

CREW Network Committed to Strong Chapters, Successful Members

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As the commercial real estate industry continues to slug its way out of one of the greatest recessions of our time, CREW Network President Kristin Blount reminded delegates during the 2010 Spring Leadership Summit & Council Meeting in Minneapolis that CREW Network is focused on two key areas this year: keeping chapters strong and supporting member success.

Building our Brand

Addressing both the need to keep its chapters strong and members successful, CREW Network is working to strengthen the overall CREW Network brand. Delegates were reminded of CREW Network's new branding statement "At CREW Network, we exist to influence the success of the commercial real estate industry by advancing the achievements of women." It is important that all chapters communicate and incorporate this branding statement at the local level so that this organization builds cohesive messaging. CREW Network has also developed a standard CREW Network Chapter logo that several chapters have already adopted. As more and more chapters adopt this standard look, it will continue to increase CREW Network's market presence. President Blount reminded delegates that we all share in the responsibility to carry the message. Watch for more branding tools to come from CREW Network.

Strong Chapters

Providing chapters the right tools and resources is critical to maintaining a healthy network. Among its newest resources, CREW Network announced the development of two new chapter playbooks scheduled to be released later this year. The first, Chapter Administration Playbook, will cover everything from chapter startup to finances, governance, insurance and more – everything needed to run an effective chapter. Additionally, CREW Network's Career Outreach Playbook will provide chapters everything they need to know to successfully launch a career outreach program such as CREW Careers, UCREW and eMentoring.

CREW Network is also supporting its chapters through its newly developed Chapter Committee Leadership Calls. Presented by CREW Network leaders and members, these calls focus on chapter issues such as membership development, building effective committees for strategic boards and tips for program committee chairs – all of which complement its existing board hosted leadership calls delivered monthly to CREW Network Presidents and Presidents-Elect. The open exchange of information and best practices provides an unmatched support system for every CREW Network chapter.

Attendees of the Spring Leadership Council participated in strategic roundtable discussions addressing two key areas for chapters: membership recruitment and retention, and programming. Delegates and chapter leaders were broken down into small work groups to discuss these two issues and how they relate to the overall branding of CREW Network. The types of programs chapters offer and the makeup of members within a chapter all impact the CREW Network brand. Delegates discussed the need for having several committees work together to create greater synergy; the need for diversity on the program committee, including diversity of discipline, seniority and more; understanding the needs of a

chapter's members and providing them with what they want; and the need to get new members active within the chapter immediately. A complete list of roundtable outcomes will be available later this month.

Successful Members

With members continuing to search for deals and looking for ways to increase their knowledge and marketability within the industry, CREW Network has responded with several new programs.

CREW Network launched its University Leadership Series earlier this year. This series, sponsored by Studley, brought in professors from some of the top real estate programs in the United States such as Harvard, Stanford, Columbia, Cornell, and Wharton to present webinars, at no charge to members, on topics ranging from real estate finance to entrepreneurship, transaction and deal structures, and more.

Also this year, CREW Network launched its much anticipated CREWbiz™ business networking site. CREWbiz provides every member a personal marketing page to promote business expertise, areas of specialties, deals completed, presentations given, and more – all designed to foster networking among all 8,000 members of the CREW Network organization. While deals may be slow to produce, they are happening across North America and CREWbiz provides an opportunity for members to find the right person to bring onto their teams. The CREWbiz tool will only be successful when every CREW Network member has populated her/his personal profile page. Delegates were charged with encouraging every member within their chapters to participate in CREWbiz.

Continuing its commitment to providing members with quality professional development training, delegates and chapter leaders participated in the highly acclaimed Crucial Conversations training, presented by Candace Bertotti, master trainer, VitalSmarts L.C. Participants were asked to think about a particularly difficult conversation they would like to or need to have with an individual and to write down how that conversation would go. Next, participants were lead through a series of exercises to help them implement strategies to insure their “crucial” conversation is conducted in a professional, positive and effective way. Delegates learned how to “State My Path,” which involves the following:

- **Share your facts**
- **Tell your story**
- **Ask for others' paths**
- **Talk tentatively**
- **Encourage testing**

Session participants were challenged to take an honest look at what they hoped to achieve by having the particular conversation, learning that to be right, punish, save face or look good are considered unhealthy goals. Instead participants were encouraged to consider healthy goals such as to strengthen the relationship, learn, achieve better results and find the truth.

Industry Research Preliminary Findings

CREW Network's industry benchmark study conducted in 2005 was one of the most important resources provided to members and to the industry – offering concrete analysis of the achievements of women in the industry. Industry Research Committee Board Liaison Diane Butler presented delegates with some of the preliminary findings from CREW Network's 2010 industry benchmark study to be released in October. Overall, while gaps do still exist, progress is being made.

Among some of the report highlights, disparity continues to exist in compensation levels for men and women in similar positions with similar years of experience. In 2005, 58 percent of men reported incomes in excess of \$150,000, while only 24 percent of women reported incomes at the same levels. While that gap has narrowed, the 2010 numbers still favor men with 48 percent men and 28 percent women reporting incomes in excess of \$150,000.

While not surprising, given the current economic climate, significantly more respondents now indicate they would consider a position with 100 percent commission. Specifically, the percentage of women willing to be compensated under a 100 percent commission plan increased from 17 percent reported in 2005 to 41 percent reported in the current study.

Regarding the areas of success and satisfaction, when asked to list the top five most important job characteristics, both men and women agreed that *job enjoyment*, *challenging job* and *co-worker respect* were within their top five. However, whereas women rounded out their top five with *maximize earnings potential* and *career achievement*, men listed level of *decision making* and (for the first time) *time for family* among their top five – a potentially interesting finding for employers.

Strong Chapters. Successful Members

The months ahead will continue to challenge every professional within the commercial real estate industry. CREW Network remains poised and committed to providing chapters and members the right resources and tools to ensure chapters remain healthy and members remain successful. To do this takes a commitment from every chapter and every member within this Network to effectively communicate the CREW Network brand and to communicate your needs back to the Network. We're here. We're listening. We're responding.