

EPISODE 739

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:00.0] ANNOUNCER: Welcome to The Real Estate Syndication Show. Whether you are a seasoned investor or building a new real estate business, this is the show for you. Whitney Sewell talks to top experts in the business. Our goal is to help you master real estate syndication.

And now your host, Whitney Sewell.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:00:24.3] WS: This is your daily real estate syndication show. I'm your host, Whitney Sewell. Today, our guest is C. Gordon Moose. Thanks for being on the show, Moose.

[0:00:33.1] CGM: You're welcome. Thanks for having me.

[0:00:34.5] WS: Moose is a 30-year, multifamily veteran who began his career as a banker and eventually ended up on the syndication end of multifamily apartment building deals. He now trains other real estate professionals on how to achieve 10X focus in mega-max personal productivity. Moose, thank you again for your time being on the show. I'm looking forward to this conversation because I couldn't agree more. I mean, just like focus is so important, and whether we're talking about on the personal side and professional side. I'm looking forward to just getting your thoughts about that and helping us through that really.

Why don't you give us a little more about your background and then let's jump into your superpower and how you're helping people gain that level of focus and productivity.

[0:01:17.1] CGM: Absolutely. I studied geology, believe it or not in college, and came out of college and couldn't find a job as a geologist. I went into sales and I ended up in mortgages. I was working for Washington Mutual and some other banks here in Chicago with apartment

lending and mortgages. I eventually got into buying property myself. I syndicated LLCs and we ended up buying about 22 buildings.

I really jumped in without having a clear focus on why I was doing it. It was more by default than by design, and we had a little bit of a downturn in the early 2000s with real estate. I took some time off and I looked back, and I said, "Where was I successful and where was I less successful? Where was I really productive and less productive?" What kept coming up for me was focus. When I was really clearly focused, I was more successful. When I was less focused, I was less successful. That was the genesis of the whole Find Your Focus and the mega-max personal productivity.

I am a real estate guy, commercial real estate guy. When I train people, especially in the real estate realm, I start there. I say, "What is it that you want? What are you focusing on? Why are you getting into this?" That I think is the most important question: Why do you think you want to get into real estate? That's where we start because that's the beginning of the focus.

[0:02:36.0] WS: Nice. Well, not getting distracted is difficult. It's so difficult these days and being able to focus. I think we minimize or don't realize how much a small distraction kind of derails us, right? You just get it started and how you help people gain more focus and some quick ways to help the listener, then apply some things right now that's going to help them to have more focus and individually more success as well just like you mentioned.

[0:03:02.2] CGM: You mentioned it's not only in your real estate career but also in all areas of your life. For me, it really begins with awareness, right? One of the things I help people become aware of is we have this mental muscle called our willpower. All human beings have six mental muscles. Our intuition, our imagination, our memory, our perception, our reasoning, and our willpower. Our willpower and our ability to concentrate that willpower, that energy really is what focus is.

Becoming aware of the fact that we have an incredible ability as human beings to focus our willpower is the starting point. Then, it's really what I call desired-based focus, right? Desired-based focus. Really getting clear on what it is that you want, and not only what you want, but also why you want it, right? Which is very important.

Then here's the other key. Determining what you're going to give in return for that which you desire because as you know, there are no free lunches in this world. The law of reciprocity, you have to give before you get. A lot of people get that backward. They think, I'm going to take, and take and take and then I'll give, right? That's not the way it works. The law of reciprocity, you give and then you get, right? What did Zig Ziglar do? If you're helping up people get what they want, you'll get what you want, right? It's the same thing.

Desired-based focus is key. Figuring out what it is you want, why you want it, and what you're willing to give and return. It doesn't mean sacrifice. It doesn't mean give up. It means what you're going to give in exchange for what you desire. So really getting clear on that as a starting point, and that doesn't take a long time.

If you take out a piece of paper and pen, then you say for example with your real estate investing. You go, "What is it that I want out of this? Do I want to study cashflow? Do I want capital appreciation? Do I want freedom from the 9:00 to 5:00? What is it that I want?" Then determining really why it is that you want that.

The way that you get there is to keep asking yourself that question. Why do I want that? When you come up with an answer, you ask yourself again? Why do I want that? Until you get to a point where you really get that emotional connection. You almost get goosebumps to say, "Wow, that's why I want that." Then you determine what you're willing to give in return. Those are the very basic building blocks of that desired-based focus, and it doesn't take a long time to do that

[0:05:20.6] WS: But what you see most of the time that's keeping people from reaching that level of focus and ultimately that success?

