



## Women Leaders Of Real Estate: Taylor Trautloff of StarPoint Properties On The 5 Things You Need To Succeed In The Real Estate Industry

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The real estate industry is extremely multi-faceted. Within real estate, you could be in marketing, investor relations, acquisitions, asset management, accounting, operations, property management, construction, development, and more, so there is something for everyone.

As a part of my series about strong [women leaders of the Real Estate industry](#), I had the pleasure of interviewing Taylor Trautloff.

Taylor Trautloff plays a vital role in capital markets and acquisitions for StarPoint Properties, acquisition, development and redevelopment of undervalued commercial properties in high-growth sub-markets throughout the United States. Her focus is on leading StarPoint Properties' capital raising efforts and on building out the high-net-worth investor platform. She received a B.S. in Real Estate Development from the University of Southern California in 2019. She is an avid skier and world traveler, and has visited over 50 countries across 6 continents.

**Thank you so much for doing this with us! Can you tell us the “backstory” about what brought you to the Real Estate industry?**

I had a passion for investing from a young age and I planned to pursue a career in the investments space. Initially, I was leaning towards private equity or hedge funds. During college, I became acquainted

with a career mentor and friend, who is a self-made billionaire real estate developer. I began to learn about the tremendous tax advantages of investing in real estate versus other asset classes. It is also easier to predict the cash flows and the future growth of a real estate asset compared to a stock and it is typically less volatile. Real estate is compelling from a long-term economic perspective. You can always create another company, but it is not possible to create more land. In specific U.S. metros, we have seen demand continue to rise while supply has been flat, and this supply/demand imbalance should deepen overtime.

I joined StarPoint Properties to raise capital from high-net-worth investors. It has been an exciting opportunity to combine my passion for real estate investing with my sales capabilities.

**Can you share with our readers the most interesting or amusing story that occurred to you in your career so far? Can you share the lesson or take away you took out of that story?**

This past March, StarPoint Properties sponsored an online webinar with a high-net-worth investor audience. Originally, Sandy Schmid, who is our head of acquisitions and development, was meant to be the panelist, but had a scheduling conflict, which presented an opportunity for me to sit on the panel in his stead. As a result of my 10-minute live pitch, we raised over \$1.5 million for StarPoint Properties. Following my participation on the panel to support the team, I am now the primary point of contact for our 500+ high-net worth investors and I have future speaking roles lined up.

I knew that the stakes were high, and I had to find a way to resonate and connect with the audience. The other panelists had decades of experience and I was the youngest by far.

If you want to be on a fast growth trajectory, you must be confident in yourself and willing to take risks. My takeaway here is to see challenges as possibilities. Cultivate a stronger sense of optimism and believe in yourself.

**Are you working on any exciting new projects now? How do you think that will help people?**

StarPoint Properties recently began construction on Lotus Point, a 245-unit multifamily community in Phoenix, Arizona, and on Point Central, a 157,000 square foot industrial project in Denver, Colorado. Both of these are Opportunity Zone funds, investment vehicles that offer investors an opportunity to potentially realize significant tax incentives.

In support of the equity raise for both projects, I spearheaded the efforts which brought in at least 10 new investors to the firm. We are helping our investors diversify their portfolios with a tax advantaged, relatively stable investment opportunity. Additionally, we help new communities by developing new housing to meet the demands of cities that are experiencing an influx of working professionals.

**What do you think makes your company stand out? Can you share a story?**

It is uncommon for a well-established real estate firm to raise capital from retail, or individual investors. StarPoint was founded about 30 years ago and we have more than \$1 billion in assets under management, and most companies of a similar size primarily work with institutional capital. I like how we are opening an avenue for people to access institutionally sized real estate development projects and gain diversification in their portfolios.

**None of us are able to achieve success without some help along the way. Is there a particular person who you are grateful towards who helped get you to where you are? Can you share a story about that?**

Yes, in fact, I would not be where I am today without the support of my mentors. I am grateful for several of my mentors in the real estate industry and I actively cultivated these relationships over a period of time. One person that springs to mind is Bill Fishel, who was my USC professor during Spring 2019, and he was my boss at JLL throughout most of 2021. Bill is a uniquely intelligent and charismatic individual, and he is one of the top debt and equity brokers in America. Despite his hectic schedule, he makes time to meet with me for coffee every quarter, and he shares invaluable wisdom and career advice. It has been almost two years since I left JLL, and we continue to stay in touch.

