

Why Do They Do It?

There are many things that agents do regularly that puzzle me. In this article, we are going to look at two practices, standard for many agents, that don't make sense. My hope is that if you recognize yourself, you can change your practices now and improve your business in the process. Why do agents take listings for less time than six months?

We see agents regularly taking 30, 60 and 90 day listings. They take these listings when the average time on the market in their area is, for example, 107 days. Do these agents truly believe that they can beat the market? Beating the real estate market is like beating the "house" in Las Vegas. What are the odds of beating the house in Vegas? There is a reason why the casinos are so big and opulent -- the casinos regularly win. Taking a listing for less time than your market average is like going to Las Vegas and thinking that you are going to win big. The odds of even a highly skilled agent regularly beating the market are very low. Don't let your desire to take the listing interfere with your desire to turn a profit.

Set a standard, based on your market, for length of listings, and stick to it. Tell the seller that a shorter time frame won't work for you. Walk away from the listing if necessary. It's better to do it now than 90 days from now, when the listing expires. In 90 days you will have invested time, money and emotion for 90 days. Cut your losses now, at the listing appointment.

Your other option is to have the seller give you a 90-day price. A 90-day price, to me, is a price that would guarantee a sale within 45 days even if swarms of locusts took over your town, or if the region were hit with an earthquake, flood, fire, famine or other Biblical disaster. In other words, the chance is 100% that the home would sell fast, no matter what. My philosophy was always 90-day listing/90-day price. Give the seller the option to choose one. Don't allow them to have the 6-month price with the 60-day listing.

Why do we spend two hours on a listing presentation?

Think about it: what are we saying in all that time? Do you think the client is really interested in spending two hours listening to us? Shouldn't we be more prepared and get to the point going in? My belief was always the less said, the better. The longer my presentation went, the weaker it became. I think that most people would rather be spending time with their families than talking with a Realtor®.

Here are the four things to focus on in a presentation. Share them; ask for the order; and get out.

- Find out the client's desires and expectations.
- Convey the value of the home.
- Show the client the value and benefit of working with you.
- Ask for the order.

There is truly no reason to be there the amount of time that we are. If we spent even 15 minutes on each section which is too long we would be out in an hour. I can't tell you how often I was thanked by the seller for being in and out in 30 minutes or less. I had people who listed with me because of my respect for their time. A week rarely went by in which I did not hear "The last guy was here for two hours. I appreciate your respect for our time." Most sellers are not interested in the fluff and hype. Leave that for the other, less skilled agents. Find out their desired and motivation. Tell them the truth on the price of their homes. Tell them what you are going to do. Ask for the business. It truly is that simple. Condense your presentation, and stay on track.

These are just two practices that have puzzled me for a while. If you see yourself, I urge you to change. For the sake of your clients and your time, commit to changing today. You will get more listings sold if you have a longer listing period. You can take more listings if you spend less time making the presentation for each one.

Dirk Zeller is an Agent, an Investor, and the President & CEO of Real Estate Champions. His company trains more than 350,000 Agents worldwide each year through live events, online training, self-study programs, and newsletters. He's the widely published author of Your First Year in Real Estate, Success as a Real Estate Agent for Dummies®, The Champion Real Estate Agent, Telephone Sales for Dummies®, and over 300 articles in print. You can get more information by visiting www.RealEstateChampions.com. © 2008, Dirk Zeller. All rights reserved. For information contact FrogPond at 800.704.FROG(3764) or email susie@FrogPond.com; <http://www.FrogPond.com>.