

# Smooth Selling: Avoid These 5 Listing Presentation Pitfalls

Even the most seasoned practitioners can make some common mistakes during a listing presentation. Here's what to avoid so you make the best impression.

FEBRUARY 2008 | BY [JOHN D. MAYFIELD](#)

Every listing presentation is a job interview. You are applying with the sellers for the opportunity to sell their property. And you need to convince them that you are the best real estate professional for the job.

I'm sure you have your standard listing presentation down by the time you do it a few times. You tell them about your company, yourself and your background, and everything you're going to do to market the home and get it sold. If you've done the comparative market analysis (CMA), you share what it shows and your recommendation for a list price.

Although this is all well and good, what differentiates a good listing presentation from a great listing presentation — and what increases your chances of getting the listing — is your ability to tailor your standard listing presentation in real time based on the reactions and personalities of the prospective clients sitting in front of you.

Here are five common mistakes to avoid during a listing presentation so that you can get the job you're applying for.

## 1. Failing to recognize personality traits.

Many real estate professionals don't take into account the different personality traits of prospects when meeting with them. The two major personality types you should be watching out for are whether the prospects are analytical types or touchy-feely types.

All prospects may not fall cleanly into one category or the other, but getting a feel early on in the meeting about which type of person you're dealing with will help you to determine just how detailed you should be in your presentation.

If you know ahead of time that you're meeting with a stock broker, financial analyst, or management consultant, you probably should bring lots of market data with you and plan on spending a lot of time going over the data.

However, if the prospective sellers don't seem to be very interested in the market data (or you start getting cues from the sellers that they are looking for someone they can "trust" and "feel comfortable with"), then you need to put the numbers aside and start talking to them about how you work and how you will make sure that everything moves forward smoothly in the transaction.

One way to identify a person's personality type: *Pay close attention to the questions they ask.*

Generally, an analytical person will be specific about questions and concerns they have. For example, they may *ask about the length of your listing contract, the commission breakdown, allocation of your marketing budget, and what types of marketing you do.*

When you begin to notice that a prospect is asking a lot of detailed-oriented questions, you need to make sure your presentation covers those details.

Does this mean that you shouldn't include the same information for a person who is not as detailed oriented? Obviously, you want to provide the same information with all of your clients. However, you wouldn't want to spend a lot of time going over specifics and details with prospects who are not analytical types.

By correctly identifying the personality type of the potential client, you will begin to understand how your presentation should take form and to what detail and depth it should go.

## **2. Not using quality presentation materials.**

Put yourself to the test: Think of your presentation as a major report you must turn in for a class. Tell yourself that this report will count for the biggest part of your grade during the class semester. When you take this type of attitude to proof, study, prepare, and finalize your presentation materials, you'll be on your way to a winning presentation every time.

Fortunately today, many good resources are available through local MLS systems, software vendors, and REALTOR® magazine online to help you build professional listing presentations.

Always use a good laser printer, quality paper, and color photographs for your presentation materials. This will render a winning presentation every time!

## **3. Not employing good listening skills.**

Author Dale Carnegie once said that we can win more friends in two weeks by showing we have a genuine interest in them than we can in two years by trying to get them to be interested in us.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Am I taking good notes during my initial presentation meeting?
- Will I know this person better after I get back to the office?
- Am I asking questions to determine the prospective sellers' needs, motivations, wants, and desires?
- Am I able to determine their personality style based on the information they give me?

All of these questions can help you learn more about your potential clients while also demonstrating your concern and willingness to help them with their real estate needs.

Remember, it's about them, not you! Whether you know it or not, people can tell when you care about them and their needs. *Listening is an excellent way to build rapport and favor among clients and customers.*

#### **4. Believing that one size fits all.**

With today's technology, real estate professionals have never had it so good when it comes to presentations.

Unfortunately, many real estate professionals tend to develop one stand-alone presentation that they use for all of their appointments.

In reality, one size does *not* fit all.

Prospective sellers, types of properties, and other factors determine what type of presentation you should give and what information should be contained in the presentations.

For example, a buyer's presentation for "first-time" homebuyers will need to cover different information than, say, a presentation to relocation buyers. A listing presentation for a primary residence should be different than a presentation for a second home or investment property.

Developing a wide variety of presentations that you might give on a regular basis is a must. Save your presentations on your computer, where you can easily pull up, edit, and personalize to meet the specific needs of the potential client you're meeting with.

#### **5. Not following through.**

After you develop and tailor your presentations, your work doesn't stop there. You have to now use that presentation. I see a lot of practitioners put together great information but when the time comes for that face-to-face meeting with prospective clients, they don't use the presentation they spent so much time putting together.

Whether it's the fear of intimidation, too much time required to boot up their computer, or the attitude of "I can do it without a structured presentation," some real estate professionals throw out their hard work and just try to "wing it."

The truth of the matter is that most prospects don't mind a presentation. After all, a picture is worth a thousand words. Showing a printed report on what has transpired in your marketplace is more persuasive than you verbally trying to convince the consumer that homes have not sold in their subdivision. A good written report is always well received.

#### **So, Just Go for It!**

In a listing presentation, *it's more important to let your prospective clients lead the discussion about what their needs are and then, matching their personality styles and their need for details, and try to convince them that you're the best person for the job.*

Keep in mind these listing pitfalls, and then go after that next listing — more prepared than ever.

