

2021
THE BUSINESS JOURNAL
6Q IDEAS
in **sixty** minutes



A SUPPLEMENT OF **THE BUSINESS JOURNAL**

THE POWER TO

make a difference

We want to thank The Business Journal for their dedication to economic growth in Fresno and throughout our Central Valley.

Bank of America supports today's entrepreneurs and tomorrow's innovators; helping businesses like yours accomplish what's important to them.

Standing by the ones who day in and day out are putting in the hard work to make things happen.

What would you like the power to do?®

BANK OF AMERICA 



Publisher's LETTER

Welcome

The Business Journal is excited to host its fourth annual 60 Ideas in 60 Minutes.

Six leaders from the Central Valley's most successful companies will share 10 of their organization's internal programs, philosophies and initiatives — both big and small — that can be applied to any business.


Out of an abundance of caution, we are once again hosting this as a virtual event. While we will miss out on the great networking opportunity, a ZOOM-based event gives us a chance to bring this wisdom to the masses and for an unbeatable price — free!

The lineup of speakers this year is top notch. We've compiled their ideas in this publication so you can learn from proven strategies for improving employee engagement, developing ideas, being an effective leader and driving innovation.

We are confident their ideas will not only be inspirational, but also serve as a spark for new ideas that you can utilize to grow your business.

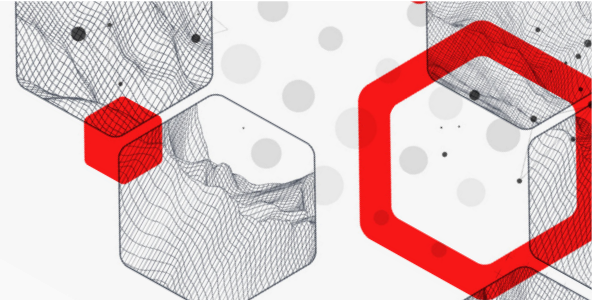
A huge thank you to our Presenting Sponsor, Bank of America; our Partner Sponsors, Tangram Interiors, Central Valley Community Bank and BBB Serving Central California & Inland Empire Counties, as well as our Event Sponsors Affinity Truck Center, Caglia Environmental, Camarena Health, Guarantee Real Estate, Hyatt Place Fresno, Paylocity, Payroll People Inc., and Sensiba San Filippo.

Lastly, we extend a huge thanks to our six outstanding speakers for making this event a success.


Gordon M. Webster Jr.

- 4 Darius Assemi
- 5 Tom Ferdinandi
- 6 Genelle Taylor Kumpe
- 7 Gaurav Deep Sethi
- 8 John S. Shegerian
- 9 Brett Visintainer

Meet the SPEAKERS



Darius Assemi- Darius Assemi is president and CEO of Granville Homes – a real estate development company established in 1977. Darius also serves on the board of the Alliance for Medical Outreach & Relief (AMORelief.org) Foundation, whose mission is to build healthier communities in areas of concentrated poverty in Fresno County and around the world, as well as the board of Breaking the Chains, a nonprofit dedicated to ending human trafficking in Fresno County.

In addition to building communities and serving the underprivileged, Darius is actively engaged in public policy work at the local and state level. In 2016, he became the publisher of GV Wire, an online news site dedicated to exploring, explaining, and exposing issues that affect the health, well being and economic prosperity of residents of the Central Valley.

Tom Ferdinandi- Tom received his Bachelor of Science degree from Santa Clara University and his Master in Business Administration degree from the University of San Francisco. After almost a decade with a large commercial bank in the San Francisco Bay Area, Tom and his wife moved back to Fresno in the early '90s. Tom served as an advisor in the financial services industry before returning back to his roots in the restaurant business at Me-n-Ed's Pizzerias, which also operates Coney Island Grill, Victory Grill, Blast & Brew American Eatery and Piazza del Pane Italian Café, operating over 50 locations primarily located in the Central Valley.

Tom has served on many non-profit boards, including Saint Agnes Medical Center, the Poverello House, the California Restaurant Association, San Joaquin Memorial High School, and the Catholic Professional & Business Club. He is also a member of the Santa Clara University Board of Fellows.

For its business achievement and philanthropy, the Company has received many accolades and awards including Best Locally Owned Business, Fresno County Schools/Business Compact Award, Fresno Chamber of Commerce - Entrepreneur of the Year Award, National Restaurant Association - Good Neighbor Award, Faith in Community - Heart of the City Award, Central Valley Outstanding Philanthropic Organization Award, the Central California Excellence in Business Award, the California Restaurant Association - Fresno Chapter Restaurateur of the Year Award, and the National Business Research Institute - Circle of Excellence Award, along with multiple Best Pizza Awards.

