ESN CEO Ray Lopez Tells Vetrepreneur Magazine: Navy Know-How and Employing Veterans Helped ESN Flourish

ARLINGTON, VA – Raymond F. Lopez, Jr., Founder and CEO of Engineering Services Network, Inc. (ESN), is featured in a Q&A in the December issue of Vetrepreneur magazine. The national publication is dedicated to covering the veteran-owned business movement.

Mr. Lopez, a 29-year veteran of the Navy, had a chance to chat with writer Andrea Lovas about ESN, which delivers engineering and IT services and solutions to the U.S. government, and his formula for success.

ESN, based in Arlington, VA, has seen revenues that soared to more than $38 million in 2013. In addition, Mr. Lopez’s business has received numerous awards and recognition for its success and rapid growth.

The retired Navy Commander says he was able to give back to the Navy by hiring a lot of veterans. “That’s a tradition that continues to be very important to me, and today, over 40 percent of our employees are veterans,” Mr. Lopez says in the article, on pages 36 and 38 of the magazine and online.

The magazine noted that Mr. Lopez credits his success in large part to the intelligence and talent of 250 employees based in six offices in the U.S. and overseas. During the Q&A with Vetrepreneur magazine he was asked the following:

You started ESN very soon after leaving the military. Can you talk about your early days?
Lopez: I served in the Navy for 29 years, retiring in December of 1994 as a full commander, and by February 1995, my wife, Carol, and I had established ESN. Carol would do all the administrative work, while I would go to Crystal City (in Arlington, Va.), walking the halls, talking to people, putting myself out there. We got our first contract with the Navy for $25,000. I like to say that we were an immediate success after five years, because really, it wasn’t an easy road. It was very much feast or famine those first few years.

During those first years, what do you think most helped you succeed at a time when many organizations fail?
Lopez: It’s not just about getting the contract — it’s about following through, working side by side with your customers from start to finish and ensuring their complete satisfaction. I was also very fortunate to hire people who were smarter than I was, and I was able to give back to the Navy by hiring lots of retired technical folks. That’s a tradition that continues to be very important to me, and today, over 40 percent of our employees are veterans.

You were also disadvantaged as a minority-owned organization. How did you overcome the challenges that presented?
Lopez: What helped us the most was getting into the 8(a) Business Development program (a business assistance program for small disadvantaged businesses offered by the SBA) in 1998. Within 8(a), we became involved with the Mentor Protégé program, which is just phenomenal for businesses like ours. I’m a technical guy. I really knew nothing about running a business. Anteon mentored us, and they really helped me learn how to run my business successfully. For example, I didn’t know how to manage quality control, and they actually gave us their QA guy for six months to set up an internal QA program. They really helped us create our entire business infrastructure.

Read more at: Vetrepreneur Magazine http://www.navoba.com/article/ESN

About Engineering Services Network, Inc.
ESN is a trusted leader in engineering and technology solutions. For nearly two decades, ESN has been proudly standing “Shoulder to Shoulder™” with our military and government customers, delivering critical services for missions that matter. ESN provides our military and government customers with mission-critical services in the areas of: professional management & systems engineering services; cyber security & information / mission
assurance services; network design, integration, & data center consolidation services; enterprise IT ITIL & ITSM services; systems development & life-cycle services; health IT services; and acquisition services.

Based in Arlington, VA, ESN has regional and field offices throughout the U.S. and worldwide. Founded in 1995, ESN is ISO 9001:2008 certified and has achieved Software Engineering Institute’s Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI) Maturity Level 2 for Services v 1.3, and CMMI Maturity Level 3 for Development v 1.3.


ESN was listed among HispanicBusiness.com’s 100 fastest-growing companies in 2014. The Federal Times ranked ESN No. 53 among the contracting firms owned by service-disabled veterans that are contracting with the federal government in 2010.

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