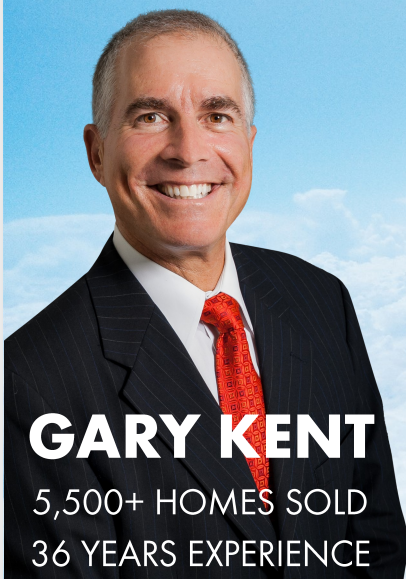


GARY'S "WISE CLIENT GUIDE" TO SELLING YOUR HOME

Your Step-By-Step, Handbook To Sell Your Home Faster & Easier,
For More Money, With Less Stress!



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I WROTE THIS HOMESELLING* GUIDE FOR YOU

There's so much to know BEFORE you sell... more than most people realize!

Even if you've sold homes before, things are always changing. And it's definitely NOT getting any simpler.

It's just too hard to be an expert at something you do only a few times in your life, isn't it?

One wrong move can cost you time, money, stress, your sale, and your best-laid plans. But the *right* moves mean a faster, easier sale, with more money in your pocket.

And it all depends on what you know and who you ~~know~~ hire to sell your home!

That's why I wrote this guide...for YOU:

To inform you, be your advocate, help keep you organized, simplify the process, improve your experience, and — most of all — guide you so you make the right decisions for you and your family. And believe me, you'll be making plenty of them.



P.S. You'll learn things in this guide you won't find anywhere else.

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**Perhaps you're selling a rental, a family property, or other real estate. For simplicity (because I want to make EVERYTHING simpler for you!), throughout your guide, we'll just refer to it as your home.*

1. PROFESSIONAL:

WHY IS YOUR CHOICE OF AGENT SO VERY IMPORTANT?



This section is the largest because your choice of agent is the most important decision you'll make. Don't make it lightly!

Why so important? Because a great agent wears many hats. I submit to you that their most important one is to be Your Advocate. But there are others:

- Real Estate Expert
- Appraiser¹
- Staging Consultant
- Marketer
- Tech Nerd
- Communicator / Updater
- Legal Advisor²
- Negotiator
- Therapist³
- Problem Solver
- Juggler & Cat Herder⁴

#1: While not licensed appraisers, your Realtor advises you on your home's value.

#2: While not attorneys, your Realtor counsels you on contracts, real estate law and practice, disclosures, etc. We encourage all clients to seek legal advice as needed.

#3: While not actual therapists, Realtors help you through stressful situations, and guide you to make the right financial decisions for you and your family.

#4: While not true jugglers or cat herders, your Realtor juggles many things at once. And making sure everyone does their job in your sale can feel like herding cats!

6 SCARY WAYS PEOPLE CHOOSE THEIR AGENT

This is one of the biggest financial transactions of your life. So it only makes sense to choose the most skilled, experienced Realtor to handle it for you, doesn't it?

Too often, people choose their agent for all the wrong reasons, and the results are *disastrous*. Why? Because there's been no reliable guide to choosing the right agent...*until now!*

But first, let's talk about how NOT to choose your agent:

1. PRICE

You want the highest price, right? How did I know? Because everyone does. Knowing this, some agents try to woo you with an unrealistic high price. *Consumer Reports* calls this "highballing." So always keep your decision of price and agent 100% separate!

2. FEE

Choosing an agent by fee all but ensures being stuck with the worst agent, and your service and pocketbook suffering. If they can't negotiate for themselves, would you really want them negotiating *your* money? The best professionals needn't discount and are worth every dime.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE ►

6 SCARY WAYS PEOPLE CHOOSE THEIR AGENT—CONT.

3. FRIEND / LIKEABILITY

Would you hire an attorney or surgeon based on friendship or likeability? No? Then don't hire your Realtor that way either. (Of course, you don't want someone obnoxious.)

