

Talking Germany**Bobby Dekeyser, Entrepreneur and Sponsor**

Bobby Dekeyser is a model entrepreneur. Happy employees are more important to him than profit. Trust, optimism, honesty and fairness form the basis of his company philosophy.

The 45-year-old became a multi-millionaire selling luxury garden furniture. Even though nowadays his clients include luxury hotels and famous people, his success as an entrepreneur was not a foregone conclusion. Bobby Dekeyser decided he was going to be a professional soccer player at the age of 15, left school and signed with Bayern Munich at the age of 19. He was the substitute goalkeeper, but his career was brought to an abrupt end seven years later when an opponent's elbow smashes into his face. While he was recuperating, he and his brother-in-law founded a company.

The secret of their garden furniture is a specially made synthetic fiber: weatherproof, colorfast, fireproof. It all began with a staff of six, now the company employs more than 3,000. Most of them work in the Philippines, where the furniture is woven. Employees enjoy regulated working hours, above-average wages and their own health care package.

Bobby Dekeyser is often described as an exceptional entrepreneur: Nevertheless, several years ago he sold large shares in his company to a US investor.

He had begun devoting his energies to a new project, the "Dekeyser & Friends" foundation. The father of three hoped it would inspire young people from all over the world to realize their dreams, and sought mentors with good ideas. The foundation began its work in 2009. Ski ace Markus Wasmeier is one of those supported by "Dekeyser & Friends". The double Olympic champion has founded a museum village on Lake Schlier in Bavaria. The foundation invited young people to join the project, and together they restored an old farmhouse that's more than 300 years old. In 2009, Bobby Dekeyser bought his company back. The investors had wanted to relocate production for reasons of cost – now the self-made millionaire has resumed control of the business.

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