

# Work Style

A worldwide observatory on work style changes

## Special edition

25 Best Multinational Workplaces. 50 Best Small & Medium Workplaces. 25 Best Large Workplaces. They are the 2011 Europe's 100 Best Workplaces *Interviews with HR Directors and an exclusive reflection by Parag Khanna on the future of work in Europe.*



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 Editorial team

Event team

- Otto Zell, *Director Global List Management*
- Marcus Erb, *Sr. Consultant & Sr. Research Partner*
- Jacob Goldstein, *Project Coordinator, Corporate Team*
- Jane Waeber, *Responsible Communication & Events*
- Charles Pelton, *Global Chief Marketing Officer*
- Julia Hardouin, *Events Assistant*

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**International publisher**  
 The Work Style Company  
 Via GB Pioda 5, POBox, 6901 Lugano, Switzerland  
 T 0041 91 9101000  
 W [www.theworkstylemagazine.com](http://www.theworkstylemagazine.com)  
 E [welcome@theworkstylemagazine.com](mailto:welcome@theworkstylemagazine.com)

<b>Italian publisher</b> Gds Brand Consultancy Foro Buonaparte 48, 20121 Milan, Italy T 0039 02 80583151	<i>US Address</i> The Work Style Magazine 2578 Broadway, Suite 150 New York, NY 10025
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 Italgrafica  
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<b>Chairman</b>	Mirko Nesurini
<b>Editor in Chief</b>	Rosario Imperiali d'Afflitto
<b>Editor</b>	Paola Bettinelli
<b>Special edition editor in Chief</b>	Cristina Milani
<b>Foreign Editors</b>	Pina Draskovich, Fabian Uzaraga
<b>Section Editors</b>	Roberto Benzi, Filippo De Bortoli, Luca Brunoni, Allan Hall, Rosario Imperiali, Nigel Phillips, Matthew Seminara, Martha Tintin, Giulia De Florio, Senem Oezdogan

<b>Advertising</b>	<i>International</i> Roberta Donati E <a href="mailto:roberta@theworkstylemagazine.com">roberta@theworkstylemagazine.com</a> T 0041 91 9101000
	<i>Italy Publicitas International</i> Marzia Solinas E <a href="mailto:marzia.solinas@publicitas.com">marzia.solinas@publicitas.com</a> T 0039 02 55194385

**Subscriptions** [theworkstylemagazine.com](http://theworkstylemagazine.com)

**Work Style talking Contact**  
 Michael Brown  
 E [michael@theworkstylemagazine.com](mailto:michael@theworkstylemagazine.com)  
 T 0039 02 55194385

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**The conference is held at the Hotel Concorde La Fayette.** The facility is conveniently located close to the Champs-Élysées, between the La Défense business district and the Triangle d'Or shopping area. It is situated at 3, Place du Général Kœnig, which is one minute away from the Palais de Congrès, at 2.5 km from the Avenue des Champs-Élysées, 4.5 km from La Défense and 4 km from both Le Grand et Petit Palais and the Eiffel Tower. The closest underground stations are: Porte Maillot (Line 1), Porte de Champeret (Line 3) or 3 RER C/Train: Porte Maillot.

## In Paris meet 100% quality



**Mirko Nesurini**  
Chairman of The Work Style Company

Making 100 companies come together to talk about the future of work is not simple. Making 100 excellent companies come together it's a mission impossible that only organizations like GPTW can do. In April we organized a workshop in Milan to talk about the identity of work. One hundred thirty-five employees from excellent European companies and designers helped us, offering ideas and suggestions that are partially reported starting from page 40 and that are deepened in the book *Talking* (publisher The Work Style Company, 316 pp., Euro 24). The Awards ceremony for Europe's 100 Excellent Workplaces is an interesting habit

that is compiled in this media that for the fourth time we publish as international media partner. Besides highlighting to the public this year's best companies in the 35 countries where we are distributed, we offer support for organizations that can get to know each other or let others know about them. This support is not a simple list of companies but also acknowledges thoughts and suggestions offered by HR Directors. In this sense it offers a significant elaboration. In Paris GPTW has thought about creating an event in great style. Many in-depth sessions and meetings are held at the Hotel Lafayette. ●



**The Gala dinner and the Award Ceremony is held at the Pavillon Gabriel,** situated at 5 Avenue Gabriel. The closest underground station is Champs-Élysées Clémenceau (Line 1). To go to the Pavillon Gabriel from the Hotel Concorde La Fayette, take Line 1 (yellow line) from Porte Maillot and get off at Champs Élysées Clémenceau; it's only 5 stops away and it takes about 10 minutes.

**A FAIRLY HAPPY MEDIUM.** In the debate between East and West for the most successful model of capitalism, Europe seems to hold a good balance; its hybrid public/private governance promotes equality and can be considered the best way for the future.

## Europe, a strong future



**Parag Khanna**  
Senior Research Fellow  
at the New America Foundation

### THE EUROPEAN MODEL.

There is clearly no winner in the East versus West debate about the most successful model for capitalism. We know that democracy needs capitalism, but capitalism doesn't need democracy and so many people are praising the China model or the Singaporean model, the state capitalism model, as many people cast out on the Western model, as a fair model. The truth is somewhere in between, and I think Europe is that in between. Europe is the balance between state capitalism, subsidies, national champions and regulation while also having free enterprise, entrepreneurship, and the ease of starting business. At the same time the social context is still one of social democracy so it is against inequality, strong basis in rights, very good infrastructure, this combination of characteristics it's something that is really offered only in Europe. Then there is the issue of government versus governance, what underpins this debate about East versus West is how strong the role of the State is, what I think is fascinating is the resolution of that in favor of a new mantra of hybrid

**“We know that democracy needs capitalism, but capitalism doesn't need democracy.”**

governance, collaborative governance, public/private governance, what the role, the appropriate role of the private sector in providing public goods, fostering innovation, and strengthening employment is. All of these kind of things maintain a low fare inequality, promoting equality. You find that tension

is very strong. In Europe you find that you have a fairly happy medium. You don't have a tremendous share of dependency on the State, but you do have firms and corporations that provide very strong wage support and are therefore contributing to welfare. You have public/private hybrid investments in entrepreneurship and innovation. I think Sweden is a very good example of that because of the role of Vinova. There are many examples in Europe of this hybrid public/private governance which is very much the way of the future.

### INNOVATION

The debate about innovation continues. Some people, think that innovation only happens in a completely free, unregulated and unsponsored type of environment, which is obviously not true, because some of America's leading innovations are originally government sponsored. They're referring to the Silicon Valley model. But most countries in the world can't take risks of failure. Singapore chooses very strategically 10-15 years in advance because they want to make sure they have an advantage. They cannot afford even one failure because they have a very precarious geopolitical situation, having a very ethnically diverse population that can become unstable. They believe that only wealth can maintain a cohesion of society, which is quite frankly true. For them the idea is to plan innovation. Last year I spent a few days and I visited their biopolis, futuropolis and A-star laboratories and realized that they have very long start up times, they want to be sure it's very clear what they innovate on and what sectors to attract.



Fellow at the New America Foundation, author of the international best-sellers *How to Run the World: Charting a Course to the Next Renaissance* (2011) and *The Second World: Empires and Influence in the*

*New Global Order* (2008). His 2008 cover story for the New York Times Magazine titled "Waving Goodbye to Hegemony," is one of the most globally debated and influential essays since the end of the Cold War.

#### EUROPE AND IMMIGRANTS

First of all this is a post-colonial problem and not a new one. What's happening in Libya and Tunisia is just one episode in a 65 years old story, since the end of colonialism. People make projections, but I think it's really hard to make projections because if we were sitting here ten years ago, we would be referring to Turks. What happened is that Turkey reached an inflection point where it became stable and prosperous and a nice place to return to. What Europe did right, it engaged with Turkey. Europe had a customs union with Turkey for 50 years. You have political engagement. You reformed Turkish laws. You have had a huge amount of foreign investment. In Turkey they have the 85-90% of foreign investment, and a massive development of Turkish infrastructure. All of these things have improved life in Turkey, so now they do not necessarily want to leave maybe they want to live in Turkey after all. So the lesson for Europe with North Africa is that you have to make it rich. You can't stop rafts coming. Spain has been trying all sorts of things. We all know that in the end they won't work. You have to do the Turkish thing, and that's just medium term. Foreign investment outside of oil and gas sectors is the main thing that needs to be done.

#### EUROPE AND IDENTITY

For Europeans the identity question needs to be broadened to follow politics, because of the politics of the EU expansion into a new expanded EU union, which I call EU Commonwealth. There are countries that are not in the EU that are becoming part of that commonwealth such as Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, and they have to become part of the identity. If you have a religious/ethnic definition of identity for Europe then you would fear a demographic decline, but if you have a political definition of the identity you can say Europe is actually quite strongly connected with Ukraine and maybe Turkey you have 650 million people and that's twice the size of the U.S. My hope is that younger generations will have a more political/geopolitical defi-

inition of identity but looking at the way young people approach politics today I think I'll end up completely disappointed.

#### YOUTH AND GLOBALIZATION

I believe that training for young people should prepare them for the corporate sector, the government sector and the nonprofit sector. Over the course of their life, they'll have multiple jobs in these areas. That's an example of new diplomacy. Another is the overall process of globalization which creates a new psychology. It becomes inevitable and that's when one realizes that they work for Jaguar, but their employer is Tata. There might still be vulnerability. One doesn't necessarily embrace globalization if it makes them weaker. Young people should recognize that's an irreversible process and, instead of recoiling from it, they should figure out how to take advantage of it.

#### WEST VS EAST

Europe is not over. There is strength to the European model, market and stability. The West won't be replaced by the East. Many say that this is the Asian century; it's neither the Asian Century, nor Indian, nor American, nor Brazilian. It's a complicated coexistence and the reason is because when people refer to the West, they think of Europe and North America, forgetting the third pillar of the West and that's South America. If you think about the West having three pillars, it is very sturdy, very strong, much stronger than the East, and there will never be a conflict. East is formed by China, Japan, Australia and Korea. There's much tension and, at times, hostility between these countries, so we should ask ourselves, if a thing such as the East actually exists. But there is such a thing as the West which has more than 50-60% of the world's economy. Europe should be much more confident, extending its reach across Eurasia. Europe is not doing enough to advance its expansion. It is very cautious.

#### CITIES AS NEW SCENARIOS FOR BEST WORKPLACES

When people use the term "war" for talent, they always refer to corporate competition, whereas I think the competition should be between cities. Talent migrates to certain geographic magnets. This is why, when the financial crisis hit us and many people lost their jobs in London or New York City, for example, they were sending CVs out in Abu Dhabi and Singapore. It didn't matter what the job was; their expertise is beyond one company.

**"So the lesson for Europe with North Africa is that you have to make it rich."**

They're looking to move to a place where there's cluster activity, so the war for talent is among cities, and not companies. Organizations move to where the talent is going.

#### TECHNICAL SKILLS, THE WAY FORWARD

The idea that by the name or reputation of where one has studied is enough to propel them through life is rapidly fading. Instead it hinges on skills. There are systems and societies that are advanced in this process, despite the competition from China and Asia, Germany continues to be the top exporter. This is because of the technical skills that are taught beginning at a younger age. Then there is the segmentation of education for particular career paths and anticipation of the need to preserve certain career paths like manufacturing, engineering, automotive. This training factor is applied at any level, even at corporate level, where organizations train their employees. They are also giving certificates, which become as useful as reputation and as important as a full degree, because it's quick; it's specific; it's tailored and it shows you can do something now. Those places that are emphasizing this vocational training component will be much better off. ●

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**NEW AND OLD.** The 2011 100 Best Workplaces list presents some changes but the underlying philosophy is the same: awarding the Best Workplaces that create productive and successful businesses. 1,380 companies entered the list and the competition was tougher than ever.

## Welcome “the Best”



**Jose Tolovi, Jr.**  
Global CEO Great Place to Work® Institute

We are proud to present the 100 Best Workplaces in Europe 2011. This year, 1,380 companies took the journey with Great Place to Work® Institute and entered the list-process to benchmark themselves with the best. These companies represent more than 1.5 million employees in Europe, making this study to the largest of its kind.

We know that operating in multiple countries is a difficult job; creating a great workplace in multiple countries is even harder! We are therefore happy to announce the following changes, as compared to last year.

We have introduced a separate list for Multinational Companies! With this list, we want to specifically recognize companies that seek to create great workplaces across country borders and cultural and language differences. Companies must be listed on a minimum of three national Best Workplaces Lists in Europe to be eligible for this list.

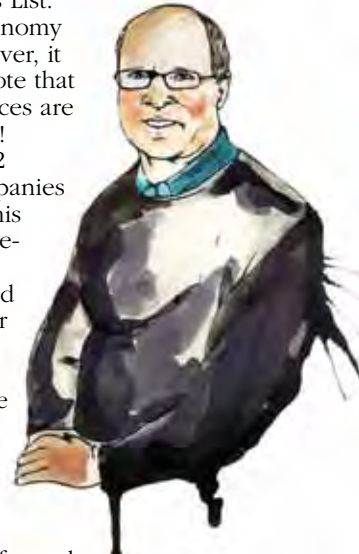
Furthermore, to recognize participation in national Best Workplaces Lists, companies that entered multiple Best Workplaces competitions in Europe received extra credit. This extra credit was built into our evaluation process on European level.

Only the top companies meet the criteria to participate in the Best Multinational Workplaces list, with Microsoft emerging as our inaugural winner. Congratulations!

Our two other lists at European level are the Best Small & Medium Work-

places List and the Best Large Workplaces List. As always, the competition was tough, and we are proud to announce the winners: Frøs Herreds Sparekasse (Denmark) made it to the top of the Small & Medium Workplaces List, and Elica (Italy) is #1 on the Large Workplaces List.

As the global economy continues to recover, it is important to note that the Best Workplaces are great job creators! During the last 12 months, the companies represented on this year's list have created 14,000 new jobs and increased their total number of employees by this number. Not surprisingly, these companies are popular employers, receiving on average 8.4 job applications per each existing staff member per year. I hope that you will become inspired by these companies. They are certainly setting the standards for how to create productive and successful businesses.



**Robert Levering**  
Co-Founder Great Place to Work® Institute

**Denver Conference.** Individuals from a broad range of industries come to the Great Place to Work® Conference in March 2011, to exchange best practices, to share challenges, and to build a robust support network. The topic of the Denver conference evolved around trust in the workplace, so that the question is: what can companies do to build trust in their workplace?

**The 2012 conference will take place in Atlanta (US) on March 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>.**



**Ricardo Lange**  
CEO Great Place to Work® Institute Inc.

Article by  
**Marcus Erb and Jacob Goldstein**

**01** Man at work at Novozymes

**02** Employee at Novozymes

Novozymes is the world leader in bioinnovation. Our business is industrial enzymes, microorganisms, and biopharmaceutical ingredients. We provide business-to-business biological solutions used in the production of numerous products such as biofuel, detergents, feed, and crops. Novozymes has over 5,000 employees globally, working in research, production, sales, and administration. When we spoke to Nathalie Ove Hoffmann, HR Director at Novozymes she put great emphasis on the importance of trust in the workplace, saying that her company is highly based on trust, as she states: "We trust employees, we give them the chance to take responsibility for their own tasks, we trust them in being motivated and being capable of completing those tasks."

## Trust in the workplace

Placing trust in someone is like giving a gift, because it empowers the other person and expands his or her possibilities. Although it is not yet commonplace for leaders to give the "gift" of trust to all of their employees, creating a high-trust workplace is an important goal, ultimately resulting in employees reaching their full potential and greater financial success for the company.

### BUILDING TRUST: THE ULTIMATE ASSET

Everyone knows how to engage in trustworthy behavior with some people – those who are regarded favorably, cared for deeply, and with whom responsibilities are shared. Often this trustworthy behavior comes naturally to people, such as with family and close friends. When trust shows up in the workplace, it has a powerful impact on a company's success and ability to sustain it, particularly in the rapidly changing times we find ourselves in now.

At the 2011 Great Place Work® Conference, speakers shared their insights about how they have built great workplaces at their businesses. While these speakers represented companies of many sizes and many different industries, they shared one common theme of success: trust.

To begin, employees are more committed to leaders who they trust. When employees trust their leaders and find them to be credible, they are more likely to contribute to their ideas, experiment with new ways of resolving dilemmas, address customer concerns, and follow leaders into uncharted territory.

Trust thus gives leaders the ability to

focus on leading, rather than spending time controlling people, putting out fires or responding to crisis brought about by unethical behavior. In a collaborative environment permeated by mutual trust, leaders set the direction for the organization and employees – who have often been involved in the process of developing implementation strategies – are willing to follow.

Companies' efforts to build trust show up not just in happier employees, but also in their financial statements. The publicly traded 100 Best Companies have consistently shown that as a group of organizations, their long-term financial performance is superior to that of comparable groups of companies – whether it is on the Dow Jones, the S&P 500, the Russell 3000, or our own internal comparison index of the Lower 100 group of companies. The 100 Best perform better in strong economic times, lose less in weak economic times, and recover faster to pursue new opportunities during times of renewal.

Why is this? In these Best Companies, employees believe their leaders, leaders respect their employees, and the workplaces are set up to insure fairness in daily operation. This creates a culture in which an individual's natural instinct to cooperate with a small group of close friends and kin is broadened to include the wider group of employees, managers and leaders throughout the organization. Thus, trust makes broader levels of cooperation possible.

### THE MEANING OF TRUST

The concept of "trust" has many dimensions, and its definition varies across different organizations. We asked several leaders taking part in the Great Place

01



02

to Work® Conference to share their definition of trust, as well as what their companies do to build trust between their employees.

