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Pepperdine University  
Graduate School of Education and Psychology

WORK-LIFE BALANCE: ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND INDIVIDUAL  
STRATEGIES AMONG SUCCESSFUL WOMEN REAL ESTATE BROKERS

A dissertation proposal submitted in partial satisfaction  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

by

Kerri Jones

July, 2018

Farzin Madjidi, Ed.D. – Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

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under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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## DEDICATION

This study is dedicated first and foremost to my adoptive parents, both deceased, Robert Lee Jones and Serena Bernadette Jones, who instilled in me the service of helping others and solidified the passion for education and lifelong learning. They also taught me I can do, be, and have anything I want according to the will of God, “Train up a child in the way they should go, and when they are old they will not depart it” (Proverbs 22:6). Also, my spiritual parents Dr. Frederick K. C. Price and Dr. Betty Ruth Price inspired me over three decades to “walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7). My biological parents Magdalena Forte’ and Lee Forte’ encouraged me to persevere in my academic journey until completion, in alignment with “all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28). This study is also dedicated to the countless real estate brokers and realtors who work excessive and uncompromising hours helping clients locate and relocate homes in which to construct their dreams.

In particular, this study is dedicated to the idea that successful female real estate brokers may confidently plan a minority-owned business worthwhile of sustaining, by putting God first—“Seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all things will be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33). These women can be dedicated to family and maintain a resilient career by building their professional reputation and creating a strategy of work-life balance. I would like to give thanks to my committee for enduring this long journey with me. I am confident this study will bridge the gap, create balance, and implement effective solutions that will improve the deficiency of work-life balance issues and transparency for women in the real estate field. Collectively, they have sustained much more than I can describe, imagine, or repay!

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“Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in Me” (John 15:4).

I humbly give God praise, honor, glory, and thanksgiving for empowerment, healing, and the physical ability to embark upon this dissertation journey. I also acknowledge my Savior Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit for the many blessings, love, and favor bestowed upon me.

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Reflecting upon this journey, I also give thanks to Dr. Gabriella Miramontes of my doctoral Committee for her constructive criticism, intelligence, valiant wisdom, and advice. I have learned from her the significance of how to patiently write to produce exemplary work. I also thank Dr. Lani Fraizer on the doctoral committee for dedicating her benevolent time to this entire endeavor. She provided scholarly directives and much-needed spiritual encouragement throughout my research project. The EIP Committee and I have formed a bond that has inspired me to achieve my deepest desires in education! They have broadened my professional world and believed in my abilities to enrich my intellectual achievement goals. All of you have been a

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In addition, to all my colleagues, I pray this research material will sustain you in your commitment, loyalty, and due diligence, in the appearance of leadership and scholarly reference as you continue to cultivate and ensure the work-life balance in the real estate industry. Through blood, sweat, & tears, it takes a village to complete a dissertation of this magnitude.

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## VITA

### **EDUCATION**

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Jones, K. (2016). “Reflections on Work-Life Balance, Career Success, and Women in Leadership Roles,” presented at the International Organization of Social Sciences and Behavioral Research (IOSSBR) Conference.

## ABSTRACT

This study defined and utilized the qualitative method of phenomenology to focus on the lack of work-life balance, consequences, and the negative impact on a culture of 15 female real estate brokers who were interviewed. The study examined the participants' experiences, insights, perspectives, and understanding of the female real estate brokers based on data collected from semi-structured interviews to create a remedy for the unresolved issues. Therefore, a compelling, dynamic work-life balance is necessary in order to create successful women in leadership roles who are real estate brokers. Female real estate brokers who are leaders facing unlimited demands predominantly in the areas of family life and their careers. These competing interests have posed many challenges, sacrifices, and problems for the women's career success. The literature mentions the dynamics of work (career, ambition) and environment that have created much pressure and instability for women in leadership roles who try to balance work and lifestyle (family, health, leisure, pleasure, and spiritual development). The lack of work-life balance may cause high levels of anxiety, conflict at home, and make it difficult to achieve and develop their full potential. As a result, women leaders can experience workaholism, job burnout, and work pressure. Thus, participants in this research expressed their challenges and share strategies for implementing work-life balance.

*Keywords:* burnout; leadership; female real estate broker, role analysis; work-life balance, workaholism, work pressure



## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

Female real estate brokers face many challenges when trying to balance their personal and professional lifestyles, partly due to their demanding careers. Real estate brokers are individuals who are professionals in their field of knowledge and ability. They have a real estate brokers' license to coordinate transactions between buyers and sellers of residential property. The occurrence that customers (i.e., sellers and buyers) choose to hire real estate brokers, suggests that the customers value the brokers' customer service capability. Since residential real estate is usually the largest portion of an individual's wealth portfolio, understanding the demands of the real estate transaction process is important while juggling the work-life balance of this occupation.

According to Haworth and Lewis (2005), such demands can lead to feelings of isolation from community, family, and non-work-related activities, resulting in burnout and reduced overall productivity. Work-life balance has been found to have an emotional impact on one's identity, happiness, welfare, and overall quality of life, thus making it crucial to a person's success (Cinamon & Rich, 2010). This study researched the assumptions that female real estate brokers cope with often challenging demands of balancing their personal lives and work. This study examined how female real estate brokers manage these challenging demands.

The objective of this study was to reveal and measure the possibly challenging experiences and recommendations of fifteen female real estate brokers' lifestyles. The ultimate goals are to (a) influence, educate, equip, and empower aspiring female real estate brokers to become comfortable while becoming successful by providing strategies to cope and balance employment, family, and demands of the economy, and (b) enrich the academic community of real estate regarding the work-life balance issues of female real estate brokers.

## **Women in Real Estate**

According to Lumbleau (1990), the real estate business can be an interesting, exciting, and rewarding occupation. Real estate is a business of service, and its earning potential exceeds that of many occupations requiring extended years of advanced preparation, formal education, and emotional competence. Real estate does not have a routine practice. Not a day passes without presenting a brand-new problem or approach never encountered before, no matter how long a person has been selling real estate. According to McCormick (2015), women have worked in the real estate business since near the beginning in 1794; real estate was founded as an authentic business in the 1840s.

“In the initial phase of real estate women occupied office and clerical positions. However, by the 1880s, women were moving into the positions of agents and brokers, though at a relatively slow rate” (McCormick, 2015, p. 1). Throughout the nation, female real estate brokers lead in the residential real estate market. However, as of yet, they have not yet entered into the more lucrative commercial real estate market. According to the National Association of Realtors, over five million real estate home transactions were consummated in 2015. The majority of the transactions were made with the assistance of real estate brokers. As a result, the real estate brokerage business has become enormous, generating \$60 - \$70 billion annually from home purchases and sales transactions.

Rarely corporate industries who have sustainability, may not see a significant change in the roles of women’s work, and real estate is not exempt from these changes. According to the National Association of Realtors (NAR), “more than 80% of Americans own their primary residence which often displays the largest component of net wealth in their financial portfolio”

(McCormick, 2015, p. 1). In order to understand the residential real estate brokerage process and market, it is significant to evaluate the recent home value adjustments within the last decade.

### **Work-Life Balance**

This study will attempt to examine many decades of work-life balance (WLB) research material. Thus, researchers in many occupations have studied the area of work-life balance, while some researchers utilized the term *work-family balance*. These terms distinguish many tasks utilized inside and outside the place of employment and or home lifestyle (Kalliath & Brough, 2008). Nevertheless, work-life balance has no accepted terminology or exact meaning of the perception (Kalliath & Brough, 2008). Collectively, work-life balance echoes that each individual identifies the ideal combination of work, family, responsibilities, and pleasure outside of work differently.

According to Ironson (1992), individuals in the workforce may be at ease working twice the number of hours of individuals who work a 40-hour work week. This may occur while managing additional commitments in other areas rather than work-related tasks. Many individuals may develop a comfort zone working fewer hours and contributing more personal time to tasks by committing to activities outside of work. According to Warner (2006), workaholic women are unhappy and disappointed, predominantly because they cannot achieve accomplishments, due to an imbalance of work and life.

The American mass media and culture creates an atmosphere that women cannot succeed at work-life balance. This external pressure and self-imposed expectancy is also called the *superwoman syndrome*, overwhelming working women in leadership positions. Purcell and Hutchinson (2007) discovered that leadership was a significant aspect. The significance clarified

positive psychological contracts, the satisfaction of work, and exciting feelings while working and a sense of loyalty to customers, colleagues, and supervisors.

### **Work-Life Balance: Relevant Objectives**

Kofodimos (1993) defined *balance* as discovering the distance between time and energy incorporated in individual's life as a value system of what is needed or required as a priority. Also, balance helps individuals make conscious decisions regarding the structuring their lifestyles by incorporating personal needs and other outside requirements that include personal and professional goals. This study examined the struggle and blurred lines between female real estate brokers' work lives and their personal lifestyles to identify, reduce conflict, and seek a method of balance. Therefore, the impact of an obvious lack of flexible time in the scheduling and landscape of work-life balance are interdependent upon each other.

Work-life balance may also be defined as combining the chronological demands of work and life responsibilities. Brief and Nord (1990) stated that changes in culture—including statistics that show increased behavioral patterns of significant responsibilities simultaneously at home and at work—are driven by the essence of trying to balance work, home, and life. Greenblatt (2002) defined the irregularities of work-life balance as stages of struggle amongst occupation and personal lifestyles. These responsibilities are commitments that are demanding, which may become unsatisfactory. This may encounter leveraging multiple roles and managing resources.

Greenblatt (2002) proposed that success varies from achievement and management of appropriate variations to obtain work-life balance. Therefore, when reclaiming the professional and personal experiences of priorities and demands individuals consider to be the most significant to them is their well-being. She also suggested the above experiences may fulfill the

significant essentials of work-life balance. Work-life balance is an inquiry of incorporating many roles, and simultaneously locating an individually sustaining and significant balance.

Work-life balance is both an applied and a psychological understanding. The applied piece is connected with such day-to-day actualities as planning, challenges, and work deadlines. The psychological piece is understood through the fact that women brokers' sense of striving for balance is designed by the meaning they attribute to their involvement in each of their many roles and establishing their own meaning based on their own parameters. This piece is experienced through an emotional state of being overwhelmed and stressed (Duxbury & Higgins, 2001; Higgins, Duxbury, & Johnson, 2000).

In the examination of the study, work-life balance may be defined as a conflict of quality time. In this study, conflict may stem from the many and varied roles the female real estate brokers are involved in (Duxbury & Higgins, 2001; Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) posited that work-life balance can be a struggle and "a method of inter-role conflict in which the stresses from the work and family domains are equally mismatched. That is, involvement in the work (family) role is made more challenging by virtue of involvement in the family (work) role" (p. 77). Duxbury and Higgins (2001) postulated that conflict happens when demands increase, and both work and nonwork life roles become imbalanced.

"Both of these areas of working and nonworking involvement in one role is made more challenging by an imbalance of more time and involvement in either role" (Duxbury & Higgins, 2001, p. 3). Duxbury and Higgins (2001) posited WLB conflict to include role surplus and role interfering, which they divided into two components: interference in the family by work and interference in work by family. Role overload is concisely the occurrence of having beyond the normal amount of work, that leads to excesses in either work and non-work simultaneously and

insufficient time to complete both. Overload occurs when performing individual roles contentedly is compromised by the total time and energy required to perform multiple roles (Higgins et al., 2000).

Individuals can encounter role overload when they cannot find enough time. For example, when combining the student, parent, spouse, friend, and employee she wants to be, she may feel she is performing less significantly in one or all roles. Duxbury and Higgins (2001) postulated role interference takes place when conflicting demands become impossible or difficult for work-life balance to simultaneously have sustainability. Ruderman and Ohlott (2004) postulated that many women desire comprehensiveness in their lives, to successfully understand and combine balance in work and life with their outside activities. However, according to the research, this often appears to be easier said than done. Therefore, female real estate brokers may encounter feelings of comprehensiveness by the following four measures:

(a) establishing clear priorities; (b) setting boundaries in their work lives. This may take the form of delegating tasks, limiting the time spent on tasks, sharing responsibilities, or limiting the problems addressed; (c) taking time for reflection and spirituality. Women do this in many ways, including meditation, exercise, journal writing, participating in organized religion, and yoga; (d) connecting learning multitasking between many roles. Life outside work offers many opportunities for enhancing roles and managerial skills. Family relationships, community relationships, and friendships all teach important roles of managerial skills such as how to build trust, resolve conflict, and develop others.

(Ruderman & Ohlott, 2004, p. 8)

## **Leadership**

Boardman (2013) stated that the National Association of Realtors (NAR) leadership team is entirely male. Women have been in the real estate workforce many decades and have not made much publicly documented progress in leadership. Boardman's quandary is that while there are many women in the real estate industry at all levels, why are there not more women in leadership roles in the real estate industry? This study examined the organizational leadership roles and strategies of successful female real estate brokers. Northouse (2010) defined leadership as "a process where an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal" (p. 3). As a result, leaders have the opportunity to support, guide, and develop individuals as they grow to their highest potentials in order to reach desired or strategic goals.

## **Bases of Power**

The perception of power is synthesized with leadership since power is a part of the influence process (Northouse, 2010). The five bases of power are reward power (the power of achieving financial or other types of gains), legitimate power (the power of authority), referent power (those who are close to persons of authority), expert power (leading from experience or education), and incentive or coercive power (enforcement of rules). These power bases are also important to access (French, Raven, 1959; Schmieder-Ramirez & Mallette, 2007), which indicates that the five bases of power concept include individuals influencing each other. It offered multiple frameworks for both external and internal analysis, which make it easy for the reader to understand the concepts. However, the authors claimed that there are five sources of power in regard to organizational politics: dependency, financial resources, position, uniqueness, and uncertainty. However, the well-known source of power from other papers/authors that studied the organizational culture said differently. The classic model source of power from

French and Raven (1959) illustrated that the power that can influence other individuals' behaviors comes from five sources: coercive, referent, reward, expert, and legitimate power. "Each of these bases of power increases a leader's capacity to influence the attitudes, values, or behaviors of others" (Northouse, 2010, p. 7).

Organizational leadership in the past century has been the subject of a broad and thorough study by researchers and specialists. Leadership Styles and Women's Perspective has noted the percentage of women employed is over 50% of the labor force. Women with children are the primary sources of income or joint sources in approximately two-thirds of American families (Shriver & Center for American Progress, 2009). According to the Department of Professional Employees (2010), women accounted for 47% of the workforce in 2008. According to this same report, over half of the multiple-job holders were women. The statistics document that women are widely held as the majority in categories of temporary and part-time employment in the United States.

A current evaluation of 45 companies found female leaders were more transformational than males. Robbins and Judge (2011) concluded this data demonstrates how women have the ability to execute well in leadership occupations in existing organizations. Women's greater accountability for home management, child care, and elder care is reflected in the greater importance they give to work-life balance, programs, and benefits versus men. Women may be more aware of work-life balance struggles made by their organizations and value them more than men (Thompson, Beauvais, & Lyness, 1999).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Successful female real estate brokers are often challenged in balancing employment responsibilities with family, leisure activities, and child care responsibilities. The changes in the



real estate career may help to minimize challenging demands on female real estate brokers and increase their overall careers and lifestyles of contentment. Thus, not all real estate organizations exhibit the identical characteristics in regard to size, authority, and other measures. According to Duxbury and Higgins (2001), It also may be evident in the study, there are some studies that have been directly related to work-life balance within various sizes of organizations.

Subsequently, it is included but not limited to the determination that examining work-life balance in real estate organizations will allow this study to utilize and obtain data from the existing literature to reveal any ambiguity or stressors. However, identifying the challenges and solutions is a compelling need to provide a basis for organizational leadership and strategic plans for (a) existing female real estate brokers who are leaders in the real estate field and (b) aspiring female real estate brokers. Additionally, a possible significance in the differences in balancing the development of work exists among many female real estate brokers' personal and professional lifestyles and their varied organizations.

### **Purpose of the Study**

Furthermore, the purpose of the study will (a) examine what practices and strategies are utilized by female real estate brokers to sustain their work-life balance, (b) examine what challenges successful female real estate brokers face while seeking work-life balance, (c) identify how success is defined by female real estate brokers who may facilitate work-life balance, and (d) identify what key recommendations aspiring women brokers can employ to achieve successful work-life balance.

The phenomenon can best be understood from an analysis of lived experiences and comprehension of data gathered from professional female real estate brokers. Surveys were utilized to examine and determine the needs of the effectiveness among variables of

demographic and professional experiences among California female real estate brokers to obtain a successful outcome in their business and personal relationships. This study also strove to determine how female real estate brokers measure the success of the organizational leadership and individual strategies in businesses to determine success based on their experiences, and what recommendations the participants give for future implementations of work-life balance in organizational development.

### **Research Questions**

In order to study why female real estate brokers desire work-life balance, the following research questions were developed:

1. What work-life balance challenges do female real estate brokers face when implementing strategies and practices that have led to their success?
2. What work-life balance strategies and practices are employed by female real estate brokers?
3. How do female real estate brokers measure their success while trying to achieve work-life balance?
4. What recommendations would female real estate brokers make for aspiring real estate brokers to become successful and accomplish work-life balance?

### **Significance of the Study**

This study examined strategies and practices employed by female real estate brokers who face challenges due to a lack of work-life balance. This might support female real estate brokers in accomplishing success and managing multiple roles consecutively. Additionally, measuring success as well as recommendations for aspiring female real estate brokers can be beneficial in different areas. Initially, understanding the strategies and practices presented from these

interviews will create a model for other women who desire to continue a career as real estate brokers in their respective fields. Next, this approach and the intent of this study may attract more women in real estate to become brokers. Researchers have studied the need to have more women represented in the real estate fields and management. However, little research has addressed why female real estate brokers endure a lack of work-life balance. Additionally, by including work-life balance in the body of real estate knowledge, this study may further the conversation and argument around the excessive amount of demands that female real estate brokers endure. Last, this study will contribute to the real estate research, which lacks current literature in circulation.

This study will ignite opportunities to develop community awareness and training seminars that are specific to the needs of female real estate brokers who are leaders in the real estate field and real estate organizations. Further, Thomas (2012) mentioned that a women's movement is embedded in the cores of influential female leaders who have arrived at the pinnacle of their careers and have a sense of responsibility to mentor and encourage other women upward. This study is significant because it describes female real estate brokers who are leaders under extreme pressure, and how they can reach out to nurture other women who are aspiring to become leaders in their field. The results of this study can help present and aspiring female real estate brokers.

### **Definition of Terms**

These definitions are the key terminology utilized throughout the dissertation and are provided as a reference tool.

- Accurate self-awareness: This term refers to sincere personal strengths and weaknesses, where individuals need to develop the capability to grow and develop from previous experiences (Goleman, 1998).
- Achievement: This term refers to being determined to advance or progress by meeting a standard of excellence (Goleman, 1998).
- Adaptability: This term is the ability to maintain a comfort zone with ambiguity and sustain calm of the unexpected (Goleman, 1998).
- Commitment: This term refers to an establishment's or group's idea and objectives (Goleman, 1998).
- Communication: This term refers to cooperatively listening and sending effective messages (Goleman, 1998).
- Conscientiousness: This term is the sustainability of maintaining one's integrity and being responsible for one's individual performance (Goleman, 1998).
- Emotional awareness: This term refers to the acknowledgment of emotions affecting performance and the capability to utilize the values to guide decisions (Goleman, 1998).
- Emotional competence: This term is a learned behavior that is based on emotional intelligence with the outcome of an outstanding performance (Goleman, 1998).
- Hierarchy of needs: According to Maslow, this term embraces a theory developed and suggested for humans to initiate the basic needs to be able to reach for higher goals in their lives (Maslow, 1954).
- Influence: This term refers to exerting effective strategies for change (Goleman, 1998).

- Initiative: This term refers to seizing the moment or opportunity to continue goals beyond a requirement or expectation (Goleman, 1998).
- Leadership: “Leadership is the ability to influence a group toward the achievement of visions or goals” (Robbins & Judge, 2011, p. 376).
- Optimism: “The ability to persist in pursuing goals regardless of difficulties and hindrances” (Goleman, 1998, p. 122).
- Real estate: This term refers to property such as land and the structures on it, along with its immovable property of this nature: water, oil, and minerals.
- Real estate broker: For the purpose of this study, “a licensed professional who engages as a principal arbitrator of buying from or selling to, or exchanging with the public real property sales contracts of real estate residential property (California Bureau of Real Estate, 2015).
- Success: This term refers to the measurement of the achievement of goals or wealth.
- Work-life balance: Work-life balance refers to combining and balancing work (occupation and goals) with a standard of living (well-being, desire, leisureliness, family and spiritual fellowship).

### **Assumptions**

The following assumptions were made in the implementation this study:

- Participants will be considered California real estate brokers by definition.
- Participants currently have an active California real estate brokers license.
- Participants have experienced the same or related phenomenon of the study.
- All participants are willing and honest.

## Limitations of the Study

The following limitations were applied to this study:

- The researcher is a woman real estate broker, which may appear to create a bias.
- The sample size is limited to 15 female real estate brokers. The purpose sampling is employed to make certain that organizational leadership and individual strategies among successful female real estate brokers are documented from the literature review and present in the participants. The sample size will limit the ability of the researcher to elaborate the awareness and experiences with other women and men real estate brokers.
- The participants may not be honest in their responses.
- Bias from the interview question format may influence outcomes. A pre-arranged set of interview questions were created from the literature. Additionally, these questions were reviewed by a highly competent validity panel and the interview format was intentionally semi-structured. However, an unintended bias may be introduced by utilizing a prearranged set of questions, and by the relationship between the researcher and each participant. This study focused solely on female real estate brokers who work primarily in the residential real estate field. The emphasis of this research is how to achieve work-life balance among female real estate brokers, who endure challenges and achieve successes. The study will also focus on the strategies and practices that are utilized to address solutions.
- There is no guarantee the participants will have integrity and be 100% authentic.
- Future research could include enlarging the population and sample size above and beyond female real estate brokers. Criteria for inclusion is discussed in Chapter 3.

## **Organization of the Study**

This study is organized in five significant components. Chapter 1 introduces the topic, statement of the problem, research questions, significance of the study, key definitions of terms, assumptions, and limitations of the study. Chapter 2 reviews the literature in regard to this study, including the historical background, the gender, leadership, leadership and theories, leadership ethics, leadership theoretical framework, trait theories, situational theory, and contingency theory. Additionally, this chapter encompasses Maslow's hierarchy of needs and Kotter's eight-step model. Chapter 3 details the nature of the study, restatement of the research questions, methodology, research design, sources of data collection, protection of human subjects, data collection method, plans for submission to the Institutional Review Board (IRB), data analysis process, reliability and validity, interview techniques, statement of personal biases, and data analysis. Chapter 4 discusses the findings of the study. Chapter 5 provides a summary of the findings, which include recommendations for future studies regarding how to utilize the data of this collected research for empirical implementation.

## **Summary**

This chapter contains the theoretical framework for the study of female real estate brokers from an array of personal and professional backgrounds, including the development and understanding of the lack of work-life balance. Female real estate brokers have gained popularity in the last 25 years. The trend for female real estate brokers who are practitioners and operate minority-owned businesses is to become educated in business management (Fleck, 1996). Research shows that many female real estate brokers give credit to Corinne Simpson for being the first woman real estate broker to become a member of the National Association of Realtors (NAR) which was a predominantly male dominated organization in 1910 (Chapralis,

1998). Today there are over 50,000 female real estate brokers in California who are members of NAR, the majority of members are women with college education. They frequently had careers in other subjects previously entering the real estate field. The majority were in management, business, and financial professions, lastly by sales and retail. The study will have significance for several groups of educators, policy makers, scholars, and female real estate brokers. The present research will utilize semi-structured interviews of practitioner successful female real estate brokers to arrive at individual strategies and solutions of the lack of work-life balance. The following chapter explores extant literature related to this study.



## **Chapter 2: Review of Literature**

### **Overview**

This literature review is organized into five significant components. The first component displays the identification and observation of the phenomenon by historical female real estate brokers who essentially sought to learn how real estate brokers work. The second component displays real estate from the aspect of successful female real estate brokers and why they are in this field of service, which is the other significant characteristic of the phenomenon. Third, the review approach explores the research into the real estate process, combining work (career, ambition) and lifestyle (family, health, leisure, pleasure, and spiritual development). Additionally, a review of selected definitions and theories of real estate provides a consensus of how real estate has evolved. The core of the formation of research questions for the study developed from this literature review and displays a framework for the design analysis of the interview process. As a result, this chapter displays a historical review of successful female real estate brokers, which has created an awareness in this field.

The literature will also include how comprising the benefits and values of Abraham Maslow's theory, the hierarchy of needs, may verify if a positive outcome has occurred in the real estate field to influence on how various roles are uniquely and specifically defined. Also, by creating a climate for change, the change model may assist initially developing a vision for aspiring female real estate brokers to transition into real estate leaders, amplify who they are, and give them flexibility (Kotter, 2006). Additionally, the literature review will demonstrate the essentials to innovate and infuse Appreciative Inquiry (AI) theory. The premise of AI in the real estate organizations will be a living network of relatedness. Thus, the real estate organizations

will have a positive core, that if discovered and monitored, will release positive drive and positive progress.

Also, by asking participants positive questions will draw out the human spirit. AI will provide techniques and strategies for developing and enriching the fundamentals of real estate organizations. This process of research and discovery will be designed to add significance and reliability. The objective of Appreciative Inquiry is to facilitate the *positive core* of the female real estate brokers and the real estate organizations. The strategy is to access the core through the art and practice of asking questions and obtaining answers to the research questions and interview questions.

This review of the pertinent literature provides an understanding of (a) how successful female real estate brokers engender trust, (b) the lack of work-life balance, (c) individual strategies and techniques of organizational leadership, (d) an assessment of John Kotter's eight-step change model, and (e) how transitioning, current, and aspiring female real estate leaders may be able to apply such change models and theories in establishing sustainable organizational change. Additionally, transformational leadership and Maslow's hierarchy of needs will be discussed, and an overview of emotional intelligence will lead into a discussion regarding authentic leadership. This study will inform the research and contribute to the discussion of the interview findings.

### **Historical Background of Women in Real Estate Leadership**

The real estate brokerage industry is acknowledged culturally as a history of an environment indicative of extremely long work hours, strict schedules, and often excessive time spent away from home beyond normal full-time working hours. Brokers play an essential role in the real estate market by assisting the matching of potential buyers to sellers. They also know

the processes of the market and transferring properties, providing both buyers and sellers with additional consent to bargain over the transaction price of a property (Barlowe, 1986).

Historically, success in the real estate industry has been viewed upon an individual real estate broker's perception and aspiration to achieve success (Hewlett & Luce, 2005; Schwartz, 1989).

Chapralis (1988), indicated that female real estate brokers in the working environment are not a new phenomenon because women have been working and raising families for decades. "When the National Association of Realtors (NAR) was founded in 1908, the membership was 100% male. The Association's founders defined NAR's purpose as "to unite the real estate men of America" (p. 8). However, the organization was not limited to men only, nor was it restricted to the United States (Chapralis, 1988). On the national level, membership never carried gender or racial requirements; however, local boards decided the qualifications of who could join. So the absence of women is not a shock. Few professional women were in the real estate industry. The rules and regulations have changed however in real estate as new boards have been created and qualified women now participate in the memberships. As a result, the innovative of including female real estate brokers usually came from one of three groups:

- widowed women or daughters of real estate fathers,
- mother-offspring team or married couple team, and
- female rental or leasing agents or office employees who, during emergency situations, were forced to learn how to sell real estate.

According to Chapralis (1988), women were the minority in NAR during its first few decades.

The first woman to join NAR was Seattle real estate broker Corinne Simpson, who became a member in 1910. Mrs. Simpson was influential in the Seattle real estate industry from 1905 until her death in 1929.

