



The 100 Best  
Workplaces  
in Europe  
2013

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# Welcome

It is our pleasure to present the 2013 edition of 100 Best Workplaces in Europe!

This year, some 2.119 companies participated in national “Best Companies” list competitions across Europe. The organisations featured in this report represent the 100 Best, divided into three size categories:

- The 25 Best Multinational Workplaces
- The 25 Best Large Workplaces (with more than 500 employees)
- The 50 Best Small & Medium Workplaces (with between 50 and 500 employees.)

This report provides an overview of the methodology used to pick the 100 Best, as well detailed results and statistics. Also included are profiles of the top five companies on each of the lists, as well as profiles of the winners of the Great Place to Work® Special Awards, which are presented to companies that excel in the areas of employee development, employee appreciation, and work/life balance.

This year, we have seen pioneering companies changing traditional work schemes within their respective industries. For instance, the 100 Best Workplaces in Europe in 2013 list includes law firms, healthcare services and staffing companies – just to name a few – that allow employees to arrange their work hours schedules.

Remarkably, there are four companies that have made 100 Best Workplaces in Europe list every year since its creation 11 years ago. These “Trust Champions” are Admiral Group, an insurance company based in the United Kingdom; global software giant Microsoft; Diageo and Middelfart Sparekasse, a Danish bank. These companies are profiled in the “Hall of Fame” section of the report, together Cisco and Irma, who have been represented on the European List for 10 years. All six companies have weathered economic crises, rapid growth and shifting external demands while maintaining high levels of trust, year after year. Adapting to new circumstances is especially challenging at a company where employees already have very high expectations from their management.

Lastly, we are delighted to include Turkish companies on the European lists for the first time. Five companies from Turkey made the cut this year. With this addition, there are now 19 nations represented on the European lists.

Congratulations to all 100 companies!

## Otto Zell

Director International  
List Management  
Great Place to Work®

## Lorena Martinez

International List  
Management Great  
Place to Work®

# The Best Workplaces at a Glance

Quick facts about the 100 best:

2.119

companies participated in the 2012-13 Best Workplaces study in Europe (+38% compared to 2012)

4

companies have been represented on the European all 11 years that the list has been published. These "Trust Champions" are Admiral Group, Diageo, Microsoft y Middelbart Sparekasse.

7,5%

Average voluntary employee turnover: 7,5% (increased by 0,3% compared with 2012)

19

Number of countries represented on list. This is one country more than last year; the first Best Workplaces in Turkey list was published in the beginning of 2013, and is now part of the Best Workplaces List in Europe competition.

589.256

valid employee surveys were received for this edition of the study (+58% compared to 2012)

32

Average years in business of the companies represented on the European List

92%

An average, of the employees among the 100 Best affirm that "taking everything into account, I would say this is a great place to work." (This result is consistent with last year's statistic).

80

hours per year. Average commitment to employee training. (13% increase compared with last year).

1.357.985

The companies taking part in the study represent a combined 1.357.985 employees (+12% compared to 2012).

26%

Proportion of Women in executive management positions (an increase of 3% compared with 2012)

9:1

Ratio of job applicants to existing jobs. (Companies received, on average, 9 applications per existing employee in the past 12 months.)

27/100

companies are newcomers and appear on the European List for the first time.

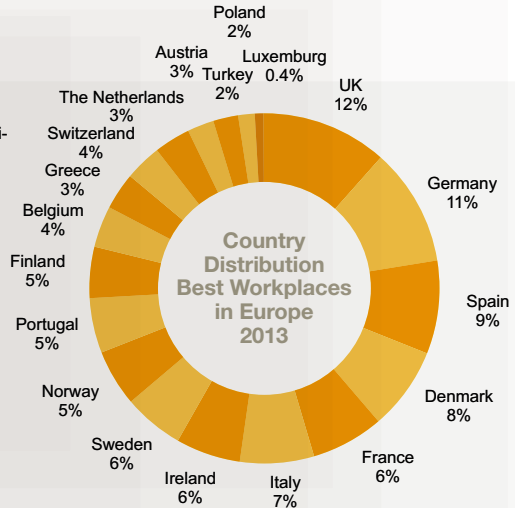
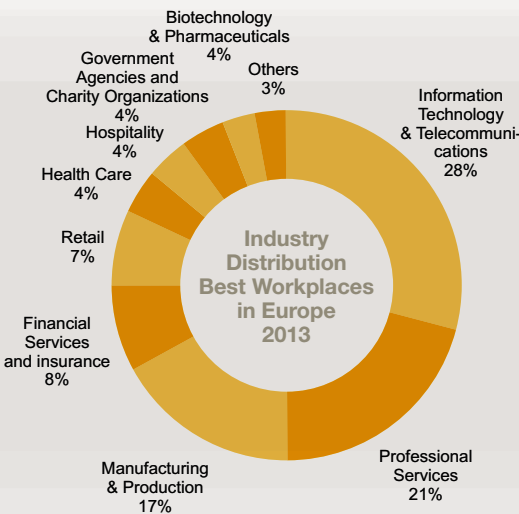
## Industry distribution among the 100 Best

Information Technology & Telecommunications companies are the largest industry group on the list, at 28%. Together with professional services companies, these two groups make up half of all companies recognised on this list. Manufacturing & Production, Financial Services & Insurance, and Retail companies are also well represented industry groups; together with IT and Professional Services, these industries account for ¾ of all listed companies.

The 2013 list also includes companies in the health care, biotech and hospitality industries, as well as government agencies and charity organisations. This variety of industries illustrates the fact that **any company** can become a great workplace.

## Country distribution

Nearly 50% of the 100 companies on the list are based in one of the “Big 5” European countries – France, Italy, Germany, Spain and the UK. Outside of the Big 5, Danish companies are the next most represented group, at 8%. Another 25% of the companies come from a group of countries composed of Ireland, Sweden, Norway, Portugal and Finland. The remaining 20% of companies are contributed by Belgium, Greece, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Austria, Turkey, Poland and Luxembourg.

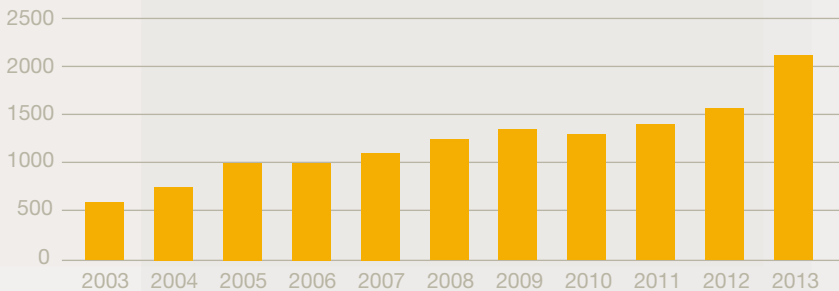


## Number of participating companies

The number of companies participating in the European List contest has consistently increased since the inaugural list in 2003. In the first year, 550 companies representing 12 countries participated in the contest. This year, 2,119 companies from 19 countries participated.

This year's list contest saw a 38% increase in participating companies in 2013, as compared to the 2012 contest – the largest increase in participation in the list's 11 year history! More and more companies are joining the competition, eager to measuring themselves against the best.

Numbers of Participating Companies in the European Lists 2003-2013



## Best Workplaces in Europe are job creators

Within the past 12 months, the 100 Best companies increased their total number of employees by 7%, on average. In “real” numbers, this 7% growth translates into the creation of 7,172 new jobs – a remarkable achievement in the light of the rather slow recovery of the European economy. Germany is leading this growth, adding thousands of jobs. France, Norway, Sweden and – surprisingly – Spain are among the other countries that saw notable spikes in new job creation.

However, not all companies represented on this list were able to increase their staff. Even our best companies at times must downsize, and the companies representing Greece, Turkey, Switzerland, Ireland and Italy all reduced their total number of employees during the last 12 months.

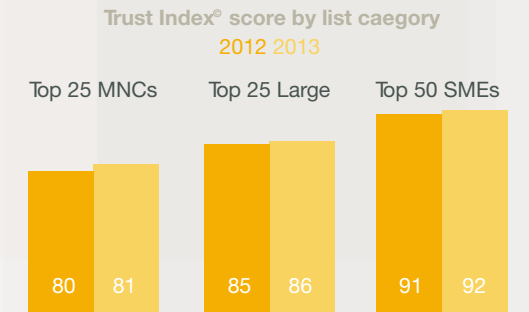
## Overall Trust Index© score

Compared to last year's list, the overall Trust Index© score of the 100 Best Companies dropped with one percentage from 91 to 90. We see this slight reduction occurring on each of the three lists.

Looking across the three lists, the Top 50 Small & Medium Workplaces list has the highest overall Trust Index© score. This is consistent with a trend we have observed for many years: that smaller organisations typically have a higher Trust Index© score. It is challenging for larger organisations to maintain a high level of personal contact to employees (as is often a defining factor in smaller companies), which influences their Trust Index© scores.

