

# POWERFUL PRESENTATIONS

## For Real Estate Professionals

7 Secrets for more profitable presentations

- ✓ Create
- ✓ Prepare
- ✓ Connect
- ✓ Trust
- ✓ Story
- ✓ Persuade
- ✓ Commit



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# Powerful presentations for real estate professionals

Real estate professionals in the U.S. spend millions of marketing dollars each year to get to that all-important initial meeting with prospects. With all that investment, it makes sense to deliver the best presentation you can. Are you making the most of every real estate presentation and proposal?

Your success as a real estate professional depends on how well you present yourself and your value to prospects. The Web and social media channels are powerful tools, but there's no better opportunity to turn prospects into sales than in-person meetings.

Better presentation skills mean more clients, more sales, and more income for you in 2011! This eBook covers seven key areas designed to help real estate pros take their presentations skills – and profits – to the next level.

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| <b>1. Create a presentation strategy</b> | <b>5. Tell a story with powerful visuals</b> |
| <b>2. Prepare to win</b>                 | <b>6. Persuade for fun &amp; profit</b>      |
| <b>3. Connect on a personal level</b>    | <b>7. Commit to continual improvement</b>    |
| <b>4. Build trust</b>                    |  |
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## ***1. Create a presentation strategy***

*Your success today depends on how well you present yourself, your message and your value to the marketplace. – Diane DiResta*



There's a great quote by Woody Allen that states, "80 percent of success in life is just showing up." While that's a humorous observation, it's a disastrous approach to real estate marketing.

However, just for a moment, imagine it's true that 80 percent of your competitors simply show up and present without much preparation or planning. There is a huge opportunity for you to win more business and expand local market share! But what about the other 20 percent?

The other 20 percent is what happens *before* you show up.

The Web and social media have provided real estate professionals with powerful information-gathering tools they couldn't have dreamed of a few years ago. Still, many take the Woody Allen approach and just show up. They don't adequately prepare for meetings. They don't have a strategy to win business, professional presentation materials, or any idea about their audience. Do you?

If you have not learned as much as possible about your prospects before meeting with them, you're not doing all you can to win the business. In today's Web and social media world, it's easier than ever to profile your prospects:

**Search engines:** Google the names of all the prospects you're scheduled to meet, and also look for any local and professional information about them. Doing your homework adds to your professionalism and enables you to focus the meeting on your prospects and their questions. Don't skip this step – your prospects may Google *you* prior to meeting and you don't want to lose the information advantage!

**Social share:** Many agents think social networks are all about talking and spreading their message. On the flip side, you may find them even more effective for listening. Social networks can help you better target your presentation and help identify a prospect's goals, priorities, and background. For example, it can be very helpful to know your prospect's profession before the meeting. (Your presentation for a graphic artist would probably be very different than one for an engineer.)

**Know their connections:** After checking your prospects' profiles on Twitter, Facebook, or LinkedIn, check out their connections. Learning who your prospects know may be the most powerful route to a referral. It's always helpful to mention someone you know in common, particularly if that person thinks highly of you or is a past client. You may uncover a referral you didn't know you had for your meeting.

Many real estate pros are great at what they do, but not so great at *communicating* what they do and the value they provide. If you can explain your value and why prospects should work with you in a clear and confident manner, you will win more business.

As you build your presentation and prepare to meet, consider your prospects: How do they feel right now? How will they feel when you meet with them? You have a lot of control over that, so imagine they want to find a great real estate professional who just knocks them out. Then, they can stop thinking about choosing an agent and start focusing on the successful outcomes of their transaction. Be sure to prepare your presentation and yourself to open their minds and cause them to see that you understand and can tend to their specific situation.

### **HOW DO YOU GET TO CARNEGIE HALL? PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE!**

Practice, drill, and rehearse. That's good advice, though often ignored. Take some time to fine-tune your presentation. Put your phone and the rest of the world on hold for a few minutes, close your eyes, and talk through the opening of your presentation. Smile.

Now go to the conclusion of your presentation where you summarize, ask for other concerns or questions, and **ask for the business**. See the prospects accepting your

message, nodding, and agreeing to proceed. That way, you will you feel assured in your approach as you progress through your presentation, and have a great sense of déjà vu when you sign the business!

