



Sanford System & Strategies E-NEWSLETTER May 2017

Thank you for subscribing to our newsletter. Walter Sanford was one of the top real estate agents in North America for nearly thirty years, and now, he is one of the most requested speakers, trainers, and coaches. He has authored ten updated systems and books on checklists, pro-active lead generation, listing presentations, buyer systems, and much more which can be found throughout his website. If you would like to contact Walter or have him speak at your event, please email: walter@waltersanford.com

Stupid Staging

There are times when the real estate culture can really hurt you. The rabid adherence to having your sellers stage a property can be detrimental to them and you, as their agent. I am sure there are instances in past markets where homes sold faster and for more money, but is it really working well in this market?

The delays in staging can bring about additional costs due to carrying costs and the time value of money. It can also delay the acquisition of a listing. I have even seen sellers go with competing agents who do not have such stringent requirements in staging.

My whole career was based on understanding the sellers needs. I asked a lot of hard questions, and if the tradeoffs of staging for a faster and higher priced sale were not greatly benefiting the seller's desired goal, then we sold at an "as is" price. Selling a property that allows "sweat equity" can be a siren's call to a buyer.

Many times the cost of staging, the delay in marketing, and the eventual sale exceed the return on staging. The most important question is this -- if a seller has been thinking about selling their property and has not done the basics, then how much chiding will you have to do to get it done?


I've included a possible solution below for you. This is an email to send *prior to* the listing presentation with other important documents. It is impersonal, because I have not seen the property yet (but that's good!). If they will do these items, great! You can list the property and move forward. If they won't do these items, well, that's your answer. I have eliminated most of the problems that staging can create by approaching the subject in a non-intrusive way.

Get It Ready Checklist


Let your home "smile a welcome" to potential buyers.

- First impressions are lasting.**
The front door greets the prospective buyer. Make sure it is clean looking. Keep lawn trimmed, edged, and free of refuse.
- Decorate for a quick sale.**
Faded walls and worn woodwork reduce appeal. Why try to tell the prospect how the home could look when you can show him by cleaning and oiling? A quicker sale at a higher price will result. An investment in fresh paint and "elbow grease" will pay dividends, and you cannot find a better investment when you are selling a house.
- Let the sun shine in.**
Open draperies and blinds. Let the prospect see how cheerful your home can be. Dark rooms are not appealing!
- Fix that faucet.**
Dripping water discolors sinks and suggests faulty plumbing.
- Small repairs can make a big difference.**
Loose knobs, sticking/squeaking doors and windows, and other minor flaws detract from a home's value. Have them fixed. Many buyers believe there are 10 problems they have not noticed for every one they do see.
- Show your home from top to bottom.**
Display the full value of your attic, basement, and other utility space by removing all unnecessary articles. Short-term, off-site storage areas are relatively inexpensive. eBay can get rid of that treasure trove, too!
- Think safety first.**
Keep stairways clear. Avoid cluttered appearances and possible injuries.
- Make closets look bigger.**
Neat, well-ordered closets show that space is ample. A little money spent on closet organizers will reap large returns.
- Bathrooms help sell homes.**
Check and repair caulking in bathtubs and showers. Make this room sparkle!
- Arrange bedrooms neatly.**
Remove excess furniture. Use attractive bedspreads and freshly-laundered curtains.
- Harmonize the elements.**
Turn the radio on a soft music station or put on a soft music CD. Turn the TV off. Keep all lights on, day or night. Keep the drapes open in the daytime, closed at night. If it is hot, cool it; if it is cold, light a fire...only if there is a fireplace!
- You can sell pride of ownership faster and for more money.**
It is called cleanliness, and cleanliness has more buyers than "used dirt." Put sparkle in your bathrooms and kitchen, and you will take lots more "silver" out.
- When any agent shows your home, remember that three's a crowd.**
Avoid having too many people during inspections. The potential buyer will feel like an intruder and will hurry through the house. Objections that can be overcome by a professional will not be forthcoming when the seller is present.
- Music is mellow...**
But not when showing a house. Turn off the blaring radio or television. Let the salesperson and buyer talk, free of disturbances. Background "soft playing" music is okay.
- Are the pets underfoot?**
Keep pets out of the way - preferably out of the house. Many people are acutely uncomfortable around some animals. Better yet, will Aunt Alma take care of "Muffin" for you?
- Silence is golden.**
Be courteous but do not force conversation with the potential buyer. He wants to inspect your house, not pay a social call.
- Be it ever so humble.**
Never apologize for the appearance of your home. After all, it has been lived in. Let the trained salesperson answer any objections. This is his job.
- Never stay in your house with house hunters.**
Let the agent handle it, and remove yourself if you possibly can. Remember, the agent has worked many hours with these people, knows what they are looking for, and how to work with them. Let him or her do the job without interference. You may feel that an agent is it not showing the important features of your home to the prospect, but the agent knows people are not sold by details until they have become emotionally involved with the big picture of your home. The presence of any member of the seller's family cannot help. This always unnerves possible buyers, and often prevents a sale. Do not put this obstacle in your path. Please leave when buyers are coming.
- Why put the cart before the horse?**
Trying to dispose of furniture and furnishings to potential buyers before he or she has purchased the house often loses a sale and shows an over-emphasized motivation to sell.
- Here is a word to the wise....**
Let your REALTOR® discuss price, terms, possession and other factors with the prospect. He is eminently qualified to bring negotiations to a favorable conclusion.
- Customized comments for your home:**

If you would like the rest of the pre-listing package, call our office at **800.792.5837**. Ask for the newsletter special - the **\$475 multi-media listing product for \$50**. Also, be sure to ask about the special price on our whole library.



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