Looking at the European List over the last years, there are ups and downs in the overall Trust Index© score, coinciding with economic downturns and crises. It is important to note, however, that best companies are often not as acutely affected by economic downturns, and generally recover faster than their counterparts.

The long-term trend sees the overall Trust Index© score going up, which equates to ever-stiffer competition at the European level. The scores of the 100 Best are getting higher and higher, raising the bar for companies that benchmark themselves against the best. This also means that it is getting tougher for companies to earn and maintain their position on the 100 Best Workplaces in Europe list.



## Comparison across regions

How do European companies rank when we compare them against other best workplaces from other parts of the world? Overall, the best workplaces around the world compete on a similar, very high level. In terms of the overall Trust Index© score, Latin America and the United States are at the same level, with a TI score of 86%. Europe is slightly ahead by one point, with overall TI score of 87%.

Differences across regions become more visible when looking at the single Trust Index© dimensions of Credibility, Respect, Fairness, Pride and Camaraderie. European companies score highest in the dimensions of credibility, fairness and camaraderie, while Latin American companies have the highest average score within the pride dimension. In contrast, US companies score best within the respect dimension, which covers issues like support, collaboration and care.



Europe 100 Best Workplaces 2013 compared to other regions  
 TI Score Credibility Respect Fairness Pride Camaraderie



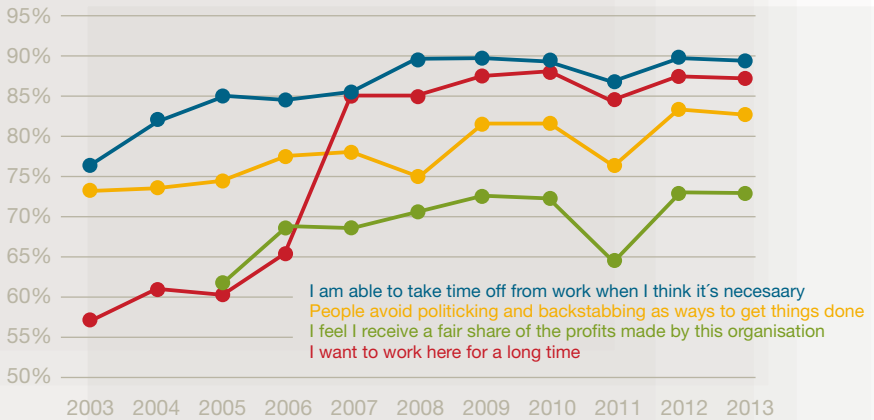




## Most improved areas since 2003

We wanted to see which areas the best workplaces have improved most during the past 11 years. Companies have specifically done well in areas like work/life balance and profit sharing, as measured by the increases in the associated Trust Index<sup>®</sup> statements. We also see substantial increases in employees wanting to work for their respective company for a long time, and in the avoidance of workplace politicking and backstabbing.

Most improved statements since 2003



## How we pick the 100 Best Workplaces

The 100 Best Workplaces in Europe list is produced by Great Place to Work®, which has identified and conducted research about great workplaces for more than 25 years. The first research started when the co-founder of Great Place to Work, Robert Levering, co-authored the bestselling book *The 100 Best Companies to Work for in America* with Milton Moskowitz.

The first list of the Best Workplaces in Europe was published in 2003. The creation of that list was supported by the European Commission, which sought to help the business community on the continent develop great workplaces, improve overall quality of life and enhance the competitiveness of European industry.

Great Place to Work today conducts national workplace studies in nearly

50 countries, including 19 national studies in Europe, which are carried out by a network of affiliate offices. More than 2.100 European companies participated in the 2013 edition of the 100 Best Workplaces in Europe study. Together these companies represented more than 1.3 million employees. All employees participated in the Great Place to Work survey by filling out the Trust Index®, an employee survey, and providing anonymous, written opinions about their organisations.

Any organisation with more than 50 employees can appear on the list of the 100 Best Workplaces in Europe. All companies are evaluated under the same basic methodology: our extensive employee survey – the Trust Index® – accounts for two-thirds of the final score, while an independent evaluation of management practices – the Culture Audit® – accounts for the remaining one-third of the score.

To begin the process of determining which companies appear on which European list, Great Place to Work divides organisations into multinational and national companies. **All companies that have more than 1,000 employees, operate in at least three (3) countries and have 40% of their workforce working outside their home country are classified as Multinational Companies (MNC). Only those MNCs that are listed on at least three (3) national Best Workplaces Lists** in Europe over the last 12 months move forward in the competition. MNCs that are not recognised on at least 3 national Best Workplaces Lists will not be recognised on European level; this is because Great Place to Work recognises MNCs that have successfully established a great workplace culture that transcends national cultures and borders.

There are two other lists. National companies (that are not MNCs) are divided into two size categories, resulting in a list of the 25 Best Large Workplaces and the 50 Best Small & Medium Workplaces.

## Methodology



All three lists are compiled from the highest scoring companies across the 19 European nations in which Great Place to Work operates. Multinational companies that are represented because of their involvement on multiple countries' best companies lists have their scores averaged for consideration for the European list. MNCs are given extra points based on the relative number of employees and relative number of countries in which they participate in the contest.

## About the Great Place To Work® Trust Index© Survey and Culture Audit©

The majority of the information in this publication comes from two sources, both of which are required for any company to be considered by Great Place to Work to appear on the 100 Best Workplaces in Europe list.

**The Trust Index©** is a standardised survey tool developed by Great Place to Work®. The survey includes 58 statements related to the five dimensions of the Great Place to Work model or definition of a great workplace from the employees' perspective. Employees respond anonymously to each statement on a scale of 1 to 5: with 1 being "almost always untrue", 2 as "often untrue", 3 as "sometimes untrue" and "sometimes true", 4 as "often true" and 5 as "almost always true". A random, but representative, sample of all employees – including managers – are invited to complete the survey. In smaller organisations, all employees receive a survey.

**The Culture Audit©** questionnaire provides a detailed overview of a company's policies, practices and value system. It includes both statistical data and open-ended question, and is usually completed by a company's Human Resources manager and other senior leaders. The Culture Audit© is evaluated based on standardised methodology developed by Great Place to Work®.



# Best Multinational Workplaces 2013



	Company name	Country	Industry	Number of employees
1	 Microsoft	Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Turkey, UK	Software	13160
2	 Admiral Group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Admiral Group</li> <li>• Balumba &amp; Qualitas Auto</li> <li>• ConTe.it</li> </ul>	Italy, Spain, UK	Financial Services & Insurance	5665
3	 NetApp	France, Germany, The Netherlands, Switzerland, UK	Hardware	1517
4	 SAS Institute	Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands	Software	1946
5	 W.L. Gore & Associates Creative Technologies Worldwide	France, Germany, Italy, Sweden	Manufacturing & Production	1483
6	 Coca Cola	Denmark, France, Spain, UK	Beverages	1103
7	 Diageo	Germany, Greece, Ireland (2), Spain	Beverages	1735
8	 Quintiles Navigating the new health <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quintiles</li> <li>• Quintiles Commercial Germany</li> </ul>	Germany, Ireland, Italy, Spain, The Netherlands, UK	Biotechnology & Pharmaceuticals	5611
9	 Hilti	Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey	Retail // Specialty	3329
10	 Affecto Be business intelligent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Karttakeskus</li> </ul>	Denmark, Finland (2), Sweden	IT Consulting	751
11	 National Instruments	France, Germany, Italy, UK	Electronics	462
12	 eBay	France, Germany, Ireland, UK	Retail	3589

	Company name	Country	Industry	Number of employees	
13	 EMC	Austria, France, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands, Turkey, UK	Storage/Data Management	7777	
14	 McDonald's	Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, The Netherlands, UK, Switzerland	Food and Beverage Service	127970	
15	 Medtronic	Denmark, Italy, Portugal, Spain, The Netherlands, UK	Biotechnology & Pharmaceuticals	5187	
16	 Mars <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Royal Canin</li> <li>Wrigley's</li> </ul>	Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Portugal (2), Spain (3) Switzerland	Food products	4932	
17	 Cisco	France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland	Information Technology	3373	
18	 GROUPE adeo <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leroy Merlin</li> <li>Aki Bricolaje</li> <li>Bricoman</li> </ul>	France, Italy (2), Spain (2)	Retail // Specialty	39888	
19	 JTI	Japan Tobacco International	Ireland, Italy, Spain, Turkey	Beverages and tobacco	830
20	 NOVARTIS cuidamos y curamos	Novartis	Germany, Greece, Portugal, Spain	Biotechnology & Pharmaceuticals	4307
21	 GRÜNTHAL <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grünenthal Pharma (Sp)</li> <li>Prodotti Formenti (It)</li> <li>Proto Chemicals (Ch)</li> </ul>	Grünenthal	Italy, Spain, Switzerland	Biotechnology & Pharmaceuticals	550
21	 SAP	SAP	Austria, Germany, Ireland	Software	16458

Company name	Country	Industry	Number of employees	
22  <b>DANONE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Danone Waters</li> <li>• Mellin Spa – Danone Baby Nutrition</li> <li>• Danone Baby Nutrition</li> <li>• Milupa– Danone Baby Nutrition</li> <li>• Danone Dairy</li> </ul>	Austria, Germany, Italy, UK(3)	Food products	1071	
23  ING <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interhyp</li> <li>• ING Bank</li> <li>• ING-DiBa</li> <li>• ING Direct</li> </ul>	Germany (2), Luxembourg, Spain	Banking/Credit Services	5319	
24 	Accor	Austria, Portugal, UK	Hotel/Resort	15568
25 	Unilever	Greece, Italy, Portugal	Manufacturing & Production	3664



# Profiles of the Top 5 Multinational Workplaces

## Microsoft®

### Microsoft

# #1

Microsoft Corporation is the world's best-known technology company. Founded in 1975, Microsoft has offices in

more than 100 countries and employs more than 90,000 people at a global level. At Microsoft, people are motivated and inspired by how customers use Microsoft software to find creative solutions to business problems, develop ground-breaking ideas, and stay connected to what's most important to them.

