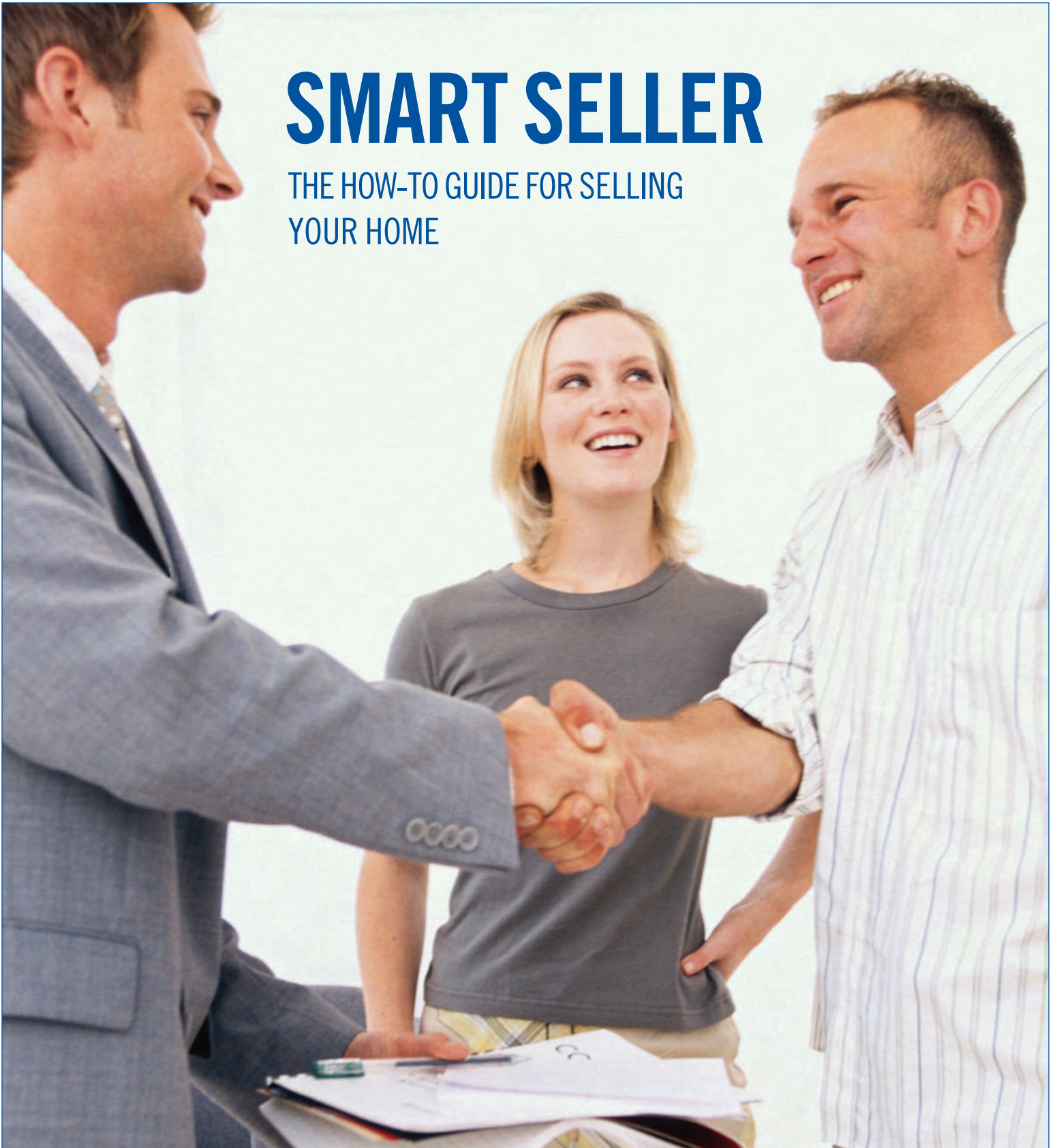


SMART SELLER

THE HOW-TO GUIDE FOR SELLING
YOUR HOME



remax.com

Outstanding Agents. Outstanding Results.

