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Home Staging:

With home prices maintaining, foreclosures up, and homes taking longer to sell this is a good time to refresh everyone on the attributes of Home Staging. We all think if we clean the floors, make the beds and clean up our magazines that will be enough. Not quite!! Home staging is an art and it takes experience and a good eye to make your place look like it is ready for a new owner.

First things first, much as in Feng Shui, your front door and walkway should be clear of dirt, dust, and dead plants. Don't overlook dirty porch lights. The front door should be wiped down from dust and any glass around the doorway must be crystal clear. The front gravel or rocks and garden must look well kept and loved. If you love to have figurines on your front be sure to remove them for your next home. Curb appeal does wonders for those drive-by house lookers!

Your entry must be clear of clutter, or furniture that is in the way to stepping into the hallway or room. Any throw rugs should be cleaned or retired if they look worn. The walls should not show scuff marks or dirt. A clean painted room goes a long way. This is especially true for households with animals and busy kids. Determine how your home "smells" or better yet, invite a friend or relative to smell test it and be honest about it. I am sensitive to odors, especially a pile up of dirty laundry or smelly shoes. That is an instant turn off to a prospective buyer. There are some lovely lavender mist products available at Whole Foods. Be careful not to "mask" odors with heavy fragrance products available at most stores.

Your kitchen and baths should be especially spotless, no stains in the sinks, no broken faucets and no dirty tubs or showers. According to major remodeling magazines, a remodeled kitchen will return 85% of what you spent and nearly 77% return for remodeled bathrooms.

If you have a separate laundry room then put away all the detergents and bleaches that are out and beautify this area. Cute pictures on the walls, or a nice pastel paint on the walls will do wonders. And the garage is another area where we accumulate our "stuff". Try to clear it out so your garage looks big and if you have to, pack your items or hold a garage sale to clear out your clutter. I can't say enough about clearing out the clutter, even if it is not visible.

Consy Malasoma is a Feng Shui practitioner, Home Stager and Color Consultant. Consy commutes between her home in Las Vegas and her home in the Cascade foothills outside of Seattle.

Consy is available for consultations with advance notice and can be contacted at **702-245-6855**.