Microsoft values work/life balance and provides its employees with a range of programs that promote equilibrium between their personal and professional lives. One such program is the Working Parent Policy, which is designed to address the needs of parents, and covers a range of benefits available to those who combine active professional involvement with pregnancy or childcare. The Working Parent Policy applies to all employees,



with a particular focus on pregnant women and those on parental leave after the birth of a child, as well as employees taking care of children up to 14 years of age.

The program sets forth specific solutions that enable working parents to balance their professional load with personal responsibilities. It helps them plan their activities, providing a varied and broad framework of available working models, as well as a sense of security and safety. Under the Working Parent Policy



employees are entitled to additional days off work whenever they need to spend extra time with their children, flexible working hours, and working from home options (using the latest technology solutions). Microsoft also provides free medical care for the entire family, and organises special themed events and gives presents to employees' children (Christmas, Family Picnic).

to a different department in the company. This ensures that the MoF remains fresh and interesting and that everyone in the company gets involved. This ensures that the MoF remains fresh and interesting and that everyone in the company gets involved.



### Admiral Group

# #2

Admiral Group is a car insurance provider that manages 14 brands in seven countries.

The company believes that the Admiral culture makes it a great workplace and is the single most important contributor to its success. The phrase that underpins the Admiral Group culture is simply, "People who enjoy what they do, do it better." The focus is on four key pillars: communication, equality, reward and recognition, and fun. These principles work together to create an environment that results in people looking forward to coming to work and giving that little extra effort when they are at work.

Fun is a big component of working for Admiral Group. The company celebrates as many events and occasions as possible, both through its "Ministry of Fun" and the organisation as a whole. This fits in with the company philosophy of making work a fun place to be. The Ministry of Fun (MoF) moves each month





**NetApp®**

**NetApp**

**#3**

NetApp is an information technology solutions company specialising in data storage and

management. It produces products and services designed to guarantee continuous access to critical business data and a simplification of clients' business processes.

NetApp espouses a philosophy that sharing as much information as possible leads to a culture of trust. As NetApp grows and hires more employees, it makes available a large number of resources designed to share that information.

NetApp believes that its commitment to transparent communication is key to its continued business success. All leaders and managers are committed to making sure all employees are well-informed and work together to achieve common company goals. Senior management shares news openly and frequently with employees. Whenever significant issues do arise that affect the company as a whole, they are conveyed directly from the top, without repositioning or filtering.





THE  
POWER  
TO KNOW<sup>®</sup>

## SAS Institute

# #4

SAS Institute has more than 35 years of experience in the field of business analytics.

Its software helps clients take advantage of analytics in business management, and work more efficiently in daily operations of an organisation.

SAS Institute believes in investing in the future through programs for employees. One such investment is The Young Talents Academy, operating since 2003, an educational program targeted for the best students of the final years of their IT studies. The program gives participants a unique chance to work with state-of-the-art business applications. Many are offered a job within a renowned, international client company while still students.

The Young Talents Academy provides a series of free trainings in SAS technology. All courses are taught by instructors from SAS Institute Training Center and are held in the company's offices. This allows candidates to learn more about SAS and to get to know its employees. Additionally, directors of all main business units (communications and energy, banking, industry, insurance,

technology) give presentations about their respective departments, allowing trainees to gain knowledge specific to individual business units or job roles.

The fundamental goal of the Academy is to give candidates the opportunity to learn about the company. At the same time the company may identify the best candidates for positions. In practice, all graduates of the Academy are offered a position as a Junior Consultant with flexibility that allows them to juggle work and studies.





## W.L. Gore & Associates

**#5** For more than 50 years, the name W.L. Gore & Associates has been associated with technology in synthetics processing that is used to make electronic and industrial products, medical goods and functional textiles.

Personal development is an important activity at Gore. Every associate, upon joining the company, is given time to set up a Personal Development Plan (PDP). Each is assigned a personal 'Sponsor'. One of the main responsibilities of that sponsor is to help his or her "sponsee" grow, even though each individual associate drives and establishes his or her own PDP. Before the PDP is established, the associate assesses functional abilities, business competencies and personal skills. This assessment enriches the dialogue between the sponsor and sponsee.

In the PDP, the associate describes his or her situation, a development plan over the next three years, areas of strength and areas for development. Once the plan is established, the associate maintains an on-going dialogue with the sponsor, ensuring that the plan is supported. In cooperation with the sponsor, Associates update their development plan twice yearly.

To ensure that all associates have a PDP, there is a special PDP follow-up or review during a reward committee meeting each autumn. This creates an opportunity to sum up development needs for the different areas of the organisation.














A woman with dark hair, seen from the back and side, is wearing a light blue and white striped button-down shirt. She is gesturing with her right hand towards a group of people seated at a table in the background. The background is blurred, showing a man in a blue shirt and a woman with blonde hair. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting an indoor office or meeting environment.

## 25 Best Large Workplaces 2013

	Company name	Country	Industry	Number of employees
1	 Capital One (Europe)	UK	Financial Services & Insurance	1089
2	 Schoenen Torfs	Belgium	Retail	571
3	 EnergiMidt	Denmark	Energy Distribution	667
4	 DIS	Germany	Staffing & Recruitment	660
5	 HYGEIA Hospital	Greece	Health Care // Hospital	1285
6	 ROFF	Portugal	IT Consulting	524
7	 Davidson	France	Consulting Engineering	800
8	 TIVOLI	Denmark	Hospitality // Hotel/Resort	1364
9	 Rackspace	UK	Information Technology	842
10	 Vector Informatik	Germany	Software	881
11	 Accent Jobs for People	Belgium	Staffing & Recruitment	608
12	 Great Places Housing Group	UK	Non-profit and Charity Organisations	599
13	 Beierholm	Denmark	Accounting	522
14	 SBK Siemens-Betriebskrankenkasse	Germany	Financial Services & Insurance	1726
15	 IRMA	Denmark	Retail // Food/ Grocery	2265
16	 SE	Denmark	Energy Distribution	720
17	 Sparda-Bank München	Germany	Banking/Credit Services	671
18	 Diamantis Masoutis S.A. Supermarkets	Greece	Retail // Food/ Grocery	5776

	Company name	Country	Industry	Number of employees
19	 Bright Horizons Family Solutions	UK	Education & Training	2306
20	 BAUDER macht Dächer älter.	Germany	Building Materials	609
21	 TOPAZ	Ireland	Retail // Specialty	1600
22	 FLIGHT CENTRE LIMITED	UK	Travel Agencies/ Travel Management	1623
23	 elobau sensor technology	Germany	Electronics	538
24	 VSA VSA-Unternehmensgruppe Partnerschaft mit System	Germany	Software	991
25	 DIACOR	Finland	Hospital	650



## Profiles of the Top 5 Large Workplaces



### Capital One (UK)

# #1

Capital One's two core values are: "Excellence" and "Do the Right Thing." To achieve excellence, the company, one of the UK's

largest credit card companies, hires the best people possible. It always holds itself accountable, and strives to make bold decisions. The company's vision is "Let's Make Lives Better," which applies to employees, customers, community and the environment.

Capital One has a number of programs for employees that support both personal and career growth leading to a culture of recognition and rewards. For example, team members are personally thanked by the Managing Director when a department has gone the extra mile to help the business succeed. They are rewarded in a departmental celebration.

To ensure that employees are connected with Capital One's vision, the company hosts an annual Vision Day which

brings everyone in the company together to brainstorm innovative ways to fulfil the company vision, "Let's Make Lives Better." During the day, employees explore the vision, reconnect with it and develop inspiration from it. Vision Day provides an opportunity for employees to see the ways that Capital One makes lives better and how they, as individuals, can and contribute to the company vision.