[0:05:25.5] CGM: I'm working with a gentleman right now who has ADD, which — I'm almost 60 years old. When I was a kid, they didn't even know what that was. He asks me the same questions, so I put him through an exercise of what I call, Eliminate, Delegate, and Anticipate. What that means is, look at the task that you have in your business and in your life. Find out the things that you can eliminate. The things that are just not moving you towards that what you desire and eliminate them.

Again, take out a piece of paper and a pen and write it down. Then the things that you don't eliminate, figure out what you can delegate. Things that are required to be done, it doesn't require you to do it, so figure out a way to delegate that. A lot of people get caught up in that because like, "Well, this is going to cost me \$20 an hour," and they don't really realize that they're worth \$100 an hour. You can look at it from that economic perspective as well.

You can also look at it from your area of expertise. If you're not an expert at something, look at delegating that, because most of us don't have the time. It says it takes 10,000 hours to become an expert in something, right? Well, most of us don't have blocks of 10,000 hours to become an expert. So eliminate what's not required, delegate what you can and then anticipate and prioritize the things that actually you are required to do. Because there are going to be something in your business that you are absolutely required to do, and your attention is required for that to move forward.

That's one way to start to eliminate some of those distractions, and we all have them. I mean even — listen, I have to sometimes put the brakes on things that I'm doing because it might be a little bit more fun or a way for me to kill some time, but then I have to look back and say, "Hold on a minute. This is really not moving me towards my desire." Again, when you have that desire right in front of you when you know exactly what it is and you might have a physical reminder. I have little phrases and stuff taped in my computer because it's a constant reminder for me to keep me focused because that's what I desire and that's how I keep coming back and refocusing.

By the way, it's a human thing. I don't care who you are. The universe is designed to keep us off-balance. It's designed to constantly be changing. The real key is just being aware of that and having the structures, and systems, and practices to bring you back into focus.

[0:07:43.9] WS: It sounds like — you mentioned like 10X focus and mega-max personal productivity. It sounds like they're very connected, right?

[0:07:51.4] CGM: Oh, yeah. Absolutely. Why do I use 10X and, of course, Grant Kurt own it. He is the 10X guy. The reason I say that is, a very small shift on the frontend can produce mega

results on the backend, right? It's 10X. When you start to become 1% aware of something, you're going to get a 10% return on that really quickly. That's why I use that 10X focus because you don't have to do 180-degree changes or shifts in all areas of your life. It's those little shifts, those consistent little shifts that will produce that ten-fold result. Mega meaning that it will start to flow in at a much higher rate than you thought, and you'll be able to maximize your effort and maximize your time. That's really what productivity is about.

Doing more, doing three times as much with half the time, and that we're all capable of getting more effective and more efficient with regard to that.

[0:08:46.1] WS: Can you give us some example, personal or professional of just ways to mega-max our productivity, just ways that you've seen, "Wow, this just changed everything for me because we do this now"?

[0:08:58.6] CGM: Yeah. Let me relate it to real estate. One of the things that we did when we were buying real estate was, we got real clear on the type of building, the age of the building, the geographic area, the unit mix, square footage, how many bathrooms, how many floors. We got really crystal clear. We had a list of about 11 or 12 criteria. When we would look at a deal, we would measure it against that box. If it didn't fit the box, we move on, right? Where prior to doing that, we would look at all kinds of deals. You know what I mean? I used to have clients, I used to be a broker as well. I'd have a client that says, "Well, just bring me a good deal." And I said, "Well, a good deal to you may not be a good deal to me, so we really need to go through this exercise. We really need to focus on what it is that you consider a good deal. What's the path rate? What's the deferred maintenance cost on it? What's the price per square foot or per door?"

That's just one example in a real estate realm, where you can really increase your productivity and maximize your efforts, like focusing on really defining what it is that you're looking for, your target. What is your target? A lot of people in marketing call it your avatar, right? Like who are you talking to? Who's your avatar? Who's your ideal client?

In real estate, if it's buying property, what are the top 10 or 11 things of property that you look for? And if it doesn't fit that, move on because they're out there. That's just one example that we

use to really get effective. Then, instead of spending a week finding property, we'd find out properties in half a day. Because we would just say, "No, no, no, no. Yes." Then, "No, no, no, no. Yes." Instead of rethinking and reanalyzing everything else, we just use that matrix to really identify what it is that we wanted and we'd go after it.

