



It didn't take long for Chicago real estate broker Mike Opyd to discover that life in Corporate America wasn't for him. "After graduating college I got a job in the financial sector and realized sitting behind a desk for eight hours a day staring at spreadsheets was not at all what I wanted to do," he recalls. "I basically quit my job with no back-up plan." Then, one phone call changed the course of his life. "I called my cousin, who was a long-time Chicago REALTOR®, to ask about investing in real estate. After that 30-minute call I was utterly obsessed with real estate and knew I wanted to go into business for myself."

Mike earned his real estate license in 2007, hit the ground running, and hasn't slowed down. He serves clients in the downtown area, as well as Lakeview, Lincoln Park, Logan Square, West Town and the South Loop. "I know the city very well, and I go where my clients want to go. In fact, my slogan is 'Chicago Real Estate is My Lifestyle,'" he explains. A Millennial himself, Mike understands the needs and desires of his clients from that generation. "We live in a digital world, and I'm pretty much available 24/7," he says. "I'm a very honest person. I'm going to tell it like it is, whether someone wants to hear it or not; I think most people appreciate that."

With a steadily growing roster of repeat and referral clients making up about half of his business, Mike is also skilled at working leads and generating business from online sources. "People want to work with me because I know a lot about this city and I want to make sure they are making informed decisions," he says. "I'm not just doing this for a paycheck. I have my clients' best interests in mind. I may over inform people but I think they see how passionate I am about real estate and how I share that with them."

Education is a thread that runs throughout the way Mike conducts his business. "I am obsessed with reading and learning. The biggest thing I can do is provide people with as much information as humanly possible," he explains. "There are a lot of moving parts in a real estate transaction. Even if someone has bought or sold before, that doesn't mean this transaction is going to be the same, and that's why they need professionals like REALTORS® to help." In fact, Mike is so passionate about educating clients, he has written a book titled *How to Buy Your First Chicago Home*, which will soon have an updated edition.

The constantly changing nature of real estate is actually what he enjoys the most about it. "I love meeting new people and not having the same day, every day," he says. "When I was working in the corporate world it became routine; I kind of became a robot. I love the fact that now, none of my days are ever the same. I can go from the huge high of selling a million-dollar place one day to losing a deal the next day. All of that is an adrenaline rush!"

Mike is proud to be part of a group that is ranked in the top 1% in the city for sales and transactions. He has also been recognized as a Who's Who REALTOR® by Chicago Agent magazine in 2014 and 2015.

A lifelong hockey player, he takes to the ice a few times a week when he needs to "escape from real estate." He also serves on the Board of Directors for the United Way Young Leaders Society of Chicago, and estimates that he reads at least 20 business-related books a year.

Mike Opyd

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