

1970 | 2020
COLLIN5ON GRANT
YEARS

Collinson Grant – 50 years

Setting the scene

To some 1970 doesn't seem that long ago. It depends on your perspective. Yet businesses that started in that era have seen profound changes: the advent of personal computers; a revolution in communications and the all-pervasive internet. Throw in several deep recessions and a global marketplace far more competitive than ever before and you can begin to understand how nimble a successful company needs to be.

In business there is an imperative to look forward: to know what your competitors are doing, to see how markets and technology are changing and to try to anticipate what is round the next corner. But it is fun to look back from time to time – laugh at your (occasional) mistakes, remember some minor achievements and recall colleagues who helped to build the company.

A mark in the sand is easily washed away with the next tide. So this is more than that – and principally a note of what has been achieved in fifty years of hard work, and some inspiration, a little endeavour, carefully nurtured partnerships, determination and tenacity.

Although of course the business has a direction, analyses its performance carefully and knows its strengths and weaknesses, it has always been 'client-led'. And in Collinson Grant a client is a person not a company. A person to get to know, to respect and understand, and wherever possible to build a relationship which will stand the test of time. Long-standing relationships are founded on trust and depend on providing value for money. That's what the business tries to do.

This celebration of Collinson Grant describes some of our well-known clients and other smaller ones, tells you about the far flung places our work has taken us to, gives you a little insight into what we actually do, and sets it all in some historical context. It is not comprehensive and no doubt misses much that should have been included. If there are errors or important omissions, we apologise unreservedly. But we hope you enjoy our story.

1970s
Where we started

1970

Focus: Collinson Grant's aims are set out in its original objects and articles of association.

The beginning

Collinson Grant was incorporated on 1st December 1970. Len Collinson, Director of Manpower, Plessey Communications and James Grant, Area Manager of Inbucon/AIC went into business as management consultants.

The Objects for which the Company is established are:-

(A) (i) To carry on the businesses of Management Consultants and Advisers, to employ, train and exploit the services of Directors, Executives, Staff and Personnel of all kinds, to act as Advisers and Consultants in trade development, efficiency technique, business, office and works management studies, advertising, marketing, sales promotion, and product design in relation to all types of commercial and manufacturing undertakings and technical, economic and financial matters affecting commerce and industry, to perform all duties of a

That same year Len's former colleague Ron Fulford, a Financial Controller at Plessey, had left to become Managing Director of Stoves, a Newholme-Veritas company. Ron became Collinson Grant's first client in a job to design and implement an improved payment system at the Rainhill factory near St Helens. A decade later he was an important conduit for many much larger assignments.

The early 1970s held some inauspicious signs for a new business; an oil price crisis in 1973 which heralded sky high inflation; a stock market crash in 1973/74; the three-day week imposed by the Heath government in early 1974 – in order to conserve electricity during industrial action by coal miners; and steadily rising unemployment throughout the decade. What's more, the country made the momentous decision to join the European Economic Community.

Nevertheless, Collinson Grant thrived. A model built on proven skills, strong relationships and measurable results withstood this early economic onslaught and began to prosper.

Building a client base

Fine Art Developments, later led by Keith Chapman, was an important early client. The group and its associated companies, several headed by Phil Maudsley, have remained loyal customers ever since – for more than forty-five years.

Other early clients included substantial 'Northern' companies such as AC Delco, Duple Coachbuilders, Magnesium Elektron, N Brown Group and a first international client: Cooper Industries, based in Houston, Texas. The advertising group Mills & Allen joined up later, the Manx Government came on board, and towards the end of the decade Edmundson Electrical – a client now for over forty years.



Collinson Grant started on the shop floor at Stoves factory in Rainhill, Merseyside

1970s

Diana Wroe is appointed the first employee and Company Secretary. Hugh Dayton, with a background in mining engineering, managerial controls and productivity also joins in 1971.

1973/74

Additional skills

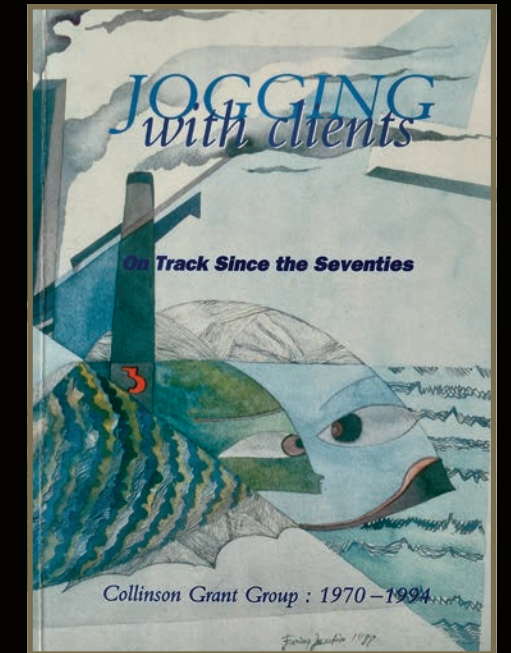
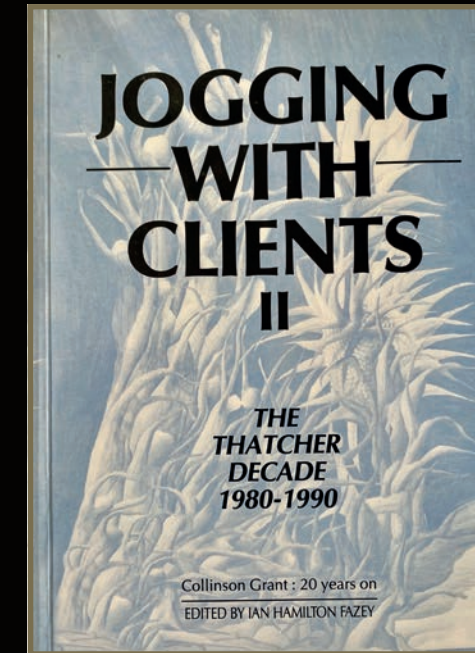
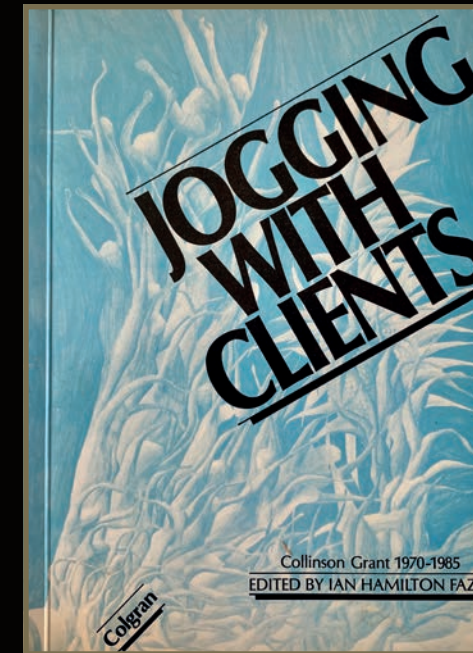
David Jones and Pip Mosscrop join the business and are appointed directors. David is an experienced personnel executive with particular skills in payment systems and negotiating with trades unions. He develops and leads work on managing people and employment law – essential complementary capabilities to our core consulting disciplines. Pip has a background in work study and reorganisation. He leads work on distribution, financial controls and reducing costs.

Standards and traditions

High standards in written work have always been important for Collinson Grant. In the early days all manuscript drafts of letters and reports for clients are carefully edited – a heavy red pen highlights unacceptable content or grammar. David Jones was a committed disciple and insisted on correspondingly high standards for all his colleagues. His own prose was deceptively simple yet powerful in its message. Clients liked it. The business still aspires to produce documents that are accurate, concise and easy to read – not always an easy task but one it works hard to achieve.

Communication and relationships

Len Collinson is a natural communicator with a distinctive style. He starts drafting and circulating his first 'Client Jogger' and continues regularly until 1994 – a digest of business news, commentary and sound advice, often reflecting the economic and political mores of the day. Three anthologies are published.



1978

Employment law

Advising businesses on all aspects of managing people was an early feature of Collinson Grant's work. The mid – 1970s saw a plethora of new legislation governing the relationships between employers, employees and trades unions: Trade Union and Labour Relations Act 1974, Employment Protection Act 1975, Sex Discrimination Act 1975. In response in 1978 Collinson Grant publishes its first edition of 'The Line Manager's Employment Law' – a practical guide on how to manage relationships at work effectively within the law – updated and reprinted every year since. It remains immensely popular with, and valuable to, clients.



1979

Local contacts – international connections

Context: Margaret Thatcher becomes Prime Minister heralding considerable change in economic policies: flexible labour markets, de-regulation and the privatisation of state enterprises.

Pip Moss crop is assigned as interim Materials Manager and then Manufacturing Manager at the Pumps and Motors Division of Mather & Platt one of Manchester's largest engineering companies. Our contact there was Eric Drewery who later provided opportunities at ABB Asea Brown Boveri the leading global supplier in the electrical power industry.

1980s

Picking up speed

1980

Alan Payne joins Collinson Grant. He had worked as a General Manager at Allied Polymers and as a director in the Alcraftfield Group.

1981

Ten years in business

Congratulatory telegram is received from Reed Hamilton of Cooper Industries, Houston, Texas:

"Congratulations to you, your partners and your Company on this big milestone. Since you Brits do not seem to like braggers, you will have to enjoy it with your usual quiet word. We Yanks say, 'if you've got it, flaunt it'. An American says ten years is a fine accomplishment and I am sure the second will match the growth and be as interesting and challenging as the first. I will be thinking of you all on Monday night and wishing you success. Best regards from the colonies."