No one in the world sells more real estate than RE/MAX.

Each office independently owned and operated.

**RE/MAX
NORTH
CENTRAL**



RE/MAX SMART SELLER

Start Smart. Sell Smart.

Thinking about moving? It may help to know that no one sells more real estate than RE/MAX. In fact, when you work with RE/MAX, you're working with a team of professionals from the world's most successful real estate company. With that kind of experience at our fingertips, we feel a responsibility to share our expertise. So, we've gathered up some of the knowledge we've gained from all of those home sales to develop the RE/MAX Smart Seller Guide.

Take a quick glance at the information in this brochure and you'll begin to understand just what working with RE/MAX can do for you. From frequently asked questions and agent interviews to homeseller dos and don'ts, the RE/MAX Smart Seller Guide provides you with a wealth of opportunities to profit from our experience.

For instance, every real estate company seems to focus on guiding first-time homebuyers — but what about first-time *homesellers*? In addition to the information you'll find here, the new remax.com is full of ideas for first-time sellers.

Of course, the RE/MAX Smart Seller Guide is just that: A guide. You and your home are unique among all others, and your needs are bound to be equally unique. But understanding the factors that impact the selling process and the real value of your home can eliminate some of the guesswork in negotiating an optimal price. And if we can be this helpful in a simple brochure, imagine all that we can accomplish face-to-face.

We hope you'll enjoy the RE/MAX Smart Seller Guide and you'll allow us to be of assistance when you're ready to make your move. Whether you're next home sale will be your first or twenty-first, remember no one sells more real estate than RE/MAX.



For answers to all your home selling questions, call your RE/MAX associate or visit remax.com.