## **Gender**

The gender changes of work-life family involvements have been a significant and consistent subject in the study of work-family (Lewis & Cooper, 2005) and in various other literature (Blackmore, 1996; Strahan, 1999). Often, various scholars have come to the conclusion that women experience a large amount of work-family issues and conflict. Women's characteristics of work-family conflict are greater because they are nurturers by nature and are usually dominant with home responsibilities. Women also have the appearance of catering to a larger portion of multiple family business roles (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). Due to a deficiency in work-life balance with female real estate brokers, this approach and research study will increase the knowledge in the real estate field and in the body of research simultaneously. Little research explores the excessive work-related experiences of flexibility around female real estate brokers' extremely busy lifestyles. Qualitative research is also deficient regarding the culture of female real estate brokers who passionately embrace the combination a change in leadership roles with an understanding of business in pursuing work-life balance strategies.

## **Real Estate Burnout**

According to Sparta (2007), the constant demands of the real estate business can take a toll on real estate brokers' physical and emotional health, and place their careers at risk. Many challenges arise with being real estate agents, including the need to work hard. Often, their work becomes unappreciated work. When women first start in the real estate business, everything is breathtaking and pleasurable. Learning is innovative, the work schedule is flexible, and the focus on developing one's career can cause a woman to overlook the long hours, problematic clients, and the inherent stress that emanates with real estate transactions.

However, when the newness wears off, many female realtors fall into a pattern that leads to a rut of repetition and challenges that become a road to burnout. Real estate agents experience burn out more frequently than individuals in most other industries. Unfortunately, this subject has gone unacknowledged. Thus, most female real estate brokers are not aware of this deficiency. To promote education and awareness, this study focuses on the issues of burnout for industry leaders. This study also discerns the possibilities of avoiding realtor burnout through the interview process. The American Psychological Association (APA) describes burnout as an exhaustion of an individual's lively resources at work. The Mayo Clinic stated that various issues may contribute to burnout. Burnout may include a lack of control over extensive work hours or assignment, unfriendly or hostile colleagues, and energy brain drain from trying to cope with continuous commotion. The real estate job simply may not be a good match with the realtor's interests and skills. When real estate brokers notice the underlying reasons for burnout, they need to be ready, willing, and able to start making changes.

The following signs identify symptoms of burnout:

- becoming more sarcastic and cynical at work;
- lack of energy to be constantly productive;
- becoming beyond irritable or less patient with colleagues and customers;
- dragging oneself in the office and having difficulty starting upon arrival;
- feeling disillusioned about the job; and
- having a hard time laughing at oneself (Sparta, 2007).

### **Successful Female Real Estate Brokers**

In the 1920s, a number of local real estate boards established special women's divisions catering to female brokers. The California Association of Realtors (CAR) had a very successful women's division, which eventually became the model for the Women's Council of

Realtors. Structures like CAR helped attract more women to the real estate industry, and women joined the National Association of Realtors (NAR) in increasing numbers. However, since women were primarily sales agents, not brokers, and since NAR's membership base was restricted to brokers, women remained in the minority for decades. NAR's first member profile survey was conducted in 1949, which found that 98% of members were men.

In 1973, the situation began to change rapidly when NAR opened membership to sales agents (realtor associates), many of whom were women. At the end of 1973, NAR had 118,000 members, with women comprising roughly 17%. By the end of 1975, NAR had ballooned to 435,500 members, and women accounted for nearly a third of total membership. Women surpassed men as a percentage of total membership by 1978. In 1996, four years after Dorcas Helfant became NAR's first female president, women represented the majority of broker licensees for the first time. This was a significant increase in the number of female real estate brokers and their contributions to the economic growth and job creation in the last few decades.

### **Leadership and Leadership Theories**

Discussion of leadership and leadership theory focuses on the literature to show the significance of leadership theories in connection to female real estate leaders. The examination of this study researched female real estate brokers who are leaders and recommends that the perception of leadership is serious in the direction of the effectiveness of female real estate brokers. According to Cantor and Bernay, "leadership comprises forming a state of mind in individuals" (as cited in Adler, 1997, p. 59). Therefore, leadership should be observed as something that exceeds the concept of a position and process (Adler, 1997). Leaders should also be individuals whose "vision and courage can influence set ideas, people, organizations and societies" (p. 173).

The following review is a closer examination of various leadership theories. Trait leadership theories are also known as the "Great Man" approach, where the certainty is in the concept that leaders are born with innate leadership traits (Northouse, 2013). Northouse categorized, "five main traits that represent a great leader: intelligence, self-confidence, determination, integrity, and sociability" (Northouse, 2010, p. 387). Leadership traits are vital for real estate leaders, essential for connecting with others effectively and successfully and influencing individuals. Leadership traits affect conditions in leadership and the role of traits of leaders to direct all conditions properly. The styles of leadership also affect leaders and determine effectiveness. Goleman (1998) recognized six different styles of leadership: (a) affiliative, (b) authoritative, (c) coaching, (d) coercive, (e) democratic, (f) pacesetter, and style of leadership.

First, the *affiliative* style is when affiliative leaders put their teammates first (Goleman, 1998). Affiliative leaders create harmony with their teammates and create a consensus that increases morale (Goleman, 1998). Second, the *authoritative* style of leadership recognizes the need for freedom with teammates by taking a "come along with me" type of leadership style, allowing their teammates some authorization in goal setting and goal achievement (Goleman, 1998). These types of leaders are optimal when the workplace environment involves some readjustment. This style is not effective when working with individuals who are more experienced (Goleman, 1998).

The third style recognizes *coaching* leaders who focus on the personal development of their teammates (Goleman, 1998). This style of leadership is effective when teammates have a high sense of cognizance about the leader's skills and ability. For leaders looking to create a social effect and change, this style of leadership will govern the success of their pursuits for

change and impact. The fourth style is the *coercive* style of leadership, which recognizes leaders who are the “do what I say” type of leaders (Goleman, 1998). These leaders are effective in serious workplace situations but are not effective in the ordinary workplace environment, as this style does not permit flexibility. The *democratic* style is the fifth type of leadership. Democratic leaders give opportunities to their teammates to suggest their opinions about change. Leaders who are democratic create a team and organization that provides opportunities for leader consensus, decision-making, and flexibility. The lengthy space allows for decision-making. This style can result in long meetings and, therefore, affect the team's progress. *Pacesetting leadership* is the sixth style. Pacesetting leaders are driven to set high expectations and standards for their teammates (Goleman, 1998).

### **Leadership Ethics**

Theoretically, for female real estate brokers to succeed and build teams of leaders, they must practice the commonalities of leadership ethics. Women’s Council of National Association of Real Estate Brokers (NAREB), is a nonprofit organization, with the focus of community at the grassroots level. The mission of the organization is to measure the ethical standards of women in the real estate industry by assisting in leadership, education, and the interchange of information through the assembly of learning innovative strategies and techniques; and to provide information about barriers and opportunities for women to enhance their awareness and proficiency with the comprehension of the real estate business. Northouse (2010) defined leadership ethics as follows:

Leadership ethics by defining ethics which is central to leadership. The five commonalities and principles of ethical leadership are *respect, service, justice, honesty,*



and *community*. The word ethics was evolved from the Greek word ethos, which translates to customs, conduct, or character. (p. 387)

Therefore, ethics is defined as a value system of morals and scruples.

Additionally, ethics are defined by individual or societal ideas of that which applies to each situation. Ethics are indicative of individuals and their motives. However, regarding leadership, ethics are based on a leader-follower relationship perspective. If no one is following a leader then the leader is merely taking a walk. Therefore, leaders who choose to make decisions are responsible for their selections presented to them for their followers' response. "They are also knowledgeable and directed by their ethics, which is based on optimistic conduct or character" (Northouse, 2010, p. 378).

As a final point, theoretically, a leader's sense of duty is to support and care for the followers in challenges that will develop change, opportunity, and personal growth. Gilligan (as cited in Northouse, 2010) postulated, "A caring principle is one of the main moral principles" (p. 386). Therefore, by focusing on the individual's unique and different needs and paying close attention from a considerate viewpoint, a leader's actions should be ethically accurate. When leaders exude carefulness in being concerned with the interests of individuals with whom the leader has fiduciary relationships, is in the initiation phase of the relationship. Northouse (2010) stated, "The ethic of caring is extremely important in organizations because it is the main ingredient in building trust and cooperative relationships" (p. 386). Therefore, in the various methods, the above concepts are parallel with the ethics of caring, as noted by the different authors specializing in aligning education and experience with career goals.

Furthermore, the foundational principles of ethical leadership that are the developmental aspect and can be found in Aristotle are respect, service, justice, honesty, and community.

Ethical leadership reflects the following characteristics: to respect others, to serve others, to show justice, to manifest honesty, and to build community (Northouse, 2010). *Respect* means that leaders listen and pay attention to the subordinates. Leaders also demonstrate empathy and tolerance of opposing viewpoints. Therefore, when leaders demonstrate respect to subordinates, subordinates can sense an atmosphere of proficiency about their work by endorsing their beliefs and values. As ethical leaders, Burns recommended,

Leaders should nurture followers in learning of their own needs, values, and purposes, and assist followers in integrating these with the leader's needs, values and purposes. The six commonalities are Principles of Distributive Justice that serve as guides for ethical leaders in distributing benefits fairly to each person within an organization although not inclusive are: an equal share or opportunity, According to individual need, According to that person's rights, According to individual effort, According to societal contribution, and According to merit or performance. (as cited in Northouse, 2010, p. 390)

According to Burns, ethical leaders have influence and should be fair and just. Leaders who are ethical make a conscious effort to treat their followers with equality and create an ethical climate (as cited by Northouse, 2010). Ethical leaders have a duty to implement matters of righteousness at the core values of their processes; this is called a justice requirement. Ethical leaders' followers will notice the behavior patterns and decisions of their leaders and will make the decision to follow or not. Followers should not receive treatment that is preferential or privileges that are superior unless his or her individual situation requires it.

The directives of ethics are applied and used to determine a significant outcome regarding leaders' apprehension in regards to justice and fairness (Northouse, 2010). Besides

respect, justice, and fair ethical leadership, female real estate brokers who are good leaders should demonstrate honesty and truthfulness. Dalla Costa (1998) postulated that fairness and trust should be a commonality and goal for ethical leaders. Therefore, when the female real estate brokers understand and establish these methods, these leadership ethics may enhance the women's intrinsic values. Leadership ethics are very important for establishing and maintaining fiduciary relationships. Coincidentally, in business practices, colleagues and customers both desire the same characteristics of sincerity and leadership ethics.

### **Leadership Theoretical Framework**

Theoretically, leadership is known for the ability to influence individuals or groups in the direction of the dynamic forces of realization, idea or set of goals (Robbins & Judge, 2005). Effective leadership goals may vary, with an individual or group being influenced, but leadership goals are also determined by the task needed to be accomplished. It also explores the contingency, expectancy, path goal, and trait theories, and situational leadership theory (SLT). Operational leadership is also revealed within operative learning of organizational literature. Senge (1990) stated that organizational leadership focuses on how learning in organizations succeeds at a higher rate, and how learning organizations do not exist without the leaders who are enthusiastic to elucidate.

The leadership theoretical framework uses leadership theories and disciplines that focus on the experiences and findings of successful female real estate leaders who deal with the challenges that create a lack of work-life balance. According to Madjidi (2012), the principal difference between leadership theory and leadership style is that leadership style is categorized within the theme of the umbrella of leadership theory. Therefore, leadership style is one of the various samples that exist in this study in leadership theory. In this study, leadership style is

focused specifically on the strategies, traits, and behaviors of the female real estate brokers who are leaders in their industry.

Dr. Paul Hersey (1984), states, “Situational leaders are individuals who recognize that influencing behavior is a process not an event.” He refers to it as “organized common sense or making common sense more common” (p. 5). The simplicity of the theory makes it an easy application to utilize. The foundation of situational leadership theory does not have one particular or best leadership style. The Hersey-Blanchard SLT model has two fundamental concepts: (a) leadership in relation to the quantity and behavior of task and (b) the relationship of a leader’s behavior will possibly transfer to followers. Effective leadership is often task-relevant; it is also a direction that many successful leaders utilize who adjust their style of leadership to the majority.

According to Hersey,

The SLT model is the measurement to establish goals at their peak and sustain them. Also, to make an attempt to lead or influence willing and readiness with the ability to take responsibility for tasks. Also, to lead appropriate education and/or experience of individuals or groups for the task of individuals and or groups. (1984, p. 7)

The Hersey-Blanchard model allows leaders to become approachable, consistent, deliberative, flexible, intentional, supportive, and transparent. Therefore, in reference to successful female real estate brokers who are leaders in their field, utilizing this model demonstrates how successful female real estate leaders can measure individual skill sets. They are able to integrate empathy and impulse control when encountering other real estate brokers at any level. This model prepares them to be better equipped as real estate brokers who are willing to excel and exceed their expectations in business to become successful. This leadership theory classifies the

ways leaders communicate with others when collaboration on a task is needed. The SLT styles demonstrate characters into a dichotomy set of four behavior types: style (S)1—telling/directing, S2—selling, S3—participating, and S4—Delegating (Fernandez & Vecchio, 1997; Hersey, 1984).

The characteristics and behaviors of successful leaders lean toward these theories; later in this study, situations will be considered for the role of the followers and the circumstantial landscape of situational leadership. This information is needed to understand the female real estate brokers who constantly demonstrate an imbalance of work-life balance. Collectively, the aforementioned theories may create an awareness about the qualities of female real estate brokers who are leaders. Situational Leadership Theory (SLT) is an approach to view leadership specifically in the applied situation. An example is how some situations may require a domineering style, while others may require a participative style.

According to Northouse (2010), “leader-participation delivers a set of rules to determine the form and amount of participative decision making in different situations” (p. 385). SLT may also have differences in leadership styles at various levels. In terms of mid-level leadership, employing the Hersey-Blanchard model will allow for a leader to be viewed as *approachable, intentional, flexible, transparent, deliberative, supportive, and consistent*. This model shows female real estate leaders how to assess individual skill levels in order to meet aspiring female real estate brokers where they are.

SLT also teaches women leaders to become better coaches in terms of their work performances and interactions with others. Robbins and Judge (2011) indicated that SLT places an emphasis on leaders and followers. Also, to become successful, leaders should accomplish leadership styles by choosing a specific leadership style. This style depends on the leaders and

followers' willingness or ability to be ready and able to accomplish unambiguous assignments. To summarize SLT, it is a strategy of planning that acknowledges the importance followers may construct from the logic of leaders and compensates for their limited ability and motivation to improve productivity. SLT may help female real estate leaders implement and discipline the focus of the important aspects of their time; capture and review important tasks; and balance time management situations, ideas, projects, or priorities.

The dynamics of SLT help aspiring female real estate brokers to make better and faster leadership decisions. Blanchard (1985) postulated, "The dynamics of situational leadership are best understood when the SLT model is separated into two parts: *leadership style* and *development level* of subordinates" (p. 5). This leadership style comprises an individual's behavior patterns used to influence others. The behavior patterns include directive (task) behaviors and supportive (relationship) behaviors. The directive behaviors may support individuals in accomplishing goals by giving directives to establish goals, with replies that display social and emotional support to other individuals. The directive (task) behaviors shed light on, usually in a direction of one-way communication, what and how something is to be done. Directive behaviors also bring clarity as to who does the action.

Thus, supportive behavior involves two-way communication. According to Northouse (2010), "Leadership styles can be classified in four specific categories of directive and supportive behaviors" (p. 91). The first style (S1), selling & telling, is considered to be a high directive and low supportive behavior style. With the selling & telling style, the leader's fundamental goal is achievement driven and utilizes the least amount of time to achieve supportive behaviors from followers. This behavior is high task/low relationship; the leader basically defines both roles of the leader and the followers and communicates the *what, when,*

*where, and how* details to complete the varying tasks. Selling and telling is categorized by one-way communication that flows from the leader to the followers (Fernandez & Vecchio, 1997; Hersey, 1984).

The second style (S2), *selling/coaching*, is an approach to coaching in the high directive and high supportive style of behavior. In this style, leaders utilize the buy-in method on what and how goals are accomplished. Also, leaders will focus on both communication and achieving goals. By establishing this relationship, the leader and the followers both engender a high level of trust (Fernandez & Vecchio, 1997; Hersey, 1984).

The third style (S3), *participating*, is high-supportive and low-directive. These leaders listen, praise, request input and provide feedback, and remains available for problem-solving. The trust level between the leader and the followers is high (Fernandez & Vecchio, 1997; Hersey, 1984). The final style (S4), *delegating*, is low supportive and low directive behavior which is a delegating approach. Leaders distribute responsibilities by delegating the control to followers who do the work that is usually performed by the leader. This trust creates an autonomy for the follower, involving him or her in the responsibilities usually set aside for the leader (Fernandez & Vecchio, 1997; Hersey, 1984).

### **Contingency Theory**

Northouse (2010) defined *contingency theory* “as a leader-match theory, which means it attempts to connect leaders to appropriate situations” (p. 111). Additionally, Fred Fiedler's (1964) contingency model focus is leadership in organizations. This model is concerned with the relationship concerning the leadership style and the favorableness of the situation. *Situational favorableness* was described by Fiedler (1964) in terms of three empirical resulting measurements:

- leader-member relationship—high if the leader is generally accepted and respected by followers
- degree of task structure—high if the task is very structured
- leader's position power—high if a great deal of authority and power are officially recognized to the leader's position

The leader's style and how well it fits the situation is named the contingency theory—the leader's success is depending on the situation. Contingency theory is a variation of situational view. The situational view focuses on identifying the variables of the situation. This theory employs applicable or effective styles of leadership incorporated for the specific situation. Therefore, the foundation of contingency theory in real estate leadership is that one best way to manage a task or where a procedure does not exist. The best solutions are contingent upon the case scenarios.

### **Expectancy Theory**

Robbins and Judge (2011) stated:

Expectancy theory as a strong point of an expectation or tendency to act depending on the strength. The act follows results and the appeal will be of that outcome to the individuals. Victor Vroom's expectancy theory discusses the strength of a tendency to act in a definite way will be contingent on the strength of an expectation. The act will be followed by an outcome on the desirability of that outcome to the individual. (p. 226)

Therefore, according to this theory, if female real estate brokers utilize expectancy theory they may become motivated to exude high levels of will-power with gratifying results.

The expectancy theory is an emphasizes three relationships of individual effort:

(a) individual performance/effort-performance— the relationship possibility, perceived by



individuals, that leads to performance; (b) organizational rewards/performance-reward—the relationship and phase in which individuals believe their performance will lead to the achievement of an anticipated outcome at a particular level; and (c) personal goals/rewards-personal goods—the degree of the relationship with organizational rewards that may satisfy an individual’s personal goals and needs, as well as the appeal of potential rewards for individuals (Robbins & Judge, 2011). Additionally, the expectancy theory has validity and clarifies why many workers are not motivated in their careers. It also elucidates behaviors considered as expected outcomes and why some individuals do the minimum to just get by.

### **Path-Goal Theory**

The path-goal theory utilized in this study may be thought of as a process in which the successful female real estate brokers who are leaders select specific behaviors that are the most supportive of female real estate brokers’ needs and the working environment.

This theory can help leaders direct and guide aspiring successful female real estate brokers on their career paths toward achieving daily work activities and goals (Northouse, 2013). The path-goal theory is not a detailed process; it generally follows the below fundamental steps:

1. Establishes the employee and environmental features.
2. Choice of a leadership style.
3. Emphasis on motivational factors that will assist the employee to become successful.

Robbins and Judge (2011) indicated that path-goal theory works when leaders provide followers with the tools and information needed to support and achieve their goals—working in an environment equipped with necessary resources for the job. Path-goal theory specifies leaders can be effective with followers when the paths clarify their work goals, thus reducing barriers

and making jobs easier. The path-goal theory demonstrates directive or supportive behaviors and depends on a compound examination of the situation.

It predicts the following:

- Directive leadership produces greater satisfaction when tasks are ambiguous or stressful than when they are highly structured and well arranged.
- Supportive leadership results in high performance and satisfaction when employees are performing structured tasks.
- Directive leadership is likely to be perceived as redundant among employees with high ability or considerable experience. (Robbins & Judge, 2011, p. 385)

### **Trait Theory**

The traits or qualities connected with leadership in trait theories are charismatic, enthusiastic, and courageous. These traits draw on individuals' personalities and social, physical, or intellectual attributes. "Trait theories consider personal qualities and characteristics that differentiate leaders from nonleaders" (Robbins & Judge, 2011, p. 377). Trait theory considers the ability to structure social interaction systems to the commitment of the involvement. Therefore, if female real estate brokers utilize this theory, they will be more effective and accomplish more of their targeted objectives and goals.

### **Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs**

Abraham Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs theory model demonstrates the effects of change (see Figure 1).

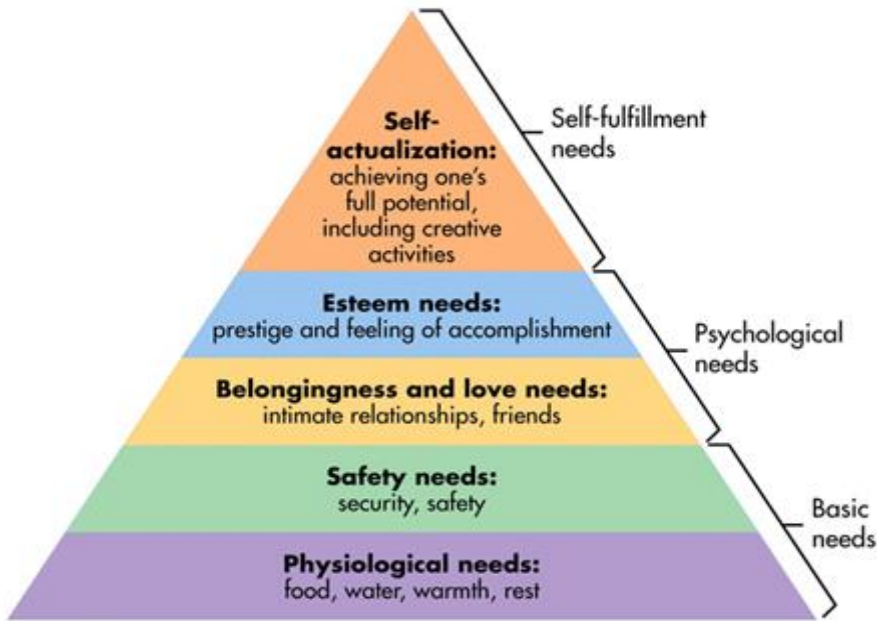


Figure 1. Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs. From "Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs," by S. A. McLeod, 2017 ([www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html](http://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html)). CC BY-NC-ND 3.0.

However, work-life balance information for women in the real estate industry is scarce. Change is needed to create and affect the population of female real estate brokers. Cohen (2005) postulated, "Change remains a crucial challenge for organizations. Understanding the impact of the different levels of Maslow's hierarchy of needs has become successful in all aspects of life" (p. 15). The change may also be crucial to individual's livelihood.

On the spectrum of the hierarchical pyramid, Maslow (1943) defined the five human needs from basic to most progressive as follows: physiological, safety, love/belongingness, esteem, and self-actualization. The pyramid process pertains to personal and business lifestyles. Maslow believed that each need has to be completely satisfied by an individual in order to advance to a next level of the pyramid (Maslow, 1943). Maslow's pyramid can help the female real estate brokers understand the basic needs and importance of shelter to the most progressive level, which is the self-actualization that happens when a woman is selling real estate

in alignment with the characteristics of the National Association of Realtors' ultimate business system. However, in order to create change in real estate organizations, anticipated outcomes should be confirmed. Organizations and leaders who have adapted to Kotter's (1996) eight-step change model have accomplished wide-ranging benefits and results. "To date, major change efforts have helped some organizations adapt significantly to shifting conditions, this has improved the competitive standing of others, and have positioned a few for a far better future" (Kotter, 1996, p. 3).

**Physiological needs.** Maslow (1943) defined physiological needs as the maximum basic need, comprised of needs that are satisfied externally: the necessity for breathing, clothing, food, shelter, sleep, and water. The physiological needs of female real estate brokers can be described as having flexible time, comfortable working conditions, and reasonable work hours.

**Safety and security needs.** Maslow's (1943) second step defined the safety need as the need to be safe from physical and psychological harm, such as safety in terms of employment, family, health, property, and social stability. Leaders in the workplace environment can provide individuals with the resources to secure a place to live. Included in these needs is the satisfactory provision of individual's physiological needs.

**Social needs.** The third step in Maslow's hierarchy focuses on family, friendship, intimacy, and sense of connection, also known as love and belonging (Maslow, 1943). A leader can contribute to the social needs of their female real estate brokers by introducing them to each other, encouraging teamwork, and by being an accessible, gentle leader who endorsing a good work-life balance.

**Self-esteem needs.** Maslow (1943) defined the third step as the development of internal factors such as achievement, autonomy, confidence, self-respect, respect of others, and the need

to be unique individuals. A leader supports the esteem needs of their female real estate brokers by offering praise and recognition when the women do well and offering promotions and further responsibilities to reflect the leader's belief that they are valued female real estate brokers.

**Self-actualization needs.** The ultimate level of Maslow's hierarchy (1943) is acceptance, creativity, experience, morality, meaning and inner potential, purpose, and spontaneity—the need for self-actualization. Therefore, it is essential for leaders to be transactional in finding ways to motivate female real estate brokers for success.

### **Transactional Theory**

According to Covey (1992), transactional leadership is a traditional model of leadership, with its origins from an organizational or business viewpoint. However, Kouzes and Posner (2002) developed a transactional theory model that comprises five fundamental practices that allow leaders to develop amazing results of commitments and accomplishments. This theory emphasizes the significance of the relationship amongst leader and followers, concentrating on the mutual benefits resulting from a contract or agreement through which the leader provides. The effects will reward the recognition reciprocating for the accountability or trustworthiness of the followers. In this study, transactional theory pertains to female real estate brokers while their contracts with their customers are the agreements to establish relationships. Similar to some degree, two contemporary leadership theories, charismatic leadership, and transformational leadership both have a mutual subject; they envision leaders as individuals who encourage followers through their actions demonstrated by their words (Robbins & Judge, 2011).

### **Charismatic Theory**

For female real estate brokers to be charismatic, Weber, 2011 (p. 1) defined *charisma* from the Greek word for gift. More than a century ago, charisma was thought to have a certain

quality of an individual's extraordinary personality, by quality of which he or she is set separately from ordinary people and treated as gifted with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional influences or qualities. Therefore, charismatic leadership theory is defined by epic or extraordinary leadership abilities that inspire followers when they notice positive behaviors. Mary Kay Ash, the founder of Mary Kay Cosmetics, is an example of a charismatic leader (Robbins & Judge, 2011).

### **Authentic Leadership**

Robbins and Judge (2011) stated "authentic leadership is leaders who know who they are, know what they believe in and value, and act on those values and beliefs openly and candidly. Their followers would consider them to be ethical people" (p. 395). The authentic leader is genuine to himself or herself and exudes positive behavior that will transform or develop contacts into authentic leaders. Authentic leadership has five dimensions: (1) *purpose*—passion, (2) *values*—behavior, (3) *relationships*—connectedness, (4) *self-discipline*—consistency, and (5) *heart*—compassion. Each dimension is related to the characteristics that individuals should acquire to become authentic leaders (Northouse, 2010).

According to Northouse (2010), authentic leadership may be perceived from these three perspectives: (1) intrapersonal, (2) developmental, and (3) interpersonal. Concurring with Northouse (2010), female real estate brokers often exude genuine leadership, lead from conviction, and are consistently original, unique, and different. Northouse (2010) further indicated that developmental leadership is authentic and develops in people over a lifetime.

An authentic leadership style can be initiated by varied key life events such as a severe illness or a new career. This study examined the innate ability of female real brokers to self-

actualize using leadership core values. In addition, female real estate brokers learn to show genuineness to colleagues, observers, and their immediate and extended families.

Self-actualization is a mission-driven, limitless journey of supporting female real estate brokers in their pursuit of the optimal results of leadership and organizational change of work-life balance. Northouse (2010) stated that the third way of defining authentic leadership is an interpersonal process. This perception highlights authentic leadership is relational, generated by leaders and followers together. This type of leadership for female real estate brokers reflects on the professional relationships. It also may be a management or supervisory role. These authentic leaders model are benevolent and serve with values to develop others' behavior patterns.