4. HAS A LICENSE

Such a low bar! People assume a license implies expertise. Nope. It means they passed an easy state exam after 50+ hours of study. By contrast, it takes 1500 hours to become a *barber* in California! I'll take a bad haircut over a bad home sale any day! How about you?

5. FIRM

You're hiring the agent (and team if they have one), not the firm or office. I say that even though my firm, Keller Williams, is the biggest in all of North America.

6. NOT BUSY, SO CAN PROVIDE BETTER SERVICE

My first manager told all us new agents, "Tell people you have more time for them because you're not busy." Clever, yes. But bad for you, the homeseller. You want a successful agent because there's a reason for their success. Remember the saying, "If you want something done, ask a busy person." ...But if you want it done *right*, ask a successful person!

Finding an agent with lots of free time is easy. What's not easy?

...Finding a successful agent with the skill and resources to get you more money in less time AND give you the

So the message is loud and clear: Don't choose your agent for any of these six reasons. The good news is, it's VERY easy to choose the right agent...

THE QUICK 2-WORD "HACK" TO CHOOSING THE VERY BEST REALTOR:

TRACK RECORD!

Yes, it's that simple! Choose the agent with the best track record.

After all, if an agent has successfully sold clients' homes time and time again, odds are they'll remember how and do it for you too. Right?

Too simple? If you *must* have more criteria, here's a few (but remember, track record is #1!):

1. Do they have a team?

Agents with teams tend to be more successful and give you better service.

2. Are you comfortable with them?

You don't want an agent you dread talking to. So no matter how successful they are, if they're obnoxious, cross them off your list. Life's too short, right?

3. How do they answer the questions on the next page?

Go to the next page...



12 SMART QUESTIONS FOR AGENTS

Fill in agents' answers to the 12 questions below...

	GARY		
1. How long have you been a Realtor?			
2. How many homes have you sold in your career?			
3. How many homes have you personally sold in [your area]?			
4. How many buyer agents on your team?			
5. How much will my home will sell for?*			
6. What list price do you recommend?*			
7. Do you use "price per square foot" to price homes?*			
8. If the buyer breaks the contract, do I get their deposit?*			
9. How long do I have to buy another home and avoid taxes?*			
10. Why should I hire your firm?*			
11. What sets you apart from other agents?			
12. What's the biggest challenge we'll face selling our home?			

**Remember, price and agent are two separate decisions. While there can be honest differences of opinion on price, some agents intentionally suggest unrealistic prices to coax homeowners to hire them. That's not professional or ethical. It's not nice either.*

**There are very specific reasons to ask #7-10 that I'll explain to you when we meet...*

2. PRICING YOUR HOME TO SELL



Ask more and you get more, right? Not necessarily.

Pricing your home correctly can be counterintuitive. Starting with a high list price often results in a *lower* ultimate sale price. Why?

Because overpricing scares off buyers. That's the last thing you'd want to do in your home's critical "new-on-the-market" phase, when you get the most activity and interest.

Of course, pricing too low is risky too. But I can count on one hand how many of my wonderful clients over the years insisted on *underpricing* their homes. Funny, right?

So let's go over the common reasons people overprice, so YOU don't make those same mistakes...

7 HOME COSTLY PRICING BLUNDERS

1. ROSE-COLORED GLASSES

Did you know the average homeseller overvalues their home by 8%? (*Journal Of Housing Economics*) Good news: You wouldn't be reading this if YOU were average! But others make this mistake by focusing on their home's desirable features and ignoring drawbacks.

2. NEED/WANT

The price you need or want for your home is very important to both you and me. But not to homebuyers. Value is set by the market (of course), not by what we need or want it to be.

3. OTHER HOMES' ASKING PRICES

List prices are half the picture: just an owner's desire, until someone actually buys the home. You've seen homes sit forever. Why? Overpricing. So rely on sales prices, not asking prices.

4. CHERRY-PICKING ONE OR MORE "COMPS"

Professionals use 3-6 comparable home sales, chosen by proximity, similarity, and date sold. They don't seek the 1-2 highest sales to justify a higher price. I may do that when marketing your home or negotiating for you, but not in objectively calculating your home value.

