

*We work with reasonable clients that treat us with RESPECT and VALUE what we do.*

## INTERVIEWING A HOME SELLER

“Thanks for having me over. Let me set my things down; I’ve done my homework on this property but I’m excited to see it in person and get to know you better.

After the tour I’ll give you my recommendations for strategy on selling this home and I can share a little about our process and **how we work best to meet our client’s goals.**”

### I. QUESTIONS TO ASK A NEW CLIENT:

*Take out a clip board and begin answering the questions on the tour and finish up at the table.*

1. How long have you lived here?
2. And why are you selling?
3. How soon would you like to have it sold? Any hard deadlines?
4. Will this be an Occupied Listing? In other words, will you be living here while we’re showing it?
5. And who all lives here?
6. Have you made any major improvements recently?
7. Have you sold a home in the last 4-5 years? When was the last time you did this?
8. How long have you been thinking of selling this property?
9. Do you have any expectations or hopes for what you can sell it for?
10. Do you have an idea of what other properties like yours in this neighborhood are selling for?
11. Have you thought about who your buyer will be? Who is going to love this the most & why?!
12. What have you enjoyed the most about living here?

### II. TAKING A TOUR OF THE HOME:

*Be kind but not necessarily impressed.*

Actively listen and express “compassionate concern” for the OBJECTIONS you see.

Do not be too complimentary. Say things like “We can help you with that.” Or “Oh, that’s going to be an issue for your buyer but if we take the job we’ve got a fantastic (fill in the resource) who can fix that.”

Tell your clients that your goal for presentation, at a bare minimum is to remove all the objections and then begin emphasizing the focal points & features.

### What qualifies as an OBJECTION?

- Out of date
- Shows deterioration
- Offends anyone

### III. SHARING METHODS & MANAGING EXPECTATIONS:

After touring the home, circle back up at the table continue with any unanswered questions from above and then begin moving through this script.

1. Have you prepared a **budget** for improvements and staging? [setting up the NEED]
2. **Let me tell you how I work** to help my clients get their best results. [setting up the SOLUTION]
3. With every home I **provide a thorough home evaluation and staging report** and I will connect you to the “members of my resources and services team” that you may need.
4. In my experience I’ve learned that if you “*give the BUYER what they want, they will BUY.*”
5. **Today’s Buyer is** passing over dark photos with cluttered spaces and outdated finishes. They are responding to professionally photographed, **MOVE-IN READY** homes with an Open Floor Plan and a soft, neutral color palette. That is what is selling! And they are shopping online so it’s all about creating an image and description that pops online. This is why I hire professional assistance!
6. It wasn’t always like this; the real estate shopping standards have literally elevated to meet the buyer’s desire to shop online and have the “model home experience” when they view the property. Processes have changed! I’ve had to **retool my business to include a full make-ready team just to stay competitive** and so that’s why I asked you about the last time you sold a home. If we work together I think you’ll agree this is a new or at least an amped up level of home preparation and marketing.
7. This process requires an investment of more time and money upfront, but the beautiful thing is that **it is formulaic, and it WORKS!** “*It works when you work it*” and my clients are loving the results.
8. We like to say, “**Don’t reduce the price, increase the demand.**” It’s the new M.O. (mode of operation) for an elevated level of service!
9. Earlier I asked if you had any gauge on what homes similar to yours were selling for and what you hoped to get for this one. I can safely say now, after looking more closely at the current condition of your property and imagining it beautifully staged, you can **expect to list somewhere within [give a wide range] this range**. What do you think about that?
10. **I’ll zero in on a recommended list price more at our next meeting** and we may actually keep it in a small range right up until we complete the make-ready process. I can’t tell you how many times we’ve shocked ourselves with how well the improvements increased the perceived value and we came out with a higher price!
11. **We do have some paper work to do** [point to or hand it to them] **allowing me to represent you** [I need you to sign this & this...] **Then at our next meeting:**
  - a. I’ll provide you with a detailed *comparative market analysis-CMA*.
  - b. I’ll bring *images of comparable properties* and we’ll look at photos of your current competition.
  - c. We’ll have a very clear picture of how well *your property measures up* to those in your desired price point and get very real about that and what it will take to *make it happen*.
12. So, for purposes of **activating the Listing Agreement** we can leave the list price as TBD and we will fill it in when we know more.
13. My home stager will evaluate your home during our next meeting or shortly after. Their team provides us with a report, I call it your “**PROFIT REPORT**” and it **outlines the most cost-effective ways to make the biggest impact** with your home.

