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## 6 tips to nail your next listing appointment

*Play up 'team' approach, communication strategy*

BY BERNICE ROSS



[Elated real estate agent image](#) via Shutterstock.

Would you like to convert more listing leads into signed listings? If so, author and speaker Terri Murphy has two great strategies that helps her list 100 houses a year without the aid of an assistant.

Many agents go on listing appointments with little more than a comparative market analysis (CMA) in hand, if that. They lack a specific marketing plan and often fail to explain the services they provide for their sellers. As a result, it comes as no surprise that National Association of Realtors statistics have repeatedly shown that approximately 7 percent of the agents are doing 93 percent of the business.

### **The power of a pre-appointment system**

According to Murphy, one of the best ways to stand out from the competition is to have a pre-appointment system. Here are the key items Murphy recommends that you include:

### **1. A list of marketing tools you will use to promote the property**

Do you have a list of tools that you're multiple listing service and your company provide to market your listings? If not, it's smart to compile this information and make it available to the sellers either in print or digital form, depending upon their preference.

Even if everyone else on your board and/or in your company has access to this information, virtually no one is explaining it to the sellers. You can stand out from the competition by simply showing them what you do to achieve maximum exposure to the market.

If you have your own tools, that's even better. Create a list that outlines your entire offering and share that with the sellers as part of your pre-appointment system.

### **2. A referral services list.**

When people list their home, there is a wide variety of services that they will need. This includes professional services related to the transaction, such as lenders, title, loan officers, building inspectors, movers, etc. Most agents have a list of service providers that they have used in the past and that the sellers can rely on to receive the best possible service. Share this list with your sellers.

There's one important caveat, however: Make sure you have a minimum of two, and preferably three, professionals from which to choose.

### **3. A seller's homework sheet**

Murphy recommends that before the sellers ever meet with you they pull together information the buyer may need to access as part of the purchase process. For example, it's smart to check the loan documents to see whether there is a prepayment penalty or some other aspect of the loan that could be an issue at closing.

It's also smart to ask for receipts (and permits) for any work that has been done the property. This includes the plans if there has been a major remodel.

Furthermore, given today's increasing energy prices, it's also smart to ask for the last 12 months of utility bills so the buyer can make an informed decision as to the energy costs associated with maintaining the property.

#### **4. A communication agreement.**

How and how often do the sellers want you to communicate with them? It's important that you match your sellers' preferred communication style instead of forcing them to match yours. Also, once you agree to when you will communicate, be sure to deliver on what you promise.

#### **5. Testimonials.**

Murphy recommends having testimonials as part of your prelisting appointment system, especially video testimonials.

#### **6. Leverage the power of your strategic alliances.**

Before Murphy ever went on an appointment, she had members of her "team" contact the sellers to explain their role as well as to answer any questions they might have.

You may be thinking that you don't have a team. Quite the opposite is true. Even if you are a solo agent, you have a host of people that you work with to close the transaction,

For example, Murphy had her favorite loan officer contact the sellers to have them become prequalified for their next purchase. If they were moving out of the area, she introduced them to a member of her "relocation" team, which was an agent she trusted who worked the area where the seller was moving. She also had her favorite movers contact the sellers to schedule an appointment to bid out the cost of the move.

Another option was to send out a professional stager so the sellers could hear from the stager, rather than from Murphy, about what they needed to do in terms of fixing up their house. You can also introduce your manager and in-office team members who handle the advertising, marketing and Web services for your company.

Her agreement with each member of her team was that they mentioned her name at least three times during the time they spent talking to the sellers.

Murphy's prelisting appointment system establishes trust and credibility with the sellers. The point she makes is a valid one: When they hire her, they're hiring a team of professionals, all of whom are dedicated to helping the sellers have the best selling experience possible.

*Bernice Ross, CEO of [RealEstateCoach.com](http://RealEstateCoach.com), is a national speaker, trainer and author of the National Association of Realtors' No. 1 best-seller, "Real Estate Dough: Your Recipe for Real Estate Success." Hear Bernice's five-minute daily real estate show, just named "new and notable" by iTunes, at [www.RealEstateCoachRadio.com](http://www.RealEstateCoachRadio.com). You can contact her at [Bernice@RealEstateCoach.com](mailto:Bernice@RealEstateCoach.com) or [@BRoss](https://twitter.com/BRoss) on Twitter.*