

NEWS

The best and worst sides of our employers

When I see employers from my perspective as a consultant, it often surprises me how different their cultures, practices and environments are from one another.

One morning I observed a harmonious sales team having a meeting that could only be described as a big warm hug. Later I was facilitating a resolution between a belligerent vice-president and the controller at a company fraught with conflict and disrespect.

There are undoubtedly many kinds of employers that span a wide spectrum from great to terrible, so it is meaningful to identify and recognize those that serve as an inspiring model to the rest.

The Greater Toronto Area's Top 50 Employers for 2007 were announced recently, by Toronto publisher Mediaworld. Among the 50 top employers are four companies based in Mississauga, including Hewlett-Packard (Canada), Microsoft Canada, Reynolds and Reynolds (Canada), and Serono Canada.

Earlier this year, Hewitt Associates issued their own list of 50 Best Employers in Canada for 2006, which included 9 companies headquartered in Mississauga. These were Cintas, G & K Services, Edward Jones, Walmart Canada, GlaxoSmithKline, Microsoft Canada, Hoffmann-LaRoche, Corporate Express and HB Group Insurance. Congratulations to all of these

HANNA DUNN

HUMAN CAPITAL



and other fine organizations that strive to be great employers.

To quote Hewitt Associates' website: "Canadian organizations recognize the need to be a Best Employer. They know there is a war for skilled employees. They understand that Best Employers attract top talent. They realize the need to capture the hearts and minds of employees to truly drive superior business performance."

According to Hewitt Associates, the key traits of best employers are in how they approach leadership, growth, talent management and the day-to-day details of managing people. Best employers strive for high levels of employee engagement; they provide incentives, motivation, "perqs" and exceptional work environments. People who work for these employers are fortunate. (In my experience, sometimes they don't realize how fortunate they are.)

But what about the other thousands of organizations in Canada, and even those in Mississauga, that make no effort to be a best employer? What about the companies that accept mediocrity at best, and at worst couldn't care less about the well-being of the people who come to work for them every day? These employers are out there and deserve to have their ways exposed.

I'd like to offer the Worst Employers' list for 2006. I won't mention names but maybe you'll recognize someone you know.

- The manufacturing company whose president/owner promises to "look after" people once they've had a workplace accident if they don't report it to WSIB.
- All of the organizations that will pay fully qualified new employees thousands of dollars below the established rate for their new jobs because they didn't ask for more.
- The logistics company that tolerates their general manager verbally abusing his hourly employees, rationalizing (in his mind) that they're all lazy and stupid.
- Employers that exploit new immigrants by paying them less than they are worth - because they can.
- All of the companies that coerce their employees into agreeing to employment terms or conditions that do not comply with

legislation.

- The CEO of a very profitable organization who, when asked about employee raises for the third year in a row, responded with: "No - they can go work somewhere else if they don't like it."

- The client that keeps asking me to hire young attractive females - because they are "eye candy" for the male customers.

- The employer that routinely denies people their vacation time as there's always a crisis and it's too busy.

- The building services contractor that pays men and women different wages because...well, there isn't really a reason.

These and other deplorable situations are more common than you might think. Many employers are completely heartless and/or they blatantly ignore employment legislation. I wish we could publish a list of the names of the offending organizations - but that would be neither fair nor prudent.

If you are aware of any of the above kinds of business practices, and if it is an area that is legislated, you can always report the offending employer to the Ministry of Labour, Ontario Human Rights Commission or other relevant legislative body. (Please be absolutely sure of the facts before you make any accusations.)

Along with congratulating our best employers, let's try to help clean up our worst employers too.

Hanna Dunn is president of Dunn & Winfield Group Inc. and has been a Human Resources professional in Mississauga for the past 20 years. Feel free to write to her at: hannad@dunnwinfield.com or visit www.dunnwinfield.com for more information.

Taking care of (small) Business



Recognizing the outstanding contributions by the small business community to Ontario's economic prosperity, Minister of Small Business and Entrepreneurship Harinder Takhar of Mississauga last month launched 'Salute to Small Business Month' at the site of a successful small business. In this case, Hyperactive Communications Inc. (120 Lakeshore Road West, Unit 6). Lisa Kember, president of Hyperactive is congratulated by Takhar after being selected as October's successful small business. Photo by Barry Pierce

FRUSTRATED?

Since 1981 We Have Been Eliminating Downtime Through Proven Solutions



NETWORKS: Design-Installation-Implementation-Support-Anti-Virus-Cabling-Wireless Upgrades-Printer Repairs

SOFTWARE: Visual Basic Custom Design Install-Support

TRAINING: Microsoft-Windows etc., Linux



416-990-1162

Admired from chairlifts everywhere.

2007 BMW X3 3.0i

Introducing the BMW X3 with xDrive. Starting at \$45,300, this latest addition to our Sports Activity Vehicle family is the best way to expand your sense of adventure. With xDrive, a sophisticated new all-wheel drive system, plus an optional 225 hp, inline six-cylinder engine, there's never been a better time to answer the call of the wild.

MINI of Mississauga
3500 Hurontario St.
Mississauga, ON
L4W 1Z6
Tel: 905-270-3300
www.mini.ca

MINI of Mississauga
4500 Hurontario St.
Mississauga, ON
L4W 1Z6
Tel: 905-270-3300
www.mini.ca

Remo Fanti Group of Finc Automobili

SPECIAL LEASE OFFER
MINI COOPER SOHO

\$299 */MONTH
FOR 39 MONTHS

MINI Vaughan West
55 Autopark Cnd.
Woodbridge, ON
L4L 1A2
mini.vahgan.west.ca

*Lease rates are based on a 2006 MINI Cooper with Soho Package. Example: MSRP for 2006 MINI Cooper with Soho Package is \$26,200. Lease is based on \$25,215, which includes a \$1,426 freight and PDI charge at a lease rate of 4.5% and a term of 39 months. The monthly lease payment is \$299.27. \$1,500 down payment is required. The last month's lease payment, a security deposit of approximately one month's lease payment, a personal property security registration charge (up to \$20), and a cancellation charge (if any) are all based on the same rate and required upon lease signing. Total obligation is \$11,500.26 plus tax, which includes the dealer's cost of \$25,000. Options, taxes and insurance are extra. The residual value of the vehicle at end of term is \$18,640. Annual mileage is limited to 20,000 km. Excess mileage charges may apply. Driving must be taken by November 30, 2006. Offer is subject to availability and may be cancelled or changed without notice. Please call MINI Vaughan West for full details.