

From the Nashville Business Journal:

<http://www.bizjournals.com/nashville/print-edition/2015/12/04/most-admired-ceos-rob-barrick-smith-seckman-reid.html>

Most Admired CEOs

Most Admired CEOs: Rob Barrick, Smith Seckman Reid Inc.

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Dec 4, 2015, 6:00am CST

Rob Barrick is CEO of Smith Seckman Reid Inc., an employee-owned engineering design and facility consulting firm serving clients from 12 offices across the country. The firm provides design and consulting services for transportation and water infrastructure projects and building systems.



JOE BUGLEWICZ | FOR THE NASHVILLE BUSINESS JOURNAL

Rob Barrick

What three traits are necessary for a CEO to be successful? The ability to build trust and a shared vision with bright, motivated people. Resilience.

What is your motto for success, in five words or less? Think, act, keep moving forward.

What's the biggest risk you've ever taken, and what did you gain from it? I moved to Houston to open a branch office in the middle of the oil bust in 1983. [I] had the opportunity to build a business from scratch in a city where I knew essentially no one. [I] learned a lot about myself, learned the value of resilience and determination, and the importance of having the right people around you.

What one question do you most want a job candidate to ask you? "What can I

do here to make a difference?”

What one word best describes you? Determined.

Share one thing about yourself people would be surprised to learn. I started a homeless feeding program (Nashville Food Project) with three high school classmates and a catering truck seven years ago. It has now grown to 550 volunteers feeding 1,200 healthy meals to the homeless and under-housed in Nashville. We still go out together every month to serve meals.

What’s a dirty little secret no one told you about being a CEO? You never really get a day off.

Who’s Nashville’s most important CEO, living or dead? Tommy Frist.

What is the best decision you made as CEO? We brought on independent outside board members 28 years ago. They were all CEOs or managing partners of their business. This was not common in our industry. We started with two and now five of our eight board members are independent outside directors.