

## SPECIAL REPORT

# TOP BDMS

## ★ ★ 2017 ★ ★

**These 25 professionals – named by their broker partners – are shining examples of what makes a great business development manager**

**A BUSINESS** development manager can be a broker's greatest ally – and having a skillful BDM by your side can make a night-and-day difference when trying to secure financing in today's evolving mortgage environment.

For the second year in a row, the broker community came together to nominate the industry's top-performing BDMs. Brokers told *CMP* what makes their BDM the best the mortgage industry has to offer, while the BDMs themselves shared the strategies behind their success and offered their take on the best formula for a winning broker-BDM partnership.

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## SOPHIA JESSA

Bridgewater Bank

Sophia Jessa's mortgage career started in 2003 when she began underwriting at CMHC, where she took on progressive roles for the better part of 12 years. During her time as an area manager at CMHC, she worked closely with most banks and lenders, developing an intimate understanding of their challenges and opportunities.

Keeping up-to-date with policy changes has been integral to Jessa's success in 2017: "I focus on being proactive, sharing what I'm learning and being open about the conditions that could impact a deal," she says. "I work hard to be an expert resource for my brokers."

Jessa's previous underwriting experience also gives her a keen awareness of the impact market conditions can have on her brokers and their clients. "I have personal relationships with my brokers," she says. "I understand and care that they are trying to do their best, and [I] provide them with the tools to do their best. Understanding how to package a deal, how insurers approach a deal and how to mitigate risks helps me coach my broker clients every day."

Aware that personal service goes a long way – especially in this industry – Jessa strives to go above and beyond with her relationships. "Whether it's volunteering with my brokers or [making] education visits, I want to help them be successful however I can," she says. "I really treat my brokers like friends and hope they find me easy to talk to and approachable."

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