James Grant dies

Since its inception he had stamped his own personal style on the business. Len writes in the Jogger:

"James's death was a blow to everyone that knew him. He was generous, courteous and trustworthy in all his relationships, was a shrewd judge of situation and character and had an endearing sense of the absurd. James hated verbosity. Suffice to say that we shall miss him and remember the good times."

Substantial progress

Collinson Grant maintains steady, profitable growth – one reason being its developing relationship with Hanson plc and assignments to improve performance in the group's recently acquired businesses.

Hanson Trust was created in the 1960s by James Hanson and Gordon White. It grew steadily over the next fifteen years, building a reputation as a fast-moving conglomerate acquiring and radically improving the performance of companies in diverse sectors. The advent of the Conservative government in 1979, led by Mrs Thatcher, and its laissez-faire economic policies sparked a further flurry of expansion. It included a fortuitous (for Collinson Grant) acquisition...

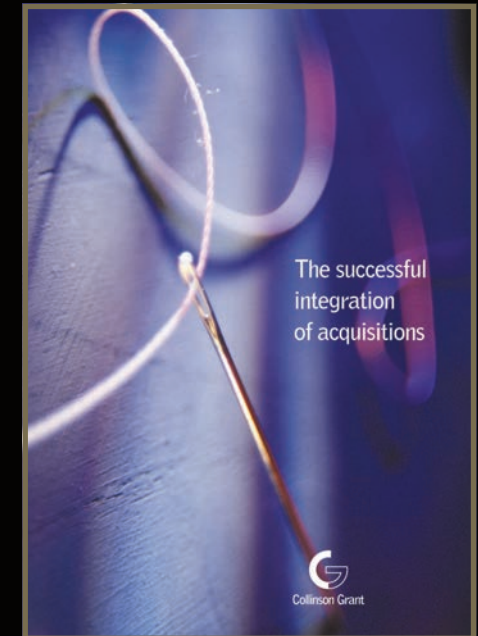
...since giving CG its first job Ron Fulford's career had progressed steadily, becoming Managing Director of Cannon in 1974 and then Chief Executive of United Gas Industries (UGI) in 1980. UGI became Hanson's next acquisition target and the deal was completed in 1982. Somewhat unusually, Ron stayed on in the acquired business and over time became Hanson's 'ultimate operational manager' leading the restructuring of many companies and eventually being appointed Executive Chairman of Imperial Tobacco (following Hanson's acquisition of Imperial Group in 1986).

In an obituary published in the Times newspaper in October 2013, Ron Fulford's approach to management was described thus:

"At UGI he (Fulford) had developed a system of devolving power to middle management by making the manufacturing and trading divisions sell to one another, turning them all into profit centres which could be easily analysed. Allied to a bonus scheme, this approach provided clear measurements of productivity while encouraging cost-cutting and better performance."

...an organisational model used in many of Collinson Grant's subsequent assignments.

1982



1982



London Brick was an important early Hanson client

Early work for Hanson

In 1982 Collinson Grant was invited to join a group that managed and improved the performance of businesses acquired by Hanson. This led to a number of important assignments for the company – allowing it to hone its skills in restructuring, cost reduction, managerial controls and organisation. And, perhaps even more importantly, it created the opportunity to build close and long-lasting relationships with the managers of the businesses in which we were working. The main Hanson acquisitions, operating companies and assignments in which CG was involved were:

- 1981/82 – Berec (Ever Ready) – restructuring and profit improvement.
- 1982 – United Gas Industries (Hanson 'acquires' Ron Fulford).
- 1983 – United Drapery Stores (Allders Department Stores) – reorganisation and support on employee relations over many years.
- 1984 – London Brick – reorganisation, cost reduction and acquisitions (later leading to large projects for Hanson Brick and building materials businesses in mainland Europe, the UK and USA).
- 1986 – Imperial Group (Imperial Tobacco) – cost reduction, productivity and restructuring (later integration of acquisitions in France and Spain).
- 1989 – Consolidated Gold Fields (ARC in the UK and USA) – management accounting, profit improvement and reporting systems.

Much of the work at Hanson companies was focused on the 'integration of acquisitions'. This discipline remains a recurring theme for many of Collinson Grant's subsequent assignments – in the UK and overseas. It is a skill that reinforces the strong relationships later established with private equity houses.



Mid 1980s

Private equity

Alan Payne manages Sapling Enterprise, the first regionally-based private equity fund in the UK.

Sapling Enterprise: Lancashire and Merseyside Investment Fund

The early 1980s was a time of rapidly increasing unemployment; there were myriad initiatives, some successful others less so, to combat a politically and socially corrosive trend. Many were focused on 'enterprise' – supporting people taking their first steps to self-employment and helping fledgling businesses to grow. The sponsors included central and local government, charities and educational establishments.

Collinson Grant (CG) built a strong partnership with Lancashire County Council (LCC), operating under its banner 'Lancashire Enterprises'. Louise Ellman (later Dame Louise) was leader of the council and strongly advocated the development of entrepreneurial activity. With her encouragement and others the Lancashire and Merseyside Investment Fund (LMIF) was put together. It secured initial backing from the Church Commissioners and Lancashire County Council. The fund was managed by Alan Payne under the banner 'Sapling Enterprise'. LMIF was the first regionally-based equity fund in the UK. After careful appraisals it took equity stakes in start-up and young businesses, providing financial support with contractual buy-back arrangements.

Princes Group

Princes Group, the international food business based in Liverpool, becomes a valued client. We built a strong relationship with its Chairman, John Mackintosh. CG supports the company, now owned by Mitsubishi Corporation, in a number of different ways.

Employment law and HR services

During the 1980s support on employment law and employee relations continues to be an important component of CG's services. With widely dispersed labour forces, care homes are in particular need of speedy and pragmatic advice on employment matters. Our model of providing fixed-fee support to employers using experienced employment solicitors and specialists and HR professionals proves popular and successful.

Westminster Health Care

Westminster Health Care becomes an early client and one of a number of independent healthcare businesses relying on the company's advice on managing people effectively. Our contact, Patrick Carter, is one of the co-owners of the business. Later, as Lord Carter, he becomes an important client and introduces CG to a number of assignments in the health service and central government.

Work on employment tribunals

Helping companies to manage people better inevitably means helping them to resolve the disputes that crop up even in the best managed enterprises. From the 1980s onwards an increasing number of cases were referred to industrial tribunals (later re-named employment tribunal – ET). These handled disagreements between employees and employers concerning unfair dismissal, redundancy and discrimination – the scope increased as employment law gradually became more complex.

CG builds considerable expertise in handling applications made to the ET – advising clients on when to defend or settle cases, preparing evidence and representing employers. Some particularly difficult class actions are brought by trades unions and require extensive research and planning to defend robustly. One example is a large, international transport business with several hundred employees that has entered administration. CG successfully defends a class action based on supposed custom and practice on the level of redundancy payments. A saving on redundancy costs in the order of £1.5m is achieved.

1987-2017

A thirty year partnership with Thorn Lighting



Thorn manufactures and supplies high-quality indoor and outdoor lighting to customers throughout the world. The first contacts with the business were in the late 1980s. CG supported the company for almost thirty years despite several changes in ownership and in the top leadership team.

Starting at Thorn's UK manufacturing plant in Spennymoor, County Durham, CG worked on initial projects to reduce overhead costs and improve the organisational structure. In 1993/94 we were asked to undertake a review of operations: examining productivity, costs, supply chains, manufacturing, organisation and products in five countries:

- Denmark
- France (Les Andelys and Belleville)
- Germany (Neheim)
- Sweden (Landskrona)
- UK (Spennymoor and Hereford)

These investigations allowed us to build an intimate knowledge of the company and to make informed recommendations for improvements. This secured the confidence of senior managers in our work and led to more intensive examination of the Belleville plant in France and the restructuring of the German factory. Separate work was undertaken to find a new manufacturing site in Poland; when this was achieved the production from Neheim was transferred there.

When Thorn was acquired by another public company in 1997 a new Chief Executive Officer was appointed. Soon after we were authorised to help Thorn by providing interim general managers in France and Germany, and then to plan and manage the closure of the Belleville site.



Zumtobel Group acquired the business in 2002. Although the company had been using other consultants, we maintained several smaller projects and two years later were asked to lead work on analysing complexity and reducing costs. In 2007 we supported a project to build a new factory at Spennymoor and transfer the current manufacturing operations to it. Collinson Grant worked with senior managers to manage the transition. We reconfigured operations to save £3.5m in overheads and staffing. The site won 'Factory of the Year' award in 2009.

1987

Diversification and skills

CG's experience in training entrepreneurs and supporting small businesses provides the impetus to create a separate profit centre to promote this work. CG Resources develops into the largest enterprise and management training provider in the North West and Yorkshire and launches a number of innovative products – some developed in partnership with the Manpower Services Commission. It focuses on smaller businesses and working with unemployed managers. Later on the emphasis changes to training in information technology.

Assessments

Work on using psychological assessments to help clients improve decision-making on recruitment and selection continues to expand. It plays an important part in helping to find successful 'profit centre managers' in Edmundson Electrical and other businesses. And it is used to support the recruitment of Collinson Grant's own staff. This expertise had originally come some years earlier from a partnership with Alan Eisenbach, an occupational psychologist based in the United States. We continue to work with clients to assess their directors and managers so that we can identify the skills, behaviours and characteristics that contribute to business success. Those traits can then be isolated and used to design a robust framework of selection criteria and an assessment and selection process for future executives.

