

# BANKER & TRADESMAN



## A Guide to Getting Things Done On Time, On Budget, Every Time

by Anthony Gagliardi

*Anthony Gagliardi is the Chief Operations Officer of Framingham-based Vision Builders Co. ([www.visionbuildersco.com](http://www.visionbuildersco.com)), a nationally recognized new breed of general contracting and construction management firm with a business model that places equal emphasis on the quality of the client experience as the quality of the finished product.*

Many entrepreneurs want to take that big step and launch their first-time business but fear the landmine of problems they might face opening a new retail store or restaurant: landlords who aren't motivated to make improvements to the commercial space, work stoppages, or time delays due to mismanaged scheduling of crews or equipment deliveries. Still others want to expand their current business to capitalize on a growing market, and are faced with the same misgivings. In the majority of cases, time is money – and making the most of that time is the key to whether or not your vision becomes a reality.

In order for your project to be a success:

1. Have a clear vision/plan of what you want to do. If your ultimate goal is to renovate your current space to accommodate more customers, but you don't have the leisure of time to do the work, pre-planning is the key. If you have the space, but need the build-out finished as soon as possible, you'll need to team up with a construction firm that shares your goal. And, if you have a vision, but don't quite know how to execute it, you'll have to find a consultant who can advise you on the ins and outs of physically building your business. The right general contractor can help you accomplish all of these tasks, and save you time and money.
2. Do your homework and be prepared. Maybe you own a chain of restaurants or retail stores, but want to franchise outside your market area. You need to work with a company that is licensed to work outside local borders. If your builder is not familiar with the permitting process or the building or zoning laws of other states, it could spell major delays for your project.
3. Know your rights and don't be afraid to negotiate. Before you sign a lease, you must negotiate for certain contingencies. Since commercial landlords are less

inclined (and not legally required) to make improvements to a space, your contractor should have the knowledge and the freedom to work the best deal on your behalf. In most cases, he/she will be able to evaluate the potential site and determine what it will take to build out the space to your specs before you sign the lease. This allows the lease to be negotiated with specific knowledge and from a position of fiscal strength. If the property owners don't want to do the work themselves, a qualified contractor will factor tenant improvement money into the lease for the client.

4. Plan down to the last detail. Plan, organize and consider every last detail before the first nail is hammered in. By now, your contractor should have helped you prepare for the expansion or build-out: pulling the necessary permits, knowing the zoning laws, negotiating the commercial lease, and oftentimes, working with an architect to draw up workable blueprints of the space. Thinking ahead and getting all of your work orders, crews, and equipment deliveries set up first will prove invaluable when the clock starts ticking towards opening day.

5. Have a deadline and stick to it. Say you want to launch your new business this summer to attract vacationers and tourists visiting the area, but you aren't sure your new restaurant or retail store will be ready to open its doors by then. Set a deadline and stick to it, no excuses.

One general contractor, Vision Builders Co., was able to expand a well-known restaurant in Boston's South End, Bob's Southern Bistro (formerly Bob the Chef's) in just two weeks because the owner would have risked losing loyal customer base if he closed his doors for too long. He was able to meet the ambitious deadline by planning ahead, working around the clock, and being available to crews,



***In just two weeks, Vision Builders Co. renovated Bob's Southern Bistro (formerly Bob the Chef's), located 604 Columbus Ave. in Boston's South End neighborhood.***

inspectors and owners to deal with delays the moment they occurred. The project was done on time, and remarkably, on budget. Even if you don't have a hard and fast deadline to stick to, it's smart to engage the help of a builder who can tie up loose ends and keep the process moving along.

In today's business world, speed and accuracy are commonplace. If you've made your business plans known to colleagues, clients and competitors, you owe it to yourself to meet your goals. A savvy contractor can help you reach those goals by getting your project done on time, on or under budget, every time. Expect the same service from your construction manager that you're prepared to offer your customers. You'll both succeed.

*About Vision Builders Co.:*

*Vision Builders is a nationally-Recognized new breed of general contracting and construction management firm with a business model that places equal emphasis on the quality of the client experience as the quality of the finished product. It focuses on developing close working relationships built upon shared vision, open dialog, and skilled craftsmanship. The private firm, established in 2005, works with new and existing companies in a variety of industries that require renovations and construction build-outs. Vision Builders has completed projects for several restaurants, well-known retail operation Work 'n Gear, with locations in Maine, Massachusetts, New York, Connecticut, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and national Chain Mattress Discounters, with location in Virginia and Massachusetts.*



*If you can envision it,  
we can build it.*



Anthony Gagliardi  
Vision Builders Company  
615 Concord Street  
Framingham, MA 01702

[508] 820-0363  
[508] 302-0424 Fax

visionbuildersco.com  
anthonyg@visionbuildersco.com