

Q&A with Stephen Sparks, CEO and Owner of Sparks Group



Stephen Sparks
Chief Executive Officer and Owner

Sparks Group
www.sparksgroupinc.com

Contact:
Stephen Sparks
240-234-0601
ssparks@sparksgroupinc.com

Interview conducted by:
Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor
CEOCFO Magazine

“Our firm’s recruiting expertise has grown over the years but the hallmark of what has made us successful is delivering our services day in and day out.”- Stephen Sparks

CEOCFO: *Mr. Sparks, what is the philosophy and vision for Sparks Group?*

Mr. Sparks: The hallmark that has always made us stand out from other staffing and recruiting firms in the Washington, DC Metropolitan area is our approach towards our clients and the approach begins with listening. Unlike many others, Sparks Group strives to build a deep client relationship built on trust. We work with our clients as a partner and solve their challenges. It begins with listening to develop an understanding of their needs and how we can help. When a customer has a unique challenge from the staffing, hiring, training or management standpoint, we help them analyze the situation and opportunities. This is where 47 years of experience pays off for our clients. We would work together to figure out what the pain points are, how we might be able to solve them, and work together towards a solution. Although, “off the shelf” delivery of services works occasionally, our philosophy is to listen, solve problems, and go the extra mile whether the situation calls for a unique approach, or the standard line of services we deliver.

CEOCFO: *Was that always the approach at Sparks Group or was there a point where you realized you needed to work a little differently than standard with most of your clients?*

Mr. Sparks: Being in business since 1970, we have seen a lot of changes in the marketplace. There was a time in the 80s when any company could achieve a level of success. Business was booming for everyone. Then there came a shake out during the early 90s. Massive consolidation took place and many competitors failed. We had to step up our game too. Our progressive approach and use of technology helped us stand out and lead an evolution toward a new client centric service delivery model. We thrived throughout the 90s opening new branch locations and building relationships with several, large international companies headquartered in the region.

CEOCFO: *Tell me about the range of services you provide and jobs for which you would find candidates?*

Mr. Sparks: In late 2016, we changed our name from Sparks Personnel to Sparks Group. This change helps reflect our diverse staffing expertise, including Finance & Accounting, Information Technology, Creative & Marketing, and General Office. Each division has its own team of experts devoted exclusively to their segment. We built our teams so they have an expertise in servicing our clients in those particular areas.

CEOCFO: *Are there areas that are easier?*

Mr. Sparks: No. The employment market is tight across the board. Building a reputation for finding the best people and matching them to the best companies is a double-edged sword. It is much easier in a high supply and high demand market. We are in a high demand, low supply market today and envision this will last for a while.

CEOCFO: *Who is turning to you for services?*

Mr. Sparks: Our best customers are growing quickly and recognize how to supplement their core competencies with a partner who is willing to go beyond a standard approach. Our client list includes companies from every conceivable line of