

Michelle Gifford's **SELLER ACADEMY:**

A COMPLETE GUIDE TO SELLING YOUR
HOME IN MCKINNEY, FRISCO AND COLLIN
COUNTY



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Selling your home is about so much more than putting a sign in the yard. It's about preparing one of your largest investments to make the strongest first impression, attracting the right buyers, negotiating with confidence, and guiding every detail from contract to closing. That's where I come in.

Before real estate, I spent more than 23 years in Montessori education, where I learned that every person, every family, and every situation is unique. Success comes from careful observation, thoughtful preparation, and having a plan that fits the individual—not a one-size-fits-all. That philosophy still guides the way I serve my clients today.

I don't believe in simply listing homes. I believe in positioning them to stand out in the market.

Long before your home goes live, we'll create a customized strategy that includes pricing analysis, design recommendations, decluttering, staging, repairs, curb appeal improvements, and professional marketing designed to help buyers fall in love with your home before they ever walk through the front door.

Once your home is on the market, I stay actively involved. I communicate closely with buyers' agents, lenders, title companies, inspectors, and contractors to keep your transaction moving smoothly while protecting your interests and your equity. My clients never feel like they've been handed off to someone else.

Over the years, I've built a trusted network of professionals—from contractors and inspectors to lenders, painters, cleaners, and stagers—so when challenges arise, you'll already have the right people on your side.

My goal isn't simply to help you sell your home. It's to help you make informed decisions, maximize your home's value, reduce stress, and feel confident throughout the entire process.

Thank you for trusting me!

Michelle Gifford
Realtor® ABR, PSA



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my strategic HOME SELLING PROCESS



1

STEP ONE

CONSULT & SELLER AGREEMENT

We will discuss you and your plans, get all the details about your home, discuss your thoughts on value and the decision making process. We will discuss my marketing plan, and I will explain my fiduciary duties to you, then sign the listing agreement.

2

STEP TWO

COMPETITIVE PRICING

We'll tour the current homes on market (your competition) and use a Comparative Market Analysis (CMA) to compare your home with similar sold properties. Based on this, you'll set a competitive price considering your home's condition and market trends. A well-priced home sells faster and draws more interest.

3

STEP THREE

PREPARE TO LIST

Getting a pre-listing inspection will help us decide which issues need to be addressed before the home ever goes to market. Disclosing what has been completed and what still should be addressed by the buyers post-close, helps eliminate time on market and costly negotiations after the buyer has their inspection.

Then get your home ready by decluttering, cleaning, and removing personal items so buyers can envision themselves living there. I use professional staging or strategic rearranging of current furnishings to enhance the home's appeal and make rooms look larger. A clean and well-staged home will attract more buyers and result in better offers.

4

STEP FOUR

PROFESSIONAL IMAGERY

High-quality photos, 3D walk throughs, drone footage are essential for a strong first impression. A real estate photographer will showcase your home's best features and make rooms look inviting and spacious. These images will be used in listings and marketing to entice qualified buyers to see your home in person.

5

*STEP FIVE***STRATEGIC MARKETING**

Your home will be listed on the MLS, and integrated real estate websites to attract the maximum number of buyers. A customized marketing plan will include social media ads, broker opens and open house(s) to maximize visibility. I personally invite the neighbors and potential buyers and agents registered on the MLS looking for homes like yours.

6

*STEP SIX***SHOWINGS**

Make sure your home is clean and accessible for showings, as you will not be present when a buyer arrives. I will coordinate showings through a showing service so we always know who is in your home using a designated real estate lockbox. I will monitor feedback and inquiries to gauge interest, and make any necessary adjustments.

7

*STEP 7***OFFERS, NEGOTIATIONS & CONTRACT**

Be prepared to negotiate and make quick decisions to keep the sale moving smoothly. Once you've received offers, I'll help negotiate terms and make counteroffers if needed to achieve your goals. You'll then sign the contract to complete the sale of your home.

