

# Secret To Selling Homes Faster And For Top Dollar!

By Adriane M. Weinberg

Not long ago houses sold immediately. Sans negotiation, offers were at or above asking price. If buyers hesitated, they knew someone else would grab them. Those days are gone, at least for now. Of course, buyers are delighted. No longer held hostage to rapidly escalating prices and bidding wars, they are free to compare and counter-offer. Price reductions and incentives have become common. What should sellers do?

**Home staging** is the *proven*

marketing advantage to selling homes faster and for top dollar. *According to the Denver Post, 7-27-04: In 1999 and 2002, Joy Valentine, a CA broker, surveyed ~3,000 homes in all price ranges. Both times, on average, staged homes sold in about half the time and for more money, often tens of thousands of dollars.* Beginning on the west coast where houses are routinely staged for sale, home staging is catching on here.

The way one lives in a home and sells it should be very different. Home staging prepares houses *specifically for sale* to appeal to buyers. Cosmetic appearance and square footage are maximized, and the seller's style is neutralized, so buyers focus on the house, not the décor.

The process begins with a thorough tour of the house,

inside and out. Seeing from the buyer's perspective, major and minor drawbacks they will notice, *and mentally deduct from the asking price*, are detailed. The process includes basic recommendations like decluttering and using neutral colors — which most people mistakenly believe equals home staging — but staging goes well beyond these basics.



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The final staging touches are critical to command top dollar and achieve the WOW factor that distinguishes your house from the rest. Furniture and accessories are rearranged and vignettes are created to showcase every room. These vignettes draw in buyers and appeal to their emotions so they can envision living there. Avoiding this step is a costly mistake! Without that picture and emotional connection, they will leave and those opportunities are lost. Outside, buyers decide in 8 seconds if they like a house. Inside, it's 10 to 15 minutes. Does your house quickly capture buyers' hearts and imaginations?

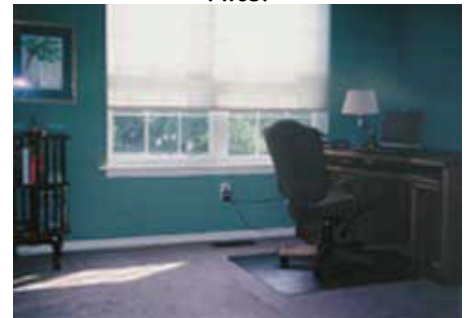
As an analogy, use two comparable cars for sale. One was detailed and appears in pristine condition; the other one does not look well maintained. Which will sell for top dollar?

Real value example: An Organized Approach<sup>SM</sup> staged a home, the last of five listed for

Before



After



sale in a development. Multiple offers were made. *The house sold in two weeks at 98% of the asking price -- in a buyers' market!* Weeks later the other homes had not sold and some even had price reductions. Staging was credited by the seller and Realtor for the quick and profitable result.

Staged homes sell for top dollar in *any* housing market. Home staging is an investment that quickly pays for itself and costs far less than a price reduction. Take advantage of this marketing tool before everyone does it. This secret won't last long!

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