

# Ask The Advisors

**Q** What career advice would you give to someone just entering the commercial real estate business today?

**A** Suzanne Heidelberger, Director of Real Estate, Skadden, Arps, Slate, Meagher & Flom LLP

There are many options for formal training in the real estate field, but hands-on experience can be the best foundation for success. Nothing beats experiential learning and I advise newcomers to commercial real estate to observe experienced professionals, look for a good mentor and listen to their hard-earned advice. I recently spoke with Kenny Rodriguez, a young real estate manager with whom I work at Skadden, about his experience in the industry. Here's what he said:

"On the college level, limited attention is given to the end-user or the commercial real estate tenant. Educational institutions highlight financial structuring and analysis involved in acquiring and/or developing properties, as well as emphasizing development and management of properties. Yet, where can an individual interested in corporate real estate understand, learn and network with other professionals within the same field? How can one conceptualize the meaning of strategic occupancy planning, space planning and design, and construction project management of interior renovations? As someone who has been very involved in CoreNet Global, I consider the association to be an excellent learning source for answers to the above questions. The corporate real estate organization provides members with unparalleled professional development opportunities with a strong academic approach. Many workshops are given by senior professionals who share case studies on current topics based on real life experience. Specifically for younger professionals seeking advanced education, CoreNet Global NYC Chapter has successfully implemented an Emerging Leaders group, wherein end users and service providers under the age of 35 can network and acquire knowledge from veteran professionals within the industry. The Emerging Leaders group addresses the void left by educational institutions with regard to corporate real estate and, in addition to education, provides a conduit to form professional relationships."

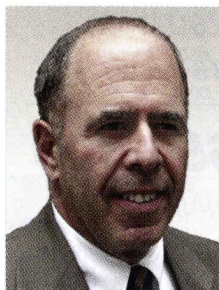


**HEIDELBERGER**

The rapid evolution and continually changing nature of the real estate industry means that opportunities to learn never end, whether you are new to the industry or a more seasoned veteran.

**Steven B. Bleiweiss, Principal, Mancini Duffy**

Anyone just entering the commercial real estate business must be fully prepared to commit to a significant investment of physical time, intellectual capital and emotional energy to their careers. Although the world of commercial real estate is diverse and offers varied career paths, there are several key "common denominators" that, once understood and embraced, effectively become "critical factors for success" in any chosen career path with the industry. These factors include, at a minimum and in no particular order of priority:



**BLEIWEISS**

- An intensely competitive personality
- Entrepreneurial, risk-seeking decisiveness based on comprehensive, focused and factual due diligence, following one's initial gut instincts
- Flexible analytical skills, both quantitative and qualitative
- A willingness to make one's career the absolute number one "life" priority, especially in the early stages of one's career
- A clear understanding that there are no shortcuts to the opportunities and challenges of accumulating substantial wealth, despite what one may be lead to believe
- The ability to be both incredibly patient and totally results-driven
- The intestinal fortitude to "never look back" following a decision. —RENY

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