

Six selling tips for a buyer's market

1. **Price to sell.** If you need to sell your home quickly, "cut to the chase". List your house based on what the market dictates today, not the prices that friends, relatives and co-workers got last winter or last spring.

2. **Consider all credible offers.** Holding fast for a better offer might put you in a situation where you're merely playing catch-up with a moving market. Don't assume there will always be another offer coming down the pike. In some cases, coming down on your price may be the quickest solution to getting your home sold.

3. **Offer to proffer.** Buyers are requesting all kinds of enticements to spice the pot. Club memberships, prepaid lawn maintenance, moving-expense reimbursements, all appliances included and liberal repair credits are just a few possible throw-ins. Don't be shocked if you hear, "Throw in that plasma TV and we've got a deal." Consider in advance how far you'll be willing to go, and know where to "draw the line".

4. **Catch the wave at the source.** Prepare your home for sale at the very earliest point this spring (actually early March or even late February), the time when seasonal buying interest is just starting to build.

5. **Preserve your equity.** Until the market stabilizes, refrain from borrowing from home equity (or raiding your 401(k), for that matter) to pay your bills, or for vacations and other purchases.

6. **Gain in a sell-buy scenario.** If you'll be buying another home at the same time you're selling your current one, the price reduction on the new one can compensate for any "loss you're taking on the old one. If you plan a "move up" to a better neighborhood and are paying 10 percent below list after selling your old home for 10 percent below list, your net dollar savings will actually be more.