There's huge value in rehearsal, role-playing, or having a colleague critique your presentation. Want to improve even faster? Consider audio- or video-taping your presentation to see what's working and what's not. It's not easy to listen to recordings of yourself, but it works.

## 2. Prepare to win

*All great presentations are well-researched and rehearsed in advance.*

– Melvin Vu



**Just ask.** Four out of five real estate professionals won't do it, but sometimes it pays to break out of the box.

Most agents will use the initial meeting to ask the key questions that determine their prospect's "pain and gain." But why wait until the meeting?

Why not ask prospects about their buying and selling goals when you're setting the appointment? Knowing your prospects' goals as well as their pain points can place you miles ahead of the competition.

*Ms. Prospect, I appreciate the chance to meet with you and your husband. To make the most of our time together, can you tell me a little about your goals in buying a home and how I can help you reach them?*

This approach offers several advantages:

- Right away, you begin to position yourself as a trusted advisor rather than a salesperson.
- You show that you value their time and what's important to them.
- Knowing their goals and pain points in advance gives you time to tailor your presentation to their unique needs and position yourself as the solution to their issues.
- Keeping the focus on their goals also can help you make a more effective presentation. Most real estate pros are good at stating their own objectives, but that's not enough to create a winning presentation. The content of your presentation



can be excellent, but if prospects sense that you are trying to sell them on your views instead of listening to theirs, you lose.

Don't wait until your initial meeting to learn that your message is off the mark and the value you're proposing doesn't connect with their interests. If you can clearly state your prospect's objectives when meeting with them, you will appear more persuasive and win business from your less-prepared competitors.

### **3. Connect on a personal level**

*People don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care.*  
– Dave Beson

At this point, you have done research and given some thought to who your prospects are and how you can meet their needs. Knowing something about your prospects will make your work in the next phase - connecting on a personal level - much easier.

Before the first word you speak, prospects are deciding whether they like and trust you. Without a solid personal connection, there's no business connection. But once the right connection is established, considerations like comparing you with other agents and negotiating lower commissions fade into the background.

The best initial approach to establishing a rapport with prospects is to be moderate in your warmth and leadership. You may be aware that your personal style is gregarious and warm. You've probably also noticed that your style may not be ideal when meeting an engineer, scientist, or other analytical types. If you come on too strong, they may feel awkward or consider you overly familiar. On the other hand, if you approach prospects from a cool and detached place, they may feel you are disinterested, preoccupied or unfriendly.

Occasionally, you can see a debate break out among sales professionals about what's more important when meeting with prospects:

- 1. They like you (before)**
- 2. They trust you**

Not surprisingly, the answer is both; prospects must like and trust you to choose you for an important role like helping to buy or sell property. Though appreciation is sometimes overlooked, it is equally important as (and comes before) trust. It's nearly impossible to develop any kind of trusting relationship with prospects who don't like you.

Once a personal connection is developed, then meaningful information about their lives and personal situations will flow. Anyone who has taken (or taught) a few sales training courses knows that people typically buy for emotional reasons and then justify their actions with logic.

Without a solid *personal* connection, there's no *business* connection. Be open, helpful, and responsive. When people genuinely like you and find you friendly, they are more likely to share their feelings and enable you to learn what's really important to them so you can be effective and deliver true value.

If you're trying to sell your services before successfully selling yourself, you're in trouble. However, once the right connection is established, considerations like comparing you with other agents and negotiating lower commissions fade into the background.

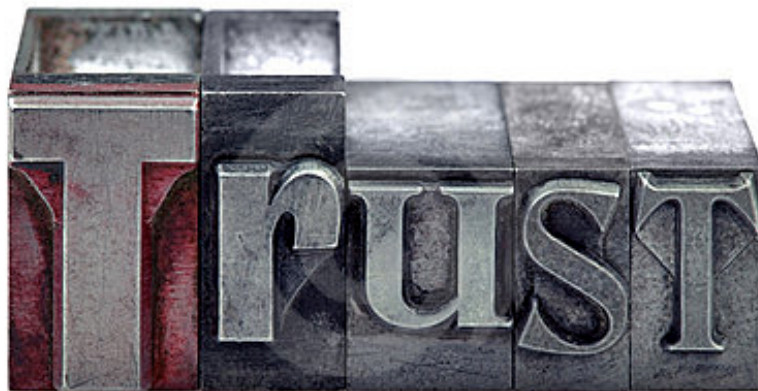
## 4. Build Trust

*Even though expertise is the least effective strategy for gaining someone's trust, it's the one that people use the most often. – Charles Green*

**Why do people buy?** If there is a one-word answer to that question, it's definitely *trust*. It's not easy to build trust over time, and it's considerably more difficult to become a trusted advisor after only one meeting. But establishing yourself as a trusted advisor, not a salesperson, is the difference between success and failure.

