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Girlfriend's advice to new real estate professional

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Gone are the days of male domination in the business world. Everywhere you turn, strong and successful women are starting and running businesses. I have spent a decade working and sometimes fumbling through the real estate world. If I could talk to a younger version of myself this is what I would say to her: it is not easy. This is not easy! Everything you do in the business world is going to be difficult. In order to succeed, you have to try hard (very hard), ask for help, get involved (but not too much), and never stop learning.

Ask for Help: Asking for help is often seen as a sign of weakness....but it hardly ever is. Never be afraid to admit you don't know something. We can't know everything. Nothing is worse than making a mistake because you were too proud to ask for help. Even if you think you know the answer, take the time to talk it through with one of your colleagues. On a daily basis I run down the hall of my office and have a conversation with another associate in the firm that starts out, "Can I get your opinion on something...." I am willing to wager that your client/boss would rather you take the extra minute to talk it over rather than getting it wrong. There is no shame in asking for help.

Get Involved: Unless you have the good fortune of being born into the business, you probably don't know the right people yet. So, go out and meet people. Whether you are an attorney, realtor, mortgage broker, or something in between, there are professional organizations out there for you. Join an organization, be active, show up to the meetings and get on the governing board if you can. Our business is all about personal relationships. These personal relationships bring your name to the top of their list-you gain their trust and their referrals.

Don't Get Too Involved: The saying, "Jack of all trades, but master of none..." is very fitting in the real estate business. When you are just starting out the inclination is to go out and join as many organizations as possible. You try to get to know everyone, but if you spread yourself too thin, you will either have too many relationships and not properly maintain any of them, or you will be a professional networker and rarely have the opportunity to do any real work. Determine a manageable number of relationships and work hard at getting the most out of them as possible.

Never Stop Learning: You need to wake up every day wanting to be better than everyone else. Part of your job is to be an expert in your field. Your edge over the competition is being more up-to-date with the changes in the industry. Try to learn something new every day and always take advantage of any continuing education offered to you.

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