



Amy Nemetz
Counsel
King & Spalding LLP

What has been the most rewarding project or deal you've worked on in your career, and why?

Representing the owners of the Hotel Chelsea has been a highly rewarding project. It's a unique property with a rich history that the owners have sought to retain while making the hotel an experience available to everyone. We have faced legal and preservation challenges both to the successful redevelopment and ongoing oper-

ation of the property as a unique combination of permanent residence and hotel available to the general public, and I am happy our efforts have ensured the hotel's legacy can continue. Knowing we helped preserve a place so important made this experience especially fulfilling.

What advice would you give to a woman considering a career in commercial real estate?

Find a female mentor whose day-to-day life reflects something you want for yourself—whether that's the kind of work they do, how they lead, or how they balance a career and a personal life. I believe meeting the demands of a challenging career is rewarding but there is no "right" way to accomplish a goal. The best evidence of how to go about getting what you want is to study how someone else is doing it on a daily basis.

What skill or quality do you believe is essential for success in your field today? Tenacity is essential for success in New York real estate. The pace is relentless, priorities can change quickly, and the base of stakeholders (owners, tenants, investors, lenders, regulators) can be unwieldy. To keep up, you have to be willing to push through challenges, stay focused under pressure, and adapt as situations evolve, all while counseling your client on the best available path to achieve their specific goals. That drive has made all the difference in my work, helping me support clients effectively and deliver results in the face of unforeseen hurdles and shifting demands.



Carin McDonald
President/Managing Partner
CMM Strategic Communications

What has been the most rewarding project or deal you've worked on in your career, and why?

While CMM Strategic Communications handles a diverse portfolio of projects for our commercial real estate clients, some of my most rewarding professional experiences were as an in-house PR manager for an acute-care hospital. I was involved in projects from conception to completion and felt like I contributed in a small

way to bringing world-class medical care to my community. These projects included a new radiation oncology center, a dialysis center and a neonatal care unit.

What skill or quality do you believe is essential for success in your field today? True journalism skills, and an ability to deploy them, are essential for success in CRE public relations and communications. This means writing and thinking like an editor and reporter and truly understanding what makes news. Other critical skills include the ability to be succinct yet thorough, be willing to pick up the phone and talk through news concepts and convey to clients that a press release is not a tool for forcing your message, it is about balancing the message with what matters to a publication's readership.

If you could change one thing about the CRE industry, what would it be and why?

It would be to increase representation among women and minorities. I often sit in meetings with brokers and developers, and create content for various company websites, and wonder: "Why am I the only woman at this table? Why aren't there any women on the management page here?" Diversifying industry sectors – from CRE and beyond – is crucial for bringing new perspectives and ideas, which leads to better problem-solving and innovation. This is an important ingredient for helping businesses of all shapes and sizes remain competitive well into the future.

realm, I feel fortunate that as an architect I've been able to devote the majority of my career to museum and cultural sector projects. It's immensely rewarding to know that so many people will engage with these buildings on a daily basis, and I'm especially thrilled that three very significant museum projects we've worked on at Cooper Robertson will open to the public in coming months: the Studio Museum in Harlem, the Princeton University Art Museum, and the New Museum expansion.

What skill or quality do you believe is essential for success in your field today?

Architects have to be problem solvers and collaborators, and they must be able to ask the questions that help clients uncover what they really need. All of these qualities are essential for success. In our work, it isn't possible to design an effective museum without probing and developing a clear roadmap of institutional programming demands and the specific needs of artists, curators, art handlers, conservators, and the public. And it's only possible to deliver the building through close, ongoing collaboration with the whole project team. Architecture is always a collective effort.



Kristen Anderson, AIA
Senior Staff Architect
Hoffmann Architects + Engineers

What has been the most rewarding project or deal you've worked on in your career, and why? For the restoration of Columbia University's Low Plaza, I analyzed historical documents

to depict the unique visible pattern utilizing brick pavers in various bonds and replacing concrete with limestone pavers to match the original materials and design intent. I detailed intricacies in the pavers, enhanced assemblies for the foundation, and developed modifications to optimize drainage. These enhancements will preserve the plaza for years to come. I'm excited to continue to honor and enhance this iconic urban space and to remember my contribution to its restoration as I pass through the campus.