**Richard Taylor**, HR Manager, Intel Corporation states that trust is “to say what you will do and then do what you say,” explains Taylor. “In Intel, to build trust between employees, we use a variety of matters. Communication is one of the most important things. We tell people about business strategy, we tell people how their individual job contributes to Intel’s success. We keep the dialogue open between managers and employees, we execute strategy, we celebrate success, we acknowledge our affiliates. And with this, the most important thing is that we have employees who believe in the company and we have managers who believe in employees.”

According to **Katherine Palmer**, Vice President, Human Resources Policy and Practices, Bright Horizons, trust goes back to credibility and integrity. “To build trust, a person needs to be able to honestly address things in an open way, to follow through on what they say, and stand behind it. That builds a trusting relationship.”

For **Cathy Leibow**, Vice President, Employee Loyalty Services, Les Concierges,

trust is an important aspect of Leibow’s work, which is focused on concierge services. “Clients trust us because, for example, we have access to their credit card information. They trust us to use it to purchase tickets or movie events. The trust factor improves the organization and the services, which provides a return on investment for the client.”

**Jenn Mann**, Vice President, Human Resources, SAS Institute Inc. says that SAS has been in business for 35 years. While its business model and employee model have changed, the company still sees a strong connection between customer satisfaction and employees’ satisfaction. “We believe that if our employees are happy, our customers are also happy. This is an important formula. For us, trust is the confidence that the employees have in the company to put them first, to do what’s right for them. SAS recognizes that its employees have a life outside the organization.” And then she adds “We do not look at them as employees, we look at them as human beings.”

#### CONCLUSIONS

The practices of leaders at high-trust workplaces, having inspired thousands of employees to make commitments to the long-term success of their organiza-



tions, have now begun to change the mindset of other leaders. Why would an employee place his or her security into the hands of leaders who are most likely not family or close friends? Because in great workplaces, leaders act in ways that invite trust: they speak honestly, keeping “spin” to a minimum, they equitably share the organization’s profits and benefits, and their actions match their words. Any organization can become a great place to work – just follow the leader. ●



“There have been moments of pride, amazement, and huge excitement in our journey from start-up to highly respected business. Our first client. Our first employee. Our 100th employee! The first time there were too many of us to have our company meeting in the local restaurant. The first £1-million contract. The first time we billed £1 million in consecutive months.” says **Jim Hayward**, Senior Partner at Baringa, who emphasizes: **“But for many of us, the one that sums it all up, was coming first in the UK’s Great Places to Work Awards in 2010. That has been, without question, one of the biggest sources of pride. It validates the beliefs the company was founded on, and recognises the work everyone has put in to making Baringa Partners the type of company we’re proud to bring people to.”**

## The Best Workplaces at a glance



### GENERAL FACTS

- 1,380 companies participated in the 2010-11 Best Workplaces study.
- 344,397 employee surveys were correctly filled-out for this edition of the study.
- The companies taking part in the study represent a cumulative total of 1,552,936 employees.
- The average Best Workplace is 33 years old. The oldest company on the list: the British branch of Twinings Commercial can date its history back to 1706 – 305 years!
  - 88% of the employees represented in the 100 Best companies affirm that “taking everything into account, I would say this is a great place to work.”
  - 23% of the 100 Best Workplaces are Information Technology and Telecommunications companies, while

20% are Manufacturing and Production companies. The list also includes Biotechnology & Pharmaceutical companies, as well as Social services and Government agencies (fig.1). This variety of companies illustrates the fact that any company can become a great workplace.

### THE BEST NATIONAL AND MULTINATIONAL WORKPLACES

For the first time, the 100 Best Workplaces in Europe have been divided in three lists:

- The 25 Best Multinational Workplaces
- The 25 Best Large Workplaces
- The 50 Best Small & Medium-Sized Workplaces

Accordingly, we have adjusted our methodology for creating the European Best Workplaces list.

As a result of the implementing an ad-

Text by **Otto Zell**

Director Global List Management

with Great Place to Work® Institute Inc. team

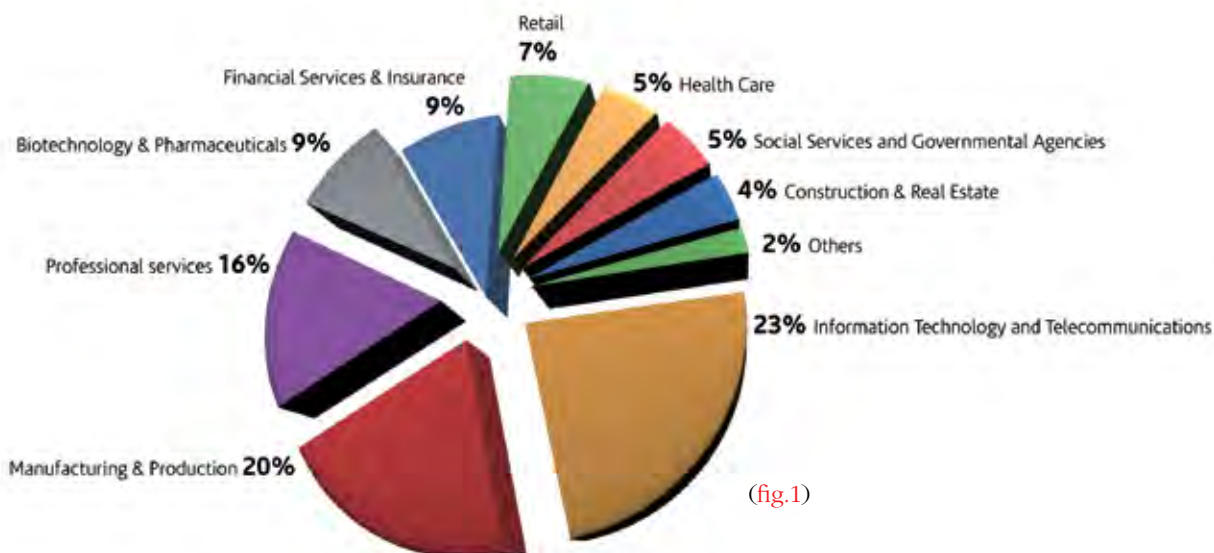
**Methodology.** This report features lists of the 25 Best Multinational Workplaces in Europe, the 50 Best Small & Medium-Sized Workplaces in Europe (for companies smaller than 500 employees) and the 25 Best Large Workplaces in Europe (listing companies with 500+ employees).

#### Where do these lists come from?

They are produced by a global organization called the Great Place to Work® Institute (GPTW). For the past 25 years, GPTW has been identifying and researching great workplaces, ever since Robert Levering and Milton Moskowitz – two journalists based in San Francisco, California – wrote their bestselling book 100 Best Companies to Work for in America. Their first list of the Best Workplaces in Europe was supported by the European Commission, which sought to help the European business community to develop great workplaces, therefore improve people’s quality of life and elevating the competitiveness of European industry.

**Today, the Great Place to Work® Institute conducts national workplace studies in more than 45 nations around the world, including 18 national studies in Europe, which are carried out by a network of affiliate offices. For the 2010-2011 edition of the European Best Workplaces Study, 1,380 European companies participated, representing more than 1.5 million employees. Participating employees filled out the Trust Index® Survey (an employee survey), as well as provided anonymous, written opinions about their organizations.**

Regardless of where your company participates in our study, all companies are evaluated under the same basic methodology: an extensive employee survey known as the “Trust Index®” accounts for 2/3 of the final score, while an independent evaluation of management practices known as a “Culture Audit®” accounts for the last 1/3.



justed methodology, it is not possible to directly compare this year's data with 100 Best lists from past years. However, one can still appreciate that trust levels have remained high, although there are slight differences in Trust Index® averages among the three lists.

The Trust Index® score from the 25 Best Multinational companies is slightly lower than that of the 25 Best Large Companies. Both of these lists have lower scores than the 50 Best Small & Medium Sized Companies (fig.2). A similar trend can be observed when looking at the detailed results, broken down by each of the dimensions of the Great Place to Work Model® (Credibility, Respect, Fairness, Pride and Camaraderie). The Large and Multinational Companies consistently score lower (fig.3).

Why? In our experience working with the Best Workplaces of different sizes, we have noticed a pattern. Usually, large companies excel at developing formalized policies and practices, and thus typically score better score than the small companies in the Culture Audit®. On the other hand, it is easier for the small companies to create trust-based relationships between management and employees, as there is a higher level of intimacy in employees' daily workplace interactions. This raises their Trust Index® score.

#### THE BEST WORKPLACES ARE JOB CREATORS

Although some of the 100 Best Workplaces have reduced their number of employees, the companies on this year's European list nevertheless remain huge sources for creating new jobs. In total, these companies have

increased their number of employees by 13,989, or 5.29%. The Best Workplaces are popular employers, understandably, and receive a high volume of job applications. On average, the 100 Best received 8,4 job applications per year per each existing staff member.

For example, Management Events in Finland has 87 employees, but received 4,000 job applications during the past year. This accounts for 46 job applications per existing employee! Beyond simply hiring many people, however, the Best Workplaces also make sure to provide personal and professional training to their existing employees. On average, the largest employee groups at the 100 Best receive 76 hours of formal training per year.

The Voluntary Employee Turnover average among the 100 Best is 9.3%.

Once the company appears on one of the 18 national Best Workplaces List in Europe, it is automatically a candidate for the European Best Workplaces List. On European level, we divide the pool of listed companies into Multinational companies and two size categories, which are 50 to 500 employees and 500+ employees. The European List is built on the data provided by our national offices. We use the same methodology to rank companies as on national level – with the exception of Multinational Companies.

*To be eligible for the 25 Best Multinational Workplaces list, a company must have:* At least 1,000 employees on global level. 40% of the company's global workforce must work outside the home country (the country in which the company is headquartered). Must be listed on at least three national Best Workplaces Lists in Europe. In the case that a company that operates in multiple countries does not qualify for the

Multinational Best Workplaces List – based on the aforementioned entry criteria – the company then competes with companies in its respective size category.

On regional level, we want to recognize multinational companies that make a specific effort to participate in the list process in multiple countries. Therefore, we give special credits to multinational companies according to the number of countries in which they participate. This credit is added to a company's preliminary score, based on its individual Trust Index® and Culture Audit® score (TI and CA score). The extra credit counts for up to 14% of a company's final score, which determines whether or not a company will be listed, as well as its rank on its respective list. Though many companies appear on multiple national lists, any one company will appear on the 100 Best Workplace in Europe list only once. Their position is determined by calculating the average of their TI



1<sup>st</sup> place for DIS AG  
in the competition  
"Germany's Best Companies  
to Work For 2011"

Work.  Your style.

Modern personnel service means addressing the individual needs of every employee and every client. And that's what we do best. You, too, can benefit from our expertise as one of Germany's top employers.



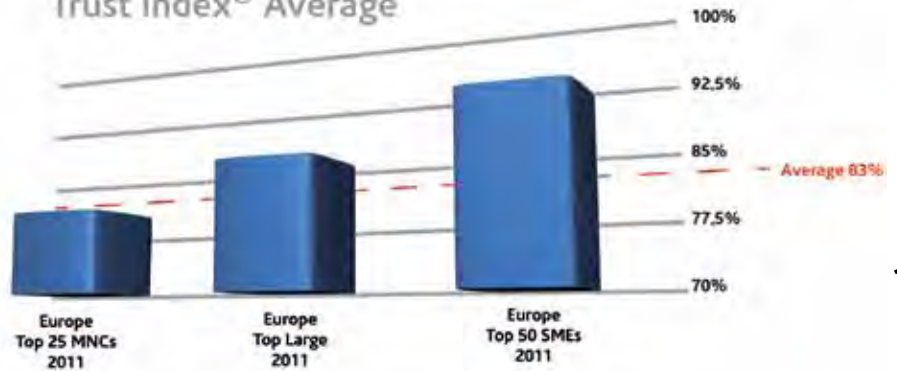
Handelsblatt

[www.dis-ag.com](http://www.dis-ag.com)

**DIS AG**

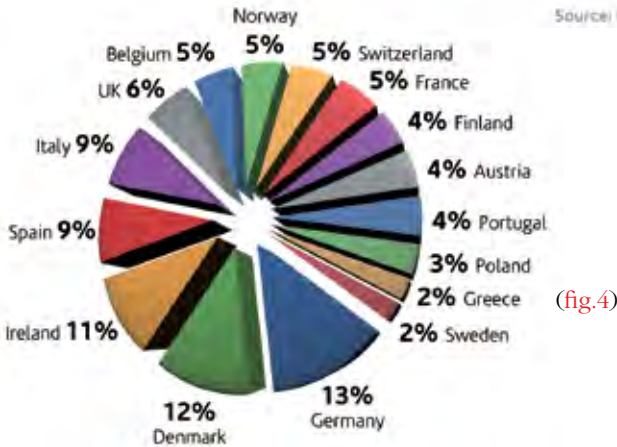


Trust Index® Average



(fig.2)

Source: Great Place to Work® Institute, "Best Workplaces in Europe" 2011

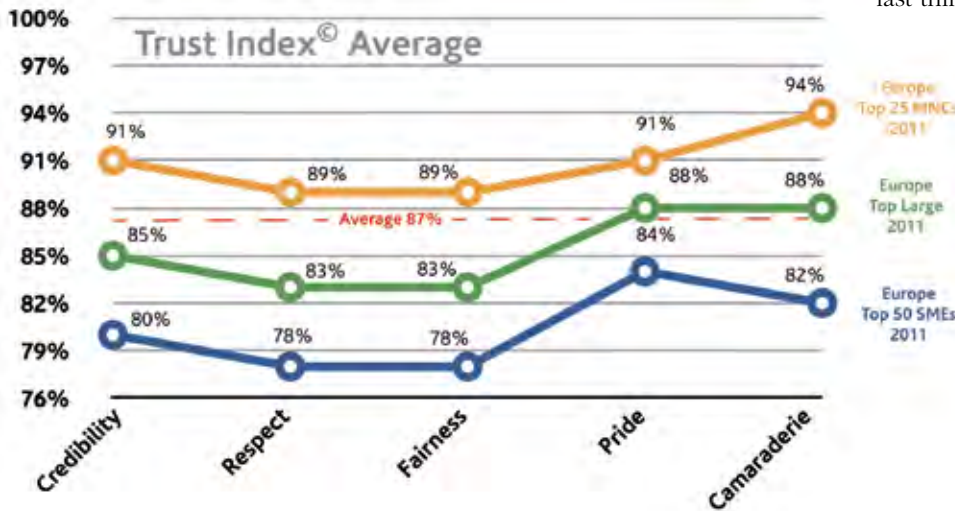


(fig.4)

The SMEs have the lowest turnover average, with a 5.5%. The average absenteeism rate at the 100 Best is 7% per year.

COUNTRY DISTRIBUTION OF THE BEST WORKPLACES

Germany, Denmark and Ireland dominate the country distribution, representing 1/3 of the listed companies. Spain, Italy, the UK, the Netherlands and Belgium represent the second third. Norway, Switzerland, France, Finland, Austria, Portugal, Poland, Greece and Sweden, represent the last third of the list (fig.4).



(fig.3)

and CA scores and weighting those scores by the number of employees. The methodology for evaluating workplaces derives from the Great Place to Work® Model®. According to this model, the definition of a great workplace is an organization where employees trust the people they work for, have pride in what they do, and enjoy the people they work with. Trust is broken down into three components – credibility, respect, and fairness – which are considered in addition to employees' sense of pride in their work and organization, and the camaraderie that they share with those they work with.

About the Great Place to Work® Institute's Trust Index® survey and Culture Audit®

The majority of the information in this publication comes from two sources, The Trust Index® and The Culture Audit®. Both are required

of companies who wish to be considered for the list of the 100 Best Workplaces in Europe. The Trust Index® is a standardized survey tool developed by the Great Place to Work® Institute Inc. The survey includes 58 statements related to the five dimensions of the Great Place to Work® Model®. Employees respond anonymously to each statement on a scale of 1-6: "almost always untrue", "often untrue", "sometimes untrue", "sometimes true", "often true" and "almost always true". Random, but representative samples of all employees – including managers – are invited to complete the survey. In smaller organizations, all employees receive a survey. The Culture Audit® is a detailed overview of a company's value system, management practices, and policies, and is usually completed by the HR manager and other senior leaders. The Culture Audit® includes both statistical data and open-ended questions and is evaluated based on a standardized methodology developed by Great Place to Work® Institute.