Genelle Taylor Kumpe- Genelle Taylor Kumpe has devoted her career to empowering others, advocating for women and children, and improving her community in every possible way. Genelle is currently the COO of the Fresno Business Council (FBC) and CEO of its manufacturing initiative, the San Joaquin Valley Manufacturing Alliance (SJVMA). She was reintroduced to FBC's work when she served as an adjunct faculty member at Fresno City College teaching 21st Century Workplace Skills. She transitioned to City College after spending three years as the executive director of the Marjaree Mason Center, Fresno County's resource for shelter and services for victims of domestic violence and their families. Genelle's dedicated and innovative work in this role earned statewide recognition, receiving the Breakthrough Leader Award from the California Partnership to End Domestic Violence.

Prior to joining the Marjaree Mason Center, Genelle served as the associate director of the Lyles Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship for 10 of the 15 years of her tenure at California State University, Fresno. She led more than a dozen programs that promoted innovation and entrepreneurship nationally and internationally and have been replicated in other regions. Genelle received her Bachelor's Degree in business administration from California State University, Fresno, and is a certified entrepreneurship teacher via the Network for Teaching Entrepreneurship.

Gaurav Deep Sethi- Gaurav Deep Sethi is currently the chief development officer and principal at Sethi Management Inc. Gaurav cofounded Sethi Management in 2009 with his two sisters upkeeping the family legacy of entrepreneurship. Prior to that Gaurav worked with his father, JP Sethi, focusing on growing their business portfolio in Fresno. He developed his first commercial retail project at the age of 23 overcoming several development roadblocks by staying focused on his vision.

Sethi Management Inc is a 350-people team that develops and operates hotels and retail businesses on the West Coast. In the past five years Gaurav has developed over \$200 million of commercial real estate and currently is working on three hotel projects that have persevered through the challenges of the current pandemic. Over the past decade Gaurav has cultivated strong relationships with banks, municipalities and franchises. He oversees every facet of the development cycle from scoping out potential sites to acquiring funding to the development of the building.

Growing up in Fresno, Gaurav has always found satisfaction in seeing the local community thrive. He remains involved in the Valley by driving local business growth and by sitting on the board for the Marjaree Mason Center and the Hindu Temple of Fresno. Among his family and friends, Gaurav is known as a connector of people as he is an extrovert that is always trying to help those in his community. When Gaurav is away from work, he can be found spending time with his family of three children under five and his wife, Katie. He also has a love for sports and music and is looking forward to attending live events again.

John S. Shegerian- John Shegerian is a serial social entrepreneur who focuses on solving global problems through game changing innovation to build successful, socially responsible impact companies.

As cofounder and Executive Chairman of ERI, he has played a significant role in paving the way for the electronic recycling, data protection and ITAD industries as a whole.

Building ERI from the ground up, John Shegerian has helped lead ERI to its current standing as the largest fully integrated IT and electronics asset disposition provider and cybersecurity-focused hardware destruction company in the United States. Under his stewardship, ERI now has the capacity to process more than a billion pounds of electronic waste annually at its eight certified locations, serving every zip code in the United States – and keeping billions of pounds of toxins out of landfills.

Shegerian is also a sought-after speaker, panelist and electronic recycling, cybersecurity and ITAD industry authority. Annually he speaks across the world in Asia, Europe, the Middle East and the Americas. He has also authored articles on the industry for Recycling Today, E-Scrap News and various business journals and regularly provides his expert knowledge to news media, including CNBC, BBC News, TIME, Fortune, and Forbes, among others.

He is co-author of 101 Tips from the Marketing Masters: Ways to Supercharge Your Marketing & Exponentially Grow Your Business, a #1 best-seller on Amazon in the Advertising, Internet Marketing and Web Marketing categories.

Brett Visintainer - Brett Visintainer is the owner/principal of the Visintainer Group, a client-first commercial real estate firm built on a foundation of investment real estate.