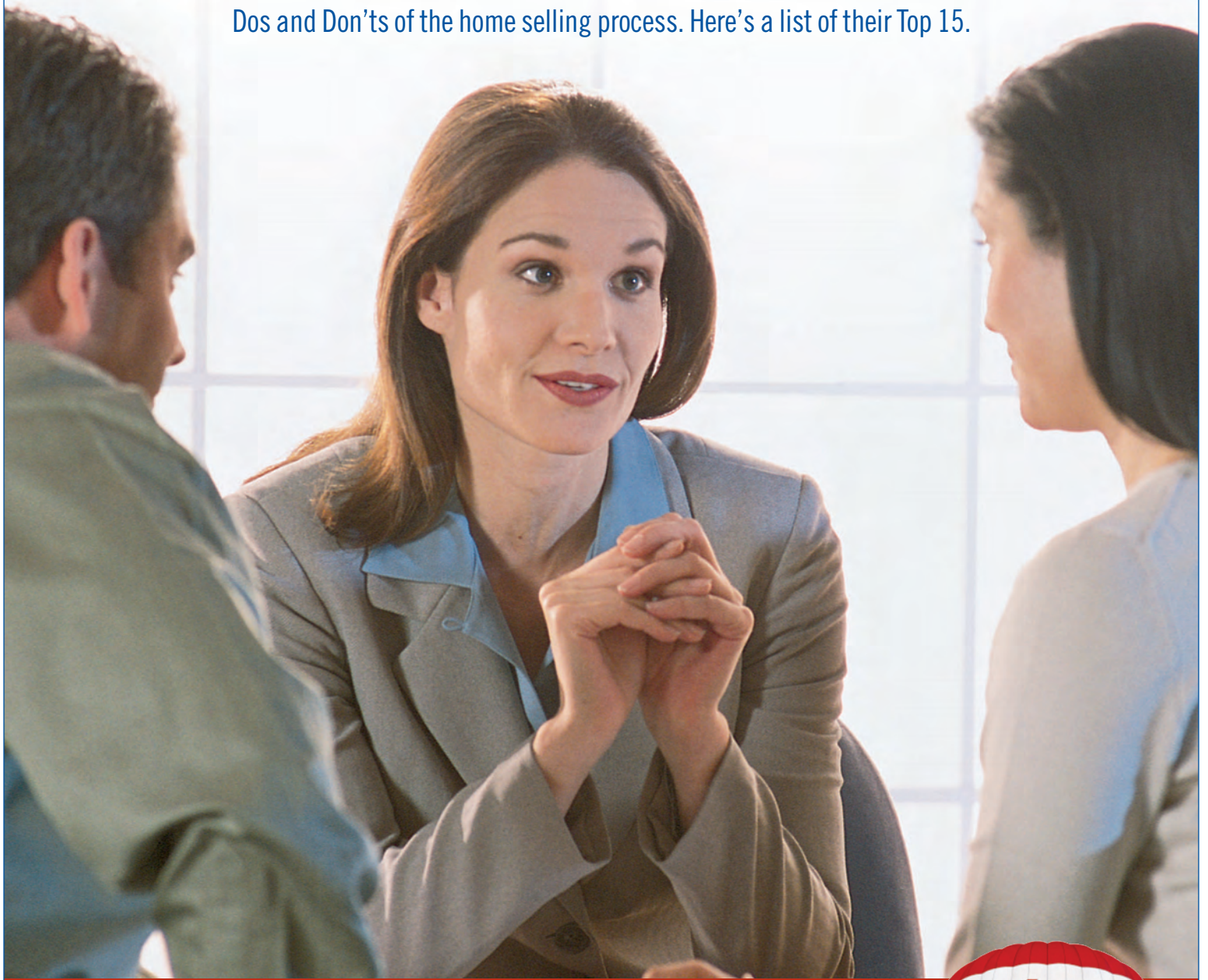
30 SMART QUESTIONS FOR FIRST-TIME SELLERS

- What do I need to sell my home — and what do I need to know?
- What are the most important factors when selling my home?
- When is the best time to sell my home?
- What is my home worth?
- Is my home ready to sell?
- What do I need to do to prepare my home?
- What do I need to repair now — and what can wait?
- What is included in the sale of my home?
- What are the costs involved in selling my home?
- What are the benefits of using an agent?
- What is a CMA?
- What is a listing agreement?
- What is the MLS?
- What happens once my home is on the market?
- How long will my house be on the market?
- What are my legal responsibilities as a home seller?
- What is a home warranty?
- Should I pay for a home warranty?
- Should I pay for an inspection before I list my home?
- Should I pay for an appraisal before I list my home?
- What is an acceptable offer?
- Do I have to respond to every offer?
- What happens once I accept an offer?
- What does a real estate sales contract include?
- What if I sell my home before I find a new one?
- What if I buy a new home before I sell mine?
- How long will I wait between accepting an offer and the closing?
- How is a closing different for a seller than a buyer?
- Do I have to move out before my closing?
- Will I still pay my mortgage after I accept an offer but before closing?



SMART SELLER DOS AND DON'TS

With thousands of brokers and agents averaging more than 13 years of experience, it's no mystery why no one sells more real estate than RE/MAX. So, we asked our associates to share favorite Dos and Don'ts of the home selling process. Here's a list of their Top 15.



