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## **Planning On Selling Your Home In The Near Future?**

How can you maximize your selling price while minimizing the time your home stays on the market?

During the real estate boom of the last four years on the Peninsula more and more savvy homeowners have been consulting a marketing specialist or staging expert to help them sell their homes quickly. Since very few buyers are able to visualize the full potential of a property, staging can transform an “ordinary house” into a “desirable home.” Staging consultations involve color scheme selection, space planning, and advice on areas to update or improve cosmetically. For example, the two areas where remodeling will yield maximum return-on-investment when the house is sold are the kitchen and the bathroom. Replacing worn, outdated or oddly colored carpet, improving lighting and enhancing landscaping are simple ways to add value to a property. A well staged home will have a minimum of clutter and will use creative furniture placement to enhance the perception of spaciousness. Staging is a very affordable way to increase the competitive advantage of the home to attract top price offers. Staging a home will make it appeal to the broadest possible market segment, thereby assuring a quicker sale.

Many buyers are unable to visualize a room as appearing any differently than as presented when they first see the house. Therefore, unusual or *avant-garde* interior décor can actually detract from the home’s desirability and create objections in the buyer’s mind, resulting in a lower priced offer. Space planning with a staging expert can minimize the impression of an awkward floorplan and create a cohesive appearance when there are disparate furniture styles. Rental furniture and props can make the style of the furnishings blend the scale and the architecture of the room. Many homeowners have furniture that is too large for the room, which makes the space seem smaller. Sometimes the condition and quality of the homeowner’s furnishings are incompatible with the high asking price of the home. In these cases, staging the home with rented furniture and accessories increases the perceived value of the home, and the buyer is more likely to offer the full asking price.

Staging is particularly valuable when the house is vacant. When the rooms are empty the potential buyer only notices the color of the carpet and walls. They have no motivation to stay in the house long enough to determine whether it fits their other requirements. Rental furniture can project the lifestyle of the prospective buyer into the home. Now the buyers can imagine themselves



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enjoying that lifestyle when they buy that particular home. Giving the buyers an emotional attachment to the property makes them more excited and motivated to make the offer. Many vacant homes that have languished on the market for several months are sold within a few days after they are staged.

Homebuyers in the Bay area are sophisticated, career-oriented and pressed for time. They demand homes that are low maintenance and appear in move-in condition. They are also attracted to flexible floor plans. With the increase in telecommuting and the burgeoning of home-based businesses over 40% of the buyers on the Peninsula are looking for a home with a spare room to use as a home office. Built-in bookshelves and entertainment centers, extra lighting and architectural details (such as crown molding and display shelves) are other details sought by today's buyers.

A consultation with a staging expert can simplify your preparations for selling your home and assure that it will sell quickly at the price you desire.

**For advice on how to make your property look its best, call Jean Cary Interiors for an appointment at (650) 593-9622.**

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Watch for my monthly column in the Redwood Shores Shoreline Magazine.)