Brett started the Visintainer Group in 2017, providing sellers of investment properties a sophisticated marketing approach and buyers national reach to investment properties. Using a proprietary database of buyers, sellers, available properties and opportunities, the Visintainer Group specializes in everything from commercial real estate transactions to multi-family properties, 1031 exchange strategies, agricultural land and full stack investments. In addition to traditional brokerage transactions, they also help investors who want to re-position a property, buy out a partner, or get help with real estate services beyond just buying and selling. Brett has over 14 years of experience in the commercial real estate industry. By getting his CCIM (Certified Commercial Investment Member), a designation that less than 5% of agents in the industry have, his goal was to create a top-tier investment team. Over the last few years, Brett has been involved in over \$375 million in investment real estate transactions across the country in 13 states.

Brett graduated from California State University, Fresno in 2004. He was the kicker for the Fresno State Bulldogs from 2000 to 2004 and then went to the Dallas Cowboys from 2005 and 2006. His NFL career was cut short by an injury resulting in career-ending back surgery. He has been married to wife Andrea for more than 9 years and is the proud father of his two children, Beau and Avery.

DARIUS ASSEMI

President & CEO | Granville Homes



1 Foster good behavior and condemn bad behavior. One of the key tenets of Islam is the idea that we are all children of the same God, and it is our duty to treat fellow humans with love and compassion. The Quran declares that “enjoining (struggling for) what is right, and forbidding (hindering) what is wrong” is an attribute of true faith, and that any community (irrespective of creed) that upholds this principle is among the best of communities. As stated in the Quran (chapter 3, verse 110): “You are the best community singled out for humankind: you enjoin what is right, forbid what is wrong, and have faith in God.” This concept is at the root of all major religions, not just Islam, and keeping this in mind in our daily business dealings as well as our personal lives can guide us towards making decisions that benefit the greatest number of people.

2 Hire more women in senior management roles. My mother Bibi has been an incredible source of strength and integrity for my family and I. Through both her words and her actions, I have come to believe that women are invaluable in the workplace because they tend to be calmer and more thoughtful, less reactionary in times of crisis, and more proactive. This is why over half of Granville's managers are women, and why we are committed to empowering the women on our staff and providing them with the support they need to thrive.

3 The Roulette of Birth. We are all born into an imaginary border that pre-determines the quality of our lives. Where, when, and to whom we are born is often the biggest indicator of how our world will shape us and where our lives will take us. It can be hard to see past these borders (the station in life in which we find ourselves) which can lead to a narrow worldview. This is why I always try to expand my beliefs by seeking out people with diverse opinions and backgrounds, who challenge my opinions. It is important to not just listen, but to practice empathy and to put yourself in the shoes of others. Always remember that any of us could have been raised in a completely different situation if not for the lottery of birth.

4 Give back to the community. As business owners, we all understand that the success of our community is what allows our business to thrive. Ensuring our community's success begins with a strong foundation: for me, it is focusing on the cornerstone areas of need, which are food, shelter, healthcare, and education. We have the power to create opportunities to end systemic cycles of abuse, neglect, and poverty. And above all, be authentic. Give to the causes that are important to you and your business, and give to global causes as well as local ones.

5 We deserve the government we elect. I have always been passionate about politics and public policy. I have found that nearly everyone has opinions on how our local and national governments should be run, and nearly everyone has complaints on how they are currently being run. As in everything in life, we get out what we put in. If we sit on the sidelines and don't participate in our democracy, we don't have the right to complain about the people we elect. Be active in campaigns and legislation, stay informed on local issues, educate your family and friends, and above all, use your voice and VOTE!

6 Networking is vital. As a business owner, one of the most frightening things I can hear in the office is that our network is down. This means that our staff cannot interact with each other, there is no communication with our clients, and our productivity is essentially shut down. In this case I'm talking about a digital network infrastructure, but your social networking is just as crucial. Making connections with other business leaders, elected officials, and industry leaders not only promotes your business, but can help you determine the best course of action to take as a leader. The connections you make will help you out in times of need, provide you with recommendations or offer advice, and sometimes even help you realize when you are on the wrong track.

7 Educate yourself on the issues that impact the quality of life in your community. Most of us can identify problems and challenges that our community is facing. This is great when we're complaining, but what about coming up with solutions? To bring real change, we need to explore these issues in depth and understand as much as we can about the issues we're passionate about. Take homelessness for example: we can always build a shelter to address an immediate need. But when we educate ourselves on some of the societal problems that can lead to homelessness in the first place, we are identifying the root of the problem and are much closer to coming up with a real solution.

8 Start grass roots efforts to address systemic failure in your community. Once you have learned as much as you can about the problems our community is facing, it's time to turn your education into action. Don't be afraid to stand up for what you believe in. Find others who share your passion and encourage them to join in. Here's the thing with real change: it's heavy, it's hard, and it's difficult to get rolling. But once you've started, and put real momentum behind it, that change becomes nearly impossible to stop.

