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BLASTS FROM THE PAST

With high-tech drone strikes and tanks the size of small houses, it's hard to imagine what inspired such deadly developments. But, not so long ago, mankind was just barely beginning to grasp the awesome power of artillery. How did it all come about?

Step back in time a few thousand years. Projectile weapons are nothing new. Preserved bows and arrows have been found to date way back into 7,000 B.C.E. (and the tech appears to have been in use since 20,000 B.C.E.). Tried and true, the bow is still a favorite of hunters and action heroes alike!

Fast forward a dozen centuries or so, and we come across a 200 B.C.E. polymath bent on truly creative victory — Archimedes of Syracuse. His works hold the keys to mathematics, irrigation, the stars, and the very first death ray. In a moment of ingenuity any Star Trek fan can be proud of, Archimedes defended his home turf using a mirror array to send invading ships bursting into flames.

This Greek genius expanded on his collection of long-distance vanquishing machines by improving the accuracy of the catapult, which was woefully inaccurate, albeit intimidating. Roman engineers capitalized on the new and improved catapult and invented the “Onager” (which translates to “wild donkey with a fearsome kick”).

But why settle for launching spheres when you can hurl giant bolts? Enter the Roman ballista (there's a reason these guys had an empire) that was even fashioned into a repeating version by Dionysius of Alexandria.

While cumbersome, these machines could go on the move with invading armies and some miniaturized versions like the onager's little brother, the “scorpion bow,” could be driven into battle on a chariot. The biggest of these early slingers was the trebuchet, and while it was a marvel of ancient destruction, it was essentially stationary. With such a well-stocked early arsenal, new forms of far-flung death didn't come about in Europe until the invention of the cannon, but all was not quiet on the eastern front.

In the 800s, Chinese alchemist Qing Xuxi put pen to parchment and documented the earliest known form of gunpowder. This “Fire Medicine” was quickly applied to more militaristic efforts, and they soon developed flamethrowers, bombs, rockets, hand cannons, and land mines! As early as 1241 C.E., Mongol forces used their explosive artillery on their western neighbors, and in the late 14th century, gunpowder finally fueled the fires of global conflict. The rest, as they say, is history...



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POWERFUL REAL ESTATE TIPS & STRATEGIES YOU CAN USE

THANK YOU, MOM

“Men are what their mothers made them.”
Ralph Waldo Emerson

We say “thanks” every day to people we don't even know, but sometimes we forget to say it to the ones who deserve it most. This Mother's Day, I'd like to thank my mom, and I invite you to join me in thanking all moms all over the world.

Who knew Mom's advice would help us as real estate investors?

7 Lessons From Mom That Apply To Real Estate Investing

1. Value education. The ability to learn is a gift and a responsibility. Our moms taught us early to give education a very high priority. People who invest in their education tend to be the most successful real estate investors in the long run.

2. Don't follow the herd. Our moms taught us to think for ourselves. You can't be successful as a real estate investor doing what everyone else is doing.

3. Practice generosity. Share your life and resources with others. My mom spent extra time after work tutoring students for free. In real estate, as in most businesses, givers gain. The best way to make friends in business is to make money for someone else. The more you give, the more you get — generous investors do more real estate transactions than greedy investors.

4. Talk is cheap. Words are important, but actions speak volumes. Your reputation in real estate will be based on your actions, not your rhetoric.

5. Seek and share knowledge. My mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother were all teachers. Teachers must both seek and share knowledge. Growing up, I learned to



appreciate the time, energy, care, and commitment that teachers show every day. The most successful real estate investors always look for new ways to learn. Investors who share their knowledge inspire other investors to reciprocate.

6. Always say please and thank you. Manners are important for life and for business. In real estate, people prefer to do business with people who are polite and courteous.

7. Work hard. My mom always set a shining example with her consistently strong work ethic. The hardest working investors get the real estate deals that slip beyond the reach of others.

Good luck. Onward and upward!

Gerald Lucas

GERALD LUCAS
Real Estate Expert & Best-Selling Author



ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITY

Entrepreneurs need more than passion. They need action. We need to be active, out there doing things, not sitting around in touchy-feely drum circles while the bigger dogs do all the work. We have to take action — do things now, or don't do them at all. The one and only Sir Paul McCartney said it best, "What does it matter to you when you've got a job to do? You've got to do it well. You've got to give the other fella hell." The point is not to think, but to do.

GET IT DONE: There are a million and one reasons why a task "can't" be done, why you "can't" take your business to the next level. Chances are, if you "can't" get something done, you're probably standing in your own way. Do your homework, conduct research. Take proactive steps to solving your own problems. Don't wait for someone else to find solutions. Take action whenever possible.

