

The HR GO Story



60 Years of Recruitment Success

1957 - 2017



www.hrgopl.com



HR GO GROUP FACTS 2017

- Annual turnover: £80 million
- 40+ offices UK-wide and in Poland
- 325+ staff
- 3,500+ temps
- Specialist recruitment companies
- Committed to personal service

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“Early success fired up Betty’s ambition to develop a new career.”

Betty, centre, celebrates her company’s 10th anniversary in 1967.

RAIL TRAGEDY LEADS TO BUSINESS LAUNCH

In 1957, Betty Parkinson was a temporary secretary in London. On a foggy December afternoon, her train home from London Bridge Station suddenly lost power after Hither Green.

Electricity had been shut off after a train behind hers ploughed into another outside Lewisham. Tragically, 90 people were killed, and 173 injured. It was many hours before Betty arrived home.

That experience convinced Betty to give up commuting and quit her London job, a decision that was to set free her entrepreneurial spirit.

After taking a temporary role at Dartford Paper Mills, she heard that the North Kent company needed staff. Betty seized the opportunity and, working mainly from home, recruited nine people.

BETTY'S BUREAU

This early success fired up Betty's ambition to develop a new career. She founded Dartford Staff Employment Bureau and, as a mayor's daughter, used her extensive network of contacts to forge a successful business.

Working closely with her first employee Winnie Woods, the firm became known for its excellent recruitment service, mainly in executive & technical roles.

Over the next two decades, Betty opened branches across Kent. The firm's name changed over time to Parkinson Staff Bureau, PSB and finally HR GO.

It remains Kent's largest and longest-established independent recruitment business, but now with nationwide coverage.

In those pre-computer days, details about clients, job vacancies and candidates were stored on cards, with quality of service often down to what staff could remember. "Winnie had a fantastic memory," recalls Jack Parkinson, the present Chairman.

One of Betty's early candidates was local teenager Mick Jagger. Before becoming a Rolling Stone, he needed a job and asked Betty to find him one. Unfortunately, she was unable to help. It was a rare failure by HR GO to satisfy a candidate, but it might have helped Mick on the path to rock stardom.





“Jack soon felt at home, introducing innovation and strategic thinking to recruitment”

Jack Parkinson with HR GO plc employees at The Cedars, Ashford, 1997.
Around a third of the people in this picture are still with us today!

JACK COMES ON BOARD

When his father passed away in 1977, Jack gave up working in refrigeration engineering in South Africa to join his mother in the family business.

"I had not expected to join the company," says Jack, "but my Uncle Fred said it was a great little business and I should get involved."

Jack soon felt at home, introducing innovation and strategic thinking to recruitment.

Recognising that the business needed to expand and diversify, he used his experience as a refrigeration engineer to found a joint venture specialising in refrigeration, air conditioning and engineering recruitment.

This was the first of many joint ventures that accelerated business growth. Jack also opened branches in many parts of the UK, including London, Manchester, Liverpool and Glasgow.

The recruitment industry was changing. Big companies were becoming bigger. While Jack wanted the business to grow, he was committed to the personal touch and excellent service.

KISSING FROGS

As a pioneer of joint ventures, Jack believed that giving a stake to others offered the fastest route to growth, achievement and job satisfaction.

"I enjoy sharing business with other people," says Jack. "I never wanted to be top of the pile, someone who had total control. I would much rather be in partnership with others."

"I concentrated on finding people who were good at recruitment. My strength was coming up with ideas. My Mum was good at motivating people and encouraging them to do well."

RHL was an early JV that has prospered over the years, recruiting talent in automotive, engineering, pharmaceuticals and other technical industries. It remains an important part of the HR GO group.

Eclipse, our IT / e-commerce business, and Space Between, a web-design enterprise, are other successful joint ventures. The latest is with Airport Placements Limited (APL).

Jack admits not all JVs work out. "It's a bit like kissing frogs and finding a princess. You have to kiss a lot of frogs."

The joint venture concept has taken HR GO to new locations across the UK and into specialist areas such as IT, human resources, healthcare, driving and aviation, with more to come.



