

EXCLUSIVE REPORT

provided by: **The Academy Of Home Staging and Design School**
<http://www.TheAcademyOfHomeStaging.com> 800.574.5576

TOP 10 MISTAKES NEW HOME STAGERS MAKE

1. Not understanding that Staging is a marketing tool

Home Staging is about helping people get top dollar for their home in the shortest amount of time. Although staging incorporates in depth design applications, people hire stagers because they are recognized as the industry experts in knowing WHAT sells a home quickly and for more money. On top of knowing what these things are, a stager needs to understand how to incorporate the psychological and emotional aspects of their staging design to result in offers.

2. Not knowing the real estate market.

If a stager is advising people on how to stage based on their own opinions rather than what is actually selling in the market place, they may put the seller in a position of having spent or done too much or too little to effectively sell their home for the highest and best offer. This could literally cost sellers tens of thousands of dollars in more time on the market, price reductions or lower offers – the opposite of what stagers are being paid for. Stagers must keep abreast of their market and educate clients as to what to update, how and why.

3. Suggesting unique updates for people's homes.

Staging is about creating an environment that appeals to the broadest audience of buyers. Any advice stager's give is intended to entice the largest pool of buyers to make offers. If buyers are already following a trend, you can be sure emulating it in your stagings will lead to more offers than going for something unique or different.

4. Not advising sellers of the best possible solutions to update their home, assuming they can't or won't spend the money.

If spending the money on updating will sell the home quicker, it is a stager's obligation to suggest the update and educate the seller on how making the change will positively impact their bottom line. Sellers are more likely to follow through on staging advice if they understand why they are making the changes and how that will help them sell faster or receive higher offers for their property. Stager's that are successful know what changes must be made to achieve maximum sales results and how much should be spent to yield the desired effect and return on investment. There are many budget-wise solutions that can replicate an updated space without spending more money than necessary.

5. Allowing things to "slide" because you feel you have already given sellers too much to do.

As a stager, you must give sellers ALL the advice that will help sell the home faster. That is why you have been hired. The home owner will decide if they are willing to do everything or not but it is only fair to give them all the information that will lead to a favorable sales result.

6. Not being educated enough to explain to sellers how they would go about making the changes you have suggested.

Stagers must educate themselves on materials, pricing and installation techniques. If stagers are going to advise someone to change out a countertop for instance, they will need to know what the appropriate countertop solutions are in different budget ranges and where and who to get them from. Simply suggesting that someone pick out a more neutral tone countertop in a modern looking surface from a home improvement store is not enough information to help anybody. Be the expert that the home owner is hiring you to be. You must be able to advise people specifically and correctly and know that the amount of money you are advising them to spend will have a larger return for the home owner. If you are not sure how much something costs, do not suggest

things blindly. For instance, suggesting someone replace a driveway due to ugly staining is extremely costly and will not yield them more money in the sale than they invested to make the change.

7. Not staging rooms for their true and best purpose.

This is a matter of doing what's best for the home and knowing what buyers will pay more money for. For example, a dining room should be staged as a dining room and not as an office or play area. Buyers expect to have a sophisticated area to entertain in and will relate to the space better. In a 3 bedroom home, all 3 bedrooms should be staged as bedrooms or the home may feel like a 2 bedroom home and too small to meet the buyer's needs. Sometimes new stagers get caught up in what is easier/cheaper to stage or easiest for the home owner, rather than how the buyer will perceive the space.

8. Forgetting to inform the owner all the things they can do to facilitate a faster sale.

Sometimes new stagers forget to address some very important areas that will help the home sell such as curb appeal and landscaping, window and carpet cleaning, power washing, deferred maintenance, etc. It is expected that when stagers make these suggestions that they know who to refer the clients to so they can easily follow through.

9. Undercutting fees

Some stagers think if they charge considerably less than other stagers in the beginning they will get more work, however, this can hurt them in a number of ways. First, raising fees to competitive pricing later may be difficult since many of the previous clients will be expecting to pay less and might be upset with this rise in fees. Second, these stagers are devaluing themselves and the staging profession in general. Staging is a world wide community so charge what you are worth and help maintain the integrity of professional home staging fees for everyone. Nationally, home stagers charge between \$75 and \$150 per hour.

10. Lack of training.

Home staging has been around now for over 30 years and with all the home staging t.v. shows, agents and home owners are savvy about the field and expect professional stagers to have the credentials to truly help them sell the home.

Continue to educate yourself by;

- Watching staging and design shows. Many of them can be seen on the networks HGTV, DIY and TLC.
- Visit model homes and open houses to keep yourself in the loop of what seems to be working in your community.
- Visit high end stores to keep abreast of current color schemes and decorating trends.
- Look through sales catalogs and pick apart some of the staging ideas and look at the color trends, accessory trends and how they have styled the room. What did they do differently that set the room off nicely?
- Make appointments with local retailers and have them explain the different products they sell, the advantages and disadvantages of certain materials and their price points.
- Continue advanced learning in the ongoing education program at The Academy.
- Take local or online design classes.

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