## 25 Best Multinational Workplaces

### 1 Microsoft

Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands, UK  
Information Technology  
Software  
12311  
[microsoft.com](http://microsoft.com)

### 2 Amgen

Belgium, Greece, Poland, Spain  
Biotechnology  
422  
[amgen.com](http://amgen.com)

### 3 Mars

Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland  
Manufacturing & Production/  
Food and beverage  
2334  
[mars.com](http://mars.com)

### 4 Cisco Systems

Austria, Belgium, Germany, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, The Netherlands  
Information Technology  
4280  
[cisco.com](http://cisco.com)

### 5 3M<sup>1</sup>

Austria, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Spain  
Manufacturing & Production  
5056  
[mmm.com](http://mmm.com)

### 6 NetApp

France, Germany, Switzerland, The Netherlands, UK  
Information Technology  
1328  
[netapp.com](http://netapp.com)

### 7 McDonald's

Belgium, Denmark, France, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Switzerland, The Netherlands, UK  
Manufacturing & Production  
Food and beverage  
45319  
[mcdonalds.com](http://mcdonalds.com)

### 8 SAS Institute

Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, The Netherlands  
Information Technology  
Software  
1595  
[sas.com](http://sas.com)

### 9 W.L. Gore & Associates

France, Germany, Italy  
Manufacturing & Production  
1514  
[gore.com](http://gore.com)

### 10 Kellogg's

Ireland, Italy, Spain  
Manufacturing & Production  
Food and beverage  
466  
[kelloggs.com](http://kelloggs.com)

### 11 Diageo

Ireland, Portugal, The Netherlands, UK  
Manufacturing & Production  
Food and beverage  
1338  
[diageo.com](http://diageo.com)

### 12 Hilti

Austria, Germany, Italy, Poland, Switzerland, The Netherlands  
Manufacturing & Production  
Machinery and equipment  
6030  
[hilti.com](http://hilti.com)

### 13 PepsiCo<sup>2</sup>

Germany, Greece, France, Ireland, Italy  
Manufacturing & Production  
Food and beverage  
2652  
[pepsico.com](http://pepsico.com)

### 14 Accenture

Austria, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland  
Information Technology  
IT Consulting  
7583  
[accenture.com](http://accenture.com)

### 15 FedEx

Belgium, France, Ireland, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, The Netherlands  
Package Transport  
5805  
[fedex.com](http://fedex.com)

<sup>1</sup> (Germany) 3M ESPE

<sup>2</sup> (Greece) Tasty Foods

<sup>3</sup> (Spain) Telefónica Int. TISA/ Telefónica Int. TIWS, (Germany, Ireland, UK) Telefónica O2

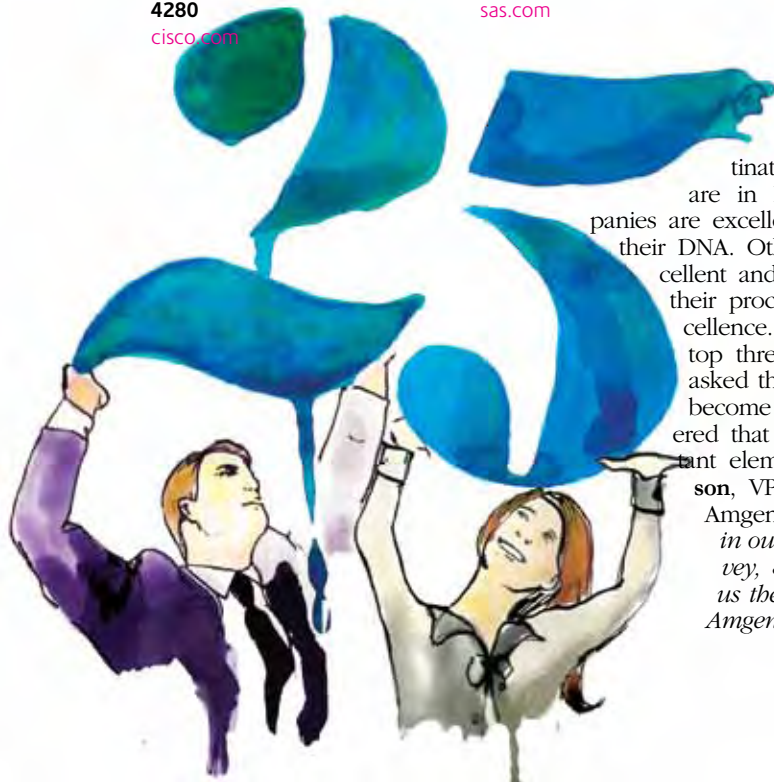
**25 Best Multinational Workplaces: Prior Recognition in the European List.** (numbers in brackets indicates the number of countries in which the company was listed). **Microsoft** [2003 (4), 2004 (12), 2005 (12), 2006 (8), 2007(12), 2008 (14), 2009 (16), 2010 (15)]; **Amgen** [2004(SP), 2006(PT), 2007(PT); Mars 2010 (3)]; **Cisco Systems**

The ranking shows that the 25 best multinationals to work for are in Europe. Many companies are excellent by nature. It's in their DNA. Others strive to be excellent and work very hard on their processes to achieve excellence. We interviewed the top three multinationals and asked them what they did to become excellent. We discovered that pride is one important element as **Cindy Morrison**, VP International HR at Amgen, told us: "Last year in our global employee survey, 88% of our staff told us they would recommend Amgen as a place to work.

*Employees are proud to work at Amgen. To a large extent this has to do with what it is we do – we discover, develop and deliver innovative medicines to treat serious illness. We make great science happen."*

Others companies found their success in their principles, like Mars, where the corporate philosophy is founded on five principles: quality, responsibility, mutuality, efficiency, freedom.

"*These Five Principles provide the building blocks for how we operate,*" says **Pascale Perez**, Communication Manager at Mars. She adds, "*Quality is the uncompromising standard for our actions. We also demand total responsibility from ourselves and support the responsibility of others. We believe that mutuality is the measure for our success.*" In Mars



<sup>4</sup> (Ireland) Abbott in Ireland is represented with Abbott Diagnostics, Longford; Abbott Ireland Pharmaceutical Operations, Sligo; Abbott Laboratories, Dublin  
<sup>5</sup> (Germany) Quintiles Commercial Germany  
<sup>6</sup> (UK) Danone Dairy, (Germany, UK) Danone Waters  
<sup>7</sup> Mundipharma are independent associated companies

**116** **Novo Nordisk**

Italy, Switzerland, The Netherlands  
 Biotechnology & Pharmaceuticals  
**616**  
[novonordisk.com](http://novonordisk.com)

**117** **Telefónica**<sup>3</sup>

Germany, Ireland, Spain, UK  
 Telecommunications  
**17852**  
[telefonica.com](http://telefonica.com)

**118** **Medtronic**

Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Spain, The Netherlands  
 Manufacturing & Production  
 Medical devices  
**5453**  
[medtronic.com](http://medtronic.com)

**119** **Baxter**

Austria, Denmark, France, Ireland, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, The Netherlands  
 Biotechnology & Pharmaceuticals  
**2419**  
[baxter.com](http://baxter.com)

**210** **SC Johnson**

Germany, Italy, Poland  
 Manufacturing & Production  
 Personal and Household goods  
**326**  
[scjohnson.com](http://scjohnson.com)

**211** **Novartis**

Finland, Italy, Poland, Spain  
 Pharmaceuticals  
**3549**  
[novartis.com](http://novartis.com)

**222** **Abbott**<sup>4</sup>

Denmark, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, The Netherlands  
 Pharmaceuticals  
**2362**  
[abbott.com](http://abbott.com)

**223** **Quintiles**<sup>5</sup>

Germany, Italy, Spain, UK  
 Biotechnology & Pharmaceuticals  
**3956**  
[quintiles.com](http://quintiles.com)

**224** **Mundipharma**<sup>6</sup>

Austria, Germany, Switzerland  
 Pharmaceutical  
**860**  
[mundipharma.net](http://mundipharma.net)

**225** **Danone**<sup>7</sup>

Austria, Germany, Portugal, UK  
 Manufacturing & Production/  
 Food and beverage  
**1445**  
[danone.co.uk](http://danone.co.uk)

[2006(D), 2007(D), 2008 (5), 2009 (12), 2010 (6)]; **3M**: 3M ESPE (Germany) [2006 (D), 2007(D), 2008(D), 2009(D), 2010(D)]; **NetApp** [2009(UK), 2010(CH, UK)]; **McDonald's** [2003(DK), 2008 (BE,NO), 2009(BE,DK), 2010(4)]; **SAS Institute** [2005(S), 2007(NO, S), 2008(3), 2009(4), 2010 (4)]; **W.L. Gore & Associates** [2005(D), 2006(D), 2007(D, F), 2008 (D, F), 2009(3), 2010(3)]; **Kellogg's** [2009 (ESP)]; **Diageo** [2009(UK) 2010(UK)]; Hilti[2009 (D), 2010(CH)]; **PepsiCo** [2004(F), 2006(F), 2007(F), 2010(3)]; **Accenture** [2008 (4), 2009(3), 2010 (2)]; **FedEx** [2004 (D, IT), 2005(BE), 2007(BE), 2008(BE, D), 2009(BE, IT), 2010(BE)]; **Novo Nordisk** 2004 (DK) 2005 (3), 2006(DK, FIN), 2007 (3), 2010(4)]; **Telefónica** [(Germany, Ireland, UK 2005 (IRE), 2006(D, IRE), 2010(D, IRE)]; **SC Johnson** [2004(4), 2005(4), 2006 (FR, UK)]; **Novartis** [2003, 2005(SP), 2006(NO) ]; **Abbott** [2005(IRE, GR), 2006 (IRE), 2007(IRE), 2010 (3)]; **Danone** [2003, 2004 (ESP), 2005 (ESP), 2006 (ESP), 2007 (ESP), 2009(UK), 2010(UK)].

efficiency is another strong principle, as Perez says, “We use resources to the fullest, waste nothing and do only what we do best.” Last but not least Mars mentions freedom, because, as stated by Perez, “it allows us to shape our future; we need profits to remain free. Freedom makes Mars distinctive from its competitors.”

Another key element that companies suggest is consistency. “I think the main thing for us is to do what we say we do, be true to ourselves and make sure that what you see is what you get. We try to be the more transparent possible.”

**Ineke Hoekman-Van Hassel**, HR manager at Microsoft advises: “For example for the GPTW survey, we decided to put all the data on our website for the world to see, and we allow people to

make comment on them, and to say if we maintained our promises.”

Companies, just like people, have distinctive traits. Which are the distinctive characteristics of this year winners?

“We’re particularly proud of the special Equity Award,” says Perez (Mars). “It recognizes our everyday practices in sharing the same offices, cafeteria and meeting rooms, the approachability of our managers, our fair and transparent pay packages, and, of course, our rejection of all forms of discrimination, particularly gender discrimination. Our efforts to adapt working hours to family schedules and to allow associates to work from home are also seen as a factor of equity, as it’s particularly useful to young moms. And we plan to go further by opening a day nursery in St-Denis-

de-l’Hôtel: a joint crèche with another local company,” she continues.

Beyond equity, flexibility is one of the important qualities that form the personality of a company as **Hoekman-Van Hassel** (Microsoft) explains: “We have an older colleague who works from his vacation home in Turkey for a few months in a year. We also have a younger colleague who starts one hour later, because he enjoys walking his dog and comes to work and appreciates the fact that he can share this with his colleagues. You don’t need a justification for this.”

People involvement is another instrument that helps companies to build their brand: “We have the ‘Make the Difference Awards’ organized worldwide every two years. It is open to all functions in all businesses and the overall objectives are to raise the importance of innovation and initiative and to recognize contributions from both individuals and teams in the areas of performance through innovation, people and planet,” explains Perez.

In the end even the internal climate helps. “At Amgen you will work with inspirational leaders and highly talented colleagues an environment in which you can succeed and develop; and we see corporate citizenship as an integral part of who we are,” says Morrison (Amgen). “I work at Amgen for three reasons: great science, great people, great future.” ●



# 50 Best Small & Medium Workplaces

**1 Frøs Herreds Sparekasse**  
Denmark  
Banking/Credit Services  
**139**  
[froes.dk](http://froes.dk)

**2 Reaktor**  
Finland  
Information Technology  
IT Consulting  
**130**  
[ri.fi](http://ri.fi)

**3 Creativ Company**  
Denmark  
Retail  
**102**  
[cchobby.dk](http://cchobby.dk)

**4 noventum consulting**  
Germany  
Information Technology  
IT Consulting  
**83**  
[noventum.de](http://noventum.de)

**5 Middelfart Sparekasse**  
Denmark  
Banking/Credit Services  
**191**  
[midspar.dk](http://midspar.dk)

**6 atrias**  
**personalmanagement**  
Germany  
Professional Services/Staffing &  
Recruitment  
**68**  
[atrias.de](http://atrias.de)

**7 Baringa Partners**  
UK  
Professional services/Consulting  
Management  
**154**  
[baringa.com](http://baringa.com)

**8 Euro Car Parks Ireland**  
Ireland  
Construction & Real Estate/Prop-  
erty Management  
**189**  
[eurocarparks.com](http://eurocarparks.com)

**9 Bain & Company Ibérica**  
Spain  
Professional Services  
Consulting Management  
**77**  
[bain.com](http://bain.com)

**10 Jones Lang  
LaSalle Ireland**  
Ireland  
Real Estate  
**59**  
[joneslanglasalle.ie](http://joneslanglasalle.ie)

**11 Socialpsykiatri  
Lolland**  
Denmark  
Social Services  
**75**  
[socialpsykiatri-oest.dk](http://socialpsykiatri-oest.dk)

**12 Webstep**  
Norway  
Information Technology  
IT Consulting  
**211**  
[webstep.no](http://webstep.no)

**13 Bofællesskaberne  
Edelsvej**  
Denmark  
Social Services  
**53**

**14 Autisme Center  
Vestsjælland**  
Denmark  
Social Services  
**298**  
[a-c-v.dk](http://a-c-v.dk)

**15 Futurice**  
Finland  
Information Technology  
Software  
**112**  
[futurice.com](http://futurice.com)

**16 GlaxoSmithKline  
Denmark**  
Denmark  
Biotechnology  
& Pharmaceuticals  
**122**  
[glaxosmithkline.dk](http://glaxosmithkline.dk)

**50 Best Small and Medium Workplaces: Prior Recognition in the European List.** Frøs Herreds Sparekasse [2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010]; Reaktor [2008, 2009, 2010]; Creativ Company [2010]; noventum consulting [2008, 2009, 2010]; Middelfart Sparekasse [2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010];



The ranking shows who are the 50 best SME to work for in Europe. Is there any difference to become an excellent company if you are a large enterprise or a SME? If yes, which are the distinctive traits that make a SME a better workplace? We asked these questions to some companies and we discovered that most of the time, it is the desire of the management to build new form of workplaces for example with a culture based on

listening, as Pia Ørskov, HR Leader at Creativ Company, states: *“I think it has a lot to do with the owners of the company. When they established Creativ Company they knew that they would want to create Denmark’s best workplace and they knew they didn’t want to do the same things that they had experienced themselves in workplaces that didn’t work. And to do that, they have always taken listening to employees very seriously, have a dialogue every day and really to act on what they hear. We still do that even if we are now more than 100 people. It is very important in our culture to listen to each other, to talk to each other, to say what we see and respond to other people’s way of working or living and we do that continuously. We do*

**17 HJ**

Denmark  
Construction  
& Real Estate/Contracting  
**82**  
huj.dk

**18 Kantega**

Norway  
Information Technology  
IT Consulting  
**77**  
kantega.no

**19 Nissan Italy**

Italy  
Manufacturing & Production  
Automotive  
**190**  
nissan.it

**20 Access**

Denmark  
Information Technology  
IT Consulting  
**113**  
access.dk

**21 Miles**

Norway  
Information Technology  
IT Consulting  
**52**  
miles.no

**22 OCTO**

France  
Information Technology  
**134**  
octo.com

**23 Pipelife**

Finland  
Manufacturing & Production  
Rubber and plastic products  
**124**  
pipelife.fi

**24 Herning Kommunale tandpleje**

Denmark  
Health Care  
**65**

**25 Softonic.com**

Spain  
Information Technology  
**185**  
softonic.com

**26 Management Events**

Finland  
Professional Services  
**63**  
managementevents.fi

**27 Mjølner**

Denmark  
Information Technology  
IT Consulting  
**83**  
mjolner.dk

**28 CB Richard Ellis Ireland**

Ireland  
Construction & Real Estate  
**130**  
cbre.ie

**29 Aquamarine Power**

UK  
Manufacturing & Production  
Energy Distribution  
**52**  
aquamarinepower.com

**30 ORMIT**

The Netherlands  
Professional Services  
**118**  
ormit.nl

**31 Grupo Visual MS**

Spain  
Information Technology  
**50**  
visualms.com

**32 Timothy James Consulting**

UK  
Professional Services  
Staffing & Recruitment  
**51**  
timothyjamesconsulting.com

atrias personalmanagement [2010]; Partners [2009, 2010]; Euro Car Parks Ireland [2009, 2010]; Bain & Company Ibérica [2005, 2008, 2010]; Jones Lang LaSalle Ireland [2009, 2010]; Webstep [2009, 2010]; Bofællesskaberne Edelsvej [2010]; Autisme Center Vestsjælland [2006, 2007, 2009, 2010]; GlaxoSmithKline Denmark

[2009, 2010]; Kantega [2007, 2010]; Pipelife [2010]; Softonic.com [2009, 2010]; Management Events [2007, 2010]; Mjølner [2005, 2007, 2008]; Aquamarine Power [2009, 2010]; ORMIT [2009, 2010]; Timothy James Consulting [2007, 2009]; Premier Group Ireland [2009]; Eurofirms [2007(DK), 2008(DK), 2009(DK), 2010(DK)];

things several times a year. We don't see development for each individual, but we see development for individuals within their groups, when we talk development is always in the group, in the team, in that way we have influence in our job and in our career and in other people's jobs and in teams' development. This is not something that leadership is saying, but every employee actually has the possibility to have influence on their everyday work, career and development and also the company's."

Being a small or a medium enterprise sometimes means working very hard on professionalism to reach sublime levels: "We have worked hard to become professional. We have set some targets based on the mission, and

also values. We are a financial institute. We don't have any stakeholders, so we don't have to pay any money to anyone when we get good results and that money can be used in our local area. So we have worked a lot with targets and objectives and then we have a simple business strategy which is that if your employees are satisfied, they can deliver the task to customers, and you also get satisfied customers," affirms Bente Graae, HR Director at Froes Herreds Sparekasse. Another secret to reach excellent levels is caring in terms of work environment and personal life. Liisa Huusari, HR Manager at Reaktor, reveals:

"When Reaktor was founded in 2000, we decided to make it the best possible workplace for both ourselves and

our employees. We want to hire the best experts in the field and provide them with the best possible conditions for development at work, and enable them to constantly learn new things. We take care of employee satisfaction by always putting people first. We never work overtime. We respect people's individuality, and we support our employees through life's changing situations. Employee well-being and company success go hand in hand. In a successful company, the employees are happy and, by investing in people, the company will succeed."

