

## At 26, a genuine success story

Debra Charatan-Berger says she always wanted to succeed in the business world "more than anybody."

And succeed she did. At 26,

Charatan-Berger is a genuine success story.

She is president of Bach Realty Inc., a New York-based commercial real estate brokerage that she built into a thriving company from a one-room basement office and a \$2,000 loan.

The all-woman company sells buildings for investment, development and resale. It is expected to gross \$50 million this year.

"The market really doesn't matter," said Charatan-Berger, who built her business during one of the worst recessions in history. "You can be successful in any market."

Charatan-Berger began her real estate career at 17, working as an aide to a multimillionaire real estate chief executive.

She spent five years as the company's office and building manager. When her boss wanted to bring someone in above her, she quit.

The next year was spent working in the commercial real estate business and getting her brokerage license.

Charatan-Berger ap-

proached big brokerages but found she could expect them to "put me in a corner for a few years and forget my name."

In May 1980, she went into business for herself.

Holed up in a tiny office with a telephone, she called 100 people a day until finally she reached someone who wanted to sell a building. Her business was on its way.

Now Bach Realty is about to undergo its fourth expansion. The staff has grown from one woman to 21 women — all of whom came to Charatan-Berger with little or no real estate experience.

"I believe in women, and I



**CHARATAN-BERGER:** A bad market didn't stop her.

hire women with no experience so I can train them myself," she said.