1988

Sustaining relationships: 'The Hanson diaspora'

The assignments to restructure Hanson plc acquisitions provided excellent opportunities to work with and get to know their senior operational managers. Close relationships were maintained with many of them which stood the test of time. As these executives later moved on to top jobs in other businesses we were frequently invited to support them in their new company – often in a non-competitive situation.

The Hanson diaspora created opportunities to work at important new clients. For example:

Ross Chiese – British Nuclear Fuels (and several other nuclear businesses)

Gareth Davis – Imperial Tobacco Group

Andrew Dougal – Hanson

Paul Heiden – Rolls-Royce

Bob Mackenzie – AA

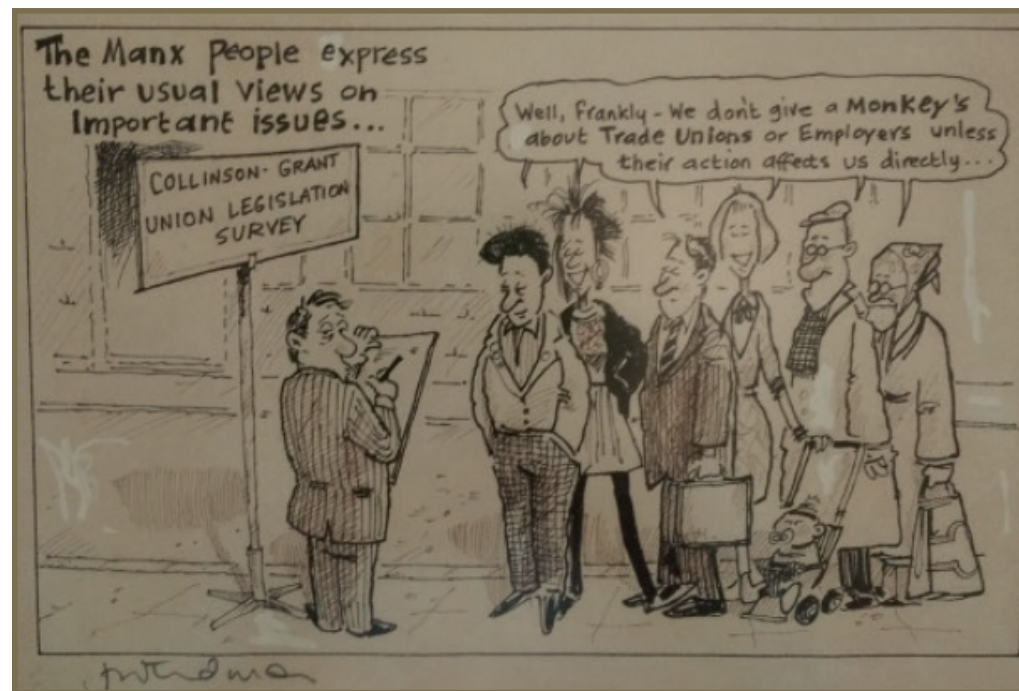
Ian Tyler – Balfour Beatty

1988/91

Manx Government – new employment legislation:

Towards the end of the 1980s officials in the Isle of Man realised that the island was vulnerable to potentially calamitous industrial action because of its outdated employment laws. Collinson Grant is commissioned to consult interested parties; develop proposals for new laws and regulations (with reference to Ireland and UK); redraft papers in partnership with sponsoring departments; support the Tynwald's draftsmen in producing bills, secondary legislation and amendments to existing laws; and to support Ministers to get the new Employment and Trade Unions Acts passed.

CG's consultation on the Isle of Man...



1990s

New frontiers

1990s

A strong focus on manufacturing

Early assignments at Mather & Platt and then ABB UK led to additional work as Eric Drewery's career developed. Pip Moss crop and David Norris completed numerous jobs, including:

- ABB Manchester – Automation and Controls – customer service and cost reduction.
- British Rail Engineering (Derby and York) –review of senior management and reorganisation.
- ABB UK – total quality management and productivity improvement. The programme involved visits to, and liaison with, businesses in continental Europe and the United States.

Eric Drewery kindly provided an endorsement for the company's 1999/2000 biennial review:

"I have used the services of Collinson Grant for more than twenty years. Their people have worked with mine in a variety of tasks, most of which have been related to productivity improvement across the complete supply chain. I have found their consultants to be innovative, often bringing productive, lateral thought to some thorny business issues. They have always fulfilled their commitments and added value to our diverse business activities."

Eric Drewery – Chief Executive Officer – ABB UK Group

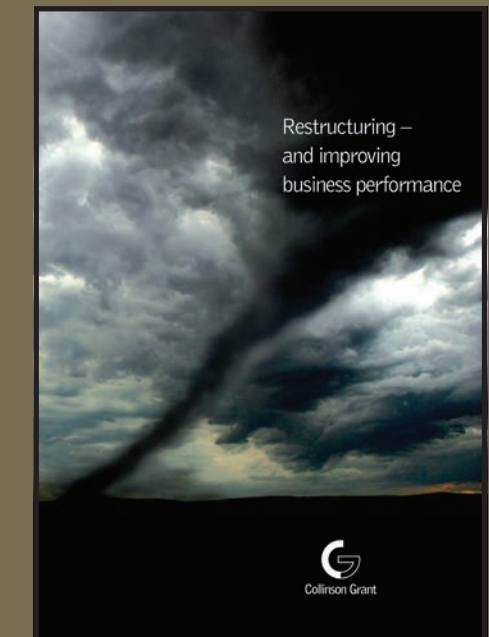
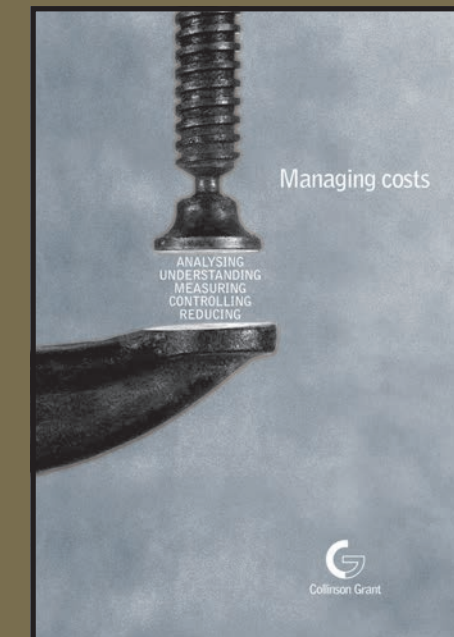
Home Truths

CG develops a series of maxims describing optimal managerial behaviours and business structures, particularly appropriate in the upcoming economic recession. They are also used in training seminars for senior managers at Hanson Industrial Services – and commented on favourably by Lord Hanson in a memo he circulates to all company directors in 1991.

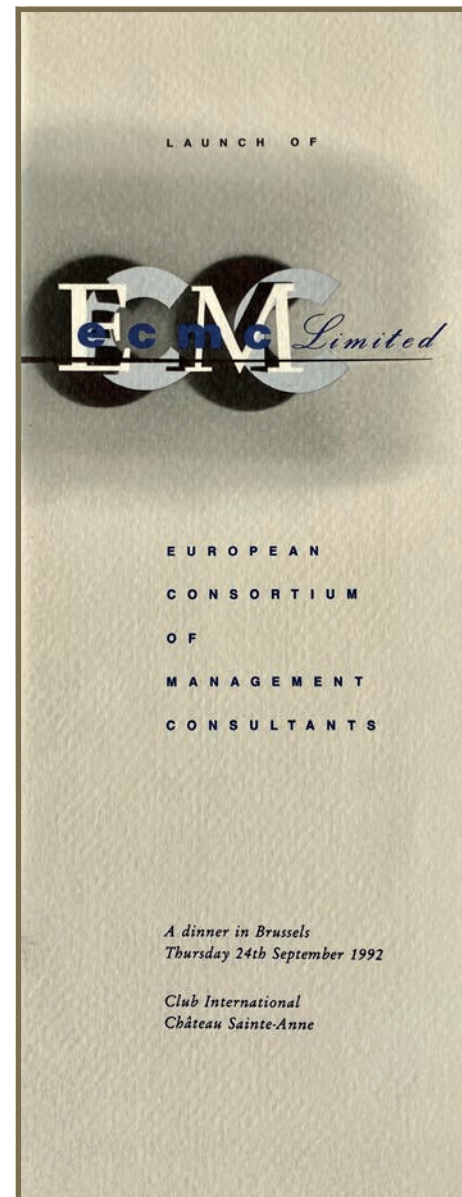
New skills and an addition to the team

A young Mandy Pollitt joins the business, first as an Administrator at CG Resources. She makes an early impact by contributing to a number of important proposals for new work in Europe and supporting projects in the United States and further afield. Mandy has since been involved in many of the initiatives that have helped to sustain the company's growth. She is now our longest-serving current employee.

Core skills in organisation, costs and restructuring



1991/92



Collaboration

To help promote work throughout Europe CG forms the 'European Consortium of Management Consultants' (ECMC). It is a group of independent management consultancies with a member in each country of the European Community (only 12 at the time). The Consortium offers skills and people to support our work throughout Europe. Colleagues are drawn from Aarhus, Athens, Dublin, Lisbon and many other locations. A dinner to launch ECMC is held at Château Sainte-Anne in Brussels. It is hosted by Heinrich von Moltke, Director General of DG XXIII of the European Commission and attended by a number of other officials. The event unfortunately follows closely after 'Black Wednesday' – when embarrassingly the UK has to fall out of the European Exchange Rate Mechanism (ERM).