SET TIME LIMITS: You might be a perfectionist, and that's fine, but not when you're

going through mundane daily tasks. Enforce a time limit on these, and stick to it. Subscribe to the two-minute rule. If something comes up that takes less than two minutes to solve, take care of it immediately. On the other hand, if a lower priority task comes up that might take more time, delegate the work out. You need to put your focus on high-priority tasks or early-stage ideas. Those need your attention first, or they're going to be left in the dust.

LET'S GET VISUAL: Don't waste your time talking out an idea. Embrace the cliché: "a picture's worth a thousand words." Visual aids spread faster than words, so let them do the talking. Also, visual planning requires a fuller comprehension of ideas and new projects. A visual aid not only gives you something more tangible to present, but it forces your hand when it comes to determining how well your team and your customers understand your visions.

No entrepreneur ever achieved anything just sitting in an office. If you're not getting out there and not helping your business, you're hindering it, and that's no way to get results. Strap on your boots and get out there.



ASK GERALD a Real Estate Question

Q. Gerald, I'm buying a property and am trying to decide which real estate attorney to use. What should I be looking for? What qualities make a good real estate attorney?
Dan, Saddlebrook, NJ

A. That's a great question, Dan. If you haven't dealt with many real estate attorneys I can imagine they all probably seem the same to you. What I'm going to do is give you three qualities you should look for in choosing the right real estate attorney:

1) Real Estate Specialization: Does the attorney specialize in real estate or are they a jack-of-all-trades? In general, you want someone who specializes in real estate law, in the same way if

you needed surgery, you'd probably want to choose a surgeon rather than a general practitioner.

2) Experience: How much experience does the real estate attorney have? Find out how long they've been practicing real estate law and find out how many real estate transactions they've done. You don't want to be the guinea pig and have the real estate attorney you've hired learning their craft while representing you.

3) Level of Responsiveness: This may be the most important factor when choosing an attorney, because if they're not available to assist you, they're not going to do you much good, regardless of their level of competence and experience. In order to gauge their responsiveness, one thing I'd suggest is to see how long it takes them to respond to your initial inquiry.

Thanks for your question, Dan — good luck. For more real estate tips and information, visit my blog at geraldlucas.com.



The Rental Market is **HOT!**

Great News! There is an incredible opportunity for rental real estate investing! Truth be told, we're not going back to 69 percent home ownership rates anytime soon. With mortgages steadily harder to obtain, more would-be homeowners are renting.

This heightened rental property interest has given landlords more power, which means rent prices are going up and are likely to continue doing so. The national average has climbed nearly 10 percent since 2010, and this trend doesn't seem to be slowing down. This can be attributed to the fact that inflation is working its magic like it's going out of style, which will definitely continue to push rents higher.

Overall home ownership cost is exceptionally favorable — even if home prices have a little further to fall — since long-term interest rates are currently near all-time lows. Prices in many markets have already dropped far enough that rental yields are quite juicy, especially compared with interest rates. If you are looking to move, instead of selling your house, why not let someone else pay down your mortgage while you get a new place?

Despite the lackluster shape of home sales, the rental market continues to be our soggy little rain cloud's silver lining. Reports are showing that vacancies in rentals have been steadily dropping over the past couple of years, meaning



for rent

that as more rentals are being occupied, more are in greater demand. This is a direct result of the number of foreclosures and those previous homeowners

being forced into the rental market. Those families are ready, willing and able to pay \$2,000, \$3,000, and more per month in rent! Can you say "opportunity"?

Real Estate Insights

1. The biggest increase in NJ home buying activity recently is for homes in the \$600,000-\$2.5 million price range.



2. 70 percent of New Jersey households have no children — this will significantly affect demand for large suburban single-family housing.

3. Rental apartment demand continues to soar as mortgage lending requirements remain relatively strict.

4. Income drives real estate sales. Even though more people in the U.S. are working now than before the global financial crisis, the quality of jobs are lower and there are more part-time workers, so incomes are flat.

5. In order to maximize return on investment (ROI), getting a property rented fast to a good tenant is more important than getting the highest rent, because just one month of vacancy can destroy your ROI and cash flow for the year.



1 Use IRS Code 121 to defer real estate capital gains on your primary residence.

2 Use IRS Code 1031 to defer paying taxes on real estate capital gains of investment property.

3 Select a real estate attorney that specializes in real estate rather than a jack-of-all-trades.

4 Buy a personal liability insurance policy if you own rental property to protect yourself from lawsuits.

5 Demand a solid written agreement with a home contractor or handyman before any work begins or any money is exchanged.