



HR STAR



Founder and CEO of Payroll Solutions Group: Howard Winters

[By Robin Salisian]

As founder and chief executive officer of Payroll Solutions Group, Howard Winters has worked with people since day one.

"My first job was in banking, and I became a branch administration manager. This gave me responsibility for staff at an early age and forced me to figure out the basics of HR," says Winters. "My second job was in the military. Again, throughout my time in the military I had responsibility for people. My third jobs were at a large corporation where I had numerous positions with all of them involving managing work groups to get business results. All of these positions and experiences indirectly prepared me for what I am doing today."

"An accident" is how Winters describes his initial interest in HR. Earning his bachelor's degree in American history at the University of Guelph, Winters spent his early years, as noted above, as a banker. Several years and military positions later, he joined Xerox Canada, holding several middle and senior management positions. But not until 1991, when "Winters relocated to the U.S. to pursue his entrepreneurial spirit," and founded Physician Management, Inc., did he "stumble into the world of human resources outsourcing," says a brief bio.

Immediately, he was hooked. And in 1998, Winters was ready to journey from Florida to Las Vegas to build his business, a professional employer organization (PEO). A year later, his first payroll ran. In the six years that followed, the small business founded on a "church table in a rented house" grew to employ more than 45 professionals.

Today, Payroll Solutions' success is booming. The company has appeared on *Entrepreneur*

Magazine's Hot 500 list, ranking 71. And with offices in both Arizona and Nevada, Payroll proves to be a rising star. In 2002, the company received the Governor's Industry Appreciation Award.

"[As CEO,] I'm the leader of a 50 person human resource outsourcing company and plan our future directions," says Winters, who's most proud "that Payroll Solutions has grown and become successful over the past 8 years."

"[I'm also] proud of the team of people who have accomplished this," he continues.

So, what exactly *is* a PEO?

Q. What do you like to do outside of HR? Any odd hobbies/interests? Are you married? Do you have children? Can you explain a little about your personal life outside of work?

A. I am married with two golden retrievers. I like to golf.

Q. What CD is in your CD player right now?

A. Some soothing smooth jazz by various artists.

Q. What is the last magazine you read?

A. *Golf Digest*.

Q. What is your favorite TV show?

A. Can't say that I have one.

Q. Who is your role model?

A. I would like to be thought of as a level 5 leader as defined by Jim Collins in *Good to Great*.

According to the company's [website](#), "a professional employer organization (PEO) is a company that contractually assumes and manages critical human resource and personnel responsibilities and employer risks for its small to mid-sized businesses by establishing and maintaining an employer relationship with the employees."

On average, Payroll Solutions works with small businesses of 16 employees. And there is no limit to the types of businesses the company works for: accountants, manufacturers, doctors, retailers, mechanics, and more.

No surprises then that Winters, having been one himself, offers accolades to entrepreneurs.

"[They're] the backbone of this country," he says. "We get to help entrepreneurs deal with the most difficult challenges related to having employees. Every entrepreneur with staff can benefit from our expertise in some way."

But having been in the industry for several years, Winters recognizes the challenges the HR industry encounters. One of the most difficult, he says, is "the regulatory environment at the federal and state levels."

"[It] continues to become more complex and is unlikely to become any simpler anytime soon."

"[And] clearly the issue of immigration and undocumented workers creates many challenges for the HR professional," Winters



HR STAR

continues, when asked about important issues facing the profession today. “Despite all the media attention to this issue, it is unlikely that this will be resolved anytime soon.”

Even with the challenges and the pressing issues, however, Winters’ passion for HR continues to thrive. “Life,” he admits, “has definitely been a tire swing — sometimes good and sometimes bad. However, I would not change anything at this point.”

Nor should he — Winters has done more than just build companies; he’s donned the hat of philanthropist as well. Winters

has served three years on the board of the Poverello House, a non-profit providing daytime hospitality to homeless men. Other programs Winters has donated his time to include the North Las Vegas Rotary and its Happy Feet program, along with his church, St. George’s Anglican.

Who then has helped guide this CEO to the top? “I have a personal friend who has been successful in his career. I have always admired his work ethic and his balanced approach to any situation he faced.”

And balance is key to Winters’ success as well.

“To be successful in HR, I believe that you must foremost have strong communication skills. You must have the ability to be compassionate but logical.”

ON THE NET

Payroll Solutions Group
www.payrollsolutions.info

University of Guelph
www.uoguelph.ca

Poverello House
www.poverellohouse.org

EmploymentCrossing is the largest collection of active jobs in the world.

We continuously monitor the hiring needs of more than 250,000 employers, including virtually every corporation and organization in the United States. We do not charge employers to post their jobs and we aggressively contact and investigate thousands of employers each day to learn of new positions. No one works harder than EmploymentCrossing.

Let EmploymentCrossing go to work for you.