

“I always read with delight your frequent mention of Paul Larkin, former head of Key Bank's leasing operations, who resigned to run a collections agency a few weeks ago. You are obviously quite fond of Paul; he is treated by your publication with greater coverage and deference than any other leasing head in the business.”

“However, having known Paul for well over 10 years, let's set a few facts straight:”

Key's leasing business has been lackluster at best and margins slipping for years. Leasing done for bank customers and with bank oversight and involvement has been a cornerstone of that business and was established long before Paul's entry into the firm; it is professionally run with strong middle management. The international vendor leasing business has not added a significant program in years; it has been poorly managed from a sales and business development perspective, with bloated overseas operations that historically operate at near breakeven results. Small ticket leasing has been a disaster. The company overpaid for American Express' small ticket portfolio and bungled the integration of that business with the existing small ticket platform. Residual values taken were far above market, leading to divisional losses. As you rarely seem to mention in your glowing articles, 180 people were laid off at the holidays, about 20% of the firm...a general sign of the times certainly, but also a sign of the company's lack of success.”

“Key's executive offices are on the top floor of the building and have been so for many years, not on the first floor as your article claims (though I note you cleverly quote an article 11 years old as your source). Paul's old offices are rather posh and offer the best view in the building, as are those of his direct reports. It is not true that he gives the common workers the best view or accommodations. The break room is not a luxurious proving ground for new ideas; it's mostly empty. Key's educational programs for its employees are attended primarily to fill personal development requirements and are rather lackluster. With the exception of a noted few, senior management at Key does not go on to positions of leadership at other leasing companies -- the mark of a truly gifted leader who inspires confidence and develops staff can measure his own success by the industry success of his employees...”

“Many at Key are pleased with his departure. Key will go through some significant future changes due to mismanagement under his watch that must now be corrected.”

Anonymous  
(sent by US mail)

(This is only a portion of the letter. Mr. Larkin was contacted for a comment. None was received. The building story comes from the Denver Business Journal as quoted in the following article, editor):



**Paul Larkin: Sunny Side of the Street**  
**by Christopher Menkin**

<http://www.leasingnews.org/archives/April%202009/04-10-09.htm#paul>