

## Sheldon Lavin's Journey from Chicago Banking to Global Food Executive



Sheldon Lavin  
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CEOCFO Magazine

**"OSI is an entrepreneurial company. It's not run like typical companies our size... This culture is very different. It evolved because it was the best way for us to do business and it has worked." - Sheldon Lavin**

**CEOCFO: What did you enjoy in your financial consulting? What did you learn that helped in later endeavors?**

**Sheldon Lavin:** I always envisioned myself to be in a business that I owned. My [academic background](#) is in accounting and finance; thus, I pursued that direction.

**CEOCFO: Why and how did you become involved with Meat Processing?**

**Sheldon Lavin:** I had arranged the financing for the first meat processing facility that the Kolschowsky family built in [West Chicago, Illinois](#). The original name of the company was [Otto & Sons](#), named after Otto Kolschowsky, and was later changed to OSI Industries. My continued involvement with the company resulted in my becoming an owner.

**CEOCFO: What was your vision for OSI in the beginning?**

**Sheldon Lavin:** From the very beginning, I aimed to grow the company to be a world class food processing enterprise.

**CEOCFO: What is the global reach and product range of OSI today?**

**Sheldon Lavin:** We are physically located in [17 countries](#) with over 70 facilities. The product range is primarily protein products although we do produce some sauces, vegetable items and baked goods.

**CEOCFO: How did you make it all happen?**

**Sheldon Lavin:** OSI is an [entrepreneurial company](#). It's not run like typical companies our size, with dictates from the top. Yes, there are rules and strategies to follow, levels of responsibility, and budgetary limits, but we operate like a family. This culture is very different. It

evolved because it was the best way for us to do business and it has worked.

**CEOCFO: *Was innovation always in your DNA or did you recognize the value as OSI evolved?***

**Sheldon Lavin:** Innovation was always in my DNA; however, it was nurtured a great deal at OSI.

**CEOCFO: *Would you tell us about the family culture at OSI? How do you foster this approach in such a large organization?***

**Sheldon Lavin:** We are very proud of all of our people. Without the loyal, talented folks we have, we would never have achieved success. My office is always open. We listen to everyone. At the corporate office, we all eat lunch together and we all address each other by first names. I am called Sheldon or Shelly rather than “Mr. Lavin.” We are concerned not only for the employees but their families as well.

**CEOCFO: *How has your long involvement with Ronald McDonald House Charities, among others, helped your outcome?***

**Sheldon Lavin:** We are very passionate in [giving back to the communities](#) in which we operate. We have a long history of fostering all to be charitable within their means.

**CEOCFO: *What is your vision for the future, for you and OSI?***

**Sheldon Lavin:** My [vision for OSI](#) is to continue to have profitable growth, serving world class outcomes to the “Nth” degree in all respects. We are poised to be one of the global leaders in the food industry. As for me, someday I will retire, but OSI will continue. We have great talent to carry on the vision and mission of OSI for years to come.



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