5. FAULTY APPRAISALS

An appraisal is just one opinion, by someone who's not in the trenches selling real estate. I've seen appraisals off by up to 30%! Why? Appraisers work broad areas and don't know your neighborhood, or the "comps" they're using. (There are more reasons—just ask me.)

6. HOME PRICING WEBSITES

Admit it: You've looked up your home value online, haven't you? Fun, right? Yes, but *not* accurate. These sites' business model: Attract more people, then obtain and sell your personal data. So they make it fun—and skew values a bit high to get people coming back.

7. INFLATABLE AGENTS

(See page 3, #1.) Too many agents inflate the price to win your favor. Don't fall for it!

BENEFITS TO PRICING YOUR HOME RIGHT, FROM THE START

1. More exposure to the right buyers (see chart)
2. Increased agent interest
3. More interest and offers, possibly multiple offers
4. Higher price
5. Faster sale
6. Less holding costs, inconvenience, lost privacy, and disruption to your life
7. People won't be saying, "Why has it been on the market so long? What's wrong with it? Think they're ready for a low offer?" (We never want people saying these things about your home!)



HOW TO ACCURATELY DETERMINE YOUR HOME'S VALUE

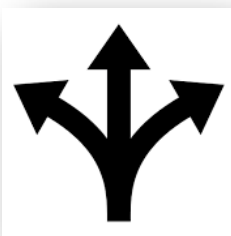
Pricing is part art, part science. Mastering it requires training and experience. This guide can't substitute for all that, but here are the basics:

1. Find 5+ similar nearby home sales (aka "comps") from the last 90-180 days.
2. Compare them to your home and adjust for: market changes since offer acceptance, location, beds/baths, square feet, view, interior condition and appeal, curb appeal, usable yard, garage, other amenities. (Comparing and adjusting is MUCH easier said than done!)
3. Determine a value based on these comps.
4. Now factor in the market and competition by analyzing homes for sale in your immediate and surrounding neighborhoods:
 - A) If similar homes are listed (and not selling) below your value, OR superior homes are listed at your value, the market may be declining, so adjust slightly down.
 - B) If few homes are currently for sale, this indicates a shortage, so adjust slightly up.
 - C) If many homes are sitting unsold, this indicates a surplus, so adjust slightly down.
5. Voilà, you have your approximate value. Great job!

Of course, determining your home's value is your agent's job, not yours.

YOUR 3 LIST PRICE OPTIONS

Now that you've determined a value, it's time to choose our list price strategy:



1. **GARY'S 2% RULE** — Add approximately 2% to your value. This gives you some negotiating room, but you're not pricing yourself out of the market.
2. **VALUE RANGE** — Choose an 8% range with your value near the middle.
3. **AUCTION / "eBAY"** — Purposely price below market to attract multiple offers to bid your price up. This makes me nervous, so I rarely advise it.

3. PREP:

SELL "As Is" vs. PROFITABLY ENHANCING YOUR HOME

There are only two things your home MUST have when selling: 1) working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in all "sleeping areas" and 2) your water heater correctly strapped. Aside from those, you can sell "As Is." Given your specific home, available time, desire, and finances, are you interested in profitable upgrades to increase your home's sale price?

If so, then you have options:

1. Have me walk through and share tips specific to your home.
2. Consider a professional home stager. They cost less than you may think, typically \$1500 to \$5000 (more for large luxury homes). Stagers prefer vacant homes, but many can work with occupied homes too.
3. Ask for a copy of my *Staging Made Simple* guide. You'll discover my 6 Levels Of Preparing Your Home For Sale.
4. See my **PREP-TO-SELL PROGRAM** below...
5. See my Top 10 Interior/Exterior Tips below...