SME have particular traits that make them succeed in their mission, and consequently become Best Workplaces. The concept of family has an im-

**33 Premier Group Ireland**  
Ireland  
Professional Services  
Staffing & Recruitment  
**139**  
[premiergroup.ie](http://premiergroup.ie)

**34 Optimum**  
Norway  
Investments  
**51**  
[optimum.no](http://optimum.no)

**35 Eurofirms**  
Spain  
Professional Services  
Staffing & Recruitment  
**130**  
[eurofirms.es](http://eurofirms.es)

**36 Roche Pharmaceuticals**  
Denmark, Portugal  
Pharmaceuticals  
**286**  
[roche.com](http://roche.com)

**37 Twinings UK Commercial**  
UK  
Manufacturing & Production/  
Food and beverage  
**85**  
[twinings.co.uk](http://twinings.co.uk)

**38 Accent jobs for people**  
Belgium  
Professional Services  
**475**  
[accent.be](http://accent.be)

**39 Altenhilfe St. Gereon**  
Germany  
Social Services  
Residential Care  
**275**  
[haus-berg.com](http://haus-berg.com)

**40 sepago**  
Germany  
Information Technology  
**52**  
[sepago.de](http://sepago.de)

**41 FCm Travel Solutions Ireland**  
Ireland  
Professional Services  
Travel Management  
**50**  
[ie.fcm.travel](http://ie.fcm.travel)

**42 ConVista Consulting**  
Germany  
Information Technology  
IT Consulting  
**191**  
[convista.com](http://convista.com)

**43 AE NV**  
Belgium  
Information Technology  
IT Consulting  
**96**  
[ae.be](http://ae.be)

**44 Taff Housing Association**  
UK  
Social Services/Housing  
**98**  
[taffhousing.co.uk](http://taffhousing.co.uk)

**45 Investec Ireland**  
Ireland  
Banking/Credit Services  
**108**  
[investec.ie](http://investec.ie)

**46 Accuracy**  
France  
Professional Services  
**87**  
[accuracy.fr](http://accuracy.fr)

**47 Fondia**  
Finland  
Professional Services/Legal  
**65**  
[fondia.fi](http://fondia.fi)

**48 Bacardi Brown Forman Brands**  
UK  
Manufacturing & Production  
**262**  
[brown-forman.com](http://brown-forman.com)

**49 Finn.no**  
Norway  
Online Internet Services  
**279**  
[finn.no](http://finn.no)

**50 Novia**  
Finland  
Professional Services/Telephone  
Support/Sales Centers  
**163**  
[noviafinland.fi](http://noviafinland.fi)

**Twinings - UK Commercial** [2009]; **FCm Travel Solutions Ireland** [2010]; **Investec Ireland** [2010]; **Accuracy** [2010]; **Bacardi Brown Forman Brands** [UK 2006, 2007, 2008]; **Finn.no** [2010].

portant role in this path to success: *“Our company has a family spirit, we try to make people feel like a family and all the responsibility and the events are about being part of a family. We are taking care of each other and at the same time we want a sort of reciprocity. We go to the theatre together. Last year we celebrated our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, so we went for a whole day and stayed in a castle in Denmark, playing, having fun and having a party. Few times a year we get together and learn and talk about some issues, bringing up questions like, ‘how can I be a good colleague?’ ‘How can I influence my work environment?’ ‘How do I communicate in the best way?’”* says Pia Ørskov. Giving the possibility to care of cer-

tain aspects of the company to employees is another way to create a positive climate. *“One distinctive characteristic is the initiative and enthusiasm of our employees. Every year they arrange dozens of different internal races, code camps (where people code two days together), sales camps, tons of free time clubs and events from fishing to running, skiing, painting, chess etc. None of these are started, arranged or led by the management of the company but employees themselves,”* says **Liisa Huusari** HR Manager at Reaktor. At Froes Herreds Sparekasse it is also the huge sense of membership that makes the strength of the company as HR Director **Bente Graae** reveals: *“Our personality is that here employ-*

*ees look first at what they can do for you before they think what the company can do for them. So, in other words everybody at Froes Herreds Sparekasse puts their department first, and then themselves, so they are going to fulfill the mission, before they think about what’s good for themselves. So we are teams who work together to achieve goals.”* ●



## 25 Best Large Workplaces

### 1 Elica

Italy  
Manufacturing & Production  
Furniture  
1506  
[elica.com](http://elica.com)

### 2 ATP

Denmark  
Financial Services & Insurance  
774  
[atp.dk](http://atp.dk)

### 3 EMC

Ireland, Poland  
Information Technology  
1718  
[uk.emc.com](http://uk.emc.com)

### 4 DIS AG Germany

Germany  
Professional Services/Staffing  
& Recruitment  
810  
[dis-ag.com](http://dis-ag.com)

### 5 domino-world™

Germany  
Social Services  
Residential Care  
520  
[domino-world.de](http://domino-world.de)

### 6 Nordea Liv & Pension

Denmark  
Financial Services & Insurance  
563  
[nordealivogpension.dk](http://nordealivogpension.dk)

### 7 Heiligenfeld Kliniken

Germany  
Health Care/Hospital  
598  
[heiligenfeld.de](http://heiligenfeld.de)

### 8 NetDesign

Denmark  
Information Technology  
IT Consulting  
524  
[netdesign.dk](http://netdesign.dk)

### 9 SMA Solar Technology

Germany  
Electronics  
5450  
[sma.de](http://sma.de)

### 10 EnergiMidt

Denmark  
Manufacturing & Production  
Energy Distribution  
612  
[energimidt.dk](http://energimidt.dk)

### 11 Irma

Denmark  
Retail/Food, Grocery  
721  
[irma.dk](http://irma.dk)

### 12 Beierholm

Denmark  
Financial Services & Insurance/  
Accounting  
544  
[beierholm.dk](http://beierholm.dk)

### 13 Schoenen Torfs

Belgium  
Retail  
523  
[torfs.be](http://torfs.be)

### 14 Topaz Energy

Ireland  
Retail  
1367  
[topaz.ie](http://topaz.ie)

### 15 Tivoli

Denmark  
Hospitality/Hotel, Resort  
1300  
[tivoli.dk](http://tivoli.dk)

### 16 Novozymes Denmark

Denmark  
Biotechnology  
2400  
[novozymes.dk](http://novozymes.dk)

#### 25 Best Large Workplaces: Prior Recognition in the European List.

Elica [2008, 2009, 2010]; ATP [2009, 2010]; EMC [2009(IRE), 2010(IRE)]; DIS AG Germany [2005, 2008, 2009, 2010]; domino-world™ [2010]; Heiligenfeld Kliniken [2007]; NetDesign [2009, 2010]; SMA Solar Technology [2006, 2008,



Excellence has different dimensions and depends on many factors when it comes to companies. It could be the territory, the culture, the degree of innovation, or the vision of their managers. But the excellence of the three large companies that were awarded this year has a single name: "Listening."

Marco Scippa, HR Manager at Elica, states: "The most important thing, and perhaps it is a trivial answer, is that we put the cus-

tomers first. Starting with values that are the delight of customers, we try more and more to make people feel special, all those people with who we come in contact. All things that we have thought were suggested by our people and that requires a great ability to listen. Everyone in the company has the right to come and say "why don't we do this or why don't we do it differently? I think this is one of the key elements that allowed us to be a reference."

While Hazel Shananan, HR Manager at EMC, adds: "One of the things we have done through the years and continue to do is that we listen to employees feedback. We have a survey every year that provides employee feedback

## Ranking 25 Best Large Workplaces

22

### 17 Bright Horizons Family Solutions

Ireland, UK  
Education & Training  
1984  
[brighthorizons.co.uk](http://brighthorizons.co.uk)

### 18 Tetra Pak Italy

Italy  
Manufacturing & Production/  
Machinery and equipment  
737  
[tetrapak.com](http://tetrapak.com)

### 19 Boots Retail Ireland

Ireland  
Retail  
1700  
[boots.com](http://boots.com)

### 20 Unicarepharmacy Ireland

Ireland  
Retail  
788  
[unicarepharmacy.ie](http://unicarepharmacy.ie)

### 21 Admiral Group

UK  
Auto Insurance  
3017  
[admiralgroup.co.uk](http://admiralgroup.co.uk)

### 22 Janssen Cilag

Spain, Switzerland  
Biotechnology &  
Pharmaceuticals  
669  
[janssen.com](http://janssen.com)

### 23 Sparda-Bank München

Germany  
Banking/Credit Services  
666  
[sparda-m.de](http://sparda-m.de)

### 24 Randstad Group Belgium

Belgium  
Professional Services  
Staffing & Recruitment  
1364  
[randstad.be](http://randstad.be)

### 25 Reitangruppen

Norway  
Retail/Food  
Grocery  
534  
[reitangruppen.no](http://reitangruppen.no)

2009, 2010]; **EnergiMidt** [2009, 2010]; **Irma** [2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010]; **Schoenen Torfs** [2006, 2007, 2008, 2010]; **Novozymes Denmark** [2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2010]; **Bright Horizons Family Solutions** [2008(UK), 2010(UK)]; **Unicarepharmacy Ireland** [2007, 2008, 2010];

**Admiral Group** [2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010]; **Sparda-Bank München** [2008, 2009, 2010]; **Randstad Group Belgium** [2007, 2008, 2009, 2010]

and we get feedback in many other forms. Listening to the feedback and implementing what was requested I think it's what made us an excellent company." Listening also means that the company acts in a humane way as reveals Scippa: "We are still a human company. Two months ago, unfortunately, one of our employees died leaving two little girls. We took care of his wife who now works with us. As long as there is the feeling, the heart, we will continue to be an excellent company and will continue to churn out ideas." But listening is also the ability to build a good communication, as Shananan suggests: "EMC works extremely well on communication with employees and customers. That is the key to create trust and to

make a "Great Place to Work." If you are able to communicate and people communicate with you, you have a two way conversation continually going." For other companies the way to reach excellence is to develop employees' skills as **Pernille Juel Sefort**, associate director HR & Internal Communication at ATP, says: "Our basic view is that ATPs competition-power depends on the market value of each and every employee. The psychological contract we have with our employees is simply that their market value must improve while working for ATP. This is why we very deliberately focus on developing competences, making sure everybody is on the right track. This includes professional, social and personal skills. Furthermore we de-

mand a high level of managerial skills from our leaders. Our leaders are responsible for creating a working environment, where purpose and vision are visible for each and everyone, and where passion and engagement has room to blossom."

Many times the distinctive traits of a company are those of the founder. Marco Scippa (Elica), tells a nice story about the founder that gives the sense of Elica's DNA: "Ermanno Casoli, the founder of Elica, invented the hood. He was a veterinarian, and he had nothing to do with the world of technology. One day, in the seventies, he had the idea to create a prototype and he was able to get an appointment with Philips Europe in Paris. At one point during the presentation the



managing director asked him how the hood worked. Unfortunately by connecting the hood to the socket power went off and the entire building was in the dark. Mr. Casoli turned to the director and told him 'Monsieur, I hope your electrical system has not damaged my hood.' With this joke he got the first order of 5,000 covers. This shows how unconventional we are; but this makes us original. Today we are the first company that invented designer hoods. The efforts we are doing today keep alive this DNA and reproduce it in other places where Elica is an idea, the paradigm of being unconventional. Being able to see things from a different angle and mainly contaminate the knowledge leads to innovation." In other companies is

a commitment or a particular challenge that gives a company a special trait. For example in EMC, this is innovation. "Recently EMC held a mega launch, which was the launch of a new product and the title of the launch was "Record Breakers" and EMC is all about breaking records, striving for new things, pushing innovation. At this launch they did a number of novel things like 'how many people can we fit into a Mini Cooper.' They broke a number of Guinness World Records that day and the launch was in different places across the world. This shows the culture at EMC, the culture of innovation at EMC is very strong," affirms Hazel Shananan (EMC). Also having fun has a special role in creating the personality of a compa-

ny, as Pernille Juel Sefort (ATP), reveals: "The DNA of ATP is well mirrored in an experience from last year; at the nomination of 'the Best Places to Work in Europe' in Madrid. After the ceremony (ATP came in number 2) the five delegates from ATP were having breakfast in the hotel restaurant. The conversation was light and we were laughing quite loudly. At one point another Danish girl stops at our table, mentioning that she overheard us talking, and would like to know if we were friends on holiday or colleagues. We told her we were colleagues, and she burst out, 'Then you must have a very special good place to work.' One of our stated values is that 'working must be fun'." ●



**WORKPLACES CHANGE.** In the Middle Ages we all worked near markets and some worked in the fields (their home was also their shop). In the Industrial Era new dedicated workplaces were created (factories), which big buildings of the service industry were then added.

## Working from home remains an option

Work moved from city centers. Then it went back to city centers with big banks and the media. Today the urban dynamic of work has passed. The Internet - again - has divided the world in two parts. On one side are those who have to work in a physical place and, on the other, those who can choose their location. We asked some of the 100 Best European Companies **where will we work in the future?** The majority of companies said that we still have buildings, but that their function will change slightly, and that technology will allow people to work potentially from everywhere. In the future we will see more and more “smart buildings” and technology that helps communication between different locations that will be equipped in standards.

**Emilio Moreno**, CEO at Softonic, says: “We are going through an evolution inside the work space where cubicles and hierarchical separations are erased from the seating plans. These adjustments point towards an “open-space” distribution, where people work together in functional groups that follow a logical pattern of the production process they follow.”

According to **Tanja Neuser**, HR Director at Danone, buildings will become more functional. She explains: “People make the difference in this area. It’s something we need to care about when looking to the future, which I believe will be a link between the things we have today, I believe in personal contact, we will not abandon buildings, but buildings will change in function of our needs. Buildings will likely become places where we network, where we come together, but we do not necessarily need buildings to work, now we

01 Glass windowed offices at Tetrapak, Modena (Italy).

02 Man at work at Futurice.



01

can build a home office or we can work when travelling on a plane.”

Technology and employees’ individuality will play an important role in the future of our workplaces says **Raymond Opszalski**, HR Director at DIS AG who claims: “Office buildings will definitely become more technically advanced. But what is even more important, is that companies must learn to respect the individuality of their employees.” On the same wavelength is the thought of **Ceri Assiratti**, HR Director at Admiral Group, who claims: “We will still have a physical office, where people can come and work and share, but, clearly, with technology and flexibility we will see major changes, working from home is becoming the way forward.”

At Tetrapak they rebuild the en-



tire Modena site, as HR Director **Gianmaurizio Cazzaroli** tells us: “The tendency is to go towards what we call *New Offices 2.0*: multifunctional spaces built by a repertoire of standardized work components; open office supported with silent rooms, telephone booths, pulse rooms, project rooms and different meeting facilities; not one desk per employee, but a mix of assigned desks and free seating; interwoven spaces for different moods of work and recreation; different media support integrated with spatial configuration and access to outdoor and view to green environment.”

As **Patrizia Fogheri**, HR Director at NovoNordisk puts it, “companies start to think that people are not ‘one’ but ‘multiple’ and have a need for membership



**NETWORKS** have reduced communication time, and they have also allowed people that are not in the same place to communicate more easily. New identities are born. We collaborate with people that we have never actually met in person, and that perhaps live in another continent.

## Internet and new forms of interaction

*then there would be no need for a physical space, but the acceptance of “N” areas where the relationship between people makes the communion, in other words an office without offices.”*

**Eddie O’Brien**, CEO at Topaz, who recognizes the importance and increase of home working, says, *“Many homeworkers are probably finding that it is difficult to work from home permanently, because you start to lose that connection with the center, so organizations will have to find a balance between using the central bold to bring people together for ideas, innovation, social contact in terms of group think, and the use of distributed locations like homes.”*

**Tuomas Syrjänen**, CEO at Futurice, doesn’t believe that homeworking will be the only future, saying the office has benefits both for the company and for employees who need a sort of connection. He adds, *“However I do believe that business will be done from anywhere – customers’ premises, offices and homes.”*

**Peter Bennet**, Owner of Timothy James Consulting, believes that virtual teams will grow but despite that work environment is necessary. He explains, *“Nowadays and in the future you can’t limit offices to a desk and a computer. You have to have kitchen, break rooms, showers, room with TVs and video gaming equipment for those who are working late.”*

**Bernd Bogert**, Director at Altenhilfe St. Gereon, thinks that we will abandon old buildings and we will use technology at our advantage as much as possible, he says: *“The future definitely has to be build around responsibly independent working employees.”* ●

We asked some of the 100 Best European Companies, **how is it possible to communicate with those who are not in the office on a daily basis and that we rarely see in person?** The general feeling of companies is that clearly technology has helped a lot. Despite this, there is nothing like direct personal contact, which remains, even in our era, the preferred approach.