Disseminating cultural knowledge

Château Sainte-Anne is on the outskirts of Brussels (near Waterloo) and its landscaped gardens contain a number of large horse chestnut trees. As it happens to be early autumn Len Collinson decides to educate our new European partners in an ancient English pastime. A 'junior' colleague is despatched to collect suitable specimens of recently fallen conkers and then to donate his shoelaces to facilitate the game. It's not recalled how the critical 'hole boring' was achieved but after suitable demonstrations to our curious new friends a few rounds are enthusiastically played. The 'ice-breaker' is enjoyed by all, although colleagues from Greece, Luxembourg and Spain take some time to cotton on to the basics of this really, quite simple game.

An expanding footprint

More assignments are undertaken overseas mainly in Western Europe and the United States but sometimes further afield. For example...

...Ascension Island is a remote volcanic peak sitting in the Atlantic halfway between Africa and South America. It remains an important communications hub. The BBC World Service maintained a broadcasting station on Ascension and also held a management contract for services it provided to the Ministry of Defence. Collinson Grant is asked to conduct a 'value for money' study at this remote location to ensure public funds are being well spent. Peter Sherratt completed the work in this unusual and challenging environment – trips back to the UK were via a military VC10 airliner.

Important new clients

The early 1990s saw the acquisition of a number of significant new clients:

- Balfour Beatty – we worked on assignments in Europe and the United States in the construction and rail engineering sides of the business, largely devoted to examining overheads, organisational structures and the options for reducing costs. Later John Millin led work to help the company to adopt uniform Stakeholder Codes of Practice throughout 21 worldwide businesses.



James Lindsay with a Balfour Beatty manager at the Florida East Coast railroad

1992/95



Balfour Beatty



Rolls-Royce

An initial restructuring of the Engineering Division was based on an analysis of processes and activities. It improved customer focus and led to large projects in the continental Europe, UK and USA:

- to design and introduce more efficient processes
- to pinpoint and eliminate inefficiencies and cut duplication and waste
- to establish controls on cost and performance through internal transfer pricing.

Work at Rolls-Royce remains an important part of the company's activities and has covered assignments in its head office and most of the business's current and former divisions: Aviation (Civil and Military); Engineering; Marine; and Power Generation.

John Ryle's early work was well received and he later received this mounted turbine blade specially designed and produced in the Rolls-Royce apprentice school in Derby.

A later assignment at Rolls-Royce received this endorsement:

"Collinson Grant was instrumental in reducing operating costs at Rolls-Royce Aero Repair and Overhaul. The main outcomes were to consolidate skill groups with fewer resource owners, to change key processes and to improve operations. The results have been very useful. The business has continued to grow revenue from a far more efficient cost base, while the staff cost has reduced by 10%."

Huw Treharne – Director of Human Resources

1992/1993





United News & Media

Early involvement in the advertising industry with MAI and other businesses secured involvement with this media giant. In one major assignment work centred on combining the editorial operations of the Daily Express and Sunday Express; designing and introducing lean processes; rationalising printing resources; improving the effectiveness of support functions; and determining the profitability of publications. In a difficult industrial relations climate the company also called on our capability in employee relations to facilitate the agreed changes.



National Car Parks

The geographical fragmentation of the business demands particular organisational and managerial skills and rapid access to advice on employment law. CG's employment lawyers work with NCP's HR specialists and line managers to ensure that consistent standards are maintained in this difficult business environment. The approach is to provide pragmatic advice on employment problems and reinforce 'the message' with robust defences at employment tribunals.



1993

Poland – shaping new employment legislation

The fall of the Iron Curtain meant that former communist regimes had to wake up quickly to a changing, competitive world. This demanded new ways of managing enterprises and people. Employment law and accompanying procedures had to be quickly redrawn and mirror more closely the approach taken in Western Europe. Richard Hendry led work with the Polish Ministry of Labour to reshape employment legislation fit for a new world. Other initiatives focused on the Warsaw Voivodship Labour Office and procedures for handling changes in the labour market. They were aimed at ensuring state infrastructure was better geared to dealing with closures in large, inefficient old communist enterprises in coal, steel and manufacturing.

1994

Study tour in the United States

Collinson Grant's involvement with local and regional enterprise continued well into the 1990s. During the Thatcher administration it was common for government ministers and officials to visit the USA to investigate novel approaches to training, productivity and education. These would then be brought back over the pond and promoted as 'new ideas'.

CG Resources had forged strong links with a network of local Training and Enterprise Councils throughout North West England, Wales and in Yorkshire. Marc Sussman was CG's contact in New York – an oil executive with a broad knowledge of business and contacts throughout the US. Marc helped to put together a programme of visits to colleges, universities, and state and federal officials in New York State, Washington DC and Los Angeles. In spring 1994 a party of ten chief executives, led by David Brown and Alan Payne, visited the US for a one-week study tour. They had the opportunity to discover 'new ideas' first-hand, discuss them in depth and judge how they might best be applied in the United Kingdom. The trip was rounded off with a flying visit to Beverley Hills including Rodeo Drive, and Sunset Boulevard.

Consultancy on the edge

Central Asia – Kazakhstan

The USSR collapsed two years after the fall of the Berlin wall. Western powers soon became concerned that the breakup of the centralised Soviet economy would lead to large-scale unemployment and eventually unrest in the dependent former republics – significant amongst these was Kazakhstan.

Collinson Grant won a contract funded by the World Bank to support enterprise and employment initiatives in this vast central Asian country. Working in partnership with the British Council, we prepared protocols for handling 'mass layoffs', designed and tested model jobcentres and provided training for employment managers. Although based in Alma Ata (the former capital) some of the field work took place in the city of Pavlodar in Siberia. Here enormous tractors were assembled on a scale suitable for working on the Steppes. The fact that the engines were formerly made in Volgograd and the transmissions came from Minsk only highlighted the potential economic turmoil. At the time the only customers for such large tractors were the Chinese – but as their economy was then so weak a local system of bartering developed. The factory received payment in hair dryers and other electrical goods, these were subsequently distributed to employees in lieu of cash wages, who then tried to convert their 'assets' into hard currency by selling them on street corners.

Working conditions in Kazakhstan were unusual. The temperature in Pavlodar hovered between -10°C and -15°C – somewhat tempered by copious supplies of vodka. Interpreters were Russians or ethnic Kazakhs – equally proficient and often with a startling command of British history, literature and language – Robert Burns' poetry being a particular favourite of the communists. Back in Alma Ata life was slightly more sophisticated yet not without its dangers. Some colleagues were housed in Soviet-style flats next door to the British embassy. They were 'guarded' by a young man – no more the eighteen years old – who sat at a table in the foyer all night with a large revolver in his hand. Occasional gunfire, we were assured, was nothing to be concerned about.

Our efforts in Pavlodar were rewarded at a ceremony in the Town Hall when the team was presented with the city's prestigious medal.

1995/96



Pavlodar town hall and civic buildings overlooked by the obligatory statue of Lenin



The tractor factory in Pavlodar with the river Irtysh in the background (usually frozen)

1996



The business moves on

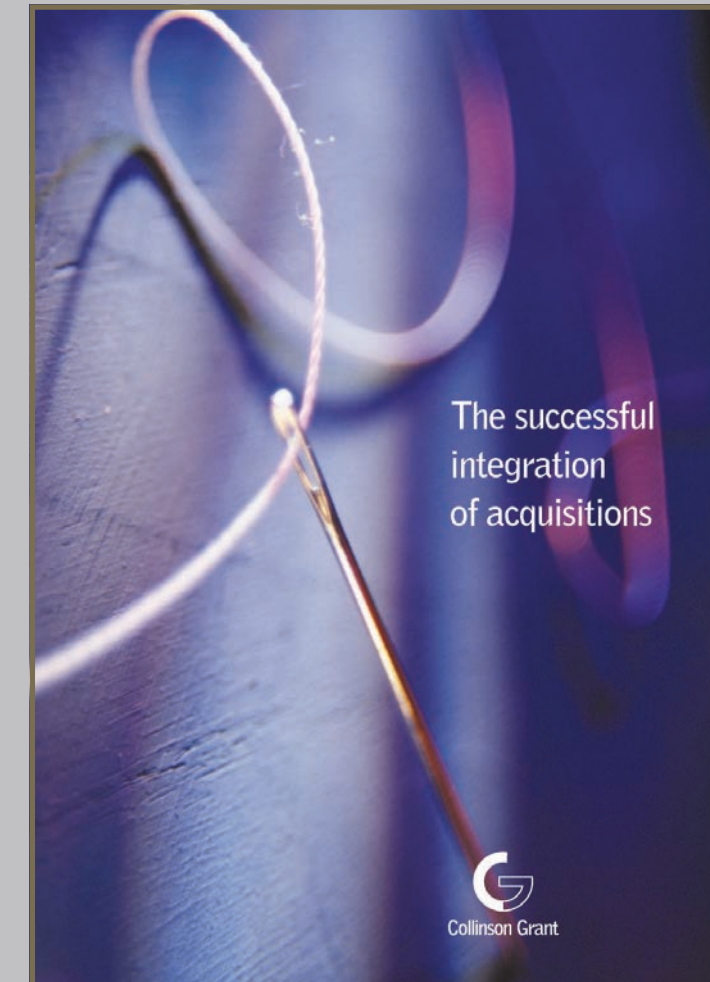
Not long after its 25th anniversary Len Collinson decides to step down from the company and leave more time for his other business interests. Andrew, his son, takes over as Chief Executive, having already managed a number of successful enterprises in the group.

