



BY FRANCHI ROGERS

BAYLOR, BUSINESS + BROTHERLY LOVE

OFFER RECIPE FOR SUCCESS

Their clients and co-workers say that the founding partners of Fuller Group Realty Advisors have fantastic chemistry. They work very closely with one another, and have the same set of values and goals. Their styles complement one another. Sometimes they even finish each other's sentences. But that might be expected of Curt and Clint Fuller, since they've been working together since before they were born. They are twins, and are quick to point out that their bond began before birth and has grown stronger for 40 years. And they believe that's not only an advantage to them, but also their clients.

"After all, how many business partners have had a lifetime to prepare for each business meeting?" Curt asked.

The twins, who grew up in the Dallas area and later moved to Grand Saline, Texas, graduated from Baylor in 1991 (Curt in August, and Clint in December) with BBA degrees in Real Estate. Curt said he graduated on a Saturday and went to work the following Monday. He began his career in commercial real estate valuation for a regional commercial appraisal company. After two years in that industry, he joined Citigroup working in various commercial finance and credit card businesses for the bank. Through a series of mergers and changes, he held operations, business development, process improvement, relationship management and vendor management positions over a period of 11 years with Citigroup.

In the same 13 years, Clint stayed within the real estate industry, working in commercial real estate valuation and commercial real estate investment sales. He held a senior management position with a Big Four accounting firm and was responsible for a regional real estate consulting practice. His responsibilities included lease audits, due diligence, lease administration best practices and portfolio management.

And about the time Clint was ready to start a firm of his own, the division of Citigroup that Curt was working for was purchased by GE and moved to Minnesota. The timing was right for the two to fulfill their lifelong dream of becoming business partners.

"We've always wanted to work together," Curt said. "Clint is a 'big picture' person, and I'm more detail-oriented. He's creative; I'm organized. Both of us are risk-takers. We're a perfect team."

And they both believe they found the perfect blend at the perfect time.

"God knew what he was doing, bringing us back together after separate 13-year careers," Clint said. "We had that time to develop our own careers and our own identities. We'd often talked about working together, but must have needed to go our separate ways for the first 13 years for me to get an extensive real estate background while Curt gathered the knowledge to take care of the details of running a company."

The result is Fuller Group Realty Advisors, a commercial real estate services firm located in Addison, Texas. The company offers their clients a high level of real estate expertise that complements their existing advisory team.



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"Many companies have an attorney, a CPA and a financial advisor or bank, but we've found that there's a missing chair at the table where a real estate advisor should be," Curt said. "We are that real estate advisor for them. While each of the other advisors on the team know how their disciplines address the client's real estate needs, oftentimes business points that would not normally enter a legal, financial or tax discussion are missed. That's where we become an important part of that advisory team." For instance, clients don't need to look for one real estate professional to help them buy a commercial property and then find another professional to lease the space for them, and yet another person to work through a lease dispute.

"In other firms, you may get different departments and different people for every area," Clint said. "Even large companies appreciate having that one, trusted advisor. That's us."

The company's objective is to maximize their clients' real estate value while minimizing their real estate risks. They do this through lease contract compliance audits, real estate representation, general consulting, due diligence on investments and Commercial Mortgage Backed Security (CMBS) underwriting where real estate needs to be thoroughly analyzed before an investment is made.

The twins have found a tight-knit group of companies that comprise Fuller Group's client base. And that's exactly the model they were hoping to find.

"We have a great group of companies," Curt said. "Maybe they need to lease this year, sell next year, and something completely different the next. But no matter what they are doing, we are their trusted advisor."

Curt and Clint believe that their bond as twins is reflected clearly in their bond as business partners, and is something their clients appreciate.

"You'd like to believe that all siblings have that same confidence and trust in each other, but I don't think it works that way," Clint said. "I don't think I could ever impose on Curt, or he on me. I trust him with everything we do. I know he's always making decisions that are in the best interest of both of us. Business partners don't always think that way. I know Curt is there for me personally and as a business partner."

While the twins have always felt a strong bond and commitment to each other, they have also always strived to be independent.

When they enrolled at Baylor, for example, they requested not to be roommates.

"We insisted that we wanted to enjoy and experience separate identities and seek different opportunities," Curt said.

As luck would have it, they both ended up on the fourth floor of Brooks Hall, about 10 doors down from each other.

It was at Baylor that the twins came their closest to successfully pulling off the "twin

most of their time in the classrooms at the Hankamer School of Business. Lessons they learned there have stayed with them and served them well.

"Baylor has done a phenomenal job trusting their real estate department with the professors they have," Clint said. "Dr. (L.M.) Dyson and Dr. (Chuck) Delaney created such



switch," although for one of them it was a complete surprise.

"I married my high school sweetheart," Curt said. "So, when we got to Baylor, I was committed to a long-distance relationship. Clint, on the other hand, did what you'd expect when surrounded by the most beautiful women in the state of Texas: he dated."

But, as it turns out, Clint was a little shy. He'd told his brother about a girl he had met and liked.

"One afternoon, I was walking out of class, and a girl I didn't know started talking to me," Curt said. "It was pretty clear she thought I was Clint. I knew he didn't have the guts to ask her out, so I asked her for him."

That's the only time the twins will admit to swapping identities.

"We tried it once in third grade," Clint said. "We got caught and never did it again."

Although they sought and found separate experiences at Baylor, both ended up spending

a personal connection for us, and it's great that they're still sharing their knowledge with students today. It's an industry that's diverse, where men and women can make fantastic careers."

Curt and Clint are pleased that they have been able to cultivate fantastic careers in real estate, but thrilled that they found a way to finally do so together.

"We've both previously experienced getting caught up in our corporate identities at the expense of our personal lives," Clint said. "Now, this business can become a part of our identity. It's got our name on it, and it's not something we hide behind; it's who we are."

In the end, they agree, it all comes down to their special bond. And they hope their family business becomes a family legacy.

"It's something we want to be doing when we're 85-years-old," Clint said. "We have fun doing it. And we want it to be something that our children and grandchildren want to take on."