



Stephen Rolston

Tampa, Florida



RISA

Learn about Florida Entrepreneur Stephen Rolston:

Stephen Rolston, founder of RISA, a cyber security defense contractor that was recently named one of GrowFL's Companies To Watch for 2016, is a fan of Florida's entrepreneur resource agencies. "I have used both the Small Business Development Center and CareerSource," he said. "In fact, RISA's Small Business Administration certification as an 8(a) company led to our first sole source contract award with the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the U.S. Pentagon."

RISA specializes in cyber security, information assurance, risk mitigation and elimination for U.S. Department of Defense clients. "Our employees are our differentiator," Rolston said. "We go out of our way to treat them well and they are regularly recognized by our customers for outstanding service because they exemplify good work on a consistent basis and it shows."

Rolston decided to try his hand at entrepreneurship after he could not shake the feeling that he could improve upon the service delivery and employee satisfaction performance of his past defense contractor employers. "I took mental notes for several years regarding how I could do a better job in some aspects of what they did and how they treated their employees," he said. "In June, 2008 I got my first subcontract with L3 Communications. At that time it was a one person consulting firm. I have been able to grow RISA from that to the 19 employee prime contractor that it is today."

Rolston's advice to aspiring entrepreneurs is to not overlook free resources. "Use as many free resources as possible like SCORE, the Small Business Development Center and CareerSource," he said. "Try to identify a mentor. Attend luncheons and meetings to network to find mentors. I've had several mentors help me along the way. I may ping one or the other depending on the question but I know I can contact them and they'll help."

Awards and Recognition

