

# W2W

WOMAN TO WOMAN

Real Estate  
Rock Star

*Linda  
Skolnick*



# Linda Skolnick Holds the Key to Global Success

**Award-winning real estate agent shares “secret recipe” for international notoriety**

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Enthralled in an intense tennis match, Linda Skolnick grips her racket, eagerly awaiting to make contact with the ball and send her winded opponent scrambling forward once more. Skolnick, a globally-renowned real estate veteran, waves across the courts to a fellow player. “Thanks for the package you left in my mailbox, Linda. It was wonderful”, the elated woman shouts while waving back. Confused onlookers and local residents of the tight-knit community of Westport, Connecticut wonder what Skolnick dropped off at the residence of her former client’s house that made her so excited.

The twenty-year Realtor veteran, who is equally as competitive on the court as she is in her field, smiled to herself because the brief exchange gave her affirmation once again that years of practice made way for the perfect execution. And she has the awards to prove it.

Linda Skolnick’s early days as a buyer for one of America’s most upscale retail chains greatly contributed to her success as one of the top Realtors in Connecticut’s ultra competitive Fairfield County. Shortly after graduating from the University of Massachusetts, Skolnick entered the prestigious Bloomingdale’s executive training program. While at Bloomingdale’s, she worked her way through the ranks to ultimately achieve the role of Buyer, who specialized in luxury home goods and gift accessories. During this time, she mastered the skills for which she has become widely known, including strong leadership, analytics, and creativity. For over six years, Skolnick remained content with her retail career.

Engaged in an in-depth conversation with a few random commuters on their way to work, she had a sudden epiphany. The three strangers encouraged her to consider all of the precious moments that she, while working in New York City, might regretfully miss as her children grew up. Sobered by the new revelation, Skolnick exited that train knowing that her life would be forever changed.

“I walked into my boss’s office before stopping in my own office, and quit. I called my husband and told him. He said, ‘go back...tell them you are only kidding...we just bought a house.’”

Reflecting back on that moment, 21 years ago, is now laughable to the Skolnick family, but at the time Linda thought, now what? Equipped with years of training in luxury services and a knack for technology, the self-proclaimed “computer nerd” contacted her former Realtor’s office, determined to land a position within the company. Impressed with her eagerness to make a difference and her computer savviness—a rare quality in the early ‘90s—her manager brought her onto the team.

“I thought that was all I ever wanted to do,” she exclaimed confidently.

Until, that is, she and her husband purchased a new home for their growing young family. She described the entire process as uncommunicative and awful, from beginning to end. Though their Realtor had a pleasant personality, she failed to offer the top-notch level of expertise and client service that would have put the new mother and her family at ease during the chaotic period of home buying.

Shortly after maternity leave, while en-

In the span of a few months, Skolnick's dream of having more time with her family was a reality. She soon realized, however, that precious time with her young children, was often interrupted by the constant needs of her clients. Ironically, she was once again resentful at the imbalance of work and her personal time, which took her back to square one.

"I was used to being respected in my field. I had risen through the ranks at Bloomingdale's and was well-known. It was a rude awakening that nobody knew me or cared. I had to prove myself all over again."

Through the advice Mike Murray, her mentor and boss at the time, she resolved this obstacle by scheduling her personal time in the same manner as work-related appointments.

"A client never missed out on an opportunity - and I never missed out on my kids milestones," she shared.

Skolnick spent the next two decades establishing herself as a top sales agent, specializing in high-end listings. Along the way, her consistency as a top producer attracted the attention of Coldwell Bankers and Prudential Headquarters, who lauded her with the coveted International Presidents Elite and the Chairman's Circle Gold, respectively. Skolnick solidified her

become part of my inner circle. They're part of my world and I'm part of theirs," she reasons.

If ever one is in doubt about Skolnick's approachability, they are quickly put at ease by the award-winning Realtor's sense of humor and bright smile. Her winning personality, paired with her impressive credentials, has earned her much respect for her mastery of client services. Her experience years ago as a neglected client to a less than attentive real estate agent has kept her grounded in her high-level career. She credits her father, a high-profile attorney with clients including Ed Sullivan and John Lennon, for personally motivating her to this level in her prestigious career.

"He always said do it right or don't do it at all. Always be prepared and always have a conscience."

Often sacrificing sleep, adhering to a tight schedule and accommodating the diverse needs of international clients, Skolnick offers concierge-style assistance to home buyers. Her roots in upscale retail set her apart as a professional who dedicates herself to making the home buying experience seamless. In order to do so, she sometimes has to wear many hats at once.

"I tell them [clients] I am part boyfriend, part marriage counselor and

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stature amongst the top 2% of the world's highest achieving real estate professionals.

With such grand accolades, she has also established herself as an expert on the latest market activity and real estate trends. Her expertise caught the eye of area news editors, landing her the role of columnist for the Westport News in Connecticut. "Skolnick's Scoop", a bi-weekly column that provides insight and answers many client questions validated her specialization in her field. The "computer nerd" also created a website, GoAskLinda.com. According to her website, it was built in response to clients and friends, who had questions about restaurant reviews, directions to Little League baseball fields, handyman recommendations, etc. GoAskLinda.com also serves as a direct source for current real estate market information.

"I realized that putting that info out there for everyone was a great way to get my message out. I often [publish content] based on a question that a client or friend has asked," she explained.

The terms "client" and "friend" are oftentimes interchangeable to Skolnick, as she is notorious for retaining clients after the initial sale. Since most of her work and play are within the Fairfield County area, she often finds herself selling more than just the house.

"Clients move into my neighborhood, I see them around town and they

part best friend," she said. "I always keep their secrets, and I am there to listen or problem solve. My clients remain my friends."

To sweeten the deal, Skolnick lives by a "Brownies for Life" policy, which she describes as an annual holiday package delivery of her self proclaimed dangerously fudgy brownies, that are left quietly in her clients' mailboxes. Her kind gesture is followed by a high volume of client responses, including:

"Thank you!!!! My kids love you, the mysterious Linda who magically delivers brownies each year!"

"If you see my husband and kids around town, don't tell them...I told them you don't deliver brownies anymore. Then I don't have to share!"

"We are stuffed, exhausted and shoveling in your brownies. I left all of the mail in the garage. That can wait. The brownies could not!"

With so many approaches to enchant past and potential home buyers, there is no question why Linda Skolnick is a beloved professional in Fairfield County, Connecticut. She customizes and delivers her own personal recipe for success.

Game point!