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NEWiRE President Message: See yourself as a leader

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I am a huge proponent of continuous learning. Whether we pursue education as a means to further our careers, hone a skill, or discover something new about ourselves, learning allows us to evolve. And as we evolve as individuals, we evolve as a society. One of my hopes for NEWiRE as the incoming president for the 2014-2015 term is that even more women will be inspired and elevated in their careers as a result of our efforts in the NEWiRE organization.

I Can Relate: When I think back on my own career, it's hard to believe that I have been involved with the Commercial Real Estate industry since the mid-80s! Almost since the beginning of my career, I have been involved with NEWiRE. I happened to work with one of the original founders of the organization, Susan Leff, and she encouraged me to get involved.

I can remember going to my first NEWiRE luncheon and feeling like a freshman in high school. I didn't know who to sit with and I felt a little intimidated. But I stayed with it, and after attending many, many lunches, I joined a committee. Then another. And over time, NEWiRE just became part of my life.

Fast forward to present day. I am living proof that what you put into something is what you get out of it. And now, I realize that I have become that senior professional in commercial real estate. As NEWiRE president, I want to help women to reach their potential, surpass expectations, and set even higher standards for the commercial real estate industry. I feel that one way to do this is to get more women to see themselves as leaders.

Learning to Lead: I have been very motivated by recent books on the topic of leadership: leadership in general, leadership and women, you name it. I was particularly interested in a study that the Commercial Real Estate Women (CREW) Network Industry Research Committee published in 2013 titled, "Women in Leadership." It talks about effective leadership skills along with the key areas in which we, as women, need to step up our game:

Take Risks: In order to get into leadership positions, women need to take risks. Accept assignments that stretch your skills and challenge you. Don't let the fear of failure and/or criticism keep you from trying something. Instead, focus on learning from your mistakes if an endeavor doesn't end successfully. And keep trying.

Relating and Networking: Women need to support, encourage, and back each other. Sponsorship is key. Spend time building relationships with professionals in positions of power who will advocate for you and propel your advancement.

Participative Decision Making: Speak up. Make your opinions known. Share your ideas. Show that you have something valuable to contribute based on your knowledge and expertise. Assertive communication will earn you respect while building self-esteem.

To bring about change externally, we need to start with our inner selves. I think many of us, myself included, have some work to do in that area. It starts by being just a little more aware of our

potential and taking action.

To that end, NEWiRE is at the ready. We are looking to broaden our membership, and we want our programs to be relevant to everyone. Take advantage of all the resources, support, and education that NEWiRE has to offer.

Making It Happen: Let me wrap this up by saying that NEWiRE isn't something you belong to. It belongs to you. Make the most of it, like I have. Step out of your comfort zone. Grow as a person. Demand more. Inspire others. That is how I plan to do my part to advance women in the commercial real estate industry in the coming year as president. Who's with me?

To learn more about NEWiRE and upcoming events visit www.newire.org, find us on LinkedIn, or follow us on Twitter @NEWiREBoston.

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