### **Servant Leadership**

Northouse (2010) defined servant leadership as “increased service to others; a holistic approach to work; promoting a sense of community; and the sharing of power in decision making” (p. 111). The Women’s Chapter Advisory Board of Christian Women Commerce Chapter of California has developed a culture that starts with their largest accomplishment of integrity, with the mission of being Christ-like in the workplace of real estate. Their foundational Scripture is Galatians 2:20, “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me” (New International Version). These servant leaders incorporate the ideas of empowerment, total quality, team building, and participatory management, and they impart service and ethics into a leadership philosophy.

Northouse (2010) defined servant leadership as “strong altruistic ethical overtones, with emphasis that leaders should be attentive to the concerns of their followers and should emphasize with them: they should take care of them and nurture them” (p. 385).

Through the examination of this study, an exclusive focus was made on a needs assessment of female real estate brokers. Raising this awareness helped them become more knowledgeable, liberated, and more like servants themselves. This study also contains essential knowledge for other female real estate agents and brokers who can be enriched by the feedback from the interviews with this study's participants.

This study can assist novice female real estate agents and brokers to understand how to manage and grow a successful real estate business. This research can also teach current female real estate brokers how to improve their businesses to become clear and concise. Greenleaf (1977) postulated that leadership is the efficacy of an individual who is a servant by nature. Bandura (1986) postulated that an "individual's self-efficacy functions to decrease insights of and responses to stressors" (p. 10). Senge (1990) further stated,

Therefore, ethical leaders who are effective see their own personal ideas as a significant part of something larger than themselves. This is a part of the organization and the community at large which develops the followers and grows the organization which is a shared vision. Servant leaders are influential in simplifying the growth of a shared vision and learning organizations. An important change in their own expectations and behaviors may be needed. (p. 206)

### **Connectedness**

Connectedness is defined by Rath (2007) as connecting with others and helping to change lives by seeking to unite others through a commonality with like-minded people who share the same vision. This connectedness theme continues to give female real estate brokers the faith to persevere in the new and existing relationships between all things. Through their connectedness of faith, they believe there are few coincidences, and that almost every event has a meaning or



reason. Because the female real estate brokers are united, this connectedness can enable outcomes for the women to succeed. More importantly, the connectedness can be a life-changing occurrence that connects female real estate brokers with top-producing women leaders in the real estate industry.

This networking strategy of connectedness teaches leaders to know what their time and energy are worth. This commonality of connectedness can build powerful business alliances that may connect to nourish and support female real estate brokers to be empowered for the possible challenges female real estate leaders endure. According to Rath (2007), everything happens for a reason. Some may call it collective unconsciousness. Others may brand it as spirit or forces of life. But whatever the choice of words, this methodology can increase confidence within female real estate brokers, knowing they are not isolated from one another. This feeling of connectedness implies certain responsibilities.

If the female real estate brokers are all part of a larger picture, then they must not harm others because they will harm themselves. They must not exploit others because they will exploit themselves. The female real estate brokers' awareness of these responsibilities creates their value systems and harmony collectively and unanimously. Female real estate brokers in this study were examined to see if they have the connections to be considerate, caring, and accepting. Also, this study explored their capacity to be certain of the unity of humankind.

The examination of this study also bridged the gap for real estate brokers and students of many cultures who aspire to obtain a California real estate license for the buying of, investing in, leasing, or selling of real estate. The study also researched the sensitivity of the realtors to their customers' wants and needs. Connectedness is identified when female real estate brokers comfort others whose routine lifestyles are in an imbalanced mode. Burns (as cited in Northouse,

2010) argued “that it is important for leaders to engage themselves with followers and help them in their personal struggles regarding conflicting values. The resulting connection raises the level of morality in both the leader and the follower” (p. 384).

Networking may be utilized as a means for female real estate brokers to create connections to develop their careers, with a new sense of purpose through connectedness. Female real estate brokers should try to connect with talented individuals in multiple networks, with 56 connections within their sphere of influence and outside of the real estate organization (Eagly & Carli, 2007). To succeed, female real estate brokers need to increase their skill building of connections with full support from the industry, peers, and supervisors to build powerful business networking. This strategy is an extremely valuable for business development. According to Madjidi (2013), a leadership strategy of connectedness is called disruptive change. The focus of disruptive change is how the external factors may cause the female real estate brokers to adjust their business models and also build wealth.

This adaptation may change the female real estate brokers’ productivity radically, increase competition, customer needs, innovation, and networking. Smallen-Grob (2003) stated that individuals must build a resilient support system through networking. Close and transparent relationships can help individuals cope with stress as they disclose personal information, discuss concerns, and receive advice (Wills, 1990). Therefore, the concept of connectedness in this study can be a basis for female real estate brokers—rookies and veterans—to train to become leaders in their field of business. It can also motivate them to understand about developing contacts and sustaining relationships, build a rapport in their real estate career to the highest level, and to transform female real estate brokers’ relationships to be successful with this proven strategy.

Work-life balance has constantly been concerned with those of interest in a better quality of working life including the above mentioned 8 items, and the relationship to a better quality of life (Guest, 2002). The awareness of work-life balance was examined from women brokers' career satisfaction level in real estate, which is an intrinsic element of career satisfaction. This study aimed to encourage a better quality of life for female real estate brokers and at the same time, retain the productivity levels at the workplace when encountering role strain. The concept of role strain (also known as role conflict), according to Goode (1960), combines social behavior to social structure, connecting "the observed acts and incidental values of the individual with the institutional imperatives or requisites of the society" (p. 484). Role strain is defined as "the felt difficulty in fulfilling role obligations" (p. 483), which is unique to every person according to their circumstances.

Role strain may occur due to conflict of time, place, or resources; for example, female real estate brokers may need to work excessive hours to earn money to support their families, yet also be at home to provide care for their children or parents while also attending school. These roles may not always be harmonious. The result of unsuccessfully merging multiple roles may cause poor health. Michelle Obama (2014) stated,

Women in particular need to keep an eye on their physical and mental health, because if they're rushing to and from appointments and errands, and don't have a lot of time to take care of themselves. They need to do a better job of putting themselves higher on their own "to do list." (p. 1)

The stress associated with unbalanced lifestyles may increase individual's health risks. The overall goal is to balance the female real estate brokers' personal and professional lives so they can become happier, healthier, and more productive. Oprah Winfrey stated, "I've

learned that you can't have everything and do everything at the same time" (Prosperity Quotes, 2015). The aim is to provide work-life balance support, to meet the unique and different challenges faced to combat stress in both work and life.

Female real estate brokers can incorporate success techniques and strategies into their lives to create a better balance between their personal and professional lifestyles, eliminating workaholism and burnout. Many of these techniques are grounded in historical data that point to the stressors of sustaining dual roles. These ideal success strategies in this study may empower female real estate brokers with resources for creating a dynamic intervention to promote healthy relationships. Historically, numerous significant portions of legislation (e.g., Civil Rights Act of 1964, Pregnancy Discrimination Act, Family Medical Leave Act) assisted women to acquire work, and, as women frequently had general caretaking obligations for families, promoted work-life balance proposals as well. However, similar specified legislative standards, research shows that employees manage to feel contented attending to their non-work-related needs (i.e., by taking family or health-related leave that they are legally entitled) only when organizational policies and procedures, cultural norms, supervisors, and surrounding coworkers also display a commitment to work-life balance (Kossek, Baltes, & Matthews, 2011). Therefore, organizational encouragement is serious for fostering a healthful work-life balance.

Foley (2005) wrote many books designed to share success strategies with women seeking career and personal success. She suggested, "[Ten] ways to create a remarkable career: Don't take things personally, build relationships, network, market your value, know how to be treated, take a stand, thrive on change, know your worth, embrace politics, and think strategically while acting remarkable" (p. 57). Foley also listed strategies for hiring the right people, building the

right reputation, creating boundaries and building financial security, which could all be utilized for work-life balance. Another strategy uses mentoring and coaching programs for women.

Women who have obtained leadership roles serve as role models for the younger and inexperienced generation of women. Significant power will be left on the table if this mentoring does not happen (Smallen-Grob, 2003). These strategies are essential elements to incorporate for female real estate brokers to achieve a balance in work and life.

### **Work-Life Balance: Theoretical Framework**

The framework focus is on the proximity of issues (work characteristics, non-work characteristics, and personal characteristics). Gray (2009) stated the epistemology is a philosophy that determines valid knowledge. Therefore, the examination of the literature focused on the knowledge of coping strategies for female real estate brokers. This research revealed that most studies regarding work-life balance are focused on frameworks for coping with stress, regardless of the situation. However, no specific framework has been designed for coping with stress related to the work-life balance of female real estate brokers. The closest thing to this theory is the ecological conceptual framework (Bubolz & Sontag, 1993; Hill, Hawkins, Ferris, & Weitzman, 2001) and work-life substantive theory or spillover theory that is incorporated in the methodology (Zedeck, 1992).

Barnett, Marshall, and Pleck (1994) postulated that negative work-life balance spill over includes more pronounced psychological distress due to poor marital and parental role quality, decreased job satisfaction (Burke, 1989), and decreased quality of work life (Higgins, Duxbury, & Irving, 1992). Thus, a strong work-life mesosystem is recommended and accepts that the work microsystem and the home life micro system considerably affect one another through a penetrable margin (Bromet, Drew, & Parkinson, 1990).

This research study proposes to focus on the strategies and coping mechanisms that female real estate brokers may utilize for work-life balance on a small, medium, or large scale. An examination of the literature reveals there is no precise framework designed for coping with stress associated with the work life balance of female real estate brokers. Work-life balance is how to create a daily routine for productivity and happiness without burnout.

Cooperrider, Whitney, and Starvovs (2000) postulated that appreciative inquiry (AI) is the development and preparation of inquiring about the strength of a system's measurements to capture, anticipate, and heighten constructive possibility. The appreciative inquiry method can shift real estate leaders' seeing an appreciative approach that will assist them to focus on what is (positive) right in their community, organization, group, or team rather than focusing on who, what, and where is wrong (negative). Appreciative Inquiry is a four-step process of research and discovery. The four steps include:

1. discovery: Involves inquiry into the positive
2. dream: The vision and purpose will form and connect people.
3. design: Connected by the dream. people will cooperate to design a system.
4. destiny: realizing the transformation of the organizational paradigms

The discovery phase is centered and designed as the positive core of the interview process. This phase is a methodical survey into the positive ability of the participants. The participants become aware of the positive core, appreciation increases, hope develops, and the community becomes larger. In the dream phase, the female real estate brokers can describe reality. Moving forward, potential possibilities of invariable may emerge in the dialogue and a dream may begin to form. In this phase, the female real estate brokers may become deeply connected as they begin to encounter the vision of a familiar passionate purpose.

However, in the design phase, the female real estate brokers may share a similar dream or idea. Design involves the association of inquiry, through the creating of the categorical interview questions, involving the fifteen participants. This four-step process may make the potential findings of their dream a reality (Cooperrider, Whitney, & Starvovs, 2000).

Appreciative inquiry can be transformational of existing paradigms. Therefore, as female real estate brokers' thoughts, ideas, and suggestions change they may realize how they may interpret the real estate industry to make a difference. AI intentionally tries to find work from an optimistic fundamental change. AI accepts that each living system has many vacant, rich, and inspiring accounts of the positive. As female real estate brokers are brought together individually but collectively through this research study to pay attention to the interview questions, the intent is to revolutionize the real estate organizational lifestyle through work-life balance. The goal is for female real estate brokers to examine their occupations and lifestyles to interpret the industry of real estate and make a difference. This study may create an awareness for the female real estate brokers to realize and create work-life balance in their lives, which is creating destiny.

Appreciative inquiry (AI) affects organizational development, and full participation will establish the communication barriers that engender a voice for female real estate brokers in the real estate industry and their organizations.

- Inquiry is intervention.
- Inquiry breaks down communication barriers.
- Inquiry builds unity.
- Inquiry links relationships to a positive core.
- Inquiry helps foster positive organizational change.

The process of inquiring appreciatively will examine how to build a community between the participants as interview questions and answers are conveyed. The focus will be on techniques and strategies of successful female real estate brokers challenges, strengths, innovations, and achievements. If the drive of the participants' feedback is connected to their positive core, it will be achievable to connect the responsiveness to a change agenda, and positive change may become effectively organized (Cooperrider, Whitney, & Starvovs, 2000). The following is a change agenda suited to Appreciative Inquiry:

- business improvement
- cultural transformation
- customer satisfaction
- leadership development
- morale and retention
- organization design; and strategic planning

### **Kotter's Eight-Stage Change Model**

Often communities are asked to adjust to an environmental condition and/or unique and different changes. It is often difficult, perhaps even stressful, for those involved in the change process (Kotter, 1996). Leaders who explore how to drive change often overestimate how much change they can force through a system (Kotter, 1996). They also underestimate how difficult it may be to force people outside of their cultures and comfort zones. Thus, several forms or fashions of resistance to change may be encountered within the organization, such as anxiety over change, complacency, fear of the unknown, habits, lack of leadership, or low morale (Kotter, 1996; Robbins & Judge, 2010). The resistant forces may overwhelm an unstructured or nonexistent change mechanism or strategy (Kotter, 1996). Moving forward, leading change



initiatives will successfully create motivation and power that will be sufficient to overcome the obstacles of resistant forces by creating and utilizing the eight-stage process, proven and driven by high-quality leadership (Kotter, 1996).

Kotter wrote:

Management is a set of procedures that keeps a complex system, a group of people, or innovative technology operating efficiently. Burns defined the perception of transformational change in leaders as the occurrence of “when one person takes the initiative in making contact with the others for the purpose of an exchange of valued things” (1996, p. 12).

Transformational leadership is present if a person or group of people engage others in an approach where both leaders and followers nurture each other to a greater level of morality and motivations (Burns, 1998).

Kotter’s eight steps of change model (1996) should be utilized for this entire change process for the successful women leaders. Because of the deficiency of work-life balance, female real estate brokers and the real estate industry is lacking. Change is urgently needed in the real estate organization; not just a little change, but a permanent change that enhances the organization, provides tools for female real estate brokers, and balances the organization. But “change remains a crucial challenge for organizations” (Cohen, 2005).

Kotter (1996) stated that management is a set of processes that keeps change uncomplicated. The eight steps are defined in Kotter’s *Leading Change* (1996) and additionally defined in *The Heart of Change* (Kotter & Cohen, 2005). Dan Cohen added directives in his book *The Heart of Change Field Guide* (2005). The work of Kotter and Cohen was utilized as the foundation for executing Kotter’s eight-stage change model for female real estate brokers.

**Step 1: Establishing a sense of urgency.** The first step in the change process is a vital foundation for leading the change strategy. Without a strong, clear, and concise sense of urgency, complacency can prevent the project from moving out of the initiation phase (Kotter, 1996). The application in an organization is what creates a sense of urgency. By acknowledging employees and distinguishing them by understanding there is a need for a change can be challenging, but there are multiple paths that may contribute in this method. Kotter (1996) stated, “Establishing a sense of urgency is crucial to gaining needed cooperation” (p. 35). Since the female real estate brokers’ sustainability may be in jeopardy due to a lack of work-life balance, the researcher may clarify it during the interviews with an awareness of infusing work-life balance into their lifestyles. To increase urgency, Kotter & Cohen, “suggested that any fear, anger, or contentment and complacency that has built up in the organization must be reduced”.

While the researcher does not believe anger is present within the organizations, fear and anxiety about the future are definitely present in the real estate organizations. Therefore, the female real estate brokers must not have a spirit of fear and become resistant. In order for change to become a successful outcome, they must be willing to embrace the change without any hesitation. At times, there may be resistance to change both from leaders and from the female real estate brokers because of a culture of rejection may exist. Many leaders become content and complacent in their comfort zones and are not willing to adapt or adopt change in the working environments.

Therefore, in a culture of denial, leaders and followers occasionally avoid what they need to do, what they do not want to do, what they hear, or what they see. The main objective to overcoming working cultures of phobia and denial is to create an atmosphere with a sense of change urgency. Leaders may become overwhelmed with information about forthcoming

opportunities, obtain rewards for following those opportunities, and how in the present state of the organization they may be unable to conceive those opportunities. Hope is not a strategy to change the organization; leaders and subordinates must act in order to accomplish change (Cohen, 2005). However, the nonbelievers will need more convincing to change their mindsets.

**Step 2: Creating the guiding coalition.** In step two of the change process, organizations must have the right people, place, and timing to create a guiding coalition. The change may be the idea of one person or a group of individuals to be executed in an organization to initiate and propel the implementation process. However, it is not always possible for one person to implement change successfully. There is power in numbers, the utilitarian approach works for the greater good of everyone in the organization. Cohen (2005) postulated making a transparent case for change that plainly distinguishes the gaps among existing organizations as routine and expected performance, identifies the causes of the organization's contentment, and clarifies the roles of leaders and managers in executing the change without any ambiguity (p. 14). Therefore, by requesting to move forward with formulating and infusing work-life balance in female real estate brokers' lifestyles, healthy emotional, financial, mental, spiritual, and physical benefits will create happiness.

**Step 3: Developing a vision and strategy.** Kotter (1996) defined a vision as a sensible and appealing representation of the future, driven by an understood or unambiguous review on why individuals should work toward the creation of the future goal. A compelling vision serves to solidify the direction of change, motivate individuals to achieve in the path, and direct the activities of different individuals in an effective manner (Kotter, 1996). In the third stage of the change process, a good vision serves three significant purposes. A clear vision and strategy are imperative to the successful implementation of a change in an organization. The first step is

clarifying the overall direction for change; the second step is to motivate individuals in the right direction, even if the early steps cause discomfort; and the third step is to help organize activities. Thus, clarifying the direction of change was significant because people frequently agree to disagree on directions, are disorganized, or wonder whether the significant change is actually necessary (Kotter, 1996).

Exploring a vision and strategy was one of the first phases established with the female real estate brokers in this study. The collaborative ideas were presented to all of the selected participants for approval preceding the face-to-face interviews. Also, developing the vision of work-life balance became the watermark of change for implementing change with the female real estate brokers. Strategies to develop the vision regarding work-life balance were incorporated into the study. The implementation required many strategies but bonding and planning strategies together was used for developing most of the vision for work-life balance for female real estate brokers.

**Step 4: Communicating the vision.** In step four of the change process, communicating the vision, according to Kotter (1996), may assist to utilize purposes even if it is comprehensive by a significant individual. Kotter recommended that there be tens of thousands of communications throughout a change process to assist those implementing and accepting the change. As effective as both communication and messaging are in the change process, exemplifying the behavior can be even more influential. Clear messaging and classic behavior provide the communication necessary to help members of an organization achieve the change vision. Effective communication comes in multiple forms, such as meetings, memos, and newspapers; two-way communication may have more powerful methods. In this study, the effort was made to make sure participants were clear and comfortable when referring to the vision,

with simplicity for communicating the vision for change. The real power of leading a change initiative is delivered when a transformational vision is unleashed across an organization, including its stakeholders, through a compelling communication strategy (Kotter, 1996).

**Step 5: Empowering for broad-based action.** In step five, the change process is to empower a broad base of female real estate brokers to take action. This happens by eliminating difficulties to the realization of the change vision at this point in the process. The four biggest obstacles that often must be attacked are *structures, skills, systems, and supervisors* (Kotter, 1996). Aligning broad-based action with vision systems will empower the female real estate brokers and the researcher to accept the action plan. During the first step, the female real estate brokers needed to buy into the problems at hand. Therefore, the plan to empower broad-based action involved communicating the same vision, making structures compatible with the vision, providing skills to the female real estate brokers to empower them, and aligning information and personnel systems to the vision (Kotter, 1996). Throughout the process of change, leaders were asked to forget their former traditions and behavior work patterns. This stage may create a challenge if historical patterns have accumulated over a long period of time.

**Step 6: Generating short-term wins.** Short-term wins are visible, timely, and clearly related to those involved in the change effort. Short-term wins are significant for creating a new culture of change and for sustaining the effort to make changes over a substantial amount of time. When the female real estate brokers built a work-life balance model, this was a victory to celebrate. Short-term wins need to be significant and show members of the organization that what they are doing pays dividends and creates effective results. Short-term wins that are visible, timely, and meaningful are important to creating trustworthiness to support efforts to

make changes over a significant period of time. Additionally, enthusiasm may diminish if individuals do not feel their labors are unworthy to receive honor (Cohen, 2005). According to Kotter (1996), enthusiastic followers in organizations will stay the distance regardless of what happens. However, the majority of followers need to see indications that the efforts are worthwhile.

**Step 7: Consolidating gains and producing more change.** Cohen (2005) stated that step 7 is critical to ensure that the researcher will persist in monitoring and measure the progress, and not declare victory prematurely. The researcher must always be on alert for gains of any kind. A prime example of business performance is when real estate sales increase within a quarter, and female real estate brokers can celebrate and set future goals for the next quarter. Aligning and monitoring female real estate brokers was a systematic intervention of work-life balance—an organizational transformation revealing organizational structure, technology, processes, measurement, and rewards. The goal was for female real estate brokers, the California Association of Realtors, the National Association of Realtors, staff, and students to interact and convert this vision and strategy into a business performance in alignment for change to succeed. For short-term wins to be constant through the change process, leaders must retain their concentration, communication, and message of the vision.

It is not rare for leaders to lose focus at this point, by celebrating prematurely and decrease rather than increase their efforts. Accordingly, the challenge for leaders in this step is double: to continue passing on their drive and commitment to leaders and followers to sustain the accomplishment through total implementation of the change, and to display and measure improvement on a constant basis. (Cohen, 2005, p. 181)

The message must be made public through continuous support and appropriate communication. This effort requires significant development to maintain the energy of change. This important transformation may increase awareness and inquiries about the need for the infusion of work-life balance for present and future female real estate brokers.

**Step 8: Anchoring new approaches in culture.** In step eight of the change process, Kotter (1996) noted that culture refers to norms of behavior and shared values between a group of individuals. In several change efforts, the fundamentals of the old culture are not incompatible with the new vision. However, some specific norms will be incompatible. The challenge is to supplement the innovative practices of the old origins while eradicating the unreliable sections. The female real estate brokers, in their organizations and individual firms, can apply the confidence and skills with leverage to create a new culture of learning to keep everything running at a prime level infused with work-life balance. By implementing a change strategy, the outcomes were redesigned for the female real estate brokers, community, and literature for future study. The anchoring strategy recognized that culture change would come last, after successful mapping through Kotter's first seven steps (Kotter, 1996). The commitment in this step can only be achieved if this philosophy is anchored in the real estate brokers culture (Kotter, 1996).

### **Herzberg's Two Factor Theory**

Frederick Herzberg's two-factor theory separates motivation and job satisfaction into two groups of factors. They are the motivation factors and hygiene factors. According to Herzberg:

The motivating factors are the six "job content" factors that include achievement, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement, and growth. These are the characteristics that the successful female real estate brokers may find intrinsically

rewarding outcomes from their work. Hygiene factors are the “job context” factors, which include company policy, supervision, relationship with supervision, work conditions, relationship with peers, salary, personal life, relationship with subordinates, status, and job security. (Robbins & Judge, 2011, p. 203)

Essentially, the theory distinguishes the factors between intrinsic motivators and extrinsic motivators. The intrinsic motivators are known as the job content factors, defining things that the individuals actually do in their work—their responsibilities and achievements. These factors can provide an excessive amount of job satisfaction an employee feels at work. The job context factors, on the other hand, are the extrinsic factors that individuals do not have much control over; they relate more to the environment in which people work than to the nature of the work itself (Robbins & Judge, 2011). An intrinsic motivator for female real estate brokers may be to acquire Telework to work remotely from home, an alternative work arrangement. This arrangement enables real estate brokers to perform their work in their households or at another agreed-upon place. It may contribute to the eradication of some disturbing factors and creativity barriers and reasons for dissatisfaction. Working from home means a lower level of supervision, which may also contribute to the eradication of dissatisfaction. Successful female real estate brokers understand the possibility of working at home as convenient and productive. They may feel more satisfied with more independent work styles. Individuals working from home or another agreed place are often more productive.

### **Organizational Change**

According to Ramirez and Mallette (2007), leaders must comprehend and be aware of their environments before developing, processing, and infusing organizational change in a structured environment. In the real estate industry, female real estate brokers have a compelling



need for work-life balance. Therefore, if these leaders do not know their organizational deficiencies they will not be able to engender change to meet the challenges within their personal and professional lifestyles and bridge the gaps. The social, political, economic, legal, intercultural, and technological environments (SPELIT) power matrix is a brilliant leadership tool to articulate and elaborate leadership assistance to infuse the change that engenders an effective change process.

The SPELIT tool measures the strengths and weakness of the social, political, economic, technological, intercultural and legal environments of an organization. These individual environmental influences have a considerable influence on the change process. Some of the influences may threaten the change process in the real estate industry more than others.

According to Ramirez and Mallette (2007), these influences are considerable, and SPELIT identifies this type of influence as a social network influence because the social efforts motivate employees through challenging circumstances. The intercultural environment influence may also have an effect on the real estate environment that can help the female real estate brokers remove limitations, reveal the anonymity, and never become complacent because of the ambiguity of the lack of work-life balance. Therefore, incorporating the SPELIT tool gives a strategy to successful female real estate brokers who are leaders in their organizations. This method is important for an organization that needs to adapt and adjust to external, internal, or organizational factors as well as changes in the environment. Burn and Stalker (1961) studied organization structure and its environment and found that organization structure is influenced by moving external and internal markets as well as technology. An organization that is surrounded by a stagnant environment will have different organization structures when compared to one that

is surrounded by a dynamic environment. Furthermore, each real estate organization may not necessarily encounter the same environment.

## **Summary**

Chapter two reviewed the theoretical framework. The theories included gender (women in real estate), leadership, ethics, successful women in real estate knowledge, real estate culture, and trait theories. Historical perceptions of female real estate brokers and the deficiencies of work-life balance were also presented, as well as pioneering female real estate brokers, career advancement, leadership, barriers, and the lack of work-life balance. This review of the literature summarized the epistemological framework for the intervention of infusing work-life balance for female real estate brokers in the real estate industry. Additionally, to decrease stressors related to dual roles, this stress leads to a precise need for coping strategies.

This research is resilient regarding strategies that affect female real estate brokers. The women may utilize these strategies to obtain balance and cope with the stressors related to the lack of work-life balance. This study utilized the theoretical frameworks found in the ecological conceptual framework strategies for dealing with stress (Bubolz & Sontag, 1993; Hill et al., 2001) and work-life substantive theory or spillover theory was incorporated in the study (Zedeck, 1992). A void regarding the work-life balance challenges of female real estate brokers in the literature has been noted. In chapter three, the principal researcher explored if female real estate brokers desired to incorporate these coping strategies into their lives for work-life balance. The interview process allowed probing questions for women who aspire to incorporate their professional and personal lifestyles simultaneously, including the gaps of work-life balance.

## **Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study is to examine the strategies and techniques utilized by successful female real estate brokers to meet the challenges of work-life balance and burnout. Second, understanding these strategies and techniques will contribute to the study of successful female real estate brokers who are actively involved in leadership, and who serve as mentors for aspiring female real estate brokers/leaders. Third, interpreting participants' experiences and strategies will be best achieved by using a qualitative research design with a phenomenological approach (Creswell, 2003). This chapter describes the method of qualitative research and design utilizing a phenomenological approach, and why it was chosen for this study. The population and sampling method will be reviewed, as well as the sample response rate.

Considerations for human subjects are explored to ensure that safety and privacy will be guaranteed. The validity and reliability of the study are addressed, as well as the thoughts, ideas, and suggestions regarding the researcher's personal biases. The data collection process and interview protocol are shared. Finally, the process for analyzing data and identifying findings from the research will be presented. This research is intended to provide to the real estate industry.