[0:10:45.7] WS: Makes so much sense, no doubt about it and just really — I mean, narrowing down our criteria so we can be more focused there. Are there any tools that you found, Moose that help you either to be focused or to be more productive, just on a daily basis? Something that, say, the listeners could put in place right now.

[0:11:04.9] CGM: Yeah, a piece of paper and a pen.

[0:11:08.5] WS: There you go.

[0:11:10.3] CGM: Seriously. Or a pencil if you really wanted to get old school. I'm a big fan of lists and getting things out of my head and into the physical form, whether it's in a spreadsheet, a Word doc, or literally on a notebook or something. Then really staying present to that, not taking it and putting it on a shelf but reminding yourself literally on a daily basis and keeping it at hand.

Then also, if you're working with a partner or you're working with agents or attorney or something else, sharing that with them. Letting them know what it is that you're going after and why you're doing that because that's that emotional connection. People can get engaged with you or not. I used the distinction between needs and wants. If I work with somebody and they tell me they need something, it just goes in one ear and out the other, right? Because there are only certain things that we really need to survive. There's an infinite number of things that we want.

When you share what you want and you share that emotional connection of why you want it, you engage other people to help you, right? Because if you tell me what you need, you just sound needy. If you tell me what you want and you're going to inspire me to help you, right? It's just that little distinction, right? How do you get there? You write it out, you define it so that when

you're in a conversation with somebody or you're on the phone with somebody, you can tell them what you want.

I'll give you a real quick example. I remember the first building we bought. I was working with Bob Proctor. I worked with Bob Proctor for many, many years, which people know mostly from The Secret. He put me through this process where I got real crystal clear of what it is that I wanted in commercial real estate. I'll never forget this, I was at a networking event and I was talking to a gentleman and he said, "What are you up to?" I said, "Well, I just put a contract on an 18-unit building and I need a partner with a million-and-a-half-dollar net worth so we can go out and get the loan and so on and so forth." I didn't have it at the time, right?

Because I was very clear and I could explain exactly what I was looking for, he said, "Oh, I should introduce you to my lawyer. He's got a group of lawyers that invest in exactly that kind of property." I said, "Yeah, great. Set me up with him." He said, "Well, he's right there. He's in the room. I'll go introduce you right now." Literally, he walked me over to this gentleman and within a week, we had our investor and we ended up buying three more properties together.

What's my point? My point is, I was very crystal clear and I could articulate it. I told them exactly what was required and what I wanted. Literally, the guy introduced me to somebody that was in the room, which wouldn't have happened if I didn't have that focus in the moment.

[0:13:32.5] WS: Wow. No, that's great. I appreciate the examples and just explaining more in-depth to some ways that have worked for you. I wanted to go back to about the eliminate, delegate, anticipate. I was thinking more about that. I'm making notes here, you said get a pen, and pencil and paper out. I'm always making notes during interviews and writing things down. I mean, it's just — because if forget. I forget if I don't write it down right then. I write it down, then I don't have to think about it anymore, and I can focus more on the next thing you're saying or whoever it may be. I think that's great advice.

Eliminating what's not required, that's hard. Is there a system that you have that you help people to do that? Is it writing down everything that you do and thinking through what you can get rid of? Is there a way that you found to help people to eliminate those things?

[0:14:20.9] CGM: There's a pragmatic way of looking. Is it revenue-producing? Is this activity going to produce revenue? That's one measure. The great thing about money is you can measure it down to the penny, right? You can really measure it. It's quantitative. Is this moving me towards revenue? Yes or no? Is this phone call? Is this email? Is this — everything I'm doing, you can measure it against that.

The other thing that's less quantitative and more qualitative is the activity that I'm contemplating or the next thing that I'm doing is going to move me from the perspective of not revenue-generating but just in general of moving me towards my goal, right? And being really clear about your goal is, not only the big goal but also, what's my goal for the next hour, what my goal for this half of the day. I know it sounds pretty sterile, and for a lot of people that don't like list, this is not a good conversation for them. However, I urge you just to give it a try. You know what I mean?

Because here's the thing, when you get in the habit of doing that, because I resisted it for a long time too until my mentors and guides. Just trust me and do it, then I got into the habit of doing it. It's really great practice. Again, I'll give you another real quick example. I was working with Bobby, he said, "Every night, I want you to write down a list of things you're going to do tomorrow." Well, the next day I had 21 things. He said, "Whoa, tear that list off." He said, "That's way too many." He said, "Let's start with six."

