

# A journey to success

When Jivko Jeliaskov arrived in Canada 12 years ago, he did not appear to be well on his way to a successful business career. He had \$35 in his pocket, didn't speak a word of English, and his luggage had gone to Cuba.

He was one of a group of 14 who managed to get out of Bulgaria by booking a tour to Cuba, which the Communist government would allow. However, the travelers knew that the plane would make a refueling stop in Gander, Newfoundland, and when they got there they claimed political asylum while their luggage flew on to Cuba.

While Jivko and a couple of friends were sharing a Coke and trying to figure out what to do next, they met two young business partners who decided to help them out.

"Their names were Charlie and Rob," Jivko recalls. "They paid for our tickets to Ottawa so we could get our papers. They told us to call them in five years and tell them

how we were doing. I've tried but their number is not in service and I haven't been able to locate them. Hopefully I will someday."

Jivko would like to thank them and repay them, because they helped him along on a very successful journey. In Ottawa he was able to get refugee status and take English courses. He soon landed a job laying flooring and within a few months had started his own business. He also met a young lady who is now his wife and mother of their two daughters.

While continuing with his flooring business, Jivko was also continuing his studies, in English and economics, which had been his major at university in Bulgaria.

When his wife was offered a transfer to Victoria, they decided to move, and Jivko soon established his flooring business there, but his interest in financial management continued to grow. He continued his studies in financial planning and in 1996 decided to move his career in that direction, taking a job with Imperial Life.

In 1998 he started his own company, Beacon Benefits Group.

"I really enjoy helping people improve

their situation," he says. "I got an important lesson not long after I started with Imperial Life. I was trying to contact a client who really needed to review his plan. He kept putting me off, but finally one Friday I called him and he agreed to see me on Monday. When I called on Monday his wife told me he had died on Sunday. His family only got \$5,000.

"Since then I've seen many clients retire, and some die, and it's really a good feeling when you've worked with them to make sure everything is taken care of. It's very fulfilling. All the rejections and hard work haven't been for nothing."

*While few people will take a trip like Jivko Jeliaskov's, he is now helping many others find their path to a secure and successful future.*



Jivko Jeliaskov

Because of his own entrepreneurial spirit and experience running his own businesses, Jivko soon found that his niche in the financial service field was with business owners. He now concentrates most of his time in that area and has developed clients all across Western Canada, including many in Alberta. Although most are small business owners, he has clients with assets in excess of \$100 million.

"It doesn't matter how big," he says. "Business owners all have the same problem, finding time to look after their own financial affairs as well as running their business. I've been able to save them time and money, as well as giving them the assurance that if anything should happen to them, their family and their business is secure.

"I never go to sell something," Jivko says. "I work through the issues with them and together we come to a solution. The goal is to find a safe, secure, guaranteed plan. I don't like taking risks with other people's money."

He also doesn't like seeing people pay excessive taxes or spending too much on legal and accounting fees. So he works with the client's lawyer and accountant right from the start.

"We become a team," he explains. "It costs a lot less to get everything set up properly, especially with regard to succession and estate planning. If the lawyers and accountants have to sort things out after you're gone, there likely won't be much left."

Jivko has developed a strong relationship with a number of clients in the forest industry in both Alberta and B.C. One of these is Joe Martushev, a logging contractor in Northern Alberta.

"Jivko has been very helpful," says Joe. "He's very thorough and very professional. I would certainly recommend him to anyone."

"I don't have a formula that works for everyone. Every business owner has a different situation, a different attitude. I understand that. I work with them through the problems and find a solution. It could be offshore planning, holding companies, moving money in the most tax advantageous way.

"And," he adds, "it doesn't need to take a lot of time. My biggest client is worth about \$100 million. We meet every few months for about 45 minutes. We spend 15 minutes on business and the rest talking about family."

Speaking of family, Jivko is bringing his parents to Canada this year.

"This is a wonderful land of opportunity," he says.



210, 2187 Oak Bay Ave  
Victoria, B.C. V8R 1G1

Ph: 1-877-361-9936

Fax: 250-598-6445

E-mail: jivko@bbg.ca

Website: www.bbg.ca