

Just a minute with Dave Vetta President & CEO, First Business Bank-Milwaukee

In the People & Profiles Section

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Company address: 18500 W. Corporate Drive, Brookfield, WI 53045

Company Web site: www.firstbusiness.com

Industry: Banking

Number of employees: 20

Education: Certified Financial Planner; master's degree in business administration from the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater and a bachelor of science degree from Carroll College; additional advanced studies at Northwestern University and University of Virginia, Darden School of Business.

Family: "I am most proud of my family: my wife, Katy, and our three terrific daughters."

What was the smartest thing your company did in the past year?

"Investing in our Milwaukee team. We've been able to complement our core team and add five very experienced people in the last eight months."

What's new at your company?

"We have five new associates to complement our terrific team of people, bringing additional commercial real estate, manufacturing, investment management and private banking expertise."

Do you plan to hire any additional staff or make any significant capital investments in your company in the next year?

"We are planning to continue to invest in our team with as many as four additional people next year. We intend to continue to grow at a rapid pace, while ensuring its prudent and sustainable growth. We seek growth and won't compromise our service model to our current clients."

What will be your company's main challenges in the next year?

"We want to continue to build on our seven-year legacy in metro Milwaukee. Our biggest opportunity is telling our story – over 90 percent of our clients tell us they are satisfied. So, our story for current and prospective clients is, 'Try us and you'll enjoy our unique service model.'"

What's the hottest trend in your industry?

"An intense focus on small-business owners. We have always focused on the business owner. The business owner has needs related to the business finances and also to their own finances –

they are closely linked. Both need to be considered when proposing solutions. Many banks say they are focused on the business owner, but that's been our company's distinction since inception 17 years ago. Among our clients, we're seeing more discussion about leadership and succession planning. We've added capabilities to help them address this."

Do you have a business mantra?

"Integrity in all you do. I strive – and I ask all our people – for an alignment of their personal and professional goals and passion. We need to strive for an alignment of the interests and values of our clients, shareholders and employees."

From a business standpoint, who do you look up to?

"Stephen Covey, who wrote 'The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People.' It has stood the test of time. Personally I look up to a former boss of mine who I had for 20 years at JP Morgan. He remains a mentor and a friend. I have learned a great deal from him."

What was the best advice you ever received?

"My parents impressed upon me to respect people, work hard, strive for balance, be humble and have fun."

What's the funniest thing that ever happened to you in your career?

"We used to celebrate a lot when we hit milestones in the company. So we had a lot of fun playing roles and performing in skits. I have played Michael Jordan; some of it was caught on film. Only through the magic of video will I ever dunk a basketball."

What do you like to do in your free time?

"Reading, traveling, biking and being a terrible piano student."