9 Research candidates running for office. Whether you're voting for a Senator, Mayor, or local School Board member, it pays to thoroughly research each candidate. Look past the eloquent campaign rhetoric. What is their voting record? What articles have they written? Who do they endorse? These are the people who are going to be representing you; make sure they are representing your values and beliefs as they are voting for legislation or instituting policies that you're going to have to live with.

10 Invest in candidates for office to help get them elected. It always helps to promote your candidates of choice and to do your best to educate your friends and families about the candidates you support. Community leaders need our support, and as business leaders, it is up to us to support them. Remember, promoting good public policy is the most effective form of philanthropy.

TOM FERDINANDI

Vice President & COO | MILANO RESTAURANTS



1 You Can't Say "Thank You" Enough. Our Company has been blessed to enjoy success here in the Central Valley, and we can't say "thank you" often enough to our customers who have made us their favorite pizza. Our way of doing so has been through serving on various hospital, school, and non-profit boards, as well as by donating monies, providing sponsorships, and making in-kind donations – with a particular focus on the youth of our community, as well as those most in need. Saint Agnes Medical Center, Poverello House, Boys & Girls Club, Valley Children's Hospital, Catholic Charities, and the Central California Food Bank, along with the many schools, churches and recreation leagues, are who we have partnered with in this endeavor.

2 It Takes a Team. We have been very fortunate in our Company to have very long-tenured team members. We have very successfully promoted from within people who started out as pizza makers that ended up being General Managers, District Managers, Maintenance, Human Resources and even IT. Because of their dedication to our Company, we have been able to have a well-rounded leadership team that knows what it is like to work in our restaurants and can help guide our personnel based on shared experiences. We remain very grateful for their years of service and commitment to our Company.

3 Vendors Are Partners. We are very grateful to have so many supportive vendor relationships. From banking to beverage to our broad-line supplier, these relationships have helped garner our success, and have provided great benefit to our customers and our team members. Shared learnings and clear communications have resolved the ongoing challenges, especially in today's environment. What makes these relationships extra special is that our fellow vendors believe like we do how important it is to support the communities in which we all operate.

4 Measure Twice, Cut Once. This carpenter's adage, to measure twice before cutting so you don't make a mistake and have to go back to the lumber yard and purchase another piece of wood, holds up to almost all business decisions. In our Company, before we decide to introduce any new menu items, before we decide to announce any new systems, before we decide to imbed any new programs, we test our decisions on paper and then in real time before rolling out system-wide. There are always unintended consequences – both good and bad – to every decision. The more you can establish what your baseline is, and the more you measure the impact of a decision, the better chance of success your decision will have.

5 Shoulder to Shoulder. What has been so successful for us is that many members of our leadership team were promoted from within the Company, and therefore have filled the positions that they are now supervising. Our District Managers can work side by side with entry level personnel as well as new management promotes, and show by example how to take an order, make a pizza, run a shift, complete an inventory, or conduct an interview. We remain inspired by the work-ethic demonstrated by all our team members.

6 Margins Matter We have an Accounting Department that helps us keep track of where we have been, and to help us budget for the future. In an environment where input costs are always changing, and where there are multiple stand-alone operating units, it is important for us to be able to measure trends, analyze controllable costs, and compare margin performance, so as to ensure we are running our restaurants as efficiently as possible. Having a detailed chart of accounts and general ledger system is important in our ability to understand our performance.

7 Don't Rest On Your Laurels. Although we have worked hard as a Company and have achieved success within our pizzeria segment, we always realize that we can't rest on our past successes to guarantee our future results. The restaurant segment is very competitive, even more than before, and we have to remember that fact with each and every customer and each and every team member. We always need to work harder and care more in order to do more and be more. Through our Marketing Team, we try to convey to our guests – through print, electronic and social media – our sincere desire for their patronage.

8 No One Is More Important Than the Other; We Just Have Different Jobs to Do, but a Common Goal for All. Creating a culture of respect and dignity is important in any operation. And even though companies have organization charts that create various levels of authority and supervision, at the end of the day, everyone should be working towards the common goal. In any restaurant, on any given day, for any reason, a team member can get "caught in the weeds" with too many pizzas to make, tables to clear, product to prep, orders to take, you name it. Anyone within the Company should be able to help in those circumstances, regardless of position.

