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Holland, assistant manager at Hobbs Brook Management

November 23, 2011 - Spotlights

Responsibilities include: Lease negotiations; tenant relations; construction management; external communications ; operations of properties within the firms more than 3 million s/f portfolio.

Real estate organizations / affiliations: IREM; NAIOP; and CoreNet

What single event professional or personal has most significantly impacted your career?

HBM owns all 7 Buildings (over 1 million s/f) in Wakefield's Edgewater Office park, two of which we built new. I assisted with the construction, purchase, and acted as the liaison between the former owners, brokers and attorneys. I also assisted with lease renewals for existing tenants and marketing and leasing to prospective tenants. I enjoyed seeing activities come to fruition and truly enjoyed working with the new and existing tenants to address their needs. This endeavor encompassed all of the activities I enjoy in one project. This kind of assignment doesn't come around very often, but it's exciting when it does.

How do you stay ahead of the curve?

Staying in touch with our target audience is the most important tool to keep abreast of issues and address current trends. I am constantly talking to our tenants to discern their needs, and I pride myself on being a good listener who can take swift action about their concerns. It is not unusual for us to take a particular tenants needs into consideration in order to find a solution that works for both of us. In addition, I read a lot of industry materials, take additional classes in my field, am a member of IREM and am a CPM candidate.

Who has been the strongest influence on your career and why?

Though not in this industry, my mother has been the strongest professional influence on me throughout my childhood as well as adulthood. She has always pushed me to strive in a positive manner, giving me encouragement to achieve my goals. As a 35-year veteran with the Department of Defense Contracts department, she showed me by example how to conduct myself professionally and with ethics, while pursuing professional development, and balancing work and family. As I look back, I now have the life she was leading when I was a child.

What impact has social networking had on your success?

In such a people-oriented industry, I find traditional networking methods to be most effective. People you met 20 years ago often come back to you in some form or another. However, we are not immune to the benefits of technology and use it to augment our business. We utilize e-marketing to reach our target audiences, and have employed virtual reality animation to showcase the experience of working in a future development. At a recent marketing event, we gave a way Ipod touches with this movie loaded onto it so that our brokers could easily demonstrate the experience for their customers.

How has the need to create a more sustainable environment influenced the way you do business?

This actually ties directly back to listening to our tenants and responding to their specific needs. So

many of our constituents request sustainable building materials, practices and systems. HBM has been building and renovating sustainably for more than 30 years, so we are not starting fresh. Rather we're keeping current with industry trends and available products and are listening to the tenants and our industry for ideas on ways to improve upon what we're already doing.

What obstacles have you overcome to get where you are today?

Because technologically-advanced communication methods have increased the speed with which we hear from our tenants, swift action is always expected. Constantly reachable by smartphone, balancing work and family is often the biggest challenge I face. But, I have to say that working within a traditionally male-dominated industry I have always experienced equality, while being encouraged to pursue women-focused events. Last year, I was nominated by our president and first vice-president to attend a Women's summit, which I found to be extremely inspirational and with resources that have helped me in my daily activities.

What advise would you give to a woman just starting a career in your field?

Always give your all and be the best you can be. I try to remember that even when it seems like there is no resolution in sight, there is always an alternative, and that sometimes a little distance and clarity can go a long way to creative problem solving. Rely upon your co-workers and available resources. Never give up on your goals.

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Years with company/firm: 14 years; Years in field: 22; Years in real estate: 24

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