

23 SALE-MAKERS

The following checklist sets a good example - without getting you involved in major renovations or full-scale redecorating projects. Since first impressions are formed from the street, the list starts outside your home:

- Keep lawns and hedges neatly trimmed, weed flowerbeds.
- Clean out your garage or carport to show off its full size.
- Clean the outside windows.
- Oil gate hinges and latches, repair fence if necessary.
- Remove dead limbs and branches from trees - especially from evergreens.
- Check your verandah lights; are house numbers faded?
- In winter, make sure all ice and snow is removed from outside stairways, walks, etc.
- Don't let anything obstruct the street's view of your 'For Sale' sign. Keep it shining clean and straight.

Once they enter your home, prospective buyers are most interested in checking items that will help them assess its overall condition. That's why it is very important to remember jobs like these:

- Wash down entry walls or give them a coat of paint.
- Repair drawers and cupboard doors that stick, squeak or won't close properly.
- Free up any hard-to-open windows.
- Repair leaky faucets and any toilet that runs, replace loose tiles.
- You're going to move anyway - so clear the clutter from every room. Get rid of anything you don't want. Pay particular attention to the basement, you won't believe how much larger you can make it look. Ask for loan of garage sale signs.
- Wash the kitchen walls, if necessary, and shine up sinks, knobs etc.
- Put away off counter tops everything that is not absolutely necessary; this will make work area appear larger.
- Make sure your closets are clear of everything except clothes that are neatly hung or folded.
- Depersonalize – minimize number of family pictures; collections or hobbies should be reduced or packed away.

Here are a few pointers to remember when you know that prospective buyers are going to call:

- Open drapes to let sunshine fill your home.
- Try to avoid cooking a meal that might cause a lingering odour (kippers, cabbage, curry, etc.)
- Put large pets outside. Keep all pets away from prospects. Get the children settled quietly in one room, or better still take them for a walk.
- Don't let the radio or T.V. compete with your salesperson's voice:
- Let your representative do the talking - and the walking, unless asked, DO NOT join the tour of your home.
- Above all, do not discuss price or terms. Give polite answers to direct questions. But let your representative negotiate the sale.
- Finally, do not apologize for the appearance of your home. As a matter of fact, if you follow this checklist, you won't feel that it is necessary!