



# Step by Step Guide to Selling

## Step 1 - REALTOR® Interviews and the Comparative Market Analysis (CMA)

There are hundreds of critical mistakes you can make when selling your home, however there is a universal cure for all of them . . . qualifying and choosing the right REALTOR®. Ask the real estate associates you are interviewing lots of questions to ensure their motives are coming from the right place, and that they have the ability to properly represent you. Furthermore, you need to find out if you are comfortable with this person's style of business and feel you can trust them to guide you through the sales process.

In addition to an interview with a REALTOR®, have them look at your house and give you an idea of its value. The agent will then assess the other homes in the area that have recently sold and are comparable to yours, make financial adjustments for the differences and give you an approximate market value for your home. This process is called a CMA.

## Step 2 - Document & Material Preparation

In order to sell, there are certain documents and materials that you should obtain. These include an updated survey of your property, called a Real Property Report or RPR (you likely have one from when you bought the home), any relevant repair receipts (such as a new roof or furnace), any home warranty documents, a spare set of keys, relevant rental or lease agreements, etc. If you live in a condo, pull all of the documents you have received from the condo board or management company. Your REALTOR® should be able to help you with the rest.

## Step 3 - Home Preparation

If there are major repairs that need to be made, consider fixing them before you put your home on the market, or offer a credit to a buyer for the repair up front. If you try to hide it, or don't address the issue at all, then in the buyer's mind it will drastically reduce their perception of the quality and value of the property . . . "If this is wrong, then what else is wrong". In terms of a simple cleaning, the key is to de-clutter rooms (clear out knick-knacks, personal items & excess furniture), and make sure the house looks clean and well maintained.

## Step 4 - The Listing Documents

When you sign the listing documents, be sure that you understand you are signing a legal contract. Your REALTOR® should clearly explain each clause and the implications. When does the contract begin, and how does the contract end? What are my rights and responsibilities within the agreement? Most standard listing contracts are written to protect both you (the seller) and the brokerage.

## Step 5 - Marketing

Be sure your REALTOR® mentions all of the features of the house that convinced you to initially purchase it, because other buyers will likely feel the same way. Look over the marketing materials and if you have any suggestions for additional information or improvements, let your agent know. Any house will sell if the value exists and is perceived in the mind of the buyer . . . this is the key.

## Step 6 - Showings

No one likes to be forced out of their home, but it is extremely uncomfortable for a buyer if you are present during a showing. If possible, make arrangements with a friend, neighbor or relative to escape during showings. The more flexible you can be, the better, however, if there are specific times that will not work, or if you want a break, simply tell your REALTOR®. We are all human and buyers will understand that the home will not be accessible 24/7.

## Step 7 - Strategy Assessment

After a couple of weeks on the market, we should have enough feedback to assess the effectiveness of the current marketing strategy, and it may be time to make some adjustments. This may include changing the marketing medium



(newspaper vs. websites, etc.), the features that are focused on, price, agent incentives, etc. Your REALTOR® should remain proactive to ensure the listing doesn't go stale.

### **Step 8 - Offer & Negotiation**

When someone decides to write an offer, you will be contacted by your REALTOR® and a time will be set to present it to you. The agent representing the buyer may want to present in person, however you ultimately have the choice as to how you would like the offer presented to you. After some negotiations, signatures and initials will be required to finalize the agreement. The goal in a successful negotiation is to come to a win-win solution. Remember, people will pay your price if they feel they are getting the value somewhere else.

### **Step 9 - Conditions**

It is most common for an offer to have some sort of condition on it. This might be that the buyers agree to purchase your house, as long as they can get a home inspection first, or subject to their financing being approved. A due date is usually between 7 – 10 days and your house will be considered “conditionally sold” during this time (unless you have signed a non-disclosure of status with your REALTOR® stating that you would like to keep the acceptance of an offer private and confidential). The shorter the condition dates, the better, but it is important to give the buyers a realistic amount of time to meet their conditions to save the headache of extensions later on.

### **Step 10 - Preparation for Possession**

Once the conditions are removed, the deal is considered “firm” and you can prepare for possession. You will need to book an appointment with the lawyer (usually happens about a week before possession), and fulfill any part of the contract that you agreed to. If you said you would paint, clean, or anything else, then this must be done before the possession date to avoid breaching the contract.

### **Step 11 - Closing and Possession**

Possession typically happens at 12:00pm (noon), unless otherwise agreed to in writing. It is best to have your furniture moved out the previous day, as some buyers like to do a walk through an hour or two before noon (this is not a requirement and is simply a show of good faith). Keys do not get released to the new owners until noon, and only if the money has been transferred to your lawyer (they will notify the REALTOR®s when keys are releasable). Typically your cheque will be ready a couple days following the possession day, and if you are buying a new home at the same time, the lawyers will handle any money transfers that need to happen.