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TORONTO WEST EDITION

**Full
Service
for Full
Success**



Full Service for Full Success

By Kate Richardson

Leslie Battle has come full circle in her interesting and successful career. She currently resides and operates her real estate business in the same neighbourhood, where both she and her husband grew up. But before Leslie returned to the Kingsway area she travelled extensively, honing her talents and business skills and developing her operating philosophy of “full service for full success.”

Leslie first left Toronto to attend McMaster University, then also attended the University of British Columbia for post-graduate studies. Recruited as a purchasing agent for the spice and perfumery departments of a Fortune 500 company, she travelled extensively internationally. She became involved in advertising and marketing, travelling to southern France to do further research on perfumery product lines.

What she learned during her European sojourn has been useful ever since. “When I worked with the advertising agencies, I learned that I loved being creative, and that I



thrived on the pressure of balancing both the client’s needs and the marketing abilities of the company,” Leslie explains. “I decided that I wanted to move into advertising full time. I loved the pace, the pressure and the excitement, all of which I still thrive on.” When Leslie returned to Toronto, she was hired by an advertising agency as a sales manager and, shortly thereafter, was promoted to Sales Director. Later, she was recruited to another agency in London, Ontario.

Leslie was introduced to the real estate business when she bought her first home in London, Ontario, with her husband Joe, then an Information Technology Executive. She found that she was fascinated with houses: how they were built, how they were decorated, and what made them work for the families that lived in them. After her first child was born, Leslie took her real estate courses, earning her licence in 1992. When her daughter was one year old, she joined Coldwell Banker in Toronto’s west end.

Leslie's background in business negotiations, advertising and marketing helped her business soar immediately. She completed an astounding five sales in her first five weeks of business, and by her sixth month had become one of the top producing sales representatives for the year to date. "Selling real estate took the same persistence, the same creativity, and the same long-term patience as selling advertising," Leslie says. "My experience in being able to communicate within all levels of understanding and needs, from the product executive to the junior copywriter, stood me in good stead in dealing with both first-time buyers and those clients looking to purchase their 'destination dream home.' I still enjoy working with all different buyers and price ranges today."

Early in her career, Leslie ran many ads and tried different types of marketing strategies. "My experience and creativity helped me move beyond the 'standard' real estate promotions," Leslie explains. "Right now I'm running a campaign entitled 'It's all about you,'

focusing on the customer rather than the agent. The series of 12 ads is getting great feedback."

Leslie and her team are also tech savvy. Their website, buyselltoronto.com, is proving to be a valuable resource tool for clients. Quarterly newsletters, Christmas events and client satisfaction surveys are some of the many tools she uses to keep in constant contact with clients in her database. "Sometimes I just e-mail out a great joke or a thought for the day," she says. "In this business, you need to 'lighten up' and sales will brighten up. Never forget the value of fun and humour."

When Leslie started in real estate, she worked "24/7." She looked after any open house that agents would offer her for the chance to talk to people about their needs and meet prospective buyers. She honed her skills as a buyer's agent out of those open houses, but now operates either as a buyer or listing agent, depending on the market and client needs.

Leslie joined Royal LePage about 10 years ago and now works out of the company's Kingsway Branch, where she is in the top three out of 106 agents. She has attained a sales award every year she has been in business, including the President's Gold Award and the Platinum Award. She is now a member of the coveted "Chairman's Club" which is the top one percent of 11,000 Royal LePage agents across Canada! Believing that a top agent should be constantly learning and evolving, Leslie is both a recognized relocations specialist and retirement planner. Leslie chose Royal LePage because of the company's carriage trade



reputation in her market areas, the educational tools and the in-house marketing department.

Leslie's husband Joe became a full-time real estate agent three years ago. Leslie and Joe work all of the west end neighbourhoods: Edenbridge, Humber Valley, The Kingsway, Sunnylea, The Lakeshore Village, Bloor West Village and Roncesvalles. Together with an unlicensed Customer Care Manager, they are able to offer full service around the clock. "Whether it's a request to show a house, present an offer, or do a marketing plan, one of us is always available," Leslie says. "That's one of our definitions of 'full service.' It's about always being able to say 'yes' to a client."

Leslie's knowledge of home construction adds to her unique abilities to give full service to clients. In her first projects, Leslie would buy the land, the builders would construct the homes, and finally Leslie would help with the interior design and eventually sell the home. "My builders were extremely generous in their 'mentoring' process," Leslie says. "My experience has given me an invaluable knowledge base and I have become recognized as a builder specialist. I can give potential clients who are deciding whether to move or renovate a ballpark on costs, and an idea of processes to



help them make that decision.” Leslie acknowledges that she may lose clients if they decide to renovate rather than move. She believes firmly that the client recognizes the time and effort that she puts into helping them in their decision making process. “It’s all part of sowing seeds,” she explains. “They become long-term clients and offer me a huge referral base.”

Leslie and her family are currently building a new residence for themselves of her own design. “It is our fourth build, and this time we built it solely for ourselves and are very excited!” Leslie says.

With two children, ages seven and twelve, and a husband full-time in real estate, Leslie struggles to balance work and family life. When a close friend was diagnosed with cancer, Leslie took the time to reassess. “That was close to home,” Leslie admits. “Since then, I work harder than ever to make sure I take time for my family and myself. I love to travel, paint, design, scuba dive and do photography. I try to take

nothing for granted.” Leslie volunteers at school and community events regularly, and insists that the children’s special events come first. She and Joe schedule a “date night” every week to catch up. “Joe has always been a huge part of my success,” Leslie says. “It took some negotiating on my part for him to leave his IT career, but Joe’s father was a well respected hotel and restaurant real estate agent so the business was not foreign to him. My business had grown so quickly I needed both his skills and his efforts. He has become successful, with a dedicated client list. We complement each other perfectly.”

As part of her “full-service” credo, Leslie maintains a complete roster of professionals, such as painters, plumbers, gardeners, electricians and stagers, who help her clients get ready to sell. But Leslie has been known to carry her full-service philosophy a few steps further than just making a house look good. As her campaign states, “We have made the beds that your teenager forgot to ... we have gone hunting for

your pet snake that was hiding under the bed ... we have sat and read stories to your sick kids in bed while the showings went on ... we have lent you our cottage so you can clean once and take the kids away during the weekend open houses ...”

Leslie says she knows their marketing works because so many people quote from the ad asking if she really has done all that! The answer, Leslie confirms, is “Yes!” It’s all in the life of a full-service professional real estate agent who’s willing and able to go beyond the call of duty. She knows her clients are worth it. Ultimately, it’s all about them.

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