8

*STEP 8***INSPECTIONS AND APPRAISAL**

Once the offer is accepted, the buyer will schedule a home inspection and appraisal. The inspection assesses your home's condition and identifies any issues, while the appraisal confirms its market value to match the purchase price. I will help manage the process and address any potential concerns that arise from the findings.

9

*STEP 9***REPAIRS & NEGOTIATION PERIOD**

If any issues are identified during the inspection process, you and the buyer may need to negotiate repairs. I will help facilitate these negotiations and ensure a fair resolution. Once repair negotiations are complete, the closing process can proceed.

10

*STEP 10***CLOSING**

Before closing, I ensure all inspections, appraisals, and repairs have been completed and any necessary documents are in order. The buyer will have a final walk-through ensuring the home is in the condition they contracted for, we'll finalize remaining details, sign paperwork, and transfer ownership. You'll receive your payment, and the buyer will officially take possession of the home.



DETERMINING FACTORS

TO SELL YOUR PROPERTY

FACTOR 1:

PRICING

When pricing your home, it is important to carefully consider current market value. Using competitive market analysis, I will suggest your home's best listing price range. When we list just below current market and competition, we create a buzz, more offers, faster sale, and often for over-asking price. Pricing to "test the market" or "leave room to negotiate" can quickly create a stale listing that could sit on market, chasing the market down when other comparable homes are lower, thus losing time and momentum. Price it right from the beginning for maximum benefit!

FACTOR 2:

PRESENTATION

It is important to have your home ready for market before listing for photography and videography. Don't worry, I'm here to advise on the necessary steps and top ROI so you do not overspend.

- Completing repairs that need to be done
- Decluttering & removing personal items
- Make sure the home is clean and smells fresh
- Cleaning carpets
- Neutralizing spaces and walls
- Keeping it show ready at all times

FACTOR 3:

MARKETING

I offer SUPERIOR MARKETING TECHNIQUES to help get your home sold faster and for more money than the competition.

•PROSPECTING

Prospecting daily for potential buyers, talking with neighbors, buyer's agents, and past clients.

•MARKETING

The second you sign with me, I go to work on marketing your home! COMING SOON MARKETING, ONLINE MARKETING, SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING and PRINT MARKETING are all part of the success of getting your home seen by the most potential buyers, selling your home faster.

•COMMUNICATION

I actively communicate with you through every step of the process. Diligently sharing feedback from showings, following up with agents after viewing the home, and calling weekly to discuss the progress from the previous week.



PREPARING TO LIST

MAXIMIZE YOUR HOME'S POTENTIAL

A clean, neutral, and streamlined look helps buyers to imagine what life would be like in your home. The action points below will help them be able to do that and could potentially add thousands to your bottom line!

EXTERIOR

- Power-wash or paint the home's exterior
- Power-wash every surface - clean concrete brightens the whole home
- Paint or replace the front door
- Update exterior light fixtures. This can quickly give a home an updated look
- Keep the yard nicely trimmed
- Keep the lawn free of clutter
- Weed and freshly mulch garden beds
- Clean interior and exterior windows
- Apply fresh paint or stain to wooden fences

INTERIOR

- Remove personal items, excessive decorations & furniture
- Steam clean carpets
- Clean every wall and surface (Magic eraser!)
- De-clutter, organize and clean closets
- Apply a fresh coat of paint to walls, trim, and ceilings. If you can't do it all, at least the trim.
- Replace outdated ceiling fans and lighting fixtures for instant upgrade
- Minimize and clean pet areas in the home
- Be sure that all light bulbs are the same natural white
- Replace cabinet hardware
- Modern faucets for every sink

MARKETING YOUR HOME

PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY | VIDEOGRAPHY | AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY

A listing's photos are often the first opportunity to attract a buyer. 90% of buyers search online, and high-quality photos are the #1 factor in getting showings scheduled.

21 DAYS

FASTER SALE
WITH PRO PHOTOS

118%

MORE ONLINE
VIEWS

90%

OF BUYERS
SEARCH ONLINE

Video is the top form of online engagement. It brings your home to life and creates an emotional connection with buyers before they ever visit.

