



Richard Burroughs- Product Development Manager

Cortland Partners

1. What makes this industry exciting to you?

The rise of individualism and the experience economy, lowering costs of consumer technology, and the on-demand service economy combine to create opportunities for new products and new business models. Student loans, aging baby boomers, and the psychological hangover of the Great Recession make this a tense and relevant space.

2. How would you describe your job and our industry in five sentences or less to someone considering the industry?

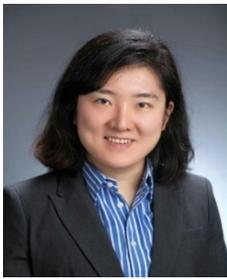
You must have an even keel. Cortland plays a large part in improving the quality of lives for thousands of residents through smarter product development and offering more value for the dollar, which is an important social attribute of a professional pursuit. However, meeting both the extremely high performance expectations passed down from institutional investors and the ground-up requirements for incredible customer service creates an intense requirement to perform.

3. What you've learned about yourself since leaving college?

I am an explorer and a creator at my core, and I must continue to seek greater challenges.

4. What pearls of wisdom would you have for anyone looking to get promoted in this industry?

Study how successful personalities lead meetings, double check details, actively seek new challenges.



Faye Shi- Purchasing Specialist

Cortland Partners

1. What makes this industry exciting to you?

I get to meet such a diversified group of people.

2. How would you describe your job and our industry in five sentences or less to someone considering the industry?

Sky is the limit

3. What you've learned about yourself since leaving college?

Time is like water in sponge, my bandwidth is like bungee cord

4. What pearls of wisdom would you have for anyone looking to get promoted in this industry?

Don't be intimidated by anything!



Carolyn Lewis- Recruiting Manager

Gables Residential

1. What makes this industry exciting to you?

Our industry is constantly evolving. What markets/submarkets we develop in change over time, who we are marketing our communities to, what future renters are looking for in their new homes, and who we are recruiting into our industry are all things we have to adapt to consistently and keep each day exciting.

2. How would you describe your job and our industry in five sentences or less to someone considering the industry?

I have the best job in the world! I get to help people find great jobs in a variety of fun locations in an industry they may never have considered previously. The apartment industry is certainly not a fit for everyone but those that thrive in a fast paced environment and genuinely enjoy working with people find themselves in our industry for life...whether it be on site, in a corporate support role or working on the vendor side.

3. What you've learned about yourself since leaving college?

Since college I have worked for a variety of organizations, I have learned that I thrive working in a large organization with nationwide presence which provides for variety in my workday. I have also learned the importance of work/life balance after having multiple supervisors drill it into my head. While I am still very passionate about my work and make myself available to my internal customers outside of work hours I have learned to balance the two and highly value working for an organization that supports my personal health and that of all members of the organization.

4. What pearls of wisdom would you have for anyone looking to get promoted in this industry?

Be patient. Everyone is on a different timeline. If you have a peer that receives a promotion before you there may be something bigger and better for you around the corner, have confidence in your abilities and know that the right opportunity will present itself at the proper time. Just be ready to take it when it does present itself! Take time to really explore what is important to you in terms of company culture, work environment, and what your career path goals are. Don't be afraid to ask someone to mentor you, but remember that if someone is fantastic enough to mentor you they are also likely very busy so have a plan in place and take the lead on what you want to achieve from the relationship.



Chase Lawrence – Real Estate Broker

College Town Properties

1. What makes this industry exciting to you?

I enjoy the pace of the industry. When our company was established we outlined a focus in three core areas within the industry; development, operations and brokerage. Each of these presents its own unique challenges, opportunities for growth and incredible learning curve. Every day is different. Some days are a challenging lesson in customer service and others are an out of state new project acquisition. It's exciting and we get to experience it all and learn every single day. I appreciate the fact that we get to build something new, create homes that residents can enjoy and value. I like the margins in our industry, the fact that you can work on a single deal that could support your company for the entire year or spread your attention over multiple opportunities to bring together a great livelihood.