As **Raymond Opszalski**, HR Director at DIS AG, affirms: *“At DIS AG, we highly value the direct personal contact between our people. This emphasis on a non-virtual dialogue is a fundamental element in our company’s culture. That is why we organize multiple personal meetings between the management and the teams of our branch offices and give every employee the opportunity to address the entire management directly, whenever necessary.”*

The same thought is shared by **Ceri Assiratti** (Admiral Group), who states: *“We have to make sure we keep as much personal contact as possible, for example the managers and the CEO have formal meetings altogether; they also have regular meetings over video conference so they actually do see the people they are talking to and that helps to build a personal relationship.”*

**Eddie O’Brien** (Topaz Energy), is all about personal interaction, as he explains: *“I think too often emails go out and they’re all about business, and they’re not about the people that we are actually dealing with. The other thing is that people react very positively when you actually make an effort to go and see where they’re actually working.”*

**Patrizia Fogheri** (NovoNordisk), is absolutely pro-virtual communication as she explains: *“we continue to pre-*



02

*fer human touch, losing a lot of time in meetings rather than arranging a web conference and maybe trying to find a different form of relationship.”* She continues: *“I believe that with a little more dexterity with these tools, of course the level of relationships will not change so much.”*

Multinationals might be in a way forced to embrace virtual ways of communication as **Simon Linares**, European HR Director at Telefonica, says: *“To meet this geographical challenge we have, created one Telefónica European HR team with virtual centers of expertise offering support to the business across Europe in such areas as learning and development, talent management and resourcing. This also creates new opportunities for our employees in terms*



of mobility, and so teams based across our European region, work together virtually on a daily basis.”

At Optimum they use many tools to enhance the virtual dialogue as CEO **Trond Gullaksen** explains: “Video conferences, Skype, iPads and other technical tools will be even more common in the future. Not only when it comes to colleagues, but in the way we act with people around us - both at work and private.” He continues: “I strongly believe that people will have the need to meet face to face even in an increasingly virtualized world. The virtual world can't replace direct human contact.”

**Tuomas Syrjänen** (Futurice), embraces the concept of personal interaction as the basis of a potential virtual dialogue and says: “If you've met or know the person, it's easy to communicate with tools like email, phone or instant messaging, but all of these means require a certain level of acquaintance, that when missing makes things more difficult.”

**Nathalie Ove Hoffman**, P&O Partner at Novozymes, states that being a global company makes them used to using tools to communicate with virtual teams or workers. The most common tools used are email, phone, presentation sharing systems and also live meetings. She explains: “We do a lot more on TV. Instead of writing we do videos that can be then viewed by everyone. For example for our quarterly meetings we have employees or those who can't attend send questions that will then be answered during the meeting, which is videorecorded and then sent out to everyone, so people in the US can have their questions answered directly, and that helps them feel included.” According to **Peter Bennett**, Owner of Timothy James Consulting, the first step is to choose the right people to do virtual work. It is very important that they are self-motivated and that they are able to complete tasks autonomously. He says: “We have virtual teams that work for us across the country, the dialogue is challenging, but eventually rewarding.” ●

**MULTICULTURALISM IS A CONSOLIDATED REALITY.** Everyone knows someone that has a different passport from theirs. However inside enterprises we often find a sort of “business nationality”. In other words “we all belong to the same brand.”

## Pride, security, trust and sense of belonging

We interviewed managers of some of the 100 Best European Companies, and we asked them what they thought were the emotions felt in companies at the moment, and what are those of the future. One of the emotions felt inside companies is pride, as **Emilio Moreno**, CEO of Softonic, affirms: “Currently at Softonic we speak of a strong sense of pride of belonging to this company, as well as positivism and respect for co-workers and the project as a whole. As the company evolves and grows, a sense of contribution to society starts to emerge, and with it, a concern for how we can contribute to the growth of different economies.”

Another excellent company that values pride is Baringa Partners, as **Jim Hayward**, Senior Partner confirms: “It's often hard to define what pride means within an organisation - but you know when you have it.” He also adds that trust is another key factor for organizations as he states: “Upside-down management is the buzzword here. It's about breaking down hierarchies and encouraging openness and honesty. If there is a lack of transparency in the company, if employees do not trust the management, or do not believe in what they are doing then it shows in the most crucial areas.”

NetApp HR Manager **Barbara Storlein** says: “We like to be proud, successful and we drive on the sense of achievement.” She continues: “NetApp has a strong company culture in which our values of leadership, trust, integrity, simplicity, adaptability, teamwork and an attitude of going beyond form the cultural passport of our business nationality. We see our values implemented globally, we hear our leaders



talk about it and we feel the connection in our global diversity.” When asked about the emotions of the future she says: “I expect a number of emotions to play a major part in the future. The one that stands out the most for me is emotional intelligence, which would breathe new life into all organizational and human development activities as we strive for continued alignment with other generations that will be present in the workforce.”

**Raymond Opszalski**, HR Director at DIS AG, speaks in favor of multiculturalism, crediting diversity as the key to company's growth. However at Danone the feeling of belonging to a brand is very strong as confirms HR Director Tanja Neuser: “We feel very much like “Danoners”, and this is very inter-



01 Employees take a break at Softonic. Photo credits by Alexey Tarsev.



01

*national with our frequent communication with colleagues. It's a spirit of what we call a "Danone personality", which links us altogether all over the world. Emotions in Danone are visible in our training sessions, where we have people coming from everywhere, people that have never met before, but after five minutes the room is buzzing with communication, conversations, and people are busily interacting."*

**Elaine Ballard**, Chief Executive at Taff Housing Association, recognizes the importance of diversity and the feeling of belonging and inclusion as key factors for success. She says: "All employees need a clear sense of purpose if they are to perform effectively. A supportive culture is one that recognizes each staff member as a person in their own right,

*but creates a strong vision of what can be achieved by working together."* She adds, when asked about the future of emotions, "In the future, successful businesses will need to capture the imagination of their teams and create an environment where it is safe to innovate, with a sense of 'anything is possible'."

About the sense of belonging **Valerie Metcalfe**, Managing Director at FCM Travel Solutions, says: "The notion that 'we all belong to the same brand' becomes clear as we focus on similar goals and ethics, and this leads to a feeling of belonging irrespective of culture or nationality." She continues about the future of emotions: "I think the key emotions are excitement, motivation and enthusiasm and the ever-changing travel industry will ensure that these positive emotions prevail into the future."

The sense of belonging and the adherence to an organization's values are the key as **Patrizia Fogheri**, HR Director at NovoNordisk, puts it: "I think that the real glue is the adherence to company's values." She adds: "For example many years ago I went to Greece, where I started working. The country manager of Greece made a presentation on a business plan. Obviously, it was in Greek, and also the slides were written in Greek; but at some point I definitely recognized what he was talking about because in the way in which the slides were written, and, thanks to some key words that were written in English, I was able to understand exactly the message he wanted to convey."

**Eddie O'Brien** CEO at Topaz Energy states: "Right now Ireland is going through quite an economic crisis, so I think emotions are very much around security and trust, people want to feel that they're in an organization that they can trust, that they have management that has high credibility, that they're actually part of something that is secure and that is growing, despite all the challenges that are in the economy." For some companies it is important to give employees a sense of security **Ceri Assiratti**, HR Director at AdmiralGroup,



states:

"We are always aware that we have grown

*from very small beginning and then we had a rapid expansion. We have grown from just 17 employees to maybe 5,000 across the world now. The emotions of our people is the worry that we will lose the closeness of working together as a family, but also in the general business community there's a feeling of uncertainty, and this is something we have to deal with giving employees a sense of security within the group."*

The CEO of Futurice, **Tuomas Syrjänen**, confesses: "People here feel inspired and committed, this produces great results and also makes them happy." When talking about the future of emotion, he states: "In the future it will be necessary to understand what motivates people, and to promote that motivation with autonomy and with guidance instead of rules." He also praises transparency as a key factor to build trust and he says, "for example we make every data available and shared, so that a high level of trust can be built between the organization and employees."

Trust seems to be a key factor also for **Nathalie Ove Hoffmann**, P&O Partner at Novozymes: "We take good care of our employees. We give them higher salaries than many companies. We offer good pension plans and, if they're going through difficulties, we help them by providing social advisors or lawyers." At Novozymes failure is accepted as Hoffmann explains: "We recognize that we can't always be successful. At times we will fail, but it is important that people understand that it is okay to fail, because from failures we learn."

**WE HAVE SPENT THE PAST 60 YEARS FILLING OUT THE PLANET** new cities, new factories, new buildings, new facilities. Now we are at a point where the planet should be reclaimed. We can (almost) all agree that companies will have to be more careful with environment preservation.

## The planet: the only true resource



01 NetApp Building in harmony with nature



*respectful attitude towards everything that surrounds them.”*

At CB Richard Ellis environmental respect is taken very seriously as HR Director **Deirdre Bodley** tells us: “*CB Richard Ellis is the only company in our sector to achieve carbon neutrality, thanks to the collective efforts of individuals and teams across the globe. In EMEA, we have contributed to reducing our carbon footprint significantly: over 90% of our offices now have recycling programs in place and innovative local office initiatives are helping us become even more environmentally responsible.*” But according to Bodley there’s still a lot to be done.”

At Admiral Group they have put in place various initiatives to respect the planet. HR Director **Ceri Assiratti** shares: “*We have recycling plans - nobody has waste bins - we all have recycling points in every office. We are creating a new building and we want to make sure that is the most environmentally friendly building possible.*” They also work with mobility as Assiratti reveals: “*We have also started a bike plan so that people can avoid using their own transportation, and we are also promoting a carpool plan, which we try to fill a car instead of having people using many different cars when moving for business.*”

“*As a strategic goal for 2012, we will have all our factories where insulin is produced powered by wind energy,*” says **Patrizia Fogheri** HR Director

But what can companies positively do to respect our planet? At Tetrapak they really care for the environment, as **Gianmaurizio Cazzarolli**, HR Director explains: “*We believe in responsible industry leadership, creating profitable growth in harmony with environmental sustainability and good corporate citizenship. Our strategy is to reduce CO2 emissions. We optimize our energy consumption thanks to our building automation system. We invest in renewable energies, installing solar and photovoltaic panels that produce green energy.*” At Tetrapak they also work with mobility management, as Cazzarolli explains: “*Today our bus shuttle is part of the urban transportation of Modena and an average of 50 employees use this service every day. Our*

*ultimate goal is that all wood fibre in our packages shall come from certified forests, managed in accordance with principles of sustainable forest management. In 2010, 80% of our packages had the FSC Certification.*”

At Eurofirms they believe that companies can do a lot by spreading a value of respect within their staff as manager **Miguel Jordà** says: “*Companies can act as spearheads promoting solid values between staff, both in executive and non-executive profiles. One of these values is respect.*” He adds: “*This consists of very effective and very meticulous work at the same time. If we perform a very careful selection of every employee in the company, and we adopt a good behavior to instill some values, including respect, all employees will adopt a*



at NovoNordisk. She continues: “We changed our ‘car policy.’ All our cars have CO2 emissions limits, so that not only does the lease payment make a difference but also the reduction of CO2 emissions does. We are also providing a policy to reduce travel costs and the impact of air travel.” She finishes: “We also have a campaign with zero CO2 which certifies all the materials that we produce.”

**Simon Linares**, Group HR Director at Telefonica states: “Telefonica recognizes that its business has an impact on the environment – hence, we offer business smart technology and flexible working which deliver significant carbon savings.” He offers an example: “Our new Telefonica European HQ in the UK was built with sustainability at its heart. For example rainwater is captured and used for watering the plants and trees around the building. Pull printing will reduce the amount of paper and toner we use by at least 25 percent. It will also reduce our annual CO2 emissions by 113.5 tonnes.”

For other companies sustainability is at the heart of their mission as Danone’s HR Director **Tanja Neuser** explains: “We have three main goals. The first one is reducing our CO2 footprint. We have two areas where CO2 has the biggest impact: logistics and PET. We want to replace trucks with trains. The other two ambitions are 1) water preservation with access to pure drinking water. We do this in collaboration with UNESCO and UNICEF; and 2) the protection of our core products; we work very closely with the local environment.”

For the nature of the business at Timothy James Consulting, the impact is less heavy, as **Peter Bennet**, owner of the company says: “We recognize that any small thing could make a difference, so we make sure that we do not waste paper printing documents. We make sure that all equipment and lights are turned off when we leave and we encourage employees to recycle.” As for the future he reveals: “We try to cut down on travelling to reduce our emissions. We also encourage people to use public transportation instead of their own cars.” ●

**WE ORGANIZED OPERATION PLANS BASED ON STATISTICS.** We did five year plans, then three year plans, and at present we plan as far as our eyes can see. Times are reduced, certainties for our future too. While we were planning our future, we organized companies according to efficient processes.

## Flexibility is the key

“Clearly we will always need efficient processes, but these processes also have to be extremely flexible in order to cope with the market’s rapid changes,” says **Ceri Assiratti**, HR Director at Admiral Group, and adds: “We have to ensure that everything we do has a light catch and gives people the autonomy to operate freely... We have a plan, but we recognize that everything could have an impact on that plan, therefore they both need to be changed. We try to make sure that if a change is truly needed, we can avoid all the big processes that normally a change requires a company to go through.” According to Assiratti, communication is important at this level. Management needs to communicate effectively. The feeling at Topaz Energy is slightly different. CEO **Eddie O’Brien** confesses: “I think it’s important that consumers and organizations make sure that the market doesn’t drive us into a situation where we have no connection between services and our products. For example the internet is creating all that, because people do not need to meet in person to receive a product anymore. Unless the goods provide gratification, you don’t have any social interaction. We have to listen carefully to consumers. The hard job is to balance consumers’ requests: efficiency and engagement. The market adapts to what people want, you see cycles, sometimes people are driven by price; some others by quality. So organizations have to react to the cycle, but the business model shouldn’t depend on a cycle or the other.” At Danone planning must not be given up, as HR Director **Tanja Neuser** confirms: “I think that giving up planning is the wrong way to take learning. Here we learned that we have to move



on a greater flexibility, in terms of reacting in a quick way to the market... At Danone we usually have a three year plan, and the challenge is to look into the future, build realistic scenarios based on experiences had in the past and consumer market understanding. There needs to be bottom up and top down strategic thinking and the process to do this is in the organization itself.”

According to **Patrizia Fogheri**, HR Director at NovoNordisk, strategic planning might not be the right answer anymore. She says: “I’m convinced that strategic plans, today no longer work. But I am equally convinced that if companies respond with short sighted ideas, shortening the time for setting goals, it will only be of use to postpone problems. I think the hypothesis of an answer is that there are intangible goals and tangible objectives: the creation of corporate culture, the environmental impact,



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and social responsibility are not issues that the company can face as a target of short-lived nature. Instead, these issues need to have a vision and a plan for more than five years... So it's not so much the time but it's what we're going to measure, and by what means... I am convinced that we do not have to have a real plan but certainly a capacity of long-vision. Otherwise we truly risk staying in this 'loop.'

and putting more emphasis on efficiency... We've begun an ongoing drive to offer centralized Telefónica Europe-wide functions where it makes sense. For example we have launched our European People Services Center, which now manages transactional activity. By offering centralized support to our in-country teams, they are enabled to offer a more consistent, efficient service to our customers locally."

to him on the spot, but he doesn't have time to do the strategic planning. This is why we allow him to work from home once a week, so that he has time to concentrate on the actual planning part of his job."

**Trond Gullaksen**, CEO at Optimum refers to himself as "old fashioned" and strongly believes in long term planning but he also adds: "Future leaders must be able to see new opportuni-



01 NetApp Building in harmony with nature

01

At Telefonica the general thought is that the key answer is focusing on the customer as Europe HR director **Simon Linares** explains: "Keeping customers at the heart of everything we do continues to be the cornerstone of our strategy and we aim to gain and maintain a clear lead over our competitors in customer satisfaction. We need to get a balance between exploiting opportunities of standardization and eliminate duplication where this is sensible. Staying close and having proximity to customers also means we identify and select the right delivery options, be it in-house, out-sourced or provided by alternative delivery options... We are making sure our resources and talent are aligned to our business objectives, as well as being more efficient in our commercial costs

**Deirdre Bodley**, HR and Internal Communication Executive Director at CB Richard Ellis strongly believes in flexibility: "If we continue to promote flexible working, this will in turn allow businesses to be more agile to meet market demands. Flexible working in terms of hours and locations include part-time work and job sharing. With the technology we have today people do not have to come in everyday; they can easily work from home. Flexibility helps us attract talent, improves our corporate image and helps us retain staff. We have a very low turnover because we listen to our employees' needs. For example we have a director that works four days at the office and one from home, because when he's in the office, he has to solve problems and questions that are presented

ties and have the ability to 'take action' even in the short term." For some companies, organizations should be more proactive, as stated by **Peter Bennett**, owner of Timothy James Consulting: "I think that businesses will have to be much more proactive and not let things play out." According to him flexibility is the key to adaptation, to quick reaction which is what companies need to face whatever could impact their business. In Futurice proactivity means giving responsibility and the chance for employees to make decisions as CEO **Tuomas Syrjänen** explains: "We encourage people to make changes, even in strategy, if they feel that is the right direction to take... We work on the basis of three dimensions: 1) people, 2) customers and 3) numbers." ●

## Our Heroes?

They are the people who help companies become great workplaces, people that work with enthusiasm, have pride in the company they work for and respect others and what they do. They are the people who celebrate their work and activities, that are happy and motivated about what they do. They are those who work hard together, that promote team work and reciprocity, but also those that are not afraid to tell the truth and share all the information, in good and bad times. Our heroes are dynamic, they strive for interaction. They like to have fun at all times and are always up for a challenge.