403%

MORE INQUIRIES
WITH VIDEO

2.5X

MORE VIEWS
ON LISTINGS

68%

FASTER SALES
WITH VIDEO

Aerial photography provides a comprehensive view of the property, boundaries, and surroundings - giving buyers a true sense of the home's location and features.

- Increased market exposure • Competitive edge • Comprehensive property view
- Enhanced marketing materials • Increased perceived property value

Virtual Tours and Social Media

Virtual tours and continuous social media posting allow buyers to explore your home 24/7 from anywhere in the world.





I HAVE YOU

COVERED

✔ A SECURE LOCKBOX WILL BE USED

This allows real estate agents access to show buyers your home securely. The lockbox holds the keys to the home and is typically found at the front guarded by a security lock that only licensed agents have access to.

✔ STOW AWAY VALUABLES

Before showings make sure that all valuables are put away and out of sight. This includes even mail left out (which may contain personal information and bank statements). Items of value such as jewelry, artwork, cellphones, and gaming systems should also be out of site. It's a good idea to walk through your house before showings and make sure everything of value is out of sight.

✔ REQUIRE APPOINTMENTS FOR ENTRY

Now that your home is online many know that it is for sale. For your safety, NEVER let a stranger into your home. While it is likely that it is just someone that saw the sign in your yard and is interested in getting a quick look, you just never know. Ask them politely to call your agent who handles all showings.

✔ REMOVE PRESCRIPTION DRUGS & MEDICATION

Clean out your medicine cabinets and any other place you may store medications and hide them away. There have been more and more stories of people intentionally going to home showings to take medications freely.

✔ PUT AWAY BILLS & OTHER MAIL PIECES

With identity theft on the rise it is important to put away all mail pieces with your information on them. If this information ends up in the wrong persons hands, it can easily lead to identity theft.

✔ BE EXTRA VIGILANT ON KEEPING DOORS LOCKED

Often times a home for sale means home owners are not at home. So be sure to always keep your doors and windows locked.

✔ KEEPING YOUR HOME BEAUTIFUL

Once your listing goes live, we provide all the necessary shoe covers and friendly reminder signs for all of your showings.



tips

FOR HOME SHOWINGS

FLEXIBLE

Be as flexible and accommodating to the buyers schedule as possible. We want to avoid having missed opportunities if at all possible.

INFORMED

Make sure everyone in the home is informed when showings are to happen so they can keep their spaces clean.

DAILY CLEANING

Keep up with daily messes. Wipe down kitchen and bathroom counters before leaving for the day.

ODORS

Avoid strong-smelling foods: Keep your meal prep as neutral and simple as possible.

FURRY FRIENDS

Keep pet areas clean. Clean up after your pets immediately and wash their bedding regularly. Hide pet food or litter. Not everyone is a pet person and it may hinder a potential buyers ability to picture themselves living in your home.

NATURAL LIGHT

Open blinds and curtains and let in as much natural light as possible. Leave lights on before you leave for a showing.

TRASH

Empty trash cans to avoid any odors. Try to empty trash cans nightly so that the home is fresh when you leave for the day.

TEMPERATURE

Keep the room temperature cool. This demonstrates to buyers that the HVAC is working properly.

PERSONALS

Make sure you place all valuables, prescriptions, alcohol and firearms out of sight and in a safe place.

VACATE

Having a seller present can make buyers feel awkward. We want to make the buyers feel at home and stay awhile.

you might be wondering

THE BENEFITS

OF OFFERING A BUYER AGENT COMMISSION

The decision to offer or structure buyer agent compensation significantly influences your home sale. Several factors come into play:

