

Everything I Know About Home Staging I Learned From My Mother

It all begins in 1964 when my parents take a drive in the “country” and see a model home they fall in love with and decide to buy.

As they consider the move north from Yonkers to Katonah, they discuss plans to put their home on the market with a neighbor. That neighbor tells a friend, Mrs. Brooks, who comes by to see our house. Later the same evening, the Brookses return and agree to pay the full asking price.

Without knowing it, my mother staged her home to sell, and since then, she has steadfastly held the belief that the home sold quickly because of the way it was decorated. I think she may be on to something.

If your mom is like mine, she takes great pride in decorating and showcasing her home. I remember our formal living room. There are no electronic devices – phones, stereos, or TVs – and it is set up purely with friends and family in mind. A cozy conversation area is established, highlighting the room’s two main features – a fireplace and large picture window. And as with any home staged for sale, these spaces are always ready for company.

Even today, my mother’s home is a reflection of how she wants guests to feel when they visit – welcomed and relaxed. From the minute you drive up, until you enter the living area, you are greeted by warm, inviting, and distraction-free spaces.

My mother understands the emotional response to home decorating and I learned, through my parents’ quick sale, that this emotional response is even more powerful when decorating a home to sell.

Both home staging – and my mother’s decorating style – are based on emotion, because few people buy a home based on logic alone. Think back to when you purchased your home. Most likely, you bought the home you fell in love with, not necessarily the home with the most items checked off on your wish list.

There are many factors that can impact a home’s marketability, but even if you don’t experience the kind of rapid sale that my parents enjoyed, there are simple and inexpensive ways to make your home more attractive to potential buyers. And it is generally the case that the faster a home sells, the higher the sale price.

As you prepare your home for sale, step into your buyer’s shoes and consider the questions that guide my mother, and perhaps yours as well, in decorating her home:

- Are the rooms inviting?
- How do they make you feel?
- Are the spaces clean and neat?
- Do they encourage conversation and/or relaxation?
- Does the furniture layout draw you into each space?
- Is your home designed to appeal to a wide variety of friends, family, and potential buyers?
- Will your “guests” feel like staying – lingering – perhaps long enough to make an offer?



By the way, these are the same questions home stagers ask themselves as they walk through the homes that they stage.

Having trouble stepping into your buyer’s shoes? Consider the help of an objective friend, family member, your real estate agent, or a professional home stager.



Susan Atwell, home staging expert and President of *AtWell Staged Home*, is passionate about staging homes to sell quickly and for top dollar. Contact Susan for more information or to schedule an appointment.

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