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BEST SMALL COMPANIES TO WORK FOR

2009



Cheers: Graham Hefferman of Business Environment makes a splash on company day

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Business Environment
Business services



Annual sales	£21.6m
Staff numbers	88
Male/female ratio	46:54
Average age	33
Staff turnover	21%
Earning £35,000+	25%
Typical job	Centre manager

There was no Christmas party at Business Environment last year but there was still plenty of seasonal cheer, as staff preferred to split the normal budget among themselves as a festive bonus to pay for presents.

When senior managers at the serviced office company were considering whether a festive celebration would be appropriate, they consulted staff. The 88 employees agree that managers listen rather than just tell (an 80% positive score) and they don't feel taken advantage of (74.5%).

The company, based in London and 12 other locations, gets its best scores in our survey for Giving Something Back to the wider world, with a 72% positive score overall (a top 25 result).

There's a green committee, proposed in one of the regular workshops for new starters, which rewards staff for ideas that are implemented. The company supports staff raising money for good causes and everyone takes part in events such as Jeans for Genes day, which helps children with genetic disorders.

With so many offices there is the potential for plenty of waste but the firm recycles everything from milk bottles to paper. Clients are encouraged to participate, and the company also runs energy-saving schemes. Staff say the organisation does a lot for the environment (81%) and supports its local communities too (70%).

A vision statement was launched at a recent summer family fun day and new starters have an induction pack to tell them all about it. To keep people talking, there are fortnightly team meetings and morning team huddles. Managing director David Saul recently spent the best part of a day talking to central London staff individually about how they and the firm were doing.

Staff say they aren't under too much pressure to concentrate (80%) or to perform well (79%), deadlines are realistic (79%) and they don't end most days feeling exhausted (58%).

Everyone has private healthcare, childcare vouchers and life assurance. After three months, people enter a contributory pension scheme matching their input of 2% of salary, and everyone works a 40-hour week.

Social events include regular outings such as tours of London and bowling.



BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

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