

FOR REAL ESTATE PROFESSIONALS

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# Negotiation After Inspection: A Practical Guide

Where transactions get made or lost — and how to stay on the right side.

# Negotiation After Inspection: A Practical Guide

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*Whether you're closing your first deal or your five hundredth, inspection negotiations are where transactions get made or lost. This is the reference we keep close.*

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## Start with Triage, Not a List

Your first step isn't writing a repair request. It's triaging the report.

Separate findings into:

**Tier 1: Address these** Safety concerns, non-functioning systems, or items that affect habitability or value in a material way. These are the findings worth negotiating.

**Tier 2: Budget for these** Repair recommended items that are your buyer's responsibility to maintain post-close. Aging water heater, worn roof coating, HVAC due for service. Know the cost range. Sometimes negotiate; sometimes accept and plan.

**Tier 3: Ignore these** Cosmetic items, minor maintenance notes, monitor-only findings. Putting these in a repair request dilutes your leverage on Tier 1. Leave them off.

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## The Three Ways to Respond to Findings

**1. Request repair** The seller corrects the issue before close. Best for safety concerns, non-functioning items, and anything that requires a licensed contractor fix. Requires verification; ask for permits and receipts where applicable.

Risk: sellers pick low-cost vendors. You get the letter, not necessarily the quality fix.

**2. Request a credit** Buyer takes a credit at close and handles the repair after. Better for items where your buyer has strong preferences about contractor or quality, or where the repair isn't urgent before move-in.

Benefit: buyer controls the outcome. Seller has less leverage on how the fix gets done.

**3. Price reduction** Adjusts the purchase price down to account for the finding. Often used when credit limits are an issue or the finding represents a significant depreciation in value.

Typically for larger items. Less flexible than a credit and harder to calculate accurately without a contractor bid.

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## Building the Request

A strong repair request is short, specific, and grounded in the report.

**Include:**

- The specific finding from the report (reference the section and use Konnor's language)
- The category of contractor needed (licensed electrician, licensed plumber, licensed roofing contractor)
- What you're requesting: repair prior to close, credit, or price adjustment

- A reasonable deadline for response

#### Leave out:

- Cosmetic and minor items
  - Long lists that dilute the significant requests
  - Vague language ("fix the roof") without specific scope
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## How the Breathe Easy Report Supports Negotiation

The report is written in plain language with photos. Every finding is dated, described, and documented at the severity level Konnor assigned. That documentation matters.

If a seller pushes back, the response isn't "our buyer thinks..." It's "the licensed inspector documented [finding] at [severity level] on [date], with photos." The report is the evidence.

Konnor's credentials (AZ BTR #72416, ASHI Certified, InterNACHI Member) and the documented format of the report give your requests professional standing. Lean on that.

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## When to Get a Contractor Estimate First

For any Tier 1 item that involves a major system (roof, HVAC, electrical panel, foundation), get a contractor estimate before you write the repair request or agree to a credit amount.

A licensed roofer who says "that coating needs replacement, \$3,800" is a stronger foundation for a credit request than "the inspector noted roof wear." The estimate gives you a number. It also reveals whether the finding is at the low or high end of the cost range.

Konnor can tell you what type of contractor to call. He won't give you a cost estimate; that's outside inspector scope. But he'll tell you exactly who the right trade is.

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## Common Mistakes to Avoid

**Negotiating everything.** Long repair lists signal that the buyer is looking for a discount, not addressing real issues. Sellers and their agents read that. Keep the list focused.

**Skipping the estimate.** Accepting a credit based on no information is a coin flip. For major items, spend the two days getting a real number.

**Mixing negotiation tiers.** A request for a \$6,000 HVAC credit loses force when it's on the same list as "repair cracked caulk in master bath." Separate these.

**Waiting too long.** Inspection periods are short. Triage the report the same day, consult with your buyer the next morning, and get the repair request moving. Don't lose days to indecision on the minor items.

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## Reading the Market

The findings in the report don't change based on market conditions. What changes is what you can realistically do with them. That conversation needs to happen before your client reads the report, not after.

**Seller's market:** Inventory is low and sellers know it. In this climate, expect sellers to fix little or nothing. Cosmetic and maintenance items are off the table entirely. Even legitimate safety concerns can get pushback. Shift the conversation with your buyer before negotiations start: the question isn't "what will they fix" but rather "is this home worth it at this price with these conditions as-is?" The report is information. Use it to help your buyer decide, not as a list of demands.

**Buyer's market:** Homes sit longer, inventory is up, and sellers are motivated to protect their deal. In this climate, a well-documented repair request grounded in the Breathe Easy report carries real weight. Buyers can reasonably expect sellers to address safety concerns and significant system deficiencies. The report becomes a legitimate tool. Use it with confidence.

**Balanced market:** Neither side holds a clear advantage. Negotiate case by case. Safety concerns and major system failures are still worth putting forward. Cosmetic items are still not worth the friction. Read the seller's posture (days on market, price reductions, listing history) and calibrate accordingly.

The principle: know the market before you build the request. It shapes what you ask for, how you frame it, and what your buyer should realistically expect.

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## The Breathe Easy Commitment

Our reports are written to be used, not just read. Clear findings, clear severity levels, professional documentation. When your buyer is in a negotiation, the report should be the clearest thing on the table.

Call us if you need anything clarified before you write the request.

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*"Your Home. Your Health. Our Priority."*

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