



## Real Estate Reality How to Fall Flat on Your Face as a Seller.

- Debbie Yost

**I**n an active seller's market almost any house will sell. The Arizona market certainly experienced that type of market a few years ago. In the current buyer's market (one where supply exceeds demand) or even a balanced market (one where supply and demand are fairly even), there are typically five items that affect the salability of your home: price, terms, location, condition and marketing. Here are the top ways sellers sabotage their home sale:

**Price your home higher than current market value.** Insist that you NEED a certain dollar amount from the sale of your home, or that your home is much better than the three others which were built by the same builder, are the same floor plan, and sold for \$30,000 less than what yours is priced at. You aren't going to "give" your house away. The right buyer will come along and recognize that your home is better than those other comparable properties, no matter how few showings you have right now. If the marketing was better on your home the right buyer would buy it at your price.

**Insist on being present in the home when prospective buyers come to view it.** Hover about so they feel uncomfortable about looking in closets or cabinets. Follow them around, making sure they see every detail of the home and talk too much about the advantages of the home.

**Present your home to the marketplace without cleaning or staging it properly.** "It's our home and we live here" is your attitude. "Why clean it, paint it or re-carpet it? The buyers might want to do that themselves and what if we pick the wrong colors?" Besides, the next owner will probably have teenagers too and they will feel right at home in your son's room (which smells like rank tennis shoes and is painted dark blue with life sized posters of young women in bikinis covering every square inch.) "Why clean those baseboards and windows during monsoon season anyway? They'll just get dirty again!"

**Keep those odors lingering in the house!** Make sure that the fish smell from last night's dinner overpowers the urine smell from the cat's litter box which is housed in the bathtub. Just before showing the house spray a lot of strawberry scented room deodorizer to cover up the cigarette smoke smell.

**Allow the animals to remain in the house during showings.** After all, it's their home too and you really don't have any place to take the dogs during the day. Fluffy and Skipper really don't bite through the skin. They usually only bite the men on the ankles, not the women. Dogs are supposed to bark at strangers. Make sure you leave the dog drool on the sliding glass door as well. It's a great reminder to prospective buyers that there is a door there. You wouldn't want them to mistake a clean door and walk into the glass and hurt themselves!

**Keep ALL of your collections out for buyers to look at.** Your 300 sets of salt and pepper shakers, your husband's bowling trophies, and each of the kids' and grandkids' school pictures are important to you. Besides, they've been on the walls so long that if you took them down you'd have to fill in all the nail holes and repaint the walls. You

are proud of your family and you want the prospective buyers to see the wonderful family you've raised in this home.

**Keep the unusual wall colors and decorating experiments intact.** HGTV has really allowed your creativity to come out in this home and you've tried many of the decorating ideas shown on Trading Spaces. Perhaps those brightly colored walls will appeal to someone looking at the house. You don't want your house to be bland and just like all the others on the market. Besides, it's just a coat or two of paint and if the buyers don't like the colors they can repaint.

**You've already moved and the house is vacant.** The buyers should understand that the pool might be a little green and the house a bit dusty. Can't they see that it's impossible to keep it perfectly clean? The house is a burden since you've already moved and it's just too painful to think about it every day, let alone pay someone to keep it in top notch condition. Perhaps if you don't think about it, it will go away. There really isn't any reason to keep your Realtor informed of your whereabouts and contact information at all times. If they find a buyer who is really interested, they will be patient while your Realtor searches heaven and earth to locate you.

**You are behind on your mortgage payments and it's embarrassing.** You'll catch up the payments when the house sells. The mortgage company will probably be happy when you get an offer and will delete all those late charges and attorney's fees. Your Realtor doesn't need to know the real story.

Obviously I have written this in an attempt to humorously convey the things we are told by sellers as we attempt to attractively position their home in the current marketplace. With the current oversupply of homes for sale compared to demand it's critical for a home seller to put their home in saleable condition and price it properly for current market conditions. The best marketing in the world will not sell an unattractive, overpriced property.

*Debbie Yost, CLHMS, CRS, GRI is an Associate Broker with RE/MAX of Casa Grande and can be reached at [Debbie@YostHomes.com](mailto:Debbie@YostHomes.com).*

