

# How to Grow Your Organization While Improving Company Culture



## Parker

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**No. of Employees:** 800+ employees

**Key Executive:** Roberto Muñiz, President and CEO of Parker

**Products/Services:** Assisted Living, Nursing Care Residences, Adult Day Centers, Post-Acute, Rehabilitation Services, Health & Wellness Center, Memory Care

**Year Founded:** 1907



**M**ore than 110 years ago, Parker was founded as a place where people could age in a home-like setting. Parker's goal was to provide individualized attention, purpose and meaning for those who needed long-term nursing care.

Some years ago as a non-profit with just two nursing homes, Parker saw it needed to grow in multiple directions due to demand for quality, diversified aging services. It first expanded Parker at River Road, adding memory care services, then built Stonegate an assisted living residence. Parker then created a community center with a child development center to promote inter-generational programming, two adult day centers with medical and social models, and health and wellness services, which include, outpatient rehab, a gym and aquatic therapy. Several years ago Parker built Parker at Monroe, a nursing care residence using the "small" home model of sixteen residents (with similar needs) per "neighborhood."

Three years ago the acquisition of a skilled nursing home took place, providing full rehabilitation and post-acute services (Parker at Somerset).

All of these changes happened within fifteen years and under the watchful eyes of Parker's CEO, Roberto Muñiz who will be celebrating twenty years at Parker this October.

Muñiz comes from humble beginnings. Moving from Puerto Rico as a teen, he started working in health care services after school from the age of sixteen. He has held many positions from a nursing assistant to supervisor to nursing home administrator and finally CEO. Parker employees respect and trust him because they know he has walked in their shoes.

Mr. Muñiz has some advice on how to expand your workforce while maintaining a strong company culture. There are three ways to achieve a healthy expansion.

**Communication:** Parker's vision was bold, but also at times overwhelming for its then small workforce. Communicating the importance of growth and the direction the company was moving toward with all employees was crucial. During the growth process, there was frequent communication with the workforce. As a non-profit, Parker's goal was to care for as many people as possible and growth would allow that.

**Engagement:** Workers from all departments: recreation, nursing, dining, maintenance, housekeeping and more, took ownership in the planning process through brainstorming and focus groups. Employees were empowered to speak up and were often asked for their opinions.

**Transparency:** As exciting as growth can be, it is often overwhelming. Parker executives realized at an early stage that a steady pace was needed. They also recognized they may not be able to do it all right away. Going at a pace that allowed growth, yet knowing when to "hit the brakes" was crucial. If an idea jeopardized culture and services, it would not be implemented even if it helped with expansion.

At Parker, the mission is to *Make Aging Part of Life*. Without the buy-in from employees, that's just a slogan. Continuous communication of important cultural elements, such as mission, vision, values and history, create informed employees. An acknowledged and empowered workforce is your greatest ally in growth, while maintaining a strong company culture.