

HOW DOES AN ESTATE SALE WORK? This is the first question most people ask us, so let's break it down.

### **Before you call us:**

1. Finish deciding what the family is going to keep or take. It is hard for us to evaluate a sale when half of the items "might be going to family members". You do not have to move the items out, but do clearly identify them with notes taped on with painters tape. We evaluate a potential sale based on what we are told will be included during our initial consultation.

2. Don't throw (almost) anything out before we come!

Things that are ok to throw out include perishable food, expired food (check the dates and don't throw out unexpired food), personal mail, personal paperwork, china and dishware with any chips or cracks, stained or damaged clothing and shoes, encyclopedias, and cassette tapes. Leave everything else – things like half cans of paint, half bottles of motor oil, half bottles of cleaning supplies, unexpired food, kitchen wraps and bags, old greeting cards, matchbooks, potting soil, gardening supplies and more will all sell and can add a surprising amount to your sale. Clothing in good shape will sell quite well (and this includes shoes, belts and accessories)!

### **Initial Consultation**

Every sale starts with us coming to your home for a free consultation. As the only company in WNY accredited by the American Society of Liquidators, you can be secure in knowing that our references have been strongly vetted before we even arrive.

We take a look at the items included and assess the feasibility of a sale. If we don't feel you have enough content for a viable sale, we will let you know and can suggest other liquidation options for you. This is rare, but it happens. After determining if a sale is viable, we explain our services and commission structure, answer all your questions, have you review the contract, and discuss possible dates for your sale.

### **Staging and Set-Up**

Set-up comes next. It starts with cleaning and dusting most of the items in the sale, from china and jewelry to furniture and collectibles. Then we organize the items according to category and display them in an attractive way – we will generally have dedicated rooms like "holiday room" or "linen and clothing room". This is far more enticing to buyers than an odd mix of items jumbled in every room and results in more sales for you!

We bring in shelves, tables, locked cases and display units, and make sure that everything is well lit (we'll bring in portable lamps as needed). We are known throughout our area for our amazing set-ups – your home will look like a boutique shop when we are done!

We also protect your floors and carpeting with mats during the sale, as needed.

### **Appraising/Pricing**

It's important that you get full value for the merchandise you're selling. It would be easy to sell everything by putting a below-market price on it. That's not our style. We have expert appraisers on our team, with years of experience pricing household goods, antiques, collectibles, china, glassware, furniture, jewelry and clothing. If you have something we're not well versed in, we'll even bring in an expert at our expense. Remember, our fee is commission based. We shoot for a sell-out every time because the more you make the more we make!

We price everything individually except items like books, neckties, mugs, etc. where a sign is quicker for buyers when everything is the same price.

### **Promoting**

Our following is huge, with many regulars coming to our sales every week!

Our bright signs attract drive-by customers and locals from the neighborhood.

Online promotion is key to today's successful sales – we are premium members of estatesales.net and estatesales.org where your sale is individually listed with many photos. We have our own website, Twitter, Facebook page, and use Craigslist and other social media outlets.

We also have an email list with thousands of loyal customers who are notified whenever we have a sale. We even keep a database of people looking for specific items, and make sure to contact them when something pops up.

### **The Actual Sale**

We put up a sign-in sheet at the opening of each sale and let buyers in in small groups so that we can control traffic flow. Making sure your items and home do not get damaged is a priority.

We always have an adequate number of friendly, professional staff on hand to answer questions and write up tickets for people to bring to the check-out. We also actively engage and chat with buyers, which results in more items sold.

Our pride in being experts at staging includes adjusting and rearranging as possessions sell during the sale itself. No matter how many or how few items are left, we make sure that every person who attends your sale enters and leaves with a positive impression.

We accept cash, checks and credit cards, and we take full responsibility for payments – you never have to worry about a bounced check or chargeback.

### **After the Sale**

Complete clean-out services are part of your commission. We'll leave the house broom-clean and ready for sale or rent.

### **Payment**

We send out your check and copies of all the sale sheets within five days after the sale.

That's pretty much it in a nutshell!

### **Some extra questions we hear a lot:**

#### **How long does a typical Estate Sale last?**

There is no "typical" Estate Sale. They're all unique. That being said, most Estate Sales last two or three days. The determining factor is simply the amount of merchandise to be sold. Sometimes a one-day sale is optimal if the premises are smaller.

#### **How much stuff do I need to warrant having an Estate Sale?**

It depends on the nature of your merchandise. But in most cases, if you're thinking estate sale, you likely have enough. Nowadays, furniture is harder to sell, the antiques market is not what it was ten years ago, and household items like clothing, cleaning supplies, unexpired food, gardening supplies, holiday decorations and smaller items are where it's at sale-wise – so don't throw or clean anything out! When we do a visual inventory during our initial visit to your home, we'll definitely be able to assess feasibility. Let us judge whether you have enough or not – we're always happy to do a free consultation!

#### **How far in advance do we have to schedule our Estate Sale?**

The best answer to that is the sooner the better. During busy times, we may be booked as many as 6–8 weeks in advance. So, even if you're planning a sale months from now, a good time to call would be today.

### **Is it better to have an Estate Sale before or after we sell our house?**

Because an Estate Sale can be an effective sales tool, we definitely recommend before you sell. We are always pleasantly surprised at how many attendees at our Estate Sales have actually wound up buying the house!

Empty houses also sell faster because the buyer can picture their own belongings in the house. As an added plus, the rooms always look much bigger empty as well.

### **How much does it cost to have an Estate Sale?**

Nothing, actually. You make money from an Estate Sale. Our fee is strictly commission based. Once we agree on terms, you just pick the dates. We handle everything, from promoting and staging to appraising and pricing. The more we sell, the better for everyone.

Sales grossing over 10K are charged a commission of 25%. Absolutely everything involved with running the sale is included in our commission: sale set-up, all necessary sale staffing, display units, online advertising and marketing, and a broom-clean house clean-out.

We charge a simple flat fee for sales under 10k (some companies refer to this as a minimum fee). This is based on the set-up and sales staffing needed for your individual sale, and we'll be able to give you a definite amount when we meet and see the property. Absolutely everything involved with running the sale is included in this fee: sale set-up, all necessary sale staffing, display units, online advertising and marketing, and a broom-clean house clean-out.

**Call us today at 716-860-1550 and set up your free consultation – we look forward to holding your sale!**