Female real estate brokers who are leaders need to display integrity and transparency at all times to benefit their careers and add value to their professional reputations. Due to the influence that integrity and transparency have in cultivating aspiring real estate brokers and participation, this study will help individuals pursue or improve their leadership qualities in

real estate. The commonalities in individual strategies and techniques by successful female real estate leaders can be considered and examined by future leaders to develop their leadership skills and impressions. This chapter also discusses the research methods that were employed to accomplish the purpose of this study and answer the research questions that were proposed.

### **Nature of Study**

This descriptive study employed a qualitative approach in addressing the identified research questions. The study was concerned with the discovery of common patterns or themes that developed from the data rather than a strict statistical interpretation of the data (Creswell, 2013). For the purpose of this descriptive study, the following research questions were asked. These questions were utilized to guide the research and direct the principal investigator to the major themes revealed during the analysis phase.

### **Restatement of Research Questions**

1. What professional and personal challenges are faced by female real estate brokers in implementing strategies and practices that led to their success?
2. What strategies and practices are employed by female real estate brokers?
3. How do female real estate brokers measure their success?
4. Based on their experiences, what recommendations would female real estate brokers make for aspiring future real estate brokers to become successful?

### **Methodology**

The methodology and research design direct a principal researcher in designing and implementing the study to achieve the intended goal. The design is the strategic blueprint for conducting a study (Burns & Grove, 1998). Methodology, according to Mouton (1996), is the means or method of achieving an outcome. Polit and Hungler (1999) referred to methodology as

the process of following steps and procedures for gathering and analyzing data in a research investigation. The research design connects the methods of research, the philosophy, and the inquiry strategies (Creswell, 2009).

A qualitative methodology study was chosen to gain an understanding of (a) the challenges encountered by successful female real estate brokers, (b) the strategies and practices they employ in creating and sustaining successful work environments, (c) the tools they use to measure the effectiveness of their implementation strategies, and (d) the recommendations these leaders give for aspiring and current leaders. A qualitative study emphasizes the qualities of entities and processes; the emphases are not measured in terms of quantity or frequency.

### **Phenomenological Approach**

Creswell (2013) defined the phenomenological approach as “the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon” (p. 77). The focus of this approach will be on the commonality of the lived experiences within the group of fifteen successful female real estate brokers. Thus, “research design and data analysis are interdependent; one makes little sense without the other” (Dane, 2011, p. 80). The methodology used in the design of this study is phenomenological, which offers a descriptive, reflective, interpretive, and engaging method of inquiry from an obtained experience (Richards & Morse, 2013). The goal of this methodology is to describe the meaning of experiences from the lens of someone who has experienced the concept or phenomenon. Phenomenology is also a philosophical perspective that requires researchers to suspend their own beliefs in order to comprehend the participants’ understanding and experience of the inquiry concept (Creswell, 2013).

A phenomenological approach differs from a narrative inquiry in that it describes the common meaning for multiple individuals of their experiences of a shared phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). The phenomenon reviewed in this study was the collective experiences of successful female real estate brokers establishing a culture of work-life balance. Additionally, this work explored challenges to be overcome in the process of implementing work-life balance practices and recommendations for sustainability. Thus, comprehension of these experiences can only be understood through the lens of these current participants within the context of their real estate environment or organizations.

Phenomenological designs authorize themes to be developed from narrative descriptions. Nonrestrictive instructions and open-ended questions allow broader descriptions from participants. Researchers may provide follow-up questions that elucidate and maintain the focus of the research questions. The information gathered is intentionally subjective to provide an understanding of the context and the participants' behaviors by developing themes that arise from the data (Creswell, 2013). The fundamental goal of this approach will be to arrive at a description of the nature of the particular phenomenon of a universal essence (Creswell, 2013).

### **Research Design**

According to Creswell (2013), research design requires methodological choices to be created in accordance with the research topic. Thus, by creating a design that is relational will capture the voice of the successful female real estate brokers who have an implicit familiarity with the topic to be studied, and which is generative in which new perceptions can be discovered. Therefore, the research will encapsulate the following:

- appreciative approach
- conceptual framework

- framework analysis
- narrative methods
- sample
- work, life: balance and leadership literature and theories
- evidence of findings utilizing components of appreciative approach.

The appreciative lens will be accomplished through the conceptual framework (incorporating the research questions, the problem statement, and appropriate qualitative methodology) to examine the literature and the narratives (including the treatment of the narratives of the participants) to create the findings in relative to the research questions. The narratives of semi-structured interviews will allow the fifteen participants to provide their experiences and insights, and generate suggestions for their ideas and thoughts for improvements.

**Participant selection.** The unit of analysis for this study is a successful female real estate broker in California. The data for this study were collected from the population of successful female real estate brokers who reside in California. These participants were selected by purposive sampling. Careful considerations were taken to protect the participant's rights as required by Pepperdine University and the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Participants selected for this study were successful female real estate brokers who have experienced the phenomenon being investigated. A California-based woman real-estate broker is the unit of analysis.

**Purposive sampling.** Gray (2009) defined purposive (or purposeful) sampling as a non-probability sampling strategy in which participants are selected because they are considered typical of a wider population. According to Dane (2011), purposive sampling involves the

researcher providing directed procedures for obtaining a certain element. To further reduce the list, the researcher uses a maximum variation to ensure the diversity of the sample.

Ideally, the sample in a qualitative study should be large enough so that saturation is achieved. To determine the probability of the sample size for this study, Leedy and Ormrod (2010) were consulted. They recommend a range of five to twenty-five participants in a qualitative study. Accordingly, the sample size used in this study was made of 15 female real estate brokers with active real estate licenses, living in California.

Participant selection followed a three-step process. First, a sampling frame, in the form a master list, containing a list of female real estate brokers in California was obtained from The California Bureau of Real Estate. Next, criteria for inclusion and exclusion were applied to the names on the master list to reduce the number of names on the list. When more than 20 names remained on the list, criteria for maximum variation was applied to reduce the names on the list to 20. From the list of 20, participants were invited to participate in the study. When 15 participants agreed to join the study, the participant selection process was complete.

**Criteria for inclusion.** For the purpose of this study, the criteria for inclusion were:

- women with active California real estate broker licenses for at least 5 years
- more than five years of experience in the real estate field
- primarily engaged in the sale of residential real estate
- work with both buyers and sellers
- leaders in a real estate organization, or own and/or operate their own firms

**Criteria for exclusion.** For the purpose of this study, the criteria for exclusion were:

- female real estate agents with only a real estate sales license
- those who live outside of California



- must be available for an interview in January and February 2017.

**Criteria for maximum variation.** Criteria for maximum variation includes:

- participants from different age groups
- participants with different marital status
- participants with geographic dispersion

**Sources of data.** Data for the research was obtained through semi-structured interviews.

The interview questions were created by the principal researcher and analyzed for reliability and validity by a panel of experts and the dissertation committee. Data from the semi-structured interviews were retrieved with multiple voice recorders so potential technical difficulties were avoided. Additionally, the data were transcribed and analyzed accordingly.

**Selection of human subjects' consideration.** This research was conducted in a manner consistent with Title 45, Part 46 of the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, Pepperdine University's IRB. Data collection was done at multiple real estate locations. Previous to starting this study, written permission to conduct the study utilizing real estate brokers, as well as site permissions, were secured. An individual consent form was shared with and signed by each participant in the study (see Appendix A). A detailed application was submitted to the Pepperdine University Graduate and Professional School IRB, including the IRB application Informed Consent Form (see Appendix B) and Interview Protocol designed for the study. Participation in the study was voluntary. Individuals' identifying information was removed from any retained transcripts. Participants' rights included: (a) the right to be fully informed about the study's purpose and the involvement and time required for participation, (b) the right to confidentiality and anonymity, (c) the right to question the investigator, (d) the right to refuse to participate without any negative ramifications, (e) the right to refuse to answer any

questions, and (f) the right to withdraw from the study at any time (Richards & Morse, 2013, p. 263).

The participants were assured confidentiality and anonymity, verbally and in writing, and informed consents were secured. A written thank-you note and a copy of the completed research were sent to participants; no stipend was given. A number of different risks, benefits, and mitigations to participants were considered. The most significant benefit of participating in this study is that participants obtained a copy of the findings, which will optimistically improve their performance in their current positions or assist them in preparing for future positions.

By sharing the commonality of strategies, techniques, and challenges in leadership, participants can learn how other successful female real estate brokers who are leaders practice work-life balance and can compare and contrast their styles, strategies, and practice. Participants may fear that participating in a study will have a significant impact on their reputations at their organizations or in their career paths. Participants were specifically assured that no negative consequences would result from their participation; all of their data was kept in confidence, and personal identifiable records were anonymous. When the study was completed, all data with personal, identifiable information was destroyed. Demographic data were gathered and stripped of identifiable characteristics, and instead were reviewed in collection. The principal researcher was responsible for safeguarding the commitments to maintain confidentiality. The commitments in this study have written permission and request for the participants' participation, and Pepperdine's IRB to uphold.

**Confidentiality considerations.** The Pepperdine University Institutional Review Board (IRB) protects the rights and welfare of the human subjects who were interviewed for this study. The plan for IRB approval was to submit required forms and adjust the application as

needed prior to the fall 2016 deadline. Participation in the study was voluntary. The anonymity of participants and the real estate organizations was maintained. The confidentiality of the research followed the requirements of the Institution Review Board. Therefore, regulations required signed participant authorization informing the participants of the process and confidentiality.

Participants had the options of participating or opting out of participation in the study. An e-mail notification and formal letter were accompanied by the consent to participate in the study. The consent form identified the purpose of the study, benefits of the study, the participants' consent to disclose their name (or not), the understanding that the study was voluntary, acknowledgment of the tape-recording of the interview, and the principal investigator's contact information. The signed consent forms were archived appropriately and will remain in a secure, locked location for at least three years. Participants were not coerced to participate and could withdraw from the study at any time without adverse consequences.

All information will remain confidential and private, and pseudonyms were used to maintain confidentiality. Participants' personal information, such as names and addresses, are stored in a secure and locked location. Additionally, hard and electronic copies of the interview notes and the recordings are protected. Electronic files are protected with a password identifiable only by the researcher, and hard copy files are locked in a file cabinet in the principal researcher's home for three years and thereafter will be destroyed.

Participants' names will not be assigned to responses, and responses will remain confidential unless otherwise noted in the consent form. A risk of the study included the pressure on the participants' time. IRB approval of a waiver or alteration of informed consent was not required for any undisclosed information. Participants did not receive compensation for

participation in the study. All recordings will also be kept confidential and safely guarded in a passcode-protected computer. In addition to these recognized principles, the research methodology employed Pepperdine University's research ethics policy. Fraizer (2009) stated, "All research containing human participants must be conducted in accordance with accepted ethical, federal, and professional standards for research and that all such research must be approved by one of the university's Institutional Review Boards" (p. 138). Furthermore, 45 C.F.R. 46.101, subpart A, Basic HHS Policy for Protection of Human Research subjects, section (b)(2), states:

(b) Unless otherwise required by department or agency heads, research activities in which the only involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the following categories are exempt from this policy.

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside of the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation. (p. 3)

**Data collection method.** The data collection begins with contacting potential participants. Data were obtained from successful female real estate brokers within various real estate locations in California, including the Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Diego and Ventura counties. The method of data collection was in the form of semi-structured interviews with women classified as successful real estate brokers who are leaders in their field. The data

collection focused on individual strategies and techniques of leadership in regard to work-life balance. As aspiring and current leaders articulate and execute their visions as leaders of their organizations, they exemplify ways to interpret the vision into results. The phenomenon measured included recollections of past and present experiences, and future aspirations or anticipations. Data were collected regarding a leader's actions, in regard to goal-oriented strategies and techniques for a successful transition into work-life balance. Utilizing interviews as a means of data collection allowed for the possibility of identifying additional questions and concerns to be pursued in the research process based on the responses provided by the interviewees.

Once participants agreed to joined the study, a package containing a copy of the informed consent form and a list of interview questions was sent to them. The researcher then made appointments with the participants for an oral interview at a place convenient and comfortable to the participants. Most communication with the participants took place on the phone or by email.

### **Interview Protocol**

An interview protocol form was utilized to confirm that the same methods were surveyed with each interview participant. The interview protocol form was used to take written notations during the progress of each interview. Additionally, a semi-structured interview, a pre-designed and selected set of open-ended questions, was utilized. This method allowed the principal researcher to request certain data while receiving in-depth responses from interviewee participants (Saldana, 2008).

**Interview techniques.** The interview technique was semi-structured (Gray, 2009), which is vital for utilizing the phenomenological approach. Data were obtained from successful female real estate brokers within various real estate locations in California, including the

Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Diego and Ventura counties. The method of data collection was in the form of semi-structured interviews from those classified as successful female real estate brokers who are leaders within their field. The data collection will focus on individual strategies and techniques of leadership in regards to acquiring work-life, balance into aspiring and current leaders when articulating and enforcing their vision as a new leader of an organization; and aspiring real estate brokers will exemplify in interpreting that vision into results. The phenomenon measured will face recollections of past and present experiences, and future aspirations or anticipations. Data will be collected regarding a leader's actions, in regards to goal-oriented movements, to successfully transition into work-life, balance. During the interview, the principal investigator listened attentively to the statements of each participant. The art of active listening is to suspend judgment and opinion with the goal of accurately hearing and interpreting the participants' verbal and nonverbal communications (Creswell, 2007). Nonverbal strategies include paying close attention to the participant's body language, tone, gestures, and posture. Questions can be paraphrased if necessary by rephrasing the questions in a different form, fashion, or wording. Also, active listening involves a strategic use of silence to produce answers to the questions (Creswell, 2007).

**Reliability and validity of the study.** The qualitative research methodology develops comprehension through a broad review of the data and obtains meaning and themes that arise from these reports (Creswell, 2007). However, to remain accurate to the data, standards for validating and evaluating the tools and instruments for reliability are defined. Lincoln and Guba (as cited in Creswell, 2007) described the validity and reliability phase as ensuring authenticity, confirmability, credibility, and internal and external validation (p. 202). The validity of this instrument was established to ensure that the questions on the protocol effectively addressed the

constructs in the research questions. To assist this process, a four-step validation process was utilized.

A two-step validation process was employed: (a) prima facie validity and (b) peer and expert review validity. The validity of the instrument was established to ensure that the interview questions used adequately addressed the constructs in the research questions.

**Step 1: Prima facie validity.** This first step of the validation process is based on a thorough review of the literature. A set of research questions were appropriately related to and answered by the interview questions (see Table 1).

Table 1

*Research Questions and Corresponding Interview Questions*

Research Questions (RQ)	Corresponding Interview Questions (IQ)
<p>RQ 1. What career challenges are encountered by successful female real estate brokers in implementing strategies and practices that have led to their success?</p>	<p>IQ 1. What has been some of the most significant challenges (direct or indirect) you have encountered as a successful woman real estate broker?</p> <p>Follow up questions with respect to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● culture</li> <li>● administration</li> <li>● socioeconomic factors</li> </ul> <p>IQ 2. What in your own formal education, experience or training prepared you to overcome these challenges?</p> <p>IQ 3. How did you cope with and/or overcome those challenges?</p> <p>IQ 4. Do you think it is more of a challenge as a leader for a major recognized firm as a successful woman real estate broker or being an owner/operator of an independent firm?</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(continued)</p>

Research Questions (RQ)	Corresponding Interview Questions (IQ)
<p>RQ 2. What shared strategies and practices are employed by successful female real estate brokers in the real estate industry?</p>	<p>IQ 5. How would you describe your leadership style?</p> <p>IQ 6. What methodologies/strategies or philosophy(ies) have you incorporated, which you have established to become successful?</p> <p>IQ 7. Describe your leadership strengths and how they have contributed to your leadership effectiveness and success.</p> <p>IQ 8. Do you know of any leadership methodologies/strategies or philosophy(ies) other successful female real estate brokers who are leaders utilize? If so, please explain.</p> <p>IQ 9. Are they different from your own established strategies and practices? If so, please explain how.</p>
<p>RQ 3. How do successful female real estate brokers measure their success?</p>	<p>IQ 10. Describe your principles for success?</p> <p>IQ 11. How did you evaluate your goals which led to becoming a successful woman real estate broker (i.e., when did you know your goals were in alignment with your desired outcome)?</p> <p>IQ 12. What evaluation methodology or strategies do you utilize to measure your success? Also, success of other successful female real estate brokers?</p> <p>IQ 13. Who or what was influential in your measure of success?</p> <p>IQ 14. How do successful female real estate brokers measure success?</p> <p>IQ 15. Is this different from your own measurement of success? If so, please explain why or why not.</p>
<p>RQ 4. Based on your experiences, what recommendations would successful female real estate brokers make for aspiring female real estate brokers to become successful?</p>	<p>IQ16. What advice would you give aspiring female real estate brokers wanting to lead and become successful?</p> <p>IQ 17. What recommendations do you have for aspiring women who want to begin in real estate sales?</p> <p>IQ 18. Is there anything else you would like to share about your expertise, experience or education that you would like to contribute that would be relevant to this study?</p>



The generated interview questions for each research question enhanced credibility or validity to qualitative studies. Thus, “validation is an attempt to assess the accuracy of the findings, as best described by the researcher and the participants” (Creswell, 2013, pp. 249–250).

**Step 2: Peer review validity.** The second step after the initial coding provided results from the data analysis that were annotated in Table 1 and presented to the two panel members for peer review. The reviewers were doctoral candidates in the Organizational Leadership program at Pepperdine University who had previously taken courses in qualitative research. They had also done research, conducted data analysis, and coded data with similar research studies. The panel members reviewed the table to confirm the correspondence of interview questions to research questions and literature. The panel was also instructed to review the summary statement to become acquainted with the purpose and goals of the study, to read each research question and the corresponding interview questions, and to mark any unrelated interview question or suggested modifications with an asterisk. Annotations of recommendations and modifications were to be added in the provided space. As a result, the peer review panel members 1 and 2 (PM 1 & PM 2) and committee’s recommendations for revisions were provided to the principal researcher. To support this process, a two-step validation process was employed. A review table was created to indicate the correlation between each research question and the corresponding interview questions. This table displayed the initial interview questions anticipated to answer the study’s research questions. These questions were presented to two panels of reviewers to assess and deliver feedback on the applicability of each interview question in relation to answering the study’s research questions. The results of this step were shared with the dissertation committee who made a final series of recommendations. The final relationship between the interview and research questions are listed in Table 2.

Table 2

*Research Questions and Corresponding Interview Questions: Review Table*

Research Questions (RQ)	Corresponding Interview Questions (IQ)
<p>RQ 1. What career challenges are encountered by successful female real estate brokers in implementing strategies and practices that have led to their success?</p>	<p>IQ 2. What strategies did you use to overcome these professional challenges?</p> <p>IQ 4. What strategies did you use to overcome these personal challenges?</p>
<p>RQ 2. What shared strategies and practices are employed by successful female real estate brokers in the real estate industry?</p>	<p>IQ 1. What have been some of the more significant professional challenges you have encountered in your journey to become a successful woman real estate broker?</p> <p>IQ 3. What have been some of the more significant personal challenges such as work-life balance you encountered in your journey to success?</p> <p>IQ 5: How do you avoid professional burnout?</p> <p>IQ 6: What among your personal characteristics have been instrumental in your achieving personal and professional success?</p>
<p>RQ 3. How do successful female real estate brokers measure their success?</p>	<p>IQ 7: What does success mean to you professionally?</p> <p>IQ 8. Who does success mean to you in your personal life?</p> <p>IQ 9. How do you measure each?</p>
<p>RQ 4. Based on your experiences, what recommendations would successful female real estate brokers make for aspiring female real estate brokers to become successful?</p>	<p>IQ 10: If you start your journey over, what would you do differently?</p> <p>IQ11: Is there something else you would like to add?</p>

The final list of interview questions, including the order in which they were asked, is listed below:

- Introduction. You are a very successful real estate broker. Success generally comes at some cost or challenges.
- IQ 1. What have been some of the more significant professional challenges you have encountered in your journey to become a successful woman real estate broker?
- IQ 2. What strategies did you use to overcome these professional challenges?
- IQ 3. What have been some of the more significant personal challenges, such as work-life balance, you encountered on your journey to success?
- IQ 4. What strategies did you use to overcome these personal challenges?
- IQ 5. How do you avoid professional burnout?
- IQ 6. What among your personal characteristics have been instrumental in your achieving personal and professional success?
- IQ 7. What does success mean to you professionally?
- IQ 8. Who does success mean to you in your personal life?
- IQ 9. How do you measure each?
- IQ 10. If you start your journey over, what would you do differently?
- IQ11. Is there something else you would like to add?

### **Statement of Personal Bias**

Acknowledgment of personal bias is a significant process for any and all research (Creswell, 2013). The topic in this study was chosen based on the researcher's personal experiences of being a successful woman real estate broker who is a leader. The researcher in this study employed the practice of *epoché*, a Greek word meaning “to stay away or

abstain.” When utilizing epoché, preconceptions and prejudgments about the subject matter are set aside (Moustakas, 1994, p. 85). Practicing epoché or bracketing “aids the researcher to acknowledge and analyze prior knowledge, personal beliefs or theories that may have, but also to remain open to the information that is obtained through the research study” (Packer-Hewett, 2015, p. 54).

### **Bracketing**

Giorgi (2009) indicated “bracketing or *epoche* is a matter of not forgetting what has been experienced, but of not letting past knowledge be engaged while determining experiences” (p. 8). During the semi-structured interviews and throughout the study, a researcher must focus less on her behaviors, experiences, and interpretations and embrace more of the descriptions of the participants’ experiences. In this process, the researcher bracketed her own experiences in order to better understand the experiences of the participants in the study. Before the interview process began, the researcher documented her personal biases, experiences, and past knowledge of female real estate brokers and used a bracketing journal when biases or preconceived notions occurred during the research process to assist with a way to reflect on her biases as the study continued. The researcher will write the bracketed details in the actual study, so the audience can be aware of those biases when reading the results and interpretation of the data (Creswell, 2013).

### **Data Analysis**

The data analysis process began with the transcription of all the participants’ interviews. Next, the data were analyzed and coded to categorize common characteristics, experiences, ideas, themes, or insights. In addition, the researcher used a journal to record ideas, thoughts, or suggestions occurred during the data analysis process (Creswell, 2013). The process of data analysis included:

1. Data organization. Files were created and organized for data collection. The content of the oral interviews was converted through transcription.
2. Reading and annotating. The text was read and notes consisting of short phrases, ideas, or concepts were made in the margin to form the initial codes.
3. Describing the data in codes, themes, and descriptions: The researcher described personal experiences through *epoche*.
4. Describing the core of the phenomenon. The coding process required aggregating the text into smaller themes of information.
5. Classifying data into themes. Noteworthy statements were grouped into meaning components to develop themes and sub-themes.
6. Interpreting the data. The researcher developed descriptions (describing what happened), structural descriptions (descriptions about how it happened), and the essence of the experiences.
7. Representing and visualizing the data. A narration of the core experiences was developed in the study's discussion, figures, and tables.

**Coding.** As acknowledged by Moustakas (1994), throughout the analysis phase, the data is categorized by clustering meanings and themes. Therefore, to draw out meanings and themes from the data, a process identified as coding was used with the goal of creating a framework or model of significant categories from the data (Thomas, 2006). The categories as a result of coding include five features (Thomas, 2006):

- Category label. This short word or phrase may or may not be representative of the category.
- Category description. This includes key characteristics, scope, and limitations.

- Text or data related to the category. These text or data illustrate “meanings, associations, and perspectives associated with the category” (p. 240).
- Links. Links identify the relationships with other categories.
- The type of model in which the category is embedded may be integrated into a framework model, structure, or theory. Applying process coding was appropriate for this study because it “implies actions intertwined with the dynamics of time, such as those things that emerge, change, or occur in particular sequences, or become strategically implemented through time” (Hennik, Hutter, & Bailey, 2011, p. 253).

**Inter-rater reliability.** A two-step coding process was used to ensure inter-rater reliability and validity of the study.

- Step 1: The researcher coded the first the transcripts of the first three interviews completed. The coding results were shared with two peer reviewers. If the peer reviewers disagreed with the codes created, the researcher discussed the differences with them with the goal of achieving consensus. If consensus was not achieved, the dissertation committee resolved the differences.
- Step 2: After completing the first step, the researcher, using the coding approach applied and validated to the first three transcripts, proceeded to code the remaining transcripts. At the completion of this process, the results were shared and discussed with the peer review until either consensus was achieved or the dissertation committee resolved any remaining differences.

## Summary

Chapter three contains the empirical study, where the choice of method is described, followed by data and materials, participants, and a short discussion about anonymity and the procedure of the study. It elucidates how each component identifies the research design and methodology of the study. Restatement of the research questions is discussed, utilizing the qualitative research method for evaluation to address the problem and nature of the study. This chapter highlights the phenomenology of the study—to examine each participant’s personal experiences and narrate the stories of their real estate descriptions. Additionally, the sample data collection procedures and interview protocol are discussed.

The population was defined as successful female real estate brokers with five or more years of experience specifically in California, to accurately present the findings of this study. Also, an examination of the data analysis process was explained, in which voice recorders, memos, data entry, storage, and coding were utilized. A monologue of the personal biases of the principal researcher and data analysis of this study is provided. Human subjects’ concerns are also included in the study in accordance with the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The data collection was a face-to-face interview process with an in-depth, semi-structured interview—the protocol and the formation of the data collection instrument will be utilized for the study.

Finally, the validity and reliability were examined, including an explanation of the gathering of the data by a team of three professionals assisted to provide useful and constructive criticism of the interview questions recommended by the principal researcher that was utilized for the study. In conclusion, this chapter evaluated the data provided for further research and findings in Chapter Four relative contains a segment on individual occurrences followed by

interviews of the participants and analysis of structured process and procedures. An assessment of the discussions by the participants and the examinations of the principal researcher will follow in Chapter five, as well as contain the conclusions produced.



## **Chapter 4: Presentation of Findings**

Fifteen participants were interviewed for this study. The study participants were all successful female real estate brokers who are leaders in real estate, exclusively in the capacity of residential real estate. For the purpose of this study, successful female real estate brokers were identified as a licensed professional real estate broker. The functions and responsibilities identify with the objectives, missions, and visions of the organization of which their license is kept in their current company.

The participants work excessively with other real estate brokers, real estate agents, customers, vendors, and the public. They can be found holding positions such as presidents, vice presidents or as real estate brokers of their own firms, teachers in their organizations or academic institutions. Additionally, these individuals must have earned a real estate brokers license which requires a minimum of two years full-time licensed real estate salesperson experience in the last five years or a four-year degree from an accredited college or university including a major or minor in real estate. All broker license applicants must complete the following statutory required college level courses:

- the real estate practice
- legal aspects of real estate
- real estate finance
- real estate appraisal
- real estate economics or general accounting

Broker license applicants must also complete three courses from the following topics:

- real estate principles
- business law

- property management
- escrows
- real estate office administration
- mortgage loan brokering and lending
- advanced legal aspects of real estate
- advanced real estate finance
- advanced real estate appraisal
- computer applications in real estate

In addition, individuals need to complete required licensing education and pass the written California state exam.

Also, a compelling dynamic of work-life balance is necessary in order to create successful women in leadership roles. Women leaders face unlimited demands predominantly in the areas of family and their career. These competing interests have posed many challenges, sacrifices, and problems for career success. The literature mentions the dynamics of the work (career, ambition) and environment have resulted in a large amount of pressure and instability for women in leadership roles who try to balance work and lifestyle (family, health, leisure, pleasure, and spiritual development). The lack of work-life, balance may cause high levels of anxiety, conflict at home, and make it difficult to achieve and develop their full potential. As a result, women leaders can experience job burnout and stress.

