

What your estate agent should – and shouldn't do

Jackie Gray-Parker • May 18, 2016



Once you've decided to put your house on the market, choosing your estate agent is of utmost importance.

After much deliberation, you've finally decided to put your house on the market. It's a big decision and no doubt not one you've come to lightly. Of course unless you're going to try and [sell your property yourself](#), you will need to list it with an estate agent.

There are a number of things to keep in mind when [engaging an agent](#) at this important juncture. You have to ask yourself if you are going to [go the sole mandate route](#) or if you are going to list your property with multiple estate agencies. Whatever you do, chances are you want to sell your house fairly quickly, therefore, you should engage the services of an agent or agents who are affiliated with an established agency that has a good footprint and can sell your house in the shortest time possible.

It's also important to understand the methods and processes your agent and agency utilises so that you can keep track of how your property is being managed and exposed. Other points to keep in mind include the fact that you must be comfortable with your agent or agents of choice. There's no point engaging the services of people who you just know you are going to clash with. Equally important - in addition to all the usual mandate documentation - is to have some kind of performance agreement in place which will enable you to back out of an arrangement if your estate agent/s don't do what they are supposed to do.

Once you've selected an agent or agents, you can let them go about their business. Let them come and take photos of your property and fly drones above it to capture different angles if that's their thing. The relevant graphics should be posted to their agency website as well as all the big name property websites along with a good, accurate property description within days of viewing your property. Your property should also appear in all the relevant print property publications within a short space of time.

Your agent/s should also arrange a show day or special viewing sessions within weeks of meeting with you. If you're lucky you will get an offer the first time you open your property to the public. Regardless, your agent/s should be able to provide you with the details of all the people who came to look at the house and what their feedback was. That way you will be able to gauge whether or not your house is priced correctly or if there is something you could do to entice buyers.

If you don't get any offers following the first show day (and even if you do), your agent/agents should actively bring private buyers through by appointment until another show day has to be arranged (if necessary). The number of buyers that come through by appointment should give you an idea of how invested your agent/s is in selling your property. That said, a lack of interest could indicate that there are problems with your property, the property market could be flat or both. It's best to try and be fair and give your estate agent/s the benefit of the doubt.

As things progress your estate agent/s should provide weekly verbal or written feedback on what is happening with your property. They should tell you where it's being advertised, what leads are being followed and what progress has been made on any offers or a deal. If you have to chase your estate agent/s it's not a good sign. That means they are either distracted, disorganised or not fully invested in selling your property.

At the end of each month you should have a full status meeting with your agent/s to ascertain how things are progressing and what, if anything needs to be done. Towards the end of a mandate your agent/s may suggest that you should lower the price or that you should have multiple show days in quick succession. You need to exercise your own judgement in such circumstances. It could be that your agent/s is concerned they will lose the mandate or it could be that they are genuinely trying to assist you. Unless really necessary, you should be very careful of lowering your price because once you do so, you can't put it back up again. Too many show days can also over-expose your property.

Lastly, once you have a solid offer, your agent/s should be pro-active, make sure all the necessary paperwork is in place and keep you up to date at every step of the deal. It's also worth keeping in mind that if you are not happy with the way things are going at any point of the sale process you should contact your agent/s, meet with them face to face and try and sort things out. If things aren't rectified to your satisfaction, it's best that you go your separate ways. This is where the performance agreement comes in handy. Lastly, don't be bullied, trust your instincts and just remember at the end of the day, it's your house, so actually you call the shots.