



Career Insight: Real Estate License Can Change Your Life

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Stefani Markowitz gives us some career insight on how women can transform their lives with real estate



Every woman should have her real estate license. Be a referral agent, or just do one deal; it's always worth it. Even if you never thought once about our business, a real estate license can change your life.

Many times, the value comes when you'd least expect it. And by that I mean when a woman is on her own, unexpectedly, and, usually, and that's when real estate can be a life saver.

In our business, we meet a lot of people who are buying a house because they found the person they want to share their lives with, and dream of a home where they can raise a family. But the statistics don't lie. A full 50% of us won't be married forever, and, inevitably, that real estate asset is going to get in the middle of a divorce, messy or neat.

If you had studied for a real estate license and had the pulse of the market to better navigate that awful situation, what woman wouldn't be better off? Knowledge is power, and ignorance doesn't get you much when you're in those jams.

I see real estate as female empowerment at its finest. It's a way of taking control of your life, especially if you've been out of the workforce for a while, or if your first career has plateaued.

The kids are grown up and you want a business to fill your days? Or you're a single mom and need a bigger source of income for all the expenses. Even if you do one transaction, it's worth it. A real estate license is something you can always fall back on, even if you do a deal just once a year.

If you're great at relationships, real estate is a way to capitalize on your natural abilities for empathy, listening for what's between the lines and helping people find what they are looking for to complement their future lives. If you're good at it, there's no limit to how far you can go.

At Rutenberg, we have 620+ agents today. A third of us are real Type-A movers and shakers who have been doing this for a while. Another third are working hard all the time at getting to that next level. And the final third are who we're talking about.

The way our 100% commission model works, closing one million dollar deal in Manhattan could mean a \$29,000 or so check for an agent, and that can be a lot of money for a family.

That's one story I hear a lot at my firm: "I'm a single mom and made double this year than last year when I was working at another company, and I now I can spend more time with my daughter."

Or: "I'm taking care of my son and the extra commission is paying for his private school."

The most inspiring stories we hear are from women who spent the first part of the careers in another industry, and then wandered into real estate to knock our socks off.

The person I'm thinking of, a woman who very much inspires me, for a long time had been a school teacher in Connecticut, until she was approached by a developer who needed curriculum and teaching assistance to educate tenants on the advantages of home ownership. She was a natural, helping people empower themselves through owning their first homes. From there, her reputation bloomed with many developers who brought her into the business of condo conversion, which she then led all over Manhattan, notably at the Ansonia, Leonori and Parc Vendome. And after that second career brought her to the top tier of real estate agents (at Douglas Elliman,) she moved into her Third Act, which was doubling-back on her beginnings, as a teacher, becoming Professor and Director at the Graduate School of Business at Touro College, distilling her wisdom into that inspirational real estate bible "Tips from the Tops" and starting her well-known real estate training institute – one which I had the pleasure of speaking at last month – where thousands of women over the past 20 years learned how to slide their foot firmly into this business.

Of course who I am talking about is Esther Muller, co-director of the Academy for Coaching and Training and the Academy for Continuing Education.

At Rutenberg, we were so inspired by her enthusiasm and love for this business, that we hired Esther to come on-site to work with our agents in seminars and one-on-one training every week.

My grandfather founded our company and I always knew I would get into this business, but I never thought I'd be so proud of strong women who now hold court in our office. Each week, seeing the joy in her presentation and the rapt attention she inspires in our agents, especially the women, makes me feel amazing for having brought her into our fold, especially, as the young female president of our company.

For all you sociable New York City women out there who are longing for a profession where you can enjoy meeting new people and have the ability to earn a little bit or a lot, from the bottom of my heart, I very much recommend looking into the business of real estate and taking the first step to study for a license.

Becoming a real estate agent can change your life. Women empowered. Only at Rutenberg.

Stefani Markowitz is President of Charles Rutenberg LLC, one of New York City's largest real estate brokerage companies, where she leads an experienced management team responsible for more than 600 licensed agents. The company's 100% commission model favors entrepreneurs, rewarding independent operators with the highest payout in the industry. She is an active supporter of The New York City Rescue Mission, City Harvest and Race for the Cure.