Trust is also the answer to the question of why prospects will choose one real estate professional over all others. Like it or not, your trust level is likely being evaluated against the trust level of your competitors with every presentation you do.

Here's an example: Mr. and Mrs. Seller interview three agents back-to-back before listing their home. It may be difficult to remember which one boasted the most impressive facts and figures (years of experience, certifications, rankings and sales awards.) Nevertheless, the Sellers probably can instantly tell you who they trust.



### A TRUST-BUILDING FORMULA

So, what's the right formula? While you are interacting with prospects and observing their actions, you will likely begin to feel comfortable enough to lead the conversation as a trusted advisor. As prospects give you permission to lead, you may increase your assertiveness or directness.

As you get better acquainted and learn more personal information, concerns, or problems you may be able to be more personable in your conversations. Remember, though, your goal is not to be viewed as a friend. Rather, you're a professional with a personal connection. That means you are ready to shift your behavior, not your personality, so they feel welcome, comfortable, and as though they are in the hands of a professional.

A simple example from outside our industry can illustrate the point.

A baby is born with a blocked tear duct, causing discomfort and the potential for infections. The baby and the new parents would suffer many sleepless nights if this ailment wasn't treated properly. It is decided that the infant must undergo surgery.

Although correcting this condition is a fairly simple outpatient procedure, the prospect of surgery for an infant is understandably stressful to the new parents. On the way to the hospital at 6:00 AM the morning of the surgery, the parents are emotionally wrecked.

Sensing the parents' concerns, the surgeon meets personally with them before the procedure. He takes his pad and draws a sketch of the eye and the issue with the tear duct. He points out where surgery will take place. He asks if there are any questions and assures the parents that now is the best time to take care of this minor procedure. He mentions that he'll want to see the baby in a week just to be sure that everything is okay.

Would it surprise you to know that the parents kept that little drawing and showed it to friends and family to explain what the procedure was about? How about the fact that they said good things about the surgeon and his care and appreciated his willingness to take the time to explain the procedure?

Though you're not a doctor, you do need to maintain a "bedside manner" that conveys confidence, tenderness, and enthusiasm for your work. Your referral business depends upon people liking you, believing you, and feeling that they got all they expected (and a little more.) That's the teaching point: Prepare to meet your prospects as a confident, problem-solving professional and make the connection!

## **5. Tell a story with powerful visuals**

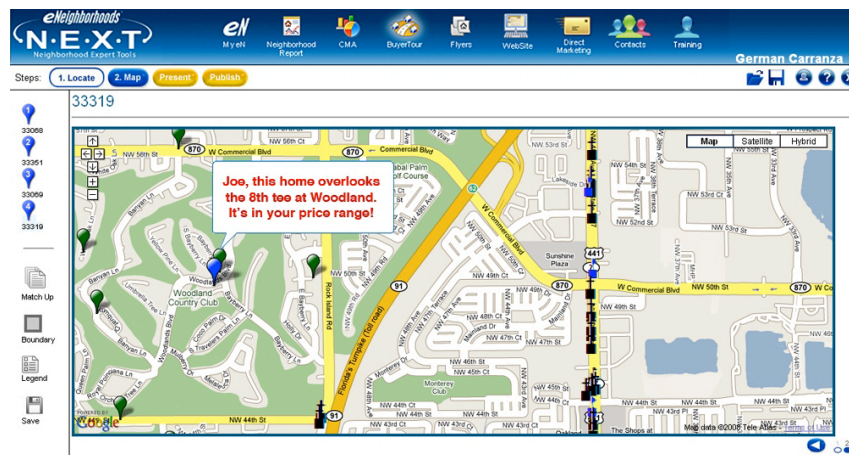
*Mix in a little bit of report with a little bit of story and change all of your presentations into wonderful explanations of your ideas. – Nancy Duarte*

To demonstrate their marketing ability, some real estate pros hand out samples during marketing presentations including glossy brochures, flyers, and postcards. This approach is arguably better than unprofessional materials or no materials at all.