01 Meeting at Amgen

02 Employees taking a break at Microsoft

03 Employees at Reaktor play chess during the break.

04 Eddie O'Brien CEO at Topaz Energy.

05 Lunch break at Reaktor.

06 Break in the cafeteria at Amgen.

07 Work environment at Leroy Merlin.

08 Employees enjoy their workday at Pipelife.

09 Teamwork at NovoNordisk.

10 A workday at Microsoft.

11 Tower Palace © Nigel Young Foster+Partners.

12 Swiss Re HQ © Richard Bryant.

13 Employees' care for their company at NovoNordisk.

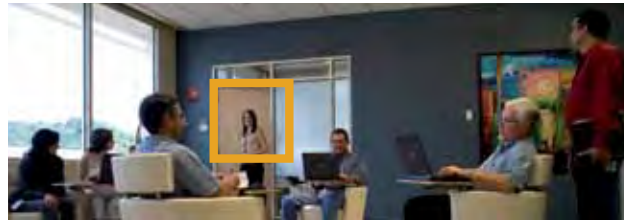
14 Delivering our goals at FedEx.

15 Cafeteria in Boulogne Billacourt Building © Nigel Young Foster+Partners.

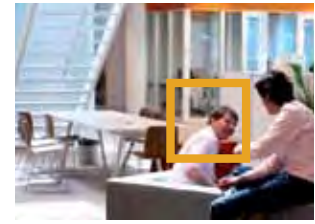
16 Hearst Tower's © Chuck Choi.

17 Team building at ConTe Insurance.

18 Sharing an office at Quintiles.



01



02

## About the Great Place to Work® Institute

Great Place to Work® Institute has conducted pioneering research on the characteristics of great workplaces for over 25 years. We believe all companies can become great places to work, and our mission is to help them succeed. Our Great Place to Work® Model® is recognized as the standard for assessing great workplaces. In 45 countries around the world, we are proud to:

- Recognize the Best Workplaces for their achievements through our international Best Workplaces lists. In Europe we publish 18 national lists and worldwide we publish lists in more than 45 countries.

- Help companies create and sustain great workplace cultures through our consulting services. Our data collection tools (e.g. employee survey, focus groups, 360-degree professional development tool); educational workshops and training programs; action planning system; and strategic advisory services all support the transformation process within any organization. The Institute's unique access to Best Workplaces' data allows us to offer unparalleled benchmarking opportunities, best practice information, and transformation insight to our Consulting clients.

- Share resources, best practices, and Institute research through our education services. These include peer networking groups, workshops, conferences, and publications, which enable organizational leaders to learn directly from each other, as well as benefit from our wealth of knowledge and lessons learned from the Best Companies and our clients.

19 Cooking Team Building at KKIEN enterprises.

20 Open space office at Zeta Service.

21 Space division for a unique goal at PepsiCo.

22 Working together at Quintiles.

23 Work is fun at Quintiles.

24 A break at Quintiles.

25 Employees at Bristol-Meyers Squibb.

26 Eric Buell © Timothy Zwicky.

27 Production Laboratory situation inside production facility at Novozymes.

28 Employee enjoying technology in the courtyard at Novozymes.

29 Working dynamics at Novozymes.

30 Innovating in the lab at Novozymes.

### Contact information GPTW offices in Europe

#### Austria

Kagranner Platz 40/3/3

**Erich Laminger**

info@greatplacetowork.at

+43 17985928

A-1220 Wien

#### Belgium

Reep 1

**Kristien VanBruystegem**

kvanbruystegem@greatplacetowork.be

+ 32 9 210 9737

9000 Gent





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## GPTW Managing Director's Voices

### Happy Birthday Best Workplaces.

One of the key points for workplace consolidation is trust in management and the relationship employees have with them.

56% of interviewees think that managers are able to manage properly and are capable of assigning tasks fairly, and they also think that 60% of managers live up to their promises.

No discrimination because of sex, race and sexual orientation is the superseded subject for Spanish companies, as 87% of interviewees declares that people are equally treated in their organization. However companies have to continue to work and focus on the ability to allow their employees to find balance with their work and private life.

Another issue that companies have to work on is the capability of letting employees feel a part of the objectives of the latter, since only 6 out of 10 interviewees know, understand and work in line with the real and global strategy of their organization. 65% of employees think they receive an appropriate offer in terms of professional growth and learning. Seven out of 10 employees are at ease with their colleagues and 58% feel rewarded for the effort they make at work. All of this ensures that 8 out of 10 employees wish to be working in their current workplace for a long time. In terms of newly hired employees, 84% of them confessed they felt welcomed by the company. Working environment perception doesn't significantly vary between men and women. In the same way only 40% of women believe they receive a fair salary as opposed to the 46% of men. Moreover, 55% of female interviewees perceive favoritism, and hence a higher possibility of promotion for male employees. The survey collected the opinions of more than 30,000 employees of 250 Spanish companies working in different sectors.

**Gilberto Dondè (CEO)**  
*Great Place to Work® Italy*

**A model which works.** Many companies participate in our community with constancy and continuity, because they firmly believe in pursuing the objective of creating an excellent work environment.

The publication of the 10<sup>th</sup> Best Italian Workplaces List has shown how companies are committed to create environments where employees trust their managers, are proud of what they do and feel comfortable with colleagues.

One of the main thing emerged from the survey, in this difficult economic situation, is that companies showed a feeling of closeness to common values and of unification. Companies had the ability of inspiring people to react consistently and effectively to the economic situation. Best Companies registered an increase (+7.5% in comparison to the previous annual report), in addition gen



**Erich Laminger (MD)**  
*Great Place to Work® Austria*

### Denmark

Falkoner Allé 20, 4  
**Ditte Vigso**  
dvigso@greatplacetowork.dk  
+45 33 69 13 69  
2000 Frederiksberg

### Finland

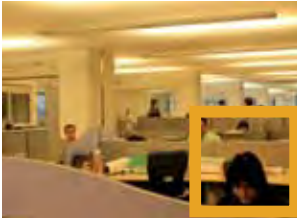
John Stenbergin ranta 2  
Sepänkatu 20  
**Panu Lukka**  
pluukka@greatplacetowork.fi  
+ 358 40 1989 765  
00530 Helsinki, 90100 Oulu

### France

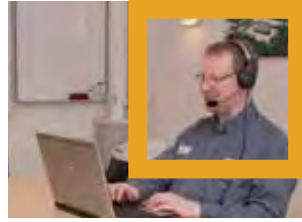
1bis Cité Paradis  
**Patrick Dumoulin**  
Dumoulin@greatplacetowork.fr  
+33 1 44 83 87 10  
75010 Paris

### Germany

Sülzburgstraße 104 – 106  
**Frank Hauser**  
fhauser@greatplacetowork.de  
+49 221 / 93335 - 0  
D-50937 Köln



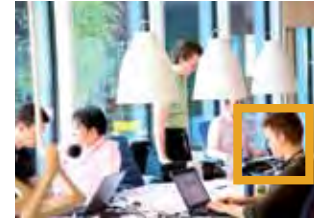
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eral employment rates decreased, however for Best Companies employment rates increased by 5.6%.

Employees particularly appreciated:

- coherence and ethics in management behaviors;
- the attention to put in place policies and practices aimed at answering to employees' needs.
- the realization of a strong teamwork spirit, based on sharing common objectives and interests.

Best Companies know that creating an excellent workplace is a real business strategy that helps the company to obtain maximum efforts from employees. After a very difficult economic year in 2009, with a decrease in GDP by 3.9% and employment by 1.5%, while unemployment rose significant to 4.8%, the economic development in 2010 was again positive in Austria. GDP grew by 2% and in annual average after all by 0.8% more people were re-employed. This development also had its positive effects on Great Place to Work® in Austria. The interest in the annual benchmark study in 2010 was significantly higher than the year before, resulting in an overall slightly higher participation in the competition for the title "Austria's Best Employers in 2011".

We found a remarkable increase in the just completed benchmark study referring to the Trust Index results and our five dimensions (credibility, respect, fairness, pride, camaraderie) and a very significant difference between the Austrian Top 25 and the non-list group in the three dimensions of trust (credibility, respect, fairness). So there is, as in other countries, still a need for development and we are confident of winning more companies in Austria this year. A very powerful fact is helpful: We can actually report that the current study of the Austrian Top 25 have an average sick leave of only 3.3 working days per employee per year. Thus, they are 70% below the average of Austria and we are sure that this fact is particularly convincing for many new highly interested CEOs and their companies to Great Place to Work® wanting to reach equal results finally reflected in the economic outcome.

past few years, however, Denmark has experienced a major change in the attitude towards charity and Corporate Social Responsibility in general. This is reflected in the Best Workplaces in Denmark, where sustainability and charity are at the top of the agenda. Looking into the future though, stress seems to be a major challenge. Workplaces that take part in the annual Best Workplaces competition in Denmark are asked if they offer employees time off to carry out charity work. In 2010 the 50 workplaces on the list of Best Workplaces in Denmark 2010, 36% replied that, as an organization, they spent days engaging in charity work. The same number of workplaces also offered their employees time off to engage in charity work as individuals, for instance as part of a program to help third world countries that was initiated by the company itself. 44% of the workplaces support the local community by sponsoring local sports clubs or by employing people with reduced ability to work. 14% have signed the United Nation's Global Compact or United Nation's Principles for Responsible Investment. The top scorer within Corporate Social Responsibility 2010, however, is sustainability. Of the 50 Best Workplaces on the Danish list 2010, 66% focus on their CO2 emissions. They strive to reduce travel, work to reduce energy consumption.

### Green is the New Black and Stress is the largest challenge of the Future.

In Denmark, welfare has traditionally been provided for by the Danish state and Denmark does not have the tradition of charity as, for instance, Anglo-Saxon countries do. During the



**Liselotte Jensen** (Deputy Manager)  
Great Place to Work® Denmark

#### Greece

Panormos 74  
**Dimitris Ganoudis**  
dganoudis@greatplacetowork.gr  
+30 210 6971098  
115 23 Athens

#### Ireland

Discovery House  
**John Ryan**  
jryan@greatplacetowork.ie  
+353 1 890 9510  
Feltrim Road  
Swords County Dublin Ireland

#### Italy

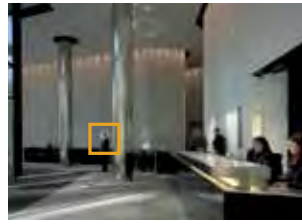
via della Moscova 40  
**Gilberto Dondé**  
gdonde@greatplacetowork.it  
+39 02 29060629  
20121 Milano

#### Luxembourg

5, Z.A.I. de Bourmicht  
**Fabian Amoretti**  
famoretti@greatplacetowork.lu  
+352 26 27 69 1  
L-8070 Bertrange



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tion by switching off lights and printing less, demand that their subcontractors pay attention to sustainability and a few have adapted solar energy. At the Institute, we believe that this change has been brought about by the financial crisis. The latter assumption is confirmed by Steen Riisgaard, CEO of one largest participants in Denmark, Novozymes. According to him, there is an increased wish to create images of companies that do things the right way, and that want to make a change in society. Now moving from present challenges to those of the future, stress seems to be a paramount issue. The Danish National Research Centre for the Working Environment estimates that 35,000 Danes report being sick every day due to stress, and that stress imposes an expense of approximately one billion Euros to the Danish society each year. This only adds to the expenses for treating the diseases that stress entails. This sad statistic is not unique to Denmark, however. According to a recent report from the European Commission, 50% of absenteeism due to sickness in the member states is caused by stress, and imposes an expense of approximately 4% of the GDP on the member states. In France alone the cost amounts to 2 to 3 billion Euros. In Great Britain, 10 bil-

lion working days are lost each year. According to the WHO, in 2020, stress will be one of the main causes of sickness. However, the good news here is that a high level of confidence between employers and employees seems to be reducing the level of stress remarkably.

**France has great companies.** In France nothing is simple. For many years, French managers thought that a good company was a company that just gave work to employees. Slowly but surely more and more managers have come to understand that having happy and satisfied employees was one of the keys to success. Our awarded companies have become models for others companies. This is the reason why, today, we have experienced a rapid increase in the number of participants on our list.



Patrick Dumoulin (General Manager)  
Great Place to Work® France

However, if we compare ourselves with others countries like Germany, Finland, Denmark, Norway or Sweden, we still have a lot of work to do on our mission “building a better society by helping companies transform their workplaces.” We too, have

many great companies that don't even know how great they are. This year we will be publishing the fourth edition of our “best practices” manual, which is a good source of inspiration for a lot of companies, and that our partners await with anticipation. I am convinced there are truly great workplaces everywhere. As Robert Levering our co-founder says, it's not a question of size or activity. It's the way in which managers are willing to lead their teams and live their work values. We learn, day after day, from the Best Workplaces, and we hope in the future to have a French company at the top of the list. Meeting all French leaders, sharing with them and learning from other countries is already for us and for our partners a fantastic source of motivation. The next step will be for France to be a model for Europe.

**In a booming German labor market, more and more companies recognize the importance of employee-oriented workplace culture.** The German economy faces a steady upturn. Substantial increases in employment subject to social insurance contributions and a record high of 40.29 million people employed are evidence of the positive development of the German labor market. Accordingly, the number of unemployed declined

**Netherlands**

Postbus 1775  
**Jos Plompen**  
 jplompen@greatplacetowork.nl  
 +31 6 28530433  
 3800 BT Amersfoort

**Norway**

Middelthunsgate 27  
**Jannik Krohn Falck**  
 jfalck@greatplacetowork.no  
 +47 922 12 747  
 PO 5492 Majorstuen  
 0305 Oslo

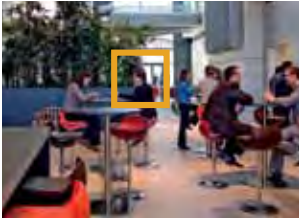
**Poland**

ul. Druzynowa 3/1  
**Maria Zakrzewski**  
 mzakrzewski@greatplacetowork.pl  
 +48 22 331 66 99  
 02-590 Warszawa

**Portugal**

Escritórios Quinta do Jamor  
**Sandrine Lage**  
 slage@greatplacetowork.pt  
 +351 214 177 419  
 2790-466 Queijas





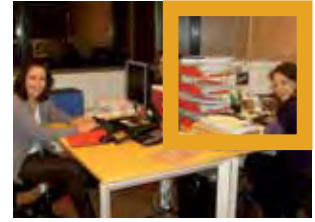
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by 350,000 (10%) compared to 2010, leaving 3.21 million people (7.6%) jobless. Demand for workforce has continued to grow. Furthermore, as laid out by the German Federal Statistical Office, the real gross domestic product remains on target for growth whilst early economic indicators give reason to expect a further increase in 2011. Despite promising forecasts, Germany is and will be confronted with a shortage of skilled labor resulting in a tough competition for the best employees. An increasing interest of companies to provide an employee-oriented workplace culture and the will to actively engage in becoming an attractive employer can be observed in the development of the number of participants in the contest “100 Best Companies to Work For in Germany”. The yearly survey evaluating

companies’ attractiveness to employees included 123 companies in its first year in 2002, while in 2010, 235 firms participated. In 2011, 319 companies of all sizes and industries took part in the survey, out of which 290 participated in the competition to become one of

Germany’s 100 Best Workplaces. A first indicator of workplace quality is the employees’ overall judgment thereof. 88% of the Best 100’s employees agreed that when taking everything into account, their company is a “great place to work”.

A closer look at the dimensions that constitute an employer’s attractiveness reveals that Germany’s 100 Best Workplaces score high on issues such as diversity, security, integration and the overall work climate. Potential for improvement has been identified in promotion opportunities, payment, profit-sharing, work-life balance and psychological distress. Even though Germany’s companies did not significantly improve in comparison to 2010, there is good news: more and more firms acknowledge the advantages of an employee-friendly workplace culture and make efforts to become a “Great Place to Work”.

### Best workplaces during the economic recession in Greece, the role of trust in difficult times.

Best Workplaces 2011 survey took place in Greece last November-December, which means that employees of the participating companies responded to the survey during the big economic crisis, having all pos-

sibilities open (i.e., salaries cut, collective agreements negation, withdrawal of benefits). Several companies that intended to participate in the annual survey finally decided not to. Actually we were very curious to see how all the undertones of insecurity, fear and anxiety would be recorded. Taking into account that half of the companies that participate each year have done it at least once in the past, we understand that 2011 results may give us a clear evidence of how employees evaluate their work environment before and during the crisis. At this point we need to point out that companies participating in this annual survey, irrespective of their final ranking, are companies that in terms of their working environment are above market average and exercise care in their human factor. On the other hand those companies are present in the current difficult market conditions, and many have been

forced to reduce their benefits, give no raises, reduce salaries or even let people go. Nevertheless, this year’s survey results are better compared to last years’. The majority of employees evaluate their workplace better than before. Listed companies demonstrate better trust



**Frank Hauser** (CEO)  
Great Place to Work® Germany



**Dimitris Ganoudis** (General Manager)  
Great Place to Work® Greece

#### Sweden

Munkbrogatan 2  
**Maria Grudén**  
mgruden@greatplacetowork.se  
+46 8 56 20 04 80  
111 27 Stockholm

#### Switzerland

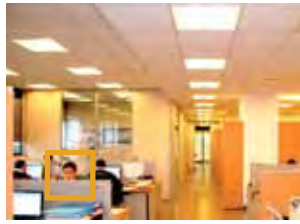
Seestrasse 123  
**Antonino Borgese**  
aborgese@greatplacetowork.ch  
+41 43 817 65 67  
8002 Zürich

#### Spain

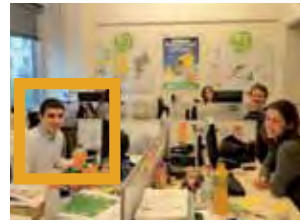
Calle Victor Andres Belaunde 10, Esc. Izq 1A  
**Nicolas Ramilo**  
nramilo@greatplacetowork.es  
+34 91 141 08 99  
28 016 Madrid



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levels. So what is the reason why employees evaluate their companies better during the recession? The truth is that employees experiencing insecurity and confusion, along with cross talks and a blurred future, do appreciate to hear the truth from management, value open communication and reliability, even if some decisions may have negative influences. In some cases, management ask for employees' opinion regarding tough decisions, in order to consider all possible alternatives. The current period is crucial regarding employee relations with management in relation to trust.

