
PRESIDENT'S RESOURCE ORGANIZATION

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PRO's Prose

by Ray Silverstein, Founder and President

A NEW YEAR HAS BEGUN. Now, many of us find ourselves re-energized by new goals and resolutions. This is an excellent time to step back and take a wider view, to seek a fresh perspective and set new directions.



Of course, that's what PRO is all about—not just in the first quarter, but year round. By viewing our business through the eyes of our peers, we find new solutions to old problems...and discover hidden opportunities we'd never spot on our own.

But PRO is not just about running your business better, it's about living your life better. Because when your business runs more efficiently, you have more time to spend with your family and friends. When your business prospers, you have greater opportunity for leisure pursuits. And when you find a way to solve long-standing problems, you reduce your stress levels—making you not just happier, but healthier.

As entrepreneurs, our professional and private lives are closely intertwined. It's our obligation—to our families, our employees, and ourselves—to make the best of both. So as you continue to fine-tune your short-term goals and long-range objectives, make sure you have this one placed somewhere high on the list: stop and smell the roses. Starting... today!

Ray

Creating Opportunity:

Igor Boguslavsky

President, Belmont Trading Company, Northbrook IL

Where others saw junk, he saw value. Where others saw nothing but high-tech cast-offs, he saw profit—and opportunity.

You might say that Igor Boguslavsky, President of Belmont Trading Company, has the Midas touch. He takes discontinued and obsolete electronics equipment...and transforms it into in-demand product. And he does it so well that, in the short space of a decade, his vision of opportunity has grown into a flourishing company, with over 50 employees and 30,000,000 in sales.

Ten years ago, Igor, an electrical engineer by trade, was working as a buyer for a leading telecommunications manufacturer. With technology evolving at lightning speed, he saw millions of dollars in rapidly-outdated equipment end up on the scrap heap.

Seeing a niche opportunity, he left his employer and founded Belmont Trading. Belmont buys unwanted telecommunications and computer equipment, dismantles it, and then recovers all usable parts. The parts are sorted, refurbished, cleaned and tested to meet industry standards...then repackaged for sale. At every step, Belmont addresses its clients' security issues and environmental concerns.

Originally buying and selling between the United States and the Pacific Rim, Belmont—which has offices in both the U.S. and Mexico—now provides asset recovery services on a global basis to a roster of blue-chip electronics companies.

"Our company is always changing," says Igor, "Because we're dealing with technology." As a result, Belmont's emphasis continues to shift along with the changing market it serves.

Igor joined PRO about two years ago. "It's wonderful," he says, "to get feedback from other people who have faced the same problems in a non-competitive environment."



PRO Chatter . . .

BILL CAPRARO, JR., of Cimco Communications, has expanded his office facility. He also was named by Phone + as one of the top 50 in the telecommunications field. **Tim Padgett**, of the Pepper Group, has moved to new facilities and has acquired an audio visual company. **Frank Bachochin**, of Excel Marketing, is moving his office from Schaumburg to the Loop. USA Chicago's **Pat Yanahan** has a new office and sends thanks for allowing him to lead the PRO seminar about web sites. Windward Builder's **Ross Friedman** has completed a fabulous new home in Highland Park. He may even throw in a new Mercedes if you are the buyer! Congratulations to **Barry Carnow**, of Aquaworks, on the new name and exhibition space in the Mart. **Lisa Tomsheck**, of Arthur Clesen, Inc., announces a new distribution facility. **Igor Boguslavsky**, of Belmont Trading Company, and **Jody Haas**, of Resource Technology, both have new facilities. Mapes & Sprowel Steel's **Gary Hamity** announces the installation of his new coil straightening and slitting line. **Bill Fuches**, of Fuchs Devries, has started construction of new offices and demonstration facilities. **Brian Swerdlow**, of EBS Public Relations, Inc., and **Mary Ellen Innes**, of Innes Publishing Co., both have new offices. And finally, congratulations to **Ray** and **Rhoda Silverstein** on their recent marriage.