For some reason, six is my magic number. I just do six things every night that I want to accomplish the next day, right? Just six. As I went through that process, I started realizing that by about 11:00 in the morning if I get up at 6:00 and I get at it at 7:00, 7:30, I'm don't with my list, right? At first, I wanted to put everything on the list, and then I just — following his advice, I just — he said, "Cut it down to about a third," so we ended up with six.

That practice at first was difficult. But now, it's just become a habit and it's a very effective habit. There's one business I do, I do it about three hours a day. That leaves the other 21 hours less than six hours of sleep. Fifteen hours a day to do spend time with my kids, go exercise, do other revenue-generating activities. Kind of a long-winded answer to your question, but really looking at, does it move you financially towards what you're doing and does it move you emotionally,

and spiritually in all other areas of your life towards what you're doing. If it does, do it. If it doesn't, eliminate it.

[0:16:49.9] WS: Great advice, Moose. I'm so grateful. Just laying it out there, is it revenue-generating, knowing your goal, just the importance of those things you listed. I want to take a turn just a little bit, ask a few final questions before we run out of time. I wanted to ask, these many years of experience in real estate, in multifamily, what you predict to happen over the next 6 to 12 months in the real estate market and what you all are doing,

[0:17:14.0] CGM: It's interesting. I just read an article the other day that single-family homes, people are walking away from their single-family homes. They're going to have to live somewhere. I don't know what people are doing. Whether they're moving in with relatives or what. However, one thing I love about multifamily, unlike retail, or unlike an office, or unlike a big box, we can get away with not going to the office. The last six months have proven that. We could get with not going to a brick and mortar store. Jack Vessels has figured that one out. Companies like Kmart, Sears, and Penneys are having trouble. Those are the big boxes. People have to live somewhere, right?

The population is continually growing, and multifamily satisfies that need, right? Whether it's an interim thing when people are in college or when they're getting out of college before they can afford their first home. By the way, statistics show that people are — because of a number of factors including college debt, they're waiting longer to buy that first home, so where are they living? Well, they're living in apartments, right?

I think the apartment market is still going to be strong. I think for buyers out there, I think you're going to find some deals, especially on the smaller multifamily what I call two to four to sixes. Because a lot of operators have owned these buildings for a while, they're getting tired of it. They want to get out and they're going to let the buildings go for I think a below-market price on the property. So if you're patient, you know what you're looking for, I think there can be some deals out there that we had. Even for the first-time buyer, if you're looking for that two to four to six, what I call it two to four to six, keep your nose in the grindstone, there's going to be some deals out there that are fine.

[0:18:46.0] WS: How do you and your group prepare for a downturn?

[0:18:49.7] CGM: We've been doing this for a while. We've been working reducing our leverage and reducing that service just by constantly looking at the mortgage rates and repositioning ourselves from that financial perspective. That's key because if you have a lower mortgage balance, you have more equity in the property. If you start to see some vacancies, you can still cover your debt service coverage and all your expenses and everything else.

That's the benefit of being in the business for a long time. The thing I would say to somebody new is, don't get over your skids, don't overpay for a property, and pay attention to the amount of money that you have into the building going forward. Because certainly on the smaller unit, if you've got a four flat and you've got two units vacant, you've got 50% occupancy. That's not good. If you don't have the reserves to cover that, you're going to have some challenges, right?

Just being frugal, don't be too anxious to get into a deal, don't overpay. There's an old saying, "You make your money or you earn your money when you buy the property. You experience it when you exit the property." You don't experience your property until you actually exit the property. But your profit is built when you buy the property, so be real careful about that going into it.

[0:20:02.0] WS: What's the way you've recently improved your business that we could apply to our business?

[0:20:06.1] CGM: We haven't made a ton of changes recently. We've been on a course. Just going back to what I said earlier about, always constantly look at the financial scenario. If you have an opportunity to build reserves, build them because you never know what's around the corner. If you have an opportunity to reduce your debt ration on the property, take a look at doing that.

One of the things that we do is we do our best to minimize tenant turnover because that cause you money. When you turn over a tenant, you may be vacant for a period of time. Matter of fact, you usually are. So that's costing you money. What's for incremental investments? Not only time

and energy but also in money can you do to keep your current tenants current and keep them with you. Because when you turn over a tenant, that has a negative effect on your NOI.

[0:20:48.8] WS: What's your best source for meeting new investors right now?

