

# Adopt the “Big Bang Theory” of Home Staging

**It is always better to delay the listing of your home than try to trickle out fixes and updates while the home is on the market.**

When marketing any product—from a soft drink to a new luxury automobile—advertisers bombard consumers with images, words, and music that will entice them to buy. Marketers have learned that it may take 10 or more of these “touch points” before consumers act.

But that’s not how it works in real estate. A home is not repeatedly put in front of a potential buyer. Instead it explodes onto the market with a single big bang! Just one chance to make that very important first—and lasting—impression with potential buyers, as well as real estate professionals who promote these homes. An equally important audience that is sometimes overlooked.

Like a gourmet meal artfully described, agents and buyers see this listing as fresh, new, and tantalizing. But what happens when no one bites? The listing quickly becomes stale, doubts become concerns that soon turn into worries. Why is no one interested? What’s wrong with this home? Is it worth seeing?

So, what is the “*Big Bang Theory*” of Home Staging? Simply put, it’s when all the elements required to sell a home quickly and for top dollar come together at the same time.

The perfect formula integrates promotion, price, and product. The agent is responsible for promoting the home to potential buyers, as well as advising the seller on setting a competitive price based on current market conditions. But the seller alone is responsible for preparing the product—the home—to look (and feel) its best.



Properly showcasing a home is an important piece of the equation. And the big bang can only be achieved when the vital preparation step is complete. This groundwork takes the most time and effort, may require a financial investment, and garners the highest financial reward for the home seller. In my experience, it is the amount of effort, or “sweat equity,” expended more than the volume of money invested that has the greatest impact on how quickly a home sells. And faster home sales generally lead to higher sale prices.

For example, after 14 months and no serious offers, a large 5-bedroom split in Katonah, NY, is taken off the market. The home sellers don’t want to lower their asking price again and agree to try a new method—home staging. *AtWell Staged Home* develops a detailed and budget-conscious do-it-yourself plan, which is aggressively implemented over a two-week period. The only items purchased for this transformation are two gallons of paint and a slipcover. This approach, suggested by their agent, works. Four days after going back on the market, it sells. Same house, same agent, the only difference is an enhanced “product.”

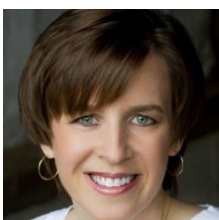
Where do you focus? In real estate most agents say that the three most important things are location, location, location, but when staging your home to sell, the three most important things are clean, clean, clean. And when you’re done with that? Clean again. Next comes lightening and brightening, followed by removing distractions (aka decluttering) from every space buyers will look. (Yes, that means the insides of closets, kitchen and bathroom cabinets, and any other built-in storage.) Finally, arrange the furniture in such a way that buyers notice the architectural feature(s) in each room, such as a picture window, fireplace, high ceilings, or wood floors. Every room has at least one such element. Identify it, then show it off.

As Nike says, “Just do it!” Whether training for an athletic event, preparing for a presentation, or writing a term paper, we are limited only by our time, drive, and determination.

Start early and do a little each day to reap the greatest rewards while reducing the stress of moving. No all-nighters, just do what can be done in the time frame established. The key is to prioritize and focus on the tasks with the highest return on investment (ROI).

Done right, the seller’s only job after listing is to keep the home in showing condition—and field offers, of course.

Not sure where to start, what to do, or how much to invest? Consider hiring a professional home stager. A home staging consultation will quickly give you clarity on what is necessary to properly prepare your home for its debut.



Susan Atwell, home staging expert and President of *AtWell Staged Home*, is known for her ability to showcase the beauty and character of any for sale home so that it sells high and sells fast.

Let Susan show you how quick, economical, and fun it can be to stage your home beautifully using what you already have.

Ready to sell? Call now for a free phone consultation. Still thinking about it? Sign up for free home staging tips, tools, and transformations at [www.StageEveryListing.com](http://www.StageEveryListing.com)

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