

MANN REPORT™

THE PEOPLE BEHIND THE DEALS IN THE NY REAL ESTATE SCENE

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From Janitor To EVP



Astrit Gorana has defied the odds in his career. Armed with no more than a high school degree, Gorana has succeeded in building Planned Building Services into an all-star powerhouse of more than 800 associates and expanding its operations to six states, a dominion that accounts for over 50 percent of total revenue for Planned Companies, which offers janitorial/maintenance, concierge/doorman, and security services for landlords, building owners and property managers.

Through his extreme focus and dedication to client satisfaction, Gorana has helped grow the company's client base to over 120 clients within his first 10 years with Planned and was instrumental in raising tenant retention from the range of 80-85 percent to 95-98 percent and in growing the division from \$8 million to \$28 million.

Gorana's personal successes have followed much the same trajectory as that of his company, and that is no coincidence. Citing a Thomas Jefferson quote he learned in school, he says, "I am a great believer in luck, and I find the harder I work, the more I have it." And with that philosophy in mind, he has worked his way from a position cleaning buildings to executive vice president of Planned Building Services.

Born in Southeast Europe's Montenegro, Gorana moved to New York City in 1992, attending high school in Staten Island. At the age of 16, he also began working as a janitor with Golden Mark Maintenance, a job that took him across all five of the city's boroughs. He was named supervisor before even graduating from high school, having already exhibited a keen understanding of employee and customer satisfaction.

Loyal to his employer, Gorana stayed with the company to learn more about building services and after high school was named area supervisor, overseeing services for 38 bank properties throughout Brooklyn and Queens. He was pro-

moted to field manager by age 20. Despite his quick rise, Gorana sought out additional education opportunities and participated in courses in specialized cleaning techniques to master all aspects of his trade. By the age of 21, he was promoted once again, this time to account executive.

In 2000, at age 24, Gorana joined Planned Building Services as an account executive, bringing with him accounts from the now-defunct Golden Mark. He continued his rapid rise through the ranks, within a year becoming director of operations, charged with managing all New York City accounts. In 2006, he became vice president of operations, managing the daily operations of Planned's \$27-million janitorial services division, and executive vice president in 2010. He earned all six promotions without the benefit of a bachelor's degree.

Not content to rest on these individual and firm achievements, Gorana continues to expand his education and credentials in other ways, having recently become a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) for Existing Buildings Accredited Professional. That certification enables him to deliver or proactively facilitate approximately 40 percent of the credits for building owners, developers and managers to achieve LEED certification.

Gorana is a testament to the fact that education doesn't occur just through college courses but also through on-the-ground experience — and that one can make his own luck. Walking the hallowed halls is only one way to the C-suite, or you could also try cleaning them.

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