- **WIDER BUYER POOL:**
Offering a buyer agent commission attracts more potential buyers, increasing competition for your property.
- **QUICKER SALE:**
More buyers often lead to faster sale times, reducing carrying costs and market exposure.
- HIGHER OFFERS:**
➤ Competition among buyers can drive up offers, potentially resulting in a higher sale price.
- ATTRACT QUALIFIED BUYERS**
➤ Agents work with pre-approved buyers ready to move. Your home gets prime exposure to serious and motivated home buyers.
- PROFESSIONAL REPRESENTATION:**
➤ Buyer's agents bring expertise and dedication to get the home sold, ultimately benefiting the seller. Together we work towards getting to the closing table!
- **SMOOTHER TRANSACTIONS:**
Experienced buyer's agents can help navigate the complexities of the home buying process.
- FEWER CONTINGENCIES:**
➤ Buyer's agents often pre-qualify buyers, reducing the likelihood of possible deals falling through.
- MARKET INSIGHTS:**
➤ Buyer's agents provide valuable market feedback to help ensure you have priced your home competitively.
- PROFESSIONAL TRANSACTIONS:**
➤ Buyer's agents can help manage the complexities with HOAs, title companies, inspections and more.
- **ENHANCED PROPERTY EXPOSURE:**
Buyer's agents often showcase properties to their network of potential buyers.

It's essential to weigh these potential benefits against the additional costs associated with offering buyer agent compensation. Ultimately, the decision should be based on your specific goals and market conditions.



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OFFER

analysis



When you receive an offer, price is just one of many considerations when deciding which offer is best for your home. Here are some of the other factors that matter.

CONTINGENCIES

The fewer contingencies on an offer the better. Shorter time periods are also valuable.

ALL CASH BUYER

A cash offer is usually more appealing than a finance offer as the seller doesn't need to worry about the bank approving the loan.

PRE-APPROVAL

I will require a pre-approval letter be submitted with every offer so you know the buyer is qualified.

LOAN TYPE

A conventional loan is often the least complicated. This is an appealing choice for sellers. An FHA and VA loans may require certain repairs and approvals. Your loan might be assumable, which could be an option.

CLOSING TIMELINE

You might need to close quickly to move on to the next adventure, or you might need to extend the closing to allow time for the next home to be ready. Choosing or negotiating an offer with the closing time that fits your needs will be most attractive to you.

CLOSING COSTS

Sometimes an offer comes in high, but the buyer asks you to pay a percentage of the buyer's closing costs.

REPAIR REQUESTS

If the home needs some repairs, but you don't have the time or money to do them, a buyer who is willing to do them for you might be what you need.

OFFER PRICE

Of course, price matters too! If a high offer will cost you more in closing costs, repairs, or other factors —then it probably won't be the better offer.

BEYOND THE OFFER

Once you receive an offer, the journey isn't over. There are still important steps to navigate. We'll make sure all details are clear and all terms are met. Once you've accepted an offer, the escrow process begins. I'll be your trusted partner, every step of the way.

DUE DILIGENCE PERIOD:

- The buyer conducts inspections and appraisals to assess the property's condition and value.
- Any necessary negotiations or repairs are addressed during this period.

FINANCING APPROVAL:

- The buyer secures financing from a lender, ensuring they have the funds to purchase the property.

ESCROW ESTABLISHMENT:

- An escrow account is opened at the title company to hold funds and documents related to the transaction.

TITLE SEARCH AND INSURANCE:

- A title search is conducted to verify ownership and ensure there are no liens or claims against the property.
- Title insurance is purchased to protect the buyer and lender from potential title defects.

DOCUMENT PREPARATION AND SIGNING:

- The necessary closing documents, such as the deed, mortgage, and settlement statement, are prepared.

PRE-CLOSING:

- Buyer and buyer's agent will conduct a final walk-through ensuring the property is left as contracted. Depending on the contract possession date, you might be moved and cleaned by this time.

CLOSING:

- The transaction is finalized and all documents signed with the title company. Funds are transferred, documents are recorded, and the keys to the property are handed over to the buyer.

POST-CLOSING:

- The buyer and seller receive copies of all closing documents for their records.
- The buyer takes possession of the property



CLOSING THE SALE

what to expect

Closing is when funds and documents are transferred in order to transfer ownership of the property to the buyer. The escrow officer will look over the contract and find out what payments are owed by who, prepare documents for closing, perform the closing, make sure all payoffs are completed, the buyer's title is recorded, and that you receive payoffs that are due to you.