2. How would you describe your job and our industry in five sentences or less to someone considering the industry?

Student housing is one of the fastest growing industries in our economy right now. What started as a little know segment of Commercial Real Estate has now exploded into a thriving primary sector for institutional investment. Student housing has opportunities are found in college towns across the country and the growth is seemingly limitless. The industry offers multiple areas for learning new skills, developing various core competencies and building a business.

3. What you've learned about yourself since leaving college?

I'm more risk adverse than I originally thought. With great risk comes great return and when you're out in the market it's a constant balance to keep your ambitions in check with the realities and challenges of operating without a safety net. I've also found I can work at a tempo and schedule much more demanding than I'd ever envisioned. It's taken an incredible dedication to build my company up from nothing. As I look back over 10 years and think about the things we've done sometimes they are literally so challenging that I'm not sure I could even do it again! That level of dedication to a concept, to an idea that drives you is something that building a business takes and while I knew it was in me I don't think I realized how far I was willing to go before I started.

4. What pearls of wisdom would you have for anyone looking to get promoted in this industry.

"Stay In Your Lane"!!! That's a joke we make about the tendency of people to jump around from idea to idea or industry to industry. Focus in on something you have a passion for, something that you can be the very best at and something that can make a great deal of money. Once you find where those three things intersect you have a business you can start to invest your time and resources into. Stay in it. Avoid the hesitation to bounce from job to job or city to city. You have to build a foundation, gain experience and that takes time. Malcom Gladwell the author of several incredible books on concepts like this says that you have to invest 10,000 hours into something to become an expert. Do the math. Most recent graduates aren't even close to truly knowing any one particular aspect of an industry. Once you become an expert you've created an intrinsic value in yourself. It doesn't matter if you want to start your own business or work with someone else. You're experience and skill set adds value wherever you are to whatever you're working towards and that creates opportunities for you both in growth and compensation.



THE WORTHING COMPANIES

Ivan Mosqueda Ramirez – Assistant Project Manager

Worthing Southeast Builders

1. What makes this industry exciting to you?

I have always been interested in the way things are built. Now I'm excited to have a better understanding of the building components that most people do not acknowledge in an apartment for example. I'm very interested in learning all the possible approaches, materials, techniques that can be used to build new and better styles of apartments.

2. How would you describe your job and our industry in five sentences or less to someone considering the industry?

I'm an Assistant Project Manager. I'm involved in the project in most of its construction process after the design is complete. I'm involved in preparing the estimate to present our budget and schedule. Later, I participate in the bid process with our subcontractors. I also help with the buyout of the different trades. Close to the end comes the process of acquiring the Temporary Certificates of Occupancy (TCO) and the final Certificates of Occupancy (CO). Then we start the move-ins, until we finally deliver the project.

3. What you've learned about yourself since leaving college?

I believe there is always something new you can learn on every activity you get involved. Attitude matters more than most people think.

4. What pearls of wisdom would you have for anyone looking to get promoted in this industry?

Get involved as much as possible. Join student associations, young professional groups, tour visits, etc.



GLOBAL STATE
INVESTMENT GROUP

Austin Young- Analyst

Global State Investment Group

1. What makes this industry exciting to you?

The apartment industry is filled with amazing people, a vast field of opportunities, and provides people with one of life's basic needs, shelter.

2. How would you describe your job and our industry in five sentences or less to someone considering the industry?

The apartment industry is a wonderful field to go into. Even if you're not sure of what your career goals are, there are a MASSIVE number of opportunities within the industry to choose from. These range from finance, technology, management, marketing, sales, law, teaching, construction, and many, many more. Whether you want to work with few or many people, inside or outside, work on computers, build things, etc., the apartment industry has a great job for you!

3. What you've learned about yourself since leaving college?

Leaving college is just as strange and exciting as leaving high school! It truly made me feel like an adult. There are more responsibilities, and the feeling of "being on your own" really makes an impact on everyday choices and actions. After leaving college, the world is your oyster, and anything is possible!

