

A man in a dark pinstriped suit, white shirt, and red striped tie stands on a rooftop or balcony, smiling. Behind him is a city skyline with several tall buildings under a clear blue sky. The man is the central focus of the image.

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*Putting His
Money Where
His Mouth Is*

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By: Anne Marie Aikins

Real Estate broker Michael Reis speaks with a wisdom and common sense far beyond his years. Being an investor in real estate himself, Reis practices what he preaches. Specializing in investment properties, first-time homebuyers and move-ups, the thirty-three year old Toronto resident believes that if you “work hard, your reputation will precede you.” Given that he is on-track this year to receive the coveted President’s Elite award (which would rank him among the top 5% of Coldwell Banker agents across the country), Reis’ astute work

ethic is obviously paying off.

Describing himself as “self-confident, trustworthy and hard-working,” Reis became involved in network marketing at the ripe old age of nineteen, recognizing that his strengths lied in sales and marketing. Involvement in real estate soon came after. “My uncle and mentor, Alex Karamitsos, Broker of Coldwell Banker Delphian Realty, approached me after seeing how well I was doing in my business,” the energetic and articulate salesman recalls. “He suggested that if I applied what I learned

from network marketing to the real estate business, I would be a success.”

Support from his family taught him from a very young age that he was capable of doing whatever he wanted to do. So it was in 1992, when he was just 22 years old, that Reis obtained his license. His Broker’s license followed within the next five years. “I am going into my 12th year of real estate and currently have my own satellite office,” the Toronto bachelor reports.

Reis believes there isn’t much more to the average agent than the agent themselves. Most agents try to sell you on “personalized service” and therefore try to juggle all the aspects of the transaction themselves resulting in burnout from trying to do a good job for their clients. In the majority of cases, they couldn’t really work any harder than they’re already working. “We know, because we used to do it this way,” Reis says.

“But we don’t anymore because we found that the service that we provided our clients suffered from our good intentions,” he continues. “You may be sympathetic to the fact that your agent is working as hard as humanly possible. But if the quality and profitability of your home sale suffers as a result of the



Michael Reis, Associate Broker; Richard Reis, Business Partner; Christine Hoang, Executive Assistant.

agent trying to wear ten different hats at once, it's understandable if the client feels cheated."

Reis has built a team of highly trained and dedicated professionals at the top of their field to help him be in ten places at once, and therefore greatly enhance the quality of service he puts forth to his clients. "This is basically how other professionals, like doctors or attorneys, would operate", he explains.

And in addition to this, Reis' team uses cutting edge technology to dramatically improve the speed, efficiency and innovative inner workings of the service they deliver. The team manages a number of websites, uses CD-ROM business cards, on-line real estate tutorials, "Virtual Home Tours," the ground-breaking "Talking House" and a Home-Hunter hotline (both of which allow a prospective purchaser to obtain information on any home, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, without speaking to a real estate agent), and multiple newsletters to make their services accessible to clients.

"As a result, our client's homes sell for more money, in less time, guaranteed," Reis reports.

Clients James and Paula Sherman seem to agree with their agent's approach to the business of real estate.

"We loved working with Mike," the Shermans wrote in a letter of appreciation. "We were impressed with him in every aspect of our business relationship and feel it went beyond that and became a personal friendship. He was always there for us when we needed him and he gave us good solid advice about every facet of real estate when buying our first house. He was incredibly patient with us and looked after all our needs (we especially appreciated his humour)...we loved that Mike never pressured us and even went so far as to advise us not to buy certain houses. We have great respect for and trust in Mike. He was recommended to us by a friend and we would not hesitate



Michael Reis at his High Park home.

to recommend him to anyone else."

Reis believes that part of his success has come from "making real estate easy."

At a very young age, he made it a personal mission to meet the top professionals in the industry. "From mortgage brokers to home inspectors to lawyers, who all play a major role in making the real estate transaction a smooth one, I feel confident that I have compiled the best team available. My executive assistant, Christine Hoang, has made it possible to maintain my existing database while keeping up with the overwhelming demand of Internet leads. I was highly impressed with her writing and website design and management skills, which have become essential to my marketing approach."

Another satisfied client letter was received from Theresa Jasinski.

"I called Michael Reis from an ad in the Renter's News magazine and he answered my real estate questions long before I was able to bring him any business. A couple of years later, Michael took me through a purchase of an old Victorian home and assisted me with creative ideas on how to make the property into a successful income property. Less than four years later,

Michael sold my Victorian in only four days, for 105% of its asking price - \$126,000 more than I originally bought it for! My recent needs have changed and Michael assisted me in finding a new type of dwelling. If it's remotely related to real estate, there's only one person I call - Michael Reis!"

His advice to new agents: "Stop selling and start listening; invest in yourself; and most importantly, keep in touch with your existing client database." To become a successful agent, Reis believes you must do three things: make the real estate transaction an easy one; be a good listener; and do what you say you're going to do, when you say you're going to do it. Old-fashioned hard work is the key to success.

Reis sets himself apart from his competitors by not only talking the talk, but also walking the walk. For sellers, he will guarantee the sale of their existing home in 60 days at a price acceptable to them or he'll sell their property for free. For anyone interested in moving up to any one of his listings, he will guarantee the sale of their existing home at market value, or he'll buy it. Promises that most agents aren't willing to make.

He is so confident in his negotiating skills that for buyers, he will guarantee \$10,000 of the asking price of the house or he will pay cash on closing.

“We put our money where our mouth is. We provide a performance guarantee to all our clients,” Reis, a self-confessed workaholic, says.

A smile crosses Reis’ face as he recalls one particular event that made a considerable impact on him. “After being interviewed along with three other realtors, I was chosen to list and sell a home for an estate. I couldn’t help but admire two wrought-iron Viking statues, situated in the master bedroom. The home was sold in three days for \$20,000 over the asking price, setting precedence for the area. The executor was ecstatic. To my surprise, after the property was sold

and the house was vacant, I entered the home to find a note attached to the two Vikings that read: Dear Michael, May Eric and Thor guard you, protect you, and defend you and yours, like the good warrior Vikings they are...and wherever you are. In appreciation, Jean Racicot & Claire Caza.”

The future certainly looks bright for this remarkable young entrepreneur. “I hope to build a business that can run itself without me, so that I can spend more time working on my business, rather than in it,” Reis says. “I love this business and wake up every day looking forward to going to work.” But most importantly, he believes that “money isn’t everything. Quality of life is.”

Michael Reis displays a sense of optimism most people would envy.

You can contact
Michael A. Reis
at **Coldwell Banker**

Case Realty

221 Dufferin Street
Suite 107A
Toronto, ON

(416) 588-8896

fax (416) 461-7802

michael@michaelreis.com

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