

## Interview with Philippe Pace (B2F)

### “Provence Promotion informed me about the takeover file “

Takeover operations are frequently long and tricky projects, and are difficult to manage ... Philippe Pace knows this from experience, after taking over the B2F company specialised in cladding and roofing for buildings. Apart from simply searching for a company to takeover, it has to be compatible with the skills and projects of the entrepreneur taking it over. This is the context in which Provence Promotion has acted as an assistant and an intermediary, as part of its Go Between program that aims at maintaining the vitality of the local industrial fabric!



*The head office of B2F*

#### > Can you introduce your company to us?

**Philippe Pace:** The B2F company was created in 1998. It specialises in buildings and concentrates its activity on roof, cladding and waterproofing work. It has a design office, and manages sites from design until completion. Its global supervision calls upon the skills of its 15 employees composed of work supervisors, design office personnel and two installation teams. It also works with about fifty subcontractors. Its range of activities covers the entire south of France from Nice to Toulouse, as far north as Valence.

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### > How did the takeover take place?

**Philippe Pace:** The takeover took place at the beginning of 2008. The project began with the cooperation of Provence Promotion. The development agency informed me about the takeover file, since it was also familiar with my objectives. My initial concept was to takeover a company working in an activity sector compatible with my own skills, to offer the necessary symbiosis for the project to work satisfactorily. I am a graduate from the Arts et Métiers engineering school, and for more than 10 years I have been responsible for site supervision and management of industrial projects. I was also the President of a small company (also for an industrial group) for 6 years. Although the businesses are different, the methodology for management and site supervision aspects is similar. These skills helped me to prepare a successful takeover proposal and to overcome the difficulties with the procedure ...

### > Difficulties ... ?

**Philippe Pace:** Although the project satisfied my needs in general, there was still a problem to overcome; the project was much larger than I expected. The takeover was finally successful, although size was a problem that delayed the proceedings and cast doubt on whether or not the takeover was feasible.

### > And what does the future look like now?

**Philippe Pace:** The takeover took place successfully; the company is continuing to develop and its level of activity is in phase with estimates. Most customers stayed, and new customers arrived. Apart from managing daily projects, we also need to think about developing skills in markets of the future, for example such as photovoltaic.

### > Based on this experience, what is the main advice that you would give to any potential takeover entrepreneur?

**Philippe Pace:** The success of a takeover file depends strongly on the initial audit that must be performed in detail by the takeover entrepreneur! It is a way of getting to know the company ... before taking the reins.

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