4. What pearls of wisdom would you have for anyone looking to get promoted in this industry?

Don't be afraid to walk through open doors! If an opportunity presents itself that is exciting to you and could propel you closer to your life and career goals, take it! Don't get caught in the negative spiral of "What if it doesn't work out, etc."

Work HARD towards your goals and differentiate yourself from the "average" worker who just does enough to keep their job. The opportunities to advance will come to you.

Lastly, and most importantly, keep your connections with the people in your field strong and healthy. Meet and remember as many people as you can. Don't burn any bridges. This mentality made me memorable to others, led to a referral which landed me my current job, and I couldn't be happier with where it has led me so far!



Alex Forde - Associate Community Director

Matrix Residential

1. What makes this industry exciting to you?

Being able to constantly grow and learn something new every day makes this industry so exciting to me. You are always meeting new people. Having opportunities to attend Apartment Association events makes for a fun way to network which after years of being in the industry turns into having a "Property Management Family".

2. How would you describe your job and our industry in five sentences or less to someone considering the industry?

In Property Management you will build relationships, work with a team and overcome objections. Every day is different and you will never be bored. You are constantly learning, which leads to opportunities for you to progress in your career. One of my favorite things about this industry is creating a community environment for my residents. I personally have the opportunity to give someone an amazing living experience, which is something they will always remember!

3. What you've learned about yourself since leaving college?

Since leaving college a few things I have learned are adaptability, flexibility, patience and independence. Being in this industry things are constantly changing as far as your direct team, or even what community you are working at. Teaching yourself to be easily adaptable and to be flexible will not only help you grow professionally, but also personally.

4. What pearls of wisdom would you have for anyone looking to get promoted in this industry.

- Go above and beyond and pay attention to the details. If you see dog poop... pick it up. If you see finger prints on the window... clean the windows. People will notice the little things you do and that can go a long way. It shows that you are taking pride in your community.
- Ask your direct manager to teach you something new each week or month about their role. Have them give you the responsibility of that specific task so you can become an expert at it.
- Be involved in your property, company and with Apartment Association events. It shows that you are interested in growing and being involved and you never know who you may meet.



Shannon Crane- Training Associate

Matrix Residential

1. What makes this industry exciting to you?

The range of opportunities in multi-family housing is huge. I started as a leasing consultant right out of college and have received several promotions in the past 3 years. Very few industries allow for as much movement and growth as the multi-family housing industry does.

2. How would you describe your job and our industry in five sentences or less to someone considering the industry?

I work as a Training Associate with Matrix Residential. My main focus is to provide our associates with the tools and skills they need to successfully manage a luxury apartment community. I am able to see the associates I work with grow from entry level positions to management roles and corporate positions. At Matrix, our focus is on our employees; I want to make sure that they are challenged and fulfilled by their career so that they can provide the highest level of customer service to our residents.

3. What you've learned about yourself since leaving college?

Since college, I have gained so much confidence in myself and my potential. Working in multi-family housing has grown my skills in customer service, conflict resolution, leadership and training, and so much more.

4. What pearls of wisdom would you have for anyone looking to get promoted in this industry?

Use your resources! Offer help to associates that are in the position or department that you hope to join. The more you put yourself out there, the more likely you are to be considered for a new promotion.



Ashley Casaday – Development Manager

Pollack Shores Real Estate Group

1. What makes this industry exciting to you?

I like that someone's apartment and where they live can be a major piece of who they are, and it has the ability to shape so many of their experiences. For that reason, our industry is always changing and advancing to cater to the many types of renters you'll find today. I love this evolution and creativity!

2. How would you describe your job and our industry in five sentences or less to someone considering the industry?

I help search for, analyze, and procure sites on which our company develops new apartment and mixed use projects. This involves a great deal of analysis and a multitude of relationships as we work with brokers, equity partners, lenders, architects, interior designers, and general contractors to create a new development. I also manage the property sale process as we put it on the market, interview buyers, work through due diligence, negotiate a purchase and sale agreement, and ultimately sell the property. It's always changing, and each project is unique!

