



## Siegel of CMG; Clients are the best referrals

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Title : President

Company/firm : Circle Mortgage Group

Years with Company/firm : 15

Years in field : 25

Years in real estate industry : 25

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Real estate organizations/affiliations : WWBA, WCBANY

How do you and/or your firm use social media?

We utilize LinkedIn as the primary footprint in the social media world. It allows the widest outreach to various professions and groups especially those focused on real estate. Other than my website, it is the easiest way for people to find me. We have just starting utilizing Constant Contact and are tracking these results. When people unsubscribe, I take it personally!

What is your biggest leadership challenge, other than the 'glass ceiling'?

As a leader in the mortgage industry, I'm not only concerned about numbers and volume but also about education and professionalism. The residential mortgage industry has become a detailed maze of disclosures and repetitive paper pushing. I consider an expert in the industry as one who can lead their clients through the process with the least amount of pain as well as keep up the morale of their staff and colleagues. A good leader is one who improves themselves everyday through new experiences and self-education and I spend 50% of my time on this. There is always room for improvement, especially in an industry that has a tarnished reputation. It is up to us to make it shine again which can be forgotten in the day-to-day.

What is the most daring thing you've done for your career? How did it turn out for you?

I wrote a consumer book, The New Rules for Mortgages, published by Penguin, when the industry was tanking. It was a huge challenge and a lot of work. I find that not only was the project personally rewarding but it led me down a new road as a go-to industry expert. I continued on to write several textbooks and industry continuing education courses. I like to think of myself as the educator of educators.

Which project, deal or transaction was the "game changer" in the advancement of your career?

When the mortgage industry came to a screeching halt one fine day in August 2008 maybe 2009, I had to make changes to insure my place when it came back as a very different profession. This meant streamlining overhead, improving technology and working with a tighter projected budget. I find that those in the industry that streamlined back then were the ones that survived. That holds true today in many industries that were affected by our economy and is the way to work today.

What do you consider to be the most successful way to increase referrals?

Clients are the best referral source, so do a good job and they will get the word out for you.

What is the BEST advice you have ever received?

Stay skinny! Not literally (although that's good too!), but with office overhead.

What is your favorite tip for balanced living?

Work out in the morning and know when to go home.

Where would you like to be in 10 years?

Tuscany

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