[0:20:54.2] CGM: Well, relying on my current network because we've got a pretty good network. When I started, I would go to networking events. Now I know with everything that's going on, the in-person networking events are harder and harder to do, but I think we're going to get back to that.

One of the best things regardless of whether you're doing it virtually or you're doing it in person is really being clear on what it is you're offering. Remember, it's old value, value, value offer. What value are you bringing to somebody that's looking to invest? What's your value? Maybe that you found a good deal, it may be that you're going to be the property manager. The value might be that you've got a really great relationship with banks so that you can — your mortgages. Your value might be in property management. You may be a really good property manager.

A lot of people make the mistake that money is the end-all in a deal. I've got news for you. We did 22 deals, I didn't put a nickel of my own money in, because I brought other value to the partnership, right? There are lots and lots of money out there. Tons of money out there. People with self-directed 401ks. If you find a good deal and you bring value from that perspective, the money will find you. So don't get hung up on the fact that you may not have all the cash.

[0:22:05.7] WS: What's the number one thing that's contributed to your success?

CGM: I've always kept an open mind, and I've learned from people that have blazed the path ahead of me. I've always had coaches and mentors. Mike Morawski and I as you know, because you're going to be a speaker. We're very excited about that, about the Multifamily Global Summit. Mike's got a saying, "Success leaves clues."

Align yourself with successful people that are doing something that you want to do, whether it's in real estate or health and fitness or whatever. Align yourself with people that are doing what

you want to do and look for the clues that they leave behind or that they give you that are clues to their success and keep an open mind. Keep your ears and eyes open and use them in proportion to your mouth. We've got two eyes and two ears, use them in proportion to your mouth.

The other thing is when you do articulate, be clear, and express the value that you bring to the situation.

[0:23:00.4] WS: Nice. How do you like to give back?

[0:23:05.0] CGM: Well, I really enjoy helping people. I really enjoy watching people grow. I really enjoy when people get something and the light bulb goes off, I really enjoy that. I come from a big family, I've got three teenage kids. I'm almost 60 years old, I've done a lot of things. I'd say, I've spent the first part of my life filling my vessel up. Now, it's overflowing and I like to give back. Doing things like the Multifamily Global Summit, or running my Mastermind groups. or doing one-on-one coaching with people or guidance. Really seeing people get it and make the change is incredible.

Just real quickly. I actually see people physically change, when their thinking change, when their mindset changes. They physically change because they're changing themselves. That's the most gratifying thing. When I can see somebody from week to week physically change, so they come in and they're more lit up, or they're more excited, or they're talking differently about something. That is something that I really, really love and that's the most gratifying thing for me.

[0:24:06.1] WS: Moose, so grateful for your time today, and I can't say enough about this. Increasing our level of focus and productivity and grateful for your willingness to help us through that today and how you're helping others too, just like you talked about. But eliminating what's not required, and delegating, and anticipating and writing things down. I mean, just some things like that that you've helped us with today. I'm very grateful.

Tell the listeners how they can get in touch with you and learn more about you.

[0:24:31.5] CGM: Yeah. What I'm doing right now — and thank you for that. I appreciate it. It really is pretty simple and I know that you know that as well. Thank you for doing this on a daily basis because your show is really great. I'm your focus guy, in the background, you can see my email. I'm working with people to do what I call a Focus Foundation call. It's a 15-minute call. If anybody is interested in getting on that, it's a free, no-cost call and we talk about some of these things that you can implement immediately. Email me at info@yourfocusguy.com.

If somebody's interested, just put "Focus foundation call" and we'll schedule a 15-minute call and talk about, give you some tools immediately that you can put into place to increase your focus.

[0:25:15.9] WS: Awesome, Moose. Grateful for your time. That's a wrap. Thank you so much,

[0:25:21.0] CGM: Thank you very much, Whitney.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:25:22.1] WS: Don't go yet, thank you for listening to today's episode. I would love it if you would go to iTunes right now and leave a rating and written review. I want to hear your feedback. It makes a big difference in getting the podcast out there. You can also go to the Real Estate Syndication Show on Facebook so you can connect with me and we can also receive feedback and your questions there that you want me to answer on the show.

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[OUTRO]

[0:26:02.9] ANNOUNCER: Thank you for listening to The Real Estate Syndication Show, brought to you by Life Bridge Capital. Life Bridge Capital works with investors nationwide to invest in real estate while also donating 50% of its profits to assist parents who are committing

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