

## *Does your team just have too many quarterbacks?*

### COMMERCIAL REAL ESTATE

Ahhh, winter! The smell of fires in chimneys, rainfall down low and snowflakes in the mountains, cooler temps, the nonstop cadence of Christmas carols — and it's college football bowl season! A sport that's truly American in its origins. Whether you played at a professional level or are just a fantasy geek — we ALL have played football!

What the heck does football have to do with commercial real estate? Indulge me, and I will try to explain.

Some would say the quarterback is the most important player on the gridiron. Certainly, at every level, the quarterback is in charge. For all of you who have coached football at any youth level, you know that every kid wants to play QB.

I still recall my first practice as coach of the all-star team. I showed up to be introduced to several quarterbacks. How do you field a team with that? The answer is you can't — nor can every kid play the position. A successful football team requires 11 offensive and 11 defensive players who can block, tackle, snap, pass, catch, run and kick — totally a group effort.

Now to commercial real estate.

As some of you are aware, I recently added an administrative assistant. I am building a team. Our assistant will work across from another team member whose position is to execute the business we generate. Some refer to the role as a transaction coordinator. So far, everything is proceeding nicely. We are a week in and she is learning,

looks or just dumb luck? Maybe all or none of these, but probably some of these reasons.

I would offer that the main reason we are achieving some success is that we are not all quarterbacks. The three of us have our distinct roles and responsibilities that intersect but are autonomous at the same time.

Building a commercial real estate team tips:

- Look for role players, not all “rainmakers.”
- Place an emphasis on compatibility.
- Don't add a team member just because your company will pay for it.
- Think long and hard about what is “missing” from your practice and staff accordingly.
- Can the role be filled virtually?

Pretend you have a virtual assistant for a week or so and imagine what the team member would be doing for you that day.

Consider carefully your strengths and weaknesses — I know, I hear a collective — we're good at everything. Uhhh, no you are not! Or even in rare cases, just because you are doesn't mean you should complete the tasks.

Family members are great, but they are family members. One step removed is good. One of our team members is our son-in-law. If you

*Real Estate Services in Orange. He can be reached at [abuchanan@leeassociates.com](mailto:abuchanan@leeassociates.com) or 714-564-*

*7104.*



If your team is growing, make sure players' roles are clearly defined.



helping and assimilating the myriad things we do as commercial real estate practitioners. But why is she doing well? Is it my expert training, my good-natured soul, my dashing good

changed his diaper, he may not heed your mentorship.

Carefully craft a compensation package that will allow learning and provides incentive.

Good luck to you with all of the quarterbacks on your team. You may want to mix in a wide receiver. After all, someone must catch the ball when it's thrown. *Allen C. Buchanan is a principal with Lee & Associates Commercial*

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