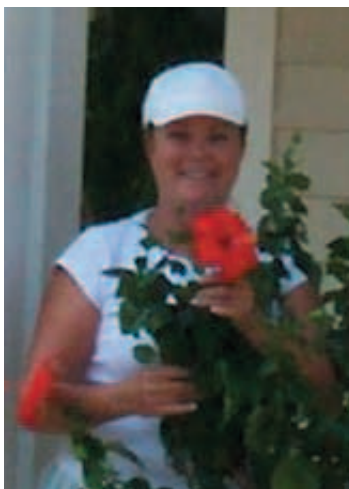


OVER THE EDGE



Sherry Coleman,

Broker Associate, SRES, RCA, ILHM, Fonville Morisey

IN LAST MONTH'S ISSUE we posed the question, "Where is your edge?" Do you associate edge with risk tolerance or with a certain workload, physical endurance training, life style habits or just simply how much you are willing to take on in your everyday life? We've all heard the term "That is edgy."

MadTV is over the edge funny to me. Many advertising campaigns utilize edgy tactics to get attention. Some might say Paris Hilton and Lindsey Lohan have jumped off the edge of the earth and lost touch with reality.

Have you explored inhibitions and fears that potentially hold you from achieving desired success or a special dream? On the next page of this column is part two of our five-part Edge Meter self-assessment, a fun way to test edge factor.

Let's look into the challenges of everyday living by one Triangle professional who made a drastic life and career change five years ago.

Over the Edge Story of the Month: Sherry Coleman,
Broker Associate, SRES, RCA, ILHM, Fonville Morisey

"Don't worry about it... I'll take care of everything for you," Sherry Coleman, broker associate at a leading real-estate firm, tells me as I look at the daunting list of things to do before I place my home on the market. Sherry is new to real estate, however, anything but new to the art of sales. I consider her one of the best salespeople I know. She approaches everything she does with incredible passion, integrity and the energy of a 21-year old just starting her professional career.

Sherry is a seasoned sales executive. She built and led a successful sales team for 18 years, over achieving sales goals year after year. She loved her work, being a team mentor, her clients and enjoyed great success.

What does over achieving sales goals mean in the life of a sales person or manager? It means excellent compensation, additional hard earned commissions, job security for life (as long as you hit those big goals) and a great opportunity during the frequent visits to New York City to buy first edition Manolo

Blahnik or Jimmy Choo shoes as soon as they hit the Bergdoff's shoe department.

Five years ago, Sherry decided "enough was enough." She took steps to reclaim her life. The travel rat race was no fun. Her life was not her's anymore. It belonged to the planes in the sky, her employer, everyone but her, it seemed. She quit her job, walked out on the five star resort stays, the hefty expense account, the large commission checks and yes, any signs of an income for the foreseeable future.

NOW WHAT?

I was not surprised to hear from Sherry about her search for a career transition. A driven soul, people and work were important to her. She also loved her valuable art collection, beach

"I must have been crazy to think of Real Estate as a part time job... how can I build my business and fit cancer surgery into my day?"

home, sailboat and closet full of designer clothing. In the end she realized it was just all stuff – stuff she didn't want or need anymore. I watched in amazement as she sold, shifted, downsized and began to enjoy shopping for the \$9.99 Diane Von Furstenberg look-alike dress at Marshalls. She revealed she had signed up for real estate classes. Soon Sherry was offered a position and was off to work digging, networking, meeting, learning and more networking for new clients.

"Real estate," I am thinking. "You must be insane. Why real estate, one of the most challenging sales positions in the world? I thought you were looking for part-time," I tell her. Growing up in a family of realtors, I knew all too well what happens when you care about your clients (you work your tail off) and not to mention the shifts in the industry brought on by the "do it yourself" trends and the Internet. Why this career and why now?

When I asked Sherry, she said she had no idea how difficult and stressful this new career would be. She noted that is was easier to sell a \$5 million advertising contract to a new corporate client than to sell a \$150,000 home. The trade-offs however, were big to her. She is able to sleep in her own bed every night, have friends in the community (an almost non-existent

Sherry Coleman... (Continued from page 59)



Sherry
with her granddaughter

and strong service ethics may appear as "over the edge" to some. It clearly sets Sherry apart from the average salesperson regardless of industry. She became a real estate expert in a timeframe that would make your head spin. Hours of work merge to where there is no clear start and stop time in her day.

LIFE DEALS THE UNEXPECTED

Somehow in all of this, Sherry faced health and life challenges that would cause most people to stop in their tracks and just give up.

In her second year of her new career, Sherry took a nasty fall off a ladder that resulted in severe injuries, long recovery, rehabilitation time and a new permanent steel rod in her leg to hold it together. Just days after her surgery she was back on the phone and a month later she was escorted by her office mates

"Walk the talk I say! Integrity, Honesty, Trustworthiness & Competence; these are the qualities I pride myself on!"

volunteering their car services and held up by her stable walker as she signed new home listings.

Just this year, after a few weeks of our own home being on the market, Sherry called to postpone a meeting. "Is everything ok?" I asked. This was unusual for her to make a last-minute change. "Yes" she said, "I just need to have cancer surgery on Monday, but it is outpatient and I may be able to come by Monday afternoon." I was floored, to say the least.

Tuesday, when we talk, I ask about her surgery. She shared that the emotions caught up with her Monday morning. After showering, she walked into her closet and looked at her entire wardrobe. She thought, "What do you wear for cancer surgery? Well clean panties must be important," she laughed as she recalled the moment, "but workout clothing was just too casual, a suit didn't feel right either and gowns were certainly overkill for this event." Sherry reduced this life-threatening potential to just another day's humorous event thrown her way to test her strength. "Reducing facing the issue of cancer down to what should I wear made the experience an insignificant event. It was just another day. I could cave or become stronger, "

Sherry just looked at life's challenges as tests thrown our way. She clearly took the latter choice.

Sherry stressed to me in a big sister voice that the surgery went well, the cancer was removed and not life threatening. Sherry was back at work the next day with bandages on her face like those that men wear with a shaving cut. This was the only sign of traumatic surgery and tests.

AN INNER DRIVE

Sherry's drive for success is not money, as evident when talking with her. This woman is driven by something greater – a desire to see others happy and settled into a life they dream of. She wants to help and educate so much that she is now looking for even greater opportunities to give of herself (yes, the Peace Corps was mentioned).

"People say, do what you love and the money will come. That has clearly been the case for me," Sherry notes. "I've enjoyed the money; don't get me wrong, but it is not the motivator." Now I want less, not more, stuff and more, not less, people connection.

For Sherry, her life is about YOU! She is over the edge about YOU! She is honest about you and will tell you what she thinks in a second; she'll not just tell you what needs to be done but will help you do it. She's the kind of friend I call a 911 friend... you can call her when most needed and she'll drop everything to be there in an instant.

Over the Edge story lessons this month from Sherry Coleman:

1. It feels better to give of yourself to others than to just keep acquiring more stuff,
2. Honesty, integrity, competence, trustworthiness are qualities we should all integrate in our daily lives as well as expect from others,
3. Do what you love; the money will come,
4. When thrown a life-altering curveball we can either cave or become stronger... CHOOSE THE LATTER!

I would love to hear what you think. Email me at Teresa@cladventures.com if you have any comments on my stories or if you have an "over the edge" story you'd like to share however funny, compassionate, insane, crazy story or just simple life lessons to share in an "over the edge" way!!

"Life throws us challenges as tests. We can either cave or become stronger. I choose the latter"
