



Wendy Miller, Cassidy Turley

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Wendy Miller

Managing Director

Cassidy Turley

What was your greatest professional accomplishment in 2010?

I set two simple goals every year. The first is to keep all our existing clients happy and aware of the latest market trends, while making sure I'm always focused their goals and objectives. The second goal is to increase my productivity and profitability relative to the previous year. Usually, if I'm successful in accomplishing the first goal, the second goal takes care of itself. In some respects, the goals are simplistic but they're also fundamental to our business. The good news is I achieved my 2010 goals. The challenging news is I raised the bar for 2011!

What was your most notable project, deal or transaction of 2010?

2010 was a year of many large-scale projects. Three projects that stood out as huge successes include 250 Park Avenue, 477 Madison Avenue and 360 Lexington Avenue, despite their superb locations, in the wake of the recession, each of these buildings faced vacancy issues. Each situation was different and posed unique challenges but we were largely successful in overcoming these challenges. At 250 Park I oversaw large-scale capital improvement projects and coordinated the leasing of 180,000 s/f of space in the building. At 360 Lexington we were able to renew five tenants and brought in one new tenant. At 477 Madison Ave., we cut in half a significant immediate term potential vacancy rate.

How do you contribute to your company and / or the industry?

I see it as a responsibility and a privilege to mentor the younger brokers at Cassidy Turley—particularly young women. I like to help them understand lease language, how to seize and maximize opportunities, and, most importantly, the value of building relationships with a clients. It's my goal to help young brokers understand that the commercial leasing business is less about jockeying space and more about consulting and working with clients to ensure their priorities are met.

What advice would you give women just starting out in commercial real estate?

The commercial leasing business is certainly dominated by men more and more female brokers are drawn to the business than ever before—a lot more than there were when I started 16 years ago. For the male brokers, lifestyle choices are often more limited but, in a sense, easier: They are here to make money and provide for their families and themselves. Period. Women have a slightly tougher time because for a lot of us, while we are very competitive and want successful careers, there's often a gravitational pull toward starting and raising a family that requires heightened organizational skills and some sacrifices.

In a small brokerage community like New York, it is essential for young female brokers to be consistent, accessible and always responsive to other brokers. Visibility within the field is essential. I encourage prospective female brokers to strengthen and broaden their skill sets as clients are becoming more demanding and transactions become more complex.

How do you manage the work/life balance?

As a mother of two young daughters, I admit the work/life balance is a constant challenge. Nightly discussions regarding ever changing schedules with my husband are a must to keeping everything running smoothly. Cassidy Turley allows me some flexibility so I'm able to take my daughters to school each morning. Having a reliable nanny looking after the girls in the afternoons makes my life much easier. Of course, my Blackberry is pretty essential too since I have to be available to our clients and colleagues 24/7.

Who or what has been the strongest influence in your career?

Robert Billingsley, Vice Chairman at Cassidy Turley recruited me to the firm and spent a great deal of time helping me evolve into the broker I am today. I credit Bob for teaching me all the clauses of a lease and how to handle clients -- basically "Real Estate 101." I also work very closely with David Hoffman, Executive Managing Director at Cassidy Turley and he has been a strong, encouraging influence on my career. After sixteen years there is a significant level of trust between the three of us.

What impact has social networking had on your business?

Through Facebook I found several college classmates who are in the same profession in different cities. It creates a commonalty and bond that otherwise would not exist. Facebook and LinkedIn have made the professional world much smaller.

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