

# 10 Elite Leaders Dominating the Real Estate Sector, 2024

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## Barry Saywitz: A Commercial Real Estate Mogul

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**Barry Saywitz**, the President of **The Saywitz Company** and Managing Partner of **Barry Saywitz Properties**, is a prominent figure in the commercial real estate industry, headquartered in Newport Beach, California. His journey into this field began in October 1989, in Orange County, California.

Before his career in real estate, Barry worked as a Tennis and Golf Pro at Club Med in the Bahamas. While this job offered an enjoyable lifestyle, it lacked financial rewards. This led Barry to return to California with aspirations of entering the commercial real estate sector. However, his timing coincided with the commercial real estate market crash in November 1989.

Entering a volatile market with no prior experience in the industry or business was a formidable challenge for Barry. During this period, the industry was markedly different from today. There was no internet, cell phones were a novelty, and there was no multiple listing service to facilitate the sharing or accessing of property information. Business was conducted through personal networks, word of mouth, and direct property inspections.

With only a few thousand dollars in the bank, Barry undertook all necessary tasks himself—ironing his clothes, washing his car, preparing his lunch, and spending weekends driving around neighborhoods to understand the market. His employer at the time offered no formal training or mentorship, which made the learning curve even steeper.

From these early experiences, Barry learned the critical importance of mentorship and guidance in navigating the complexities of the real estate market. He realized that having an experienced professional to provide direction, offer protection during challenging circumstances, and assist in closing transactions is invaluable until one can independently manage these tasks.

### **The Gritty Climb**

Barry's journey is marked by numerous challenges and a steep learning curve. He struggled to navigate the commercial real estate landscape, making many mistakes and losing several deals due to his inexperience. Many of his clients mistakenly believed he was older than his 23 years. It was improbable that a CEO would entrust a multi-million-dollar office lease to a recent college graduate. Nevertheless, through perseverance and hard work, Barry built a solid client base and closed deals in a challenging market.

Unlike many brokers who relied on existing family or personal relationships and waited for business to come to them, Barry had no such network. He developed an aggressive cold calling and marketing strategy, teaching himself to type and use a computer. His daily routine involved canvassing and prospecting in the mornings, cold calling in the afternoons, and typing letters and proposals in the evenings until he could afford to hire an assistant. Recognizing the importance of focusing on deal-making, Barry understood that he needed to grow his business to afford help with administrative tasks.

In 1991, Barry became a partner at Howard Ecker & Company, where he expanded the business by hiring additional staff and reinvesting his income and commissions. By 1994, he acquired the West Coast operations of the firm and rebranded it as The Saywitz Company, embarking on a successful entrepreneurial journey.

Barry's leadership and strategic vision led to significant growth and success. In 1997, he began investing in rental properties, understanding that the cyclical nature of brokerage income could be offset by steady rental income. His initial investment in a duplex in Newport Beach expanded to multiple units and eventually to a substantial portfolio. Today, Barry Saywitz Properties owns over 100 commercial, multifamily, and retail investment properties throughout Southern California, complete with its own construction, property management, and leasing divisions.

Barry's journey from a novice in a tumultuous market to a leader of a thriving real estate empire underscores his resilience, innovative thinking, and dedication to success. Despite the challenges and mistakes along the way, Barry's accomplishments stand as a testament to his hard work and strategic insight in the commercial real estate industry.

### **People Make the Difference**

Barry understands the critical importance of surrounding oneself with dedicated and loyal individuals. At The Saywitz Company, employees are treated like family, fostering an environment of mutual respect and loyalty. This approach has resulted in a team of long-term employees who have been instrumental in sustaining and growing the company.

As a leader and business owner, Barry emphasizes the necessity of being attuned to his employees' needs, wants, and emotions. He recognizes that while business objectives are paramount, ensuring that employees get along with each other, clients, and customers is equally important. Motivation and interpersonal harmony within the team are crucial for success, though they present ongoing challenges.

