

# Home Staging by Abigail



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### The Home Stager Perspective: A Conversation with Abigail Halal By Home Staging Newswire: A RESA Blog

Once upon a time, Abigail Halal, RESA® member and founder of Home Staging by Abigail, was a reporter/journalist (as evidenced by her super cool newsletters & blog). She was on track to attend law school when she had a change of plans.

*"I realized the best way to make money and feel happy is to figure out what you would do for free, but charge for it."*

Abigail is based in Jefferson, MA, and offers her clients a variety of home staging services including; consultations, accessory staging, and vacant and luxury staging. Her background as an educator has been a valuable skill when it comes to teaching agents and homeowners the benefit of home staging.

*"Based on the conversations I've had over the years, I've realized it's not that agents don't want to list and show staged properties – they're just not sure how to introduce the topic to their sellers. After all, selling a home is an emotional process. It can be challenging for sellers to change their thinking and see their property as something to market and sell to the masses rather than their home."*

**Q:** How does your commitment to RESA®, the exclusive nonprofit trade association for stagers, align with your professional goals and values? Share your perspective in detail.

**Abigail:** I stand with RESA's [mission and vision](#) but more importantly the [code of ethics](#) and professional conduct.

**Q:** What inspired the beginning of your staging journey? We'd love to hear the story behind your career's inception in vivid detail.

**Abigail:** One day, someone walked into my home and said, "Wow, your home is beautiful. Is it staged?" I responded: "Staged? What is that?" Three days later I quit my job and the rest is history.

**Q:** Take us back to your very first day on the job as a home stager. What were your feelings, expectations, and the most memorable moments from that day?

**Abigail:** Excited and nervous... I didn't sleep. I packed way more than I needed. It took longer than I anticipated. But I left feeling confident in what I delivered and finally relieved when the client reached out to tell me how happy they were.

**Q:** How has your perception of the staging industry evolved since you started?

**Abigail:** The standards are higher. Vignette staging will no longer cut it. Stagers must keep up with current design trends. I do feel this is partially due to networks such as HGTV that set higher expectations. But I love the challenge!

**Q:** Would you share some insights into your creative process? Where do you typically find inspiration for your staging designs, and how do you translate that into your work?

**Abigail:** Start with the art! When designing a space, I always start with the art. My "big" follow: the larger furniture pieces, then the soft goods and small accessories. Often times social media dictates what is trending in the design world!

**Q:** Prior to entering the staging industry, did you have a different career path or profession? If so, please share some details about it. How have the skills and experiences from your previous career uniquely equipped you for success in the world of staging?

**Abigail:** Oh yes! I was a reporter/journalist on track to go to law school turned educator... I realized the best way to make money and feel happy is to figure out what you would do for free, but charge for it.

**Q:** Can you recall a particularly challenging staging project? What obstacles did you face, and how did you overcome them? What did you learn from that experience?

**Abigail:** Challenging projects stem from two places: tricky layouts and tricky clients. The tricky layouts will always come and go, but I quickly learned with clients, especially new clients, it's important to identify and trust your gut when it comes to red flags. It's okay to turn down work if the client is not the right fit; the feeling is most likely mutual.

(Continued on last page.)



# What's New in Inventory?

By Abigail Halal  
 Owner | Founder | Home Stager

New trend alert! Boucle!

From the French word boucler, which means "to curl."

Boucle is a heavy fabric made from looped yarn, often referred to as "nubby" in texture. It's somewhere between the soft fluffiness of sherpa fleece and the natural texture of maled linen. Its most popular application lately is as an upholstery fabric on sleep, modern sofas, as well as soft, curvy arm chairs.

Traditionally, it's woven from wool or mohair, but like anything that gains popularity and wide appeal, there are now versions made from merino, alpaca, linen, silk – even polyester and cotton.

Take a look at our new boucle pieces!



