

Secrets Of Success Citi Habitats

"Everybody wants to talk real estate," says Citi Habitats Associate Broker Dina Cohen.

Cohen certainly knows how to talk real estate; she is a 12-time award-winning agent. Among those she has received are: two consecutive awards for being a Top-Producing Agent; multiple Platinum Awards; and recognition for being the Highest Earning Branch Sales Agent and Top Rental Agent. In addition, she is a member of the Multi-Million Dollar Sales Club.

The genesis of Cohen's remarkably successful real estate career can be traced to when she was producing a television show called "Realty Views" on Time Warner Cable's Madison Square Garden channel. For two years, she researched New York City's most notable buildings and interviewed well-known professionals in the real estate business. In her free time, she continued to involve herself in real estate by helping her friends find places to buy. Her knack for matching people with apartments, choosing apartments with great earning potential (one friend of hers has been in the same apartment she found him 10 years ago; it's worth 10 times what he paid for it), and interest in topical real estate issues led her to decide to become a professional agent. Finally, "the light bulb went off," says Cohen, "and I realized that I could unite my interest in real estate and my need to earn enough of an income to live in the city I love by becoming an agent." Since 1999 she has been doing just that.

She first started working at Citi Habitats' John Street office where she became extremely familiar with the Financial District, an area she has placed a good amount of her clients in and continues to do so. She then moved to the company's Midtown West office where her neighborhood expertise was further expanded. Currently, Cohen works in the company's Gramercy Park/Flatiron office, the neighborhood she also lives in. Having worked in various Citi Habitats offices and having lived in Manhattan since the late '80s, she is well versed in all of Manhattan's neighborhoods. A look at her track record is proof that there isn't a neighborhood that she hasn't done business in.

The range of clients that Cohen works with is also vast: renters, buyers, sellers, and investors; some with conservative budgets and others with "sky's the limit" budgets; and clients looking to stay a month or a lifetime. Such a range is not only a challenge but it's also good for business. "Opportunity is everywhere, you never know," she says. "It helps that I have the philosophy of not turning down any client whom I feel I can help—regardless of the potential gain."

The fact that her business is nearly all referral-based is another indication that every client and every transaction is an opportunity for future business.

Finding homes for her clients is rewarding for Cohen, who works seven days a week to make it all happen. Her achievements can be directly attributed to her interpersonal skills. "I treat every new client as if they were a friend who asked me for help. That motivates me to get them the best possible deal," she said. Additionally, she



Dina Cohen

maintains an upbeat attitude and her sense of humor doesn't hurt either. Cohen was named "Funniest East Sider" at Stand-Up NY, for cracking up audiences during her stand-up comedy days.

Taking care of, and providing outstanding customer service for her clients has helped Cohen expand her network of potential buyers and sellers, many of who began as rental clients. For example, she tells of an out-of-town couple that needed an apartment for just one month—a challenge that few agents jump for but one that she took on.

After the apartment was found and the papers were signed, Cohen sent the couple a gift basket filled with NYC guidebooks, brochures, and the like. At the end of the month, the couple called her to say that they were having so much fun in New York City that they wanted to stay for a full year. Cohen quickly found them an entire townhouse to rent. She said, "Maybe one day this same couple will decide to live here permanently and want to buy an apartment." There is little doubt about whom they will call if that happens. ■

Dina Cohen
Associate Broker
Citi Habitats
27 East 22nd Street
New York, NY 10010
Tel: 212-685-7300
dcohen@citi-habitats.com