3. What you've learned about yourself since leaving college?

Tough question! I think the most important thing I've learned is that I am my biggest advocate. It's an additional role I've had to learn because it's not my natural tendency. Ultimately I am driving my career, and it's my responsibility to ensure it moves in the direction I want it to move. I've also learned that I really enjoy digging into the numbers and mechanics of the deals, which is something that came as a bit of a surprise to me. I find it very interesting and useful to understand why a real estate investment happened or was a good investment for someone in the first place.

4. What pearls of wisdom would you have for anyone looking to get promoted in this industry?

Go the extra mile. Plenty of people out there are willing to do "enough," and that's often just fine. But if you really want to get noticed, figure out how to do something better, more efficiently, with more excitement or allure. Take the time to look into the emerging technology, or to fully dig into the details before making a decision. The people around you will notice your extra hard work and attention to detail.



Sullivan Wickley



Rob Rojas- Development Associate

Sullivan Wickley

1. What makes this industry exciting to you?

Real estate is tangible, whether it be residential or commercial. You are directly affecting communities; through the living options you provide or the shopping options you provide the citizens. Being a developer you get to see raw land transformed into a project, that you were overseeing from start to finish, that feeling of a quality project being completed is extremely gratifying.

2. How would you describe your job and our industry in five sentences or less to someone considering the industry?

The current position I have had for the past 2.5 years is my dream job. I decided my junior year of undergrad that I wanted to be a developer, and now I am working for a well-respected developer in the southeast. The real estate industry is fast paced, detail oriented, and important to our communities.

3. What you've learned about yourself since leaving college?

Even if you are not the smartest, hard work and tenacity continue to pay off.

4. What pearls of wisdom would you have for anyone looking to get promoted in this industry?

Find your niche in real estate and passionately pursue it.



Rachel Deal- Housing Programs Manager

Athens Housing Authority

1. What makes this industry exciting to you?

The housing industry is exciting because it is constantly evolving and there are numerous opportunities to grow and thrive. Every day I have the opportunity to revitalize my community and help deserving individuals and families achieve their dreams. In revitalizing the community, I have the opportunity to take properties that are a problematic and turn them into properties that can make the community stronger and the neighborhood proud. It is exciting to be one person and have the opportunity to make a positive impact on so many people.

2. How would you describe your job and our industry in five sentences or less to someone considering the industry?

I am the Housing Programs Manager for the Athens Housing Authority. I work in Athens-Clarke County and my two major roles are: 1. Help revitalize the community and 2. Help low to moderate income individuals and households move into homeownership. In an effort to revitalize the community, I complete acquisitions, renovations, demolitions, and new construction projects. I work with owners and appraisers in negotiations to acquire properties, draw up specifications for renovations and demolitions and draw up punch lists on new construction projects. I work with low to moderate income individuals to help them move into homeownership by completing income and asset verifications and putting them in touch with housing counselors, lenders, realtors, etc...

3. What you've learned about yourself since leaving college?

Since leaving college, I have learned that, for me, the best way to learn is through hands-on experience. I learned a lot in the classroom but it wasn't until I actually interned and eventually got a job in the industry that I was able to put some of what I learned into practice. Many things that I thought I fully understood were actually foreign to me when I encountered them in the real world. Not everything falls into one category or another and not every question can be answered like a multiple choice quiz - sometimes you have to think outside the box and come up with practical solutions that aren't necessarily staring you in the face.

4. What pearls of wisdom would you have for anyone looking to get promoted in this industry?

Network. Network. Network! The old adage "it's not what you know but who you know" actually holds some weight. While you must be willing and able to learn new things and keep up with the times, it has been my experience that opportunities present themselves when you put yourself out there. I completed an unpaid internship during graduate school and that internship ultimately led to my current career. My position required a college degree and I still had to interview for the position and show that I was capable of completing the necessary work, but the fact that people knew me is what landed me the interview. I was personally asked to apply for the position and that never would have happened had I not participated in as much networking as possible. I did not complete my internship in the department in which I was ultimately hired but knew my current boss because, while interning, I networked within the company. All this to say, if you have the opportunity to get some real world experience, whether it be through case studies, projects, apprenticeships, internships, take the opportunity and run with it.