Management of companies that regularly invest in trust issues is aware of the fact that in tough times they will enhance their bonds with their employees.

**Exports Forge Ahead In Irish Economy.** While we may have read newspaper headlines about pressures on the Irish economy in recent months, the real story is more positive, especially from the Best Workplaces.

Irish exports jumped to their highest level in almost a decade in February (Euro 8 billion), according to figures published by the Irish Central Statistics

Office. Year-on-year, exports grew by 11%. While the numbers at work in Ireland shrank by 3.7% in 2010, the Best Workplaces actually grew employment by an average of 4.8%. I believe that exports are driving the Irish economy back to growth. With a new government in place and a new plan for consolidating our banking sector Ireland is ready to grow again. Many of the Best Workplaces are indeed foreign direct investment companies (FDI). In fact, Ireland has forged ahead in attracting FDI. Ireland has 8 of the world's top 10 ICT companies, 8 of the world's top 10 pharmaceutical organizations, 15 of the world's top 25 medical device companies and has more than 50% of the world's leading financial institutions.

"It is clear to us that the Best Workplaces are clearly moving out of recession faster because their management had engaged with their employees early on in the process and made the necessary decisions in a timely fashion. When the economy changed, there was a temptation amongst many leadership teams to come up with solutions behind closed doors because they felt the facts might frighten the employees. However the leadership teams in the Best Workplaces actively engaged with employees seeking their solutions and ideas in a spirit of collaboration. Another factor that played into the hands of the best

workplaces has been the bank of trust that they had built up with their employees; this allowed them implement necessary changes faster. Change has been a real feature of the Irish economy over the last 12 months and the Best Workplaces have shown great adaptability to the changed economic environment," says John Ryan, CEO of Great Place to Work® Ireland.

**Luxembourg a new arrival in the GPTW network.**

The Great Place to Work® Institute welcomed a new arrival this year: Luxembourg. The Luxembourgish world is full of contrasts and has certain features which are particular to its country's history and economic culture. One of the reason is that the HR role developed later than in other European countries as a strategic role, and didn't really change from personnel service (administrative) to business partner until over the last few years. We are beginning to see HR managers members of management boards, but this still remains quite rare and is generally reserved for very large struc-



**John Ryan** (CEO)  
Great Place to Work® Ireland



**Fabian Amoretti** (Director)  
Great Place to Work® Luxembourg

**From this point we quote opinions and thoughts of people working in excellent companies.**

"If I could change one thing - it would merely be the fact that I wished I had started my career here and not spent 20 years in another industry. There is nothing to change. From the CEO on down - everyone is one big happy family. It is fun to come to work and be apart of something great."

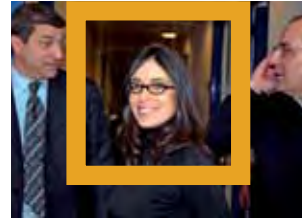
**Employee - Manufacturing & Production**



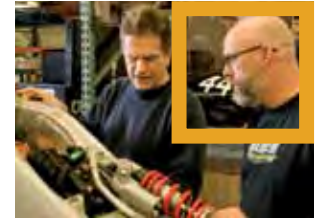
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tures, notably in banking. Another reason is that until the beginning of the last crisis, the HR managers mainly worked in seeking and keeping talent, while diversifying their attentions to employees and by trying out services which were newly available on the market, such as concierge services. The crisis put a brutal stop to this surge. Today, a number of structures are in a delicate situation following mergers or planned redundancy schemes while the world economy is starting up again. Problems are re-emerging, with an expanding turnover and a Generation Y more worried about their well-being at work than, like former generations, about their careers. It is pertinent for Luxembourgish companies to participate in the Great Place to Work® survey, quite apart from the intrinsic HR interest, due to the importance for companies of attracting high profiles from all countries to assure their development.

**Better than an energy drink.** During the past year, we noticed in Poland that “fun” has grown in importance as a feature of a great place to work. Today, “Fun place to work” and “Great place to work” became very close concepts. The importance of fun at work has been confirmed in our recent national survey



**Maria Zakrzewski** (CEO)  
Great Place to Work® Poland

“This is a very fair place. If you have an issue, nine times out of ten it’s resolved. And if it’s not you can always go above, and above, and above.”

**Employee – Information Technology**

conducted in February 2011. I made a small private investigation into the meaning of “fun” at work by enquiring a layman – a person who knew nothing about the Great Place to Work® Model® or our findings. My question was: “Michael, do you see any connection between the concept of a great place to work and having fun at work?” The answer came just like that: “Of course! Fun is a matter of team spirit. Fun at work makes you feel positive, optimistic and helps you achieve your goals. Fun means that things aren’t cut-and-dried, the environment is stimulating, unexpected things happen, and every day is special. When you finish your work and go back home, you’re happy to tell your family what happened. You laugh together. And the next day you’re eager to go back to work. Fun connects work to private life.” I thought, “Wow, Michael not only placed fun correctly within the camaraderie dimension, but he also addressed the mission of the Great Place to Work® Institute.” What I noticed in recent years is that Poles pay more and more attention to workplace quality. Work-life balance is becoming a more common career anchor among Polish employees. And, last but not least, people simply wish to feel happy all day long. Even at work. It’s the most natural thing. So why not laugh at work?

### Contributing to the solution of change.

More than a decade separates us from the first publication of the study on work environments in Portugal and in Europe. Since then, two trends stand out: the conquest of sustainability on the best workplaces agenda and a regular presence of Portuguese organizations in national and European lists.

Reducing worldwide the environmental footprint by 25% in 2012, monitoring carbon emissions in Europe, according the geography of each country, including the fleet of vehicles and the efficiency of buildings, purchasing electricity, generated from renewable sources or with a carbon neutral impact; providing a daily shuttle service shuttle for employees (from downtown to the office), in order to reduce the number of trips and optimize the route tickets; optimizing what is spent on energy; inviting outside parties - consultants in the environmental area - to share views on climate change and the role of the organization, have guided



**Sandrine Lage** (Founder)  
Great Place to Work® Portugal

“Our company has a very open and honest atmosphere. Your opinions and ideas are welcome and you are often informed of changes in a timely manner.”

**Employee – Retail**





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the evolution of the Best Workplaces in relation to their role, not only within the organization, but also outside doors. The promotion of a responsible use of resources is no longer alien to the Best Workplaces and it perfectly translates their evolution: the winner of this category, this year (in Portugal), uses wood from managed forests, adopts a pooling model that fosters the repair and reuse of materials and, fundamentally, they optimize materials. They look to use more resistant materials, with more durability, allowing, in parallel, to reduce damage among the transported products, avoiding waste. The Portuguese Institute sought to recognize practices like these when launching an award in 2009 that related to how organizations support their employees, managers and leaders, in understanding and responding to social and environmental challenges. In particular, they seek to understand and provide to their internal public the skills that they effectively need in order to tackle social and environmental issues of global range, as climate change. Even in a particular context as the European one, it allows, however, to make a positive balance: the recognition of this group as part of the solution and change.

**Switzerland: Scientific focus on the Human factor.** The results of this and

past years surveys, characterized by high levels of positive perception of all the aspects of the workplace, show that in Switzerland management's efforts of creating excellent workplaces at the best companies thrive in an environment where a scientific focus on the human factor goes along with organizational mechanisms working with the precision of a Swiss clock. On average more than two-thirds of employees show appreciation the workplace features of their company. The level of positive experience at the Top 20 is close to the EU Best. This made it possible for 11 of 20 Top Swiss companies to be selected for this year EU Best ranking. The results of the Swiss survey indicate that some of the most positively experienced workplace characteristics are the quality of the job, the feeling of making a difference, the level of commitment of the team and the company's reputation. The high degree of commitment for the job is fostered by the feeling of a high level of responsibility given by managers to their associates: the perception significantly increased from last year. Another key aspect typifying

the positive experience of the workplace is the appreciation of the quality of relationships among colleagues. Although their highly positive overall experience of the workplace, employees at the Best Companies point out some critical aspects on which management should focus, in order to improve the quality of their organizations. Those areas are the same ones representing improvement opportunities at most of the organizations in the country. Employees would like managers to do a better job when organizing the work and assigning tasks. People would like to be more involved in decisions that are relevant for their job or workplace. People sometimes feel some psychological discomfort in their job, for example feeling under pressure or having difficulty to find a balance between work and private life. An employees think that the economic treatment they receives does not always represent a fair share of profit made by the organization. Finally people think that the way managers treat them is not always impartial, in particular when it comes to the fair recognition of merit and the decisions about promotions. Although impartiality is still somehow critical, it improved from last year. ●



**Antonino Borgese** (Managing Partner)  
Great Place to Work® Switzerland

“Management has focused on improving the employees’ lives. There is more of an emphasis on balancing work and personal lives. When you work long or extra hours, you are rewarded with time off at another time. I no longer feel guilty for only putting in 40 hours of work, yet I am willing to put in extra when needed.”

**Employee – Information Technology**

“There’s a feeling here of being part of a team. It makes you feel part of something important to work here.”

**Employee – Manufacturing & Production**

**THE WORK STYLE TALKING. MILAN. 12—16 APRIL 2011.** It was an initiative broken into 5 workshops and featuring many national and international professionals; most participants were top managers and CEOs running several companies listed in 35 Best Workplaces Italy 2011 list.

## An interactive dialogue looking for work identity

*In the following text you will find some information on the event that has also become a book, which I suggest all of you should read.*

### TALKING PERSPECTIVE

Work Style talking is a journey, a challenge for the imagination and for the concept of work identity: working processes change, transforming our ideas of work, folding and subjugating them to the dynamics of people and variations in social relations. We wanted to give ourselves and the people who accepted the challenge the opportunity to reconsider our jobs from a different and original point of view. We were prone to be inspired and imagine and build our future on a broader, stronger and more colorful basis. We decided to stop and think for a while of future scenarios in terms of priorities, both personal and social. We talked through topics and issues that constantly change our work style and, eventually, our life.

### IDENTITY

The individual/person is the core concept of the dialectic between brand identity and personal identity. There were various chairs and poufs, but in less quantity than the total number of participants: this approach had the purpose to fostering people to stand up and interact with each other, and to avoid them sitting and not participating actively. Tables were used as marginal supports, preventing them from becoming the central objects associated with the talk. Through this organization, Rosario Imperiali aimed at stimulating the individuality and the personality of the people involved, stirring up their originality and spon-

aneous participation in the discussion.

### EMOTIONS

Inner and collective emotions. Sandra Sassaroli considered this talk as a sort of brainstorming session and wanted to highlight the evocative potential of keywords, through “the game of opposites”. The introduction of topics and the discussion was carried out also by showing people some peculiar scenes or sketches, just to provoke reactions and discussions among participants. Different emotions that seem to overtake our rational thinking, especially when we are under pressure, as in a work environment, were deeply analyzed and compared, thus giving a general overview of the most common and popular feelings that all the participants had experienced to that point. The big gender gap was soon acknowledged, which emerged from the difference between the emotions that male and female participants



**“Talking” is a book that tells how the work changes.**

It is the outcome of the discussions on 5 topics: identity, emotions, architecture, environment and organization. The main subject of the book is a look at the future identity of work. The general theme has been developed by 135 professionals coming from different sectors (psychology, architecture, identity and privacy, organization and environment care) who have actively contributed to it. The result has been divided into four sections: photography (5 photographers’ interpretation), the drafts (of the participants and of the 5 illustrators), the texts (of 5 storytellers and of the Talk moderators) and 5 original videos (5 filmmakers’ interpretation) included in the attached DVD. In the book you will find also the description of the locations that hosted the various workshops, a presentation of our partners, the illustration of the T-shirt project as well as some statistical data. The collaborators and the people who took part in the event come from 23 countries in US, Europe and Asia. The staff made of the best international professionals, the easy-to-read journalistic style and the clear straightforward topics make this book a very good way to get some clues on how the business world is going to change.



**Gilberto Dondè**  
Managing director Great Place to Work® Institute Italy

**Work routes. Living and working means travelling.** During the day everybody moves around different spaces – mostly urban. We wanted to show how each of us creates our own paths according to our personal interests, hobbies and duties. That is the reason why we asked some people to tell us their work routes, or their particular and different ways they choose to travel, during the Design Fair week. For this reason we created a large map of Milan and hung it up on a trestle; then we put a thin and transparent paper on it that allowed



## Identity Perspectives

Some 25-odd guests were being verbally poked and prodded by moderator Rosario Imperiali on why worker identity is an essential component of brand identity. Trust in yourself, was the message (with the emphasis on self) and others will trust in you. The ideal workplace? “A place where one’s identity inside the workplace is no different to one’s identity outside.” How different are you at home and at work? And why? Identity is, by its very nature much more fluid than we imagine it to be, akin perhaps to the persona – or mask – worn by Roman actors to distinguish their characters on stage. Staff happiness equates to a high quality of product –

feared most. The discussion gave the way to find new solutions and stimuli to recognize weaknesses and change for the better.

### ARCHITECTURE

Volume, spatial interactions, ways of interaction and places. This section was characterized by an “unstructured” approach: objects, reference points and natural choreographies in the room were used to stimulate discussion, and participants were able to enhance the talk with personal in-

and, in turn, client – satisfaction. Or put another way, employee identity and brand identity as one and the same. We talked about assuming multiple identities. What about the danger of another assuming your identity? Identity theft is, some would say, the most damaging form of theft possible. Expressing your true identity at work may, indeed, be too high a goal for most – especially if you accept that identity is mostly formed by culture and surroundings. Perhaps it is more realistic to work on developing the ideal work and home personas separately than to strive to promote an identity that, in any case, is mostly likely the product of circumstance.

by **Thrasys Petropoulos**

puts and case stories. In this context, the moderator Cino Zucchi started off by showing some images that helped him talk about themes concerning architecture, urban design, and setting changes. This information was then processed and gave interesting hints to start the discussion. Some of Cino Zucchi’s works were included as inspirational material, useful for talks about architecture, space, volume, fluidity, interaction between technology and humans. The large presence of architects or designers made it possible

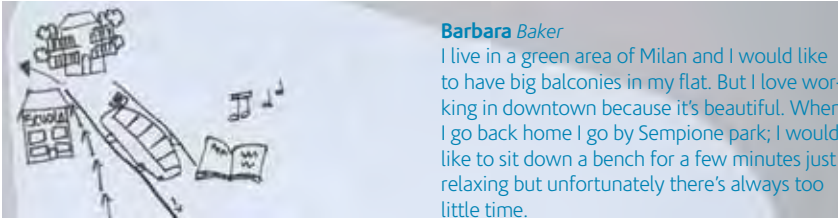


to find quickly a common language that enriched the discussion and allowed the information to be shared and discussed among the participants.

### ENVIRONMENT

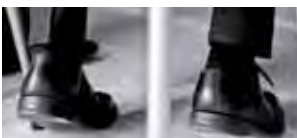
The Man and the Planet: the Intimate and Corporate Dimensions of doing business. Fabrice Leclerc’s approach is focused on a well-defined set of keywords, which set up the language of the talk. Through this language, participants were able to get in touch with a new dimension to live





**Barbara Baker**

I live in a green area of Milan and I would like to have big balconies in my flat. But I love working in downtown because it's beautiful. When I go back home I go by Sempione park; I would like to sit down a bench for a few minutes just relaxing but unfortunately there's always too little time.



## Emotions Perspectives

"Emotions are information signals, about what's happening in the world now, coming before our thoughts, and proceeding after them," explains Sandra Sassaroli, the engine of this Talk. "There aren't good or bad emotions, nor are there useless emotions, that we are not supposed to have." We are probably not so accustomed to considering the weight and the thickness of emotions and we do not often consider the time factor as well: do we take the time to consider our emotions? Or is it just a collateral of our daily routine? Need of control and perfectionism are common to many men, while gender and diversity express more a female perspective. The gender gap is clear. "Gender gives different interpretation of the same situation, through a different set of emotions, creating a language that needs to be understood to catch the positive contribution that a person can give in a workplace." But to both men and women a void of emotions sounds dramatic and could bring to real panic. It is quite clear: nobody wants a flat world nor pain neither repression. A "smiling" workplace wins the "top of the pops" in the Emotions chart. A place where you can smile because the heart that you put in your work is the strongest feeling that increases productivity as much as self-fulfillment. Is this possible, now?

by **Filippo De Bortoli**

### ORGANIZATION

The man who works has to confront targets. This was the most peculiar and suggestive location among the five sessions; Leonardo la Pietra led the participants through an extraordinary way of coming together, living the experience of a surgical team work. In this way, it was much easier for participants to empathize with the concept of the talk. The main theme was thus highlighted by the setting itself and the moderator Leonardo la Pietra was able to put a great emphasis

a peaceful life, to be in harmony with nature. For Leclerc, the environment is not only what we usually relate to planet Earth, but is also intended as the whole emotional and ethical area, based on the opposite dynamics of God/Evil, Acid/Basic, and Slow/Fast. The individual was put at the center of the stage because each of us is responsible for the care of the planet: new scenarios were brought about, many ideas aimed at a change in attitude and priorities in order to think seriously about what is around us.