New PRO Survey:

What Small Businesses Want From Their Vendors

SMALL BUSINESSES have big buying power. After all, there are about 15 million of them in the United States right now—and each one is making purchasing decisions every day.

But what do small businesses look for in their suppliers? PRO recently surveyed some of its members to find out what they consider most important.

The results were intriguing. The quality that is valued most highly in suppliers is the ability to provide swift, effective solutions to problems. It is not surprising then that expertise ranked second. Ranking third and fourth: strong personal relationships and a friendly staff.

On the other hand, small businesses apparently are not particularly concerned with their vendors' size—on either a local or national level—or financial strength. And price was rated a unimpressive fifth, exploding the theory that most markets are primarily price-driven.

Savvy suppliers who cater to small businesses would do well to heed this data. Clearly, small businesses want strong, ongoing relationships with experienced vendors they know and trust—and who are responsive to their needs.

What Small Businesses Value Most in Vendors

Rank	Criteria	Scale 1-10
1	Quick and Proper Problem-Solving	7.93
2	Expertise	7.87
3	Personal Relationships	7.19
4	A Friendly Staff	6.93
5	Price	6.61
6	Error-free Performance	6.61
7	Depth of Staffing	6.23
8	Quality of Direct Sales Effort	6.23
9	Customized Service	6.19
10	Financial Strength	4.61
11	Local Market Leader	3.70
12	Offering Educational Seminars or Ongoing Information	2.67
13	National Leader	2.41

A Vision of the Future

by Ray Silverstein

YOGI BERRA SAID, "You've got to be careful if you don't know where you are going, because you might not get there." A major responsibility of the progressive business leader is to look to the future, to have a picture, dream, purpose or goal...in short, a vision!

Why is a vision important? Studies have found those companies where the vision is shared and is bought into by the organization, achieve more and are better places to work. These studies have also found that one of the most important criteria employees want of their leader is a vision or dream. This is second only to integrity.

A mission statement is not vision. The mission statement tells what you are. The vision is the goal or destination of where you want to go. It is a long term direction of imagining greater things are ahead. A vision is not a wishful thought but one that is realistic and will make the company and its employees better.

Vision is not planning. It is an intuitive feel of where you want to go, what you want to look like and how you will feel. Planning is objectives and tactical activities. Planning can be defined by short term results. A vision is sometimes hard to put your arms around because it is a philosophy or mental picture.

Is having a vision enough? The answer simply stated is NO! The vision must be shared and bought into by the organization. Most importantly, it must be continuously communicated and feedback established to make sure it is understood.

Sandra Kurtzig, founder and chairperson of ASK Computer Systems, said, "You have to have focus when starting a company." Vision gives that focus. Imagine the leader of the company running a movie projector. If the film is out of focus and not clear to the audience, who do they get upset with? The person running the projector, of course. The job of the leader is to be able to focus and make sure the image is clear for all to see.

The leader must not only participate and create the vision, but also communicate it. The followers do not have any idea of what their leader's vision is until the leader describes it. The picture that is created in their minds is dependent on how well it is described to them. If it is not, a leader's vision of an apple might be an orange by the time it gets to middle management. By the time it reaches the general worker, it might very well be a lemon.

Another analogy of this is the "Jigsaw Puzzle Principle." If you know what the picture on the cover of the box looks like, it is much easier to put the puzzle together. In each company, people have different pieces of the organizational puzzle. They may have detailed descriptions of their roles and responsibilities, but may not have the information to see the big picture.

To create your vision, first think about your past. Consider and analyze the high spots and what strengths you received from them. Next, determine what you want to accomplish and why. Keep asking yourself why. Try writing a short vision statement using your past experiences and intuition.

Remember, leaders are the innovators who inspire trust, challenge the status quo and have long range perspectives. Jack Welch, Chairman of General Electric stated, "Good business leaders create a vision, articulate the vision, passionately own the vision, and relentlessly drive it to completion."

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