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DO

DON'T

- 1. Be realistic.** You may believe your house is the best on the block — and it might be — but perhaps not in everyone else's eyes. All you can do is make yours appealing to as many people as possible. Consider another opinion from an agent, appraiser, inspector, staging consultant — or all of these.
 - 2. Consider a pre-listing inspection.** You can get a third party perspective and put buyers at ease if your home has already been inspected and issues have been taken care of.
 - 3. Create a bright space.** Clean windows, inside and out. Paint dark walls a lighter color. Open drapes and shades for showings. More light gives the impression of more space.
 - 4. Clear the clutter.** Pick up and dispose of old newspapers, garbage, and magazines. Keep children's toys and games in one location of the home or yard.
 - 5. Clean everything.** From cobwebs and baseboards to carpets and basements.
 - 6. Remove excess wall decor.** This goes for the refrigerator door, too. It will look cleaner without a hundred magnets and photos. Put away family photos. Buyers have a hard time picturing their family in the home when they see yours at every turn.
 - 7. Update fixtures and features.** Old carpet, outdated light fixtures, busy wallpaper and ancient appliances are big turn-offs. Our RE/MAX Smart Renovator guide can help you decide what to do first.
 - 8. Arrange furniture properly.** Your furnishings should fit and complement the room size, lighting and natural traffic pattern.
 - 9. Create curb appeal.** A well-maintained yard and entry make a great first impression. Trim bushes and trees. Add flowers and greenery. Remove ice and snow. Your entryway is where buyers stand while they wait for their agent to open the door.
 - 10. Eliminate pet evidence.** Take care of any pet smells or messes. Put the litter box in an inconspicuous place and clean it regularly. You should also remove dog waste or toys from your yard/walkways and repair lawn spots.
 - 11. Keep and organize paperwork.** Assemble a binder that contains inspection reports, property disclosures, appliance manuals and receipts for any work done. Anything that shows you have meticulously maintained, cleaned, and cared for your home greatly diminishes fears that something major could happen.
 - 12. Keep the temperature at a comfortable level.** This means cooling it in the summer and heating it in the winter. If a buyer is not comfortable visiting your home, it will be harder for them to imagine being comfortable living there.
 - 13. Understand your responsibilities.** Be aware of the terms of your agent contract, so you'll understand what each party is responsible for.
 - 14. Start packing now.** If you don't use it on a regular basis, pack it, sell it or dump it. Remember that buyers are looking for storage space, too.
 - 15. Respond respectfully to every offer.** Let the buyer know that even if their offer isn't up to par, you are serious about accepting a better one.
- 1. Insist on overpricing.** Pricing your home higher than what it is worth so you can lower it if it does not sell diminishes your opportunities. Your home can appear unattractive, flawed or "stale" after it has been on the market a long time.
 - 2. Refinance beyond the price of your home.** Doing so will just make it more difficult for you to provide prospective buyers with a price that's in line with similar properties in your neighborhood.
 - 3. Try to hide imperfections.** Sooner or later, they'll come to light — either through a professional inspection or a second buyer showing. It's better to take care of any flaws you can *before* you list.
 - 4. Talk about repairs instead of performing them.** Sellers have a hard time picturing completed repairs. Doing them now will not only paint a better picture for the buyer but prevent you from having to reduce your selling price.
 - 5. Keep collectibles on display.** Put away your special collections or arrange them in a special spot. This presents your items as a unique collection, rather than just clutter, and creates a focal point in the room.
 - 6. Make your home unavailable.** Requiring 24 to 48 hours notice for a showing can greatly diminish your opportunity to find the right buyer. Your home needs to be ready when prospective buyers are.
 - 7. Stay in your home for showings.** Buyers will be more comfortable looking at your home and sharing their thoughts if you are not present to overhear.
 - 8. Keep pets in the house for showings.** Even animal lovers can find it difficult to enjoy a home tour with an unfamiliar pet following them around.
 - 9. Light scented candles.** Some potential buyers may have allergies or be sensitive to strong smells. You're better off getting rid of offensive smells rather than trying to cover them up. Instead of candles, try a softer "childhood" aroma like fresh bread, cinnamon rolls or chocolate chip cookies.
 - 10. Assume buyers will not snoop.** A home is the largest investment most consumers will ever make and they want to see it all. Make sure your cupboards, closets, appliances and storage spaces are in order and don't contain anything you don't want others to see.
 - 11. Wait to get Truth In Lending info.** Delaying this important step can delay the listing, sale and closing of your home.
 - 12. Enter into negotiations with unqualified buyers.** Request that all negotiations take place after buyers can demonstrate pre-approval for a mortgage adequate to purchase your home.
 - 13. Fall behind on your mortgage or utilities.** Extra fees can appear at your closing if you are not up to date on all payments.
 - 14. Try to do it all yourself.** The experience and expertise of a professional real estate agent can be invaluable — and are well worth any commission you might pay.
 - 15. Leave it all to your agent.** Working with an associate is like a marriage. Both parties need to share responsibility or the partnership will never be successful.