Thrive Realty Advisors



Brody Brown – Multifamily Consultant

Thrive Realty Advisors

1. What makes this industry exciting to you?

The thriving multifamily market has developed so many new properties, created so many new jobs, and the technology is now cutting edge. The properties are amazing, the management is evolving, and the growth is unmatched.

2. How would you describe your job and our industry in five sentences or less to someone considering the industry?

I create value for multifamily developers throughout the Southeast with training, coaching, and consulting. The multifamily industry has so many crossover roles. You can learn marketing, management, sales, business development, finance and real estate. The most important thing you learn in this industry is how to collectively work with all of these areas to develop a successful business. It's an industry where you can develop skills that you can take and apply to any role in the future.

3. What you've learned about yourself since leaving college?

You never know what life has in store for you. Be ready and willing to accept change. You can only control your attitude and work ethic. Work hard, have fun, and be nice to everyone.

4. What pearls of wisdom would you have for anyone looking to get promoted in this industry.

Learn as much about the industry as possible. There is so much room for growth. The more you know, the greater asset you become to your company. You can be anything you want to be in life and also the multifamily industry.



Taylor Hawke – Vice President

360° Residential

1. What makes this industry exciting to you?

The cyclic nature of the business and the role that plays in the financial structure of the deal.

2. How would you describe your job and our industry in five sentences or less to someone considering the industry?

My job is amazing. Being able to work for people who I consider mentors is fun and rewarding. Working for a small company has given me the advantage to see all aspects of the industry. In this, I have been able to understand how each aspect of the industry works together. It has been fun, challenging and an amazing opportunity.

3. What you've learned about yourself since leaving college?

I have grown immensely since leaving college. I have learned that I am driven and determined. I constantly step out of my comfort zone in an effort to better myself and learn every day.

4. What pearls of wisdom would you have for anyone looking to get promoted in this industry.

Work hard, work smart, and don't be afraid to make mistakes.



Emily Doherty – Engineer

Holder Construction

1. What makes this industry exciting to you?

It is such a dynamic industry where there is always something new to learn, and new challenges with every project. I love getting to work with such a diverse range of people and every day is different!

2. How would you describe your job and our industry in 5 sentences or less to someone considering the industry?

I am working in the Preconstruction department for a General Contractor. It is an exciting role that includes building relationships and working with the project team and subcontractors, estimating and scope coordination.

3. What have you learned about yourself since leaving college?

I love learning and being challenged! It was important for me to find a job that was a good cultural fit and had opportunities to learn and grow in my career. Graduate school was a fantastic experience and has helped me achieve my long term career goal to work in the construction industry.

4. What pearls of wisdom would you have for anyone looking to get promoted in the industry?

Have a positive attitude and make the most of every opportunity. Be willing to try new things, you may find out you love something that you had not considered. Show up on time and be prepared. Be dependable, do what you say you are going to do. Ask questions and take responsibility for your work. Be a team player and be willing to help out with things that are outside of your immediate job description. Have a plan, what is your next goal and what steps do you need to take to achieve this?



Ashley Lester – Leasing Operations and Marketing Manager

Invitation Homes

1. What makes this industry exciting to you?

To me what is exciting is that we are providing the most basic necessity that every person needs and that is a place to call home. Regardless of what stage of life you are in, every person needs to call somewhere home and it is a pleasure to provide that need for them.

2. How would you describe your job and our industry in five sentences or less to someone considering the industry?

My current job is to find people the perfect home. As the leasing manager, our team is helping people find the home that is best for them to begin a wonderful relationship with us as a resident in our home. While I sit in the leasing role today, no matter what role you have in the industry you are contributing to a comfortable, happy, and successful place for someone to live.

