After exiting a company he owned in a different industry, Mark Borge decided to go into the building service contracting business with his longtime friend Steve Nobles. “The dynamics of what he described when talking about the janitorial model he had experienced made sense to me, so we literally drew up an initial launch plan while sitting at his kitchen table.” The two went on to co-found Best Facility Services in 2004 and never looked back.

Here, Mark talks about traits he looks for in future employees as well as the best advice he’s received in his career.

“If you simply do what you say you are going to do, you are among the upper percentile in any industry.”

**What is your personal approach to customer satisfaction?**
While our employees are our greatest company asset, the reason we exist is to make and keep customers. It amazes me how many times I’ve tried to reach out to do business with a company that doesn’t answer my call, expects an answering machine to address my needs or doesn’t correspond. I think people still like doing business with people, and we have to make ourselves available to our clients to listen and respond. If you simply do what you say you are going to do, you are among the upper percentile in any industry.

**How would you describe your management style?**
By nature, I’m an introvert, so I think and do a lot, but don’t really talk a lot. I prefer to teach, listen, coach and discuss but not micromanage. I value other people’s talents and abilities and appreciate skill sets that are different from my own. People need room to grow personally, and I like it when we all grow and learn together while working towards shared objectives. I just don’t care much for drama.
What are some tips you have for employee retention?
I like the philosophy from the book, “The Great Game of Business” by Jack Stack that promotes a transparent and genuine work environment. I also believe that employees — not customers — are any company’s greatest asset. We have a form of continuous profit sharing with our account managers in their compensation program as well. Since the principals (myself and Steve) share a similar compensation program, all of our interests are in alignment towards building and keeping long-term relationships.

What traits do you look for when hiring?
Character, competency, common sense and specialized experience and knowledge are key indicators in my opinion and in that order. I value work ethic highly and expect a high level of consistent commitment from all involved in our organization. And, of course, honesty is everything.

What is one challenge you've experienced in your career, and how did you handle it?
We went through a lawsuit after making a hire that occurred around our third year in business. We knew this candidate had a prior employee agreement with a competitor, but we had it checked out by our attorney. After we saw it had no legal reach into our decision, we hired this employee, but we were still sued. We ended up meeting with this competitor, hashing out a limited no compete agreement and settling out of court. I wish they would have just called us to discuss the issue. It would have been much less expensive for both parties!

What is the best piece of advice you've received in your career?
I learned from others and from my own experience in my prior business that you need to have some type of continuous marketing program. It’s important that you market smart, but even more so that you do something consistently. Frequently, business is lost due to circumstances beyond your control. My philosophy is to try to replace accounts prior to losing them.

What are your hobbies?
I am a former amateur motocross racer, and I still enjoy riding my dirt bike! I’ve also enjoyed playing drums most of my life, and I still occasionally sit in with a band or a musical production. I try to hit the gym about four times a week to work out and/or play racquetball. I like learning and growing and also like to fish and spend time with my wife and daughters.

What books are you reading right now??
I’m currently reading, “The Mystery of the Shemitah” by Jonathan Cahn as well as “The Oz Principle” by Roger Connors, Tom Smith and Craig Hickman. Reading magazines and books is one of my favorite things to do during my “rocking chair time” on my back porch!