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## Tips for Buyers When There Are Multiple Offers on a Home

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People often ask me real estate questions and someone recently wondered, “What subtle moves will make a seller choose my offer over others... without driving up the price?”

The truth is that the best offer almost always wins when there are multiple offers in play, so subtlety isn’t always a savvy move, but some creative thinking when crafting an offer can make it stand out—and help lock in the best deal. Price is important, but the full offer also includes your terms, along with material to convey why you are the right choice.

The presentation of an offer is a collaboration between agent and buyer. Your job is to provide the information. Your agent’s job is to investigate the seller’s needs and what terms will appeal, as well as to make a worthy, ideally winning, presentation.

When deciding on price, make a strong statement because you may just have one shot. Don’t come in under the asking price unless your agent advises you to do so. If more offers are under consideration, it’s far better to

receive a counteroffer than to be scratched off the list. Is your interest great enough that you would regret it if another party’s offer won for a few dollars more?

You can, however, make your offer financially stronger than another’s beyond the price. The seller should have no doubts or concerns of your financial viability, so explicit evidence of your down payment, closing funds and pre-approval if using a loan can be impressive. A cover letter by a good agent should include those details with the offer’s summary points in addition to a paragraph or more about you—personally and professionally—to illustrate your buying strength.

You can certainly “sweeten the deal” by making things easier and less costly for the seller. Eliminate protections you could do without. For example, if you are already confident the property is worth what you would pay, consider dropping the appraisal contingency, which could be a difficult process. You could offer the seller a lease-back if your agent discovers it could be helpful. No matter what, make sure your offer is honest. Don’t weigh your offer down with com-

plicated terms or make promises you can’t keep such as impossibly short contingencies.

How your family will enjoy the home can be of real value to some homeowners, so include that in your presentation. Write a letter explaining how the children will play in the backyard and how that remodeled guest room will perfectly suit the in-laws. Sharing photos of yourself and expressing your intent to maintain a beloved space—a rose garden, a custom-built area—can be meaningful if done tastefully.

If you do receive a counteroffer, respond quickly! If you can imagine yourself living happily in the property, show your commitment with the best price you are willing to make. Hopefully the sellers will appreciate your determination and expediency.

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