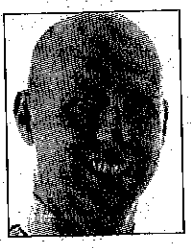
2 things to get right when it's time to sell your home

When I have the opportunity to discuss selling a home for one of my clients, I always tell them that we have to get two things right if we want to sell for the most money in the shortest time.

The two things aren't hard to talk about, but sometimes the seller doesn't want to "go through the trouble" to make it happen. They could make the difference between selling and not selling, but certainly will make a difference in how much money you get for your home.

The first thing is to win the beauty contest. What the heck does that mean?

Well, you may have heard the term staging. What we are trying to do is eliminate any reason that a potential buyer might have to say, "Let's move on to the next one" or "Too many things to do here." You want the buyer to walk in and say, "Wow, this home is great."



REAL ESTATE RIGHT HERE

LES WALDEN

You get there by looking at your home through the eyes of a buyer before you put it on the market. Start outside. Does your home need to be pressure washed and cleaned? Does the grass need to be cut and edged? Shrubs trimmed? New mulch spread?

Really pay attention to the front door area. The buyers will stand in this spot the longest. While waiting for their Realtor to open the door, the buyer will be hyper-focused on the front door area and notice any imperfections.

Does the door or trim need fresh paint? Does the front porch need pressure washing? Does the doorbell work? You certainly don't want to get off on the wrong foot with the buyer, and the showing starts outside.

Next, we can move inside. Neutral paint colors are always best. They go with everyone's furniture. Flooring needs to be spotless. Have the carpets cleaned, and the hardwood and tile floors mopped. Arrange furniture so that it maximizes the size of the rooms. This may mean temporarily moving some to storage. Clean off counter tops in the kitchen and bathrooms to show as much space as possible. Straighten out and organize closets. Once this is done, we will be crowned Miss America.

Next you have to win the value war. Value is not just price — it is what we have to offer, plus price as compared to the other sellers. Compare yourself to others in location, condition, bedrooms, bathrooms, square footage and surroundings.

Be honest with yourself. It's not better just because you own it. Truly compare these areas and find the homes that are most like yours. Now look and see what they are asking for their homes. If there are 10 homes for sale that have the same number of bedrooms, bathrooms, in similar condition and location as your home and they are all asking $200,000, do you really think a buyer is going to pay you $300,000?

Win the value war by getting your home ready and asking the correct price.

I have simplified these two areas a bit, but you get the idea. The best way to make this happen is to contact a local real estate professional.

Let them help you see your home through the eyes of a buyer. Let them help you compare your home to others so you can win the value war. Do these things just right and you will accomplish your goal of getting your home sold for the most money in the shortest amount of time.

LES WALDEN is the broker and owner of Les Walden Real Estate in Seneca. Send any questions about the real estate process, selling or buying real estate, or the local real estate market to RealEstateQuestions@leswalden.com or call (864) 985-1234.