

# PARKER HANNIFIN WALKS THE TALK

An interview with Nate Jackson, VP of HR at Parker Hannifin

BY CHRIS CARMON

**Most** every CEO has made the statement that “our people are our greatest asset.” I do believe that most companies realize that their people are their greatest asset. However, to sustain this value, companies need to continually evaluate, measure and evolve their strategies for talent acquisition and retention. After having completed several successful searches for Parker Hannifin and working with numerous executives, it is clear they “Walk the Talk” and their track record speaks for itself.

Recently, I had the opportunity to discuss talent acquisition and retention with one of Parker Hannifin’s HR executives, Nate Jackson. Nate is a vice president of human resources for Parker Hannifin’s Instrumentation Group and one of the primary stakeholders in the execution of Parker’s workforce planning strategies. Parker Hannifin has continuously demonstrated success in attracting and retaining top talent globally. In a time where employee tenure is shrinking, it is common to see tenure with their employees of 10-, 20- and even 30-plus years. This success is a direct result of corporate culture and values, competitive wages and benefits, and career growth and succession strategies.

The following are some of the insights Nate Jackson shared with me regarding Parker’s efforts.

## What steps does Parker take to ensure that senior level talent fits the culture?

We view the hire of a senior level manager or executive like bringing someone into our family. We want to get to know them and be certain that this person will take care of our customers and employees the Parker way. Senior level candidates will meet with numerous executives in the interview process to ensure we really know the candidate and evaluate the fit effectively. At certain levels, we will engage the services of industrial psychologists who conduct in-depth assessments of the candidates. References are checked with an emphasis on management style. We look for people who can influence others versus those who just exert authority.

## Parker has locations in 46 countries, 132 divisions and approximately 55,000 employees worldwide and growing. What is different about Parker’s talent acquisition process in various regions in the US and the world?

As a corporation, Parker will continue to drive efficiencies through global processes and procedures as it relates to our talent. We have developed Parker Leadership Business Skills which serve as a universal standard for Parker employees and consists of values, behaviors, attributes and skills. With that said, we realize that being a growing,

global business, we need to empower our divisions to create best practices for their specific location based upon both Parker values, as well as, regional cultures.

Parker has regional VP’s of HR who are then supported by divisional HR managers within their region. These professionals are experts in the local culture, hiring practices and regulations. They are empowered to execute strategies for talent acquisition and retention which are aligned with Parker’s values and goals.



NATE JACKSON,  
PARKER HANNIFIN

## Experts keep talking about the talent shift. What is/has Parker done to retain talent during the recession and as the economy picks up?

As we entered the recession, Parker took major steps to minimize reductions in our workforce and save as many positions as possible. We started with a top down approach where senior level executives made the first

sacrifices. Ultimately, we took a team approach to the sacrifices being made to weather the economic storm. This approach strengthened employee loyalty to the business.

During this time, we realized that we were asking employees to do more with less to get us through this time. Parker has and will continue to execute programs that incentivize our employees for their performance within the business. We offer a profit sharing program, equity

programs and strategies for our employees to be rewarded and grow through globalization of our business. Parker continues to think outside of the box by expanding our medical coverage including alternative medicine. We also have a goal to have a workout facility in every Parker location. This is an obvious convenience to our employees and helps to increase the overall health of our people.

Parker continues to engage in strategic workforce planning initiatives. Talent challenges are a result of retirement, expansion & acquisition, new product launches and increasing globalization of our business. We are constantly looking for better ways to increase our talent flow into the business and talent growth once inside the business. <<

**HOW TO REACH:** If you would like to learn more about Parker Hannifin, you can visit their website at [www.parker.com](http://www.parker.com) for more information. This article was brought to you by Chris Carmon, president of The Carmon Group. You can find out more about The Carmon Group at [www.carmongroup.com](http://www.carmongroup.com)