### Schoenen Torfs (Belgium)

# #2

Schoenen Torfs is a shoe retailer based in Flanders that employs 571 people. The company is proud of

the family spirit within which it operates. Torfs distinguishes itself as a values-driven company where employees enjoy coming to work. Its philosophy is that happiness doesn't start after work ends; everyone should enjoy themselves while on the job.

Torfs places great importance on corporate social responsibility. To stimulate the involvement of employees giving back to the community, every employee is given a child to sponsor as part of the Cucina Project. With the help of this project, 67 Nepalese children get a chance for a better education and a better future. Torfs takes care of the financial commitment while employees are responsible for developing relationships with the children they sponsor through letters and correspondence. To keep employees posted about what's happening in Nepal, the company publishes a joint Torfs-Cucina newsletter, called Cucina Kontakt, every two months.



# ENERGIMIDT

nye strømninger

### EnergiMidt (Denmark)

# #3

EnergiMidt is a Danish energy and broadband company that employs close to 600 people and serves more than

176,000 customers. The organisation's mission is to increase comfort within private homes and to optimise the operation of companies through its services.

EnergiMidt recently created a new strategy that will be implemented through 2015. The organisation values the ideas of its employees; they were active participants in the development and implementation of the company's new strategy. Employees assessed workplace values and helped articulate a long-lasting and concrete set of shared values in the EnergiMidt workplace. The plan was launched with a New Year's reception where a warehouse was transformed for a New Year's banquet. After a concert, breakfast was served to all, and management presented the broad outlines of the new strategy.

EnergiMidt is characterised by a high degree of self-management and cross-collaboration. Employees are expected to take responsibility across the value chain. Last year, the company provided courses in self-management. Today, 39 employees continue the implementation of that effort through commitment and understanding the concept of self-management.

# DIS AG

## DIS AG (Germany)

With 660 employees in 175 branches, DIS AG is one of the six largest recruitment agencies in Germany. Headquartered in Düsseldorf, DIS AG recruits staff in the finance, industrial, IT, office and management, and outsourcing and consulting sectors. Apart from its core business in temporary employment recruitment, DIS AG provides all forms of modern employment services and solutions, including personnel placement, project management, HR consulting, and professional training and development.



DIS AG invests heavily in knowledge management for the purpose of promoting employee development. The DIS Academy, with a high calibre, generous seminar catalogue, is grounded in the concept of “Lifelong Learning.” The principle doesn’t stop there! The company offers diverse development programs tailored to employee skill sets and experiences.

Communication is another strong component of DIS AG’s culture. The company uses numerous opportunities to gather and share information. The practice is that communication principles are innovative, open and include all members of staff.



### HYGEIA (Greece)

**#5** For more than 35 years, HYEIGA Hospital, the first major private hospital in Greece, has provided high quality

health services with respect to and sensitivity for People, Society and the Environment.

HYGEIA Hospital covers all areas of primary and secondary care. Spread over 17 floors, it has 18 operating rooms and 440 beds. More than 129,000 patients are treated annually, with 13,000 surgeries and 1 million tests performed each year. It is the first and only hospital in Greece that has received the top accreditation in the world for quality and safety in health services by the agency Joint Commission International (JCI).

HYGEIA continually seeks ways to reward employees for their long-lasting contributions to the organisation. Each year, it awards close to 70 employees with recognition that includes a €1,000 check. The company also awards the best employee of the month by communicating their names across the organisation. Every six months, a contest is held which gives employees a chance to win a trip for two to a destination of the employee’s choice. Employees also receive training based on their individual development plan. Often HYGEIA funds employee education for graduate studies or foreign language courses.














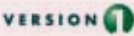







50 Best Small  
& Medium  
Workplaces 2013

	Company name	Country	Industry	Number of employees
1	 Futurice	Finland	Software	156
2	 Webstep	Norway	IT Consulting	232
3	 Centiro Solutions	Sweden	Software	76
4	 Impact International	UK	Management Consulting	99
5	 Key Solutions	Sweden	Business Process Outsourcing / Call centers	69
6	 Baringa Partners	UK	Management Consulting	254
7	 Tenant & Partner	Sweden	Real Estate	50
8	 EiendomsMegler 1 Midt Norge	Norway	Real Estate	179
9	 Fondia	Finland	Legal	87
10	 Softcat Limited	UK	IT Consulting	490
11	 Blocket	Sweden	Online Internet Services	92
12	 Esbjerg Kommune	Denmark	Social Services and Government Agencies	63
13	 GRUPO CH - CH Business Consulting	Portugal	Management Consulting	75
14	 UKFast	UK	Information Technology // Internet Service Provider	151
15	 Hartmanns	Denmark	Professional Services // Security	140
16	 AE	Belgium	IT Consulting	138
17	 Octo	France	IT Consulting	157
18	 Piteå Kommun Stadenheten	Sweden	Social Services and Government Agencies	86
19	 Herning Kommunale Tandpleje	Denmark	Health Care	71

	Company name		Country	Industry	Number of employees
20	 Intuit UK		UK	Software	64
21	 Kvadrat		Denmark	Textiles and textile products	138
22	 Brand Learning		UK	Professional Services	96
23	 InfoJobs		Spain	Information Technology	167
24	 Terramar		Norway	Management Consulting	52
25	 Kantega		Norway	IT Consulting	97
26	 thuiszorg vlerminckveld		Belgium	Social Services and Government Agencies	195
27	 frontit		Sweden	Management Consulting	64
28	 Middelfart Sparekasse <small>- et her overbød til dig</small>		Denmark	Banking/Credit Services	215
29	 Schindlerhof		Germany	Hotel/Resort	72
30	 ORMIT <small>Enjoy talent</small>		The Netherlands	Management Consulting	172
31	 Lodam <small>Member of the Pentasys Group</small>		Denmark	Electronics	84
32	 Pentasys <small>Group Member of the Verica</small>		Germany	IT Consulting	161
33	 TWININGS		UK	Food Products	106
34	 umoe consulting <small>Erkennungsunternehmen</small>		Norway	IT Consulting	65
35	 St. Gereon Seniorenenddienste		Germany	Residential care services	269
36	 GATEWIT		Portugal	Information Technology	75
37	 vincit		Finland	Software	65



	Company name	Country	Industry	Number of employees
38	 Novia Finland	Finland	Business Process Outsourcing / Call centers	95
39	 Convista Consulting	Germany	IT Consulting	248
40	 FINN.no	Norway	Online Internet Services	329
41	 Virgo Health	UK	Advertising and Marketing	58
42	 mnemonic	Norway	Information Technology	103
43	 SKAGEN Fondene	Norway	Financial Services & Insurance	130
44	 R	Spain	Telecommunications	203
45	 Version 1	Ireland	Software	350
46	 Accuracy	France	Consulting-Actuarial/ Risk Assessment	101
47	 Core Media	Ireland	Advertising and Marketing	135
48	 Melissa Kikizas	Greece	Food products	211
49	 Bursagaz	Turkey	Energy Distribution	241
50	 Euro Car Parks	Ireland	Property Management	178

# Profiles of the Top 5 Small & Medium Workplaces



## Futurice (Finland)

# #1

Founded in 2000, Futurice is a Finnish software service company that develops customers' businesses by building

user-driven web and mobile services. The company builds both consumer and business-critical solutions for a variety of industries. Futurice's major customers are international operators, device manufacturers and media companies. It currently employs more than 150 people at its Helsinki headquarters and across offices in Tampere, Berlin, Düsseldorf and London. Futurice is no stranger to the European Best Companies list. The is the second year in a row that it has appeared as Europe's #1 Small & Medium Workplace.

Futurice hosts monthly staff events called FutuFridays, which take place at each company office. FutuFridays always start with the Monthly Anonymous Developer

(MAD) Meeting where each employee goes over his or her goals with their peers. The meeting is organised as a conversation where everyone walks through objectives and accomplishments of the past six months. Topics include: what each of the participants achieved in the last month, how they have developed and learned, and what they plan to do in the upcoming month.

MAD supports Futurice company values by enhancing transparency, highlighting the importance of continuous improvement, and inspiring confidence in career and professional goals by allowing employees to share them publicly. In order to ensure MAD's continued success and commitment to high quality, some team members are trained to be MAD coaches. They are responsible for facilitating the meetings and making sure each team member actively discusses goals, achievements and learnings.

# WEBSTEP

## Webstep (Norway)

# #2

Webstep is in high-end IT and business intelligence solutions and provides clients with experienced

senior consultants to help them achieve business goals. Webstep has an exciting and unconventional structure and model that is tailored to its culture. People are central to Webstep; the company goes to great lengths to ensure that they are cared for and supported. This year, Webstep's hard work and focus on culture landed them the top spot on Norway's best companies list.



