place where you’re desperate to get this selling business over with, and yet, there are no takers. Give your prospective buyers a little nudge. Make them feel as if they’re getting the deal of a lifetime! Everyone loves a bargain. There are several ways that you could use this psychological tendency to your advantage;

• Offer an allowance for decorating, new appliances or even landscaping. Look at the flaws of your home, and instead of trying to correct them with MORE improvements, correct them with money. Buyers love being able to pick out all of their own. new stuff.

• Consider paying for a home warranty. They aren’t typically astronomically expensive, usually just a few hundred bucks, and they give a new homeowner the peace of mind to buy your used home.

• Think about paying the closing costs. While this may seem a little unfair, if you can sell your house quickly, you’ ll be benefiting tremendously. Remember, the longer your home marinates on the market, the less you’re going to make anyway.

Chapter 23

Read This Before You Sign A Contract With A Buyer

Imagine taking your home off the market for 60 days while a prospective buyer tries to buy it. 60 days later the buyer finds out that they cannot obtain a loan.

You just wasted 60 days of marketing time!
Imagine that during the 60 days, another buyer wanted to buy your home. But, the buyer couldn't buy your home. Why not? Because you signed a contract with the first buyer. By the time you find out the first buyer could NOT obtain financing, the other buyer had already bought a house! Ouch! You just lost a sale!

This is why it is so important to make sure a buyer is able to obtain financing BEFORE you sign a contract. Fortunately, 1 can help pre-qualify any prospective buyers. I will tell you whether or not they will be able to obtain financing.

It costs you nothing to have me pre-qualify them.
I can help them get a loan with the most competitive interest rates available. You can rest easy knowing they will be able to obtain financing. This is a completely free service. The buyer is under no obligation to use me to get a loan. I will help them select the best loan for their financial needs:

• Conventional - Refinancing your conventional mortgage can lead to low fixed rate or adjustable rates used for your primary, second home or investment property.

• FHA - If you currently have an FHA mortgage, the refinance process can be very streamlined with no appraisal and reduced loan documentation to qualified applicants.
• VA - Refinance your current VA mortgage into a lower rate VA loan with a streamlined process.
• USDA - USDA mortgages provide a low-cost insured home mortgage loan that allows you to refinance your current USDA loan into a new USDA loan with a lower rate.

Chapter 24

How To Find Out Exactly how Much Money You Will Receive On Your Sale

Knowing how much money you will receive on your sale is obviously the key factor to setting your sale price. However, you must keep in mind that whatever your sale price is, is not the same amount of money that will go into your pocket.

As a seller, you will be responsible for settlement agent fees (to pay for the services of the title company), search and exam fees (for the title company to review the public records to determine valid title), Homeowner's Title Insurance, deed transfer fees (payable to the county clerk), HOA estoppel fees (to conform your HOA is being paid), and other fees.

Also, you will be responsible for paying a portion of the current year's property taxes, even though the amount may not be currently due. The fees are varied and impossible to explain with specificity on a book.

Contact me to request a free closing cost estimate. The free estimate will itemize all of your projected closings costs and fees. I will provide you with a free, no obligation closing cost estimate that will show how much money you will receive from your home sale. I've been a real estate attorney for over 17 years and have conducted hundreds of closings.

Chapter 25

Should You Consider Hiring A Realtor?

I am sure you have wondered why people even hire a Realtor. Well, here are a few reasons why.

Reason #1: We can sell homes for more money

In fact, most sellers net more money in their pocket, even after they pay the agent's commission. The typical home sold by an agent sells for $230,000, while the typical For-Sale-by-Owner home sells for $184,000.

That doesn't mean every agent is going to sell your home for more money. But the numbers do show agents typically sell homes for more money. In fact, many sellers actually make money hiring a Realtor to sell their home.

Here are a couple of real life examples:
• Brandon had his home on the market for $220,000. He wasn't getting much activity. The buyers who did look at it were not serious. They showed little interest in buying the home and made lowball offers. He listed his home with an agent for $240,000. Three weeks later, he received an offer from a buyer willing to pay full price. He actually ended up with more money in his pocket, even after paying the real estate agent's commission.
• Jimmy & Kaye had their home on the market for $380,000. It

wasn’t selling. After a few months, they hired a Realtor and increased the price to $420,000. A few months later, the home sold for $408,000. They actually made more money, even after paying the real estate commission.

Do these stories happen every day? No. Does this happen to every For-Sale-by-Owner that hires a Realtor? No. But, they happen more often than not. In most cases, the agent can sell the home for more money than the seller could sell it for on their own.

Reason #2: The process is easier when you hire a Realtor

Let me give you a concrete example. I talked to a title company manager who handles both For-Sale-by-Owner closings and Realtor closings. He told me when a For-Sale-by-Owner sells their home, it takes about 30-45 days for the two parties to sign off on the sale contract. He said sometimes they don't even sign it until they sit down for the closing. When a property is sold by a Realtor, the sales contract is usually signed in 45 hours.