To be persuasive, presentation materials should have a purpose like reinforcing the important points of your presentation. Telling isn't selling; creating complementary materials reinforces your message and makes it more memorable.

It's important to avoid using the same presentation as everyone else in your office. Take the opportunity to create personal presentations with high-impact visuals and materials that won't be thrown away shortly after your meeting. Here are a few ways to make your presentation materials stand out:

- Personalization is powerful and should be used wherever possible. At a minimum, your materials should feature your prospect's name. Also, provide reports with local information such as BuyerTours, CMAs, or Neighborhood Reports. A small touch like adding comments to maps can go a long way.



- There's a reason people often use the phrase, "**seeing is believing.**" Use powerful visual materials including colorful maps, charts, and images to present local information and reinforce your neighborhood knowledge. Images like the marketing planner below can help prospects visualize a timeline for selling their home. The image on the right is used to show prospects all the places their listing will appear.

### Selling your home: marketing planner



Date	Task	Completed
02/23/11	Sign listing papers	<input type="checkbox"/>
02/25/11	Home Featured on Homes.com	<input type="checkbox"/>
02/25/11	Input listing into the MLS	<input type="checkbox"/>
02/25/11	Listing will be Syndicated to Google, Trulia Yahoo	<input type="checkbox"/>
02/25/11	Order for sale sign for property	<input type="checkbox"/>
02/25/11	Order lock box for property	<input type="checkbox"/>
02/25/11	Premier status homes.com	<input type="checkbox"/>
02/25/11	Advertise in local newspaper and on web site	<input type="checkbox"/>
02/25/11	Create flyers and other marketing materials	<input type="checkbox"/>
02/25/11	Hold open house	<input type="checkbox"/>
03/09/11	Review pricing strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>





- Don't pile on the facts and figures. The most skillful presenters and persuaders know how to tell stories and use examples to bring dull data points to life. Showing a chart with the local high school's impressive standardized test scores is one thing. Relating the story of how a recent graduate of that school won a scholarship and is now attending Stanford is another.

Agents frequently talk about number of days on market, percent of list price obtained, and the sales-to-listing ratio (the number of sales divided by the number of homes offered for sale). Economists can process these statistics, but most people can't. When presenting local market statistics, state them as simply as possible. Your prospects will remember the information better and you won't put them in the position of feeling awkward if they need to ask for clarification.

Instead of...	Try...
50% sales to listing ratio	About half the homes are selling
62% of homes sell in 180 days or less, often with one or more price adjustments	Most homes are selling in six months or less
Some homes are selling in 30 days or less	Homes that are properly priced and in good condition sell faster

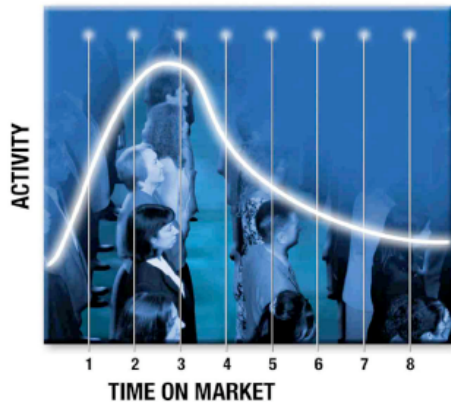
- Educational materials (like special reports, checklists, or how-to booklets) help your prospects through the real estate transaction better than pretty pictures. Materials that contain useful tips and ideas are more likely to be retained by your prospects and seen by their family and friends. Be sure the materials you leave behind for your prospects are professional and feature your contact information.

- To boost your credibility, consider including your own Neighborhood Report that's personalized to your prospects featuring schools, recreation, points of interest, recent home sales, and more. Personalized and localized materials have more value to prospects than generic sample flyers with stock photos homes nowhere near the neighborhood in question.

