

## 1. Consultation – Occupied Home

A Consultation is \$\_\_\_ and is for occupied homes. This is not reimbursed if client proceeds with further staging. Always know in advance who is paying for the Consultation and have a valid credit card authorization submitted prior to the visit.

If the Client prefers to pay for a consultation with a cheque have the office email you an invoice prior to your visit and provide them a copy.

When booking a consultation you should allow 1-1.5 hours but aim to spend closer to 2 hours on site. The extra 30 minutes is cushioning for larger than expected homes (or those in need of lots of help!) The goal of the consultation is to spend 1-2 hours doing an extensive walk thru of the home and contents, analyzing each room from a buyer's perspective and creating an action plan (that may or may not involve return staging) to get the house market ready.

Unless hands-on staging is required, there is no follow-up required for most consultations unless you have advised the client personally that you will send those details. In most cases, it is advisable to have the client take their own notes. It is beneficial to them to do this as they will understand any instruction better if they write it down themselves. Let them know that the notes you take are for hands on staging if required. This is to prevent hours of work detailing notes at a later date. If a follow up email has been promised provide a follow up email within 24 hours of summarizing what was discussed at the consultation. Cc the office to this email.

Areas of concern should be addressed and detailed ideas and solutions should be offered to play up the positive features of the home while eliminating or de-emphasizing trouble spots. This includes furniture placement, de-cluttering, accessorizing and organizing for all areas of the home to help highlight its best features. Feel free to actually reposition items right then and there where time allows.

If required, provide recommendations on lighting, paint color selection, flooring and minor repairs..

If hands-on staging is required a consultation form should be used to record all details and should be attached to the Service Proposal once it is completed.

If hands-on Staging is required:

A staging proposal/rental agreement should be emailed to the client within 24 hours of Consultation with the tentative date scheduled. If delivery is required, advise the Client that we are only able to secure delivery upon receipt of contract and staging deposit. TURN ALL DOCUMENTS INTO PDF'S BEFORE SENDING TO CLIENTS.

## STEPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL CONSULTATION:

- Shoes should be removed upon entering the home
- A business card and brochure should be given to the realtor/homeowner at the beginning of the visit
- A business card should be obtained where available
- Always ask to sit down (usually the kitchen table) to gather contact details. (Full name with correct spelling, email, and phone) should be confirmed.
- Exchange some pleasantries.
- Find out if the client has ever staged a home before or understands how it works.
- Explain the difference between living and staging – assure the client that what you say is not a reflection on the way they live (“The way you live in your home and the way you sell and market a home are two different things.” Use detailing your car when you sell it analogy)
- Look for ways to compliment the client on their home – this will help build a rapport and trust.
- Explain that your job is to provide the ‘10-out-of-10’ version but that it is ultimately their decision what is achievable given the circumstances. (ex. They don’t want to pain)
- Give the client a sense of priority for the major items on their to-do list.
- Encourage the client to take notes during the walkthrough.
- Let the client lead you through each room and then end back at the beginning.
- Ask the client how familiar they are with staging? Do they understand why you are there and your role to help them prepare their home?
- Determine if they are resistant to changes or will be offended by suggestions. Try to prepare them and remind them it is not personal. It is to help them sell their home quickly and for more money.
- Remind them, ‘How we live in a home and how we sell and market a house are two different things’
- At the END of the consultation (if returning for hands-on staging) go back thru the property to take photos of any room you will be staging (and measurements where necessary) and make note of any design features unique to the home which would affect sourcing decisions – ex: wall colour, dimensions, etc. Do not take pictures with any people in the photos. If they are in the way politely ask them to move. TAKE A PICTURE FROM EACH CORNER OF THE ROOM.
- Once the consultation is complete, a potential timeline for staging should be determined while on-site. Advise clients that we book up quickly and it is always better to reschedule a stage than to not book one and miss the opportunity. Remind them that their Realtor will want it done quickly in order to capitalize on the market.
- If you are returning to stage, discuss dates with the Client and book a return date. Explain that you can always reschedule but that it is best to schedule in advance as we book up very quickly.
- Ensure the client knows that they can call you with any questions.