# centiro

## Centiro Solutions (Sweden)

# #3

Founded in 1993, Centiro Solutions is a Swedish software company specialising in transportation,

logistics and supply chain management. Its solutions are used around the clock by some of the world's largest brands by hundreds of thousands of end-users. Centiro currently employs nearly 80 people who are encouraged to challenge and develop themselves within a nurturing workplace culture.

Webstep wants clients to enjoy working with the consultants assigned to their projects, both as people and professionals. Its vision is to be the first choice for both clients and consultants. Throughout 2011, Webstep developed and tested a concept called the Hero Project. Individual consultants often develop expertise in different areas, and this knowledge is potentially important and useful for various Webstep clients. The Hero Project has resulted in about a dozen consultants signing up as “heroes” in their special field, ready to make special appearances with clients other than their own. By guest-hosting a presentation, a workshop or an analysis, Webstep showcases the flexibility and breadth of knowledge that consultants possess. Clients then gain access to extra expertise and the consultant is recognised for his or her work.



Centiro promotes a culture of understanding. Part of this culture is ensuring that employees know that mistakes are part of doing business. Employees feel so comfortable with the role of mistakes in business that an informal club was created where employees get together for humorous meetings to talk about the mistakes they've made and what they've learned from them. The key is to encourage openness and avoid guilt or anxiety that people might feel about the errors they make. This initially informal club has now spread across the organisation and is accepted as an important part of the organisation's culture.



### Impact International (United Kingdom)

# #4

Impact International specialises in leadership development with services that help

people work more effectively together. Founded in 1980, this values-led organisation is grounded in treating its people with respect, promoting a healthy, safe, dynamic, diverse, meaningful and balanced workplace.



Impact celebrates professional milestones, but also encourages get-togethers for social gatherings such as craft fairs, charity events, concerts, and story telling around the fire. Employees work together with a policy of open and honest dialogue. Impact prides itself on providing a high-trust workplace. The result is the company attracts people who are supported in achieving their professional dreams.

Impact's believes that all of its activities in the marketplace, workplace and environment should positively affect the community, and that these activities enhance its brand and productivity. As such, the company measures success against a "triple bottom line" with targets for community interaction, environmental impact, employee engagement and profitability. Impact has developed tools to measure and assess success in each of these areas and report out regularly on them.

Impact gives every employee a minimum of three working days per year to complete projects in the community. Each interaction must benefit both Impact and the local community by providing a local organisation with a resource they wouldn't otherwise have had access to. It's also a development opportunity for the employee. In the last 12 months, Impact employees have completed 167.5 days with 27 community partners.



### Key Solutions (Sweden)

**#5**

Key Solutions is a sales agency that focuses on streamlining the sales process. Founded in 2008, the company has expanded to four offices in Sweden (going on five) and has 69 employees. In 2011, Key Solutions was named Best Sales Agency in Sweden, taking an important step in becoming a global leader in event and direct sales.

The company is committed to achieving this goal by creating sustainable sales methods and investing in its people, who are at the heart of the organisation. The theory is that by giving team members the best conditions in which to thrive, they will, in turn, invest in making the company succeed and grow.

An important value at Key Solutions is listening to and supporting their people, even in situations outside work. One example of the company's commitment to helping employees in their personal lives is when a particular employee wanted to move away from the town in which he lived because of a change in a personal relationship. The employee was given the opportunity to move to an office in another city and received help finding a new apartment and generally getting settled in the new city.

An elite group of 4 companies has earned a spot on every European Best Workplaces List since its inauguration in 2003: **Admiral** (a car insurance company from the United Kingdom), **Microsoft** (the global software company with offices across Europe), **Diageo** (multinational) and **Middelfart Sparekasse** (a bank from Denmark). Joining these four companies in our “Hall of Fame” are **Cisco** (Multinational) and **Irma** (Denmark), which have been featured on the European List for 10 years.

## Hall of Fame

These six companies have not only created great workplaces, but also sustained this high standard over a long period of time. We asked these companies about their experiences in creating a great workplace, as well as their past and future challenges when it comes to maintaining high-trust workplace environments.



## Admiral Group

**Q: What were your priorities for becoming a great workplace 11 years ago and how did they change in the last decade?**

From the very early days, delivering great customer service was seen as the key to Admiral's future success. We knew that treating staff well meant they would be more engaged, enjoy their job more and thus deliver great service. Our underpinning phrase is "People who like what they do, do it better."

Across our business we have empowered managers locally to make their business areas great workplaces. [They] continue to do so. We entered Best Workplaces [competition] in the beginning to help us validate our approach to employee engagement and benchmark against other organisations.

We don't design our approach to engagement in order to win accolades. Any recognition has been a by-product of what we've always done, something which is culturally natural to us: to prioritise the well being of our employees.



More recently we have created four cornerstones to help sum this up: Communication, Equality, Reward and Recognition, and Fun. This has helped us during our period of growth mentioned below.

**Q: What has been the biggest challenge that you have faced in this period to create the workplace culture that you have today?**

We have seen both our customer and employee numbers grow. With that growth comes some challenges. For example, our policy of promoting from within has meant that people have been promoted quickly into more senior roles. This means that training has been very intense for them, when ordinarily they would have more time to grow into roles.

This has an effect on our culture because there is a danger that both numbers and inexperience could dilute [our culture]. To help us address this, we use our four pillars to build training courses and we have used the opportunity to deliver a huge range of training designed to help our managers help our employees perform to the best of their ability.

We want our business to maintain a "family feel," a big business that feels like a family business. Our managers are trusted to make local decisions on ways to support and help our employees. We believe the family feel still exists even after this period of growth.

In our most recent results, there are some key metrics which we believe reinforce this. [Indeed] 89% of staff felt 'we're all in this together', 98% felt that 'this is a friendly place to work' and 92% said 'people care about each other here'.

**Q: Looking ahead, what do you think will be the biggest challenges in the coming years for you to maintain and improve the workplace culture in your company?**

The biggest challenge will be maintaining these same results with the ever-changing demands of the workforce.

We will keep doing what we've always done: Listening to our employees and trusting people at all levels to make Admiral is a great workplace so [employees] can deliver great service to our customers

# Microsoft®

## Microsoft

**Q: What were your priorities for becoming a great workplace 11 years ago and how did they change in the last decade?**

To be ranked as a great workplace is an external recognition that proves the quality of our HR practices through the voice of our employees. That has a very positive impact on the talent market. At Microsoft, we believe that no business will be effective without a highly motivated and passionate workforce, and that people are our most valuable



asset. That was our drive 10 years ago, and we still believe that is the right way to go.

We have always had policies that aim to improve our employee satisfaction. We do care about our peoples' opinion. Once a year we conduct an internal climate survey to identify our strengths and challenges in order to continuously improve. One of our most appreciated areas is development, and that is reflected in our strong development initiatives that allow each individual to build his or her career through manager coaching, constant feedback, training, mentoring and the possibility to move to other positions either locally or internationally.

In terms of local development initiatives, last year we launched the "Playing to win" program that involved people managers and individual contributors, working on the following areas: teamwork and collaboration, positive leadership and business.

During the few last years, Microsoft has adopted the concept of a "new world of work." In line with this strategy, last year Microsoft Portugal made a significant investment in the new headquarters, creating this "new world of work" and allowing people to collaborate like never before. A redesigned office and the latest technology facilitate even greater flexibility. We believe that adopting a flexible working policy and trusting our employees to do their best in the environment they choose will result in more satisfied staff, better results and increased productivity across the business.

That said – and looking back a decade ago – we fully recognise how important and even pivotal it has been to [receive]



sustained, top-class recognition as an employer of excellence through the Great Place to Work® Trust Index© survey. We have few doubts in saying that the recognition has positively impacted employer branding in Portugal and thus our ability to attract talent. At the same time, to be part of a ranking where only the very best get recognised, has also allowed us to learn from others what they do well and include that in our practices.

**Q: What has been the biggest challenge that you have faced in this period to create the workplace culture that you have today?**

At Microsoft Portugal, we have been constantly working and investing on a having a long term HR strategy in place, in order to create a strong trust environment amongst our people and for them to feel valued and confident.

This has created a vibrant, inclusive culture with high level of engagement by employees, who feel like they are part of a winning team and are able to contribute to their fullest potential.

**Q: Looking ahead, what do you think will be the biggest challenges in the coming years for you to maintain and improve the workplace culture in your company?**

Looking ahead, the biggest challenge is to build upon the practices we currently have to maintain our peoples' passion and satisfaction in the workplace. We must keep working on competitive HR practices to attract and retain the best talent.

This means that it is very easy to improve and climb the ladder of excellence when you start with modest results. When you are already an employer of excellence

and the whole market looks upon you and takes you for granted, then it's a lot more challenging to innovate and excel, especially in a very tough social and economic environment like the current one.

So, and as always, we have to get back to basics to understand how we can overcome challenges and ignite the organisation. This is done with the most valuable and basic of all assets: People!