For answers to all your home selling questions, call your RE/MAX associate or visit remax.com.



RE/MAX SMART START

Six Suggestions for Successful Home Selling

1 Get Ready. People sell their homes for a million different reasons, but all sellers have one thing in common: The desire to get as much money as possible from their existing residence as quickly and effortlessly as possible. Before you begin the selling process, take time to evaluate why you're really moving and what you really need. Do you have too few rooms? Or too many? Has your job taken you to another neighborhood? Or another city? Are the neighbors driving you away? Or are you simply looking for a change? A complete analysis of your position and expectations will help you set goals for selling.

2 Get Set. Just as with purchasing a home, you'll want to list with a RE/MAX agent who has experience in your neighborhood. Potential buyers will be calling this "area expert" to inquire about homes for sale. There are bound to be more than a few who are knowledgeable about your area, so call and interview potential agents. You need to feel comfortable with him or her, since they'll be working very closely with you. Our list of Top 15 Agent Qualifier questions will help you get a head start.

15



TOP 15 AGENT QUALIFIERS

How much experience do you have? Particularly in my neighborhood?

What services and resources do you offer?

Do you have the time to devote to my needs?

How often will you communicate with me?

How does the home selling process work — and what is expected of me?

How long are homes in this neighborhood typically on the market?

How many homes have you listed and sold in the last year?

How would you price my home?

How will you market my home?

What disclosure laws apply to me — and what do I need to be aware of?

What does the listing agreement entail — and what is your fee?

What happens if another agent locates a buyer?

What happens if I'm not happy with your services?

What references can you provide for yourself and your company?

In a nutshell: Why should I hire you?

3 Let Them Know. While we all believe our home is our castle, our personal tastes may not appeal to everyone. Your RE/MAX agent will work with you to provide an objective, impartial analysis of your home; how it relates to other competing homes on the market, how it reflects current design and style trends, and how to best market it to prospective buyers. The time to take care of any minor imperfections or major repairs is before your RE/MAX agent begins a marketing program.

4 Let Them In. The primary purpose of any home marketing program is to get buyers into your home for a showing. Is your home in condition to be put under a microscope? For most consumers, purchasing a home is the largest investment they'll ever make. So, take a look at your house as if you were a buyer — then take a look at the Smart Seller Dos and Don'ts in this guide. Make notes on what needs minor clean up, what needs major attention and what you can do about it all. The key is to be honest with yourself.

5 Be Open To Offers. After many discussions, your RE/MAX agent will know the conditions and lowest price you'll accept from a potential buyer. By knowing your parameters, your agent can work with the potential purchaser's agent to create an offer that will be acceptable. Your RE/MAX agent will take you through every aspect of any offer you receive. Be sure you scrutinize all the details, provisions, conditions and closing information of your sale. If there's anything you don't understand, ask! Once you're satisfied with an offer, you'll want to accept it quickly.

6 Be Ready To Close. Once you've accepted an offer, there's bound to be a lull until closing — but it won't be quite as quiet as you may think. This can be a time of great preparation and frenzied packing. Just remember not to pack anything that you agreed to sell! Chances are you've already bought a new home — or are at least in the process of looking for one. While you already have experience with the home buying process, our comprehensive Smart Buyer Guide also has all the information, worksheets, checklists, calendars and tips you need.

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