

# Flooring Solutions strives to be a zenith of customer service

CHRISTA J. TRAEGER – The Washington Construction News Special Feature

**In 1998, Faizi Syed decided to buck the trend of what seemed to be happening to the flooring companies in the Washington, DC region. At the time, the carpet mills were purchasing flooring companies across the country in an effort to control all facets of the carpet industry. On the one hand, this was very appealing to the independent flooring company because of the influx of more capital; however, these flooring companies found themselves hobbled by the restrictions placed on them by their new owners. Suddenly relationships with vendors, which took years to establish, were cast aside because of sole sourcing. An emphasis toward standardization in both policies and procedures as well as a change in focus from customer service to the bottom line placed undue strain on the relationships with customers.**

According to Faizi, "With big companies it's all about numbers; somewhere in it all, the service suffers." Furthermore, employee morale deteriorated as the team concept, which had worked so well in the past, gave way to a mindset of "every man for himself". Having been in the industry for well over 13 years, Faizi had a different vision for what he wanted a flooring company to be. Finally, in July of 1998, he resigned from his position as president at one of the larger flooring contractors in the DC area and with only three employees at his side, started his own company – Flooring Solutions, Inc.—out of the basement of his home.

Faizi's goal was to develop what he called a "real people's company." He wanted to create an environment where everyone worked together toward one common goal and employees were rewarded for their efforts. His main emphasis has been on keeping in tune with his employees. He appears to have been very successful in this regard

according to Christina Price, controller of Flooring Solutions, who states, "Our employees, most of whom have been involved with the flooring industry for at least five years, have thrived at Flooring Solutions. They feel as if they have a personal stake

in the success of the company, which brings out the best in them.

Faizi's intention is for Flooring Solutions, Inc. to be the zenith of customer service. He firmly believes that "customers are buying a company, not just a product. Anyone can provide the flooring, it's what happens with that flooring after it is delivered to us that sets us apart from the rest." With this in mind, Flooring Solutions, at the outset, discarded any thoughts of restrictions and standardization and has opted instead to provide its customers flexibility both in product and service. According to Faizi, "Our customers' needs are paramount. Therefore, it is our mission to provide the best possible service all within the customer's required timeframe. This is a fast paced industry. There are times when we get a call in the evening requiring us to be on site the following morning. This frequently occurs with



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## *A real people company*



## Flooring Solutions

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the hospitals we service. We make it a point to be there."

Flooring Solutions specializes in the installation of carpet, wood and vinyl solely for commercial customers. Its projects are diverse, ranging from large intricate layouts to small hospital rooms as the company firmly follows the

credo that there is no project too large or too small. Since its first project at Arnold Communications at 1600 International Drive in Tysons Corner, VA, Flooring Solutions has been involved in many high profile projects throughout the entire Washington Metropolitan area, including the ESPN Zone, the Smithsonian Institute, INOVA Healthcare Systems, XM Satellite Radio, Mitre Corp., and Network Solutions. Indeed,

the Network Solutions project won a 2000 Craftsmanship Award from the Associated Builders and Contractors.

Faizi acknowledges that a great deal of the company's success is owed to its customers and vendors. "We are grateful to them for placing their faith in us," he said. Flooring Solutions has worked hard to gain respect and trust from those with whom it does business by always honoring its commitments and keeping open all lines of communication. As a result, Flooring Solutions has been able to maintain a good reputation with its customers and vendors.

Flooring Solutions also owes a good deal of its success to its employees. "Your employees can either make or break a company," Faizi stated, "and it is gratifying to know that each person is here because they want to be here." This positive attitude is what gives everyone within the company the drive to succeed, and this is shown by the company's low employee turnover rate. Faizi and Christina both agree that it is easy to deliver excellence to both vendors and customers when you have great internal support.

Today, Flooring Solutions is a long way from its humble beginning in Faizi's basement having expanded to 22,000 square feet of office and warehouse space and from three employees to 38. The company nearly doubled in sales from 1999 to 2000. "We had to implement a lot of infrastructure to handle the growth," observed



Photo by David Galen

Christina. "However, from where we are situated now, we feel that we have the foundation which can comfortably accommodate any future growth." If the future is a reflection of the past, Flooring Solutions is sure to see a great deal of success over the next few years.

Flooring Solutions, Inc. is located at 45965 Nokes Blvd., Sterling, VA 20166. For more information, call (703) 450-9002.



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Congratulations Flooring Solutions!