

Biting Off More Than She Could Chew?

Not at all. Stacy Gottula knew she could be a prestigious Realtor. One of the industry's greats gave her the chance.

When Stacy Gottula moved to Beverly Hills she wrote a blueprint for her future, in effect writing her own Hollywood ending. The tale seems scripted, after all: The boss' assistant who believed she could get to the top if only given a chance and ends up closing multi-million-dollar deals.

Except it is not a script. It is Gottula's life.

Gottula is a sales associate with Joyce Rey's Coldwell Banker Beverly Hills team. She and Rey recently completed the \$18-million sale of Kimberly and Hugh Hefner's Holmby Hills home, located adjacent to the Playboy mansion. Not bad for someone who was working in dentistry eight years ago.

"My mom always thought I was a dreamer," says Gottula, who grew up in northern California and moved to Beverly Hills in 2000. "I didn't know one person here, but I always had big ideas."

Originally, Gottula moved to continue her dental career, but after a few months she decided it was time for a change. She listed what she wanted from a new job: The chance to use her social skills, an opportunity to be her own boss, the prospect of making money based on productivity and not limited to a pay scale.

"At the time, I didn't realize that was real estate," says Gottula.

During her transition period, Gottula took a course in real estate. She worked as an agent for three years before joining Rey's office as Rey's assistant. It was a difficult decision, initially.

"To be behind a desk all day wasn't my personality," says Gottula. "But after three hours of thinking about it and consulting with a friend who was a successful investor, I realized I would be crazy to turn it down. If I could be training with the best, gaining all that wisdom and knowledge, I was going to take advantage of every minute."

Gottula never gave up her dream of being a top agent. A half-dozen times over the next couple years she approached Rey with proposals which would move her into the field, part time at first. After rejecting the idea the first five times, Rey decided to give Gottula a chance.

"I had to be very persistent and I believed that I could be an asset and contribute," says Gottula. "I saw myself being part of a sales team, bringing business into Joyce's office. It would be a win-win for everybody."

"The first year of the proposal we closed \$50 million in real estate together. Since then we've steadily built a great partnership. Together we've listed some of the most prestigious properties in the country, including an \$85 million estate we are marketing now. It's exciting and a privilege to work with someone you admire and respect. We're like family now."

Forging relationships is at the heart of a successful transaction, says Gottula. Her role is similar to the time she spent in her dental career comforting patients and, as she says, "handholding" them through the process.

"It's not enough to just work hard. You have to really care about your clients," says Gottula. "And sometimes this evolves into bigger relationships. Kimberly Hefner and I created a friendship for life. We connected on a level that grew beyond business, for which I am grateful."

"I'm very excited about my career right now. I'm definitely in the zone which I envisioned. I'm finally getting to experience my dreams." **UH**

"The first year of the proposal we closed \$50 million in real estate together. Since then we've steadily built a great partnership. Together we've listed some of the most prestigious properties in the country, including an \$85-million estate we are marketing now. It's exciting and a privilege to work with someone you admire and respect. We're like family now."



— Stacy Gottula specializes in luxury homes and landmark estates for Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage in the Los Angeles area