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Steven Matovski, Redwood Realty Advisors

“You never know what opportunity will present itself, just make sure you are ready for the ride”

What is your greatest professional accomplishment?

Closing Silk Lofts this year, it was a milestone in my career.

What is your most notable project, deal or transaction?
Silk Lofts in Bayonne

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

I try to be a wealth of knowledge for the junior associates in our office. I was in their shoes not too long ago, talking out deals, strategies, managing expectations is essential.

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

My fiancé has been an integral part in my career.

What impact has social media/networking had on your career?

I rarely use social media, trying to become more active on LinkedIn.

Tell us how and when you began your career in the profession you are in, about your current position and why you choose the field/profession you are in today?

This was never a field that I strongly considered it just fell into my lap when searching for an internship. I applied at national brokerage firm in '08 and the rest is history.

What were some of your early goals and did anything happen to change them?

I set small quarterly goals that I felt were achievable and built confidence and poise from attaining those feats.

What unique qualities and or personality traits do you feel makes you most successful in your profession?

My sense of humor, it is a great ice breaker when meeting clients.

What challenges and or obstacles do you feel you needed to overcome to become as successful as you are today?

Understanding the intricacies of commercial real estate, from cold calling to having market knowledge to closing a deal. The continuum was difficult to grasp at first, but once you have one under your belt it became much easier.

What was the most defining moment for you?

2011 was a year that I considered leaving the real estate industry, I was told by my mentor at that point that the hard work

Steven Matovski
Director

Years with company/firm: 3

Years in field: 10

Years in real estate industry: 10



I had put in the last several years would be flushed down the drain. He said to give it my all in the next six months and if you are still not sold on the business to move on. Several weeks later I closed a 26-unit

property all cash with a client I still have a very strong relationship with today. That deal catapulted my career.

Who do you feel was most influential in your life when choosing this profession?

My cousin, he was always a role model and was the reason I got into real estate.

What is the funniest, most unique situation you have faced/conquered during your career? Or in your life?

A client reached out to me on Christmas Eve out of the blue and wanted to sell his property in Jersey City, while on the phone I patched in the buyer I had in mind and we were able to agree upon a price, terms etc... in a fifteen minute call.

What outside activities do you enjoy during your free

time?

Hiking, working out, just staying active outside the office.

What inspiring word of advice would you give to a young executive graduating from college today?

You never know what opportunity will present itself, just make sure you are ready for the ride. Be patient, be motivated, be relentless.

What is your number one career goal for 10 years from now?

To have a team that has full continued on page 30D



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Nicholas Nicolaou, Gebroe-Hammer Associates . . .

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Hammer started the firm in 1975. Their values are all an extension of my father's advice.

What outside activities do you enjoy during your free time? I think a lot of people who work hard think they have to play hard too. For me, balance comes in the form of travel. Being exposed to different cultures, economies and architecture help me gain a renewed perspective. This experiential

learning takes me beyond my normal day-to-day – if there is such a thing in commercial real estate – and challenges me to see things in a new light. What inspiring word of advice would you give to a young executive graduating from college today? Relationships, relationships, relationships. This is my one inspiring word and something you should continually strive to expand upon. I firmly believe my ability to thrive each

year and set new year-over-year sales benchmarks is directly linked to relationship building. And as an advocate for forging solid relationships, I also feel compelled to lead the charge for industry mentoring. Analytical skills are imperative, but there is no substitute for being “in the trenches” on the frontlines and being mentored by industry icons like the ones at Gebroe-Hammer who have taken me under their wings. ■

Richard P. Rizzuto, KAV (Rick), TRANSWESTERN . . .

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As Senior Partner & CEO, I personally ran RPR Marketing Solutions day-to-day for five and a half years before letting it run while phasing myself out of day-to-day operations to obtain a real estate license which allowed me to grow further and diversify into commercial real estate marketing ventures, in addition to complementary, existing and ongoing business initiatives and activities. Today, as Chairman of RPR, I continue to drive its visions and successes from a macroscopic perspective while laser focusing my daily attention on the marketing of commercial real estate with TRANSWESTERN.

What were some of your early goals and did anything happen to change them? My early goals were the same then as they are now – work hard, play hard, and always strive to do the right thing for your customers and clients.

What unique qualities and or personality traits do you feel makes you most successful in your profession? I've always had an extraordinary vision and mind that never stops creating. From forming the aforementioned celebrity advisory board in order to get a fair chance at business when I was only 23, to developing platforms to highlight New Jersey's Attributes on behalf of/with the then marketing director for the New Jersey Commerce & Economic Growth Commission, Toni Jones (“The Garden Party: Taste of NJ”, 2004), to envisioning and subsequently creating a streamlined platform for commercial real estate professionals to quickly and easily identify who represents whom in the business, to being part of the elite team of people who masterfully crafted and successfully implemented a strategy to revive and revitalize NJ's Downtown Morristown, I've always prided myself on being pretty far “out-

