

Real Estate in a Challenging Market...What Sellers Really Want Buyer's Agents to Know

As a seller in today's real estate market, my encounters with many of the buyers' agents have left me with a very negative impression of the realtor profession. I have found many of the buyers' agents to be unresponsive and in some cases rude. As a result, I am now collecting the names of the unresponsive agents and am freely passing them onto friends, family and work colleagues. If an agent does not treat a potential seller with respect...there is no reason to believe that person will treat a potential client with respect.

As a seller, I ask for only a few simple yet basic things from the buyers' agents:

1. Show up for the scheduled showing. We all understand that things can happen to delay or cancel a showing. However, if that happens, contact the appointment service/center and let the seller know as soon as practical and try to reschedule as soon as possible. If the showing will not be rescheduled, let the seller know that too. I know a seller who is 8.5 months pregnant. She left work early to get her house ready for an evening showing. She and her husband went out for dinner and shopped in order to stay away from the house. By the time she got home, she was exhausted and could not find a card from the buyer's agent. Several days later she learned the showing did not take place because the "buyer did not feel like getting out that night."

2. Leave a business card or note. Showings are a big deal for us sellers. They get us excited at a time when showings are few, prices are dropping and competition is great. They give us hope. They are also a lot of work. We clean up the house, turn on the lights and in some cases buy fresh flowers, turn on music and the fireplaces (and that is after spending time, effort and thousands of dollars to get the house ready to place on the market in the first place). Sometimes we leave work during the day to get the house ready for a showing and then return to work. Nothing is more depressing for a seller than to come home and have to guess as to whether or not a showing took place.

3. Provide prompt, respectful, helpful feedback. I cannot believe that it takes that much time to do, especially with e-mail and cell phones. It's really hard for us sellers to keep a positive outlook when the feedback is slow and in some cases sarcastic or just plain dumb. I have work colleagues who have the same complaint and they leave little tricks so that there is proof someone actually showed up for the showing. That is a pathetic comment on your profession. Do those unresponsive agents only represent buyers so that providing feedback to seller is simply "not on their radar?" If you do represent sellers, do you tell them that buyer's feedback is really irrelevant? I ask those questions because I cannot for the life of me understand why this is such a problem for many agents. It seems to me that providing feedback also shows respect to my agent who is working very hard too. I cannot count the number of phone calls and e-mails my agent has needed to do in order to get feedback from a showing. Another thing that is so surprising is that in many cases the unresponsive agents are well known and have been in the business for many years. Is that just sheer arrogance?

4. (And this is not critical...but nice to have) Turn off a few of the lights (it at least shows that someone was there and just a shred of respect for the seller).

As a seller in today's market, I am so over buyer's agents.

Randy Goetz, Esq.

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