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2021 Ones to Watch: Daniel Sarno, Vice President, New England Security

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What led you to your current profession? I've always been a person who enjoys a challenge, especially when it comes to my career. By no means did I ever expect to go into the security industry. I went to school for communications, however, my concentration was in business management for film and television. Very different from the kind of work I do today. I realized early on that the skills you learn in school are one thing, but what really makes someone successful is being adaptive and open minded. I discovered a passion for managing a team and steering them toward success.

How do you keep your team motivated despite conflicts and obstacles? Security is a tough industry. We operate 24/7, every day of the year. Our managers and guards juggle grueling hours and constant changes to the day-to-day operations. What sets us apart is that we really do value the input and suggestions from our managers and guards. I try to include them in many decisions. The key to managing a successful team is to empower your workers to make critical decisions on their own and appreciate the ideas they bring to the table. We host monthly meetings where all of our employees can participate in management discussions.

Who or what inspires you? What I find most inspiring is the feedback I get from our valued clients. They entrust us with their property and assets. It is a huge responsibility. If you want to know how good a service your company provides, you need to ask your clients and be in constant contact with them. Their feedback allows you to set standards and goals for growth and development. Stride for praise, but learn from criticism.

What advice can you offer to someone who is interested in a career in your industry? People that start security guard companies usually previously worked for a security guard company or similar asset protection field. These people are often very good at what they do, but they lack a full understanding on how a corporation is maintained. The back office management is often overlooked when starting a company. I highly suggest that if you are interested in starting a business, find someone that knows that they are doing in managing a corporation. Everything from taxes, bookkeeping, marketing, and payroll are often an afterthought. There are a lot of moving parts to consider. Before you do anything, assemble a team of qualified individuals to help you.