



Young & Established: Shaffer of Douglas Elliman: Admires Leonard Litwin

June 23, 2015 - New York City

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Company/firm: Douglas Elliman

Year Company was founded: 1911

Years with company/firm: 10

Years in field: 12

Years in real estate industry: 12

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Who in the commercial real estate industry do you admire most? And why?

Leonard Litwin. It is amazing how at his age he continues to grow his empire of buildings and stay so sharp and innovative. Unlike most people who become less aggressive and take less risk as they get older, he is still making bold moves. I have always admired people who take that enthusiastic approach to New York City real estate. And even as someone who grew up in this city, I must admit that to this day I stop and marvel at his buildings when I pass them. He inspires me to dream about the day that I too can develop or own a piece of this magnificent skyline.

What was the most important thing you learned in school?

I wouldn't say it is as much "what," but "who." Having attending a college with one of the world's most diverse student bodies, I was introduced to a variety of personalities and cultures. As a broker, it is important to form commonality and an understanding of your clients and their customs. This gave me a big jump start when I began at Douglas Elliman, and was able to work with a larger group of buyers, sellers and international investors. In this business, it is hard for even the smartest and most motivated agent to become successful without the right relationships. As the saying goes, "It's all about who you know."

What is the best advice you ever received? What's the next big project you want to tackle?

Move the needle every day. Whether you are meeting someone new, solving a problem on a deal, or tackling a new project, every day should have meaningful progress. The little things you do every day add up and combine to success over months and years. Any successful person plays by this rule. Eventually, the incremental gains add up. I am very much looking forward to selling out my new development on the Upper West Side. Having worked on many sellouts in my career, I am excited to take the lead on a project of this nature and magnitude.

