

**Sunbelt**

the world's largest network of business brokers

## Meet Our Brokers

*The following questions and answers are excerpts from our recent interview with Ashton Carlton, a Sunbelt of Fairfax broker.*

*Q. Ashton, can you describe your career experiences before joining Sunbelt?*

During graduate school, I worked for Dun and Bradstreet, a leading provider of global business information and tools. This experience provided a solid background in general business. I have also worked in a variety of industries, including golf course design.

*Q. You have been a Sunbelt broker for over six years. What have been the challenges of being a broker?*

The challenges of being a business broker are defined by the industry—helping both buyers and sellers. Creating a win-win situation for all parties is not always easy, but one must be able to learn from previous situations to create fresh, encouraging sales situations.

*Q. What traits create a successful broker?*

There are many elements involved in business brokering that make a successful broker. This industry requires business experience, as well as an attention to detail. It is also important for a broker to be competitive, but to also have integrity and honesty. A successful broker will be able to balance his or her traits with the variety of opportunities and challenges of being a business broker.

*Q. What is your most memorable experience as a business broker?*

My most memorable experience was my first listing. About a month after joining Sunbelt, I listed my first business, a full-service grocery store. I found this listing by looking through the *Washington Post* classi-

fieds. To my surprise, the owner enlisted my help immediately. Two months later, this business was also my first sale.

*Q. How does a business broker add value to the process of buying or selling a business?*

Independent buyers and sellers often face an impasse when determining the sales terms. Because of this, many sales do not close. However, a business broker is able to facilitate this process because of his or her skills and experience. Brokers also help buyers buy a business, instead of selling them on a purchase.

*Q. How do you develop new listings?*

The common tools available for brokers are referral sources and cold calling. I prefer to use drop notes, for they allow me to leave a reminder of myself and Sunbelt to the potential seller. I also look through the weekly newspaper classifieds for businesses for sale by owner. This referral source allows me to target potential clients and educate them on the benefits of utilizing myself and the Sunbelt network.

*Q. What about Sunbelt makes it the best alternative for business brokering?*

No matter how long you have worked as a business broker, unfamiliar situations will arise. If I worked with a small independent brokerage or loose-knit national outfits with autonomous locations, I would have limited resources available to me. The contrary is true at Sunbelt. In the hundreds of Sunbelt offices, I know there are many seasoned “pros” willing and able to share their experiences. All I have to do is ask.



**Sunbelt of Fairfax**  
Ashton Carlton

703.322.2090 (o)  
703.322.8092 (f)

acarlton@sunbeltnetwork.com

12500 Fair Lakes Circle  
Fairfax, VA 22033

**Sunbelt Corporate Offices**  
Contact

877.392.6278 (o)  
216.674.0650 (f)

7100 E. Pleasant Valley Rd.  
Suite 260  
Independence, OH 44131

www.sunbeltnetwork.com

