



# SIX TIPS

FOR BETTER OPEN HOUSES

## Six Tips for Better Open Houses

In real estate marketing one of the most debated topics is whether an open house is a useful marketing tool for selling the house and or gaining leads for the Realtor. While I am not a Realtor I have dozens of clients who swear by them to sell a house and generate leads using tools and techniques like the ones below.

For a Realtor an open house is a time saver. You can show the house to prospective buyers without having to disrupt the homeowner through the week. Many Realtors drive their clients to open houses on weekends as they do not have to make an appointment and can cover a lot of ground. So an open house can actually save you time.

If you are going to hold an open house then this article gives you 6 ideas that you can implement to make opens more effective at selling the house and generating leads.



### OPEN HOUSE DIALOGUE

When you are at an open house you are going to be speaking to the most qualified prospects you will ever meet. 9 out of 10 times they are going to buy or sell a house eventually. Here are some of the questions you should ask them:

- 1) What brought you to our open house today?
- 2) How long have you been looking?
- 3) Are you currently working with other Realtors?
- 4) When would you like to be in your new home?
- 5) What price range are you looking for?
- 6) How long have you been searching for a home?

Ask them if you could add them to your email list and possibly send them links to properties they might be interested in. Then ask them if they would be interested in working with you.

### OPEN HOUSES FOR NEIGHBOURS

I read a lot about how bad it is that open houses are being visited mostly by neighbours. Wait a minute. These are the same neighbours who own homes they may want to sell. Neighbours who have friends that might want to move into the neighborhood. Neighbours with kids of their own that are first time buyers or have parents that might be down-sizing.

For all of the Realtors that say open houses are a waste of time please take a new look. Don't miss out on an opportunity to add people to your sphere of influence. Instead, make a point of inviting neighbors to a special preview just for them. Walk the neighbourhood and drop off a special invitation for them and their friends to come for 30 minutes before the public open.

Have coffee and cookies and make a production out of it because these are the very people who might be needing your services in the future and are a good source of buyer leads for the home.

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### OPEN HOUSE COLOURING

This recommendation is effective in two ways; it either entertains kids and gives the parents a chance to view the home and/or it impresses parents and creates a positive impression of you.

I recommend you print some stock coloring pages, add your branding discretely to the page and put them out on the kitchen table. Free colouring pages are available on the internet. For crayons go to a dollar store and pick up packages or 16 for a buck. I know most people don't bring kids to open houses, but if they have kids they will be impressed you were thinking about them and I have seen people take the pages and crayons home for the kids.

If there are no kids offer the colouring and a pack of crayons to people. Guess what happens next? The kids colour the pages and it ends up on the refrigerator with all of the other artwork and your name is displayed for weeks on the fridge.

### SELL THE HOUSE TO BUYER WITH HOME FEATURES SIGNS

If you are a Realtor reading this it might seem obvious that you should sell the house to the potential buyers, but are you doing it effectively?

Other than the owner you know more about the house than anyone else and you may have put some of the information into a Feature Sheet or an Enhancements and Improvements Sheet, but when the person most interested in buying the home is walking through it are they going to appreciate all of the subtleties of the home?

If you are walking them through the house and remember all of the features you can point them out, but here is a better idea. Type or write out the features on a small, plain index card or tent card and place or tape the Feature Signs around the house.

For example if there are self-closing drawers in the kitchen you could have a card that reads "I am self-closing – Try Me" taped to the drawer. If a closet door leads to extra large storage space place a sign on the door that reads "More than a closet – 80 square feet of storage". Think of all of the buyers that wander through houses appreciating only the tip of the iceberg.

### MAKE YOUR OPEN HOUSE AN EVENT

If you are in agreement that an open house is the best opportunity you have to meet prospective buyers than make every open house an event to impress prospects. I recommend you always have coffee, fruit, treats and candy to make your marketing stand out among all the other Realtors hosting open houses. If you branded material like pens and memo pads make sure you bring those too. Helium balloons on your open house signs draws attention to the home and shows you put a little more effort into your marketing.

### GO THE EXTRA MILE WITH YOUR MARKETING

If we assume most people at an open house are eventually going to list their home then make the best impression you can. Subconsciously they are looking for the best Realtor to sell their home. Hand out colour feature sheets; preferably an 11" x 17" 4 page brochure. Print out a map of the area so you can point out where schools, shopping and churches are.

Bring a list of homes in the area that are in the same price range and offer it to visitors with your card attached. Ask a mortgage broker to provide what is referred to as an affordability sheet showing what their payments would be. Have an aerial view of the property and surrounding area. All of this extra effort will be recognized by sellers needing a good Realtor.

When you hold an open house it is your time to shine and you should not miss an opportunity to make a positive impression on people coming through the house. After all they are probably looking for a professional Realtor to list their home.



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