- Don't brag; let testimonials do that for you. One of the most persuasive ways to demonstrate value is to show how your services have helped others. You may want to include in your package a handout featuring your top testimonials. Testimonials that include specific benefits on how you solved a problem, negotiated a great deal, or sold a home in record time are better than those that simply say you've "done a great job."

Use only visuals that persuade and support your message. For example: if you're emphasizing the importance of pricing a home correctly, use something like this:

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If you're presenting to sellers who are considering whether to hire an agent or try FSBO, you can show them a visual summary of why they need a full-service agent.

## 6. The power of persuasion

*Bad presentations are uninformative. Good presentations are informative and persuasive. Great presentations end with someone signing something. - Unknown*

Is your current presentation persuasive or merely informative? If you're just providing information to show your expertise and hoping to be impressive enough to sign a deal, you're not presenting persuasively. It's important to know this because these two types of presentations have very different goals:

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- ▶ **Informative** presentations provide new information
  - ▶ **Persuasive** presentations have clear objectives and call to action
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Your goal for a marketing presentation may be simple - walk out with a signed listing agreement. But there are several necessary steps on the journey to your ultimate destination:

With such a straightforward objective it may seem unnecessary to spell it out, but it helps to clearly define a specific goal for your presentation so that you can clearly communicate it to your audience. Unless you're already turning every prospect you meet with into a client, there's room for improvement.

**Write it down.** As with any type of goal-setting it's a powerful practice to write out your objectives in your own words, even if it's just a few sentences. You should clearly state the desired results from each portion of your presentation. For example: your goal in creating personal connections may be to establish an environment where prospects feel comfortable sharing their real motivations and personal information with you.

**Check your progress.** If former President Ronald Reagan were a top-producing real estate agent, he might have said, "Build trust, but verify." As you proceed with your presentation do you get a good handle on how prospects feel and react? Are your listeners asking questions that show they have the information and trust level they need to move forward? Every presentation is different and you should have a good sense of what to focus on and what to leave out to motivate your prospects to take action.

**Gain agreement.** Some real estate professionals deliver great presentations but fail to finish with a strong call to action. Since not everyone is a strong closer, a good strategy is to build closing points into your presentation as you go. Sometimes called "trial closes" these are questions within your presentation designed to build agreement:

*Well, Mr. and Mrs. Seller, we've had a chance to get to know each other a bit, and I feel confident we can sell your home. Based on what we've done so far, would you like me to prepare some solutions and recommendations?*

Once you've gotten agreement on some minor points during your presentation, it can be easier to get agreement on a major point (such as signing a listing contract.) Persuasive speaking, remember, is about changing or reinforcing people's attitudes, beliefs, values, and behavior. Your listeners will respond the way you want them to only if you can convince them that they will benefit from the action you're proposing. You're dealing with people on the level of their needs, and that means dealing with emotions more than facts.

Recognizing that you need to move people by their emotions doesn't mean that *you* must be emotional. It only means that you must take the emotions of your listeners into account. Notice which parts of your presentation seem to evoke reactions and which parts don't and improve as you go.

To prepare for your next presentation, begin with a clear goal and develop a compelling argument to persuade your listeners based on your audience analysis. There are specific tools and techniques that you can use to make the process easier and more effective.

## ***7. Commit to continual improvement***

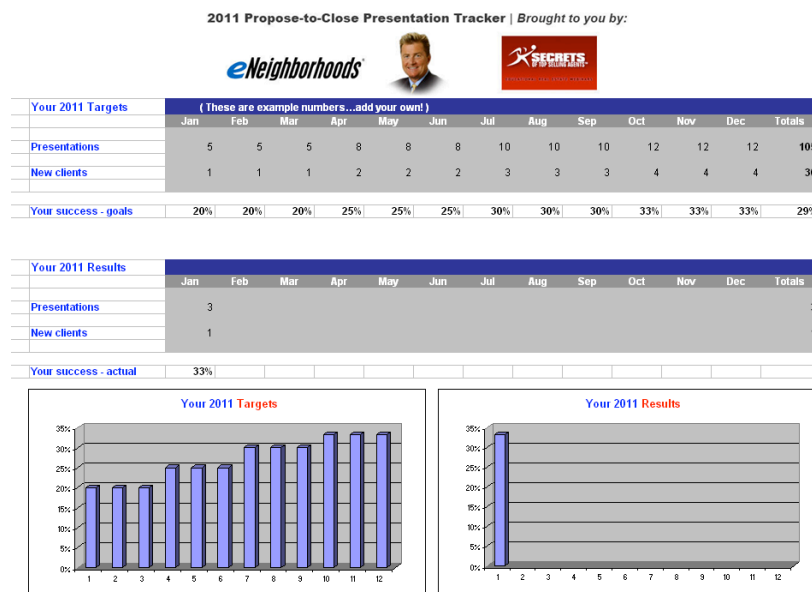
It's easy to attend a seminar or coaching session and get fired up about improving yourself and your business. The hard part is creating a plan of action and sticking with it until you've reached your annual and long-term goals. How do you know if you're on track day after day?