14. We'll take all the information from the *CMA and the Staging report and your goals* into consideration and **I'll give you my official recommendation on LIST PRICE.**
15. With this property I recommend **"PRICING IT LEAN & PRESENTING IT WELL FOR A QUALITY SALE."** This strategy is based on the fact that "everybody wants what everybody wants" and when a potential buyer walks through your doors I want them to say "Oh this is beautiful and at this fair price it's going to sell quickly! **Make them a quality offer.... Because we want it!**" (And remember, nobody wants what nobody wants. If it feels neglected or unwanted buyers won't want it either. That's why 78% of all expired listings are VACANTS. They feel abandoned and unwanted and have no expressed potential.)
16. And remember (according to NAR) a **home buyer makes their decision based off first impressions**, and this happens in under 4 minutes. That's where we focus our attention and invest our time & money-into what can be experienced in the first 4 minutes.
17. The initial filter of this impression actually happens within 15 seconds, so **CURB APPEAL is critical.** It's huge! [insert comment about their need for some improvement and how you'll provide solutions during the evaluation, maybe brag about your landscaping crew]
18. Something worth noting, our make-ready process involves **EDITING out nearly 60% - 70%** of the contents of your home. It's nothing personal-it happens with every listing. But it is worth mentioning because it is a little life altering for a while.
19. But keep in mind, **"The way you LIVE in a home and the way you SELL are home are two completely different things!"** There will be times when it is uncomfortable but if we've done our job well, we shouldn't have to do it for very long. Home staging reduces DOM. [Insert your sales stats or success story-optional]
20. **When we're done with the editing process and the home improvements** like painting or [insert a glaring objection that need improvement] we will help you **strategically merchandise the home for SALE**, driving the buyer's eye to the features and showing each room to it's fullest potential.
21. When it's "photo-ready," I'll call my professional photographer to set up a day & time to capture it in the best light. **I invest in quality photography;** you must if you want to pop online!
22. It takes about a day or two to get the photos edited and back so that's when I'm securing your **unique property website and writing your listing description**, ordering your signs, and loading up all the property specs into the MLS. As soon as the images are ready, I'm very selective with the images we use and the order we show showcase them. **We're creating a NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION of your home to capture our buyer's attention** and make the most impact. After I make final selection, my team gets it loaded up online and we GO LIVE...in a BIG WAY!
23. My MLS matrix is set up to syndicate to hundreds of other websites. Are you familiar with Realtor.com, Zillow or Trulia? That is syndication. You'll be live on all of those within the next 24 hours.
24. I maintain an active social media presence and we launch an extensive online marketing campaign. [show examples of marketing mix]
25. There's one more final thing that I want to touch on today, and it goes back to the home preparation process. **TALK TO ME ABOUT YOUR STORAGE.** When we remove 60% of everything in here, where is it going? We'll tell you exactly what to pack and what to keep for staging but will you start thinking now about where we can store what you're keeping? Options include: neatly storing packed boxes in the garage, maybe the attic, outdoor shed, a 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> bedroom, maybe a storage unit, or POD? I can make recommendations for a couple storage units nearby if we need to go that route. Hmm...well this is nothing we have to decide on today. [Begin slightly packing up your belongings]

26. Do you have any questions for me? [if not stand up now, and make eye contact for closing]

#### IV. IN CLOSING:

"I am really glad you called. I've enjoyed the tour and learning more about your situation and sharing a little bit about how we work. *I understand you may be interviewing other real estate agents but I think we'd make great team!*"

[pack up the final items on the table and hand them the "paperwork"]

"The next step if you want to get the ball rolling is to ***fill out the paper work I'm leaving you- this will activate our Listing Agreement and then we'll will find a date on the books*** when I can come back over to provide you with a thorough Comparative Market Analysis; we'll hone in on that price range even more and I'll have the property fully evaluated by my professional home stager. *That's a service I invest in for all my clients.*"

"Thanks again! [stop and give one last directive] Hey, there is one thing; if you truly plan on selling this home in the Spring [or insert their ideal time frame] **do not delay in starting the process. I want you and my team to have every advantage to make improvements**, cultivate your curb appeal and come out looking strong when you're ready to sell.