**Middelbart Sparekasse**

**Q: What were your priorities for becoming a great workplace 11 years ago and how did they change in the last decade?**



In Middelbart Sparekasse, trust has always been the cornerstone of our relationships. It's all about mutual confidence, respect and recognition. We believe that these are prerequisites for enthusiastic and committed employees and for building a safe work environment.

In this way, we create a unique work community that's driven by our mission and culture in which we all share common success and develop together. [It is also] achieved by utilising our differences. We have great confidence in our employees, who possess a great amount of freedom and responsibility at the same time.

Employees have always been our focus and are our only competitive parameter. We need satisfied people, who have pride in their work and enjoy their job and their work relationships. We believe that this is the right way to run a business.

With 160 years of experience, we have continuously adapted to the rapidly changing world of which we are a part. Thus, in Sparekasse, we always stay tuned to new surroundings. The circumstances required acclimatisation, which resulted in us becoming more business oriented. Most importantly, we strived to achieve this without giving up on our way of creating value for our employees and our old virtues of orderliness, honesty and mutual respect.

**Q: What has been the biggest challenge that you have faced in this period to create the workplace culture that you have today?**

Our strength is our mindful employees, who are willing to change and adjust. The new managing director, Martin N. Baltser, has led the way in this regard, shifting the organisation so that we as a community can not only better serve our customers, but also better meet our employees' wishes.

The adjustment is a part of our new path, Strategy 2015, which did involve some challenges, like slimming down the organisation and obtaining a more sustainable business. We decided to make the company less complex by focusing on our core competencies, which also involved more decentralisation – meaning new roles for our employees and demanding new competencies. During this process we evolved, having our heart in the right place

**Q: Looking ahead, what do you think will be the biggest challenges in the coming years for you to maintain and improve the workplace culture in your company?**

No doubt that finding and striking the happy medium in the welfare of employees and carrying the business will require extra focus.

While everything out there is digitising, we must put more effort than ever into staff development. Furthermore, we are rearming in regard to human capital.

Our employees are our company's most crucial asset and the foundation for our unique work environment. We believe that with these strong internal relationships, we are ready to face future challenges. Additionally, we have a "platform" built on a balance between leadership and self-management, between team and individuality, between soft and hard values, between the human and technology, and the balance between work life and privacy

# DIAGEO

## Diageo

**Q: What were your priorities for becoming a great workplace 11 years ago and how did they change in the last decade?**

We are as passionate today as we were 10 years ago about becoming a great workplace – our priorities have changed as we have become more aware of



what truly makes a great workplace. In the beginning, it was about seeking recognition for what we felt were some best-in-class people practices. What we have learned through the support and guidance that we received from Great Place to Work® is that it is so much more than that. We now know that it is about building trust with employees – about truly engaging them about our business priorities and about ensuring that we create the conditions for every employee to succeed in their role so that we, in turn, deliver better business results. We are still learning what it takes to build employee trust and, each year, we get a deeper insight into what we can do to make Diageo Ireland an even better workplace.

**Q: What has been the biggest challenge that you have faced in this period to create the workplace culture that you have today?**

The biggest challenge has been the external environment with a period of recession and difficult prevailing market conditions. Like many organisations, this has resulted in leadership having to take some tough decisions.

In 2011 we implemented a new ‘Western Europe’ operating model to unlock growth opportunities for our business. The implementation of the new model resulted in an organisational change programme which had a significant impact on the Ireland business, leading to some fundamental changes in our organisational structure, ways of working and a headcount reduction. We also had a new Country Director join the business transferring from the Diageo business in Great Britain.

Change is never easy and we put a lot of effort into how we engage our

people around what we were doing. We have been really impressed by how our employees responded and in particular by how colleagues continued to focus on delivering extraordinary results for the business despite the fact that many were unsure of whether they had a role in the new organisation. In the face of uncertainty, it is the determination, the resilience, the dedication and the can-do attitude demonstrated by colleagues around the business and the passion to deliver that underpins for us why having a high-trust environment is absolutely critical.

**Q: Looking ahead, what do you think will be the biggest challenges in the coming years for you to maintain and improve the workplace culture in your company?**

Conditions remain very challenging with market conditions remaining tough. Despite this, we know from our internal values survey, the Great Place to Work® Trust Index® survey and the spirit in the business that levels of employee engagement, passion for the business and the commitment to make a difference remain incredibly high.

We will continue to make employee engagement a strategic priority. Being a great workplace is a core part of what we are trying to do as an organisation. Going forward, our focus areas are:

(1) Everybody is aligned to a strategy they believe in. We have an ambitious business strategy. Our people helped create it. It wasn't just created in a boardroom, we really engaged with colleagues for input and ideas. It's not just about results; it's about how people behave and what they experience in the business. For instance our strategy calls [for wanting to be a great workplace.]

This has inspired our line managers to be braver coaches and more open to feedback themselves.

(2) The second element is that Diageo is a business with strong values. We all genuinely connect with these values and try to live by them every day.

(3) The third element is that we really encourage strong communication and listening up and down the business. For instance, every 6 months, the Country Director visits every team in the business for connect sessions [in order to learn] how people are feeling in the business, what is getting in the way of great performance and what ideas there are to improve how we operate. After the sessions, the Leadership Team work though what they want to change to make people's lives easier and the business more effective.

(4) We strongly believe our people are our competitive advantage and so another way we manage through tough times is by continuing to invest in each person. Working for Diageo is a career and our people are learning functional and leadership skills all the time to help them further their career.

(5) In a tough and challenging environment, where we are asking more of our people all the time, it is our 'whole' person philosophy – the concept that is a whole person who comes to work every day - not just the employee. That motivates us to think bigger than the role when determining the programmes that we offer. Our people get a lot out of Diageo Ireland's wider contribution to society.

- They are proud of the brand heritage
- They are proud of the €270m of malt

and milk we buy from Ireland's farmers and the 20,000 jobs this supports.

- They are proud of the £1bn of exports and our support for pubs in Ireland.
- They want to give something back and whether it's through a charity soccer match, working voluntarily in work time with charities, being actively involved with the €3m we have given away to social entrepreneurs through the Arthur Guinness fund or in some other way the majority of our people are involved in supporting the community.

(6) We also invest in peoples' well-being. We refurbished the office, the gym and the swimming pool. We have walking challenges, a very successful charity Triathlon, a charity weight loss challenge among other initiatives, many of which are driven by employees themselves, and supported by the business. We know that fitter, healthier employees are more engaged and perform better which is good for the Employee and good for Diageo.

# Irma

Irma

**Q: What were your priorities for becoming a great workplace 9 years ago and how did they change in the last decade?**

We first decided to enter the Great Place to Work® competition as the criteria [against which] workplaces are measured



for areas that Irma believed in and focused on. At that time, the Great Place to Work Trust Index© survey was the only tested methodology that was able to measure workplaces across countries, industries, cultures and workplace sizes.

The areas that are measured in the Trust Index survey (Credibility, Respect, Fairness, Pride and Camaraderie) are areas that Irma finds crucial for good management. To take part gives us a good view of our workplace. It is a good tool for gaining knowledge about where to improve. Last but not least, positive media attention contributes to increasing our employees' pride in the workplace, and their energy and enthusiasm.

Irma is proud of being among the Best Workplaces in Europe and the survey is a means to achieving our goal of continued improvement.

**Q: What has been the biggest challenge that you have faced in this period to create the workplace culture that you have today?**

The biggest challenges have been specific to our industry. For instance, a change in opening hours and the financial crisis has been particularly tough for the retail industry in Denmark. Turnover in the retail industry in Denmark has been decreasing since 2007 and is close to the 2003 level.

Additionally, the appeal of the law that used to regulate opening hours in Denmark has had an impact on Irma. We previously emphasized having a good work/life balance, but now we are facing a challenge. We have to balance expenses and at the same time we must dare to invest in the more "soft" factors.

Discount supermarkets are doing quite well, and for that reason we need to be good at telling our customers what it is that Irma is offering and what we want to be known for.

Lastly, we need to secure our employees' understanding of what is expected from them and that they should provide an outstanding shopping experience every time they enter one of our stores.

**Q: Looking ahead, what do you think will be the biggest challenges in the coming years for you to maintain and improve the workplace culture in your company?**

The biggest challenge will be to find our place in a changing marketplace. We must stick to prioritizing being a good workplace and invest in education, benefits, etc.; to continuously secure a high level of information; and to remember to celebrate successes in a tight market.

We will have to continue working with the feedback we get from our employees from the Trust Index© survey. At Irma, being a good workplace is a high priority. Our employees also have a large share in our good results throughout the years. They have a passion for working at Irma. Our employees create our success.



Cisco

**Q: What were your priorities for becoming a great workplace 11/10/9 years ago and how did they change in the last decade?**



Our key priorities are centered on our Employee Value Proposition which we call “What Cisco Offers You”. Our proposition is focused around five core elements: The People; The Culture; The Environment; The Opportunity; and The Rewards.