9 Support Your Restaurant Teams. For a majority of employees in the hospitality industry, working in a restaurant is often a team member's first job. To this end, our Company believes it is important to offer orientation programs that review various Federal, State, Local and Company Regulations, Policies and Procedures, as well explain to the new hire what it means to be in the hospitality industry – from the kitchen to the customer. Our HR Department works hard to help our General Managers recruit and retain the people that work in our restaurants. The restaurant industry offers many pathways and opportunities for those who enjoy serving others, but for those who leave, these same learnings will benefit them for years to come.

10 Tools of the Trade. We have been operating in the Central Valley since 1958. Maintaining the older restaurants gets harder and harder, but it is important to be able to refresh and redecorate for the enjoyment and comfort of both our guests and team members. We are thankful for the work of our Maintenance Department and our Contractors who help keep our buildings and equipment in working order. We also have embraced technology, especially as it relates to enterprise systems and customer facing applications, such as our new mobile app for iPhone and Android.

GENELLE TAYLOR KUMPE

CEO of the San Joaquin Valley Manufacturing Alliance / COO of the Fresno Business Council



1 Fill your own cup first. Nothing is more important than your physical and mental health. Filling your cup = self-care. If we don't take care of ourselves, we have nothing left to give others. This was a tough concept for me as a woman. We're genetically programmed to be caregivers and to put others first. I used to feel guilty to take "me" time and would wait until everyone else was happy. Guess what? You can't please all of the people all of the time. If you attempt this lifestyle – you will end up exhausted, sad and unfulfilled. To fill your cup is to recharge your emotional, mental and physical energy. Take the walk. Read the book. Visit your friends. Watch the movie. Sleep. Recharge.

2 Leadership is a constellation, not a star. An African proverb says, "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." At the Fresno Business Council, we aspire to go both fast and far and implement strategies that prompt people to think and act in the best interest of the overall community rather than in the narrow interests of their own business. Breaking down silos and channeling the collective capabilities of others to bring solutions to complex problems in our region means we all win. Ultimately, these strategies require organizations to work and collaborate in new and unfamiliar ways. While many factors contribute to the success (or failure) of these initiatives, one common thread differentiates those efforts that are successful: the shifting of mind-sets, activities and behaviors from individual results to shared results. The fabric that connects shared results is Fresno's Community Values, which can be found at www.FresnoBC.org.

3 The Golden Rule. Treat others as you wish to be treated – words reinforced by my father since I was a little girl, and now my Golden Rule that is embedded in my every fiber and applied both personally and professionally. To me the Golden Rule goes even one step further. Instead of just treating others the way I would want to be treated, I think about others the way I would want to be thought of. I speak to others the way I would want to be spoken to or spoken of. You are responsible for how people remember you – or don't. So, don't take it lightly. Make it an intention to always leave someone feeling better than they were before they spoke to you.

4 Be the Change that Adds Value to the World. If you want to see change, you must start from within. It's that simple, and it's that profound. Whatever changes you would like to affect in your family, your friends, your colleagues, in society, must begin with you. Every moment must be an example of what you teach (this means no more "do what I say, not what I do"). Every action should reflect your beliefs. Every word should reflect your own thoughts. The commitment to change has no days off. To add value to our world – it takes a true commitment to lead with both your heart and your mind.

5 Don't Dictate - Communicate. Every day I work with businesses that are struggling to fill vacancies and reduce turnover. The pandemic has accelerated a shift in which businesses must focus on creating an environment where employees actually want to show up to work. As leaders – success starts with getting to know those around you first as individuals and as human beings, not just as workers. What do they care about, value and why? Know their greatest skill sets. See their potential. And offer them guidance in a way that enables them to grow into their potential, take on new and difficult projects and feel challenged. Communicate your vision without dictating how to achieve it.

6 No one likes a know-it-all. Your need to be right can overshadow the very outcome you are trying to pursue. If the person can't hear you – and I'm not talking about the volume of your voice – it doesn't matter. You will end up destroying the relationship and burning that bridge. Relationships are everything – but when we put on the robe of a judge and jury – we lose. Telling someone how wrong they are simply makes it about how good you are and how bad they are – thus shutting down the needed communication to resolve issues. For someone to hear what you have to say, sometimes all it takes is for them to feel heard first. God gave us two ears and one mouth in that proportion for a reason. Listen up!