## REALTOR RESPONSES TO CLIENT QUESTIONS:

1. **Q:** What if we list my house as is and offer price concessions to interested buyers when they have objections?

**A:** That doesn't fair well with aesthetic objections because a potential buyer cannot imagine you house any different or better than what they see and the DESIRE is not there to submit an offer!

2. **Q:** What if we just listed it as is? What could we get for it?!

**A:** We'd get lengthy days on market and costly price reductions. It's a sad way to sell a house. If your committed to SELLING IT AS-IS, then I'm probably NOT the REALTOR for you. [That gets them every time!] My motto is "Don't reduce the price, Increase the appeal!" That is my approach and these standards have come to define my level of service, and my brand.

But I'll tell you something, I only work this way because IT WORKS [insert stat or success story] I invest in my properties because I don't want the liability of doing it any other way. I'll gladly provide you with a referral for an agent I know that's more accommodating in that way.

3. **Q:** What is your commission on this sale?

**A:** I earn my portion of the [%] commission by providing you with a thorough preparation process to show your home in its best light. I put skin in the game by investing in home staging with you, I use beautiful professional photography and do extensive marketing. When I commit to you, we're in this together! But to answer your question, after I pay the buyer's agent their commission and my Broker's commission, I earn \_\_\_%.

4. **Q:** What color should I paint this wall?  
**A:** You know, my Stager will want to make that call. And she'll select a beautiful color and finish that coordinates with the existing elements (the floors, trim, counters, cabinets, stone etc.)
5. **Q:** What type of stone do you think this counter top is?  
**A:** It's a beautiful solid slab; my stone guy, Patrick could tell us. He can also get us great pricing on alternative stone options. We've been using Quartz, butcher block and Marble-Stone Laminate [insert what's trending] because they're durable, brighter, feel more contemporary and visually simpler; perfect for staging!
6. **Q:** Do you think this granite and tile is out of date? What would it cost to do something new?  
**A:** Gosh, that is not my department, but my fabulous stager or stone & tile guy would love to answer that. Does it feel a little busy or too dark? Hmm... I'm curious to see if we can salvage the stone slab by brightening the cabinets and updating the back-splash. I find improvements for real estate are all about salvaging and shining up what you can and enhancing it with a little NEW. It's all about the ROI. "It's a minimal cost – maximum impact mindset!"
7. **Q:** What if we pack up the whole house and just show it vacant?  
**A:** We'd lose the opportunity to show the home's potential. Without furnishings to show scale it will feel smaller and lacking clarity on functionality. You gotta *"help people SEE IT to FEEL IT!"*
8. **Q:** What if we do some but not everything on the PROFIT LIST?  
**A:** It's like baking a cake; if you alter the recipe you can't expect the same result. Essentially the more you do on the list, the more likely you are to attract a higher offer.
9. **Q:** How will you help me prepare my home?  
**A:** I'm committed to my listings looking their absolute best when they show. I have retooled my business to include an entire home staging and make-ready process and I work with only vetted professionals and the best real estate photographers to capture your home in its best light.
10. **Q:** How will you market my home?  
**A:** It's always evolving as things are changing so fast, but I've developed a marketing platform that I run all my properties through. It goes above and beyond the hundreds of syndicated sites that we'll see within 24 hours of listing it on the MLS. I'm a member of the [insert Board of Realtors] and I maintain subscriptions to the [insert neighboring Board] MLS so you have exposure in all directions. Plus, my social media engagement is multi-faceted. I'm a member of several Realtor exclusive groups and community real estate pages, I have a paid advertising section of the [insert publication] that we can feature your property in and I'll submit it for the local REALTOR tour and we can discuss the possibility of an Open House. When we launch, it's a BIG DEAL. *It's your one and only chance to make a first impression.* According to the National Assoc. of Realtors "People buy homes based off first impressions." We want to lead with our best price, and our best presentation to garner the best results!