

6 Things Not to Say When You're House Hunting

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House hunting can be one of the most enjoyable parts of buying a home, but did you know that your behaviour “on the hunt” can directly affect your chances of having an offer accepted?

Clarke says an accidental insult can weigh heavily against you when it comes time to view your offer, but an honest compliment can go just as far in your favour.

It's easy to forget that while you're investigating the strengths and weaknesses of a property, the seller and their agent are investigating your strengths and weaknesses as a buyer, too.

This is according to [Tony Clarke](#), managing director of the [Rawson](#) Property Group, who says it's perfectly normal to want to chat about the pros and cons of a property during a viewing, but don't be fooled into thinking that nobody is paying attention to what you say.

“The impression you create in the minds of the seller and their agent can be detrimental to the success of your offer - but it can also be a great opportunity to get a leg up on other potential buyers.”

Clarke says the first thing to realise is that selling a home is more than just a financial transaction: it's an emotional experience for sellers who are saying goodbye to a place that probably holds a lot of special memories.

As such, their decision to accept or decline an offer is not always based purely on the numbers presented, and can easily be influenced by how much they like or dislike a potential buyer.

Clarke shares **a few things you should not say** when house hunting:

1. Keep major renovation plans to yourself

“You don't have to suck up to sellers, but you do need to be sensitive about the sentimental value a home may have for them. You might think the massive renovations you plan are exciting, but to them, it could feel like you're tearing down everything they put into their home,” says Clarke.

“It's not easy to picture your baby's nursery as a man cave, or the kitchen you built by hand torn out and replaced, and a seller may well choose a slightly lower offer rather than hand their home to a buyer whose plans they don't agree with,.

2. Refraining from negative commentary on the existing décor

In addition to keeping major renovation plans to yourself, Clarke suggests refraining from negative commentary on the existing décor.

“It seems obvious that insulting the current owners’ tastes would be a no-no, but it’s easy to forget yourself in the heat of the moment and blurt something out,” he says.

“Just remember, that hideous wall-hanging may have been embroidered by someone’s beloved grandmother, and that olive green bathroom suite was once hand-selected with great excitement.”

Clarke says an accidental insult can weigh heavily against you when it comes time to view your offer, but an honest compliment can go just as far in your favour. However, do not be tempted to go overboard with the enthusiasm.

3. Never admit that you’ve found your dream home

“Never, ever admit that you’ve found your dream home to the seller or their agent,” says Clarke.

“If they know you’re in love with the property, they’ll have much more ammunition to negotiate a higher offer. Showing interest is fine, as are a few compliments, but save the real gushing for home.”

4. Be careful who and what you ask

Of course, Clarke says there may be some questions you need answered before you can be sure if it’s your dream home or not.

“Asking questions is expected and can show that you are a serious buyer, which is good. Just be careful who and what you ask, as it can backfire in some situations,” he says.

Clarke says one fairly common example of this is asking the existing owners the reasons behind the sale.

“People sell for all kinds of reasons, and not all of them are good. Financial difficulty, divorce or even a death in the family are possibilities, and forcing the seller to divulge these details can be painful to say the least,” he says.

“If you need to know the reasons, rather ask the seller’s agent in private. It’s a more discreet way of satisfying your curiosity - and won’t pour salt into any wounds.”

5. Be careful when chatting to any of your potential neighbours

You’ll also want to be careful if you decide to chat to any of your potential neighbours.

“Talking to neighbours is a great way to get an honest opinion of life in the area, but you do need to respect people’s boundaries and know when to back off. Don’t be pushy if someone doesn’t feel like talking - you don’t want to be known as ‘that nosy neighbour’ before you even move in,” says Clarke.

6. Avoid saying that the asking price is unreasonably high

Clarke says another common mistake to avoid when house hunting is claiming that the asking price is unreasonably high.

“You have every right to think a house is overpriced, but try not to say so out loud. Sellers can interpret this as an insult on the quality of their home, and agents can take offence at the implication that they don’t know how to accurately value a property. Neither of these will get you bonus points if you plan on making an offer down the line,” he says.

“Similarly, making a particularly low offer can be viewed as an insult, and will likely get you written off as a frivolous buyer. Making an offer below asking price that you legitimately feel is fair is one thing, but chancers trying their luck with multiple rock-bottom offers are fast going to find themselves in the agent’s bad books. This can make it difficult to be taken seriously on future offers.”

He says making a good impression isn’t difficult. It just requires a little mindfulness, sensitivity and an awareness of the game at hand.

“You don’t have to be dishonest or deceitful, and you don’t have to try to be best friends with every agent or seller. Just treat them with respect and they will respect you - and your offer - in return,” says Clarke.