

## Rio Fasteners Certifies To ISO 9001:2015 With The Help of BMSC!



Rio Fasteners will celebrate 18 months in business this month! Though the Los Angeles based Minority-owned fastener business is very young, Owner Oscar Rivera has nearly 4 decades of experience in the manufacturing industry with more than 3 decades in the fastener industry. And though the company isn't yet 2 years old, it is already ISO 9001: 2015 certified!

Oscar's story is an American success story that is inspiring to anyone who wants to someday achieve business ownership. Hard work, ambition, and a strong sense of customer service can indeed pay off.

Oscar came to the United States 40 years ago, in 1978. He was a young man, just 20 at the time, and his country of El Salvador was unstable politically. Oscar's mother had the foresight to get Oscar out of the country shortly before El Salvador's civil war officially began in 1980.

Oscar says, "When I first arrived in the United States, I landed in Montana. The language barriers for a person who didn't speak much English made finding a job in Montana very difficult."

Oscar was a young ambitious man, and he utilized TV, books, and magazines to continue to improve his English. Just 6 months after arriving in the US, he moved to Los Angeles where job opportunities might be better, and he quickly found work. When a cousin helped him to find employment with Informer, it was Oscar's entrée into what would become his career in manufacturing.

Over the next 6 years, Oscar's English continued to improve, and with his strong work ethic, he moved from assembly to stocking to shipping and receiving, to purchasing, to inventory controls. Oscar left his employer when another company acquired it.

Oscar says, "Informer enabled me to learn many different aspects of manufacturing, and in purchasing, I developed relationships with many people in the industry. When I made the decision to leave my employer once it was acquired, it was one of my supplier/customers who offered me a position with his company, Samson Fasteners.

Oscar spent the next 19 years with Samson Fasteners (which later became TR Fastenings-Samson Industries). Through the course of his tenure at the company, Oscar worked in positions in shipping, warehousing, customer service, outside processing and purchasing. When Oscar's boss gave him responsibility for supporting their customers Vendor Managed Inventory requirements (VMI), Oscar's career with his employer took off. With his Spanish speaking ability, Oscar was promoted to 'Outside Sales and Inventory Control Specialist', and he was chartered with supporting Samson Fasteners customers throughout Mexico.

In 1998, Oscar's boss sold Samson Fasteners to a British company, called TR and the company is now called TR Fastenings – Samson Industries. With the change in ownership, Oscar was promoted to General Manager for the company's Tijuana, Mexico operations. Oscar remained with his employer for 6 years, based in Mexico.

Oscar says, "I dreamed of opening my own business, and I wanted to return to the US. I called my old boss who had sold Samson Fasteners years ago, and asked his advice on how to start my own fastener company." He continued, "My old boss convinced me to come to his new company, called Jenson Fasteners." Oscar accepted the offer and he stayed with Jenson Fasteners until his boss retired (2017).

"Now it was time to follow my dream of business ownership", Oscar said. "My new company was called Rio Fasteners, so named because of my name Rivera (Ri) and Oscar (o); hence Rio."

Rio Fasteners supports customers in Mexico and in the United States, with 80% coming from Mexico. Oscar has several principles within which his business operates:

- Grow slowly so that you can continue to offer outstanding customer service.
- Be diversified in your customers. Try to always apply the '10%' rule, meaning retain customers who comprise ~10% of your business
- Big companies are just as important to the business as are small companies
- Continue to visit your customers. Face to face visits help cement relationships.
- Put quality processes in place right from the start.

Oscar says, "You tell your kids to always put the keys on the hanging key holder. Do it every time, and you will never be looking for your keys. This is what ISO certification is all about. Do it right from the start."

7 months into business ownership, Oscar had contracted with Bretta Kelly, owner of BMSC, to begin ISO certification. Oscar says, "I knew the owners of RC Fasteners from working together at Samson. I contacted them about ISO certification and they highly recommended BMSC." He added, "I additionally talked to one of my processing suppliers in Los Angeles and they also gave me some recommended consultants."

In the end, Oscar selected BMSC for the company's ISO consultant. Oscar says, "I just felt very comfortable with Bretta's style from the start." About his experience in the months ensuing where he worked with Bretta and her colleague Debbie Hart, Oscar says, "Bretta and Debbie were outstanding. They gave me confidence from the start that they would help me to successfully achieve certification and I felt that they would be honest with me if I needed to improve or revise a process. My experience with BMSC was absolutely wonderful!"

Rio Fasteners successfully certified to ISO 9001:2015 on September 18th. Oscar says, "We are ready to expand our business with customers who require ISO certification and our certification will just be another step in continuous improvement for our current customers."

Contact Rio Fasteners, a young, highly-experienced, Spanish-speaking ISO certified entity, at 323-920-4682 or email: [orivera@riofasteners.com](mailto:orivera@riofasteners.com)

BMSC offers consulting services as well as proven, copy written templates for ISO 9001:2015, AS9100D, AS9110C and AS9120B Standards. Contact them at: (602) 445-9400 or visit [BusinessMSC.com](http://BusinessMSC.com).