7 Tell the truth even when it's hard. Truth telling is essential for authentic communication to occur. It's the foundation upon which genuine interaction between people is built. Interacting without truth is like building without a foundation: it won't be long before communication collapses. Think about it: if someone can't trust you to give them truthful information, what's their basis for making important decisions? Honesty makes life less chaotic. They say the truth will set you free. But to experience that freedom, you need to be mindful of what you say, how you say it, when you say it and why. Let the truth be the strong foundation of your relationships, and you will be appreciated and respected in all areas of your life..

8 Build Employee Bridges. Purpose is the bridge between the work you are doing and the impact it has on customers, employees, and the world-at-large. Sadly, many employees struggle with their purpose because organizations have been built on tasks, projects, and busy work. As a result, these employees can't see beyond this very basic level. Strengthen that bridge by involving all your employees, so that they can see how the work they are doing is creating impact. Let the engineer talk to customers, let the sales professional know how the money they are bringing in is being used, share stories of how Human Resources teams are creating better internal employee experiences and recruitment effectiveness.

9 Give Grace. Giving grace means understanding that each of us has "stuff". No matter who we are, how financially comfortable we are, or what we do for a living, we all have stuff that levels the playing field. No matter how perfect someone appears on the outside, inside they're dealing with their own struggles, battles, and backgrounds that led to their current reality. We all have stuff. Some people just have a better way of hiding it. Be gracious to everyone.

10 Learn, then Teach. Learn from those who came before you, be a steward of what you are given on your journey and teach those who come after you. I believe that nothing is more important than learning from the successes and sacrifices of those who came before us. For example – just within the Fresno Business Council – there are Board Presidents and members whose wisdom is priceless. These are stewards who are committed through heart, mind and the desire to improve our region now and for future generations. We have a responsibility to live up to the legacy of those who came before us, and leave things better than we found them for those that come after us.

GAURAV DEEP SETHI

Chief Development Officer & Principal
Sethi Management



1 There are no failures, only lessons and growth. I got pulled into the family business at an early age thanks to my father. The best thing he did was to let me make mistakes and learn from them. Every time we do a new development there are some mistakes made. We learn from those mistakes and get better and more efficient. Some of the most successful projects have happened for us because we corrected mistakes we made on previous ones. I think you need to have a good attitude and be willing to learn from challenges and mistakes.

2 Be grateful for the help along the way and remain humble. A lot of second-generation business owners think they hit a home run when crossing home plate, but they were born on third base. Nothing is accomplished alone. You have help all along the way and you should be appreciative of it. If it wasn't for my father immigrating to this country and taking the leap into business, I would have never had the opportunity to learn all aspects of business at such a young age. My father moved here and worked for his uncle; his uncle came here on an academic scholarship. They all had help along the way, took advantage of the help, and were successful because of it. Unless you are Bill Gates or Jeff Bezos, there is someone more monetarily successful than you are. So don't act like you are better than others. Everyone has their own struggles, and everyone measures success in a different way. Be humble and check the ego at the door. I try and treat everyone with respect and if a deal doesn't pan out the way I intended, I always try and make sure my relationship with that person is still on good terms.

3 Persistence is key. Success doesn't happen overnight. You must work at it day in and day out. There will be days you do not want to get up and those are the days you need that persistence the most. One of my favorite quotes is "success is not owned; it is leased, and rent is due every day."

4 Help Others Selflessly. My grandfather always told me that you should help people whenever they ask if it doesn't put you in a compromising position. His reason being "people only muster up the courage to ask you for help because they know you will deliver, and it is your duty to deliver to them." This has been very helpful in cultivating long lasting relationships for me.

5 Innovate and adapt with the times. Ray Kroc of McDonalds once said, "I don't know what I will be selling in 10 years, but I will be selling more than anyone else in the world." That has always stuck with me. We were very heavily involved in the convenience store and gas station industry and now we are down to a handful of locations knowing that the EV market will sooner or later make that business obsolete. No one wants to be the last Blockbuster.

6 Have a vision. Don't shoot in the dark. Move forward with a clear vision. Early in my career I was trying to do too much without a proper vision and action plan. It was difficult to plan my next step because I didn't know where I was going. Now we set 5-year visions and review them constantly. Everything we do as a company has a collective goal to meet that vision.

7 Stay present and don't dwell on the past. Woulda coulda shoulda. Dwelling on past deals or the what ifs just cloud your mind and make you unproductive. Focus on what is in front of you and how that can get you to your vision. Underwrite every deal in the present not in the past.

8 You are only as good as the people around you. I don't try and be a master of everything. We hire the right people around us and let them do what they are qualified to do.