Here's a secret many real estate pros don't realize: you can be "off track" with your goals most of the time and still successfully meet them. Suppose you have determined you need to do 10 listing presentations each month to win enough business to meet your earnings goals. One week you may have two presentations and fall a little short. That means you've got to hustle and schedule three or more next week to stay on track.

In other words, you don't always need to be on track, but you need to know exactly where the track is and plan appropriately. Continual reinforcement and improvement are imperative. Author Daniel Pink is known for calling annual performance reviews "a joke" because they don't provide feedback frequently enough to be useful. Can you imagine an elite athlete like Tiger Woods meeting with his coaches only once a year to review his golf swing?

Like an athlete, you need frequent practice, feedback, and refinement of your technique. If you have not done so, take a moment to download the simple 2011 Presentation Tracker Tool. It's a free spreadsheet-based tool that can help you stay focused on improving your presentation skills and turning more prospects into clients. Try sharing the tracker with a friend so you can both improve your performance or start a friendly competition among the agents in your office. You may be surprised how much improvement you see just from being more aware of your progress and keeping your goals at the forefront of your mind.

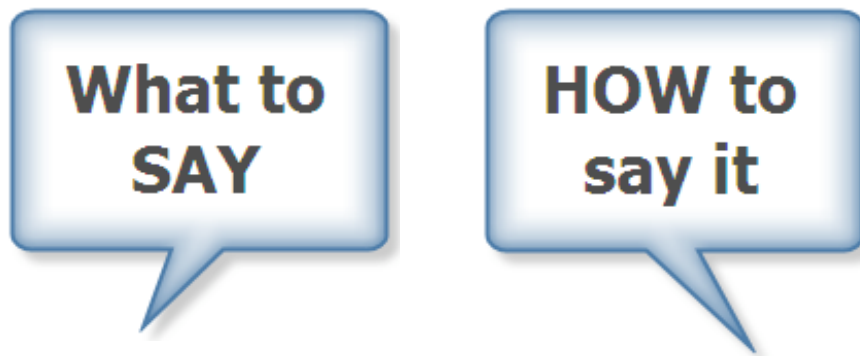
If you're reading this eBook, you're probably truly interested in improving your presentations. It's an important step in planning for success and taking advantage of every opportunity that comes your way in today's economy.



**No goals, no glory.** But how can you measure your improvement? Just by committing to continual improvement and measuring your progress you can become a more powerful presenter.

**But Wait, There's More! Powerful Dialogs for Sellers from Dave Beson! ▼**





### **Effective questioning – the key to closing sales**

The difference between sales masters and the rest is the ability to ask powerful, open-ended questions and listen effectively. That means avoiding simple “yes or no” questions that don’t move you forward. Understanding the prospect’s motivation is key to guiding them to appropriate action.

Let’s take a seller presentation for example. We know they want to sell, but why are they selling? Helping them state the problems they face in their own words shows you are solution-oriented and puts you ahead of competitors who don’t question effectively. While you don’t want to sound like you’re reading from a script, it helps to have a collection of powerful open-ended questions ready to use in every marketing presentation. Here are some examples of effective questions you might use to open your presentation:

*Mr. and Mrs. Seller, how long have you lived in this home?*

*Are you from this area? Where did you live before you bought this home?*

*What features of this home have you come to enjoy the most?*

*I noticed the landscaping looks very inviting as I approached from the street. Did you do a lot of the landscaping?*

*Why are choosing to move right now?*

*How familiar are you with the real estate market and the challenges we are facing in selling and buying?*

