

Working With Your Real Estate Agent - A Team Approach to Selling Your Home

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Once you have made the decision to sell your home, the next big choice you will have is in selecting a real estate agent that is right for you. If you had a good working relationship with the agent that assisted you in the purchase of your home, you may wish to contact that person again as you have already built up a rapport. He or she will also have a sense of what you are looking for, if in fact, you are purchasing another home.

If you are searching for a new agent, it's a good idea to speak with friends and family and get recommendations from them. If they used an agent that they were very happy with, you may want to consider contacting that person yourself. You should arrange to meet and get a feel for whether you see yourself working with that particular agent. It's important that you have confidence in who you pick. After all, buying or selling your home is one of the biggest steps that you will take in your life.

Selling your home is a team effort. You have to take some responsibility as well. The whole burden should not rest on your agent, especially if you want to sell quickly and get the highest asking price for your home. Here are a few "coaching tips" that will help you be a team player with your agent:

(1) **Consider having a consultation by a professional home stager prior to listing your home for sale.** A home stager will be able to make suggestions on what needs to be done to help sell your home faster and for more money. You can then carry out these recommendations yourself or hire the home stager to perform the work on your behalf. If at all possible, these recommendations should be completed before you even contact your real estate agent. If your home is completely sell-ready before your agent comes over to assess it, you may find that a higher asking price will be suggested than what would have been, if your home had been left as is.

(2) Remember, **your agent is on your side.** You are both wearing the same team shirt. He or she is there to help you. After all, **you both have one goal in common:** selling your home.

(3) **Listen to your agent and follow his or her suggestions.** If he or she feels that your expectations with respect to the asking price are unrealistic, don't be offended. He

or she is a professional and can give you solid comparables on what homes in your area are selling for. You may think your home is worth much more money than your neighbour's home, but that may not necessarily be the case. There are many considerations that go into assessing your home and comparing it to others. Your agent will be able to explain that to you.

(4) **Trust your agent.** Just because he or she doesn't call you every day to check in after your home is listed, that does not mean that you have been forgotten about. A phone call each day from your agent will not sell your home. A well prepared, marketed home with a fair and reasonable asking price will get sold with your agent's hard work behind the scenes.

(5) **Keep your home clean and tidy.** Always have your home in a show-ready state. If you have small children, they have to become team players as well. Try to turn it into a game if you can and reward them for keeping their rooms clean and putting their toys away.

(6) **If your home has been staged,** it is your responsibility to **keep up its staged presence.** If you don't have the time to do that, some home stagers offer touch-up services particularly on the morning of open houses. This is something you may want to consider.

(7) Pets - if at all possible take them over to a friend or neighbour's house during showings and open houses. **Not everyone is going to love Rover as much as you do.** In fact, many people are afraid of dogs, particularly large ones. There is nothing worse for an agent than having to enter your home when you are out, knowing that Rover is waiting on the other side of the door. He or she may not be sure of the type of greeting they will receive. Also, prospective buyers may not spend very long looking around if they are frightened. Don't forget to clean up after your pets as well.

(8) Avoid cooking foods that leave lingering **strong odours** and do not smoke in your home when you are trying to sell it. This is something that can put off a prospective buyer very quickly.

(9) **Never turn down showings if at all possible.** If you make it difficult for people to see your home by setting up strict rules on times and days when it can be seen, you are slimming down the chances of it being sold quickly.

It is my hope that these suggestions will assist you in developing the type of working relationship with your agent that is necessary in order for your entire team's goal to be met. Getting your home sold fast and for the most money possible is your common goal.

Dezigner Digz is a full-service home staging and interior decorating company located in Burlington, Ontario and servicing Ancaster, Hamilton, Aldershot, Burlington, Bronte, Oakville, Milton and surrounding areas.