3. What you've learned about yourself since leaving college?

I have learned that I am capable of more than I could have ever dreamed and that we can all have an impact in a little way every day. While I loved school, working in this industry allows me to see the fruits of my labor daily through the financial performance of my asset, the happiness of my residents, and my own personal career growth.

4. What pearls of wisdom would you have for anyone looking to get promoted in this industry?

What I would tell people who are coming into this industry is to listen. Listen every chance you get. You learn the best through listening to what is going on around you. Listen to your residents, managers, maintenance team, trainers and everyone that you can because they will say something today that you can apply tomorrow. It is so easy to get bogged down in your daily responsibility and put your blinders on to what you currently need to accomplish but there is so much going on around you that can help you grow into a better version of yourself.



Krisha Patel – Project Engineer

Winter Construction

1. What makes this industry exciting to you?

I enjoy the variety in the industry. I absolutely love that I am bouncing on my day-to-day tasks as well as my long-term projects. Each job is different with new challenges, conditions, and even the project team. It requires you to use not only knowledge and prior experience but creativity and innovation as well. In the end, as cheesy as it sounds, we take our client's dream from yesterday and build it to reality today and for a better future for people tomorrow.

2. How would you describe your job and our industry in five sentences or less to someone considering the industry?

The industry is so broad and varied; almost anyone can find a place to excel in, whether it is marketing, relations, numbers, engineering, etc. People are welcoming as long as you have an interest to learn. My job is multifaceted in that it includes but not limited to documentation control, seeking and studying technical problems, processing change orders, and coordination of schedule, budget, clients' needs, labor, and equipment. In short, my job is project coordination and supporting the project team.

3. What you've learned about yourself since leaving college?

Coming out of college and starting in the workplace, I have learned that my decision making process needed strengthening. I am working on understanding the decisions being made by the experienced professionals around me - this helps build my problem solving skills. I realized the importance of asking questions.

4. What pearls of wisdom would you have for anyone looking to get promoted in this industry?

Swallow your pride and accept help. With the industry being so diverse, we are not expected to know everything. We are expected to ask questions and to learn.



Kenisha Franklin – Assistant Property Manager

Columbia Residential

1. What makes this industry exciting to you?

The thing that excites me the most about working in this industry is the people I get to meet, and help. Whether it is employees/co-workers that I help with their professional development, or people relocating to the Atlanta area that I help find a place a call home. I love people. I love their stories. I love to find out what motivates them. Meeting people is definitely the most exciting part of this industry.

2. How would you describe your job and our industry in five sentences or less to someone considering the industry?

Property management is so exciting because you are allowed to help people fulfill one of the most important elements in their life (finding shelter). People will always need a place to stay so if you are looking for career security with opportunities to make addition money on top of your base salary then property management is the place to be. If you are focused in your career, you will also learn the important elements of real estate investment and learn how to apply that to your own life so that you can continue to build your own net worth. I have met people that I was assisting to find a home, and they end up helping me achieve my own personal development goals.

3. What you've learned about yourself since leaving college?

The most important thing I have learned since leaving college is that sometimes failure is the stepping stone to success. You must learn from your mistakes and use them to become a better person.

4. What pearls of wisdom would you have for anyone looking to get promoted in this industry.

Always look for opportunities to improve processes and procedures that will make life easier for you and the people you deal with a daily basis. Work Hard, Play Hard, & Love Life!



Carla Orme – Management Coordinator

CF Lane

1. What makes this industry exciting to you?

I really enjoy meeting great people through all walks of life and learning from them. Making dreams come true for those who want to live in a great community.

2. How would you describe your job and our industry in five sentences or less to someone considering the industry?

I would describe our industry as evolving, you learn, grow and advance. This industry requires a great deal of knowledge and professionalism. Change is inevitable, it is constant in this business. Having the capability to grow and change here is very important.

3. What you've learned about yourself since leaving college?

What I have learned is that I'm not perfect. I have embraced every flaw that I have and now I know that I am and always will be flawed, but still great.

4. What pearls of wisdom would you have for anyone looking to get promoted in this industry.

Always be great at whatever you do in the industry. Stay knowledgeable about the industry through education or organizations. Keep a great networking circle, as this is how most positions are filled.