Hanson: Our work in North America and continental Europe – a continuing relationship

In the USA John Ryle leads work on the restructuring of ARC, the Hanson aggregates business, and in particular the implementation of transfer costing procedures first developed in the UK side of the business.

David Norris had first met Richard Manning in 1986 at London Brick Company where Richard had been appointed Managing Director following the successful integration of the business into Hanson. He was then Managing Director for Hanson Brick after the integration of Butterley Brick. In 1996 Hanson Brick's first major acquisition was Belgium-based Desimpel, a brick manufacturing company with operations also in France, Germany and the Netherlands. David led a team to support the integration of the business.

Richard Manning subsequently moved to the United States and was appointed as CEO of Hanson Brick North America in 2001. The company had earlier acquired Jannock Brick and a large assignment followed over the next three years to restructure the new business, introduce transfer pricing and relocate the head office. And in 2004 Richard was now CEO of all Hanson's brick, roof tiles and pre-cast operations in North America. Another major project followed including establishing a new head office, introducing transfer pricing, rolling out quality systems and restructuring elements of the business.



From the mid
90s



Nuclear industry

New sector | New skills | New relationships | New clients

CG's first work in the nuclear sector began in 1996 and has continued since without interruption. It has built on the company's model of sustaining long-term relationships and developing deep knowledge of an industry. Some of the executives that we work with now were recent graduates when we first got to know them.

British Nuclear Fuels

British Nuclear Fuels Limited (BNFL) became a client in the late 1990s – Ross Chiese a former executive at Hanson, having moved to a senior position in the company, helped to secure the first important assignment. Much of the work was highly analytical concerning business planning and reporting but also included a review of the wider supply chain. Our later work for Sellafield Limited on operating models and organisational design continued for several years, much of it led by Keith Morgan.

Phil Ross, who has a background in energy engineering, did some early work at BNFL which provided an introduction to George Beveridge. This in turn led to an invitation to start work at the Atomic Weapons Establishment (AWE) – which plays a crucial role in national defence by providing and maintaining the warheads carried by Royal Navy submarines.

Collinson Grant has worked with AWE on process improvement projects in a range of functional areas such as Engineering, Finance, HR, IT, Procurement, and Production. Other work included the development of organisational and cost efficiencies in production and also in streamlining purchasing. Jason Smith became an important client and retained CG's services when he later became Chief Operating Officer of Rolls-Royce Nuclear.





Urenco

Urenco – an international supplier of uranium enrichment services – became the next major client in the nuclear industry when CG completed work on Lean processes and profitability. A follow-up project concerned market analysis for a new product. Urenco then created a joint venture with the French multinational group, AREVA – known as Enrichment Technology Company. Collinson Grant was asked to help manage a major business transformation – to gradually downsize this large business whilst maintaining critical production targets. Over a two-year period Bill Pearson and David Sturman worked at a number of different sites in five countries: France, Germany, the Netherlands, the UK, and the USA.

National and client security

The nuclear industry is not the only sector where stringent controls are necessary on data processing, confidentiality and security. Consultants are expected to undergo security vetting for many of our clients, including for a number of large assignments for central government departments. Having held the quality certification ISO 9001 for several years, Collinson Grant was also certified to ISO 27001 in 2018 – the international standard for information security management. The company's premises and operating procedures at Ryecroft in Manchester are able to securely hold and process highly confidential information for private companies and government agencies.

Relationships and results

In 1999 Collinson Grant publishes the first of three biennial reviews. It discusses topical business issues and features case studies of six prominent clients: CGU Life; Cooper Industries; Electrocomponents; Hanson; Thorn Lighting and United News & Media. This was the start of a successful relationship with John Bracken and his colleagues at CQ2 – the Manchester-based marketing and advertising agency that has produced many of the company's promotional documents.



2000s
Economy, efficiency and effectiveness

2000s



Important new clients: diversity and global reach

- Northgate – one of the leading van hire businesses in the UK had grown organically and by acquisition. Its structure had become unwieldy and inhibited further improvements in profitability. CG undertook a major restructuring of the company – on its commercial and operational divisions – to streamline the business and improve controls.
- National Lottery Commission (NLC) – when a new licence to run The National Lottery is awarded to Camelot it makes hefty claims to the NLC for the additional costs of necessary severance and restructuring. CG is appointed to act as professional adjudicator on redundancy claims submitted by Camelot. Detailed investigations and negotiations eventually result in large savings to the NLC (in effect the taxpayer).
- Priory Group – our experience with Westminster Health Care leads to work with Priory Hospitals and then Priory Group both led by Dr Chai Patel. CG does work on staffing, financial controls and then managing people.
- Rockwood Specialities – CG’s earlier experience in the chemicals sector with Laporte plc leads to a major assignment to support this US-based business. Our contribution centred on helping to sustain performance and clarify options for growth. Phil Davies works on developing a worldwide manufacturing and marketing strategy for the compounding business. And then to analyse global supply chains – examining costs, technical capabilities, capacities and demand – for different product groups and in different continents.



2000

"A day will come when you France;
you, Russia; you, Italy; you, Britain;
and you, Germany – all the nations
of the continent will merge tightly,
without losing your identities and your
remarkable originality, into some higher
society and form a European fraternity."

Victor Hugo c1860 – how right he was

2001/02

2001/03

Building pan-European businesses

CG undertakes more research into the design of businesses that operate seamlessly throughout the European continent. The report concludes:

'Pan-European structures follow from a radical examination of markets, supply chains and the structure of costs. There is no single market in Europe but there is a multiplicity of different consumer and business-to-business groupings. What is certain is that more and more often these are not defined by national boundaries'.

The research generates useful discussions and leads directly to work with a new client that is attempting to create a pan-European commercial structure. We worked with its country managers at a seminar in Oslo to develop and test new ideas.

Room for growth

The company's premises at Colgran House in Swinton, Manchester are becoming too small. Ryecroft, a large, former children's home becomes available in nearby Worsley. After extensive refurbishment and modernisation the company relocates in late 2002. It is an excellent location – in landscaped grounds – close to the motorway network and to Manchester airport. Our offices in central London are situated close to Whitehall.

Manchester and Warwick Business Schools

Collinson Grant undertakes research in collaboration with Manchester and Warwick Business Schools. Later it sponsors Morten Andersen, a Danish postgraduate student, to complete his PhD studies at Warwick into pan-European acquisitions and the subsequent transfer of employment practices. Morten goes on to have a successful career in pharmaceutical market research.

Improving performance in private healthcare – McKesson UK

McKesson Corporation, the 16th largest industrial company in the USA, is the main supplier of information, products and services for care management. Following several difficult acquisitions CG is asked to restructure its UK division. Consultants worked with local managers to analyse work streams and the profitability of customers and products, as the basis for creating a recovery plan. They managed the redundancy programme and consultation with the trades unions. The work improved the organisational structure and quickly transformed the profitability of the business.

Managing costs in the public sector

In 2004 Sir Peter Gershon was commissioned by the Labour government to review efficiency throughout the public services. In line with this initiative Collinson Grant is asked to test the efficiency and effectiveness of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO's) field organisation. The exercise, led by John Millin, Jon Park and John Ryle, samples the work of almost 3,000 employees at fifteen embassies and consulates throughout the world – including Accra, Beirut, Bratislava, Colombo, Mexico City, Paris and St Petersburg, as well as support functions in London. CG's report, at times controversial, shows how up to 1,200 jobs could be saved in the UK and overseas. It also illustrates how working practices and managerial controls could be improved. This ground-breaking work was reviewed by the Select Committee on Foreign Affairs in the House of Commons and was considered important enough to warrant a front-page article in the Financial Times about CG's work.

Success at the Foreign Office led to a number of other significant jobs to restructure, reduce costs and improve productivity in central government departments, including:

- Department of Health
- Her Majesty's Prison Service
- Home Office
- Ministry of Justice
- Office for Criminal Justice Reform
- UK Border Agency.

2003/04



2004/05

"The FCO Board has considered the Collinson Grant report. It re-committed itself to achieving the £87 million target (of savings) and agreed to incorporate the Collinson Grant work as far as possible into the FCO's existing Efficiency Plan."



2005

‘Breaking bread’ – building relationships,
sharing experience



The Royal Automobile Club's comfortable premises in London's Pall Mall are the venue for a programme of regular dinners for clients and leading decision makers. The events help to share ideas and experience. Since they first began in 2005 hundreds of senior managers and business contacts have been invited to attend stimulating, informal evenings in a private setting. CG also regularly invites clients to the Confederation of British Industry's annual dinner in London.

