

# Increase Your Chances of Getting Offers

by Kirsten Sharpe, The REALTOR for SENIORS™



There are many reasons why buyers don't make offers on a house. Some reasons are out of your control, such as the location, style and age of your house. Buyers are very particular when house hunting, and will compare your house to your competition (other houses in their price range).

Fortunately, there are ways you can increase your chances of getting offers. You'll need to invest some sweat equity to get your house ready for sale, and pay close attention to the following 5 points, which are absolute turn-offs for buyers. Addressing these does not mean remodeling your house, but making sure it is presented in the best possible manner.

- **CLUTTER:** Too much stuff (furniture, collectibles, photos) makes your house look busy and your rooms smaller. When you cause sensory overload, buyers shut down and are no longer interested in your house. Or they criticize your taste, instead of envisioning themselves living there. Start minimizing your contents and gift, sell, donate or discard items.
- **ODORS:** Smell is our most powerful sense, and if buyers get hit with a musty or closed-up house smell as soon as they open your door, it's a negative first impression. Odors are absorbed by upholstery, curtains, carpet, throw rugs and clothes. If your house has a strong scent, discard what you can and open your windows. If your basement smells wet and moldy, address that with a professional and a dehumidifier. But don't use a plug in air freshener to cover up smells. It's a give-away that you have problems, and potpourri does not entice buyers.
- **DATED:** You're most likely selling your house to a younger generation. A buyer once said to me, upon showing him a house, "this looks like my grandma's house". And we promptly ended the showing and left. Remove lace and printed valances, curtains and table cloths. Today's buyers like window blinds rather than drapes. If possible, remove old recliners, extra side tables and minimize collectibles. One easy way to update a house is to modernize light fixtures. Head to a home improvement store and then hire an electrician for a few hours. You'll be amazed at the wow factor of economic, modern lighting.
- **DIRTY:** Once you declutter, you'll come upon areas of your house you haven't seen in quite a while. Dead bugs on windowsills, grime in your kitchen, ovens that look like a casserole exploded a decade ago, and off-putting bathrooms will make a buyer walk away. In regards to flooring, worn carpet is one thing. But unidentifiable carpet stains are a scary sight for buyers. Cleanliness is of the utmost importance.
- **WALLPAPER:** No one wants to take down wallpaper. The

seller doesn't want to, and the buyer doesn't want to. But someone has to! And why would a buyer pay a good price for your house and then have to tackle your wallpaper? This is one of the biggest deterrents to getting an offer. Think strongly about taking down wallpaper, and painting the room a soft white. You can try to make your sales price attractive enough for buyers to do the work, but sometimes a price reduction won't help. Buyers will instead buy someone else's house, where wallpaper doesn't reside.

**Remember, you are competing for the attention of buyers.** Don't give them blatant reasons not to make an offer. Spending time preparing your house for sale is a worthwhile investment.

For a personal evaluation of your house, call **Kirsten Sharpe, Managing Broker/Owner of Sharpe Realty, LLC. 574-339-7959 or [www.TheRealtorForSeniors.com](http://www.TheRealtorForSeniors.com).**

