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## Real Estate Tips

### JUST BE A CHAMELEON

By Sidney Jimenez / Your Realtor



You've heard these things from me time and time again. We're firmly entrenched in a buyers' market. It's a laborious task to sell a home—a "For Sale" sign on your lawn won't do the trick. Both the realtor and the seller need to work together on pricing, home staging and maintenance, and other issues. But there remains another critical factor to add in to the equation—when a curve ball is thrown, the seller and the realtor need to make like a chameleon, adapting to the changing environment.

Flexibility is key. While some buyers might take advantage of their power, some of them truly need the help that they ask for. For example, skyrocketing taxes and other financial factors keep many potential buyers from realizing their dreams, which in turn prevents the seller from selling their home. Many people are locked into their current homes because moving implies taking on higher taxes, which are often unaffordable. The same holds true for many buyers, and it can greatly curtail their price range.

This is where flexibility and creativity come in; buyers need to be helped—and enticed—to buy your house. For instance, let's assume that a buyer and seller have agreed on a price of \$400,000, and now the buyer needs to come up with \$10,000 for closing costs. An inflexible seller might balk at a request to pitch in for closing costs because he would apparently lose money on the sale price. However, the seller could simply increase the sale price by to \$410,000, and then offer the increase as a contribution toward closing costs. The seller gets his price, and the buyer gets the amount needed to close the deal. Everyone is happy! A straightforward dialogue and a creative idea can solve a very simple problem.

Flexibility also comes into play when you consider your price expectations. I would suggest thinking in terms of price ranges rather than specific numbers. For example, if you start out thinking, "I won't go a penny lower than \$400,000," it will make any offer—even

\$399,999!—seem negative. However, if you consider yourself open to offers between \$390,000 and \$400,000, any offer above \$390,000 will be a victory. Remember that in the end, your goal is to sell your home for market value—which is defined as what someone is willing to pay, not what your neighbor sold their home for last year! The days of setting a record for the sales price in your neighborhood are long gone.

Adapting to a certain environment is a necessity for survival in some circles. So, I would suggest that you allow yourself to see the big picture and stay current with the market. Once you witness a trend, embrace and use it to your advantage for a quicker sale. For example, if sellers of recently-sold neighborhood homes paid the maintenance fees or homeowner taxes for a given period, follow suit—advertise that you will do the same. Anybody can drop their asking price by \$10,000; but exceptional offers like those mentioned above will get you noticed and be more enticing.

This market rewards those who are flexible in their requests and expectations. And it rewards those who adapt and use the market trends and innovations to attract the buyers who are able to buy a home. Remember that the inflexible sellers out there will almost assuredly lose the opportunity to sell their home.

So find yourself an innovative Realtor whom you feel can be flexible and adapt to the nearly daily changes of the market. Now more than ever, it's important to go with a Realtor who can give you great exposure and show you they are looking for new trends to set. Selling a home in this market takes a lot of know-how, innovation, perseverance, and patience, so make sure you have a fellow chameleon by your side!

**Editor's Note:** Sidney Jimenez is a Realtor and a contributing writer for *CSPN News* and *The Pines & Miramar Advisor*.