

Tips for interviewing your agent to sell your home

In the Phoenix area, our home values went from record high prices in 2005 to 2007, then record lows with the national collapse of the real estate market in 2010 to 2011. Our values are back to pre-bust values and our market has been steadily rising over the last few years. We are now in a balanced market. Here are my top tips for making sure that you have a great working relationship with the agent you hire to sell your home no matter what the market is doing.

1. **Have an honest discussion about your price.** While you will want to get top dollar for your home, (every one of us would like that), it will be important for you to understand where the average sales prices have been at over the last 3 to 6 months. If you have a very honest conversation about your expectations and about how your agent views your price, it will help you to determine the game plan with your agent. Don't just accept what your agent says verbally about where your home should be priced. Have your agent show you the numbers on paper and ask that comparable properties out of the MLS using the virtual tours on the internet to be sent to you so that you can see the condition that those homes were in when they sold. **A fair price is the most important factor to selling your home.**
2. **Ask for help staging your home for sale.** Most real estate agents have had some training on helping clients to do this but if you do not like what you hear from your agent, do not hesitate to hire a professional home staging company to help you. Even the best decorated homes have something that can be improved on. Having a home ready to show and making it look that way every day is not easy and you will get tired of doing it. **If you stage your home right from the beginning, you will get a higher price for your home and it will sell in less time.** There will be a lot of your competition that will be doing this so you cannot afford to ignore this step.
3. **Review how your agent will be marketing your home.** You want your agent to do a great job in this area. **You have a right to have some input into this process and you should be informed on what is going out to the public.** I always talk with my clients about what we are going to do and then when I have it ready to go live, I have my client approve what the public is seeing. It will also be important to have a discussion about what your agent does on the internet. Since most people start looking at homes on the internet, it better look right and say what you want it to say. This step should be a team effort between you and your agent.
4. **Discuss open houses for your property.** Not every home should be held open to the public. If it is not staged properly or is in an area not conducive to open houses, you may not want to have these done. **In most cases, it is a good idea to have open houses to increase the number of people viewing your home.** Not every agent feels that way, so you should have the discussion.
5. **Demand excellent communication from your agent.** My last tip is the most important thing to do after you have listed your home. **Excellent communication between you and the listing agent is critical.** I email my clients every time there has been a showing and the feedback once I receive it from the showing agent. I try to have a personal conversation and a summary email of what was done that week. I send my client the analytics reports from Zillow.com, Trulia.com, Homes.com, Realtor.com, my own web site and other websites that track it so that my clients

can see how many times their home showed up on a search, how many times their home information was clicked on and viewed, and any other website tracking that I may have that week. In our personal conversation, I try to go over what the plan is for the next 10 days and get input from my clients. All of this has really helped to get a home sold. **So during the interview process, ask the agent how they will communicate with you to keep you in the loop and giving you control.**

If you discuss these 5 key areas during the listing interview with your agent, you will have a better chance of getting your home sold in a reasonable amount of time and at a price that you may be happy with. Please feel free to call me at 623-882-5121 if you have any questions.