MY PREP-TO-SELL PROGRAM

To provide you a higher level of service, I designed this unique program. And I'm happy to do any or all of the following for you at no extra charge:

- Make a list of recommended profitable improvements specific to your home
- Professional paint color consultation
- Refer you trusted vendors & tradespeople
- Get you bids/estimates for your approval
- Schedule the work you approve of
- Arrange access to your home for them
- Provide you with regular progress reports
- Send you photos showing the completion
- In some cases, I pay them up front and you reimburse me at closing from your proceeds

Let me know if you're interested in my **PREP-TO-SELL PROGRAM...**

MY TOP 10 "GENERIC" HOME PREP TIPS: INTERIOR & EXTERIOR

Interior

1. Pro cleaning
2. Clean carpet
3. New flooring
4. New paint
5. Depersonalize
6. Deodorize
7. Declutter:
 - Start packing
 - Empty closets of excess stuff
 - Store items in garage or offsite
8. 100-watt bulbs
9. Trim bushes to allow light in
10. Organize kitchen & baths

Exterior

1. General yardwork
2. Add flowers
3. Front porch:
 - Working doorbell
 - New mailbox
 - New "Welcome Friends" mat
 - Paint front door
4. Power wash house & driveway
5. New paint
6. New address #s
7. Haul junk
8. Hide trash cans
9. Open up views
10. New lawn furniture (take to next home)

PROFITABLE IDEAS TO INCREASE MY HOME VALUE

Use this checklist to note needed improvements and check them off when you're done!

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4. PROMOTION → PAYDAY

**Because A) my office is a laboratory of evolving, innovative marketing strategies and B) my goal here is to inform — not "sell" — I won't dive into the details of my marketing plan in this guide.*

To keep your guide concise, there's only room to scratch the surface on: Marketing Your Home*, Offers, Negotiating, Escrow Process, and Closing/Payday! Apologies in advance for cramming so much into this small space!

1. MARKETING

- **Agent Marketing Plans:** It's hard to tell what actually works vs. "shiny" gimmicks that don't. So my advice may sound familiar...the best plan is the one that's sold a lot of homes!
- **How Buyers Buy:** No surprise, buyers start online. That makes these critical, in descending order: 1) pricing, 2) photos/video/virtual, 3) written description, 4) everything else.
- **Access:** Homes that are easier to show sell faster and for more. So a lockbox and flexible showing appointments are best. We'll discuss and decide what works best for you.
- **Never Engage Agents & Buyers** viewing your home. Better to be gone or just exchange pleasantries. If they ask questions, just say, "Sorry, my agent Gary said to call him. I'm not supposed to answer anything."
- **Updates & Feedback:** Don't be in the dark! Good agents update you weekly on activity/interest/feedback and suggest course corrections as needed.
- **Half The Marketing** boils down to one specific strategy. Ask me what it is and I'll explain...

2. OFFERS

- **Never Take The First Offer?** Don't believe it! First offers *sometimes* are your best offers.
- **Offer Spreadsheet:** Offers have so many confusing details! Multiple offers multiply that. So I'll email you a simple offer spreadsheet clarifying it all, and offering recommendations.
- **Is Your Buyer Qualified?** We don't want your buyer's loan denied at the last minute. Do you know the critical steps to vet your buyer's qualifications that most agents *skip*?
- **Traps In The Contract:** The offer form treats the buyer as the consumer who needs protection, skewing terms in their favor. But what about you? I have a form that protects you!
- **More Than Price:** Yes, price is king. But there's other terms that matter, like deposit, financing, escrow period, contingencies, and more subtle things that some agents overlook.

3. NEGOTIATING

- **Do You Know** the "stupidly simple" question smart seller-agents ask when they get offers?
- **Many Seller's Agents** make a specific negotiating faux pas that's bad news for you.
- **Timing** is key. Should you respond to offers immediately, wait a day, or...? It all depends on the buyer, offer price & terms, how long you've been listed, other buyer interest, etc.

