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How long have you been in the business?

My start day was on the Ides of March: March 15, 1985.

What made you decide to get into real estate?

When I was growing up, my parents began investing in Brooklyn real estate, so it was a medium I inherently understood. By the same token, I have always been in sales in one capacity or another, including positions in the health and fitness industry as a regional manager. So the entire terrain was kind of a natural for me to come back to.

Who inspires you?

My mother, who was one of the first women to start investing in real estate back in the 1950s, was an absolute inspiration to me. She clearly set the standard for strong, entrepreneurial women in my life. It was only a natural for me to partner with another strong woman, Faith Hope Consolo, and build a resilient partnership that has lasted over two decades. In a different vein, people like Father Francis Gasparik and Joseph Sano, Executive Director of the St. Francis Food Pantries & Shelters are good friends who inspire me with their selflessness and as practitioners of effective grass roots of charitable giving.

What pushes you to the next level?

A healthy sense of competition and working in an industry that provides me with the impetus to constantly grow, both professionally and personally.

What is the hottest retail deal you have made to date?

We were the stewards for Buccellati's new home! It took two years to negotiate a buy-out and disposition with two different landlords at the original store at 40 East 57th Street where they had been for the past forty years. Then we had to quickly find the right place to relocate the iconic jewelry brand, which we found at 810 Madison Avenue. Along with sealing the Madison Avenue deal, we simultaneously secured their Chicago location on East Oak Street. Now, we continue to explore additional locations for Buccellati in appropriate markets across the country.

What is your secret weapon for sealing a deal?

It is being ahead of the curve. A lot of my success may be attributed to experience and instincts, but I feel my main advantage is to get to the deal first and foremost. It appears that my biological clock always seems to be one to five days ahead of the herd. Even today when I go out to eat, the restaurant gets packed ten minutes later. I always tell my wife that when we start to arrive at restaurants that are already packed, it is time for me to leave the business.

What is the hottest area for deals right now?

Soho is back with a vengeance, as is upper Madison Avenue in the Carnegie Hill area. New York is our primary base for leasing and selling, but we are also very active in Chicago, Los Angeles, Miami, Toronto and of course always Europe.

What's the best season for deals?

The retail market is driven by opportunity, so deals are done all year round and there is no "best season." Of course, if you ask me which seasons I prefer to be running around outside, that's another question.

If you had to work in a city other than New York, where would it be?

Three cities: Los Angeles, London, and Rome. Obviously, they are all very different but we have long been active on the West Coast and work with several designers and businesses in London and Rome, which share many common traits with New York.

What's the best piece of advice you would give to someone starting the business?

Learn the basic landscape. Walk around the city to see the retail mix and people on the street. Learn who owns what and where. And while developing the thick skin that is required in this business, don't lose your sense of humor. Remember, it's only your money they are trying to take away... Ha, ha!!