



Christine Winning Corporate Care Relocation Ltd.

GOING FOR GROWTH PROFILE

NAME:

Christine Winning

BUSINESS

Corporate Care Relocation Ltd

POSITION

Managing Director

WHAT WE DO

Relocation Solutions

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Growing up in Bantry, West Cork as part of a large family where her mother was the local nurse-midwife, Christine (Chris) learned from an early age the value of caring for others and set out to become a nurse. When she qualified, she sought and secured employment in the USA. Just as she was due to leave Ireland Chris was informed that she had been refused entry to the US on a Visa technicality. The hospital had made a clerical error in the papers they had issued, which meant that she was ineligible to get a US employment visa in the foreseeable future.

Though disappointed and frustrated, she decided to pursue her employment options nearer home and started her nursing career in Ireland. She gained experience in various aspects of nursing, developed a keen interest in working with the elderly which eventually resulted in her establishing an innovative Day Care Centre in Cork. By 1995 Chris was married and a mother of three when her husband, Mark learned that his company needed him to relocate to their Chicago office. Chris finally now had a chance to live in the States albeit as a "trailing spouse" and not quite as she had originally planned.

As with her previous travelling experience, all did not run smoothly. Mark's company had issued the wrong immigration papers and as a result they were questioned by emigration upon arrival. Chris describes this as a harrowing event. *I was separated from my children and we were detained for questioning for what felt like several hours. We were eventually allowed stay on a temporary basis.* Other aspects of the move were poorly organised even though it was not a budgetary issue: *We were met at the airport by a limo that took us to our hotel. However, when we arrived we found that there was no food and that we needed to drive out in snow and ice to find a restaurant.* The experience of this trip and issues that arose on other assignments essentially led to the creation of Corporate Care Relocation Ltd.

When the family returned to Ireland in 1997, Chris contacted Mark's employers and offered a welcoming service for any families relocating to Cork. *As a trailing partner, myself, I knew how difficult it could be moving to a new city. I started making welcome packs and organising coffee mornings. It soon became clear that this was a very popular service and with the right model could be a successful business.*

Chris decided early on that the company would focus on corporate clients rather than individuals. Chris began to approach companies to gauge the level of interest in hiring Corporate Care Relocation's services. She found that Irish companies didn't really grasp the concept and didn't understand why their staff might need assistance in relocating. This discovery led Chris to focus on seeking clients from multi-national companies with offices in Cork, in particular American companies.

We offer two very important things in the business: Firstly, solutions: we help clients to find solutions to the various challenges they encounter when relocating. Second is reassurance: moving can be a very trying time so we highlight the many positive aspects of their relocation and reassure them that we are with them all the way in directing our energies and experience to ensure that all will be well for them in their new situation. According to Chris each move has different requirements and Corporate Care Relocation tailors its support to the individual circumstance. *One of the reasons corporate customers hire us is that we free up their employees' time, which allows them to be more productive in their job.*

When Chris began the business in 1997 she operated as a sole trader with her home office in the converted attic of her house. But it soon became obvious that the business would require additional staff. *In 1999, I hired three staff members and we moved into offices in the nearby Marina Commercial Park, Cork.* Initially, she decided that she would only cover the Munster area but as the business grew she found that her services were requested in other parts of the country.

Chris credits her involvement to date with the Going for Growth programme with aiding in the geographical expansion of the business. *Before I joined the group I only really ever thought about the business in terms of Munster. I soon found the positive encouragement from the other women on my table really pushed me towards expanding into new locations. We now operate throughout the country wherever our clients are. Going for Growth also opened up plenty of opportunities for me and helped to secure a closer working relationship with Enterprise Ireland.*

