



# Smart Sellers Listen When Their Real Estate Agent Speaks

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REAL ESTATE

*If you are already working with an agent, this is not meant as a solicitation for that business.*

Sellers often become defensive or insulted when a real estate makes recommendations for changes prior to putting their home on the market. If you find yourself working with an agent who wants you to make changes, consider yourself fortunate. He or she could be worth thousands of dollars to you.

Real estate agents walk through hundreds of homes every year. They know what works and what doesn't. If they see something that will be a deterrent to you getting as much money as possible, it is their responsibility to suggest that you make a change or improvement.

This is by no means a reflection on your personal taste. It's simply a professional's opinion, based on years of experience. A good real estate agent *knows* what gets a buyer emotionally charged when walking in the door.

Here are some of the most common recommendations real estate agents make:

1. *"Spruce up your curb."*

Curb appeal is so important. Any seller who doesn't take a good hard look at the first impression a home makes when a stranger first pulls into the driveway is throwing away thousands of dollars. You need to get your yard in tip-top shape.

This may mean adding some "beauty bark", trimming hedges, sweeping the front porch and sidewalks, mowing the lawn, and adding flowering plants and shrubs. A well-manicured yard puts money in your pocket.

2. *"Change the entryway."*

When you first open the door, what do you see? What impact does your home present to the buyer at the first step inside? Your real estate agent may tell you to improve the entry area by removing some furniture, or by adding something that may not match your taste.

Don't be offended. First impressions count. You want your home to make the buyer say "Wow!" as they walk in the door. Your real estate agent is an expert on how to do this.

3. *"Buy some heavy-duty odor neutralizer."*

If you have a dog or cat, you may not even realize that your home has pet odors. You've become conditioned to them over time, but when a non-pet owner walks in they may be repulsed by the smell. Again, this is not intended as an insult. It's just a fact of life that a good real estate agent will point out to you.

The same goes for mildew, rotting wood, or other odors that you may have grown accustomed to over the years. Listen to your real estate agent if he or she tells you there is an odor that needs to be negated.

4. *"Get rid of the clutter."*

Clutter is another big mistake in terms of impact. You may have collections of trinkets or fancy decorations that your real estate agent tells you to put away. Less is more, so the sparser you can make your home, the better. A cluttered home definitely has a negative effect on buyers when they walk in the door.


5. *"Redecorate and shine up your bathroom."*

If there's one area to which you want to pay particular attention, it's the bathroom. Make sure it's perfect. Caulk all your tiles. Clean your toilet daily. Shine the floor.

This one room can make or break a sale. If a real estate agent tells you that you need new towels, he or she knows. Just do whatever it takes to get top dollar for your home without being insulted.

A good real estate agent isn't afraid to tell you the truth, so don't be afraid of hearing it. If you want top dollar for your property it's in your best interest to do what your agent suggests.

For a free evaluation of areas that may need improvement to sell your home, give me a call at (360) 620-2690 or send an email to mollyells@windermere.com. I know exactly how to present your home to help you get top dollar when you sell.

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Excelling in the Impossible<sup>®</sup>