



WRITING SAMPLE

Client: Maxavenue

Experience Counts: How to Spend \$600 Instead of \$10,000

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I'm so lucky to have been able to work in this incredible field for 16 years. Not only do I get to work with amazing people day after day, but I also appreciate the experience I have built up over the years — every day's an education and every day I'm thrilled to get to share this knowledge with my clients.

Understanding the subtleties of completing a real estate transaction is a crucial part of my profession, one I take very seriously, and one that can save clients thousands of dollars. Read on to learn how instead of spending \$10,000 to make a fix, we were able to spend \$600 to arrive at a totally desirable outcome.

Recently, I was working with clients who had their heart set on a beautiful home that was absolutely perfect for their family. The transaction was proceeding smoothly until an inspector found a crack in the exterior brickwork. I knew immediately that this could be a sign of foundation troubles, but I also knew there was no reason to panic. While this discovery might have spelled doom for less-experienced agents, I knew to step back and assess.

Knowing What to Look For

When I'm walking a house, I'm attuned to potential trouble spots. Years of experience have taught me what to look for. I can sense a sloping floor that might warrant investigation. I know which parts of Austin are built on clay soils that tend to grow or shrink based on the moisture content, and I know the impact shifting soil can have on a foundation.

In this case, the sellers, being proactive and wanting to ensure the best income, called in a foundation repair company, which visited the property, made an assessment and presented a \$10,000 estimate to repair the foundation.

Now, one thing to keep in mind is that while a foundation repair in and of itself is an expensive undertaking — I've seen them cost anywhere from \$3,000 to \$30,000 — the repair is only a part of the overall cost of the process. Not only must the cost of the repair itself be considered but often numerous ancillary costs come into the picture, as well. Sometimes wallboard problems occur as a house is leveled. Plumbing and flooring can be impacted. The process of leveling a foundation can take a significant toll on landscaping, as well. Many times, these ancillary costs are not factored in to the cost of a foundation repair.

Make Better Decisions

While the sellers in this case immediately called in a foundation repair company, that is not my usual process. While these companies are perfectly legitimate and indispensable businesses, it's their mission to fix foundations, not necessarily to assess whether a foundation actually needs repair in order to maintain the structural integrity of the home.

For that, you need a structural engineer, and that's the first call I make when I suspect foundation problems.

A licensed structural engineer has the training, expertise and experience to determine whether a foundation is indeed in need of repair, something you absolutely want to determine before dropping thousands of dollars on a fix. He or she will come in, take measurements, and make a thorough assessment before making a call as to whether a foundation repair is warranted.

And guess what? Hiring an engineer costs about \$600. Compare that to diving headfirst into a \$10,000 repair. It's a no-brainer to me.

Experience matters, and my experience in this situation saved a whole lot of money. If you want experience on your side, I'd love to chat!