



Women from YM/WREA discuss their careers: Elizabeth Martin

May 10, 2010 - Spotlights

Name: Elizabeth Martin

Title: President

Company/firm: E. L. Martin Partners LLC

Years with company/firm: 1992

Years in field: 25

Years in real estate industry: 25

Address: 160 Pearl Street 2nd floor

Telephone: (212) 269-6126/ (646) 286-3424

Email: ema5464595@aol.com

Responsibilities include: Operating a commercial real estate brokerage firm specializing in office and retail leasing and investment sales

Real estate organizations / affiliations: YMWREA, REBNY, Real Estate Committee for the Jewish Board of Children and Family Services, charter member of the NY Chapter of CREW.

What impact has Social Networking had on your success?

Social networking is very important and has had a tremendous impact on me as a real estate professional. I have always enjoyed talking to people from all backgrounds and diverse interests. When you actually take the time to listen and share with people your interests and ideas you will inevitably make a contact that you may either benefit from or can provide a benefit to at a later date. I have found that from most social events I usually will leave with either a good lead for business or a connection that may fill an existing gap.

I have also found that at social networking opportunities it can be helpful to talk to a few people in depth rather than a lot of people in a cursory manner.

What is also important is to follow up with someone that you have met with either a short email or note thanking them for a great conversation and reiterate what you do. It is a more subtle form of networking but you should never be shy about telling people what you do and how you can be of assistance to them and to the companies that they either operate or work for.

I encourage anyone that is starting in the industry to commit early on to getting involved and to systematically attend industry events in order to become more familiar with people and players in the industry.

It is also important to attend non industry networking events whose cause may be of interest. At those events you will have more of an opportunity to meet a more diverse group of people with varied interest. The broader you make your networking opportunities the more contacts you will make after ten or fifteen years in the industry.

What advice would you give to a woman just starting a career in your field?

Be prepared for long hours and a lot of hard work!! The hardest part of this industry for women is maintaining a healthy balance of work and family life. As a female commercial real estate professional you be wrestling with this issue throughout your career but the best way to start is to be honest that the issue of balance does exist especially when you decide that you want to have a family and continue to excel in the industry.

It is very important as a woman in commercial real estate especially on the office and retail leasing side of the business to get involved early in industry related activities and organizations. I can not emphasize enough how important it is to begin making relationships and contacts in this industry very early on. It is very useful to join REBNY as soon as you get into the industry. REBNY will provide you with numerous educational opportunities, opportunities to join a committee in your sub market focus or a topic that is of particular interest. Joining a committee affords you the opportunity to get to know your fellow committee members better than you would if you ran into at different events. Many times these will be the same people that you will be doing deals with over time. I also recommend that a woman new to the industry join an organization that is focused on further women in this industry i.e. Association of Real Estate Women (AREW) or Commercial Real Estate Women (CREW) and Young Men Women Real Estate Association (YMWREA). Each of the aforementioned organizations has specific requirements and criteria for joining thus you may need to be in the industry for a couple of years before you can apply for membership but they are definitely worth exploring. I also recommend that once you join an organization you should become an active member to derive the most benefit from your membership. Get involved in a committee. It will be invaluable down the road. My involvement in trade organizations over the last 20 plus years has helped me in my business immensely.

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