Over the years our dinner guests have included many senior executives of major companies, for example:

- Guy Allen**
Vice-President
(Global Procurement) – Fujitsu
- Ken Anderson**
Managing Director –
UBS Investment Bank
- Sir Roger Bone**
President – Boeing UK
- Andy Clarke**
Chief Executive Officer (UK) – Asda
- John Clarke**
Chief Executive Officer –
Nuclear Decommissioning Authority

- Guillaume Dureau**
Chief Executive Officer –
Enrichment Technology Company
- Mark Elborne**
Chief Executive Officer (UK & Ireland) –
General Electric
- Martin Green**
Chief Executive – Care England
- Mary Hurmiston**
Group Director of Human Resources –
Rolls-Royce
- Andrew Lansley MP**
Secretary of State for Health

- Andreas Ludwig**
Chief Executive – Zumtobel
- Sir Hugh Orde**
President of the Association of –
Chief Police Officers
- Andrew Shilston**
Finance Director – Rolls-Royce
- Andrew Stephenson**
Human Resources Director –
Lookers
- Margaret Young**
Chairman – Cattles

Analysing the cost of NHS Pathology Services

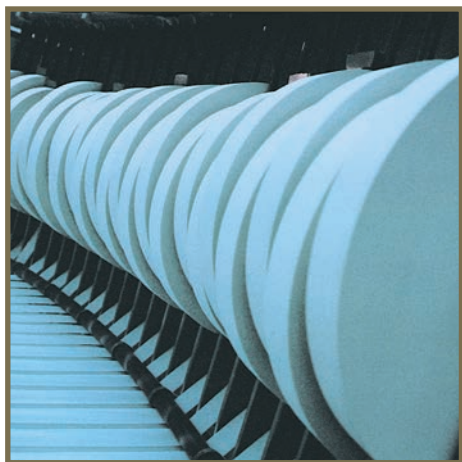
Our solid experience in healthcare leads to an invitation by Lord Carter of Coles (former co-owner of Westminster Health Care) to contribute to this important study. The objectives were to increase capacity and capability in pathology services, and reduce unit costs. Collinson Grant runs a nationwide programme to collect, test and analyse information from twelve pilot sites; to liaise with The Royal College of Pathologists and other industry bodies; and to challenge NHS data and consider evidence from international comparators in the private sector. Lord Carter's report recognised opportunities for large cost-savings and signalled significant changes to the provision of pathology services throughout the NHS.

The work in pathology leads on to other assignments in the health service: development of workforce planning tools; processes for improving staff rostering and a benchmarking tool.

2005/06



2008



A large multinational acquisition – Imperial Tobacco buys Altadis

In 1996 Imperial Tobacco demerged from Hanson and became, in its own right, one of the largest companies on the UK stock exchange. (Ron Fulford had left the business to join the US-based Brooke Group). Under the leadership of new CEO, Gareth Davis, the business embarked on an ambitious growth strategy, acquiring Reemtsma in Germany, Commonwealth Brands Inc in the USA and, in 2008, Altadis, then the fifth-largest tobacco company in the world. Altadis had been formed in 1999 through a merger of the Spanish and French public tobacco monopolies: Tabacalera and Seita. Its acquisition was one of the biggest in the European Community at the time and required formal approval from the Commission.

Collinson Grant was asked to support the integration of the newly acquired business, in particular handling the complex negotiations with trades unions, workers, and local politicians and officials to create a robust new organisational structure. This built on our experience a few years earlier of restructuring Imperial's French tobacco paper business – Rizla. The work was led by François Dermaux and other colleagues based in France, Spain and the UK. We prepared detailed social plans and agreed them with appropriate civil servants. Given that the acquisition was bringing together French and Spanish businesses that had themselves only recently been merged there were myriad cultural, communications, leadership and (mis)information problems to be resolved. The successful outcome depended on developing and maintaining the trust of the senior managers in Imperial Tobacco.

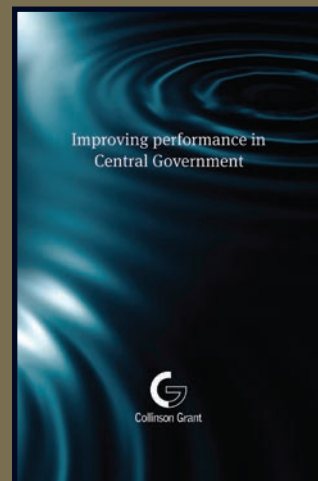


2009 | 2010

Disseminating good practice

Collinson Grant starts to publish a series of management handbooks drawing on experience and skills built up over forty years working with clients:

- Improving performance in central Government – 2009
- Managing indirect costs – 2010
- Managing productivity – 2011
- Managing restructuring – 2012
- Managing organisational design – 2012
- Managing third party expenditure – 2017



2010s

Innovation, standards and performance

Our people | Our skills

Collinson Grant has recruited many people with diverse skills, experience and backgrounds. They are the backbone of the business. For example, over the years our team has included:

- hard working administrators who provide essential support to consultants in the field
- commercially-focused employment lawyers and solicitors
- former senior executives in large private sector businesses
- colleagues from overseas, including France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and USA
- managers who have worked in the public sector
- bi-lingual administrative staff to support foreign projects
- analysts – who can manage and understand large data sets
- consultants with the skills to build strong and persuasive business cases for change
- specialists in certain sectors – for example: the nuclear industry, construction, customer service, engineering, distribution, finance and many others
- consultants with particular experience of working for and with trades unions
- accountants and others with specialist financial skills
- our 'wordsmiths' and text editors – an important position to support all colleagues in the production of first class written work
- employees who recognise the values of customer service and hard work.

Our colleagues, past and present, have provided the resilience, skills and resources that allow Collinson Grant to thrive:

Angela Ambrose	Patrick Collinson	Jo Hale	John Millin	Petra Schiffer	Eamonn Turner
Tracey Ambrose	David Crawford	Frances Healey	Keith Morgan	Andy Setters	Bill Ullathorne
Steve Baker	Denise Cunliffe	Richard Hendry	Pip Mosscrop	Dorothy Sharples	Stephen Unwin
John Band	Richard Daley	Irene Houghton	Callum Moy	David Sharrock	Mike Van Aken
Janet Benaissa	Phil Davies	Kath Hubbard	Les Murray	David Shepherd	Cynthia Vernon
Thomas Bennett	Jim Day	Bernard Humphreys	Vigen Nazarian	Peter Sherratt	Judith Watts
John Betts	Hugh Dayton	David Jenkins	Peter Neal	Deborah Simpson	Marilyn Whittle
Emma Blelloch	François Dermaux	Carrie Johnson	David Norris	Jo Slater	Charlie Whitworth
David Brown	Stuart Duncan	David Jones	Jon Park	David Smart	David Wilson
German Cabrera	Simon Fernley	Michael Lambe	Keith Parkinson	John Stewart	Diana Wroe
Mark Carpenter	Charlie Fleischmann	Mark Latham	Alan Payne	Adrian Storey	Vicky Young
Ivan Carr	Joan Gettins	Chris Ledgerd	Bill Pearson	David Sturman	James Yuen
Mike Carroll	Chris Gillespie	James Lindsay	Michelle Pearson	Alan Swan	
Benjamin Collinson	Margaret Gratton	Neil Marshall	Phil Ross	Lynn Tetlow	
Mandy Collinson	Tony Green	Ian McGlashan	John Ryle	Ted Townsend	

Urgency | Complexity | Discipline | Rigour
Responding to the financial collapse of
Southern Cross Healthcare

When major care home provider Southern Cross Healthcare experienced severe financial problems there was an imperative to act quickly so that elderly and vulnerable residents would not be threatened. The problems of the company hit the national headlines and were discussed urgently in Parliament.

Collinson Grant and Court Cavendish were asked by the landlord, NHP, which owned about 250 properties, to help create a new business from scratch and transfer most of the 13,500 employees to the new organisation, which was to be led by Dr Chai Patel and David Spruzen. The whole exercise had to be completed in only three months – from 1st August to 31st October – before Southern Cross ran out of funds. The main tasks were:

- to create and manage a master project plan ensuring that legal and regulatory matters were finalised
- to put in place an effective organisational structure that met the physical disposition of homes and supported the new operating ethos. And to manage the transfer of Southern Cross's back office systems and reduce them in size to match the needs of the new business
- to transfer staff under TUPE arrangements and deal with the inevitable 'wrinkles' in matching people to jobs – managing complex consultations with employees and their representatives.

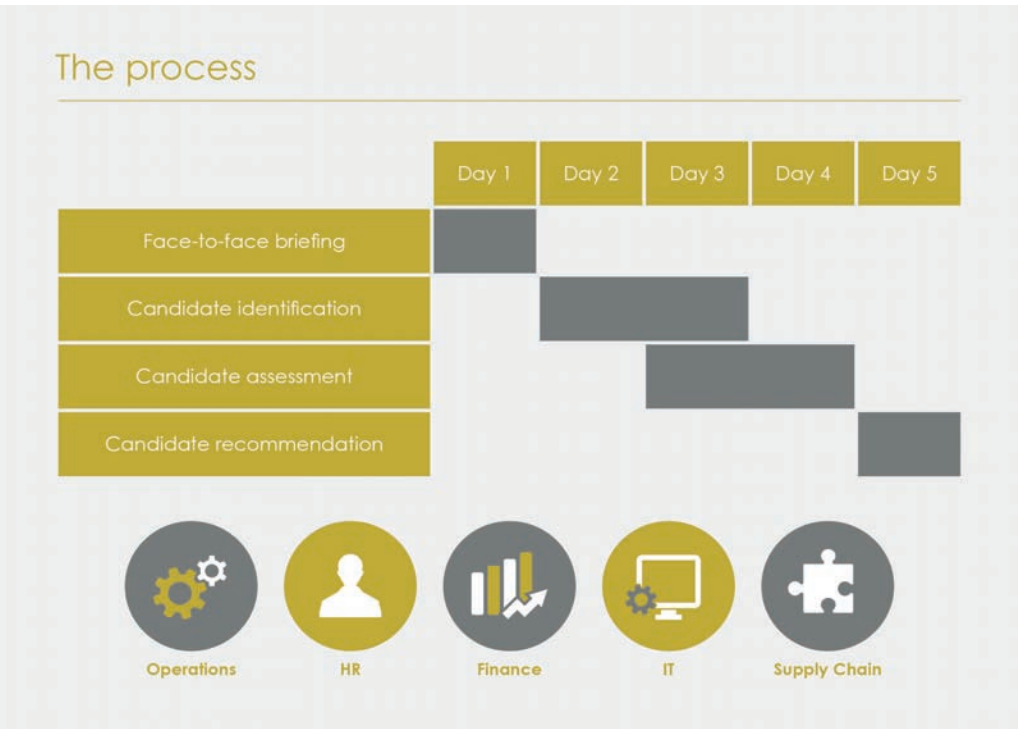
The new business – HC-One Limited, founded by Dr Chai Patel – began operating on 1st November 2011. The transfer was managed on time and in budget, with the minimum disruption to residents and their families. HC-One is now the UK's largest care home company.

