

'Surround yourself with the right support' - Jawitz Properties' Deena Pitum

 By [Sindy Peters](#)

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Having worked as a conveyancing secretary for 26 years while supporting her family, Jawitz Properties' Deena Pitum pivoted to property at 39 and has not looked back. Recently awarded Jawitz Properties' National Sales Consultant of the Year 2020/2021, Pitum attributes her success to building relationships based on trust as well as her support systems at home and at work.

This Women's Month, Pitum shared with us a bit about her journey in the property industry so far, advice for other women pursuing a career in the sector today, and what she loves most about working in real estate.

■ Tell us a bit about yourself - your background?

Deena Pitum: After leaving school, I worked as a conveyancing secretary for 26 years, which suited me as my children were small and the hours were set. However, as a single mom, I knew that I would need more income once my kids left school in order to offer them better opportunities.

In 2014, I was headhunted by one of my real estate clients to be their sales manager. Two years into this job, I was awarded and named National Sales Manager of the Year. I realised sales suited me and started selling part-time, something I had never done before, and in my first year of selling, I achieved second place for highest amount of sales concluded in a region. By 2016, I had participated in two episodes of the Home Channel's Guiding You Home series, and more doors were opening. I moved on to lead sales for an international real estate company and be a part-time agent where I scooped numerous awards for sales and recruitment. However, the working hours were hectic and exhausting and it was time for me to start focusing on myself.



Deena Pitum, property consultant, Jawitz Properties

In October 2019, I moved to Jawitz Properties when my preferred areas became available. You can imagine the shock when lockdown was announced just five months later, after I'd started working commission only. I was suddenly unable to work. During this time, I appeared on Carte Blanche to discuss the effects of lockdown on the real estate industry. By this time, I also became financially responsible for other members of my family. All that I could do was to continue to keep in touch with my clients during lockdown and I came out of lockdown with a mission!

“ That mission has been a success as I was recently awarded Jawitz Properties' National Sales Consultant of the Year 2020/2021. ”

■ What does a typical workday look like for you?

Pitum: A typical workday for me is not for the faint-hearted – it's a long day! I start early in the morning with my admin and phone calls. Exercise is important to me and since Covid, I have not been able to go to the gym, so I like going for a morning walk. Valuations and viewings normally start from about 10am and finish after hours. I would not be able to do this without the help and support of my wonderful husband and I always come home to a healthy, cooked dinner.



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What do you love most about working in the property sector?

Pitum: I love interacting with people! Learning about their families and pets and their beautiful homes. I love making buyers' dreams come true by matching them with their forever homes and, of course, I love the satisfaction and adrenaline rush of closing a deal. Rewards in this industry are plentiful!

You were recently named National Sales Consultant of the Year 2020/2021 at Jawitz Properties' Annual Achievers Awards. To what do you attribute your success?

Pitum: It's mostly about relationships and trust. I believe that my clients recognise how much I care and empathise with them. Also, I am really passionate about what I do and, of course, lots and lots of hard work and dedication. I have surrounded myself with a huge support system both at home and at work. My mom is my admin assistant and the Jawitz Properties team, from management to marketing, is phenomenal.

What's your favourite trend in the sector right now?

Pitum: The low interest rates have helped our industry tremendously. Buyers can afford that little bit more, which makes a huge difference in not only the offers made, but on their finance being approved.



#WomensMonth: 'Find something that feeds your soul' - Sue Lederle, Lederle Design

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When you're not busy working, what do you do for fun?

Pitum: I love to hike, walk my dogs, cook and spend time socialising with friends and family.

Based on your experience, what advice would you give to women pursuing a career in property today?

Pitum: What you put in is what you get out! Ensure that you surround yourself with the right support. The trick is time management. Make sure you set achievable goals and prioritise daily.

“ Be organised, focused and plan ahead in order to become successful and, of course, ensure that you make time for your family! ”

How is Jawitz Properties supporting and empowering women in the property sector?

Pitum: I am extremely proud to work with Jawitz Properties, who are always one step ahead of the competition. We are provided daily with technology-enabled tools required in this ever-changing market as well as training on every aspect required to be a successful realtor. As a woman, these training sessions are also recorded so can be watched in our time in order to have time in your day for work and family. Many women also hold leadership positions at Jawitz, which is most certainly very motivating.

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🍷 *Do you have any pearls of wisdom to share this Women's Month or words of encouragement?*

Pitum: Real estate is one of the few industries where women and men have the same earning potential. You can be your own boss and set your own hours and reap the rewards of the hours put in. It does take hard work and time, especially in the beginning, to get your name out in the industry and to start earning. But once you are entrenched in this industry, the business will start coming to you. Patience, perseverance and diligence are required. Confidence will develop over time.

ABOUT SINDY PETERS

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