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OUTSIDE THE BOX

Tapping the power of positive thinking and preparation

There's an exuberance about Ken Goldberg that is startling – and infectious. He is a partner at Bernkopf Goodman and lead attorney on complicated real estate deals, something he considers an avocation rather than a job.

Goldberg, who has been at the law firm since the late 1960s, has been married for nearly 50 years and he has three sons with whom he interacts professionally on a daily basis. One of his sons has joined him at Bernkopf Goodman, and is also a partner.

Those relationships are the bedrock of what's important, Goldberg tells reporter Mary Moore.

Where does your positive spirit come from? If you prepare well for everything you do and you really feel confident and are willing to take positions – whether it's giving advice, building a building, buying property– if you hit enough of them, you truly do add value. When you see that things go well and your judgments are incorporated or accepted and acted upon and they work, that's incredibly positive. What could be more positive?

What's your idea of a good day? Every day is a good day. I think a good day is getting up and spending time with your family in the morning and in the evening. It's rare that I have an off day. I know that sounds goofy, but that's true. You can turn almost everything into something that's positive.

What is something people don't know about you? The thing that most people don't know is my absolute love of the water – of being out on the ocean and the incredible peacefulness of that. Because I live a frenetic life and I'm busy all the time, I need that. People probably don't appreciate that I can change the channel, turn it off.

Is there anything else that might surprise people about you? There are a lot of people who are a whole lot smarter and I work hard to make up for that. I might be up all night

or well into the night to prep for a meeting – just to be fully prepared. I come across on the ball and in command. But I prepare so that I'm the best prepared in the group.

What have been some obstacles in your career? I think it would have been a whole lot easier if I'd had the opportunity to have the moniker of Harvard Law School and Harvard Business School. I didn't have the option to do that because I needed to do college on an assisted basis. That said, BU Law was a great education and I formed great relationships there that have stayed with me all through the years.

What are your pet peeves? People who are lazy and don't live up to their capabilities.

If you could have dinner with anyone, who would it be? I'd love to have dinner with Steve Jobs.

What book are you reading? I'm reading "Black Hawk Down."

What are your hobbies? I'm an inveterate boater. I try to get offshore in the ocean at least four to five times a month. And I do enjoy flying. I love the freedom you feel when you're on the water or in the sky, especially in small planes – when you're up 30 or 40,000 feet skittering through the clouds.

Do you have a mentor? Yes. My wife had an uncle who was named Abe Berkowitz, who worked as a messenger for Ropes & Gray. He was so good and so well liked, two or three lawyers put him through Northeastern University School of Law (at night). By the time he was 45 or 50, he was senior partner at Ropes & Gray.

Do you have a favorite restaurant? My favorite restaurant is barbecuing at home with my wife and my family.



W. MARC BERNSAU

► CLOSER LOOK

KENNETH GOLDBERG

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Education: Bachelor of Science, political science, University of Connecticut, 1965; J.D., Boston University School of Law, 1968

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