It is pertinent to investigate this topic of successful female real estate brokers who face many challenges when trying to balance their personal and professional lifestyles, partly due to their demanding careers. Therefore, by overcoming these challenges and infusing work-life, the balance will eliminate burnout and create longevity in their careers. As a result, the purpose of

this descriptive phenomenological study was to examine, research, and develop a comprehensive understanding. By trying to eliminate the ambiguity of how successful female real estate brokers can achieve life changing results in their careers, infusing strategies and techniques to learn, grow, and incorporate innovative information into their business change models; and to create an effective work-life, a balanced environment is sought out in this study. In order to achieve comprehension why successful female real estate brokers desire work-life, balance, the following research questions were developed and asked of 15 participants.

### **Research Questions**

- RQ 1. What work-life balance challenges do female real estate brokers face when implementing strategies and practices that have led to their success?
- RQ 2. What work-life balance strategies and practices are employed by female real estate brokers?
- RQ 3. How do female real estate brokers measure their success while trying to achieve work-life balance?
- RQ 4. What recommendations would female real estate brokers make for aspiring real estate brokers to become successful and accomplish work-life balance?

The above four research questions were addressed by asking fifteen participants 10 interview questions with the focus of conveying what individual leadership techniques and strategies successful female real estate brokers utilize. This is paramount to infuse change within their careers to become more aware and skilled to help assist aspiring female real estate brokers to become successful. Furthermore, the participants' insights and wisdom of infusing and implementing work-life, balance to change techniques and strategies were sought after. The new initiatives will prevent imbalance and burnout and help the aspiring female real estate brokers to

stay ahead of the competition. Also, by generating a needs assessment and utilizing the change model was the plan to build the appropriate foundation, to improve the possibilities of success. The research participants acknowledged challenges and leadership, and the commonality of data was noticed in the themes. These themes were next translated and examined in their entirety throughout this chapter. This study took an organic point of view of the thoughts, ideas, and suggestions of the successful female real estate brokers to infuse Kotter's 8-Step Change Model—change management to try to create an awareness and cultivate the process of innovation and clarity to implement forthcoming change successfully.

### **Participants**

The participants were selected utilizing a purposive sampling approach. Gray (2009) defined purposive (or purposeful) sampling as a non-probability sampling strategy in which participants are selected because they are considered typical of a wider population. They can also identify with this method because they can relate to the research problem and essential phenomenon in the study. According to Creswell (2013), this selection approach is a key consideration. The first consideration is that all sample participants must have all experienced a similar phenomenon, and have stories of commonality that identify to the phenomenon in the study. The sample size utilized in this study all came from the (real estate) background, 15 female real estate brokers with active real estate broker licenses, residing in California.

However, 25 subjects were identified as meeting the inclusion criteria, only 15 accepted the request to be a participant of the interview. Five declined because of time constraints and the inability to schedule an interview prior to completion of the assignment. The other five did not reply after several attempts to contact them. The participants were willing to contribute to this study with the understanding that the severest confidentiality would be maintained. Also, each

participant received the interview questions in advance to prepare them for the interview to provide complete thorough answers. Additionally, all 15 participants selected to remain anonymous. The participants requested that the communication be confidential and private during the examining and assessing of the effects navigating through the content analysis phase.

Therefore, pseudonyms for each participant in the interview was assigned to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the participants. All information will remain confidential and private, and pseudonyms were used to maintain confidentiality. Participants' personal information, such as names and addresses, are stored in a secure and locked location. Additionally, hard and electronic copies of the interview notes and the recordings are protected. Electronic files are protected with a password identifiable only by the researcher, and hard copy files are locked in a file cabinet in the principal researcher's home for three years and thereafter will be destroyed. Participants' names will not be assigned to responses, and responses will remain confidential unless otherwise noted in the consent form. Thus, the participants were identified and coded to assure and protect their anonymity. Also, human subject requirements are identified as well. The application and approval are attached in appendices A through E. Finally, as a group, participants contributed leadership techniques and strategies of strengths and weaknesses. The collective themes were identified in the data.

### **Data Collection**

All interviews were recorded successfully with no data loss due to recording device error. Also, two recording devices were utilized and were securely stored throughout the transcription process. All digital audio files were erased once all interviews were transcribed. All participants indicated verbally or via email the interviews precisely echoed their lived experiences.

Data collection was initiated February 16, 2017, and completed March 16, 2017 (see Table 3).

Table 3

*Participant Interview Dates*

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Interview Date</b>
P1	February 24, 2017
P2	March 1, 2017
P3	March 2, 2017
P4	March 2, 2017
P5	March 2, 2017
P6	March 3, 2017
P7	March 4, 2017
P8	March 6, 2017
P9	March 8, 2017
P10	March 8, 2017
P11	March 8, 2017
P12	March 8, 2017
P13	March 9, 2017
P14	March 9, 2017
P15	March 10, 2017

The projected timeline was originally scheduled for January and conclude in February.

However, it was extended due to scheduling conflicts. The data collection of this study began with the phenomenological research approach, this is a strategy of inquiry in which the principal researcher identifies the essence of human occurrences about a phenomenon explained by participants. Moustakas (1994) stated that understanding the lived experiences characterizes phenomenology as a philosophy as well as a method.

After receiving Institutional Review Board approval from Pepperdine University on February 16, 2017, the principal researcher contacted the 15 individuals via email utilizing the approved Institutional Review Board invitation recruitment script. The procedure involves examining a study of a small group through extensive and prolonged engagement to develop patterns and relationships of implication. Also, the process utilized to establish appointments were e-mails, telephone calls, and text messages. These contacts were initial steps to obtain interview dates. A copy of the informed consent to participants was attached to the e-mails, giving the participants time to prepare for the interview and gather their thoughts for answering questions.

The data was collected from semi-structured, one-on-one interviews with an apple iPad to record the interviews, which were then transcribed manually. The principal researcher also kept a journal during the research study. This method provides a way for participants to share their reality directly. The interview technique was semi-structured (Gray, 2009), which is vital for utilizing the phenomenological approach. Utilizing interviews as a means of data collection allowed for the possibility of identifying additional questions and concerns to be pursued in the research process based on the responses provided by the interviewees. As a result, the interviews took 30 to 40 minutes of a pre-designed and selected set of open-ended questions. The pre-designed questions gave the principal researcher the opportunity to ask direct follow up questions of the interview protocol. Table 3 identified participants and dates of interview.

The interview questions were presented as follows:

- IQ 1. What have been some of the more significant professional challenges you have encountered in your journey to become a successful woman real estate broker?
- IQ 2. What strategies did you use to overcome these professional challenges?

- IQ 3. What have been some of the more significant personal challenges, such as work-life balance, you encountered on your journey to success?
- IQ 4. What strategies did you use to overcome these personal challenges?
- IQ 5. How do you avoid professional burnout?
- IQ 6. What among your personal characteristics has been instrumental in your achieving personal and professional success?
- IQ 7. What does success mean to you professionally?
- IQ 8. Who does success mean to you in your personal life?
- IQ 9. How do you measure each?
- IQ 10. If you start your journey over, what would you do differently?

The data were collected utilizing a semi-structured interview structure where the same 10 questions were asked to each participant. During the interview process, the principal researcher listened intently to each participant's input. According to Creswell (2007), the objective of active listening is to prevent judgments and opinions with the goal of precisely hearing and translating the participants' verbal and nonverbal communication. Non-verbal tactics comprise of paying close attention to the participants' body language, gestures, posture, and tone. The principal researcher also asked open ended questions when needed by restating the questions in a distinctive approach to elaborate and articulate the questions further. As a result, the conclusion of the data collection of the audio files was transcribed into Word documents and all recognizing material were removed. Finally, after transcription, the principal researcher re-examined and studied the data many times for accuracy.



## **Data Analysis**

The data analysis in this study entailed many interrelated phases that persist throughout the study. Creswell (2007) mentioned that “the process of data collection, data analysis, and report writing are not separate steps. During the process-they are interrelated and frequently go on simultaneously in a research assignment” (p. 150). The principal researcher followed a thorough four-step data analysis procedure that included:

1. data management that consisted of organizing data into text,
2. reading and memoing, including reading the transcripts three times (describing, classifying, and interpreting),
3. establishing the themes via inter-rater reliability and validity, and
4. representing the data in a visual form.

The principal researcher utilized Creswell’s (2007) data analysis spiral method that consisted of moving in analytic circles rather than using a fixed linear approach. Therefore, to finish step three in the data analysis spiral of describing, classifying and interpreting the data into more themes, a detailed coding approach using inter-rater reliability and validity was utilized. The principal researcher used a four-step process to confirm inter-rater reliability and validity. The principal researcher initially coded the data independently. An Excel format table was created in which key themes were color-coded and established throughout the content analysis phase and identified as row headings. Additionally, each column was comprised of keywords that were utilized to parallel the key theme. This method created a data verification plan in which the data were checked.

## **Data Display**

The data were orchestrated by four pre-set research questions and displayed by each of the related ten interview questions. As the data evolved by analysis, commonalities occurred and a sequence of common themes developed. The themes are displayed by the ten interview questions and followed by diagrams displaying the frequency of each relative theme. However, there may be resemblances in themes among the interview questions. The themes were established simply on the data collected within each interview question. Therefore, the themes were only formulated relevant to the specific interview questions. The participants in the research were identified by a sequence of respondent numbers (i.e., Respondent 1, Respondent 2, Respondent 3, etc.) to sustain their confidentiality, privacy, and anonymity.

## **Research Question 1 (RQ 1)**

RQ 1 sought to examine what work-life balance challenges female real estate brokers face when implementing strategies and practices that have led to their success. RQ 1 utilized three interview questions that created a sequence of themes that were analyzed independently and collectively.

- Interview Question 1. What have been some of the more significant professional challenges you have encountered in your journey to become a successful woman real estate broker?
- Interview Question 2. What strategies did you use to overcome these professional challenges?
- Interview Question 3. What have been some of the more significant personal challenges, such as work-life balance, you encountered on your journey to success?

These questions established six common themes: proactive, committed, social skills, resilient, participative, and competition (see Figure 2).

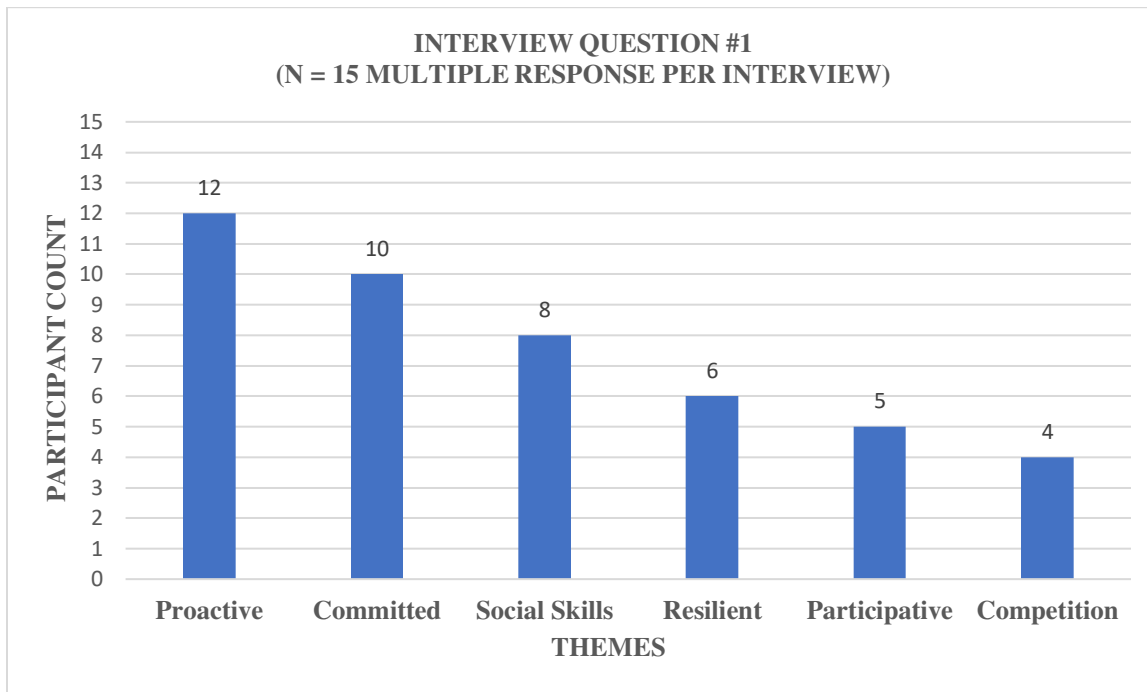


Figure 2. IQ 1: Strategies and practices techniques.

Six themes developed from the analysis of IQ 1, What work-life balance challenges do female real estate brokers face when implementing strategies and practices that have led to their success? The themes were proactive, committed, social skills, resilient, participative, and competition.

**Proactive.** Proactive traits included these terms: aggressive, careful, confidence, challenging, collegial, good listener, leader, likable, passion, perseverance, planner, willing to take risks, and be the best of the best in this demanding occupation. Respondent 8 mentioned,

As a successful woman real estate broker in this culture, you have to overcome heavy competition by being the best of the best. By being prepared and aggressive through dedication and hard work and willing to make sacrifices and take risks may be the ultimate key to success. The real estate business also has disappointments, there is no

guarantee a broker will sell every one of their customers' listings or locate a home for purchase [for] every one of their customers. However, planning and devotion to cultivating wholesome relationships, liking people, and how brokers treat their customers and clients and others in the industry is the key to avoiding excessive struggle.

All 12 respondents indicated that by being a leader you have to be more than ambitious. You have to be a motivator in this intense real estate field. You have to motivate yourself, customers, team, and have patience. In the real estate business, it is a must to have clarity, do research relentlessly, be a quick thinker, articulate, and elaborate to become trusted and likable by clients, customers, and peers. Thus, in real estate customers have extremely high expectations and are only going to work with brokers they like.

*Committed.* Committed traits included: bond, business ethics, commitments, cooperative, ensure success, inspired, leader, results driven, time management, and passionate. Ten respondents incorporated being committed in their work. This finding was also stated as a challenge, which is discussed in this chapter. Respondent 7 mentioned that:

real estate brokers who cut commissions do anything to get listings and may not be as committed, educated or equipped to be the best in the business to a seller or have business ethics is a challenge. Often, brokers who are not committed do not get along well or bond with colleagues and they don't follow-up or follow-through which creates conflict. Brokers convey illusions, to customers that they are so committed they can call brokers anytime of the day or night and brokers have no time off, this is a major commitment challenge brokers endure trying to manage their quality time with family, friends, significant others, or spouses, this may create animosity if not corrected early in

the transaction. Through experience and time, many women clients who are married have the tendency to become threatened and jealous of successful female real estate brokers, because often they focus on the bottom-line which their successful husbands appreciate a figure head. However, successful female real estate brokers have no interest in their husbands, their only passionate and driven by results of the business. However, there is a fine line successful female real estate brokers always have to be aware of.

Respondents mentioned successful female real estate brokers are committed to success, passionate, and results driven about their commitments. Their business ethics, passionate lifestyles, motivates and inspires customers and colleagues in their proximity. The respondents also mentioned their commitment also gives them the freedom to dream and have the power to make customers' dreams of homeownership become a reality. This bond they have and passion for serving customers and colleagues exudes throughout their transactions from the beginning of transactions to the end of making each transaction successful. Additionally, when discussing the details of committed, respondents mentioned by being transparent initially upon meeting customers or clients, and both parties mutually know each other's expectations, roles, responsibilities, and timeline will reduce the probability of risks or any ambiguity.

***Social skills.*** Social skill traits include assertiveness, collaborative, creative, listener, confidence, emotional intelligence, nurturers, and multitasking. Respondent 1 stated,

Being involved in the community with neighbors, children, families and giving her time and networking is an excellent opportunity to share intriguing conversations and exude empathy while multitasking. As wives, women, and mothers, this was a comfort zone. Being nurturers of children or elders in the community, it also displays self-regulation. Building social experiences builds relationships.

Many respondents mentioned in the beginning of their career they had challenges asking for business. They had phobia, anxiety and feared the consequences of hearing no or being inadequate or undeserving of the commission in the real estate business. As they became successful female real estate brokers many of them learned how to own their opinions and lose the fear of the unknown and took responsibility of their own personal viewpoints. Respondent 4 stated that she “had to learn how to use and say the most difficult word in the dictionary and the smallest word *no* by letting others know she is not a superwoman who works 24/7 on call and weekends.” Her recommendation to become assertive was to avoid passive behavior and being taking advantage of in her real estate career. By expressing herself taught her how to compromise and become assertive this taught her how to enhance her social skills and acquire self-respect and convey respect for her customers through the emotional intelligence of self-awareness, which gave her motivation.

***Resilient.*** Resilient traits include continued education, creativity, independent, insight/wisdom, initiative, intelligence, morality, overcomer, sense of humor, and tenaciousness. Respondent 6 stated, “Fostering resilient circumstances can turn failure and disappointments into success, by being able to bounce back from disappointment or failures. A resilient woman real estate broker won't give up, in spite of all obstacles and setbacks, she will keep on keeping on until the situation changes into success.” During the negative subprime crisis, many brokers had challenges getting loans approved and the lending criteria shifted to make this a very uncomfortable and challenging time for successful female real estate brokers to sell real estate. Her philosophy was to not give up because many suffered. Her wisdom and insight gave her the initiative to maintain patience and become creative in another area of real estate. Her real estate broker's license gave her the opportunity to do different jobs, such as appraisal, develop

homeless programs, property management, etc. The key to overcoming the plummeted real estate market was to continue her education and apply the skills of obtaining her real estate broker license to do other jobs and be tenacious to prevent getting burned out from real estate sales! Another challenge that did not work for her was having a partnership as a husband and wife team. Working together with her husband day and night was too difficult and it resulted in overcoming this challenge in divorce court.

Respondent 1 stated that as a Christian successful female real estate broker, God gave her the spirit of resilience to try and balance her family, grandchildren, diet, and exercise with her work routine. She also mentioned she stays empowered in life because of the fellowship with her pastor and first lady over many decades of experience, knowledge, and teaching at Crenshaw Christian Center on how to become healthy, wealthy, and wise. This gives her the strength to endure and stay in alignment with the Philippians 4:13 purpose. Additionally, the Holy Spirit motivates her to be tenacious until she achieves exactly what she wants, through wisdom and insight.

Furthermore, during the subprime mortgage lending market of the recession in 2007–2012, many successful female real estate brokers lost businesses, customers, and investments. This had nothing to do with their leadership, character, or skill sets. According to a few of the respondents, it took a lot of self-reliance to avoid self-pity and blame, wondering what they could have done differently as leaders. Therefore, through creativity and recreating themselves to get on with their lives, they had to overcome the obstacles, the nightmare, and begin again. They had to gather the courage to try again, which took a lot of morale, self-appreciation, and a sense of humor. They needed to know in their hearts and minds that they have the skills, the talent, and the strength to do it one more time. As Respondent 1 reiterated, “I can do all things

because of Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:13). “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13 The New King James Version).

***Participative.*** The participative traits included: approachable, empathy, empowering, good communicator, open minded, and thoughtful. Many respondents thought they have seen success in the workplace through the lens of participative leadership, by developing a community or they may only want to be the decision maker without any input. The participative leadership framework may come in many stages or presence. For example, Respondent 2 stated, “As a successful female real estate broker in leadership they may thrive on being approachable or having empathy to empower others as her manager does, who happens to be a successful woman real estate broker who frequently gives warm hugs and is always there to provide support. Her viewpoint is being a good communicator in her personal and professional lifestyles. At home with her husband, she believes it is necessary to keep him in the loop.

Also, good communication that is effective work well with her customers and are essential. The participant stated, “It is a plus to be assertive as a woman by bringing on a good personality and engendering trust.” However, many of the respondents interviewed were very thoughtful and enjoyed an audience of the dynamics of various cultures or a sense of community in their business environment. Their participative style of being open-minded and a good communicator enhanced creativity and enthusiasm in their workplace environments, which is essential to exude appreciation with cultural sensitivity.

***Competition.*** Competition traits included: adaptable, ambitious, perform well under pressure, and a people person. Four respondents asserted that competition in their work environment is a motivating factor for them to work well under pressure. Also, they mentioned that they are people persons who love people, which adds to their success. When discussing the



details of competition with the successful female real estate brokers, respondents believed to become ambitious as a successful woman real estate broker, they have to wear many hats in the competitive field of real estate. The responsibilities vary from showings homes, hosting open houses, marketing their listings, developing new business, negotiating contracts, filing paperwork, and exuding an exciting work pace because each day the customers and transactions are different.

Nevertheless, the unlimited earning potential of working on straight commission is that the successful female real estate brokers will never be limited to an hourly wage as a broker. However, this means that if they don't sell, they don't receive income. The work itself can also be extremely fulfilling as real estate agents compete for meaningful roles in customers' lives, such as helping them find the perfect residences to downsize or upsize. Respondent 7 stated that competition is driven to her by money in the bank, the admiration of her peers, the optimum of a well-balanced life and being a pillar of the community by giving back. The greatest thing in real estate allows her to have it all with unlimited ability with her own drive to be as successful as she wants and not be inhibited by a specific degree. "However, it's important to stay focus on goals and enjoy the destiny by being adaptable and have freedom in your journey."

**Research question 1 summary.** RQ 1 sought to examine the work-life balance challenges female real estate brokers face when implementing strategies and practices that have led to their success. This question identified many respondents' successes utilizing proactive approaches, staying committed, enhancing social skills, being resilient and participative in the real estate field of competition. The respondents discussed these themes thoroughly and considered them as required strategies and techniques to become a successful woman real estate broker. Respondents identified being proactive is the connection to the sustainability of their

success. Customer satisfaction plays a large role in how they interpreted success. As a result, when these essential factors exist, the women felt an effect in their careers toward leadership roles that advanced their visibility and financial success.

**Interview question 2 (IQ 2).** This study attempted to further answer the question of what strategies did the women use to overcome these professional challenges (spoken or unspoken) as a leader? Four common themes were embraced and acknowledged by the respondents: proactive, committed, resilient, and competition (see Figure 3).

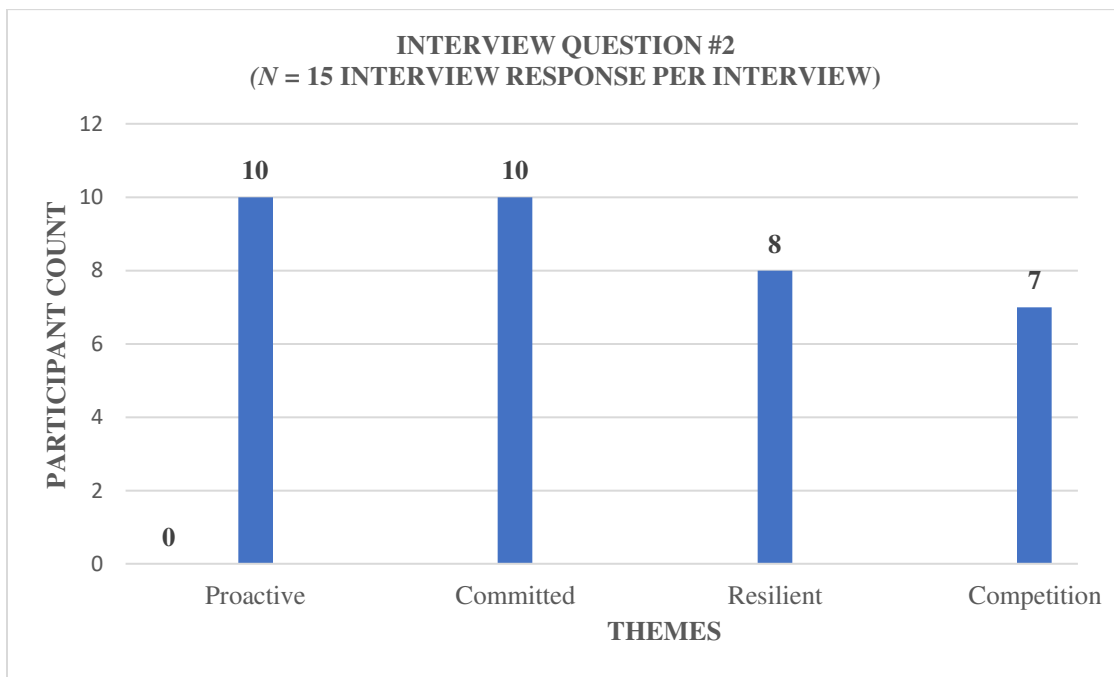


Figure 3. IQ 2: Challenges.

**Proactive.** The range of responses about the proactive theme was various. However, proaction was acknowledged as a major challenge in sustaining success as a woman real estate broker. The market shifts in various seasons, creating peaks and valleys, which are the highs and lows of the economy for earning a living. The spring/summer seasons are usually better than the hibernation seasons of autumn and winter for this business. Additionally, a major challenge was gaining customers' commitment and engendering trust with the female real estate brokers.

Respondent 1 stated, “I had a challenge being proactive because of the difficulty of consistently obtaining new listings on a regular basis to sell new customers’ property.” Proaction was discussed at great lengths and acknowledged as a strategy for success. Thus, it can also be a significant challenge if not utilized appropriately. Respondent 9 stated, “Living in California, it is important to be proactive and understand the real estate business because of the possibility of being susceptible to risk. Therefore, being proactive with education and training to understand the laws to avoid legal issues and ramifications is pertinent.” Also as a broker, she is held to a higher standard. “Therefore, risk reduction classes are very important to attend on a regular basis to prevent precaution of unforeseen legal challenges and disciplinary actions.”

***Committed.*** Ten of the respondents acknowledged they had challenges being committed to their businesses. A few of them expressed they had challenges in previous years due to the global, spiraled economic depression. Respondent 4, stated, “As women, we have to be ready for the challenges.” Her challenge to being committed was accomplishing “duo work.” She stated that trying to balance work and home can be difficult as a woman, therefore to be committed to the business and be successful in real estate she had to become organized by making a to-do list and requesting assistance to pick up the slack in her personal life and professional life to prevent burnout. She mentioned it can also be challenging in real estate to become committed if you are not computer and technical savvy because all of the contracts and documentation are electronic. “It can also be a challenge when hiring the wrong assistants who are not committed to the job.”

***Resilient.*** Eight respondents also identified resiliency as an important essential to maintaining their success in real estate. Respondent 5 said that she had to become resilient after being devastated from suffering a terrible car accident during the time of the recession in 2007–

2008 and as a single parent trying to make ends meet, it took her five years to recover.

Therefore, through her adverse times of uncertainty, she focused on increasing her knowledge in technology and continued education to be able to sustain herself, through the grace of God.

She also mentioned she places God first and fellowship at her local church on Sundays—that is where she draws her strength and resilience.

Respondent 3 iterated this by stating that she had faced challenges during the global, spiral economic depression, which saw a significant change in the 2005 market due to the slump in the economy. She had recently acquired her license in 2006, trying to learn real estate in a market that had plummeted. Through resilience, she was able to become a certified property manager and learned the management side of real estate, became a certified housing counselor, and worked in personal literacy to help first-time buyers. Also, her father, Reverend Cecil (Chip) Murray gave her the support she needed. She also stood on the biblical verse: “To whom much is given, much is required” (Luke 12:48).

**Competition.** Respondent 2 said, “The competition challenge is tough.” As a successful woman real estate broker, her philosophy is to always be nice, maintain honesty and integrity with all of her customers and colleagues, and when she is rejected, she “has to take a deep breath and start over.” Respondent 8 also stated that the competition in her business is always heavy. However, her perseverance and hard work overcome this challenge. With a wonderful preparation with a master’s degree from the University of Southern California (USC), her dedication and determination allow her to work harder than other successful female real estate brokers. She patterns her life around her work, which comes with sacrifices that separate her from the rest of the industry.

**Interview question 2 summary.** As in Interview Question 1, proactive was the respondents' primary focus to achieve amazing results and adding value to their customers' lifestyles by keeping them well informed. The majority of the respondents mentioned they have implemented a referral-based business with previous customers or they live in the same area for years and many neighbors know they are successful female real estate brokers. Additionally, they continue to proactively generate new leads from existing customers, networking, and primarily focusing on new listings. Finally, the vast majority of the respondents mentioned proactively continuing education was the primary key to their success and time management. The gap in not marketing, advertising, or prospecting in some form or fashion proactively to generate new leads may possibly risk their success.

