

## *Ordinary angel*

**Son of a Finnish diplomat and Czech woman got two degrees: MBA in Chicago and in the University of Stanford. So one day he could leave his nice and prosperous position in IBM and become a business-angel. For many years director of a company Virtual Pro Martti Vallila, whom our scientists see as a treacherous hunter of free brain, has explained that as long as inventions of our Copernicus' aren't patented abroad, anyone willing could easily steal them without his help.**

At the age of 27 the son of a diplomat shook hands with the President of USA Gerald Ford and General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Leonid Brezhnev and since then he has wanted to participate in great changes of the world, which he sees in unique technologies.

- Back then I didn't know that my father, in the beginning of his career participated in negotiation on after-war agreement between Finland and Soviet Union. Then I couldn't even imagine, that many years later life would return me back on the same geopolitical arena", writes Martti Villa in his biography, which he plans to publish soon in Russian.

In search of brilliant ideas he has travelled to Russia for 15 years and every time he visits Academgorodok, hoping to improve his relations with new local developers. Martti thinks that venture investments are not just empty words and sincerely believes in possibilities to earn money by introducing new inventions of talented scientists, who will revolutionize the world and will save Russia from being just a producer of raw materials. He meets with creators of new ideas and simply explains them how innovation economics works abroad.

Even he has a worn hat with ear-flaps, open suntanned face and simple manners Martti was during few first years seen, as unreliable American Finn, by Russian genius inventors. Thinking sarcastically how "noble" his attentions are – the riches from the depths of our land are not enough, that you came to pump out the

brains from mother Russia too. And here as well Martti had to use all his inherited diplomatic skills. Since telling to the scientist that his inventions, when not properly protected and presented, don't have any market value is almost like spitting in his face. But lately Russia has woken from her dream and Martti has had some success – four native developments, with a light hand or actually on a wing of a business angel are already patented in Finland.

**For how long have you taught our scientist the abc's of innovation economics? When are you planning to reap what you sow?**

- Yes. I've decided to promote Russian inventions on a global market, even it's difficult. Russia needs this now more than ever. Help of course is also needed for hungry children in Africa, but I'm not a Sisyphus and I can't help them, but here the perspective is obvious. But when in front of you sits a person, who in the end agrees to sell his idea to you for "only" 1,5 million dollars, preferably in cash, having a false picture of implementing his developments on almost unknown market, I have to start from abc's.

I explain them the whole truth of how this process works everywhere else in the world. Not everyone is ready to hear this truth or understand it, but with years I've noticed that my words have more and more respond. I rarely have to explain anymore. Why I do it? Probably because the first goal of a good business is not to earn money but wisely invest them. Then they will become smart money. The final goal of a

business is like in life – developing a branch of industry in which you want to invest time and money in order to be proud of the outcome. When you've something to be proud of the investment will be returned and probably once will bring a huge profit.

**- Sound optimistic. Be honest, are you an idealist?**

- Simple truths always sound beautiful. Idealist is the one who thinks that oil and gas reserves of his country are endless and building economy of a big country on exporting them for the next thousand years is possible. He lives in his dream world, which has nothing to do with the reality. Scientists work in institutes devoting all their life to science and get dozens of Russian patents for their inventions, even the market for them exists outside Russia. They have no idea that Russian patents are meaningless in the west and after half a year of getting such a patent invention is published in international anthology from which anyone willing could copy it.

Instead of a short declaration on the professional value, which is usual way to do it in Europe and USA, they publish detailed description of their technical know-how, after that there's no chance to get an international patent - openly published subject isn't the reason. In order to keep the possibility to protect the development at the same time with Russian patent, you have to fill in RST application (for Rostest certificat), which gives you a chance to register patent for your invention within one year in any other country. During the year I come here many times to reduce the amount of naïve idealism and start the real work.

**- What kind of developers you already work with?**

- Chemistry scientist Igor Pomytkin is from Institute for Biochemical Physics RAN. He was the first one in the world to discover a reason for Alzheimer's disease and came up with a method,

how the component of cure can reach the brain cells. In order to make a prototype of medicine and technology we established a company in Finland called Buddha Biopharm Oy Ltd. Finnish company Cerebricon is financing the clinical tests. Project also has other investors.

Another Russian invention is solid carbonized nano-material. The author is a genius. Woman, who is 72 years old and works for State University of Moscow. Two of her patents belong to Irish investor, who's passed away and now I'm negotiating with his company to transfer them for another owner as inheritance. In Novosibirsk we actively negotiate with a company IntraOL, who makes multifocal artificial small crystals of eye, which are used for cataract operations. They can enter the international market already today, the problem is the patent.

**- You're often called the brain-hunter and sometimes the business angel. Which of these descriptions is true?**

- In some ways I am hunting the brain, because in Russia I seek to meet people who are capable of identifying perspectives of our co-operation and possibilities to enter the market abroad with their inventions. The thought that I'm initiating the brain to flee from the country is incorrect. It's quite the opposite. I in fact do everything so your developers wouldn't leave the country, could earn money and have reliable international patents for their inventions.

The question about business-angel is difficult. What I do is called like that in the world, but for now it hasn't brought me any real profit and I earn money from other sources. For example I get governmental grants for participation in different kinds of programs. Administration of Novosibirsk city suggested that I should teach master classes on venture investments. That's why for now it would have been fare to take away the word business. I'm just an ordinary angel.