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OPEN HOUSE

HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF THE VISIT

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Open House: How to make the most of the visit

Open house is a great opportunity for both the buyer and the seller. It gives the seller the chance to showcase their home and the buyer can view the home in all its glory. Buyers love to scope out potential homes and many offers are made at open houses. After all, open houses are really sales presentations. In order to have a successful open house, there are some tasks that should be completed by the seller beforehand.

The most obvious task is cleaning. The house should be spotless, including appliances. If you work full time and don't have the time to get the house cleaned, hire a house cleaning service. The money spent is well worth it if you are able to sell quickly. It might be hard to keep it clean if you are still living there, but you must make a concentrated effort to try. Your home presentation must be impeccable.

Keep foul and mysterious odours away. The first thing a potential buyer will notice is an offensive odour and you will probably never see them again. Regularly inspect your home for potential odour sources and keep a steady supply of candles and air fresheners on hand. If you have an indoor cat, keep the litter box out of sight and scooped out daily.

Clutter is a major turnoff to potential buyers. It just isn't comforting to see piles of clutter everywhere. Keep small appliances stored instead of out on the countertops. Remove photographs and knick-knacks. You want people to envision their belongings in the house. Clean out and organize the closets. If there is no reason for something to be displayed, get rid of it.

If you can, remove non-essential furniture to make the rooms appear larger. Spacious rooms are more appealing to the eyes. Keep your boxes of junk stored out of sight. It is a good idea to start figuring out what you need and what you can live without. It would be a good idea to have a garage sale before you put the house on the market. If you can't bear to part with anything, rent a temporary storage unit.

You cannot ignore the outside of the house either. The outside presentation has a major impact on the buyer. Clean the leaves out of the drain gutter, don't let garden hoses or other tools pile up outside. Pick them up and store them elsewhere. Make the effort to beautify the

front entry. If the door handle is rusty or the whole door looks junky, get a new one. Keep the flower beds neat and free from weeds.

Look at the walls and try to put yourself in the buyers' shoes. How would you look at the walls in someone else's house? Is the paint chipping or is the color outdated? It would be well worth your time to give the walls a fresh coat of paint. Nothing makes a room come alive more than a fresh coat of paint. Give the rooms a little bit of a makeover with new décor that compliments the wall colors. If you have a garden, bring in some fresh flowers and put them in attractive vases.

Establish a pleasant atmosphere by baking bread or cookies. Candles add a nice touch along with background music. Classical or jazz music are both good choices. You want to convey style and elegance to your audience. First impressions go a long way, and it would not be the right timing for a "Punta" pace, although pleasant. If classical or jazz music is not part of your music collection or preferences, no worries! I am sure we all own at least one album by Bob Marley. Go ahead play it! After all, your buyers are buying a home in the Caribbean and Bob is sure to create a great ambiance and place a smile on your visitors face.

When trying to sell your house, you should be prepared for a showing at any time. Last minute requests are very common and can turn into offers. You have the option to request 24 hours notice before a showing, but in doing so you limit your home's exposure. Try to be as flexible as possible. Accommodating the hectic schedules of a potential buyer will make you and your home look that much better.

It is a good idea to not be present for the showing. Buyers might not feel comfortable in your presence or they might be afraid to ask a particular question for fear of offending you. If they can't view the house fully, they will probably just move on to the next one. You don't want that. They are supposed to fall in love with your house.

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