## Reviews of the Month

"I've worked with a number of stagers over 30 years and Abigail is one of the best! Her style fits very well with buyers today, Thanks!" – Mark L. Sept. 11, 2023

"Abigail did a good job staging my condo in Cambridge. Very professional and responsive, My listing attracted more serious buyers after just one day on the market compared to when it was not staged. Definitely recommend going forward." – Ying C. Sept. 13, 2023

"I had a great experience working with Abigail – she is extremely professional, has great sense of style and high quality furnishings. Both staging and destging was completed quickly and efficiently." – Catherine M. Sept. 23, 2023



Other fun pieces... Leather and rattan!



# Booking: Home Staging Presentations for Agents

By Abigail Halal  
Owner | Founder | Home Stager

Are you a real estate broker, sales manager or office administrator looking to educate your agents on the topic of home staging? Are you a new (or even experienced!) agent having a tricky time convincing your sellers to stage? Let's fix that!

Based on the conversations I've had over the years, I've realized it's not that agents don't want to list and show staged properties - they're just not sure how to introduce the topic to their sellers.

After all, selling a home is an emotional process. It can be challenging for sellers to change their thinking and see their property as something to market and sell to the masses rather than their home...

I get it! Especially for new agents! Perhaps the sellers just signed the listing agreement and the agent already pitched them on their commission percentage... Now agents are faced with the challenge of introducing their sellers to this new concept of home staging and convince them to pay for it. And the sticker price can be shocking to sellers if they're completely unfamiliar with home staging services!

As an agent, you know it's in everyone's best interest to stage - statistics tell us staged properties sell quickly and for a higher price - but you're not sure how to convince them and you certainly don't want to pay for it! Why should you? You're already working for commission...

And now you're up against those super successful, multiple-closings-a-month, full-service agents who DO pay for staging services... Or their broker pays or there's a program that covers the cost! How do you compete with that?

Well, you can! You just need to learn how to introduce staging services in such a way that a seller will feel foolish for ever thinking of skipping such an important step in the listing process... Education is key!

Let's chat! Or better: Invite me into your office for a presentation! I'll not only tell you about my services, pricing and share some before and after photos, but I'll present you with some proven home staging statistics that you can turn around and share with your doubting sellers.

And more importantly: We'll talk about sellers and their common misconceptions on home staging.

You may have tried to suggest staging services - even went out of your way to get them a few quotes to consider - only to hear:

"Oh no! Am I buying the furniture!?! Home staging is too expensive!"  
 "We don't need home staging... Our home has been professionally decorated."  
 "We don't need a stager to declutter and clean."  
 "We can't have the house staged while we're living here!"  
 "Let's just wait and see what happens... We can always stage later if we need to."  
 "What's the point? Staging won't fix all the problems."  
 "Why do I need to stage? Won't my house sell eventually?"

I'll share how I educate sellers and respond to these common misconceptions so you're better prepared in the future!

Contact me today to schedule your in-office presentation!

Email: [HomeStagingbyAbigail@gmail.com](mailto:HomeStagingbyAbigail@gmail.com)

Phone: 617-519-9133 (Call or Text)



**"I cannot convince my sellers to stage!"**



Home Staging Presentations for Agents:

- Services
- Pricing
- Before-and-After Photos
- Statistics
- Common Seller Misconceptions
- How to Educate and Respond to Hesitant or Refusing Sellers

*Let's fix that!*



Contact me today to schedule a presentation at your local real estate office!



**Q:** *Staging often involves collaboration with real estate agents. Could you share some insights into how effective communication and partnership between stagers and agents can lead to successful property sales?*

**Abigail:** The best partnerships are the ones where both parties stay in their lane! They respect your process as you respect theirs!

**Q:** *Beyond aesthetics, what do you believe are the most important qualities or skills that a successful home stager should possess? How have these qualities shaped your own career?*

**Abigail:** Communication and organization! Without these skills, my business would be done!

**Q:** *Staging can transform a property, but it's not just about aesthetics. How do you balance design principles with the practical aspects of making a home more marketable?*

**Abigail:** You have to solve problems and answer questions for buyers before they know there is a question. Properties cannot just be beautiful, they have to also be functional.

