

## PEOPLE ON THE MOVE

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### Spotlight

Steve Heitel, the new president and director of Presidio Bank, says community banks are in a better position than ever.

"What really sold me on this job was when I saw how well-placed we are for the future," he said. "Obviously there's a lot of disruption in the financial service marketplace right now; I believe community banks will become more and more important to clients and communities going forward."

Presidio Bank is a "well-capitalized institution with an experienced management team and a high profile and influential board of directors and shareholders who have been terrific about supporting the bank," he added. As financial institutions weather the current economic crisis, Heitel said, "local insight and local experience are going to be very important. In the next 18 months there's going to be a reason to turn down almost every loan request you see."

Heitel pointed out that community banks are "sort of a mirror to the communities we serve."

For example, he said, when a bank evaluates an opportunity, most of the time in their "sphere of influence" the bankers know the borrower or the property. That makes for better credit-risk decisions in a very turbulent market.

For the first 21 years of his career, Heitel was with Bank of America Corp.

"That was a fabulous training ground for me," he said. "I'm deeply indebted to the bank and a number of very senior people who took a disproportionate interest in me and my career. I had a chance very early on to take on significant and interesting responsibilities."

At BofA he headed Bay Area commercial banking, and focused on middle-market businesses and their credit, deposits, treasury management, investment banking and trade finance needs.

In 2001 he left BofA, primarily because his life had changed.

"I went from single and living alone to getting married and producing three children faster than you might think possible," he said. "Being local became much more important to me. There were two sets of grandparents nearby that had waited a long time for grandchildren."

He first went to Cupertino National Bank as chief operating officer.

"It was clearly community-rooted, and the organization was locally based, and it also had Greater Bay (Bancorp.) behind it," he said.

Most recently Heitel was president and CEO of Palo Alto-based Mid-Peninsula Bank, the \$1 billion flagship of Greater Bay Bancorp. He also previously served as president and CEO of San Jose National Bank.

Heitel said he first became interested in banking because it offered an overview of finance business before going to business school. But after being in the arena for a few years, he decided to stay. And after a few more years, "business school seemed superfluous."

Beyond banking Heitel likes to be involved in community activities.

"It's important from both a personal and business perspective," he said. "One of the joys that my profession provides is being able to give back and help the communities you're serving."

Heitel is a resident of Redwood City and a graduate of the University of San Francisco with a degree in finance. Previously he has served on the boards of the San Jose and Oakland chambers of commerce, the board of the YMCA of Santa Clara Valley and a variety of other civic and nonprofit organizations.

Heitel said he is drawn to nonprofits that help underserved populations.

"I pick out one or two where I can really make a difference," he said.