SELLER'S USUAL EXPENSES

- Mortgage balance & penalties: If applicable
- Any claims against the property: Including but not limited to liens or judgments.
- Unpaid assessments: For HOA or other property associations.
- Real estate agent commissions: As agreed upon in the listing agreement.
- Title insurance policy: To protect the buyer's ownership rights.
- Home warranty: Optional, but often requested by buyers for peace of mind.

WHAT TO BRING

- A government picture ID
- House keys
- Garage door openers
- Mailbox and any other spare keys

AFTER CLOSING

SAVE THESE FOR TAXES:

- Copies of all closing documents
- All home improvement receipts



FINAL STEPS

✓ CANCEL POLICIES

Once title transfer has occurred contact your insurance agent to cancel your policy so you can receive a refund of any prepaid premiums.

✓ CLOSE ACCOUNTS

Cancel utilities and close those accounts. Keep a list of phone numbers for each of your utility and entertainment companies.

✓ CHANGE ADDRESS

Let everyone know your new address. Submit a change-of-address form to the post office.

✓ TURN EVERYTHING OFF

Turn off valves to the sinks, toilets, appliances, and water heater. Turn off all light switches and fans. Lastly, call the electric company.

✓ DOCUMENTS

Secure all contract and closing documents in a safe place.

✓ GATHER HOME PAPERWORK

Put together a packet of manuals, receipts, and any warranties for the buyer.

✓ CLEAR OUT PERSONALS

Move out your personal belongings completely. Check all drawers, cabinets, and closets.

✓ CLEAN

Ensure that your home is completely clean - the cabinets, refrigerators, and other appliances inside and out. Thoroughly clean out the garage. Schedule trash pick up prior to the day of closing. Leave your home the way you would like to find it if you were the buyer.

✓ INCIDENTALS

Leave all house keys, remotes, gate keys, pool keys, and mailbox keys in a drawer in the kitchen.

✓ FLOORS

Vacuum and sweep floors one more time

✓ LOCK UP

Ensure all blinds are closed, and lock the windows and doors.

Thank you for trusting me!

what clients say:

Michelle is an exceptional realtor! Her professionalism, knowledge, and dedication are truly impressive.

She's always punctual and accommodating, scheduling house viewings around our busy schedule.

Michelle went above and beyond to ensure a smooth transaction, exceeding our expectations at every turn.

Her patience and kindness, especially with our kids, made the entire process stress-free. We highly recommend Michelle for her outstanding service and expertise!

Anikita K.

Michelle was extremely helpful, professional, and kind when we worked together to sell my mother's home in McKinney. Her knowledge of the community and the real estate market set her apart from other realtors. She successfully negotiated competing offers, and we ended up closing well above our asking price, and in only a few days! Michelle was also crucial in helping us locate and negotiate our new home. We credit her guidance and expertise with a positive outcome all around, with much less stress than we ever imagined the transition could be.

Amy M.

Michelle is a wonderful realtor who has always gone above and beyond for us as her clients. She's always been patient with answering any questions I have, and has been super patient with my nervousness and hesitation during the purchase process. She's always knows our preferences and does a great job of filtering out properties that she knows we wouldn't like and has also done the legwork of doing initial inspections before asking me to visit a property. She's a gem and very lucky to have her help us!

Sapna S.

Michelle is one of the best agents you can work with, period. She is warm, caring, works much more than whatever amount you pay, and stays with you until you are happy and satisfied with your buy. If you need a home, talk to Michelle. I strongly recommend her.

Harold N.

Michelle was great in representing me when selling my house. Very thorough in her recommendations throughout the process. I highly recommend her to represent you whether you are the buyer or seller!

Brenda M.

Michelle is very conscientious, hardworking and detail oriented. She helped me stage and sell a property in Forney which was very nice but a bit remote. It was going to take a special buyer and she found one! It all went off without a hitch and for over the expected sales price. Thank you, Michelle!!

Laurann P.

Michelle is a lovely person. She is kind, knowledgeable and very dedicated to her clients. She did a great job in representing us in the sale of our home and the purchase of a new home! We highly recommend Michelle Gifford.

Karen D.