

The Logic of Emotion!

by: Wallace J. Conway Homebuyers are an interesting study. Watching people make their home buying decisions has brought me to the conclusion that every decision that every one of us makes is based in emotion. You heard me, it's all about the emotion. Before you deny what I am describing to you, let me begin with me. Painful as the revelation is for me, even I as a Naval Academy graduate, retired Navy pilot, and home inspector extraordinaire, make decisions based on emotion. It took some bridging for me to get there, but I am there. Have you ever had a feeling in your gut about a decision? A hunch? That's emotion. We make decisions that reflect how we feel about the event or expect to feel when the outcome is completed. People, especially those that are highly educated and technically trained, rarely realize and usually never concede that their decisions are based in emotion. Before discussing the particulars of the emotional responses, I will admit that logic does play a role. What ends up happening is, after the near immediate emotional response and decision, the backfilling of logic begins. Logic is used to make the emotion seem reasonable. Emotional responses as I see them fall into two broad categories. The first is the desire for pleasure and the second is the avoidance of pain. When we are contemplating a decision, we weigh the balance of the desire for and probability of a pleasurable outcome with the fear of and distain for pain. What real estate agents are faced with is responding to issues presented as logic that are truly emotions. It takes a tremendous talent to listen to the logic, but hear the emotion. What are people really saying? That is the challenge. Find and understand the emotional issue and you can keep any deal together. This thought applies no matter if your role is buyer, seller, agent, or inspector. Ultimately, you must seek to understand why people feel as they feel in order to fully comprehend what they really mean in what they are saying. Not long ago, I inspected a home for an electrical engineer, a very bright and successful individual. The home had a beautiful swimming pool in the backyard. Our intrepid engineer had out his digital tape measure and was measuring the distance between each electrical receptacle along the rear exterior of the home. He would measure, then ponder, measure more, and then ponder more. Finally, he approached the real estate agent and me announcing that there was an unsafe condition relating to the unequal distance between the electrical outlets. He then spouted large quantities of electrical engineer babble and finished with, "I'd be shocked if this were not a code violation". I wanted to respond with "No sir, the code is intended to prevent you from being shocked", but decided that "hmmm" was a better response. After much debate and some real listening, the man's issue had nothing to do with electrical engineering or the National Electric Code. In his mind, he had the perfect place for his lounge chair, but there was not a receptacle adjacent to that location for him to plug his radio into! He was laying logic, however flawed, on us in order to justify his demand that a new receptacle be added. Listen to the logic, hear the emotion! Copyright © Florida HomePro, Inc. and Wallace J. Conway. All rights in all media reserved.

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