4. ESCROW PROCESS / INSPECTIONS — Watch this video for more info: GaryKent.com/Escrow

- **Herding Cats!** This is definitely when your agent MUST have this unique skill.
- **Top 5 Reasons Sales Cancel:** In descending order, 5) Buyer finds another home they prefer, 4) Low appraisal, 3) Buyer doesn't qualify, 2) Cold feet, 1) Home inspection...
- **Home Inspection:** Don't roll over, but be ready to negotiate a bit if the inspector finds legitimate issues. Watch this short video I made for my clients: GaryKent.com/Inspect

5. CLOSING / PAYDAY!

- **Be Flexible!** Closings can be delayed for reasons beyond our control, so be ready to close on time AND flexible in case that doesn't happen.
- **Utilities:** Order them off AFTER we close. If our closing is delayed, you don't want your utilities off if you're still there, or if the buyer hasn't done their "final walk-through."
- **Your Money!** Typically, your funds are available for pick-up or to be wired half a business day after closing. Wires often take a business day to transfer.

5. PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER:

GETTING STARTED TOWARD YOUR SUCCESSFUL SALE

Have you noticed that many people squint when they try to figure something out? It's because they're trying to "see" it. So let's make that process easier for you by giving you a clear vision of how we can start working together now toward your successful sale!

1. **WE DO THE LISTING PAPERWORK IN ADVANCE**

- We can do this in person or via e-signatures
- These papers don't mean your home goes on the market immediately. We'll start when you're ready, be it in three days or three months. And a little extra lead time helps me do the things (below) that I need to do.



2. **PREPARE YOUR HOME FOR SALE**

If needed, you'll complete any preparatory work on your home.

3. **WE DO OUR BORING BACK-OFFICE "STUFF"**

- Confirm your title is clear
- Order a termite inspection
- Arrange professional photography
- More very important but yawn-inducing tasks

4. **PRE-MARKETING IF YOUR HOME ISN'T READY TO FULLY MARKET**

We start working early to find your buyer and build an interest list. If we find a buyer who makes you a strong offer in this stage, you can decide to negotiate it to a price you're happy with, or opt to get full exposure in the MLS and discover what the market will bear.

5. **LISTING LAUNCH!**

Once your home is ready to market, we start with all guns blazing and expose your home to the world, so we can sell in your time frame and get you the most money.

LET'S GET STARTED, SHALL WE?

THANK YOU FOR READING MY "WISE CLIENT GUIDE" TO SELLING YOUR HOME!

I hope you've found it helpful and informative in your quest for a smooth sale, at the highest price, in your time frame. So please reach out to me and let's get started working together.

It will be my honor and pleasure to serve you...

A stylized, handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Gary".

I HOPE YOU FIND THIS HOMESELLING GUIDE VALUABLE

Gary leads *The Gary Kent Team*, a professional real estate practice serving clients all over San Diego County. The Gary Kent Team is a division of Keller Williams Realty La Jolla.

ABOUT GARY KENT...

- **9-Time #1 in San Diego County** with two major national firms
- Over **5,500 homes sold** for clients
- Over **36 years of experience**
- Author of the book, ***The 22 Secrets To Selling Your Home***
- Author of weekly real estate e-newsletter with 18,000 distribution
- Creator of Homeseller University (HomeSellerU.com) and Homebuyer University (TheHomeBuyerU.com)
- Creator of the "Find It Off Market" program (FindItOffMarket.com)
- Referral-based practice (75% repeat or referral clients)
- Interviews by San Diego Union-Tribune and CBS, NBC, ABC, Fox, KUSI TV stations
- Expert court witness
- Certifications: Luxury Home Specialist, Investment Property Expert, Senior Real Estate Specialist, Distressed Property Expert, Accredited Staging Professional
- Public seminars on real estate buying, selling, investing (GaryKentSeminars.com)
- Trained 100+ real estate agents
- Bachelor of Economics, UCLA, 1983
- Originally from Los Angeles
- Gary and Marianne have been married since 1983 and have two adult children, Tim and Emily



PAST CLIENTS INCLUDE:

- Thousands of wonderful San Diego individuals and families like you
- Michael Turko, former KUSI Channel 9 consumer advocate
- The Salvation Army and the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego
- Bank of America, Wells Fargo, U.S. Bank, CitiBank, Chase, Ally Bank
- Fannie Mae / Federal National Mortgage Association
- U.S. Small Business Administration
- U.S. Department of Veteran's Affairs



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