



## **Benzakein of Whitman Realty Group first "green" broker**

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Whitman Realty Group's, Ralph Benzakein is the first Long Island Commercial Real Estate broker to earn the LEED Accredited Professional credential and among just a handful of commercial brokers on the east coast to earn the designation.

LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) is the nationally accepted benchmark for the design, construction and operation of high performance green buildings and interior spaces. The Commercial Interiors Certification is aimed at the tenant improvement market. It is the recognized system for certifying green interiors that are healthy, productive places to work; are less costly to operate and maintain; and have a reduced environmental footprint. LEED for Commercial Interiors gives the power to make sustainable choices to tenants who do not always have control over whole building operations.

A LEED AP broker on a project can significantly reduce the expense and time associated with certification. Benzakein, a vice president at Whitman who specializes in tenant representation, will use the knowledge and expertise gained with the credential to assist companies pursuing a LEED Certification for office space. "It won't be the small local office tenant, at least not at first. It will be significant users of space who have green initiatives in place and are good environmental citizens." Benzakein said. "Since a significant portion of the certification involves site selection as well as landlord/tenant negotiations, it just makes sense to have a broker who is a LEED AP involved in the process."

LEED Professional Accreditation distinguishes individuals with the knowledge and skills to successfully steward the LEED certification process. LEED Accredited Professionals (LEED APs) have demonstrated a thorough understanding of green building practices and principles and the LEED Rating System. LEED APs facilitate the integrated design process and streamline LEED certification.

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