



From Cryptography to Real Estate in two short years.

Veronique Simoneau jokes that she wanted to become a real estate agent to get to get a peek inside of people's houses, but the reality is, real estate has always been a passion of hers. She bought her first property at the tender age of 21, and says it was the most exciting thing she had ever done. She's into home décor and home renovations, and has even bought and flipped a condo in her time. So by the time she was ready to leave the Canadian military, after ten years in Communications, becoming a real estate agent was a natural fit.

Veronique learned about Prince's Operation Entrepreneur - a program for transitioning military members who want to start their own business - through a SCAN (Second Career Assistance Network) seminar. She was off for the POE seven-day boot camp at Laval University in August 2013, and found it intensive and a little bit overwhelming at times. "It was a really great test of whether or not I was ready to run my own business," she said.

As it turns out, Veronique was more than ready. Her military training and experience was an excellent primer for owning her own business. At boot camp, "so many of us realized our potential to become amazing business owners with the training and knowledge that we carried from the military. It is simply to continue what we had been applying for years." From organizational and leadership skills to her adaptability in an ever-changing environment, her time in the military gave her the tools she needed to be successful as her own boss.

Name:
Veronique Simoneau

Military Branch:
Army

Release Date:
2013

Business Owner:
Sales Representative at
Royal LePage Team Realty
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Veronique also found that her military network was important to her new profession in terms of referrals. Military and RCMP members moving in or to Ottawa make up her primary client base. Having had her share of moves while in the service, she clearly remembers having to arrive in an unknown city and buy a house in as little as five days. She understands the stress it can create in people's lives, wants to make the process easier for others because she's walked in their shoes. Rather than having her picture plastered on bus shelter benches, Veronique counts on referrals for future business, and focuses her time and attention on relationships. And she must be doing something right because the referrals keep coming in.

Despite doing well on her own in the first two years, there were a couple of things Veronique really missed from her military days – mainly, the teamwork and camaraderie she used to have at her job. She wanted a team to bounce ideas off of, to work with to solve problems, to provide feedback and keep her motivated. "Teamwork was one of my strengths in the military and I had a very tough time staying motivated when I worked alone." Always keen to keep learning and growing, Veronique made the decision to join forces with another Real Estate Sales Representative, Linda McCallum, a woman with over four decades of real estate experience, and Director for Eastern Ontario on the Ontario Real Estate Association Board of Directors. Veronique will be starting 2016 in a partnership with an experienced Real Estate Sales Representative to help her continue to learn and grow her business.

The life of an entrepreneur is ever-changing, constantly evolving. There are always ups and downs in any business, and it's easy to either become discouraged during the slower times. But Veronique is determined not to become complacent. Other real estate agents have told her that traditionally, there's very little business going on in December; however, instead of taking a break, Veronique kept up her regular sales and lead generation activities and currently has six listings out there – her busiest December yet!

About POE

Prince's Operation Entrepreneur is a unique national, bilingual program that provides the men and women who are leaving the Canadian Armed Forces with the education, mentoring, financing and tools they need to start up and run a successful business.

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