

## **Category 1: Knowledge is Power**

***Tip 1: Before anything else, grab a powerhouse of knowledge.***

If you've decided to dispense with a real estate agent to avoid paying those ridiculous commissions, then start *thinking* like one.

How? Three to six months before your target sale, bone up on home selling strategies. If you have friends or colleagues who've worked in real estate, talk to them, but don't tell them you're thinking of your selling your house so they won't try to convince you to do otherwise.

Ask them about mistakes they've made or mistakes that their relatives and friends have made. Survey the entire

landscape. Personal experiences are always an excellent source of knowledge and strategies.

***Tip 2: Be a listener, and be a GOOD one***

Hold casual conversations with at least 3 real estate agents who work in the area where your house is located. Be attentive to what they say about location. It's helpful to know how much your civic address is worth.

While location is the predominant argument in real estate, this rule may not always apply. Perhaps location is the least of your potential buyer's worries. Don't overlook the fact that buyers have typical and unusual reasons for buying a house. Many have jumped into the arena of investment property.

While most people buy houses so they can live in it, there are those who like to play the market and want to make a killing. Sell your house with an open mind. Don't let the factor of location discourage you, or encourage you too much.

***Tip 3: Basic rule: don't get locked out of the market because you've overpriced your house!***

Continue building up on that knowledge base: make it a daily habit of reading real estate ads everyday. Get the average selling price of a house identical to yours.

If you have the luxury of time, you may even want to drive around these houses for sale and judge for yourself whether or not the price they're asking is justified.

Some homeowners have illusions as to what their houses cost. Is the price they ask reasonable, or way out of proportion to the looks and location of the property?

***Tip 4: What are the ads saying?***

Get a feel of *how* real estate ads are worded.

- What are the key words and phrases?
- What ads caught your attention?
- Why?
- Does the ad sound credible?
- Does the ad provide adequate information to provoke interest, or does it leave the reader indifferent?

Use these ads as a model for your own.

***Tip 5: Play detective***

Do a bit of detective work: try to keep track of real estate ads that appear only a couple of days (house could have been sold in just a matter of days) and ads that seem to be in the paper forever (why can't the advertiser sell? What's preventing him from selling?) This is where wording might clue you into the reasons.

***Tip 6: Read and devour all that you can!***

Build up some more on your knowledge power by visiting your local library, and browsing through books and magazines about real estate in general (and selling homes in particular).

Be on the alert for people who've written about their personal experiences in selling their homes. Being well-informed is still your best weapon.