2010s

Interim management (and executive recruitment)



Supplying experienced senior managers for interim appointments has always been a feature of CG's work. An interim manager is one of the most efficient and cost-effective solutions for unexpected demand, planning for change, hard-to-fill senior jobs, as well as crisis management. It complements and supports many consultancy assignments. An increased demand for this service from clients leads to the establishment of a dedicated team to find and place suitable managers in challenging positions. Assignments range from executives with responsibility for managing large enterprises to specialists in HR, finance, security and the supply chain – in the UK and continental Europe.



It's a sporting life... Scottish Rugby

New sector | Familiar issues: organisation, costs and accountability

Professional sport is a rapidly growing part of the global economy. Collinson Grant's early experience included restructuring jobs at Sport England and then UK Sport. In 2012 and over the next six years we had the opportunity to broaden our skills with a series of assignments at Scottish Rugby. Our long-standing relationship with Sir Moir Lockhead provided an introduction at a senior level.

When Mark Dodson, who had been a loyal client holding senior managerial jobs at Guardian Media Group, was appointed CEO of Scottish Rugby we were invited to support a number of innovative projects. After reviewing the effectiveness of the Board, we examined central costs and recommended how to slim down the organisation. We proposed a more effective, affordable and dynamic structure. This prompted a series of development projects reviewing different operational aspects of Scottish rugby:

- The Academy – specifying a structure and strategy
- Youth rugby – reviewing the support for schools and youth rugby
- Coach Academy – designing a new model for producing elite coaches
- Women's rugby – researching how a decline in participation could be halted
- Strategies for the Scottish Rugby Union (SRU) and domestic club rugby – finance, services, communications and outreach arrangements.

The findings were reported to the board, which then authorised necessary communication and implementation activities in 2014. A separate high-level review established the strengths of the HR function and the potential for improvement.

As the SRU's organisation and strategy developed CG undertook more work on professionalising club rugby, designing a model format for a new 'Super 6' competition (which started in 2019), and confirming the selection method for that new tournament. At the same time we supported other development tasks to strengthen the SRU's commercial and sporting activities.



2014/18

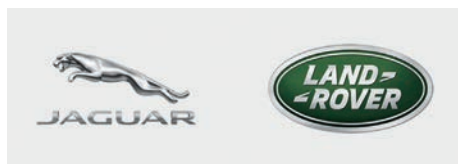


Transformation of the AA: a major customer service business

The AA is the UK's largest motoring organisation and provider of roadside assistance and other services. After its flotation on the London Stock Exchange the directors embarked on a sustained programme to improve the company's financial results. Collinson Grant was asked by Bob Mackenzie, CEO, to support elements of the initiative, to monitor its results and to provide additional managerial resources as the transformation progressed.

Using our 'Leonardo' organisational database, we investigated and analysed the structure of the business, the operational and managerial headcount, and the total costs of employment. Data, summarising headcount and costs, were used to support decisions on restructuring, recruitment and the use of contractors. We led improvement projects, particularly in customer service and the management of call centres. Later, our HR team reviewed the AA's job evaluation, pay and grading systems. Arrangements had become overly complex with many out of date job evaluations and job grades that created inconsistencies and potential breaches of legislation.

Jaguar Land Rover: A successful international business operating in competitive markets



The automotive industry depends on highly efficient and cost-effective supply chains. Collinson Grant was asked to support Jaguar Land Rover in the organisation and delivery of its training of procurement staff. The 'Category Management Masterclass' provides a structure and professional approach to procurement in different product groups.

New clients | Modern expanding sectors | Proven skills

As some older industries are in decline, new ones spring up to provide fresh opportunities for Collinson Grant and for its newly formed, specialist sister company – Watershed:

- Hexaware Technologies – an industry forerunner and fast growing provider of IT, outsourcing and consulting services.
- Inmarsat – a world leader in global, mobile satellite communications.

Inmarsat: Targeted support to the rapidly growing Aviation Business Unit

Skills in improving customer service, achieving planned savings and developing a business blueprint

Inmarsat's Aviation Business Unit was making solid progress but the leadership team recognised it needed additional support to continue its success. After CG's early work on customer service and cost reduction it was asked to bring fresh skills and resources to the senior team. The objective was to focus on what was needed to achieve the commitments in the business plan while getting a first-hand view of critical next steps. This combination of operational and consultancy skills mirrors the type of support that CG has offered clients for many years. It demands excellent relationships and a strong degree of trust from senior managers. Trust that allows consultants to contribute to the open debate and challenge that facilitate the – sometimes uncomfortable – changes necessary to move a business forward.

Armed with operational knowledge and data, CG was able to make robust and informed recommendations that were supported by the Divisional President and the leadership team. The work provided a robust blueprint for the business. This was a successful partnership that maintained the business as usual activities while supporting and managing change.

2016



2017/18



Hexaware Technologies: a successful partnership with Watershed

Estonia | Latvia | Sweden: Applying good practice in outsourcing and employee transfers in three legal jurisdictions

Hexaware Technologies, headquartered in India, is one of the leading and fastest growing global providers of IT, business process outsourcing and consulting services.

Watershed supported Hexaware in a complex outsourcing project to transfer skilled people from two telecoms providers – one in Scandinavia and the other in the Baltic region. New staff continued to work in their respective home countries of Estonia, Latvia and Sweden but were now to be employed by Hexaware. The transfer had to comply fully with the European Acquired Rights Directive and relevant employment law in each country.

Success relied on excellent planning, thorough communication and consultation procedures, and strong working relationships with Hexaware's staff in Europe and India. Watershed's collective experience in managing transfers of employees in many different circumstances helped to mitigate any potential risks. Jo Hale planned and managed the busy work schedule – including experiencing the unusual highs and lows of the Baltic winter and spring.

"Watershed is our trusted partner for this support. It uses a systematic and proven framework to ensure the smooth transition of people according to the legal parameters within each country. Watershed is an essential extension of our team to ensure we complete the transfers on time and each new member of the team is integrated successfully into Hexaware."

Augustine Kuthokathen, Vice-President – Human Resources (Europe and Asia Pacific)

2018



Watershed – a new era for HR and employment law

Managing people effectively and within the law has been an integral part of Collinson Grant's services since the 1970s. Our HR, assessment and employment law services were rebranded as Watershed in 2018. It is a solicitors' practice with commercially minded employment lawyers and HR professionals. Watershed helps managers to deal with everyday contractual questions and more difficult employment disputes. It provides a fully outsourced HR service and flexible and fixed-fee support.

This 'new' business draws on Collinson Grant's experience in advising employers on all aspects of managing people, continues to work in a close partnership with the management consultancy and shares its resources. Vicky Young, one of our solicitors and director at Watershed played a major part in getting the company approved by the Solicitors Regulatory Authority as an 'alternative business structure' for the delivery of employment law services. Watershed has strong relationships with its clients, many of which go back over thirty years. It frequently provides support on assignments outside the UK.

Employment tribunals remain a core part of our work. In a two-year period we have dealt with 104 employment tribunal claims and had a successful outcome (settled to the client's satisfaction, withdrawn by claimant or won at tribunal) in 103 of those tribunals – a 99% success rate. In the claim that was lost, we reduced the claimed damages from £128,000 to £5,000.

Pay, grading and job evaluation

Assignments on managing and controlling systems of job sizing, pay and grading remain important features of our work.

Fashions and trends come and go but we have yet to meet a senior executive who is not interested in controlling and optimising spending on pay and benefits. And ever increasing legislation, together with societal pressures towards more transparency in pay, mean that, more than ever, firms must manage legal, compliance and reputational risk.

In our experience, reports of the death of job evaluation are greatly exaggerated: traditional methods of job sizing and grading are still highly effective since alternative methods (Broadbanding et al) prove to be costly with poor control over pay drift.

Clients are returning to core disciplines such as:

- reviewing and simplifying pay and grading frameworks
- introducing new pay arrangements as markets and future skills requirements change – one size does not fit all when managing pay
- creating job family-based frameworks (underpinned by job evaluation) to control pay and grade drift
- using our proprietary job evaluation scheme.

Pay and grading work remains a fundamental component in our organisation design and development toolkit.