**Interview Question 3 (IQ 3).** This study attempted to further examine what have been some of the more significant personal challenges, such as work-life balance, that the women encountered in their journeys to success. The intent was not only to understand the challenges of work-life balance but how the respondents overcome the challenges. The understandings will help support and identify potential struggles. Interview Question 3 traits included: communication, strategy development, and leadership (see Figure 4).

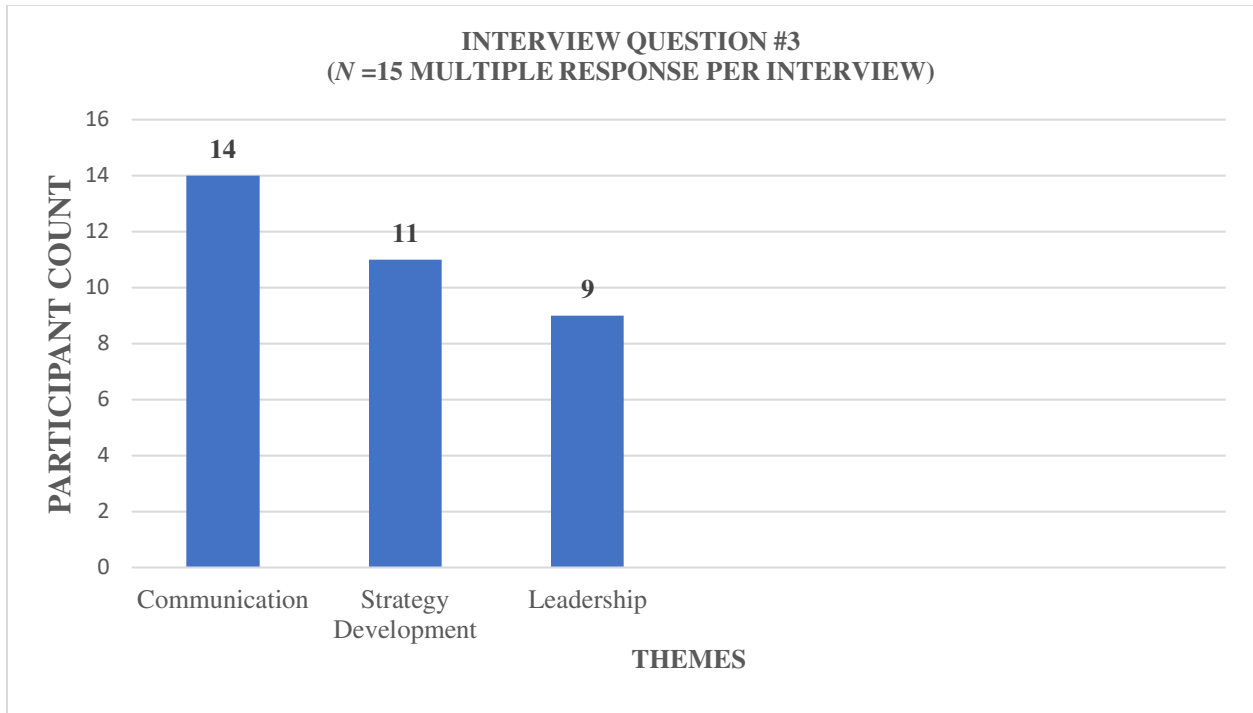


Figure 4. IQ 3: Work-Life, Balance Personal Challenges.

**Communication.** Fourteen respondents asserted that the leading focus is to communicate. Respondent 13 stated that her friends and family often do not understand the pressures of constantly being on the clock 24/7, days, evenings, and weekends, and scheduling the time for family is especially challenging. Therefore, she has to plan ahead and explain to them the lack of spontaneity and the imbalance of not working a regular 9-to-5 job. She requests they give her advance notice for time to plan dinner parties or movie nights, because her calendar fills up fast and she may not be available.

Respondent 10 believed that is important to have a plan of action and to communicate this effectively to herself and significant others, in order to have a social life and not allow her personal schedules to be dictated by the schedules and demands of others. She says “me time” is important, even if they are short trips downtown, farmers market, dining out, or an off-season get-a-way. Respondent 2 emphasized that her family always comes before being bombarded

with work. It is the epitome of love that is her family's mission. They do not compromise this bond that she and her husband resonate. They have a moral compass that focuses on self-value and self-worth and she and husband have communicated this understanding. They both agree and stand on this mission. If she is working excessive hours, such as open houses or the showing of properties, she keeps her husband in the loop. Respondents felt that some form or fashion of heightened, effective personal communication is essential in order to ensure a healthy work-life, balance, and to prevent challenges.

*Strategy development.* Eleven respondents focused on strategy development and implementation. Respondent 15 stated that her strategy is to make time management and being organized her priority, and to be as productive as possible while multitasking prior to any unforeseen challenges of the balancing act. Respondent 11 stated that it is pertinent to understand her personal utility curve and energy-coping mechanisms. She mentioned the importance of thinking consciously about how much money she spends and on what. Her quandary—is it worth it to work extra hours in order to achieve a lavish and elite lifestyle? Sometimes shorter work days and driving an economical vehicle are part of a more balanced and effective method for overall success and contentment than a luxurious lifestyle of driving a California Ferrari and working 16-hour days. She stated, “It is healthier and wiser to work smarter than to work harder for only material gain.” As Dr. Madjidi reiterated frequently, “Do you own things or do things own you” (personal communication, October, 2012). Respondent 2 reported that her strategy is having her husband involved as an integral partner in her business, which gives her the wholeness she needs, by keeping him in the loop. Her strategy includes having a wonderful branch manager who happens to be a successful female real estate broker

and is very understanding, a good listener, and supportive of the respondent's business needs, wants, and desires.

*Leadership.* IQ 3 asked participants to identify some of the more significant personal challenges, such as work-life balance, that they have encountered in their journeys to success. From a leadership viewpoint, this question focused more on talent and human capital than the other questions. Respondent 9 said that as an owner/broker of a firm for 10 years after she acquired her license in 1987, she and husband learned there are some people you cannot help. Additionally, she mentioned, "Hiring a staff and delegating authority is a key, not constantly picking up the phone and leaving messages to block out your time is valuable." She stated that hiring a coach helped her significantly with the sustainability of her company. The coach helped her maintain her focus on her business, spiritual life, and family. However, growing her business took a lot out of her personal time and she suffered. She feels fortunate her life partner in the business is her husband. Having a marriage partner who understands the leadership needs of a real estate company is what helped her succeed in the real estate.

Respondent 8 stated that her leadership skills and progress of education and training from USC's master's program helped to equip her in the field of real estate to hold significant responsibility and give her career success and satisfaction. Her education taught her preparation and planning skills to become an influential leader. She is also a leader, mentor, and a team player in her company and her group are people persons. She mentioned networking and relationship building as essential to achieving success and advancement.

### **Research Question 2 (RQ 2)**

RQ 2 asked, what work-life balance strategies and practices are employed by female real estate brokers? Three interview questions were utilized to examine this question.



- IQ 4. What strategies did you use to overcome these personal challenges?
- IQ 5. How do you avoid professional burnout?
- IQ 6. What among your personal characteristics has been instrumental in your achieving personal and professional success?

**Interview question 4 (IQ 4).** What strategies did you use to overcome these personal challenges? While these measurements may exhibit successes, they may also exude measures of needed improvement. The five key themes were developed throughout this process: authenticity, emotional intelligence, inspiration, leadership, and tenacity (see Figure 5).

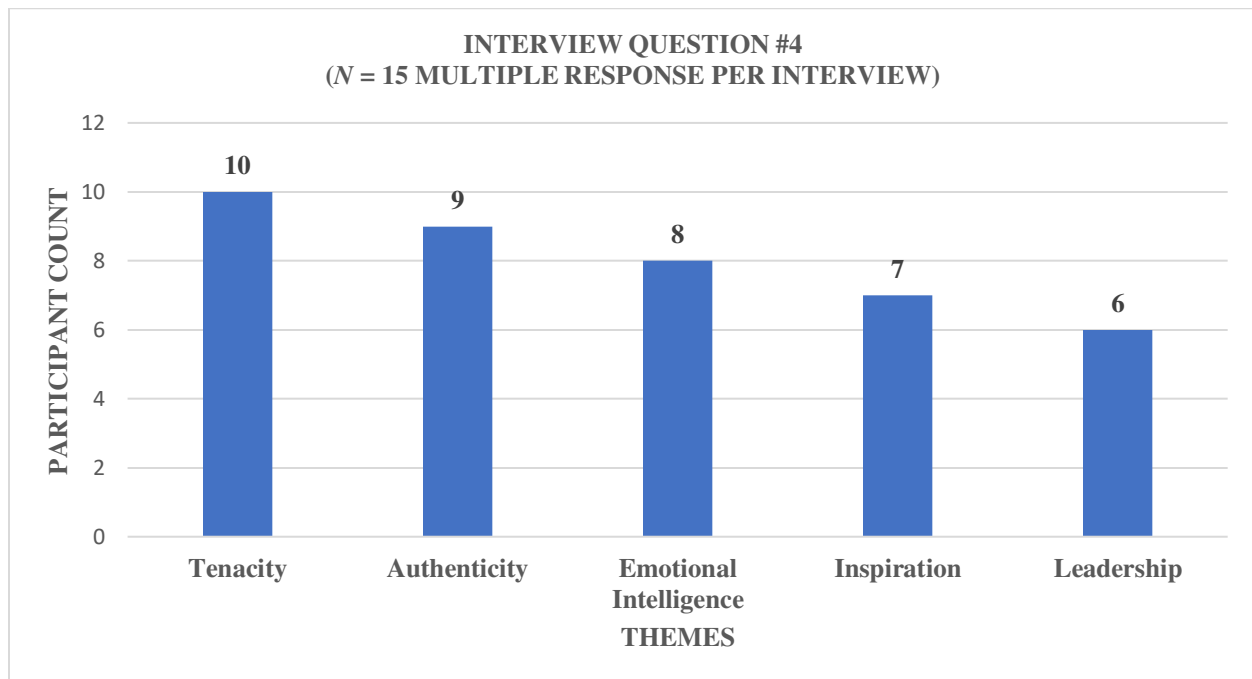


Figure 5. IQ 4: Strategies to overcome personal challenges.

**Tenacity.** Ten respondents named that having the tenacity and a strategic plan helped them overcome personal challenges. Most of them realized that their setbacks were setups for a greater comeback. Tenacity helped them to embrace and resolve unresolved issues instead of quitting in their work lives and personal lifestyles or throwing in the towel. Respondent 14 said

that she doesn't have pity parties; she is solution-driven. She doesn't dwell or focus on the negativity of past shortcomings, or problems. Her focus lies in the solution of the problem, which makes her stronger. Respondent 5 said that she was able to finagle and persevere, regardless of the difficult challenges that occurred in her personal life through the power of prayer and supplication. Her key takeaway is that God gives her the strength to endure by standing on his word in Philippians 4:13.

***Authenticity.*** Respondent 7 said that her customers respond with enthusiasm since they can trust the way she runs her business, a result of many successful outcomes over the years attributed to authenticity. Because of her innate genuineness quality, her customers refer her business and she obtains repeat business. She stated that customer satisfaction is what motivates her business to grow and succeed. She said she cannot be satisfied until she knows she has fulfilled her customers' requests; if they are first time buyers, upsizing or downsizing in their relocation process, she treats them all distinctively the same. Also, she does not sacrifice her authenticity to her customers. Her responsibility is to keep her word as her bond. She feels if her word is no good neither is she. Therefore, she treats all her customers the way she would want to be treated with the utmost dependability, truth, respect, and validity. Her peers also look up to her as a pillar of the community of real estate. Because of her authenticity, powerful recognition, and dedication she has managed to acquire and sustain a pipeline of a distinguished clientele. Respondent 1 stated, "Aspiring real estate brokers and successful female real estate brokers can all grow, learn, and develop from each other in this movement of successful female real estate brokers."

***Emotional intelligence.*** Eight respondents reported frequently working in a community while maintaining positive attitudes and being ready to provide quality services to their

customers. This commitment increased their effectiveness and efficiency. They stay motivated in challenging and difficult times, with resilience to quickly transform from setbacks, and increase their results-driven behavior. Respondent 12 said that her competence in emotional intelligence has proven to be an effective skill, leading her unlimited success in the real estate industry. When working with her real estate customers, cultural awareness and proper application of emotional intelligence are beneficial and valuable to her and her customers by mirroring and understanding her customers and exceeding the needs of her clientele. This created positive relationships and understanding the significance of emotional intelligence.

***Inspiration.*** Respondent 1 stated:

I am inspired by fellowshiping for many decades at Crenshaw Christian Center. This has enhanced my professional development in the real estate industry. By recognizing the impact of the results of Drs. Frederick and Betty Price and their ministry's teaching has inspired me through God that I can do all things which he has strengthened me according to his word in Philippians 4:13.

Respondent 5 stated:

Reflecting back on my life five years ago after recovering from a major vehicle collision, I was able to become totally recovered, sustain my company and my life, which is another meaningful example of inspiration that ultimately saved my business, after having an out-of-body experience. It is a tremendous honor to give God the glory for his amazing grace to be set free by his stripes. I'm healed and his mercy reigns on unending grace according to his Word in 1 Peter 2:24.

***Leadership.*** Respondent 3 stated that she attributed her leadership strategies from having humble beginnings and being benevolent. She was born and reared in the era of the innovation

of segregation and integration of North Carolina. Her epiphany and “ah-ha” moments came through these rites-of-passage periods in her personal life, which involved ritual activities and teachings that were designed to prepare her as a leader to trust, respect her elders, comply with authority and others. She also learned the meaning of “to thine own self be true.” Her preparation gave her the ability to develop relationships of humility, fairness, and integrity. She stated that having the gift of candor and empathy has been her birthright—to love and appreciate humankind. As a result, God has prepared her to walk into doors she could have never imagined, as a child with a vision.

**Interview question 4 summary.** Tenacity was the respondents’ key focus and landscape. Most believed that preventing conflicts and challenges by utilizing tenacious techniques reduced or prevented possible resistance with customers or unexpected encounters, when the customers notice the successful female real estate brokers are driven to satisfy their customers’ needs. Finally, the successful female real estate brokers’ dedication to customers can bridge the gap for aspiring female real estate brokers who want to achieve an exceptional career experience. However, if they do not have the wherewithal to be tenacious in their careers, it can be a possible detriment.

**Interview question 5 (IQ 5).** Respondents were asked, “How do you avoid professional burnout?” Three common themes were developed from the respondents: customer satisfaction, financial success, and emotional intelligence (see Figure 6).

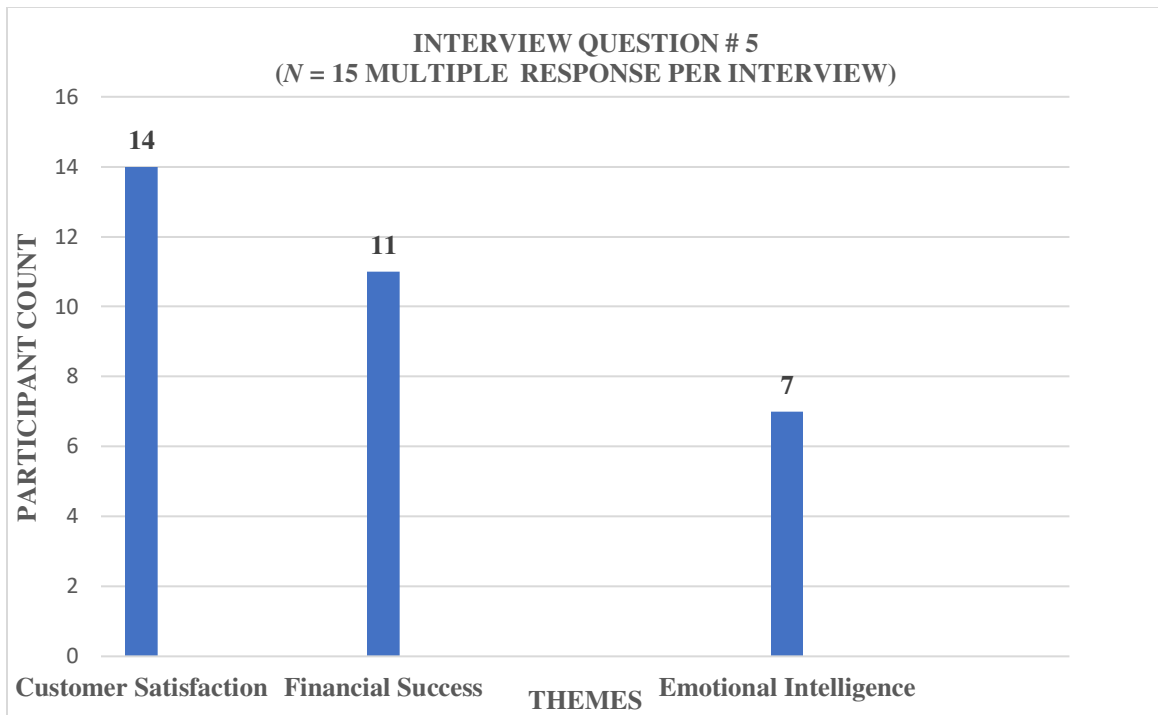


Figure 6. IQ 5: Burnout.

**Customer satisfaction.** Respondent 9 stated, “By satisfying her customers gives her gratitude and prevents her from burnout which can be caused by the demands of the imbalance of her real estate career of being on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for work and the lack of a personal life or leisure activities. This promotes the inability to function with these pressures, a commission based income, and the uncertainty of when the next transaction will occur. Thus, an unstable market can also cause stress. Therefore, she integrates actual stress relief mechanisms to her lifestyle, which includes a healthy diet, an exercise program, and knowing who not to work with.”

Most respondents identified sufferers of burnout to include: apathy; boredom; depression; fatigue; frustration, lethargy; and feelings of unsuccessfulness. Finally, the respondents identified that when customers are satisfied with the services, burnout can be avoided. Happy, satisfied customers give referrals to the successful female real estate brokers. The brokers found

that preventive measures such as an exercise routine, sleeping schedule, yoga for meditation, deep breathing routines, involvement in a hobby, and powering off the telephone with customers are the keys to longevity and the success of an extraordinary career.

***Financial success.*** Eleven of the respondents articulated that financial success is paramount in having effective, closed transactions that make the customers and successful female real estate brokers mutually delighted. Respondent 7 stated,

With experience, time, education, and skill, I have forced myself to take days off or make dream/vision boards of items of importance in my life not at the expense of family, to prevent burnout. I attribute navigation of the emotional parts of the real estate transactions with all my customers. The results [from being customer satisfaction-driven] are the admiration of my peers, having money in the bank, and achieving an unlimited amount of finances.

Therefore, the adrenaline obtained psychologically from the victory of closed transactions eliminates the possibility of burnout. Respondent 13 said,

I measure my financial success by continuing my education to be up-to-date [with] new technology and current real estate market trends. Attending innovative programs and higher education workshops empowers and provides opportunities for me to acquire new customers and increase my bottom line by the accessibility of information. These strategies enhance my financial success and prevent burnout, [moving] from not having information to ultimately maximize my business.

***Emotional intelligence (EI).*** This term was reiterated by seven respondents. They found that having emotional intelligence skills and showing positive emotions to their customers can

definitely create healthy relationships and prevent toxicity that causes burnout. Respondent 8 stated,

I love people and my customers, and the social factors of EI are very important within real estate, establishing and maintaining professional customers and contacts—it creates an emotional awareness. This is a time investment of looking inward into yourself, and upon [its] development, the probability of burnout will decrease. Also, by knowing when to take a break from work and travel during the off-season when business is not so hectic to prevent burn out helps [me to] manage my internal emotions.

**Interview question 5 Summary.** IQ 5 provided recommendations for aspiring female real estate brokers on to prevent burnout. IQ 5 also identified a lens of clarity, demonstrating the awareness of cultivating emotional intelligence. These recommendations from the respondents' viewpoints were beneficial, added value, and removed any ambiguity of how to obtain work-life balance and the prevention of burnout by their established practices to bring efficacy routines effectively in their real estate businesses.

**Interview question 6 (IQ 6).** What among your personal characteristics has been instrumental in your achieving personal and professional success? Most respondents had difficulty distinguishing and measuring the two-part question. Due to the realization, the passion they have for their careers is considered both personal and professional success. Three key themes developed throughout this process: tenacity, inspiration, and leadership. (see Figure 7).

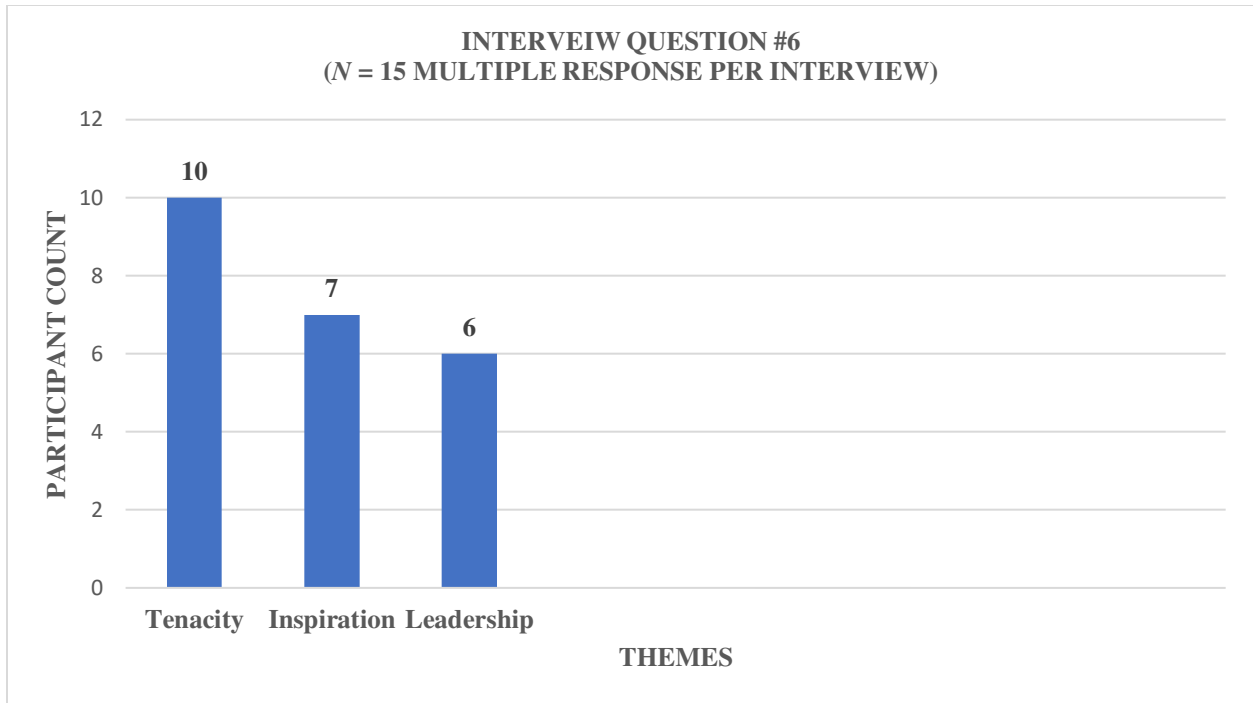


Figure 7. IQ 6: Personal characteristics achieving personal and professional success.

**Tenacity.** The respondents gave similar answers related to factors that drive tenacity, which was the leading key theme in IQ 4. The respondents measured success by their personal and professional achievements. The majority of respondents articulated that having flexible schedules, satisfying customers, being compensated, and the ability to achieve maximum earning potential are key components of their tenacity, of what motivates them in real estate.

However, Respondent 5 stated,

My tenacity has come from empowering new agents with cutting edge tools to jumpstart their real estate careers. Also, I'm driven in my personal life by being a single parent. My son gave me the will to achieve personal and professional determination. Through his concern and support, I developed persistence to where I have a can-do, will-do attitude for myself, my son, and my company. Additionally, after a severe vehicle collision and an out-of-body experience that took me five years to recover, I pressed on, and by God's grace, I was able to return to my passion of real estate. Through prayer and



supplication, I know where my help comes from. I prayed and stayed on God's Word in Psalms 121:1-8: "I lift up my eyes to the mountains. Where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth." I also fellowship at my local church as much as possible through good and uncertain times.

Therefore, successful female real estate brokers who are leaders want to satisfy customers and be tenacious. As leaders, most of the respondents mentioned they follow up rapidly every time seller's homes are shown to potential customers. The respondents articulated they work smart and they rarely give up.

***Inspiration.*** Seven respondents' answers to IQ 6 were related to inspiration. Inspiration was a key factor to their success. Respondent 7 reiterated,

My career progression and compensation are directly correlated by having a business plan of action and prioritizing its importance. Also, by bringing joy, peace, calmness, and a difference in my customers' lifestyles brings me a great deal of inspiration personally and professionally. Additionally, I'm inspired by having a flexible career [in which] I can create my schedule for family and be able to attend my granddaughter's volleyball practices and tournaments. Furthermore, throughout my life, I've been inspired by a real woman who had it all and was completely successful in every area of her life. She remained down to earth and had a trait of genuineness.

Respondents acknowledged that their inspiration gives them personal and professional sustainability.

***Leadership.*** The respondents gave similar answers related to leadership. The respondents measured leadership by both personal and professional characteristics of their successes. Respondent 1 stated,

As a successful woman real estate broker, I am truly proud to be listed among your candidates. Leadership to me in the real estate industry is being trusted by customers and having transparency and authenticity. Customers know exactly where I am coming from, with the knowledge in business to be a mutual benefit. This has always been an industry where women can excel to the highest levels, and with the right mindset and perseverance, we have displayed the pinnacles that can be achieved. There is no limit to the level of success that can be achieved as leaders to obtain financial freedom, [and] personal and professional success.

Respondent 3 stated, “My leadership qualities are to remain helpful, truthful, transparent, and positive with existing and future customers. Also, to continue to build trust and generate wholehearted support to improve individual and team performance within my sphere of influence. Finally, most of the respondents agreed that to have a respectable culture in the real estate industry, you have a good leader or you are a good leader. Then you can create and maintain a good culture.

**Interview question 6 summary.** Respondents acknowledged many methods of leadership. The progress and success of their personal and professional characteristics were identified as survivability techniques in the real estate industry. As a result, the seven respondents articulated that to be a respectable, sustainable leader, you must be an authentic leader. Foremost, the authentic leader must have morals, empathy, and be true to herself even through tough times and have an awareness of her opportunities, strengths, and weaknesses. Also, to achieve and maintain the respect and trust of teams, it is necessary to be consistent, transparent, fair, and able to make challenging decisions. An authentic leader must be empathetic, thoughtful, and have cultural awareness.

### Research Question 3 (RQ 3)

Research question 3 asked, how do female real estate brokers measure their success while trying to achieve work-life balance? Two interview questions were utilized to examine this question.

- IQ 7. What does success mean to you professionally?
- IQ 8. Who does success mean to you in your personal life?

**Interview question 7 (IQ 7).** What does success mean to you professionally? Although these measurements will identify success, they may also measure areas of need improvement (see Figure 8).