**Q:** *Could you share a memorable success story where your staging made a significant impact on a property's sale price or time on the market? What were the key elements that contributed to that success?*

**Abigail:** Quality and attention to detail is key here. When my clients have a budget that allows me to stage the most important spaces of the home, they typically go under agreement the same week they are listed.

**Q:** *The staging industry often requires adaptability and flexibility. How do you stay current with market demands and changing client preferences? What strategies do you use to continuously improve your skills and stay competitive?*

**Abigail:** The tricky part is keeping up with demand. Most agents get a listing and want it staged ASAP. To stay competitive, I keep a close eye on inventory – what's in, what's out and what's scheduled to come back so I never have to turn down a client or job because I'm low on inventory.

**Q:** *If you could stage a home for any celebrity, living or historical, who would it be, and what kind of design theme would you choose for their home?*

**Abigail:** Oh, probably a writer.... Maybe JK Rowling. Someone with an amazing library or study with built-ins that would require a lot of styling. I imagine dark and moody but very warm and inviting. It would be a Fall or Winter stage.

**Q:** *In the world of home staging, sometimes surprises happen. Could you share a funny or unexpected moment that occurred during one of your staging projects? How did you handle it?*

**Abigail:** Oh, I could write a book of funny stories that at one time, felt like a horror story. How about the time I destaged a house that was infested with spiders? Realized my staged property had been an Airbnb for months? Walked in on a developer throwing a party in a staged property? The raccoon living in a staged bed?

**Q:** *Imagine you could time travel to any era in history to stage a home. Which time period would you choose, and what elements from that era would you incorporate into the design?*

**Abigail:** Oh the Gilded Age. I was born in the wrong era. I've toured those Newport mansions too many times and it never gets old.

**Q:** *If you could collaborate with any famous interior designer or decorator, living or deceased, on a staging project, who would it be and why? What do you think you could learn from them?*

**Abigail:** Amber Lewis. Her aesthetic is so warm and calm and everything I want in my own home. She also has MS and is honest about her struggles. I also suffer from a not as serious diagnosis (osteoarthritis in both knees) that sometimes makes me feel like I cannot keep going, but she inspires me and keeps me feeling humble and very grateful.

**Q:** *Home staging is a competitive field. What advice do you have for other staging professionals looking to stand out in the market and build a strong client base?*

**Abigail:** Don't compare yourself to others who have been doing it longer. Only compete against yourself and who you were and what you were doing yesterday. Allow yourself to be a beginner. If my business has taught me anything it's that if you work on something every day it WILL grow.

**Q:** *What are some common misconceptions or objections you've encountered about home staging, and how do you educate potential clients or naysayers about the benefits it brings to the selling process?*

**Abigail:** "Oh no! Am I buying the furniture!?" Home staging is too expensive!" "We don't need home staging... Our home has been professionally decorated." "We don't need a stager to declutter and clean." "We can't have the house staged while we're living here!" "Let's just wait and see what happens... We can always stage later if we need to." "What's the point? Staging won't fix all the problems." "Why do I need to stage? Won't my house sell eventually?" There's so many but the last one is my favorite... Yes, your house will of course sell eventually... But you may be leaving money on the table. And if you're fine with that, okay! But your neighbor isn't.

**Q:** *Client testimonials and reviews can build trust with prospective clients. How do you encourage satisfied clients to share their positive experiences, and how has this influenced your ability to acquire new clients?*

**Abigail:** After every stage, I ask for a review for both Houzz and Thumbtack and share every one on my website and social media. Word of mouth and a positive reputation is key in this business.

**Q:** *How can real estate agents better communicate the value of staging to their clients, and what role can they play in making the staging process smoother and more effective?*

**Abigail:** They can book a home staging presentation with me where they learn the top misconceptions sellers have about staging!