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NITIN MOTWANI

Managing principal, Miami Worldcenter Associates/Encore Capital Management

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Birthplace: St. Charles, Missouri | **Education:** Bachelor's degree, international relations, Duke University; M.S., real estate development, Columbia University



When the pandemic hit, the organization Nitin Motwani set up in the years prior prepared both Miami Worldcenter Associates and Encore Capital Management for what was to come.

He had hired and supported "great people," whom he positioned for success. When things are going well, those people are "rock stars," he said. When things are going badly, they find solutions.

Motwani and his team believed they were prepared for "the black-swan events" – at least as prepared as his companies could be. The right people were in the right positions, and operations seemed smooth. He had placed an emphasis on capitalizing deals "very conservatively" and keeping company debt in check. He was prepared.

"If you have too much debt or don't have the right team, you can live your life hoping the tide doesn't go out or, if it does, everyone will know who's wearing a bathing suit," he said.

Thinking back to pre-pandemic days, he was ready. Th n, the pandemic hit.

"We thought we were prepared," he said. "Th s was something no one on the planet had ever seen before."

That discipline has guided Motwani since 2006, as he's led Miami Worldcenter, the $4 billion, 27-acre mixed-use real estate project in downtown Miami.

Bold projects are nothing new to the Motwani family. He and his brother, Dev, are the sons of hoteliers who helped transform Fort Lauderdale from spring break capital to family-friendly destination. He learned at a young age from his parents the importance and value of involvement in every part of a business, whether hotel operations or acquisitions.

What advice would you give your 21-year-old self?

One, seek out great mentors early. And two, get really good at something to create and show value early in your career.

As the pandemic churns on, Motwani has reason for optimism. As head of the Miami Downtown Development Authority's Enterprise Committee and co-chair of the Beacon Council's One Community, One Goal initiative, he knows South Florida will emerge strong from this. Florida is luring 1,000 new residents a day, many of whom will settle in the tri-county region.

"People realize they can move their business here and enjoy this quality of life, or continue to have their busi but not with everyone consolidated in one place," he said. "In the short term, Covid-19 creates challenges. But people moving here will bode very well for us in the long term."

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