My current position with StarPoint Properties came to fruition through a long-term mentorship with our head of acquisitions, Sandy Schmid. I met Sandy a few years ago through the USC alumni network and he has been a supportive mentor. I never intended to work at StarPoint Properties, but when the right opportunity arose, I jumped on it. I couldn't be happier now, and it isn't work when you enjoy being around your team members.

My biggest piece of career advice is to actively seek out mentors and look for people who have the type of skillset and career accomplishments that you admire. A mentorship is a type of relationship, and all relationships take time, perhaps years to form. You may not see the value of that coffee meeting now, but perhaps in 20 years, you will understand that great relationships are the cornerstone to a successful and happy life.

**Ok. Thank you for all that. Let's now jump to the main core of our interview. The Real Estate industry, like the veterinarian, nursing and public relations fields, is a women dominated industry. Yet despite this, less than 20 percent of senior positions in Real Estate companies are held by women. In your opinion or experience, what do you think is the cause of this imbalance?**

In fact, women make up less than 30 percent of the commercial real estate industry and less than 9 percent of C-Suite positions in real estate are held by women. At multiple firms, I have been the only woman on the entire investments team. In my opinion, the biggest cause of this imbalance is that women may be typically more attracted to less analytical roles and perhaps, there is not much awareness of the real estate industry as a career option either. Universities are beginning to offer majors or minors in real estate, but previously this was not common.

I am excited to see that there are more women going into real estate and that companies are seeking out female candidates. I do not expect to see 100 percent gender parity in this industry, because men and women often have different skillsets and interests.

**What 3 things can be done by a) individuals b) companies and/or c) society to support greater gender balance going forward?**

- Diversity and gender equality: Most real estate companies value diversity and in recent years, there has been a lot of movement to make strides in gender equality. I think this push starts at the university level. I know that groups such as Blackstone have on-campus recruiting, and they host events specifically focused on garnering interest from future female applicants. It may be harder for smaller companies to replicate the same level of outreach, however.

- Education: Universities should host more events on campus to let female applicants know that they are desired in the real estate and finance space, and further, universities they should make sure that female students are aware of analyst job openings.
- Networking: My advice to women who are trying to break into real estate is to find a female mentor, through cold emailing, university alumni networks, and LinkedIn, as examples.

**In your opinion, what are the biggest challenges faced by women executives that aren't typically faced by their male counterparts?**

The biggest challenge that women executives face is that women typically bear most of the household responsibilities. My views may be skewed or biased, because my mom was a homemaker. Even without a traditional job, she had her hands full because raising kids truthfully is a full-time job. Now, I help take care of my mom now because she is not able to work, but I know how hard she worked to raise myself and my brother.

In my opinion, the biggest thing companies can do to increase the number of female executives is to offer flexible work arrangements and offer hybrid work options. Not everyone is able to afford Pre-K or full-time nannies, so having a flexible work schedule will help more women stay in the industry. I do think that being in the office is essential to cultivating a thriving team culture, but there are certain roles within real estate that may be more flexible than others. For example, senior capital raising roles are often more flexible because it is clear whether you are bringing in money or not; if you can generate results, you should be able to negotiate some form of flexibility.

Outside of household responsibilities, I think some women may struggle with the idea of having a voice within a male dominated industry. During large team meetings, people will often interrupt, and conversations can be fast-paced. You need to be comfortable with speaking up and interjecting. Women who are confident and outgoing will thrive in the real estate industry, but these are personality traits that can be cultivated over time.

