
FORTUNATE FORD NEGOTIATION

Confidential Information for Proud Ford Owner

Your son has been “sharing” your ten-year-old Ford Focus since getting his license two years ago. He’s going to college in Montreal starting this weekend and won’t need a car.

Two days after his send-off, you and your spouse will board a plane for Berlin. Your spouse is on a one-year assignment for their company’s German branch. Your work is free-lance, and you have put together some remote assignments. Still, the family income will decline a bit for this year of adventure. While together you make a decent living, you are not wealthy.

You have rented your house out for the year. It has been agreed that you can leave just one of the family cars in the garage. This Ford Focus must go. You don’t want to pay for insurance or storage or worry about deterioration (rodents nesting, other problems).

You listed the car for sale a month ago and put a “for sale” sign on the back window. A potential taker in the first week made a low offer of \$4,500, which you rejected. You figured if no one made an offer, you would take it to a dealer this weekend and hope for the best.

According to the Blue Book, the dealer value is between \$7,743 and \$8,032, depending on whether it’s in “excellent” or “very good” condition. A mid-level 4-door sedan with a cloth interior, you bought it used eight years ago and have maintained it well. It now has 95,000 miles. It’s a VERY safe car – a tank, really – and it gets good mileage for its size and weight. You suspect that a local dealer may only offer you \$5,000 - \$5,500 (if you’re lucky) since it’s not a trade-in. There are many of these on the used car market.

You were disappointed that the Blue Book values for “private sale” fell between \$6,000 and \$7,000. You had really wanted to get the dealer sales range of \$7,500 - \$8,000 or more because you had budgeted to use the proceeds toward high expenses in Germany. The more you get from the Ford, the more you will have to pick up a car in Germany or spend on weekend trips. (European trains are great but expensive.)

But as they say, you don’t have time to fool around. You are organizing for your son’s send-off party and getting the house ready for the renters. Your “to-do” list is a mile long between now and when you get on that plane.

This morning, you received a call from someone who said they were interested in looking at the Ford Focus for sale. They are on their way now.