For each of these areas we know the employee experience we want to generate (see figure 1) and it is the combination of these experiences that make us a unique and brilliant place to work.

Under each of these statements is a whole host of enablement mechanisms that look to drive these experiences. Some examples include:

a. Under Culture: a set of company values brought to life throughout the organisation. We encourage Managers to explore what these values mean with their teams. We also look for our people leaders to model these values. Culture is the unique essence of Cisco. It is our differentiator and we focus on it daily.

b. Under Connect your world we utilise and encourage the use of our advanced collaboration technologies. These technologies enable us to connect with each other in ways that are leading edge. High definition video is the norm, and company meetings with thousands of employees from around the world are connected over TelePresence, Cisco TV & in person. Such events are clear examples of how our technologies connect the unconnected, including our global employees. This inspires pride in what we do.

c. Under Inspire your dreams, a clear company vision and strategy is essential. Ask any Cisco employee and they will tell you our vision is to “Change the Way People Work, Live, Play and Learn.” Communication is at the heart of driving that sense of purpose for all employees. Our Webex Social platform enables two-way communication between leadership and employees, and videos are created, shared and rated, to reinforce messaging in all leadership meetings. Managers also receive a quarterly playbook that can be used to drive discussions on executing our vision and strategy within their teams. Our employees are an active part of the solution – all of which inspires a 70,000 strong workforce.

Another key element in our priorities has been to focus on organisational health (defined as the sustainable ability to drive high performance). We have benchmarked ourselves against nine critical areas of organisational health (Direction, Accountability, Leadership,

External Orientation, Co-ordination & Control, Innovation & Learning, Capabilities, Motivation and Culture and Climate.) When we first benchmarked ourselves in 2011, Cisco EMEAR (Europe, Middle East, Africa, and Russia/CIS) ranked in the third quartile in four areas, the second quartile in two areas, and the top quartile in only two areas. This was unsatisfactory to the leadership team, and over the last 18 months they have focused on driving key areas of improvement. This has led us to move into the top quartile in five areas and the second quartile in four areas.

Our Employee Value Proposition has been consistent since it was launched in 2008, and we are seeing the benefits of this consistency as we look at our employee listening survey results. For example, "Pride" is key to employee engagement levels. Some 89% of employees are proud to work for Cisco... up 3 percentage points since 2011.

**Q: What has been the biggest challenge that you have faced in this period to create the workplace culture that you have today?**

Communications and change management are two areas that can be challenging:

Communications in a complex, global and virtual environment has been a challenge. Realigning our communications organisation, as well as enabling our employees to all be communicators through platforms such

as Webex Social (an internal social media platform), has aided this area. Communications is now rated at 83% effective in EMEAR up from 79% in 2011, showing good progress.

As Cisco looks to achieve its goals in an ever-changing environment, it continually looks to evolve and transform itself. Management excellence is critical in making this evolution successful and is a core focus. For example, our Senior Leadership Exchange program drives regular communications around our key strategies and goals for the year. The senior leadership team drives these communications to all senior managers and above. The company recognises the important role our senior managers play in Cisco's transformation journey, and makes it a priority to drive their understanding of this information. This virtual meeting now includes close to 13,000 Managers globally.



Great Place to Work® would like to recognise three companies for extraordinary practices in three of the areas of the Giftwork® model.

## The Special Awards

As part of 100 Best Workplaces in Europe in 2013, Great Place to Work® is proud to present three special awards for Employee Development, Work/Life Balance, and Showing Appreciation. The award winners were chosen from among the 100 companies that appear on this year's three lists. All companies were eligible, regardless of size. To be considered for the award, we looked at the breadth and variety of programs and policies in each of these areas that distinguish Best Companies from their counterparts.

The awards are based upon the nine Giftwork® Practice Areas, the areas where companies can effectively build high levels of trust – and therefore a great workplace. The nine practice areas are organised along three core themes: achieving organisational objectives; people giving their personal best; and working together as a team or family.

We present three awards each year, cycling through one of these three core themes. The result is that over the course of three years, at least one company receives recognition in all nine of the Giftwork® Practice Areas. This year's awards cover the theme of "People giving their personal best" and feature awards for Developing, Caring (Work/Life Balance) and Thanking.

## Special Awards

### “EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT” (DEVELOPING)



#### WINNER:

W.L. Gore & Associates  
(France, Germany, Italy,  
Sweden)

#### RUNNER UP

Admiral Group  
(Italy, Spain, UK)

#### RUNNER UP

DIS AG (Germany)

This year we present a special award in the category of **“Employee Development,”** where we recognise a company with outstanding practices that help employees develop their talents and realise their full potential, both personally and professionally. The winner of the award is **W.L. Gore & Associates**, a producer of electronics, medical products and fabrics.

Employee development is deeply integrated into W.L. Gore’s values and institutional DNA. One of the company’s four guiding principles is “Freedom to encourage, help and allow other associates to grow in knowledge, skill and scope of responsibility.” Accordingly, W.L. Gore associates have no pre-defined career path or role, but are free to find their own path to help them maximise their contributions. This approach is encouraged by Gore’s flat, lattice organisational structure.

To help employees discover their path, every associate at W.L. Gore, regardless of his or her role or number of years of service, has a sponsor. More than a coach or mentor, the W.L. Gore sponsor formally commits to helping an associate succeed. Moreover, that sponsor remains a go-to resource for any and all questions or feedback, and provides guidance on development opportunities. Sponsors also act as an advocate during the compensation

process, ensuring that their associate’s contributions are recognised. Ultimately, a sponsor helps ensure that an employee is successfully integrated into his or her role and into the Gore culture.

The sponsor-employee relationship is augmented by a Personal Development Plan, which employees create in conjunction with the sponsor. That plan is revisited each year after a thorough annual review, where the employee receives 360-degree feedback. Moreover, leaders, sponsors and Human Resources professionals from each functional area of the company gather every year for an Associate Development Process, where they discuss current and future development plans for each associate.

The employee development process at W.L. Gore is dynamic. Once an associate establishes a track record within the organisation, it is up to him or her to determine a growth trajectory, be it becoming an expert in a specialised field or assuming broader responsibilities within the company. These customised development paths – coupled with support structures – help each associate maximise his or her contribution. And that helps the entire enterprise succeed.



## “SHOWING APPRECIATION” (THANKING)

# MARS

### WINNER:

Mars (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland)

### RUNNER UP

Softcat (UK)

### RUNNER UP

Cisco (France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland)

For the Great Place to Work® special award for **“Showing Appreciation,”** we recognise the company that best cultivates “a culture of appreciation” where employees are regularly rewarded for good work and extra effort. This year’s winner is Mars, a global manufacturer in the food, beverage and pet-care industries.

Mars’ culture is marked by a wide variety of recognition programs and ways in which the company shows appreciation to employees. Mars’ global “Make the Difference” program recognises employees who have made particular contributions in specific areas: innovation; line management excellence; sustainability and community work. Winners are first selected at the national level and then advance to a regional competition, with finalists given the opportunity to attend a global event in Washington, DC, where they present their project to senior management and other members of the Mars family.

Many Mars sites around the world use what are called Associate Recognition Awards as a way to show appreciation. Twice each year, employees are invited to nominate themselves, their manager or a colleague for one of these awards in one of six categories. The management team judges nominations. Winners are publicly announced – and celebrated – in front of the company at a

quarterly meeting. Additionally, many Mars locations use “Responsibility Bonuses” to recognise employees who take on additional workload during a particularly busy period. This monetary award (which often represents 10% of base salary) sends a message to employees that their colleagues’ extra effort has been noticed and is appreciated. The monetary bonus not only recognises that the associate has taken on additional responsibility, but that the effort is really part of that employee’s personal development plan.

The culture of appreciation at Mars extends beyond these formal awards. These large-scale recognition practices occur in tandem with day-to-day events such as employee birthday celebrations, Christmas presents, and company dinners for departing employees to thank them for their service. Says one employee from Mars Ireland, “From management to other co-workers, everyone has always treated me ... with respect and recognised [my] achievements numerous times throughout the year.”



## “WORK/LIFE BALANCE” (CARING)



### WINNER:

St. Gereon  
Altenhilfe  
(Germany)

### RUNNER UP

Fondia  
(Finland)

### RUNNER UP

Microsoft (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, UK)

The Special Award for **“Work Life Balance”** goes to a company that succeeds in helping employees balance their work and personal lives, with programs and practices that are uniquely flexible and generous. This year that special recognition goes to **St. Gereon Altenhilfe**, a senior and nursing-care company with facilities just west of Cologne, Germany.

At St. Gereon Altenhilfe, helping employees find the balance between work, family and leisure time is linked directly to the organisation’s success. Indeed, work-life balance is integrated into the institution’s vision statement: “We create the conditions for ensuring that our employees enjoy a good balance between their jobs and their family life.” That statement stands in direct contrast to the working conditions in the eldercare industry as a whole, conditions often marked by long hours and high turnover.