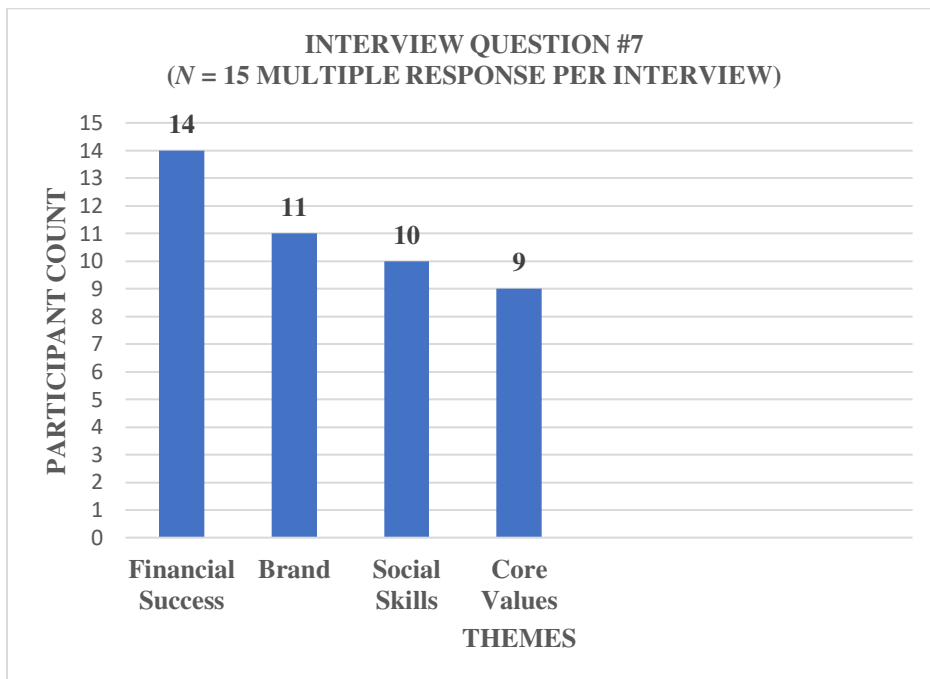


Figure 8. IQ 7: Meaning of professional success.

**Financial success.** Fourteen respondents identified with the financial success of their careers and the expectations of real estate brokerage being their dream job. Respondent 2 stated,

Reflecting on my financial success in the real estate business, family matters first with me as a priority in our business and the financial success is secondary. My professional life finances are the foundation for my personal life. My financial success allows me to enable our personal success to attend and invest in family matters.

Respondent 4 stated:

I was able to acquire financial success from a previous organization and retire from that previous occupation working with technology. Furthermore, after retirement, I was able to own and operate my own real estate company. Also, to maintain financial success I keep up with economic conditions, changes in technology, industry regulations, including buyer and seller priorities. Finally, placing keys in my customer's' hands of their new home or income property when a transaction closes is the ultimate gratification of financial success.

**Brand.** Eleven respondents have each accomplished the art of branding in some characteristic of their professionally successful careers. What makes their brands unique and extraordinary is the continued success of longevity in their professional lives. Their methods of reinforcing their branding varied in a combination of innovative components. Respondent 6 stated, "My catchy motto is Ms. Sherlock Holmes." She has an MBA, is on the faculty of a local college, is a director of a housing information program, and president of a local board where she teaches financial literacy through homeownership. Thus, she has distinguished herself from others by the creative branding of herself, which includes improving housing conditions and helping the community build wealth through economic resources for real estate.

Respondent 8 is a sincere broker who has longevity in her career and it has valuable content, a robust media presence, and regular interaction with her audience to convey her beyond

amazing brand identity. She also has a strong reputation, sophisticated resources, unique skills for marketing luxury estates, and is respected by many globally. Respondent 9 articulated:

My professional success in real estate took time and by hiring a coach, I know as a joint partner of a firm, our brand is organic and the focus is education, training, and taking what works and accelerating it with a team and a staff. Our company's foundation has been, for many years, for everyone in the community to get to know we have exemplary skills, education, and authenticity to satisfy our customers. Additionally, our brand has credibility and familiarity.

Furthermore, through branding, the successful female real estate brokers have transformed themselves into well-informed brokers through the lens of their markets as familiar, go-to resources for real estate. Finally, the majority of the respondents recommend branding one's business. Branding is beneficial because it influences customers before they select a real estate broker to purchase or sell homes their homes. Potential customers compare at least three brokers prior to making a decision to hire.

***Social skills.*** Ten respondents agreed that social skills are imperative for sustaining professional success through communication and negotiation. Social perceptiveness allowed them to be aware of customers' actions and be able to understand and respond appropriately. Respondent 3 articulated that she communicates effectively with her people skills and technology skills:

Mentoring, teaching, and helping others are essential in the real estate industry due to the fluctuations in the market. It is important for me to often reflect on the basics, remembering my inner self by making myself a better person to be able to negotiate by bringing buyers and sellers together. Also, I have the skill of negotiation to motivate and

change minds or behaviors for the outcome of the better. By being service-oriented and actively looking for ways to incorporate benevolence [with] everyone I encounter within my sphere of influence, I consistently maintain high social standards in my business.

Finally, having social skills are the needs and qualities of successful female real estate brokers with which customers, vendors, and other professionals in the business prefer to work. The preferred skills are also interconnected with responsiveness, honesty, integrity, knowledge of the real estate market, contracts, and the overall sales process.

***Core values.*** Nine of the fifteen respondents stated they utilize some form of core values to measure the success of their businesses because it represents what they stand for and how they treat their customers and partners. Respondent 15 stated that core values are extremely important to embrace and to interact with the level of authenticity, candor, and integrity. This was an indication to customers and partners that she adheres to high standards of professionalism. Therefore, delivering a high level of customer service and embracing core values was the motivating factor to exceed customers' expectations by incorporating thoughts, ideas, and suggestions of innovation.

**Interview question 7 summary.** Although identified as individual issues, financial success, branding, social skills, and core values were all indicators that the successful female real estate brokers were taking an organic approach to addressing what success means in their personal and professional lives. Finally, success is not measured exclusively by their sales quotas, bank accounts, status, or personal and professional lives. Their definition of success includes the relationships they have built, repetitively communicating with customers and responding to their individual requests, as well as understanding the unique qualities and intricacies of the homes they represent.

**Interview question 8 (IQ 8).** Who does success mean to you in your personal life? This question’s intent was to identify if the successful female real estate brokers measure themselves against another individual. Three key themes developed throughout this process: financial success, personal traits, and buy-in. These themes may also measure areas of needed improvement (see Figure 9).

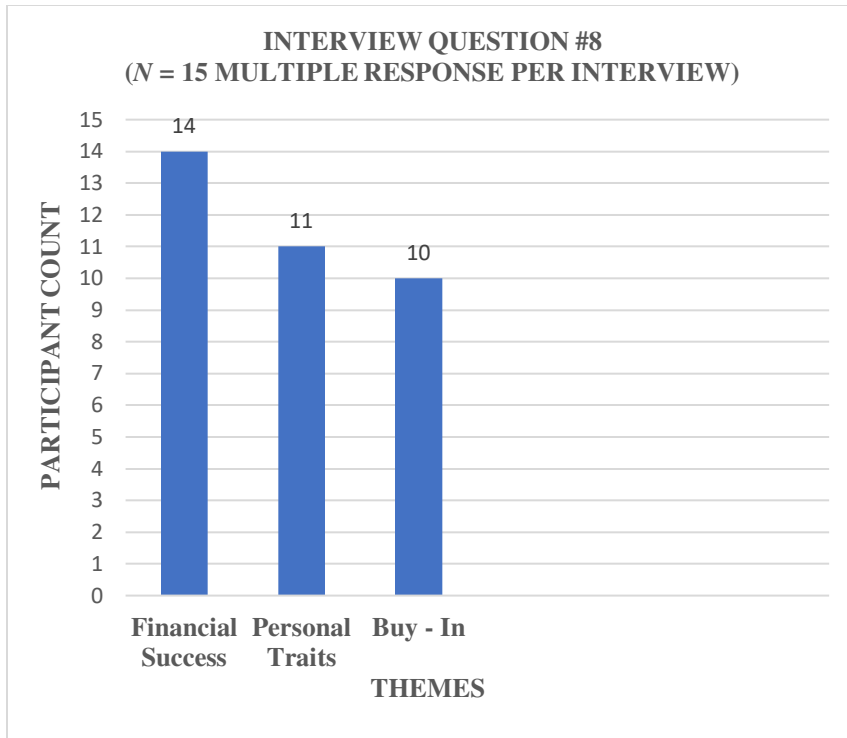


Figure 9. IQ 8: Who does success mean to you in your personal life?

**Financial success.** Fourteen respondents focused on financial success. Respondent 7 stated,

Who success means to me in my personal life is Florence Henderson. She was financially successful in many aspects of her acting in film, stage, and singing careers. I was told I started to resemble her in my twenties. This a quite a compliment to be compared to a wealthy, successful, wholesome, and spiritually conscious woman who is a household name.

Respondent 3 articulated,

Oprah Winfrey is the meaning of success to me financially in my personal life. We are the same age, both grew up in the Southern states, and both of us stand on the Scripture in the Bible, Luke 12:48, “To whom much is given, much will be required.”

**Personal traits.** Respondent 6 stated:

Having the ability to control my own professional destiny and be the leader of my company is one of my personal traits. I am a successful woman real estate broker/owner . . . because my requirement is to have a high degree of determination, self-motivation, and transformational skills.”

Respondent 9 articulated:

My personal traits are having ethics, empathy, honesty, and reliability in my business. As an owner of my company, it is essential for me to continue to have high standards to maintain a professional reputation. These traits are the ultimate foundation of me being successful in my career.

Respondent 4 stated:

I identify my personality traits as being equipped with knowledge and [staying] up-to-date with current real estate trends to service myself and customers effectively. By continuing [my] education, it enhances my professional and self-development. This allows me to utilize and increase my business decisions and stay ahead, to remain marketable, and successful.

**Buy-in.** According to Kotter (2012), buy-in is critical to making any organizational change happen. Therefore, unless organizations win support for ideas from individuals at many



levels of organizations, great ideas never appear to take place or have the impact wanted.

Additionally, without coordinating buy-in nothing will happen. Respondent 10 said:

Buy-in comprises of some amount of change and innovation. Buy-in invites conversation and examination; it also allows each individual to feel more involved in the outcome. Buy-in is important to our successful lives in real estate because the real estate culture communicates and partners with many individuals in real estate transactions, and we must be up-to-date on current market trends to stay effective. The individual partners in residential real estate transactions are buyers and sellers. Many of the teams who coordinate the process are appraisers, attorneys, bankers, contractors, government agencies, home inspectors, mortgage loan officers, and property managers who need the real estate professionals to embrace change management for sustainability for all of our success.

**Interview question 8 summary.** Financial success was the respondents' leading focus. They recommended that a level of investment to bring the most value to their business is required for success. The major components of value, education, time, and integrity are some of the significant tools in the equation, to create and sustain longevity for successful real estate careers.

**Interview question 9 (IQ 9).** How do you measure each (personal and professional success)? This question was similar to IQ 8; therefore, its intent was to examine how and if the successful female real estate brokers measured themselves against another metric. Most respondents had difficulty distinguishing between the two questions. Three common themes were developed from respondents: core values, financial success, and social skills, due to the fact many of the responses and references were similar to those for IQ 8 (see Figure 10).

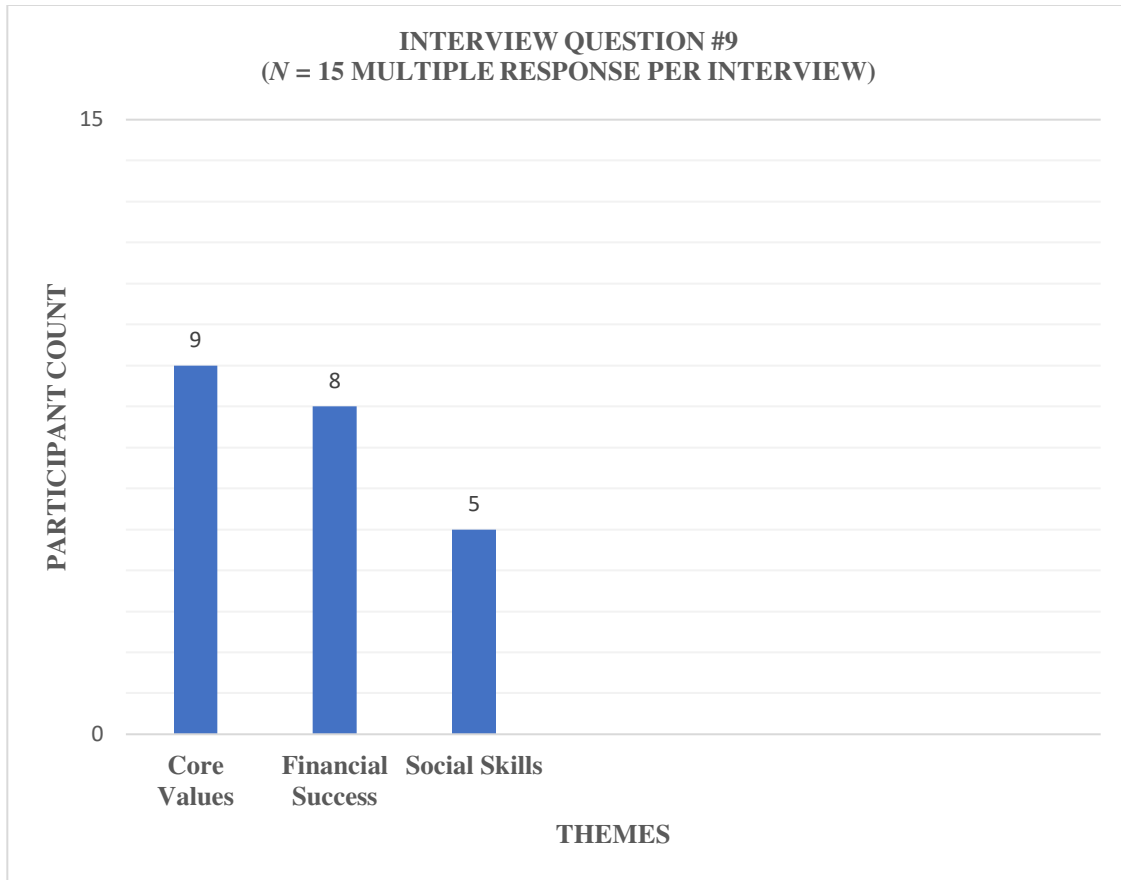


Figure 10. IQ 9: Measuring success in personal and professional life.

**Core values.** Nine of the fifteen respondents stated that their businesses are based on core values. Respondent 1 said:

As an owner of my company, I function in my business, established by a core value system of consistency, commitment, integrity, and respect. My core values provide customer service with a spirit of excellence and continuous personal and professional success through decades of credibility.

Respondent 5 articulated, “As a Christian, I believe many of the messages in Bible Scriptures represent the core values of my organization. Additionally, Christian values are shared among all individuals in my company to stimulate personal and professional success.

**Financial success.** Respondent 6 said:

As a teacher and owner of my company, I focus on teaching wealth building through the establishment of real estate success and career outreach. This leads to long-term financial security and a better quality of life in personal and professional lifestyles. My goals for financial success are teaching real estate business, leadership development, industry research, and how to develop ethical standards.

Respondent 3 articulated:

I attribute my financial success in my personal and professional life to having a great opportunity of flexibility and demonstrating an optimistic influence. For this, I have been appointed as a chairman of a national board. The financial success I achieved as an entrepreneur in real estate has created personal and professional success through my credibility. Also, financial success gives me the freedom to be flexible in many positive aspects of real estate. Therefore, through continued education, constantly improving my skills, and having integrity, I have been able to sustain financially through my Christianity. Through the grace of God, I was able to adapt to clients' schedules and many extensive hours away from home. Also, I maintained my sanity through the stress of an economy that took a downward spiral and the loss of investments.

***Social skills.*** Respondent 2 had a holy grail for social skills and articulated:

As successful female real estate brokers, we need to utilize our innate abilities to leverage our interpersonal skills and shine at networking events. It is also beneficial to follow the woman's intuition to pursue positive customers and business opportunities to maintain our personal and professional success.

**Interview question 9 summary.** Responses to IQ 9 identified the measuring of personal and professional success by utilizing core values, financial success, and social skills. Although

the themes were distinguished by various means, they all indicated the traits of real estate career success in the landscape of the business process. Respondents believed that measuring the traits of personal and professional success is a way to improve real estate entrepreneurs' continual success.

**Research Question 4 (RQ 4)**

Research question 4 asked, what recommendations would female real estate brokers make for aspiring real estate brokers to become successful and accomplish work-life balance? Although these measurements may identify success, they may also measure capacities of needed improvement. Five key themes developed throughout this process: continuing education, customer satisfaction, empathy, good listener, and humility.

**Interview question 10 (IQ 10).** If you start your journey over, what would you do differently? Although these interviews will identify measurements of success, they will also measure capacities of needs improvement. Five themes have developed from this process: customer service, good listener, continued education, humility, and empathy (see Figure 11).

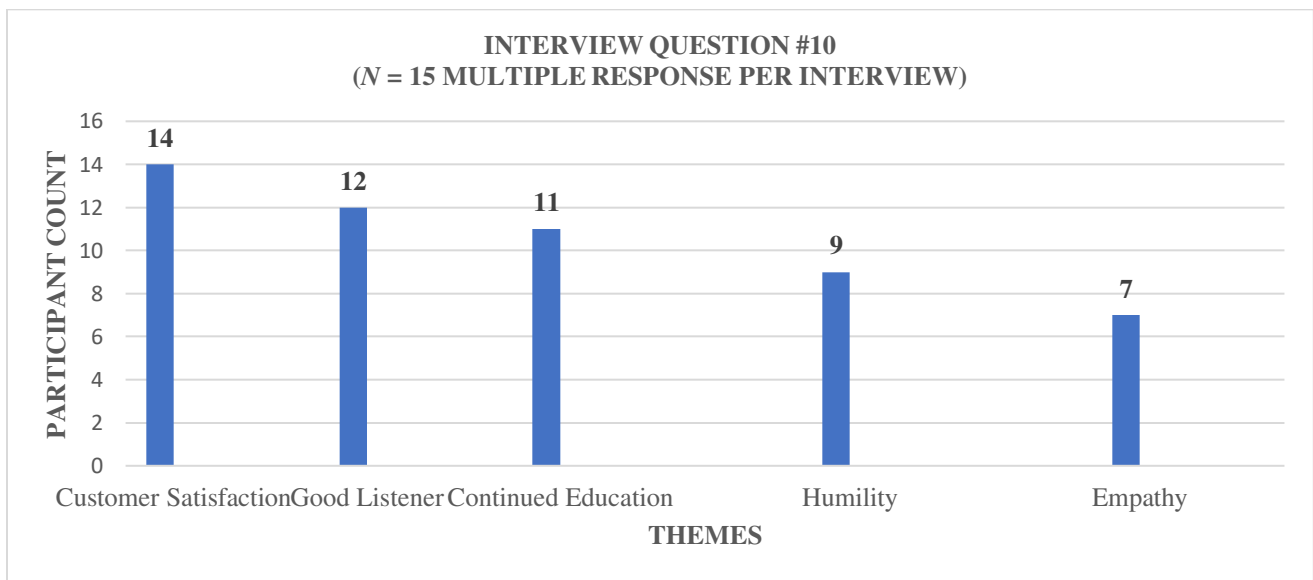


Figure 11. IQ 10: Journey.

***Customer satisfaction.*** Fourteen respondents emphasized customer satisfaction.

Respondent 13 articulated,

Upon my journey, I would recommend to future female real estate brokers, if I had to start over in the field of real estate, to exceed all customers' expectations by under promising and over delivering, going out of my way to accommodate all customers, and maintaining all promises with integrity. Also, show appreciation by giving all customers a closing gift for their business.

Respondent 10 stated, "I would emphasize to new female brokers to always educate and empower themselves and their customers. It is also pertinent to communicate effectively with customers; to know and convey exactly what they want you to provide." Respondent 1 said that if she were to start her journey over, she would satisfy more customers and buy up more property, which is an opening to any situation because investors and banks make it difficult to obtain loans. "Therefore, I would suggest to build a reputation of satisfying customers and build a nest egg."

***Good listener.*** Respondent 15 said:

The recommendation I [would] give to future female real estate brokers if I had to start my journey over is to develop the art of being a good listener. Listen more than you speak; it is why you have two ears and one mouth. When this communication skill is mastered, you will have longevity in your career.

Respondent 2 said:

If I would start my journey over, I would have started [my] real estate sales career sooner, because I enjoy engaging stories with my customers. Listening develops a relationship of trust. I also love and appreciate listening to my brand manager. By knowing the details

and history of the properties and my job earlier, I would be a wealthy woman by now!  
Real estate is where it's at!

As a result, developing effective communication skills builds success in the business.

***Continued education.*** Respondent 7 articulated:

I would do exactly what I'm doing now. I would not have continued my education in another discipline of study, other than real estate because I don't know what field has an unlimited source of financial resources you can tap into like my career. Also, I love the flexibility of being the boss and having the freedom to schedule my own agenda the way I want it.

Respondent 11 said:

If I started my journey over, I would come in as a real estate broker as quickly as I [could], due to the fact the title of real estate broker identifies as a higher status.

Customers and individuals in real estate recognize real estate brokers as being a specialist in the real estate industry. Finally, continued education will cause less legal risk and challenges in transactions.

***Humility.*** Nine respondents focused on humility. Respondent 11 said that if she had to start real estate journey over, "I would maintain a humble spirit and also recommend this to future female real estate brokers, to always reflect a spirit of humility." Respondent 13 articulated, "What I would do differently is to spend more quality time with the people that made me successful and send them tokens more often on special occasions and holidays to show appreciation and humility."

***Empathy.*** Respondent 10 said:

In my business, what I would do differently in my journey as a business owner is teach my staff to have more compassion for our customers. I would teach them to be less technical and impersonal and demonstrate empathy and concern by communicating verbally more. As a real estate broker, having empathy is the ability to step into our customers' world of understanding and being able to identify their thoughts with their point of view, and to utilize those thoughts by understanding their needs and emotions throughout entire transactions to develop an action plan.

**Interview question 10 summary.** Respondents stated that effective communication and continued education are key factors for successful female real estate brokers. Furthermore, becoming responsive and answering or returning calls are pertinent to maintain a pipeline of business. Developing negotiation skills is also an added benefit for customers. Understanding and suggesting solutions to convey to customers and partners is utilized as strategies and techniques.

## **Chapter 4 Summary**

The purpose of this study was to identify why successful female real estate brokers desire work-life balance. To achieve these results, 15 successful female real estate brokers were selected as interview participants for this study. All participants were asked 10 semi-structured interview questions designed to inform and provide evidence of the four research questions:

1. What work-life balance challenges do female real estate brokers face when implementing strategies and practices that have led to their success?
2. What work-life balance strategies and practices are employed by female real estate brokers?

3. How do female real estate brokers measure their success while trying to achieve work-life balance?
4. What recommendations would female real estate brokers make for aspiring real estate brokers to become successful and accomplish work-life balance?

Data for this study was collected through 15 semi-structured interviews. The principal researcher coded the data and validated the results with the support of two inter-raters who were present overseers and Pepperdine doctoral candidates. The data analysis was conducted employing the phenomenological approach explained in chapter three. Table 4 provides a summary of all the themes obtained through the data analyst process.

Table 4

*Summary of Themes for Four Research Questions*

<b>RQ 1 Challenges</b>	<b>RQ 2 Strategies &amp; Practices</b>	<b>RQ 3 Measurements of Success</b>	<b>RQ 4 Recommendations</b>
assertive	continued education	authenticity	community involvement
build a brand	customer satisfaction	build a brand	continue education
commitments	empathy	core values	customer satisfaction
confidence	good listener	community involvement	empathy
creative	humility	effective communication	good listener
multitasking	leadership	family unity	Humility
passionate	strengths & weaknesses	generate revenue	integrity
results driven	team oriented	quality service	time management
time management		transparency	transformational skills

*Note.* This table demonstrates a summary of all the themes derived through the data analysis process.



Chapter 5 presents a discussion of themes, implications, recommendations, and conclusions of the study.

In summary, the respondents offered the following main recommendations.

- IQ 1. It is paramount to infuse strategy and change practices in the careers of female real estate brokers in order to sustain their success.
- IQ 2. When identifying personal challenges and personal burnout, it is imperative to incorporate strategies and techniques to overcome and prevent unforeseen issues immediately.
- IQ 3. Foremost, by acknowledging and accepting the existence of an imbalance will create a mindset to seek assistance, connect with a support system for guidance, and incorporate the strategies suggested to bridge the gap.
- IQ 4. To become successful and have sustainability, overcoming all personal challenges and unresolved issues must occur by establishing mechanisms to overcome the obstacles.
- IQ 5. To eradicate burnout, developing change strategies and techniques must take place in order to grow, become successful, and have the desired fulfillment.
- IQ 6. Identifying and maintaining personal and professional levels of success is strategic to knowing the key components that work in business.
- IQ 7. Understanding that the meaning of financial success is more than money in the bank and continuing to contribute to the less fortunate through success will enhance the value system of human capital.
- IQ 8. Acknowledging the successful people in your personal life gives a continual sense of determination, hope, and encouragement to persevere despite all odds. This

period of life offers the greatest opportunity in time to succeed in compared to previous decades in history.

- IQ 9. Pay attention to details, especially elements of what reinforces concepts of success.
- IQ 10. Most were satisfied with their lives and would not change anything. Others would have started sooner in the real estate business.

## **Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations**

### **Introduction**

Cashman (2012) indicated it is extremely important to build an ambiance and awareness where innovation and failure are comprehended and realized as a conduit, not a threat. “As innovative leaders, we must have the confidence and self-trust to repeatedly risk failure, the courage and openness to absorb hard-earned learning, and the endurance to eventually break through” (p. 116). Most organizations desire innovation, but because they do everything imaginable to circumvent failure, they unintentionally crush the existence of innovation out of the culture. The antidote to these actions is to recapture the decisions leaders should create and the transformation of imagining the reality of successful female real estate brokers in leadership positions who desire to have a better a quality of life through work-life balance.

As revealed in the literature review, visionary leaders must demonstrate a sequence of occasionally analytical and serious decisions and action plans to learn and recover from failed endeavors. When implemented satisfactorily, these actions can transcend into strategies and techniques, to utilize and measure additional and compelling innovative growth mechanisms. Finally, these measurements will create cultures of daily decision-making for success in their businesses and organizations that affect successful female real estate brokers in their families, leisure, and work outcomes. Leadership has been expressed “as the ability to influence a group or individual towards the achievement of goals” (Robbins, 1998, p. 347). Since leadership is the ability to make people strive after business goals, it encompasses different elements such as motivation, communication, and delegation. Moreover, the atmosphere in the business may be of crucial importance for enhancing the performance of individuals in their real estate careers.

## **Summary of the Study**

In order to study why female real estate brokers desire work-life balance, the following research questions were developed:

- RQ 1: What work-life balance challenges do female real estate brokers face when implementing strategies and practices that have led to their success?
- RQ 2: What work-life balance strategies and practices are employed by female real estate brokers?
- RQ 3: How do female real estate brokers measure their success while trying to achieve work-life balance?
- RQ 4: What recommendations would female real estate brokers make for aspiring real estate brokers to become successful and accomplish work-life balance?

## **Summary of the Findings**

In the present study, the principal researcher has examined the work-life, balance of successful female real estate brokers, utilizing a sample of 15 participants who are successful female real estate brokers residing in California with active licenses. The participants decided to pursue their specialized, strategic careers with the capacity of conveying organizational benefits and values while exceeding in meeting the needs of customers and expectations of their staffs. The participants were interviewed to examine the challenges they have experienced and successes accomplished throughout the landscape of their careers. While this assumption is somewhat echoed in the general press or research studies, it has been subjected to a rather small, empirical examination.

The objective of this study was to examine and reveal the variances in work-life balance of personal and professional challenges experienced by the participants that needed a change

assessment. Even though each of their challenges and successes is unique and distinctive, this study developed a sequence of strategies and techniques comprised of common themes to utilize methods to incorporate recommendations for change. Respondent 6 stated, “Fostering resilient circumstances can turn failure and disappointments into success, by being able to bounce back from disappointment or failures. A resilient successful woman real estate broker won't give up, in spite of all obstacles and setbacks, she will keep on keeping on until the situations or circumstances through time changes into success.” However, the study examined various explanations of the interview questions per each participant, and the results were consistent from all the participants.