Why does this matter to you?
Have you ever heard of "Buyer's Remorse”? It's what happens when a buyer makes a decision to buy your home, only to immediately begin questioning their decision. It doesn't matter if the decision was good or bad. I've seen buyers get buyer's remorse when they were stealing homes. They still question it. And, sometimes they freak out and change their mind. If you have a signed contract, you can hold them to it. If not, they may walk away, and you have to sell your home all over again.

This isn't to say that you can’t sell your home yourself.
You probably can. But. unless you have sold a lot of homes

yourself, then you probably aren't set up as well as a professional Realtor is. Does that make sense?

Reason #3: A good Realtor can save 80-100 hours of your time

That is because we handle all of the work for you. We are experts at financing, loan conditions, home inspections, surveys, title work, termite inspections, appraisals, negotiating, etc. Some people have estimated there are 189-213 different things an agent does to sell a home. That list is shorter or longer, depending on the property. I haven’t familiarized myself with every item on that list. But, I do know from personal experience selling a home does take a lot of time.

As both a real estate broker and experienced real estate attorney for over 17 years, I’ve seen it all.

Reason #4: We solve problems

This is the most important thing a Realtor can do for you. After all, just because a buyer is interested in your house does not mean they will actually be able to complete the purchase.

Here is a story that illustrates this perfectly.
A seller put her home on the market. The perfect buyer came along and made a full price offer for the home. The seller and the buyer signed a contract, and the buyer started working on financing. The buyer ran into a problem with the financing and cancelled the contract. The seller told the story to an agent. It turns out the problem the buyer had was completely solvable. However, the seller didn't know how to solve it. As a result, the buyer couldn’t obtain financing to buy the home.

The agent is confident if they had been involved in the sale, the buyer WOULD have obtained financing and bought the home. Unfortunately, the seller had to put the home back on the market. It took another 5 months to sell. The seller had to pay an additional months' worth of mortgage payments, property tax payments, and homeowner's insurance premiums. In addition, she had to maintain the lawn, pay the electric bill, and take care of the property.

This reminds me of the old story of the importance of "Knowing Where to Tap."
Have you ever heard this story? Here's the short version: A huge steamship boiler system was not working properly. The steamship captain hired a top boiler expert to fix it. The expert asked a few questions and inspected the boiler room. He looked at the pipes that twisted and turned every which way and listened to the boiler and all of the machinery.

He studied the problem, reached into his tools, and grabbed a small hammer. He gently tapped one valve and "Voila" the problem was fixed. He sent a bill for $ 1,000 to the owner of the steamship.

When the owner saw the $1,000 invoice he was mad as a hornet's nest

He called the expert and confronted him about the bill. "You were only there for 15 minutes! How dare you charge me $1,0 00!", he said. The expert heard him out and told him he would send a new bill. The owner received another bill the next day. The bill was itemized as follows:

Tapping the valve: $.50

Knowing where to tap: $995.50
Total: $1,000.00

Specialized Knowledge is one of the most valuable resources in the world.
Fortunately, for you, I have specialized knowledge. I know how to sell homes for more money. And I know the legal issues involved. I know precisely where to "tap the valve" and to solve any problems that come up.

In fact, you will usually make more money when you hire me to sell your house.
I know that sounds crazy. But it' s true. The fact I can sell your home for more money is usually enough to pay my commission.
Here is how you make money hiring me. I save you countless hours chasing down surveys, handling inspections, etc.

What is your time worth?
If it isn't worth anything, you should sell your home yourself. But, I know that isn't the case. Your time isn't worthless! I know from personal experience most homeowners are successful, hardworking individuals. You have probably spent many hours becoming skilled at your profession. 1 am sure you have considerable "specialized knowledge" in your area of expertise.

An outsider might look at what you do and think it's easy. It's not. You know it and I know it. Run the numbers. Consider the valuable insight I've shared with you. When you are ready to hire a highly skilled, professional Realtor, give me a call. I'll be glad to help you.

When you are ready to have me do all of the work required to sell your home, contact me. I’ ll help you take the first critical step: Determining your home’s true value. With that number in hand, we’ ll be ready to talk about listing and selling your home. And you will be able to make well informed decisions.

The next page has all my contact information. I can’t wait to help you get started!

What is Your Home Really Worth?

To request A copy of my **FREE** Home Value Report and find out exactly what your home is worth, go to:

www.HomeValuesOrlando.com

This is all 100% completely free with no obligation. After you submit your info, you will receive my free report with the information. You can use that information to determine what your home is worth.

I don't charge a dime for this report, even though an appraiser would charge S300-500. Luckily, that's not necessary! If you would like my free, professional opinion on the value of your home, I'd be glad to help. We can talk over the phone, or I can meet with you in person. I look forward to helping!

Best Regards,

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