**Can you share 3 things that most excite you about the Real Estate industry?**

- Rise of industrial real estate: I am most excited by the recent rise of industrial real estate, particularly in the United States. This is in part due to the rise of e-commerce and online shopping, but also due to the restructuring of global supply chains. During the COVID pandemic, the ports were backed up and the most notable example of this is what happened with the Suez Canal. More recently, the war between Russia and Ukraine is impacting global supply chains. It is more efficient and better for the U.S. economy to manufacture domestically. There has been a dramatic boom in industrial real estate in the United States and Mexico, and I believe this trend will continue.
- Rise of retail investors in commercial real estate: I am also excited about the rise of retail investors entering the commercial real estate space. Previously, there were limited options for individual investors to access commercial real estate investments, however, this is beginning to change. Investors want diversification and stability in their portfolios. StarPoint Properties has over 500 individual investors and investor demand will continue to grow.
- Real estate as an ever-evolving industry: Lastly, I am excited by how real estate is an ever-changing and ever-evolving industry. There are real estate companies focused solely on cold storage, data centers, or on manufactured affordable housing, and these are relatively new

property types. Recently, there has been a push to build artificial intelligence data centers, and real estate has always been heavily influenced by economic trends, supporting new innovations.

**Can you share 3 things that most concern you about the industry? If you had the ability to implement 3 ways to reform or improve the industry, what would you suggest?**

- Government Legislature: I am most concerned about government legislature that may impact the real estate industry. In California, it is quite difficult to get new projects approved. There is a massive housing shortage, and as a result, California is facing a housing affordability crisis. One way I feel that we can bridge this gap, is to bring developers and politicians together versus working in separate vacuums.
- Zoning policies: I am concerned about restrictive zoning policies. For example in some states, you may be able to rezone your land from industrial to multifamily, , and in other states this may be next to impossible. Additionally, it may take several years to obtain the necessary entitlements and government approvals, and projects typically go over budget due to all the legal and administrative fees. In the states where developers have greater flexibility and zoning is less restrictive, rents are much lower because there is a larger supply of housing overall. If demand continues to rise, and supply remains flat, prices increase.
- Rise of rent control: I am concerned about the rise of rent control. These policies have good intentions, but often do more harm than good for communities. Real estate owners will often neglect necessary repairs or be forced to sell their properties, since they are no longer profitable.

In terms of reforming the industry, to start, an understanding of economics is critical. Whether we are teaching our high school and university students, or education politicians or the general public on the impacts of supply and demand, having an understanding of what is leading to the issues such as rising rents and affordability is key.

**What advice would you give to other leaders to help their team to thrive?**

I came across an interesting article on Sheryl Sandberg and how she is an advocate of eliciting constructive feedback. She is a proponent of leveraging feedback to grow in ones' career. My advice is to make sure that your team members feel heard and valued. Actively elicit constructive feedback from your team members on how you can improve as a leader.



**Ok, here is the main question of our interview. You are a “Real Estate Insider”. If you had to advise someone about 5 non-intuitive things one should know to succeed in the Real Estate industry, what would you say? Can you please give a story or an example for each?**

The real estate industry is extremely multi-faceted. Within real estate, you could be in marketing, investor relations, acquisitions, asset management, accounting, operations, property management, construction, development, and more, so there is something for everyone.

Your network is your net worth. Finding the right off- market deal, landing the dream job, or successfully raising capital, often comes down to connections. Start cultivating your network early and think about giving back to your mentors and peers to show appreciation.

Real estate is a highly social industry. There are conferences, happy hours, and team lunches every month. You will thrive if you are an extrovert.

Real estate investing is about building tremendous wealth long term. Real estate investing is not something you enter to get rich quickly. Don Bren is the wealthiest real estate investor/owner in America, and he started by building one house in Newport Beach in the 1950s. Everyone starts somewhere, and real estate is often a snowball effect. Over time, the deals get larger and larger.

Invest directly in real estate development projects if you are an accredited investor. At StarPoint Properties, we have more than 500 individual investors. As our minimum investment is \$50,000, yet, we have some investors who have invested millions. Relationships with investors are critical in allowing our firm to pursue the projects and opportunities that we know will yield high returns for them.

**Because of your position, you are a person of enormous influence. If you could inspire a movement that would bring the most amount of good to the greatest amount of people, what would that be? You never know what your idea can trigger. 😊**

The movement would about be increasing awareness with the general public on real estate investing and teaching others how they can build generational wealth through real estate. I may play a small part in this movement now, but I hope to play a bigger role down the line. I truly believe that the right investments over time can be life changing.

**How can our readers follow you online?**

You could follow me or send me a message at [Taylor Trautloff's LinkedIn](#) or my email is [taylor@starpointproperties.com](mailto:taylor@starpointproperties.com).

Thank you for your time, and your excellent insights!

**The original article can be found [here](#).**