9 Accountability. At the end of the day, you have to hold yourself to the highest standard. If you are accountable for all your actions, everything else should fall into place.

10 Family. Now that I am a bit older with an amazing wife and 3 kids, I am starting to realize more and more that family is first. I want everyone in our organization to have good work-life balance and make sure that the needs of their families are taken care of. Family is always first priority.



JOHN S. SHEGERIAN

Chairman / CEO | ERI

1 Embrace the Sacrifices that Come with Genuine Leadership. Always try to make your company or organization the best that it can be. To do this, the leader must always be willing to make personal sacrifices. As the one and only Michael Jordan poignantly said, "Winning has a price. And leadership has a price." Be willing to accept and embrace that reality if you want to be the best at what you do.

2 Take Diversity and Inclusion Seriously. Make Diversity and Inclusion a priority. Make sure your HR Director has an established D&I policy at your company, but also know that D&I is much more than policies, programs, headcounts or even a written plan. D&I means walking the walk and not just talking the talk each and every day. Equitable employers outpace their competitors by respecting the specific needs, perspectives and potential of all their team members. As a result, research proves that diverse and inclusive workplaces earn higher revenue growth, greater readiness to innovate, increased ability to recruit for the talent pool and higher employee retention.

3 Be Customer Obsessed. Make it a core value for your team to truly understand all of your customers' needs. Understand their business plan, goals and mission. Know their pain points and what they consider a "win." Learn about their corporate culture. By knowing the fine details, your team will be able to empathize and communicate on the highest level and establish lifelong relationships with clients that will never leave you.

4 Innovate. Innovate. Innovate. To excel in any industry and become a genuine leader in your field, you must relentlessly invest in innovation. Almost every problem can be remedied by solutions born out of innovation. The proprietary solutions that you create through your continuous improvement and innovation culture will take your organization to new heights – and create "moats" around your organization that will define and differentiate you from all of your competition.

5 Face Fear Head-On. Running any business can be filled with risks, "scary" moments and failures. I always say that you have a choice regarding how you define FEAR by breaking it into an acronym. It's either "Forget Everything And Run" or "Face Everything And Rise." The latter perspective and attitude will become contagious across your organization.

6 Be a Family. Treat your employees as if they are members of your family. Explore all their pain points and work to achieve solutions so that every member of your team feels respected, valued and heard. Demonstrating genuine care for and about your employees and customers creates an unstoppable brand with employees and clients who will never leave you...through good times or bad!

7 Don't Just be transparent... Be Radically Transparent. Transparency is always important, but when you take that transparency to the next level – sharing your process with customers, investors, employees...you can establish levels of trust, support and buy-in that will greatly benefit your company throughout its journey.

8 Consider and Prepare...for the Best. Don't go through life – personally and in business – assuming and worrying that the worst thing is going to happen, because in the off chance that it actually does happen, you will have lived through it twice. So why not just do the inverse?

9 Learn and Live By My Favorite Poem. My all-time favorite poem is by Muhammed Ali, and is only two words long: "Me. We." If I need to explain this one, we have bigger issues. It's as simple and powerful as the world's shortest poem should be.

10 Live and Work Like Rocky Balboa. If you have the opportunity to hit rock bottom, however you define that (and I have), you can become a pile of 412 bones or you can get up and keep moving forward like Rocky Balboa. I have personally chosen to live like Rocky.



BRETT VISINTAINER

Owner/Principal | Visintainer Group

1 Centered on Core Values. Many things can be taught in business, but a person's core values and ethics come from within. This understanding plays a major role in hiring and expecting the highest ethics from every team member. We operate in an industry where clients are investing their hard-earned money so trustworthiness and a strong foundation in a company is imperative. My football coach always said, "Your actions speak so loudly that I cannot hear what you say." That quote is adaptable to many situations – I have learned that proclaiming your values is one thing, but actions will always reveal a person's true intentions.

2 Invest in Yourself. I was raised on the idea that if you are not learning or bettering yourself, you are not growing. Investing in yourself professionally, whether by obtaining degrees, designations, or continuing education, will only propel you to the next level in your career. In commercial real estate there is a CCIM (Certified Commercial Investment Member), a designation that less than 5% of agents in the industry and less than 10 in the Fresno area have. Three advisors in our company hold a CCIM because we firmly believe that for us to advise investors, we should be the best and most knowledgeable in the industry.