What skill or quality do you believe is essential for success in your field today?

Empathy is essential to effectively promote collaboration and development. By providing a level of understanding, it is crucial for managing expectations and gaining a broader perspective. Those who demonstrate empathy recognize how to effectively respond in a constructive yet kind manner. When questions can be expressed openly, it fosters valuable interpersonal connection. Mentors who express the ability to meet me at my level of experience are unparalleled and have been vital to promoting my success. I do the same for my junior colleagues, with empathy at the forefront of my interactions.



Amy Staats
Vice President
Katz & Associates

If you could change one thing about the CRE industry, what would it be and why? If I could improve one thing, it would be to bring more consistency and fairness to how brokers are compensated. Timely payment for services rendered shows respect for the value we bring. Closely followed by championing greater gender equity across the board. With 20 years in the industry, I've seen the tremendous impact when women are empowered. Working at a great firm

like Katz & Associates, and joining supporting organizations like CREW and The Woman's Pipeline helps build a future where opportunity isn't just promised — it's practiced.

What advice would you give to a woman considering a career in commercial real estate?

Take the leap. I left a salaried job with a national retailer for a 100% commission-based role. Scary? Yes. Worth it? Absolutely. CRE offers unlimited potential for women who are resilient, curious, and relationship-driven. Every day brings a new challenge, a new deal, and the chance to shape the communities around us. Back yourself — you've got more than enough to bring to the table.

What has been the most rewarding project or deal you've worked on in your career, and why?

Leasing the Seymour Redevelopment in Montclair, NJ tops the list. This vibrant urban mixed-use project has 200 residential units above 30,000 s/f of retail — with a unique 10,000 s/f requirement for arts-related tenants. Instead of typical chains, we curated a lineup of inspired, local entrepreneurs. One of which became a close friend. With creative outreach and bold vision, we have successfully leased 98% of the project.

What skill or quality do you believe is essential for success in your field today?

Resilience. You'll hear "no" more than "yes," but the secret is learning not to take it personally. Keep dialing, keep showing up, keep refining your pitch. In this business, persistence paired with preparation opens doors — and sometimes entire developments.

historic New York City building. Thoughtful design and upgrades created a warm, welcoming environment that stood out in a competitive market — boosting leasing activity, rents, and overall building value.

What skill or quality do you believe is essential for success in your field today?

Empathy. I believe that you can have all the technical skill in the world, but if you can't truly understand a client's culture, challenges, and aspirations, you won't be able to deliver for that client. Our job is design, but it is also part detective work and part storytelling — translating a vision into a space that not only functions, but inspires. The best design solutions come from listening deeply, making a meaningful connection with the client and/or the end user, and connecting design to purpose.

If you could change one thing about the CRE industry, what would it be and why?

I think it would benefit the industry and our culture if decisions were made with a longer-term, people-first mindset. The pressures of a leasing program often force decisions to be driven only by cost per s/f or rapid occupancy, without fully prioritizing how a space will support culture, attract talent, and adapt over time. Workplaces could deliver greater value for longer if landlords, brokers, and tenants had the luxury to focus on flexibility, amenities, and the employee experience alongside financial metrics.



Erin Flynn
Partner
Cooper Robertson

What has been the most rewarding project or deal you've worked on in your career, and why?

As someone who has always believed deeply in the importance of community and the public



Saemi Lee
Senior Associate Design Director
Vocon

What has been the most rewarding project or deal you've worked on in your career, and why? While it's impossible to choose the most rewarding project from so many valuable collaborations, one that stands out is the repositioning of 11+15 East 26th St. for Rockrose. With Vocon, we renovated the lobby, amenity floor, pre-built suites, and rooftop, revealing the beauty of a