

# **“Put your heart and soul into people”: CFO at CoreSite Realty Corporation, Jeff Finnin shares about building relationships, leading through mentorship and living a balanced life.**

Jeff Finnin grew up in Aurora, Colorado, playing several sports, including baseball which he played all the way through college. He also enjoyed spending time in the outdoors, whether it was fly fishing, skiing or backpacking. Finnin went on to study in the business school at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, CO, with an emphasis in accounting.

Currently, Finnin is the Chief Financial Officer for CoreSite Realty Corporation, which is a real estate investment owner and developer of data centers in North America.

## **Advice for college grads: Give it 110%**

“As you embark on your career,” Finnin said, “it’s important to get as much out of every job or every role you have in a company that you can.” Finnin says every opportunity is the chance to learn something that you can carry forward into another position or another company. “Give it 110%” Finnin concluded.

Finnin says that relationships are really important, and you want to work to maintain them. He also warns not to burn bridges, and to always try to end things in as cordial a way as possible. “The world is a small place, you never know who you are going to run into” Finnin said.

When reflecting on advice he would give to his younger self, Finnin says he would have been a little less vocal on some of his opinions, or at least learned to deliver them in a more polished manner. He does not suggest shying away from contributing to a conversation, but be sure that opinions are offered in a professional, constructive way.

## **Lead by example**

When it comes to being a good leader, Finnin says that good leaders lead by example. He says you cannot lead well from afar, but rather be involved in the mentorship and guiding of your employees. He says that a successful leader stays active in helping those that work for the company to learn and to grow. “As long as you put your heart and soul into people, they’re going to give it back to you,” Finnin said.

## **Influential People**

When asked about who in his life has influenced him most, Finnin starts on a personal note. First, he says, are his parents and his in-laws, all of whom have provided guidance for him over the years. He says his parents provided love and counseling throughout his upbringing and into his adult life. "Both sets of parents have been invaluable," Finnin said. Next, he gives the name of a former Arthur Andersen partner, Brian Jackson, who was about six years ahead of him in terms of work experience. He says that Jackson was an exceptional teacher and mentor. Finally, Finnin says his wife, Kim, who he says he has had the benefit of knowing for 35 years, and married for 30. He describes her as his best friend, as their foundation, and what keeps them stable. "I couldn't do it without her," Finnin concluded.

## **Learning from failures**

When asked about a time he feels like he failed, Finnin first recounts a time he stole a 39 cent plastic squirt gun. He says he was caught by an undercover mall cop and immediately confessed. He says he was ashamed when his parents were called and he had to explain what he had done. He describes this experience as invaluable. "Don't do things you shouldn't do" Finnin said simply. You will be held accountable.

Finnin's second moment of feeling like a failure came when he was in public accounting. He explains that you have to make a lot of judgments and estimates based on the facts you are given. At some point, a third party started questioning him and his team's judgment, ethics, and values. It provided good insight as to how others, with 20/20 hindsight, might view things differently. He says this was one of the hardest and most tested times of his career. He decided he would never put himself into a situation like that again. Instead, if there was any doubt, he would consult with more people, find out more information and take more time to make sure his work could never be questioned like that again.

## **Feeling accomplished through others' success**

Finnin says one of his biggest professional accomplishments has been to help those around him grow. "I think what I value a lot is helping people grow both professionally and personally," Finnin said. He shares that he has worked with a lot of people over the years, and has gotten to mentor and coach many individuals as they progress in their careers and personal lives. "I like seeing them grow and flourish," Finnin said.

## **On staying motivated**

Finnin credits his competitive spirit for his ability to keep coming to work each day motivated and ready to go. He says he is driven to contribute effectively at his company, as well as driven by the people who rely on him for guidance on how to best contribute to the overall success of the company. He sums it up saying that he stays motivated through his work with colleagues, as well as his competitive spirit.

## **On the bookshelf**

The first book on Finnin's list of important books is a book given to him by his church. He says it focused on being a father and a good husband in a Christian way, and he found its message to be very powerful in shaping his role in his family. Finnin's second book is *What Matters Most* by James Hollis. This book is written around central topics of what really matters in life. It discusses family, faith, friendships, and other specific topics to be aware of and focus on as you live your life.

## **Life outside of the office**

Finnin says that it is important to maintain a balance between work, family, and faith. Outside of the office, he has spent years coaching baseball, has been involved in the Boy Scouts, the Big Brother Big Sisters program, and more. He enjoys spending time golfing with his wife, and playing in the outdoors with his family.