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Hospitality Mindset

Zach Gallan

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HOSPITALITY MINDSET

BY LAUREN YOUNG • PHOTOS BY STYLES MEDIA

"I knew I wanted more than a traditional sales role," says Zach Gallan, REALTOR® at Compass. "I wanted a career where relationships mattered, effort translated directly into results, and no two days looked the same. Real estate checked every box."

Zach's approach to real estate is the result of years spent learning how effort, consistency, and relationships compound over time. Long before he entered the industry in July 2015, those values were being shaped through work, education, and hands-on experience with people from every walk of life.

"I started working at eleven years old at a batting cage. That quickly turned into giving lessons and umpiring baseball games. I worked at a movie theater later on too," he says. "Those early jobs taught me responsibility, communication skills, and how to work with all types of people, and all of it helped shape the work ethic and people-first mindset I carry in my career today."

After growing up in the western suburbs, Zach attended the University of Iowa, where his education extended well beyond the classroom. He balanced academics with real-world experience, working in more customer-facing roles that demanded accountability and adaptability. He became involved in running large-scale music events, helping to manage ticket sales, marketing, and logistics for nationally known artists. That experience in fast-paced operations with high expectations would later serve him well as a REALTOR®.



Zach with his wife, Chrissy, and their daughter, Olivia.

"I had to generate demand, manage logistics, and execute under pressure," Zach says. "Looking back, the combination of business education, live event production, and sales experience created a foundation that naturally led me into real estate."

Following graduation, Zach moved into sales and then hospitality, managing large teams in restaurants, hotels, and nightclubs. Those roles sharpened his ability to stay calm in high-pressure environments and deliver consistent experiences even when variables changed quickly. Eventually, the desire for ownership over his outcomes and a more relationship-driven career made him consider real estate.

"I became a REALTOR® because real estate sits at the intersection of everything I've always been drawn to: sales, hospitality, relationships, and entrepreneurship," he says. "It has allowed me to build my own business, create my own standards, and work directly with people during one of the most important decisions of their lives."

Like many agents, Zach learned quickly that drive alone does not guarantee immediate success. His first year in the business ended with a financial loss—an experience that forced him to reassess his expectations and commit to long-term growth rather than short-term wins.



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"My first year, after expenses and fees, I lost around $2,000," he says. "But I wasn't discouraged. Instead, that experience fueled me. It forced me to sharpen my approach, double down on learning what I needed to learn, and commit fully to building something sustainable—I saw that real estate is a long-term business built on credibility, consistency, and patience."

Now living in La Grange Park, Zach values the opportunity to serve communities that feel both familiar and family oriented. His work today centers on educating clients throughout the process and building trust that lasts beyond a single transaction.

"Buying or selling a home is both a financial and emotional decision," he says. "This business is about people and relationships, not just transactions. Being the person who brings clarity, confidence, and calm to that process is incredibly fulfilling, especially when those clients become long-term relationships."

Family plays a central role in how Zach defines balance and success. He and his wife, Chrissy, are raising their daughter, Olivia, alongside a lively household of pets. Much of his downtime revolves around cooking and bringing people together, often in the backyard or around a shared table.

"Most of my hobbies come back to the same theme: quality time, good experiences, and balance," Zach says.

Looking ahead, Zach sees real estate as both a professional calling and a personal investment strategy. With experience as a homeowner, an investor, and an agent, he plans to continue growing a relationship-driven business while expanding his own portfolio and helping others do the same with clarity and confidence.

"Success is having control over my time, my growth, and my impact," he says. "It's about building something rooted in trust and consistency, maintaining balance with family and community, and knowing I built it the right way."



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