Barry candidly acknowledges that managing people is both the most rewarding and the most challenging aspect of owning a business. He often shares that the most valuable part of his business experience is "the people," and conversely, the most difficult aspect is also "the people." This duality highlights the complexities of leadership and the central role that a dedicated team plays in the success of The Saywitz Company.

### **Resilience and Adaptability in the Face of Disruptions**

Barry emphasizes a company culture that prioritizes excellent customer service and minimizes workplace drama. The vision for The Saywitz Company is to achieve sustained and moderate growth, expanding its client database and property portfolio while navigating the ever-changing real estate market and broader economic challenges.

Barry recognizes that enduring major disruptions, such as the Great Recession and the COVID-19 pandemic, requires resilience and adaptability. These unprecedented events present significant challenges, even for the most experienced business owners. Barry acknowledges that there is no playbook for dealing with such crises, making it imperative to stay flexible and responsive to circumstances beyond one's control.

At The Saywitz Company, the team remains committed to its core values and strategic vision, continuously working towards growth and stability in a dynamic industry landscape. Barry's leadership underscores the importance of a dedicated team, customer-centric service, and the ability to weather economic storms through perseverance and adaptability.

### **Innovation and Client Focus**

At The Saywitz Company, maintaining a proactive stance to stay ahead of market shifts and trends is foundational. While acknowledging the cyclical nature of real estate, the team prioritizes providing clients with insightful guidance for both immediate and long-term decision-making.

The company's property portfolio management emphasizes patience and discernment, eschewing hasty decisions in favor of strategic, well-informed choices. Recognizing the significance of each transaction's impact, the team navigates deals with a meticulous approach, avoiding rushed agreements and recognizing when a deal may not align with expectations.

In brokerage operations, The Saywitz Company focuses on representing tenants and users of commercial real estate, predominantly in Southern California. Their negotiation strategies integrate comprehensive market knowledge, economic analysis, and an understanding of all parties' perspectives.

Under Barry Saywitz leadership, the company emphasizes a nuanced understanding of stakeholders' motivations to facilitate mutually beneficial outcomes. Each negotiation is approached with a commitment to excellence, ensuring that every deal is executed with the same level of expertise and dedication.

### **Beyond the Bottom Line**

Over the years, Barry has found immense fulfillment in the successes of The Saywitz Company and has remained dedicated to giving back to the community. The company proudly supports over 100 charitable organizations, spanning a wide range of causes including education, healthcare, military support, disability advocacy, homelessness prevention, and more. By contributing to various aspects of society, both professionally and personally, The Saywitz Company endeavors to make a positive impact on the lives of others.

### **Perspective on Success**

Barry perceives success as a multifaceted concept, shaped not only by external validation but also by one's own determination and values. While financial prosperity is undeniably a component, Barry emphasizes that success extends beyond monetary gains to encompass personal, emotional, and practical achievements. Each individual prioritizes these dimensions differently, reflecting their unique perspectives and aspirations.

Maintaining a balance between professional pursuits, personal fulfillment, and leisure activities is essential to Barry. While financial success often facilitates enjoyment and philanthropy, he underscores the importance of holistic well-being and fulfillment in all aspects of life.

At The Saywitz Company, a culture of ambition, creativity, and leveraging available resources drives the pursuit of success for both the company and its clients. Barry expresses gratitude for past achievements while remaining eager for future accomplishments. With a commitment to

innovation and strategic growth, The Saywitz Company aims to continue its trajectory of success in the years ahead.

## Mentorship and Continued Growth

Looking towards the future, Barry aims to cultivate a new generation of talent within the company. His advice to younger individuals and those aspiring to enter the commercial real estate field emphasizes the importance of education and mentorship. Drawing from his own experiences and lessons learned, Barry seeks to guide others, ensuring they avoid common pitfalls and make informed decisions.

For aspiring entrepreneurs, Barry stresses the significance of a strong work ethic, humility, and a well-thought-out business plan. He underscores the value of hard work and determination, coupled with the guidance of trusted advisors, in navigating the challenges of entrepreneurship in any industry. By adhering to these principles, individuals can lay the groundwork for long-term success and fulfillment in their endeavors.



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