Lindsay Goodstat – Leasing Manager

Signature Property Group

1. What makes this industry exciting to you?

What's so exciting about this industry is how many different skills you have the ability to acquire. From customer service to handling financials, you will learn it all with each position you land in within property management. Another exciting element is the networking aspect of this industry! You will meet so many people that bring a plethora of different experiences and opportunities to the table--it gives you the ability to create lasting relationships with vendors, prospects/residents, other company's employees, etc.

2. How would you describe your job and our industry in five sentences or less to someone considering the industry?

My role in this industry is much more important and challenging than many may think. We see so many situations (good and bad), and help so many people along the way, and because of that we walk away from each experience more enriched and knowledgeable.

3. What you've learned about yourself since leaving college?

Since graduating college in 2014, I have landed a career with a wonderful company, acquired multiple designations, and become a homeowner--these experiences and opportunities have taught me how capable I am! I've also learned how much of an impact I'm able to make in others' lives on a day-to-day basis.

4. What pearls of wisdom would you have for anyone looking to get promoted in this industry?

My advice is to always take the initiative and be proactive. Create goals with your supervisor and keep track of your goal success--doing so will prepare you for the next step in your career!



Ethan Ruhl – Investment Banking Analyst

Wells Fargo

1. What makes this industry exciting to you?

I picked the REITs sector within investment banking because of the tangibility of the industry. While many other sections of the bank deal with intangible, routine products, I picked REITs because of the physical aspect of the industry and the small nuances that come with each property. When issuing debt for a REITs company, the importance of the underlying asset, the property, is more crucial to analyze than other products because of the fact that no two property portfolios can be exactly the same.

2. How would you describe your job and our industry in five sentences or less to someone considering the industry?

As an investment banking analyst for Wells Fargo Securities, I work in the REITs silo, pricing and issuing investment grade debt products for the bank's REIT clients.

3. What you've learned about yourself since leaving college?

Since leaving college, I have learned that in the real world, you get out what you put into it. I have learned to rely on my instincts to do the right thing. I have also learned that if you do your best, people will take notice.

4. What pearls of wisdom would you have for anyone looking to get promoted in this industry?

This industry is incredibly relationship based, meeting people and remembering names is the first step to a successful career in REITs. Also, as a repeat relationship industry, treating others fairly, with kindness and respect, is always remembered.



Abe Kruger – Partner at SK Collaborative

SK Collaborative

1. What makes this industry exciting to you?

The homebuilding industry, along with construction as a whole, is constantly evolving. New methods and techniques are continuously being developed and implemented, and interest in green building is growing in all sectors, from lenders to property owners to occupants. I enjoy working in an industry that's full of new challenges and opportunities.

2. How would you describe your job and our industry in five sentences or less to someone considering the industry?

Carl Seville and I founded SK Collaborative to work with developers, builders, remodelers, contractors, architects, and homeowners to implement cost-effective techniques that improve building performance. Our services include consulting, design reviews and charrettes, training, and green building certification for single and multifamily buildings. SK Collaborative is currently working on projects totaling over 7,000 dwelling units spread across Georgia, Florida, Indiana, Louisiana, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. This gives me the opportunity to do environmentally focused work while improving homes, workplaces, and communities.

3. What you've learned about yourself since leaving college?

My liberal arts college experience provided me with strong critical thinking and writing skills, and my Master of Building Construction and Facility management degree from Georgia Tech added to this strong foundation by broadening my understanding of the homebuilding industry and growing my professional network.

I've learned there are two things that have not changed since college: my drive to learn and to improve the built environment. Today this takes the form of writing articles, teaching, consulting, and providing green building certifications.

4. What pearls of wisdom would you have for anyone looking to get promoted in this industry?

Be curious and seek out strong mentors. Over the years I've been lucky to have great colleagues that have taught me much about green building, business, and leadership. These mentors were essential in me founding my own company and helping to create numerous opportunities within the industry.