

David Kerr & Rob Jones, Realtors®

Smart Selling

It takes some work to be a smart and prepared seller, but it will reward you by maximizing your profit and minimizing your stress.

Hire a great Realtor®. A Realtor® is a licensed real estate agent who belongs to their local Association of Realtors®, and through that the California Association of Realtors® and the National Association of Realtors®. Realtors® subscribe to a strict code of ethics and must maintain a higher level of knowledge of real estate practice and regulation. Realtors® are committed to providing utmost care in representing their clients, and in treating all parties to a real estate transaction honestly.

Make a Plan, Work the Plan. There are a number of things to do and to keep track of when you sell your home. Together with your Realtor® you will make a plan for putting your home on the market and maintaining it through the close of escrow. Be sure to put dates against each item. Here are the big moving parts:

- ☑ **Make Repairs & Spruce Up.** All those things on the Honey-Do list to repair or complete? Write them down. Listen to recommendations from your Realtor®. Fix what you can; hire professional for what you can't do. And keep receipts and permits.
- ☑ **Document your repairs and upgrades.** Make a folder or list of everything you've done on the house over the years, and note who did the work (you, or name the professionals), and if there were permits include copies. Not only will this impress potential buyers, it will also help you at tax time as you figure out the adjusted basis for the home.
- ☑ **Stage your Home.** If you can, move out of the house and have a professional stager furnish the house – he or she will accentuate the positives, and diminish the negatives with furniture, art and accessories, and may recommend painting or other fixes. If you can't move out, hire a professional stager to help you know how to de-clutter, to re-arrange the furniture and accessories, and generally make the most out of what you have to show the house at its best.
- ☑ **Keep it clean and showroom fresh.** Remember, you have to begin to think of this as no longer your home. Future buyers may not care about the things you care about. Stagers and Realtors® will guide you in what to show off – be sure to keep the house clean, keep clutter out of the way, and keep the house like a showroom. Pet or home smells can be a major turn off to prospective buyers.
- ☑ **Let it be shown.** This one should be obvious. If you want to sell your home quickly and get good offers, you need to let buyers see your home when **they** want to. If you have a newborn at home, or some other extenuating circumstance, make sure your Realtor® notes this in the MLS in the information to agents. Buyers understand personal challenges, but are put off by what might seem like a lack of interest in showing the home. If you want it sold, make it easy for buyers to see it.
- ☑ **Love letter.** Write a letter to prospective buyers, telling them what you love about the home, the yard, and the neighborhood. Very few sellers do this, and it can give you a competitive edge or sway a prospective buyer.