Note that each question has a purpose and can help you personalize the rest of your presentation to your prospect’s needs. Now, build credibility in your follow-up:

*I appreciate the chance to talk with you today and assure you that our time will be well spent. May I tell you a little about myself and my team’s approach to marketing your home?*

*I've been fortunate to live in this area for 18 years and to help over 300 families make their move. My team of three will back me up on all the details and plans that will take the worry about of your move. We believe in a three-part formula for success: Price, Terms, and Condition.*

*In today's competitive market, we use our experience and research to help you choose the right price and terms to get the best results in the shortest time. Our marketing plan includes the Internet, the MLS, our local networks, and our current prospect inventory. That is, one of our REALTOR associates may already have a buyer for your home. Our challenge is to get buyers interested in your home before they buy someone else's. Fortunately, we have a lot of experience, and we're good enough to guarantee our results.*

After establishing a background and motivations for selling, you can move to questions to uncover the seller's expectations regarding the transaction:

*To help you sell your home as quickly and as profitably as we can, may I ask some questions about your move? I'd like to make some notes, okay?*

*Do you have an opinion about your home's value and marketability?*

*Have you reviewed a current C.M.A. – Competitive Market Analysis? Would you like me to prepare one?*

*How far along are you in searching for or finding your replacement home? That is, if your home were already sold, where you want to be and when would you want to be there?*

*Do you feel it will be more difficult to sell your home or to buy your replacement home? Which one would you like to start on first?*

*If we discover that short sales and competing sales prices have reduced your equity, do you have other resources to move ahead?*

*Ideally, how soon would you like your home to be sold and closed?*

*What questions do you have for me, right now?*

*To help me prepare an effective marketing plan, may I ask what you are most concerned about: the price, the terms, the conditioning, or the marketing? Which one is most important?*

*If I were to show you a written marketing plan and provide a written guarantee that I would follow it, would that be helpful or essential?*

*Would you like to see testimonials from some of my satisfied customers or talk to them about the service we provide?*

Next, go on with your presentation to show your solutions to their problems. Be clear about the steps you can take that will help with their specific situation.



*Mr. and Mrs. Seller, I'd like to share our marketing plan for your home. I'm confident that our team has considered your requirements, and we will help you sell in less than the average market time with less stress and more financial rewards. Let's take a look.*

*You said that you wanted to list your home for the market value and hold firm. Well, the C.M.A. indicates a value range of \$274,000 to \$299,000, depending upon certain factors. Does that fit with what you were thinking?*

*Our challenge in today's competitive market is to win a pricing war and a beauty contest at the same time! That requires special planning and a partnership effort between you (the homeowners) and my team. We're up to it. In fact, we see this as one of our big value-adds and a reason to choose our team to market your home. Let me explain.*

*A lot depends upon the condition and first impression your home makes to buyers. You have a great lot and an updated home with new carpet, new appliances, and a new roof. Your care and concern for your home shows and will help your home sell faster than the competition.*

*We want buyers to choose your home instead of another home so it needs to be especially inviting. That means removing any doubts that your home is the best choice for them right now. If there were a way I could help you get thousands more for your home and help it sell faster, you would want to know about it, wouldn't you?*

*There's a way to do that and we call it "home staging." You've probably seen shows on HGTV and other channels where the designers make some changes to show off your home. It involves making some changes to allow buyers to imagine themselves in your home, and make them feel more at home. Staging is a special service we provide that will put money in your pocket.*

*Our home-staging team can visit your home, take photos, and make suggestions to help enhance the great home you have here. There is a \$499 charge for the staging; however, it will be paid from the closing so you'll have no out-of-pocket expenses. I will also provide a handyman for one half-day at my expense to help with some of the little things like the squeaky garage door, the loose carpet in the master bedroom dressing area, and the light bulbs in the high ceiling that need changing. If your home has more features, is in better condition, and shows better than most homes, we will win in the competitive battle. The local homes offered for sale at a too high price make the fairly priced homes sell faster. And there is always pressure in today's market from banks, foreclosures, short sales, and super-motivated sellers.*

*All that said, we can list your home at any price but our experience shows you will sell your home for the most money if we price close to the real market value right away. Does this fit with what you were thinking? Ask me some questions!*