For example, although most employees at St. Gereon Altenhilfe work hourly shifts, they can arrange their own schedules. There are 40 different work-hour models at the 269-employee company. Employees can decide how long their breaks will last and whether they wish to stay at work longer or go home earlier, as dictated by the workload on any particular day. Additionally, St. Gereon Altenhilfe has established a pool of nursing care personnel who can come to work on short notice. This means that if a co-worker falls ill or cannot make it to work, other staff does not need to unexpectedly pick up extra shifts.

These employee-centric scheduling policies are supplemented by a unique “traffic light” color code system for monitoring workload. In the “green” phase (up to 30 hours per week), employees have full control over their schedule and the number of hours they work. In the “yellow” phase (30-50 hours), working hours are coordinated with the employee’s team and his or her direct supervisor. If an employee reaches the “red” phase (more than 50 hours), his or her supervisor steps in, giving the employee time off and arranging for other employees to take over the shift.

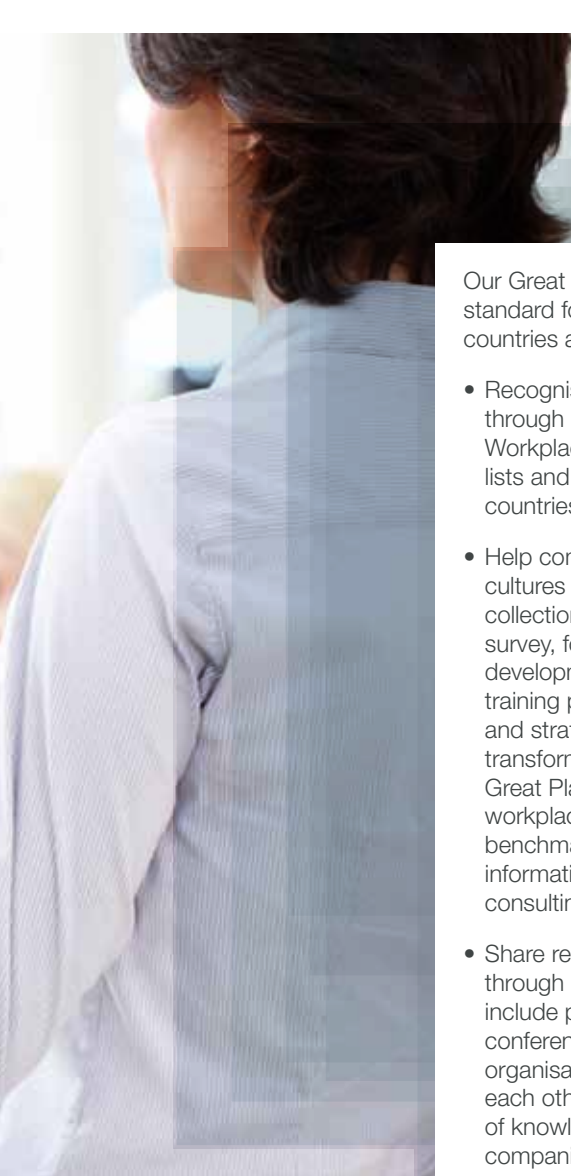
St. Gereon Altenhilfe extends this same spirit of support and flexibility to employees’ family members. For working parents, the company has arranged partnerships with local daycare centers. And, if employees have relatives who themselves have nursing care needs, they are given preferential admission into the institution’s own nursing homes.

While other companies may have more comprehensive or traditional work-life balance policies, St. Gereon Altenhilfe is a standout within its industry. The company understands the connection between work-life balance and employee motivation, initiative and work performance, and continuously strives to meet the needs of its workforce. Says one employee, “Special requests for duty shifts are carefully considered. Problems are immediately dealt with. [There is] a very familial atmosphere, very pleasant!”



## About Great Place to Work<sup>®</sup>

**Great Place to Work<sup>®</sup> Institute, Inc.** has conducted pioneering research on the characteristics of great workplaces for more than 25 years. We believe all companies can become great workplaces, and our mission is to help them succeed.



Our Great Place to Work® model is recognised as the standard for assessing great workplaces. In nearly 50 countries around the world, we are proud to:

- Recognise Best Workplaces for their achievements through our international and national Best Workplaces lists. In Europe, we publish 19 national lists and worldwide we publish lists in nearly 50 countries.
- Help companies create and sustain great workplace cultures through our advisory services. Our data collection tools (e.g. the Trust Index© employee survey, focus groups, 360-degree professional development tool); educational workshops and training programs; action planning system; and strategic advisory services support the transformation process within any organisation. Great Place to Work's unique access to best workplace data allows us to offer unparalleled benchmarking opportunities, best practice information, and transformation insight for our consulting clients.
- Share resources, best practices, and research through our events and education services. These include peer networking groups, workshops, conferences, and publications, which enable organisational leaders to learn directly from each other, as well as benefit from our wealth of knowledge and lessons learned from best companies and our clients.

## European offices:

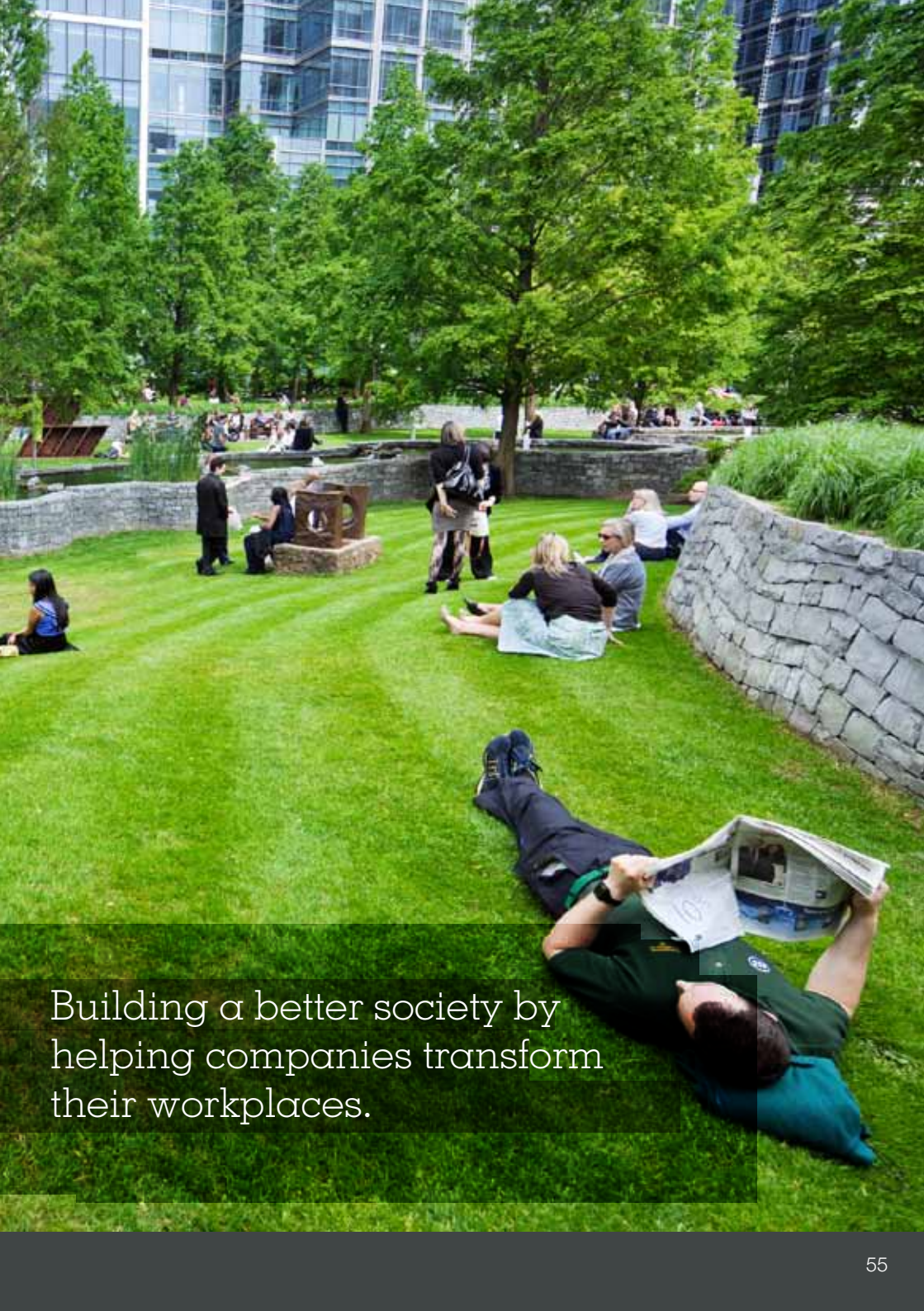
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Building a better society by  
helping companies transform  
their workplaces.