3 Culture is Key. Corporate culture has become a buzz word over the years, and for a good reason - its importance is crucial. Having a culture that promotes collaboration, positive energy, and friendly competition allows everyone to strive for (and achieve) excellence. Teamwork is key in our company where agents practice call scripts, presentations, pitches and provide feedback to help each other grow. This creates confidence, which in turn creates success.

4 Time Management is the Foundation to Success. Planning your day creates control, which creates efficiency. Certainly unexpected things will pop up and you'll need to adjust and prioritize tasks, but having a strong plan will keep your day on track. In our office, prospecting is important so we treat it like a critical doctor appointment – it would take something major to cancel or rebook that appointment. It's easy to get wrapped up in a task but if you manage your time wisely and stick to your daily goals, your day will be efficient. My football coach always said, "It doesn't matter the plan, just that you have one."

5 Attention to detail. The level of attention to detail directly shows the level of your interest in a client or a process. Careless errors are the result of a lack of attention to detail. We make sure our processes cover the major and minor steps of a transaction – every detail is reviewed and discussed to ensure we protect our clients from issues that may arise. They can count on us to look out for their best interest even if they do not know all the moving parts. Our meticulous attention to detail lets our clients know we respect and care about them.

6 Client, not commission, first. We are a client, not commission, first company. I instill this in our agents because having the client's best interest at the helm of a transaction is of the utmost importance. We set ourselves apart from other companies by ensuring a property is best for a client, regardless of what the commission structure is. We create lasting relationships with our clients because we know it's not about just getting a deal closed.

7 You're Never Too Old to be Coached. From birth to young adulthood, most people have influential figures who help provide guidance along the way – parents, teachers, coaches. They help with growth, development, overcoming adversity, and success. I firmly believe in business, coaching should still play a role. I have had a coach(es) for over 10 years – success leaves crumbs, so why not learn from those who have already been there? Coaches/Mentors can offer professional and personal support, guidance, and advice to help further your career while speeding up the timeline of your success.

Teamwork Allows for Growth. Our business model is centered on teamwork and thrives on collaboration. We work as a collective team, but also each division (multi-family, commercial, and Ag) has its own team structure with a mentor/junior relationship. This set-up allows the mentor to delegate tasks and the junior to be involved in deals and learn the processes and industry first-hand. I am a firm believer that the teacher always learns the most because you must master something in order to teach it. This creates accountability for each person and gives the junior the best chance at success in a mostly sink-or-swim industry.

9 Discipline = Success. One of the single most important attributes to success is discipline. Whether it's diet, exercise, prospecting, scheduling your day, among many other things, the discipline to do what you are supposed to do rather than what you want to is what separates success from mediocrity. Set the goals. Make the plan. But most importantly, maintain the discipline to carry out the tasks and overcome obstacles to achieve success.

10 What's Next. When it comes to business, if you're not constantly evolving, you're falling behind. Whether it's technology or business strategies, being forward-thinking is paramount to thriving. Identifying trends, analyzing forecasts, reading industry articles, staying abreast of relevant news, studying biographies of successful business leaders, all play a role in making informed decisions on the direction of our company.

Here's a Brilliant Idea...



Make Your Business More Visible.
Get Accredited Today!

2,932,485

**BUSINESS PROFILES
PROVIDED TO THE
PUBLIC IN 2020**

learn more at **BBB.org/CCIE**

 Better Business Bureau®
Serving Central California
& Inland Empire Counties

We make *amazing* workspaces.

We create curated destinations that empower people to work, learn + heal.



Successful organizations are providing people with a diverse range of spaces that support different types of work. We have purpose-built our organization to support you every step of the way.

tangram
INTERIORS

tangraminteriors.com



Let's **Reimagine** Your Business **Together.**

In these changing times, we offer certainty. Financial strength, commitment to our communities and exceptional client service have made Central Valley Community Bank a trusted choice for business banking. With our Private Business Banking cash management services, custom-tailored lending solutions and a full range of financial services, we've guided businesses in every category and size for over four decades.

We're more than bankers. We're your advocates.

Central Valley
**Community
Bank**



Investing In Relationships.

www.cvcb.com • (559) 298-1775

Proudly serving the San Joaquin Valley and Greater Sacramento



Thank You

IN APPRECIATION OF OUR SUPPORTING PARTNERS DURING OUR 4TH ANNUAL EVENT - 60 IDEAS IN 60 MINUTES -

WE THANK YOU

Presenting Sponsors:

BANK OF AMERICA 

Partner Sponsors:



Event Sponsors:



SENSIBA SAN FILIPPO
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS AND BUSINESS ADVISORS

