

TOP AGENT SPOTLIGHT: THE OULAHENS

Family Business, Family Values



Since joining Re/Max Realtron in 2001, the Oulahen Team has consistently ranked in the Top 100 Agents for Re/Max Canada. They've also won numerous awards and established themselves as prominent figures in the Yonge/Sheppard neighbourhood.

Their success is largely due in part to their commitment to family values. By treating their clients' investments as their own, they have built a strong referral network based on knowledge, experience and advice.

Paul has been a broker for many years with a wealth of real estate, construction and development expertise. Mark and Jeff were inspired to follow in their father's footsteps. "Real estate and construction were always a part of our lives," says Mark. "It was something I grew up with and grew to love."

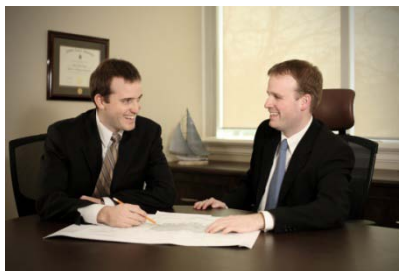
"There wasn't a doubt that this was an area both of us were going to get into. I have had my real estate license since I was 18, and even though my father encouraged me to complete my Business degree at Wilfred Laurier University, I always knew I would be an agent," adds Jeff.

Working with family has many advantages. As a workaholic who would answer his phone in the middle of the night, Paul can now share the load, having to work only 60 hours a week instead of the usual 90.

"When you work with people you trust, you build a very strong team because everyone brings their strengths to the table. Mark and Jeff have technical business skills, Norah is more creative with strong presentation abilities and I have age and experience. We share our clients and we keep everyone updated constantly, even if it means the four of us having dinner in the boardroom."

"The only negative side to working with your family is that you see them a lot..." Mark points out. "Not that it's really a negative. It's actually more advantageous for clients to know that they can speak to any one of us regarding their issues. They get four agents."

"We strive to build lasting relationships," explains Paul. "I had situation where a client approached us to list a property they had recently purchased and renovated. On the surface, they said they wanted to sell, but listening to their fears and concerns, we realized that it didn't make any sense for them to move. In the end, we convinced them to keep their house, and they appreciated our honesty so much that they referred them to their friends."





"It's the difference between listening to what they want, and *really listening* to what they are saying," clarifies Mark. "People trust us because we act in their best interest. Jeff recently had an open house and from that one deal, he secured nine other deals through referrals."

When the Oulahens moved to their new office last year, they had an open house for friends, clients and neighbors. It was a wonderful blend of people from past and the present. At the end of long day, the most rewarding part about their job is the genuine appreciation shown from clients. As Jeff surmises, "at what other job does your patron hug you for a job well done?" Norah adds, "Many of our clients have become friends."

For new agents starting out in the industry, Paul's advice to them is to be realistic. "This is not an easy industry and there is no such thing as easy money. If you want to succeed, be prepared to start at the bottom and learn the ropes. Work with an experienced agent who can mentor you. Real estate is seven days a week. Work hard and most importantly, love your job. If you don't like what you are doing, then this isn't the right field for you



We treat your investment as if it were our own.