2020
Moving on

Collinson Grant
Focus, intensity, experience and depth

Moving on – some recent priorities

Supporting private equity

- Collinson Grant's experience over fifty years has been in helping companies to perform better – to re-focus their operations; to reduce costs and to improve profitability. Much of this work is for large and middle-ranking businesses serving UK and overseas markets. A significant and increasing proportion of these companies have private equity owners and every so often they need additional managerial resources. Market conditions may have changed rapidly, key personnel may have left, or other factors combined to put the investee business in potential jeopardy.
- We provide senior colleagues to fill executive positions, interim managers in operational roles and consultancy support on defined improvement projects. When radical reshaping of the business is necessary we have the legal and HR skills to ensure that change is managed equitably and efficiently. Close relationships with private equity owners help us to understand their short and longer-term priorities. We turnaround struggling businesses and secure optimum valuations for investments. Sometimes performance needs a final push to secure the best sales value nearing the end of an investment cycle. Our consultants have stepped in to support organisations to fine tune business controls and improve productivity, to realise the full value of the business.
- Our work is often post-acquisition – working to demanding targets for cost reduction, organisational integration and redesign, and improvements in service and profitability. We are also commissioned to undertake pre-acquisition analysis to assess potential target businesses, review markets and evaluate and quantify the potential synergies and risks of combining businesses.

Pan-European – a continuing focus on France and Germany

- CG's experience outside the UK is wide-ranging. Restructuring ferry companies in Scandinavia; resolving labour issues in southern Italy; integrating brick factories in Canada and the USA; and improving productivity at a Hungarian printing plant – are not untypical examples. Yet our most frequent work has been in France and Germany where we have built up sound knowledge of local cultures and employment traditions; and have partnerships with local lawyers, where necessary, to support restructuring programmes. We understand the complexities of employment law, how to work effectively with unions, and how to draft and secure agreement on the necessary Social Plans for restructuring. For example:
 - We have managed and closed manufacturing plants in France; reduced costs and transferred operations in Germany, and undertaken due diligence on a German company for US investors. Collinson Grant supported Imperial Tobacco on its acquisition of Altadis (with operations in France and Spain) – one of the largest acquisitions in Europe at the time. We handled all the HR aspects of the restructuring which involved many thousands of employees.
 - Our team includes French and German nationals. They are supported by an administrative group able to work fluently in French and German. Collinson Grant has an office in Lille, France and most recently Malta.
 - Building pan-European businesses, first published in 2001, is our detailed study of the opportunities, risks and rewards of developing companies that are structured to exploit European markets efficiently. It built on a number of research studies we conducted in partnership with Manchester and Warwick Business Schools.
- While the full impact of Brexit is yet to be fully understood, France, Germany and the United Kingdom will certainly remain strong trading partners. The pandemic in 2020 has highlighted many opportunities for different ways of communicating and doing business remotely. Enhanced connectivity has meant that geographical location is becoming less of a concern. CG is well placed to respond to these trends.

Digital thinking

- CG's assignments often demand skills in the application of digital technologies. New investment in operations, supply chains, marketing and the management of people creates opportunities for working with existing and new clients – and requires additional resources and a broader skills base. What we are asked to do often has a familiar ring – reorganisation; profit improvement; cost reduction; and managerial and financial controls.
- What is changing however is the dramatic opportunities provided by newer technologies particularly digital applications, machine learning and artificial intelligence. Their successful exploitation is becoming a bigger than ever differentiator between those companies moving forward and those standing still. Collinson Grant has been successfully applying these approaches to resolve age old problems like falling productivity and rising costs – and to create efficient supply chains and improve customer service.

Innovation and new investments: FIYAH, Gigil and Kovered

- CG has launched two online businesses from scratch and supported them from initial market research through to profitability. The purpose has been to stay ahead of the competition by ensuring we have the skills to construct and manage our own successful online companies. FIYAH is a distinctive jewellery retailer and Gigil supplies exclusive babywear, changing bags and accessories.
- Each company's web site and sales platform was designed and built in-house. These fledgling businesses had to learn how to adapt quickly, use modern online channels to reach customers, and to research overseas suppliers and source quality products that are attractive to the broad but well-defined profile of its customers.
- Kovered sells backpacks, duffle bags and messenger bags; promoting sustainability and ethically sourced materials. It was acquired as an eCommerce business that had a well-developed brand and strong customer base – but there were opportunities to increase sales significantly through improved marketing. New advertising strategies and better merchandising are now yielding much healthier results.
- Digital transformation is not just about alternative markets and online sales channels. New businesses particularly need up-to-date managerial information and effective controls. Collinson Grant's staff worked alongside FIYAH and now supports Gigil and Kovered to ensure that emerging digital processes not only improve customer service and order fulfilment but also generate reliable operational data that support effective decision-making.

fiyah.com

gigil.com

kovered.co.uk

FIYAH



KOVERED

Moving on – business as usual

As Collinson Grant moves into its sixth decade there is a feeling that although a lot of things have changed – and still are changing at a rapid pace – there are many aspects of the business that remain familiar. We focus on applying well-developed skills in organisation, costs, productivity, restructuring and managing people. Clients are still predominantly:

- Large UK public companies from the FTSE 100 and 250 and their divisional structures.
- Businesses owned by private equity houses – where work can be authorised by the private equity owners or sometimes by the incumbent managers themselves.
- Foreign-owned companies with operations in the UK or continental Europe, particularly France and Germany.
- Quasi-public sector organisations – often with government funding/regulation but private sector managers.

In fifty years we have had the opportunity to work with many great clients – of whom, unfortunately, we only have had space to mention just a very few. We have completed countless challenging assignments: tackling entrenched working practices in the newspaper industry; taking out complexity in large government departments; resolving long-running disputes with trades unions; or increasing productivity in traditional manufacturing operations.

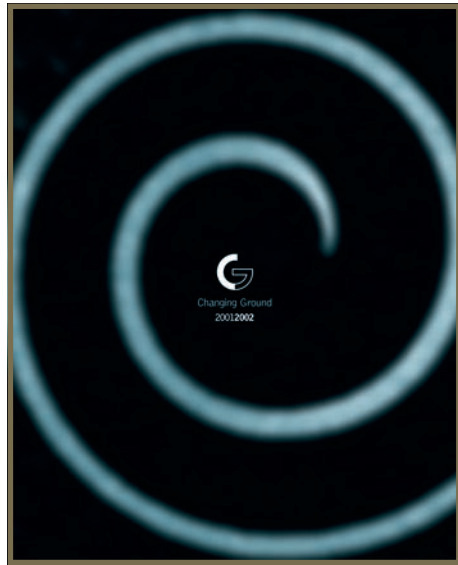
The regulations, laws and customs that govern employment are always evolving. Developing new trading partnerships in Europe will provide challenges. Clients continue to need sound advice to build good relationships with employees and to resolve disputes. Our long-standing and sustained experience in these issues is almost unrivalled. Our sister employment law and HR practice, Watershed, is also well placed to build on its strong market position.

Collinson Grant: things that define us

The managerial maxims developed and published by CG almost thirty years ago still hold true today:

Home Truths

- 1 Profit should always be the first charge against sales. This determines the costs that the business can afford.
- 2 Any business that does not constantly emphasise profit will ultimately make a loss.
- 3 Any organisation, system, procedure, or individual left undisturbed for three years will become inefficient.
- 4 Managers should treat all overhead costs as variable. If volumes fall, overheads should be cut; if volumes rise, overheads should be held.
- 5 People tend to elaborate rather than simplify their work.
- 6 Any activity managed only on technical criteria will be unprofitable.
- 7 The optional extras demanded by people can double the costs and timescale for any development.



Things that distinguish us

Large companies, robust implementation, multi-disciplinary assignments and wide geographical spread:

A history of working for large companies

ABB Group, Amazon, Balfour Beatty, BASF, British Nuclear Fuels (Sellafield), Cooper Industries, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Greene King, Guardian Media, Imperial Tobacco, Hanson, Hexaware Technologies, Home Office, Jaguar Land Rover, McBride, McKesson Information Systems, Rockwood Specialities, Rolls-Royce, Thorn Lighting, United News & Media, United Technologies – these are some of the larger businesses with which we have forged successful partnerships over the years. Some of them are featured in the case studies included in the biennial reviews we published in the early 2000s.

Implementation

Collinson Grant's approach is based on sound analysis, planning and implementation. That means, often working with our colleagues in Watershed, we can:

- achieve sustained improvements in performance and profitability in large businesses
- conduct direct negotiations with trades unions to secure meaningful change
- manage whole businesses or operational divisions – often providing an interim chief executive or other senior managers
- introduce effective managerial controls to measure progress against targets
- provide other resources to support line managers as improvements are introduced.

Multi-disciplinary assignments

A strong skills base and wide-ranging experience allows us to support clients in many different ways. We bring excellent analytical skills to delve deep into operational and financial data, uncover persistent problems and highlight opportunities for improvement. We are happy to work alongside senior executives to develop and agree the priorities for action. Consultants with well-honed interpersonal skills are well used to working together with line managers to develop and implement agreed solutions. Our link with Watershed offers expertise in human resources and employment law – invariably necessary for securing radical and sustained change.

Reach

Cooper Industries of Texas, one of Collinson Grant's first international clients, came on board over forty years ago. Assignments for companies throughout Europe, in the Americas and further afield have been a constant feature of our work. This capacity has been reinforced by the establishment of a sister company in Malta. It provides:

- A permanent office and base for completing and managing consultancy jobs in the European Union.
- The facility to employ non-UK consultants and administrative staff in the EU.
- Opportunities for contracting directly with EU entities with minimal administrative hassle.

Over the last four years our operations in Malta have managed jobs in France, Germany, Italy and Morocco.

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