

SELLING YOUR HOME? ARE YOU UP TO THE TASK?

By ALLISTAR WALKER

We are now in a part of the Economic Cycle where property prices are stagnating, mortgages can be more difficult to get and interest rates remain high. Buyers are reluctant to enter the market, because of affordability, existing high debt loads, press negativity and it's getting wintry. After winter the reason will be elections along with stretched budgets.

This is a great time for 'cashed up' buyers. There will be more and more 'bargains' as some people are forced to sell below yesterdays valuation. For the first time in a long while, we have an oversupply of housing on the market. The angst of real estate agents, mortgage and bank lenders can almost be heard as they try to find gold in an ever-increasing slag heap.

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If you are buying for the first time, there is no need to panic buy with the first property you see. Take time to look and above all make sure that you have 'pre-approved finance' in place. We often find people looking at properties they can't buy because they have no idea what the lenders will approve. A quick phone call to a broker like ourselves, will give you an indication of what can or can't be achieved. Remember a good broker deals with a basket of lenders and by working with you, will be able to help you achieve the best possible outcome.

But what about the sellers? You are competing with many others to attract buyers attention. More than ever, if you are selling, presentation and realistic pricing are paramount. Ask yourself, just how competitive are you prepared to be as a seller? If you don't want to compete, then don't sell now. Here are 10 crucial elements to help you sell.

1. Gardens are important – Your front garden is where potential buyer's first see your property and sum up its personality.
2. Don't forget the garage or driveway! Many people like to drive past a property before inspection to decide if it has the potential to be what they're looking for. Keep the garden paths and driveways swept and clean and consider giving fences and garage doors a lick of paint to freshen up your property's exterior.
3. Approaching the house – has it been a while since those outside windows and frames have had some attention? Gleaming windows are like the eyes to your home's soul. They show your house is loved and well cared for. Repair everything that needs fixing.
4. Please, do come in – Presenting a tidy, yet lived in home with plenty of light and space will do wonders for it's attraction. Often, all that's required is a good wash and vacuum but if stains remain on walls or ceilings, they may need painting.
5. Warm, cosy and inviting? On a cold winters day, there's nothing more inviting than a warm, cosy house.
6. Cut the clutter – Show off the rooms to their best advantage. An uncluttered room can create a feeling of relaxed openness so box away as much clutter as you can.

7. Little things make a big difference – Small touches like a fresh vase of flowers, plants, rugs and paintings help create a welcoming aura. Check all lights are working and open the curtains.
8. Make sure everything sparkles – Kitchen and bathrooms are two areas buyers are often most interested in, so have yours looking spotless. It may help to replace the shower curtain, toilet seat and towels.
9. There's nothing like the aroma of brewed coffee and freshly baked bread – at least ensure there are no unpleasant or unusual odours wafting around.
10. Gentle music creates a nice ambience – the mood, temperature and smell of your home are all central to making your property more attractive to buyers. Have light music playing softly. Dreamy pop or classical music is perfect.

Tideover finance arrangements, Homebuyers guides and/or indicative approvals are available through us at www.mortgagehelp.co.nz or by ringing 0800 005 066