### **Study Results**

The goal of this qualitative study was to examine and address the research concerning the concept of work-life balance and implement or recommend the strategies and techniques to meet the challenges and achieve success. Therefore, utilizing recommendations, strategies and techniques from the review of the literature in chapter 2 with a comprehensive purpose of identifying and implementing the existing body of knowledge to create results. Further, Chapter 3 displayed the research design and methodology, and Chapter 4 presented the findings of data collected from the participants and the recommendations.

The literature review developed many themes that were the concentration of many authors, theorists, and subject matter experts about business leadership in organizations and a visionary guide to customer satisfaction. The literature review attempted to apply, demonstrate, educate, and explain why pertinent, legal business recommendations for current and future aspiring female real estate brokers are significant to their careers.

### **Common strategies and techniques of successful female real estate brokers.**

Respondent 9 stated,

Living in California, it is important to be proactive and understand the real estate business because of the possibility of being susceptible to risk. Therefore, being proactive with education and training to understand the laws to avoid legal issues and ramifications is pertinent. Also, as brokers, we are held to a higher standard. Therefore, risk reduction classes are very important to attend on a regular basis to prevent . . . unforeseen legal challenges and disciplinary actions.

The effect of this initiative is to prevent or avoid problems before they happen or become visible to anyone else. According to Goleman (1998), people with emotional intelligence take the initiative of competence in seizing opportunities. They are also optimistic and function mentally from the hope of success rather than the fear of failure. Respondent 12 said that her competency in emotional intelligence has proven to be an effective skill, leading her into unlimited success in the real estate industry. When working with her real estate customers, cultural awareness and proper application of emotional intelligence were beneficial and valuable to her and her customers by mirroring and understanding her customers and exceeding the needs of her clientele. This created positive relationships and understanding—the significance of emotional intelligence.

However, failure to anticipate or prepare for potential legal crises is a major problem. The principal investigator connected this lack of initiative to Goleman (1998), who acknowledged that this procrastination is considered a failure to plan. Additionally, the principal researcher connected this resistance to Maslow's (1934) hierarchy of needs theory, with the intent of clarity of demonstrating resistance with the results having a peak experience. Maslow

described peak experiences as mighty moments with their own intrinsic value that are powered by a loss of fear, anxiety, doubts, and inhibitions. Peak experiences follow a period of struggle and resistance to self-actualization as a process, due to the effort of learning, achievement of goals, or finding the answers that equate to creative problems or solutions.

Following the insight and integration of accomplishment, peak experiences are characterized as a relief—an inner peace of mind that one seldom experiences. Therefore, we live our lives through the lens of our own experiences, and our experiences identify who we are and how we see the world. Perceived needed change may cause some defensive mechanisms to occur and our lives become frightening when coping with resistance. Eventually, through effective communication and removing all ambiguity, strategic leaders with techniques can demystify the fear of the unknown and negative opinions, and graduate towards success mechanisms.

The respondents felt that some form of heightened, effective, personal communication was essential in order to ensure a healthy work-life balance and prevent challenges. As a result, this qualitative study was designed to examine, research, and collect personal data. The data was provided directly from each successful woman real estate broker who was involved in the procedure to develop strategies and techniques to implement change through the instruments utilized to structure work-life balance of organizational leadership in their careers and personal lifestyles.

The research questions were developed to obtain the needed information from the successful female real estate brokers for promoting change. Additionally, each question was answered by utilizing supportive interview questions, as specified in chapter 4:

- IQ 1. What have been some of the more significant professional challenges you have encountered in your journey to become a successful woman real estate broker?
- IQ 2. What strategies did you use to overcome these professional challenges?
- IQ 3. What have been some of the more significant personal challenges such as work-life balance you encountered on your journey to success?
- IQ 4. What strategies did you use to overcome these personal challenges?
- IQ 5. How do you avoid professional burnout?
- IQ 6. What among your personal characteristics has been instrumental in your achieving personal and professional success?
- IQ 7. What does success mean to you professionally?
- IQ 8. Who does success mean to you in your personal life?
- IQ 9. How do you measure each?
- IQ 10. If you could start your journey over, what would you do differently?

**Common challenges of successful female real estate brokers.** These three interview questions were used to elicit answers to research question 1:

- IQ 1. What have been some of the more significant professional challenges you have encountered in your journey to become a successful woman real estate broker?
- IQ 2. What strategies did you use to overcome these professional challenges?
- IQ 3. What have been some of the more significant personal challenges such as work-life balance you encountered on your journey to success?

**Research question 1.** RQ 1 Sought to examine the work-life balance challenges female real estate brokers face when implementing strategies and practices that led to their success.

The three interview questions created a sequence of themes that were analyzed independently



and collectively. The following six key themes were utilized to achieve better work-life balance. They were developed from the analysis of interview questions as follows:

*Proactive.* Being proactive through effective communication and creating a culture of flexibility with various successful female real estate brokers, staff, colleagues, and family is an excellent way to bridge many gaps in this occupation. Articulating and demonstrating the emphasis of intrinsic motivation to develop and utilize the transformational leadership approach can be valuable. Therefore, arranging to become familiar with the unknown is an icebreaker. It allows you to ask for or exchange what you need to be successful with familiar individuals in the future. Initially, delegating authority and volunteering support from others is a great starting point. At work, look for opportunities to network with women who have experienced similar challenges and support others by sharing advice and familiarities. At home, it may involve asking one's family for support with household chores or caring for children's needs that cannot be done due to hectic agendas or hiring someone to contribute to the family. According to Northouse (2010), "transformational leadership is a process that changes and transforms people. It is a process that frequently includes leadership of charismatic and visionary. Additionally, it is concerned with emotions, values, ethics, standards, and long-term goals" (p. 171).

*Committed.* The main takeaways from this research and development to find better work-life balance was for the successful female real estate brokers to commit to positioning themselves with noble allies such as family, friends, mentors, or their office managers who know and support their goals. Becoming an authentic leader was a key factor in achieving work-life balance. When customers and partners see the authenticity in the successful female real estate brokers' work, this permeates their work and life and creates a balance. Northouse

(2010) states, “Authentic leadership consists of the foundation their actions of their values. They are also leaders who lead from conviction by exhibiting genuine leadership qualities” (p. 207).

*Social skills.* By juggling family, leisure life, and school schedules and becoming a successful woman real estate broker may come with enhancing social skills. This may eliminate an imbalance such as continuing education or developing computer literacy. Also, the skills of learning new software applications to become unambiguous in the technological world.

*Resilient.* The participants in this study were resilient. Their determination, fear of failure, and embracing possible rejection gave them the tenacity to be resilient. They prioritized their lifestyles to have work-life balance. This characteristic displayed a situational leadership approach composed of both directive and supportive dimensions. According to Hersey and Blanchard (1993), the first strength in situational leadership (S1) is credible for training to become effective leaders who influence others. This style is high directive and low supportive. Therefore, this style establishes, sets timelines, and achieves goals, and is often with one-way communication, called *directing*.

*Participative.* Developing and learning from peer groups and mentors was a synonymous focus for the successful female real estate brokers to be participative in their businesses. This approach was more of the S2 approach to situational leadership called *coaching* (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993).

*Competition.* A tremendous agreement from the participants’ interview answers was the importance of developing strategies and practice techniques, and being proactive was the key component. All 15 respondents indicated that as leaders, they have to be more than

ambitious. They have to be motivators in this intense real estate field in order to compete. They have to motivate themselves, their customers, and their team and have patience. In the real estate business, clarity is a must, doing research is relentless, and being a quick thinker, articulating and elaborating to become trusted and likable by clients, customers, and peers is essential. As a result, they were situational leaders with strengths that emphasized innovation and flexibility.

**Research question 2.** What work-life balance strategies and practices are employed by female real estate brokers? Ten respondents reported that having the tenacity and a strategic plan helped them overcome personal challenges. Most of them realized that their setbacks were setups for a greater comeback. Tenacity helped them to embrace and resolve unresolved issues instead of quitting in their work life and personal lifestyles or throwing in the towel. The five key themes that were developed throughout this process are

- authenticity,
- emotional intelligence,
- inspiration,
- leadership, and
- tenacity.

**How successful female real estate brokers measure success intrinsically.** Tenacity was the respondents' key focus and landscape. Most believed preventing conflicts and challenges by utilizing techniques reduced or prevented possible resistance with customers or unexpected encounters, when customers noticed the successful female real estate brokers were driven to satisfy their customers' needs. Through their dedication to customers, the successful female real estate brokers were able to bridge the gap of achieving an exceptional career experience.

However, if they do not have the wherewithal to be tenacious in their career, it can be a possible detriment. Three interview questions were utilized to examine this question:

- IQ. 4. What strategies did you use to overcome these personal challenges?
- IQ. 5. How do you avoid professional burnout?
- IQ. 6. What among your personal characteristics has been instrumental in your achieving personal and professional success?

**Research question 3.** Research question 3 asked, how do female real estate brokers measure their success while trying to achieve work-life balance? Three interview questions were utilized to examine this question.

- IQ 7. What does success mean to you professionally?
- IQ 8. Who does success mean to you in your personal life?
- IQ 9. How do you measure each?

Fourteen respondents identified success as the financial success of their careers and of the expectation that this was their dream job. But success was not measured exclusively by their sales quotas, bank accounts, status, or personal and professional lives. Their definition of success includes relationships built, repetitively communicating with customers and responding to their individual requests, as well as understanding the unique qualities and intricacies of the homes they represent to buyers or sellers.

**Research question 4.** Research question 4 asked: what recommendations would female real estate brokers make for aspiring real estate brokers to become successful and accomplish work-life balance? Although these measurements may identify success, they may also measure capacities of needed improvement. Five key themes developed throughout this process: continuing education, customer satisfaction, empathy, good listener, and humility. IQ 10, if you

could start your journey over, what would you do differently, was utilized to examine this research question.

The respondents offered the following recommendations.

- IQ 1. It is paramount to infuse strategy and change practices in the careers of female real estate brokers in order to sustain their success.
- IQ 2. When identifying personal challenges and personal burnout, it is imperative to incorporate strategies and techniques to overcome and prevent unforeseen issues immediately.
- IQ 3. Acknowledging and accepting that an imbalance exists creates the mindset to be able to seek assistance and connect to a support system for guidance and to incorporate the strategies suggested to bridge the gap.
- IQ 4. To become successful and have sustainability, overcoming all personal challenges and unresolved issues must occur by establishing mechanisms to overcome the obstacles.
- IQ 5. To eradicate burnout, developing change strategies and techniques must take place in order to grow, become successful, and have the desired fulfillment.
- IQ 6. Identifying and maintaining personal and professional levels of success are strategic to knowing key components of what works in business.
- IQ 7. Understanding the meaning of financial success is more than money in the bank and continuing to contribute to the less fortunate through success will enhance the value system of human capital.
- IQ 8. Acknowledging the successful people in your personal life will continue to give you a sense of determination, hope, and encouragement to persevere despite all odds.

This period of time offers the greatest opportunity to succeed compared to previous decades in history.

- IQ 9. Pay attention to details, especially elements of what reinforces concepts of success.

### **Key Findings**

The principal investigator gave the participants the opportunity to make recommendations about changes that could decrease the level of stress in their careers. The respondents interviewed provided thoughts, ideas, and suggestions of potential changes to implement in their personal and professional lives. Initially, a reduced work schedule was suggested by most of those who experienced job stress frequently or constantly. Second, the most common themes were customer satisfaction, financial success, and continued education. Therefore, by improving these areas, flexibility may occur.

Additionally, a most frequent response was vacation time in the equation of leisure activities, alone or with family, followed by responses who had experienced the burst of the economic bubble and became transformational leaders. Through resilience, they were never ready to quit but rather transitioned into another capacity of real estate. As a result, adapting to fewer working hours and more flexibility in work hours were each articulated by a few respondents who experienced burnout in their careers. Furthermore, probing was a way for the participants to become more candid by discussing reasons why they needed a better plan of action to decrease work stress.

### **Implications of the Study**

This study aimed to assess and examine the causes of career stress and burnout for successful female real estate brokers who are leaders in their field. Through research in this

study, the evidence of interference due to stress and burnout were (a) the difficulty of staying organized and keeping appointments, (b) anxiety, (c) depression, and (d) exhaustion. Therefore, implications regarding work-life, balance strategies for tackling stress through change management were explored.

Three strategies for tackling stress and developing training programs were identified:

- Implications for practitioners to decrease extensive work schedules and improving the quality of their personal and professional lifestyles by interventions. Eliminating stress in their careers was the priority for effective change actions to occur in their careers, family, and personal lifestyles, in order to have flexibility in each area and to create a balance. Infusing a primary care plan helped to conquer stress and the imbalance of overwork challenges. If primary care providers were to propose a support mechanism to infuse a better quality of work-life balance, this could reduce stress through counseling, mentorship, and exercise.
- Implications of reducing extensive work schedules. This implication may improve the quality of their personal lives to generate a balance. This could have a great impact on their careers, families, and leisure lifestyles. Also, infusing the above interventions designed to support individuals who are interested in a better quality of work-life balance goals of comprehensive strategies and techniques are recommended in this study. To create effective solutions for work-life balance issues, it is paramount that concrete evidence on the range of the challenges is identified. This is what the study of the principal investigator attempts to postulate.
- Offering training programs for achieving work-life balance for aspiring female real estate brokers. Three emphases are needed.

- Mentorship gives new female real estate brokers a community of varied experiences and advice from successful female real estate brokers. The training could include various methods of how to succeed and have sustainability through networking and through a plethora of groups and organizations that encourage guide and inspire women to collaborate.
- Leadership training equips women to be effective in every area of their careers, designed by women for women. It could offer individualized career planning with five-, ten-, and fifteen-year goals. This would give new and aspiring female real estate brokers the ability to learn, grow, and develop their skills; stories they can embrace in their careers; and the ability to become resilient.
- Technology offers virtual platforms for networking with professional female real estate brokers in other cities in California to help them know how to figure out and share what is best for them to progress in their careers in this emerging, evolving market. This harnessing of technology could help each woman real estate broker overcome her challenges in business. This could also teach women how to change their clients' futures through plans and systems of technical applications and strategies.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Further research is tremendously valued to the existing body of knowledge for varying reasons. Having the ability to study and capture the mindsets of successful female real estate brokers to address social problems, educate real estate students, stimulate economic growth, and ensure the continued success of aspiring female real estate brokers are all reasons for additional



study to benefit future leaders in the real estate industry. Ultimately, female real estate brokers can learn the significant strategies and techniques of successful female real estate brokers from studying their counterparts. Therefore, based on the results of this study, a distinctly need for further research in various areas has been identified. The areas related to this present study specifically for furthering the opportunity of examining successful real estate brokers who are leaders of both genders are as follows:

- Examine a comparable study including successful male real estate brokers in California. Some careers are dominated by women (such as teachers and housekeepers) and some are made up of almost all men (such as professional football players and airplane pilots). In the real estate industry, the gender divide is very interesting.
- Include successful commercial real estate brokers in California of both genders. Are commercial real estate brokers in California a good old boys network or are women as successful as men? It would be interesting to see if a gender gap exists.
- Examine successful and unsuccessful measurements and assessment techniques and strategies utilized or attempted by both genders of California real estate brokers. According to Inside Real Estate (2016), “they measure success and unsuccessful measurements and assessment techniques by training through California Bureau of Real Estate and their Real Estate Broker. Both genders should be taught 4 key performance metrics: response time, lead conversion to opportunity, close rates, and follow up.
- Examine the mechanisms of change, determination, and leadership as identified by the California Real Estate Brokers for both genders.

What are the mechanisms of change? The majority of the participants in this study recommending focusing one's energies in an optimistic environment, welcoming change and not resisting it. Be determined to learn, grow, develop, and build on new leadership models of success.

- Examine the effects of social media and technology on real estate brokers' productivity. How can the real estate culture improve productivity? How can organizations in real estate stay abreast with technology and the influence on social media be fluent? Finally, is it beneficial to create an awareness of the impact of social media from a business perspective. Many of the participants in this study mentioned it is beneficial to market and advertise to create a presence in real estate through technology.

### **Closing Remarks**

The process of earning this Doctorate gives me immense pleasure and fulfillment. I would certainly be remiss to not mention Mrs. Sherry Chow-Bailey for blessing me with a contingency plan. Additionally, I am obliged to express sincere gratitude for the 15 participants who gave me their quality time, unconditional love, and support to conclude my academic journey successfully! I wholeheartedly appreciate the participants sharing their leadership strategies, techniques, skills, traits, personal information, and inspiration. I will forever give thanks for the leaders who made my dream a reality. I appreciate all of your valuable directives and the contributions of your wealth of information to the existing body of knowledge. This will forever bless, educate, encourage, and prepare aspiring female real estate brokers who desire to become leaders in the real estate field to discern what is their work-life balance.

My final insights and closing statements for aspiring female real estate brokers are from a feminist perspective. The future generations of women desiring careers in real estate have an advantage when mentees are guided, led, and directed by the veteran or seasoned real estate brokers who have paved the way and know the challenges.

Successful female real estate brokers may have overcome many obstacles. Thus, it is vital to take advantage of this asset to enhance innovative minds as they cultivate their businesses. When students are trained and taught by leaders who love what they do, the students become admirable about their academic journey. This happens when leaders/mentors and students/mentees follow the same syllabus for success, which creates change, a pattern of networking, and a quantum leap of opportunity through the passion. This contribution will allow them to aim high by putting them in a place where they can make a difference. With the support mechanism tools, strategies and techniques that have been planned and executed in this study, will equip ensure and develop a rewarding less challenging and long-lasting career path.

“We need quiet time to examine our lives openly and honestly . . .  
spending quiet time alone gives your mind an opportunity  
to renew itself and create order.”

—Susan L. Taylor

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## APPENDIX A

### Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval Notice



Pepperdine University  
24255 Pacific Coast Highway  
Malibu, CA 90263  
TEL: 310-506-4000

#### NOTICE OF APPROVAL FOR HUMAN RESEARCH

Date: February 16, 2017

Protocol Investigator Name: Kerri Jones

Protocol #: 16-12-452

Project Title: WORK-LIFE BALANCE: ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND INDIVIDUAL STRATEGIES AMONG SUCCESSFUL WOMEN REAL ESTATE BROKERS

School: Graduate School of Education and Psychology

Dear Kerri Jones:

Thank you for submitting your application for exempt review to Pepperdine University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). We appreciate the work you have done on your proposal. The IRB has reviewed your submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. Upon review, the IRB has determined that the above entitled project meets the requirements for exemption under the federal regulations 45 CFR 46.101 that govern the protections of human subjects.

Your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit an amendment to the IRB. Since your study falls under exemption, there is no requirement for continuing IRB review of your project. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for exemption from 45 CFR 46.101 and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the IRB.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite the best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete written explanation of the event and your written response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the IRB and documenting the adverse event can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* at [community.pepperdine.edu/irb](http://community.pepperdine.edu/irb).

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all communication or correspondence related to your application and this approval. Should you have additional questions or require clarification of the contents of this letter, please contact the IRB Office. On behalf of the IRB, I wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

Sincerely,

Judy Ho, Ph.D., IRB Chair

## APPENDIX B

### Interview Recruitment Phone Script

Good morning/afternoon <Potential participant Name>,

My name is Kerri Jones and I am a doctoral candidate at the Graduate School of Education and Psychology at Pepperdine University. I am currently working on my dissertation entitled **WORK-LIFE BALANCE: ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND INDIVIDUAL STRATEGIES AMONG SUCCESSFUL WOMEN REAL ESTATE BROKERS**.

The purpose of this study is to (a) examine what practices and strategies are utilized by female real estate brokers to sustain their work-life balance; (b) examine what challenges successful female real estate brokers face while seeking work-life balance, (c) identify how success is defined by female real estate brokers who may facilitate work-life balance, and (d) identify what key recommendations aspiring women brokers can employ to achieve successful work-life balance. This study consists of 18 semi-structured interview questions that will focus on identifying the successes and challenges that current successful female real estate leaders have experienced in their leadership roles. I am seeking out participants to help me in this qualitative research study. Based upon specific qualifying criteria, I have determined that you would be an excellent participant for this study. The interview will take approximately 45–60 minutes and will be conducted in-person at a location of your choosing. Would you be interested in participating in this study?

If yes, thank you for your interest, what will follow next is setting an interview date, time, and location. Approximately one week before the interview, I will provide you a copy of the interview questions for review. If no, Thank you for your time and your consideration.

## APPENDIX C

### Interview Recruitment Script

Good morning/afternoon <Potential Subject Name>,

My name is Kerri Jones and I am a doctoral candidate at the Graduate School of Education and Psychology at Pepperdine University. I am currently working on my dissertation entitled **WORK-LIFE BALANCE: ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND INDIVIDUAL STRATEGIES AMONG SUCCESSFUL WOMEN REAL ESTATE BROKERS**.

The purpose of this study is to (a) examine what practices and strategies are utilized by female real estate brokers to sustain their work-life balance; (b) examine what challenges successful female real estate brokers face while seeking work-life balance, (c) identify how success is defined by female real estate brokers who may facilitate work-life balance, and (d) identify what key recommendations aspiring women brokers can employ to achieve successful work-life balance.

This study consists of semi-structured interview questions that will focus on identifying the successes and challenges that current Successful female real estate leaders have experienced in their leadership roles. I am seeking out participants to help me in this qualitative research study. Based upon specific qualifying criteria, I have determined that you would be an excellent participant in this study. The interview will take approximately 45–60 minutes and will be conducted in-person at a location of your choosing. If you are interested in participating in this study, please let me know and we can begin the process of providing you with an informed consent form and setting-up an interview date, time, and location. Also, please note that approximately one week before the interview, I will provide you a copy of the interview questions for review.

Thank you for your time and your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Kerri Jones  
Doctoral Candidate  
Pepperdine University, GSEP  
Kerri.jones@pepperdine.edu



## APPENDIX D

### Interview Questions

Question 1: What have been some of the most significant challenges

(direct or indirect) you have encountered as a woman real estate broker?

Question 2: What in your own formal education, experience or training prepared you to

overcome these challenges?

Question 3: How did you cope with/or overcome those challenges?

Question 4: Do you think *it* is more of a challenge as a leader for a major recognized firm as a

female real estate broker or being an owner/operator of an independent firm?

Question 5: How would you describe your leadership style?

Question 6: What methodologies/strategies or philosophy (ies) have you incorporated, which you

have established to become successful?

Question 7: Describe your leadership strengths and how they have contributed to your leadership

effectiveness and success.

Question 8: Do you know of any leadership methodologies/strategies or philosophy (ies) other

female real estate brokers who are leaders utilize?

Question 9: Are they different from your own established strategies and practices? If so, please

explain how.

Question 10: Describe your *principles* for success?

Question 11: How did you evaluate your goals which led to becoming a woman real estate

broker, i.e., when did you know your goals were in alignment with your desired outcome?

(continued)

Question 12: What evaluation methodology or strategies do you utilize to measure your success?

Also, the success of other successful female real estate brokers?

Question 13: Who or what was influential in your measure of success?

Question 14: How do female real estate brokers measure success? Is this different from your own measurement of success? If so, please explain why or why not.

Question 15: Is this different from your own measurement of success? If so, please explain why or why not.

Question 16: What advice would you give aspiring female real estate brokers wanting to lead and become successful?

Question 17: What recommendations do you have for aspiring women who want to begin in real estate sales?

Question 18: Is there anything else you would like to share your expertise, experience or education that you would like to contribute that would be relevant to this study?

## APPENDIX E

### PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY Graduate School of Education and Psychology

#### INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH ACTIVITIES

#### **WORK-LIFE BALANCE: ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND INDIVIDUAL STRATEGIES AMONG SUCCESSFUL WOMEN REAL ESTATE BROKERS**

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Kerri Jones, M.S. and Farzin Madjidi, Ed.D. at Pepperdine University, because you are a Successful woman leader in the real estate industry. Your participation is voluntary. You should read the information below, and ask questions about anything that you do not understand, before deciding whether to participate. Please take as much time as you need to read the consent form. You may also decide to discuss participation with your family or friends. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form. You will also be given a copy of this form for your records.

#### **PURPOSE OF THE STUDY**

The purpose of the study is to examine successful women real estate brokers who are often challenged in balancing employment responsibilities with family, leisure activities, and child care responsibilities. The changes in the real estate career may help to minimize challenging demands on women real estate brokers and increase their overall careers and lifestyles of contentment. Thus, not all real estate organizations exhibit the identical characteristics in regard to size, authority, and other measures. According to Duxbury and Higgins (2001), It also may be evident in the study, there are some studies that have been directly related to work-life balance within various sizes of organizations.

Subsequently, it is included but not limited to the determination that examining work-life balance in real estate organizations will allow this study to illuminate, utilize and obtain data from the existing literature to reveal any ambiguity or stressors. However, identifying the challenges and solutions is a compelling need to provide a basis of organizational leadership and strategic plans for (a) existing women real estate brokers who are leaders in the real estate field and (b) aspiring women real estate brokers. Additionally, a possible significance in the differences in balancing the development of work exists among many women real estate brokers' personal and professional lifestyles and their varied organizations.

#### **STUDY PROCEDURES**

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked the following:

1. Review the provided interview questions.
2. Review the informed consent form.

3. Answer the 10 qualitative interview questions.
4. Review and approve your responses to the interview questions after your responses have been transcribed.

### **POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS**

The potential and foreseeable risks associated with participation in this study include the following:

1. Potential Breach of Confidentiality
2. Potential risk to reputation
3. Self-Efficacy; Boredom; Fatigue; and Negative Self Reflection.

### **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

While there are no direct benefits to the study participants, as this is a qualitative study, your responses will be utilized as data collection for a Doctoral Dissertation examining and identifying the focus of work life, balance: organizational leadership and individual strategies among successful women real estate brokers. Additionally, this information will assist in educating aspiring women real estate brokers to become leaders in their organizations.

### **PAYMENT/COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION**

You will receive \$25 visa gift card for your time. You do not have to answer all of the questions in order to receive the card. The card will be given to you at the end of the interview.

### **CONFIDENTIALITY**

I will keep your records for this study *confidential* as far as permitted by law. However, if required to do so by law, I may be required to disclose information collected about you. Examples of the types of issues that would require me to break confidentiality are if you tell me about any instances of child abuse and elder abuse. Pepperdine's University's Human Subjects Protection Program (HSPP) may also access the data collected. The HSPP occasionally reviews and monitors research studies to protect the rights and welfare of research subjects.

The data will be stored on a password protected computer in the principal investigator's place of residence. The data will be stored for a minimum of three years. The data collected will be coded and transcribed for reliability and validity purposes. Upon the initial coding taking place, the data will be provided to two carefully selected Doctoral peer reviewers with a similar amount of training and preparation for conducting qualitative research. They will also code the information based on what they hear from the audio interview. Their coding will be used as comparison to the researcher to ensure the accuracy of what is interpreted from the commentary you provided. Upon final the data gathering, this information will be provided to the principal investigator and any evidence deleted from their computers. You will then be provided a copy of the transcribed notes and coding to verify the information determined from the recordings. Upon

your approval this information will be utilized all or in part of the findings chapter of the Dissertation.

### **PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL**

Your participation is voluntary. Your refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study.

### **ALTERNATIVES TO FULL PARTICIPATION**

The alternative to participation in the study is not participating or only completing the items for which you feel comfortable.

### **EMERGENCY CARE AND COMPENSATION FOR INJURY**

If you are injured as a direct result of research procedures you will receive medical treatment; however, you or your insurance will be responsible for the cost. Pepperdine University does not provide any monetary compensation for injury.

### **INVESTIGATOR'S CONTACT INFORMATION**

I understand that the investigator is willing to answer any inquiries I may have concerning the research herein described. I understand that I may contact Dr. Farzin Madjidi, if I have any other questions or concerns about this research.

### **RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT – IRB CONTACT INFORMATION**

If you have questions, concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant or research in general please contact Dr. Judy Ho, Chairperson of the Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board at Pepperdine University 6100 Center Drive Suite 500 Los Angeles, CA 90045, 310-568-5753 or [gpsirb@pepperdine.edu](mailto:gpsirb@pepperdine.edu).