1957

Betty Parkinson
opens first office
of Dartford Staff
Employment
Bureau

1960

Turnover reaches
£9,000 per annum

1968

Name changes to
Parkinson Staff
Bureau (later PSB)
and Chatham branch
opens

1977

Betty's son Jack
joins the company
and forms first
joint venture (JV):
Refrigeration
Recruitment

1980

Turnover exceeds
£1 million per annum

1988

18 PSB branches in
Kent and Sussex.
90 staff

1990

Turnover almost
£22 million per
annum

The HR GO Story - timeline

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1995
Extra six
JV companies
launched

2000
36 joint ventures.
Turnover exceeds
£51 million per
annum

2005+
Group renamed
HR GO plc. Business
restructured to address
challenges of recession
and changes in the
industry. Some JVs
are sold and branch
network rationalised.

2010
Jack Parkinson steps
down as Managing
Director and moves
abroad. He remains
Chairman.

2015
Jack Parkinson
returns from abroad
to resume role of
Managing Director,
while remaining
Chairman. He forms
joint ventures with
HR GO Driving Ltd.

2016
40th branch opens
- JV formed with Airport
Placements Limited
(APL).

2017 Diamond Anniversary.

Roddy Barrow, becomes Group
Managing Director. John
Parkinson appointed IT Director.
Cindy Hare becomes HR GO
Recruitment Managing Director
and Marc Taylor becomes Group
Finance Director.

HR GO celebrates its 60th
anniversary by launching the
'60 Acts of Kindness' campaign
across the group.

HR



recruitment



“Our success over 60 years has been built on great service and we will always be customer-led and customer-focused”

Dartford 2016 - town of the very first HR GO branch - Jack Parkinson with picture of Betty and current branch staff.

MOVING WITH THE TIMES

Technology has of course replaced the old rotating index card system and while Jack likes new web-based systems, he believes the industry risks becoming less personal.

To avoid the pitfalls the HR GO Recruitment brand has retained a branch network that focuses on personal service.

Since 1957, the company has placed thousands of permanent and temporary workers, and is proud of the fact that since the very first day, it has paid its temps on time, every week.

LOOKING AHEAD

From its strong base providing temporary workers, in recent years HR GO has enjoyed significant growth in specialist and niche recruitment.

Business in these areas has jumped by up to 22% in recent years.

While it still places temps, the business has seen a strategic shift towards permanent and senior staff placement.

Jack Parkinson's pioneering joint ventures have generated huge success for HR GO. They now span a wide range of services, including IT and web design. Jack continues to look for new opportunities, and is keen to develop overseas operations to join the existing IT enterprise in Wroclaw, Poland.

NEW GENERATION - SAME VALUES

John and Sydney, Jack's children and third generation members of the Parkinson family in the business, are both directors of HR GO plc.

John, Group IT Director, is learning all aspects of the business in preparation for taking over the reins from his father in due course.

He sees his role as "protecting the family legacy and company culture" whilst bringing a "millennial" perspective to the Group.

In a few short years with the company, he has seen the recruitment industry change rapidly in the digital age.

He has helped position HR GO at the forefront of technology as a crucial way of enhancing the client and candidate experience.

"Our success over 60 years has been built on great service and we will always be customer-led and customer-focused," says John.





2017



“We are celebrating our 60th anniversary by looking outwards to the communities which have contributed to our success.”

60 Acts of Kindness campaign - helping local charities and our national charity, the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI).

60 ACTS OF KINDNESS

HR GO is celebrating its Diamond Anniversary by encouraging staff across the UK to volunteer for 60 Acts of Kindness.

The company is also supporting the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) by match funding any sum raised by staff for other charities during the anniversary year.

Jack said: "We are celebrating our 60th anniversary by looking outwards to the communities where we are based and which have contributed to our success. My mother was keen to help local charities so we're carrying on that tradition.

I'm encouraging our teams across the UK to do their bit for local people and good causes. Some acts of kindness will be small, others on a larger scale, but all will be an important contribution to their community.

Although we have set this target for our anniversary year, I'm hoping that the volunteering culture will be so deeply embedded in the company that our staff will be happy to continue the Kindness Campaign well into 2018 and beyond."



Lifeboats

Fundraising in aid of the RNLI



An HR GO "Betty the Bear" (named after the founder) making new friends in Antarctica.

These bears were produced in celebration of 60 years of business. They have now travelled the world and had many adventures!



Recruitment & Business Services

Our Group Brands



www.hrgo.co.uk



www.eclipsegroup.co.uk



www.airport-placements.co.uk



www.rhl.co.uk



www.exectecsolutions.co.uk



www.hrgodriving.co.uk



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