of-the-box.”
What challenges and or obstacles do you feel you needed to overcome to become as successful as you are today? In life, or at least in my opinion, it's not really the accomplishments that make a good businessman or well-rounded person but the challenges one must overcome along the way – and how they do it - that really sets them apart. For me, things were not always the easiest as a young entrepreneur. Being merely 23 years old when I founded RPR, there were not many companies or business professionals that were willing to take me seriously. I was simply “just a kid” in their minds. Imagine trying to create a business if no one takes you seriously because of your age...it's not very easy. But I chose to break thru that major hurdle by forming the aforementioned elite advisory board whom “everyone” respected; Otis Anderson (NY Giants), the late Gary Carter (NY Mets), Rob Gilbert (Rangers), Gerry Cooney (Heavyweight Contender), the late Rusty Staub (NY Mets), Dick Anderson (Miami Dolphins), Brian Kelley (NY Giants) and others. Rather than me being “the kid” trying to get in the door, I strategically developed a plan to have them assist me in that initiative as elder-statesman. Additionally, I have a very out-of-the-box personality and mindset, which doesn't always help me. Many times I find myself having to tone down ideas and thoughts to accommodate the person, customer, or client with whom I am working at any given time. I call this method of overcoming ‘KNOWING ONE'S AUDIENCE.’

What was the most defining moment for you? In addition to for profit business activities, I also serve as the Executive Director of the 501(c)3 “Little-Life Foundation...giving premature babies a fighting chance.” Little-Life's primary

Beneficiary is Saint Barnabas Medical Center in Livingston, NJ.

To date, Little-Life has raised tens of thousands of dollars for its Beneficiary, which subsequently assists them and their elite teams of Doctors to continue to be the best at Neonatology. As a 1 pound 13 oz. preemie myself and someone who now has 2 children of my own that were also preemie, giving back to the hospitals, doctors, and nurses who navigate that world is VERY important to me.

Who do you feel was most influential in your life when choosing this profession? It wasn't just one person, but a collection of trusted advisors that helped me 1) understand it all and then 2) decide to jump in.

What is the funniest, most unique situation you have faced/conquered during your career? Or in your life? Starting my own businesses without working for someone else first. Though that path was much harder [e.g. - trying to learn along the way and in some cases reinventing wheels vs. just being taught], I would not trade the way I've built my businesses and their subsidiaries, nor how I've come to be graced with the fortune of working with such an amazing company like TRANSWESTERN.

What outside activities do you enjoy during your free time? Golf, Skiing, Traveling, and most importantly spending time with my wife, kids, friends, and family -- making memories and living life.

What inspiring word of advice would you give to a young executive graduating from college today? Never let it just be “about a deal,” it should always be about relationships and how you treat people. Protect and preserve and if you give someone your word, a handshake, or both – DO WHAT YOU PROMISED. ■

Michael F. Schipper . . .

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successful in your profession? I am my biggest critic. I do not obsess over minute detail but I do compare myself to those I feel have achieved a high-level success in the industry when I am undertaking a project, soliciting for new business, or putting together a transaction. I try to put myself in their shoes and perform as I believe they would.

What challenges and or obstacles do you feel you needed to overcome to become as successful as you are today? I have always felt that to be successful I must master whatever it is I am undertaking. It has taken years for me to learn that this is not the case. This industry is driven by the needs of businesses and those businesses have people hyper focused on their success. Understanding the needs of your client and having the ability to provide solutions so they do not have to is of vastly greater importance than the mastering every angle.

What was the most defining moment for you? My first completed off-market, institutional transaction. It was not the size of the deal but the mere fact that the types of deals I had been unsuccessfully chasing for

years had finally led to a major accomplishment in my career. It reinforced the “never give up attitude” that can be easily forgotten along the way and that more often than not, true success comes after a series of failures. You cannot be afraid to fail.

Who do you feel was most influential in your life when choosing this profession? My wife. I had recently left a career in the recyclable commodities industry which I had been involved for most of my adult life. I was working for a friend's consulting firm in NYC but knew my time was limited. The opportunity to take a position in this industry came about and though I had my reservations, my wife convinced me that I could be successful (and she was able to support me for a while).

What inspiring word of advice would you give to a young executive graduating from college today? Challenge yourself and think outside the box. Be humble and think long term. Focus on an opportunity that will best position you for growth in your career, and less on the short term financial picture. While your education provides a foundation it does not define your future. ■

Aran P. Ploshansky, Vantage . . .

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am and leverage my skills and interests.

Who do you feel was most influential in your life when choosing this profession? As cliché as it may sound, my mother was extremely influential in my move to a professional real estate career. In my formative years, my mother was a residential real estate agent, so real estate has always been present in my life. As I grew older, my mother and HGTV nurtured my interest in real estate until I was finally ready to get my license.
What is the funniest, most unique situation you have faced/conquered during your career? Or in your life? My name is Aran, pronounced Ah-run. People often mispronounce

my name, and sometimes they even call me “Iran”. Correcting people without offending them is a constant battle.

What outside activities do you enjoy during your free time? I recently moved from Philadelphia to Cherry Hill, so most of my free time - at least the outdoor portion of it - is spent on dealing with small repairs and improvements to the house and yard. What inspiring word of advice would you give to a young executive graduating from college today? It's okay to not know what you want to do for the rest of your life. As a matter of fact, you should not pick just one path. Explore your interests and skills and find ways to bring them together to solve a problem. ■

Steven Matovski, Redwood Realty Advisors

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market share in Hudson County.

What charity or nonprofit do you support most and why? Eva's kitchen, giving back to those in need in your local community.

Three things people would be surprised to know about me:

I have visited over 28 countries. I have a teacup yorkie named Monti. I used to be an avid quad rider in my teens. ■