**Identity moderator** Rosario Imperiali. He wrote several data protection manuals. Imperiali has acquired professional experience as lawyer, academic, and journalist. He worked as chief legal researcher and executive in the legal department of IBM. He is a columnist for *Il Sole 24 Ore*, *TWSM*, *Il Denaro*. Chairman of the Guarantors' Board of Anfov, member of the Scientific Committees of European Privacy Association and Istituto Italiano Privacy.



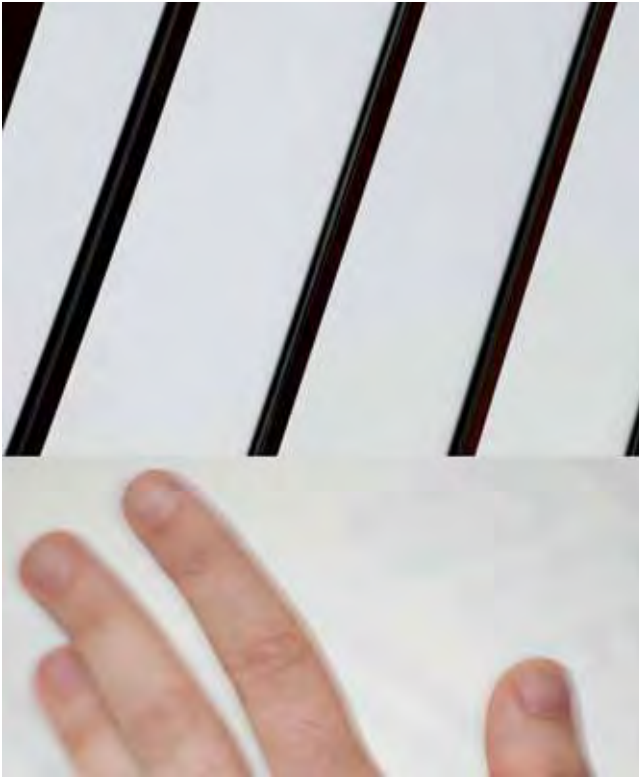
### Emotions moderator

Sandra Sassaroli. She graduated in General Medicine in 1975, earned a post-graduate in Psychiatry in 1979 and specialized in Systemic Psychotherapy and Cognitive Behavioral Psychotherapy in 1983. She worked in the public service as specialist in Rome from 1980 to 1984, teaching in the meanwhile at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore of the same city. Since 1980 Sassaroli is a teaching member of the SITCC (Italian Society of Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy) and since 1990 she also teaches in a post graduate Specialization course in Barcelona. In July 2001 she was appointed Director of Studi Cognitivi, an authorized Post Graduate School in Cognitive Psychotherapy with branches in Milan, Modena and San Benedetto del Tronto.



**Carla Bar tender**  
I prefer travelling by underground rather than by bus, though I use both of them but after working, I run home and I would like to have rollers to get back quicker.

>> >> us to see the streets behind. Going around the city we picked a bunch of people – Italian as well as international – to literally draw their daily routes, be it for work or fun, simultaneously illustrating it with little sketches. The game turned out to be a fun way to shape a new urban design of Milan, created by the people who live or visit it, thus casting a new light on the city. **Follow us on [workstyletalking](#).**



## Architecture Perspectives

How design will shape or continue to be shaped by workstyles into the future? Architects are now being asked to design for constant change and movements of people. Clients want them squeeze more and more workers into smaller and smaller offices to reduce cost. There is an increasing preference, not only for workplace personalization, but also for flexible hours that are not tied to a desk. Companies will still need

to rationalize and codify their procedures as a continued expression of their corporate identity or brand to the outside world and marketplace. In conclusion, while some architects and designers work towards the goal of perfection, the creation of solutions to specific problems will lead to new questions and contradictions that others will try to solve later on. It is a never-ending process where people, whether in societies or workers in an office or factory, will, again, adopt and shape their customs in ways not imagined by utilitarian designers.

by **Fabian Uzaraga**

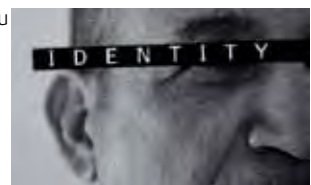
on the importance of organization in critical situations. The feelings of the talk were emphasized by the use of video images at the beginning and at the end of the session, besides specific keywords that communicated the emotions associated with the surgical room. It was a completely new and unforgettable experience that allowed the participants to rethink values and priorities in their worklife. ●

by **Gilberto Dondè**

Attached to this book "Talking" you will find a DVD.  
Contents:

- Trailer of the pre-Talk works
- Trailer of the authorial videos
- 5 authorial videos
- 5 Talks backstage
- 5 Talks Soundtracks

The two images on this page are from the video of Esam Al-Dabagh.





### Architecture moderator

Cino Zucchi. He graduated from M.I.T. in 1978 and at the Politecnico di Milano in 1979, where he is currently Chair Professor of Architectural and Urban Design. He has taught architecture at many international seminars and has been visiting professor at Syracuse University and at ETH in Zürich. Together with CZA, of which he is the principal architect, he has designed and realised many industrial, commercial, residential and public buildings, a number of projects for public spaces, master plans and renewals of industrial and historical areas. His studio's projects have been published in books and magazines worldwide.

## Environment Perspectives

The environment can no longer be left out of the equation. But what are the relationships connecting the economic and social realms? Moderator Fabrice Leclerc encouraged his participants to think outside the box in the way they approached the environment's connection to their work, and, by extension, their lives. The consequences of our economic activity on the environment have been well documented. "There is more and more technology to help develop our society. How do we better use our resources – that's the question. We need more innovation, which means better use." A possible solution: embrace the creative revolution rather than the industrial; when one considers that our industrial civilization is only 100 or so years old it becomes clear that there is another way to live in the environment without destroying it, using our natural surroundings as a source of inspiration, one that would encourage collaboration between those with natural wisdom and those in business, politics and society to design new, more holistic systems. "We have to help the corporations do a better job. With low-cost social networks, we can change things very fast. The time between crises is shorter. The system is telling us we have to change." People must make shifts in consciousness at the global level too. But "there's a difference between emerging and developed countries. It is difficult if there is no coherence, no balance in investment." If one's environment is to be a safe, protective and energizing space, the workspace and private space should have some similar characteristics. And the final solving keywords should be Love and Collaboration: "Collaboration is an alkaline word. Sharing is much more powerful than taking. It's not about products, but about creating sense in our lives. We have the power to thrive by adding more alkalinity to our world."

by Angela Boskovitch



**Networking minds.** We could not have achieved what we wanted for this event without exploiting social networks. Social networks are now utilized by any kind of organization, from the FBI to the local bus company. We believe that these networks are at the core of social interaction in the workplace. **We have successfully combined the pleasure of social interactivity with the creative fabric that has given life to one of the most ambitious gathering of minds and ideas that Work Style talking has hosted this year.**



## Organization Perspectives

The present period of crisis must be seen as a great opening to re-evaluate the internal values of organizations. In a time of radical changes, we must fight back fear and instead recognize and seize the opportunities that arise. In an organization where a shared motivation exists, a change can have both positive and negative effects – such as the awaking of personal aims clashing with the common goal. This in turn can harm the sense of team and community. An organization evolves mainly through its people, meaning that people must be open to accept changes as a challenge. In the future we will see the number and frequency of these changes increase, and a new mindset must be adopted in order to keep up. Ideally, in the future incentives should be more tailor made and be discussed thoroughly with the employees. Moderator Leonardo la Pietra's favorite keyword is lean: "In a lean organization simplifying is the operative word: that means no Muda (a Japanese word indicating all efforts or activities that lead nowhere and are therefore unnecessary)." This includes wastes of time, resources, and energy. In a modern organization, we will have to think of ways of reducing Muda to the minimum. At the workplace of the future we will have to limit the production of Muda – both physical and abstract. The process of re-thinking organization is already in motion, and theories and ideas diverge enormously. Whereas most new trends seem to be dominated by the usual corporate prerogatives of maximized productivity and profits, it is clear that other innovators are working towards re-incorporating the human element in their teams and workforce. It is important, however, that we evaluate the long-term impact of the changes we introduce and are honest about their real objectives, and that we keep in mind the scope of our responsibility and be not afraid of swimming against the current.

by **Luca Brunoni**



### Environment moderator

Fabrice Leclerc. He started by learning the basics "rules of Nature" during 6 years of medicine & veterinary studies with various Natural expeditions worldwide. Leclerc comes from a long heritage of world explorers and inspirers. For 15 years, he has led Fortune 100 companies as CEO and head of the strategic innovations of luxury brands. He is the founder of wildkeepers, the world community dedicated to the transition to good business advising corporations and business leaders on how to thrive in the new economy.



### Organization moderator

Leonardo la Pietra. Dr. Leonardo la Pietra is the Chief Medical Officer of European Institute of Oncology, a care and research cancer center in Milan. Dr. la Pietra is Founder and Chairman of SIMM-Italian Association of Medical Managers and AIDOS - Italian Health Information Management Association. His main professional and scientific interests are focused on quality improvement, performance evaluation, clinical indicators, patient safety and risk management, health information management, hospital planning and design, international health policies. He has written over 100 papers and scientific communications in the field of medical management, hospital planning and design and public health.



**Caring** The award recognizes a company that excels in caring for its employees. Caring can be demonstrated in many forms, such as responding creatively to people's needs to balance their work and life commitments and doing the maximum possible to enable employees in times of need. A caring company also promotes an environment of inclusion, where all employees can flourish.

## One Simple Thing to support employee's needs

PepsiCo Ireland cares for people in many different ways. *"We provide a diverse and competitive employee benefits package for all our employees. However, the benefit design is not solely concerned with being competitive in terms of financial benefits, but advances concern for the health and welfare of our employees. We provide benefits such as a confidential Employee Assistance Program (accessible by both employees and their families), a Workplace Well-being Program, which actively promotes healthy lifestyle, regular health assessments for all our associates and finally our unique 'One Simple Thing' process,"* reveals **Brian Cassidy**, HR Director at PepsiCo Ireland. Introduced in 2009, One Simple Thing (OST) is simple but highly effective: employees are asked to include in their yearly objectives "one simple thing" that could make a difference to them in managing

their work and life commitments. Employees are then responsible for delivering on this action, with support from their manager. Examples of employee OST objectives have included not having to attend meetings on Friday afternoons, changing start and finish times to facilitate school runs, and working from home one day a week. *"The one simple thing initiative this year has helped me to flex my morning start so that I can exercise more,"* notes one employee.

*"This has made me healthier and more energetic, which has positively impacted my home life, but also in my work performance."* The concept of OST has been introduced to help the diverse employees balance their work lives with their personal and/or family lives, adds Cassidy: *"OST is a formal objective aimed at enabling associates to work with their manager to influence their own unique work-home balance. In situations where associates are experiencing difficulties, we would always try to work to a sensitive way to support their needs."*



### Winner

- **PepsiCo (Ireland)**, a global food and beverage company best known for brands such as Pepsi, Quaker, and Walkers. More specifically, PepsiCo's noteworthy "One Simple Thing" Initiative exemplifies the holistic approach taken by the company to make sure that it is meeting the needs of its employees, both inside and outside of the office.

### Runner-ups



- **Frøs Herreds Sparekasse (Denmark)**, a banking and credit services provider and the #1 company on this year's Top 25 Small & Medium-Sized Workplaces list. Frøs Herreds offers an array of noteworthy health and wellbeing services, such as company-provided counseling for employees facing physiological, stress, or even marriage issues. What sets the company apart, however, is the sense of "family" noted by many employees.

- **Solar Technology (Germany)**, a manufacturer of solar products that transform energy from photovoltaic cells into usable electrical current. One way that SMA stands out among its peers is through its sophisticated programs and services for addiction prevention. All employees have access to on-site counseling services, and a half-day training course on addiction prevention is built into the training program for all executives.



**Developing.** The award recognizes a company that excels in the area of developing its employees. Such a company has outstanding practices to help employees discover and develop their talents. Moreover, an award-winning company enables their employees to realize their full potential, both professionally and personally.

## Building competence and confidence

McDonald's program is truly unique within their industry. For "Crew" employees, development begins the moment they start at McDonald's. It is divided into nine units and the next step is development program for managers. The two-year program is targeted at high potential individuals. **Michele Ryan** HR Director at McDonald's explains: "What we have come to understand is that it is only when employees reflect on and understand what they have learned that real pride and confidence in their ability grows. Our crew training program is now accredited by City & Guilds. Our junior manager programs have been accredited under the national framework of qualifications in Ireland. What is unique is that these programs are open to full-time and part-time employees. We have developed a degree program, which is also accredited by the national framework

of qualifications in conjunction with the National College of Ireland. This program is open to high performing managers in order to achieve a qualification through a combination of the McDonald's training program and attending college." Ryan also adds: "All members of the senior management team are trained mentors. In 2010 we launched an organization-wide coaching program. In order to embed the coaching culture, all participants attend review sessions to maintain their learning and to build additional coaching skills." The starting point of McDonald's developing approach is the business strategy. Its developing style is based on building both competence and confidence. As Ryan states: "Our managers provide employees with the appropriate support needed to develop their potential according to their skill level. We leverage the resources within

the organization to create a collaborative approach to development by involving people at all level. Our mentoring program is one example of how we do this. What underpins our approach is a belief in a coaching culture and the value of interaction and discussion in order to embed learning. The approach is supported by clearly defined training programs, which are developed to focus on the 'why', as well as a structured talent management process... This approach builds both competence and confidence in our people." ●



### Winner

- **McDonald's (Ireland).** When it comes to evaluating the best people practices of a given company, the context in which they take place can be as important as the practices themselves. To serve the needs of a large workforce, McDonald's - winner of this year's award - has responded by upping its commitment to developing employees at all levels of the organization.

### Runner-ups



- **SAS Institute (Germany),** a global developer and provider of IT software and a longtime list maker in multiple countries. At SAS, development is not simply a goal but a career-long process built into the company values. This is demonstrated by the presence of a dedicated Knowledge and Skills Development division, who recommends applicable internal, external, and vocational training courses for each employee's individual training plan.

- **W.L. Gore (Europe),** an industrial manufacturing and production company. While many of the companies on the European Best Companies List 2011 utilize mentoring programs as means of developing their employees, W.L. Gore sets itself apart in its commitment to its Sponsor Program. Not only are all employees accompanied by a personal mentor during their entire tenure, but mentors are required to take nine specific trainings related to their role.





**Inspiring.** The award recognizes a company that inspires its employees to view their work as having a higher purpose – being more than “just a job.” This can be achieved through a charismatic leader, a company’s reputation for its social responsibility, or unusual characteristics of a company’s culture. Ultimately, an inspiring company will make its employees proud to be working there.

## How to nourish imagination and creativity in the workplace

It is not too common to see employee comments such as, “*This workplace is rare and amazing: every day is a pleasure to work here.*” This comment comes from employees at Elica.

An example here is the E-Extraordinary program, a staff training project that seeks to establish a relationship between art and industrial production. In 2009-2010, 30 employees were given the opportunity to participate in theoretical meetings and practical workshops – both led by renowned artists – and then work with these artists to do works of art to exhibit in the factory. The company augments programs such as E-Extraordinary with partnerships with Sapienza University of Rome and University of Camerino on topics including industrial design, ecological innovation, and corporate branding. Elica’s extraor-

dinary commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is another source of pride and inspiration for employees. For example, the company has ongoing collaboration with Solidoro, a cooperative that employs disadvantaged groups in the assembly and packaging of industrial or hand-made goods. The “Draw Your Dreams” initiative is an annual drawing competition that

seeks to nourish imagination and creativity from an early age and ends with an exhibition of the students’ drawings. As **Marco Scippa**, HR Manager at Elica states: “*We work a lot on caring for the person not only as an employee but also his family nucleus*

*and friends. We started a series of activities like study holidays for children of employees which extends even to friends, the welfare system etc. The size of our ability to inspire people, to take people’s hearts, and to give them a flag to believe in is shown by the number of CVs that we get. We strive in a concrete way to create a physical environment where people feel good when they come to work. This is a starting point to continue to give employees the right dimension to be really special.*” In the end, Elica’s TI scores speak for themselves. 98% of employees agree with the statement “*My work has a special meaning: this is not just a job*” and 99% of employees agree with the statements “*Management has a clear view of where the organization is going and how to get there,*” “*I feel I make a difference here,*” and “*I’m proud to tell others I work here.*” ●



### Winner

- **Elica (Italy)** an Italian producer and manufacturer of cooker hoods. By imbedding company values in every aspect of the business, coupled with a remarkable level of commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), the company has created a unique and inspiring atmosphere where employees readily see their work as more than “just a job.”

### Runner-ups



- **SMA (Germany)**, a manufacturer of solar products. Like award-winner Elica, CSR is deeply-rooted in SMA’s corporate values; staff members often dedicate themselves to development projects, travelling abroad in their holidays in order to help build facilities. Moreover, the company has a dedicated CSR advisor who is responsible for strategic development, the bundling and coordination of the social and ecological activities, as well as their communication.

- **Diageo (Ireland)**, a global producer and distributor of several well-known brands of alcohol, is another nominee for this year. Diageo boasts a unique variety of legacy programs that seek to inspire employees by connecting them to the 350+ year history of the St. James Gate facility. The company honored families with generations of service to the company by hosting a lunch for them in Guinness Storehouse, where they were awarded with special Guinness gifts.



**Listening.** The award recognizes a company that excels in involving employees in the decision-making process. Such a company has outstanding practices for soliciting, listening to, and collecting employees' suggestions and feedback. Moreover, management makes themselves accessible in multiple ways to encourage questions, comments, and criticisms from employees.

## An attentive and approachable leadership

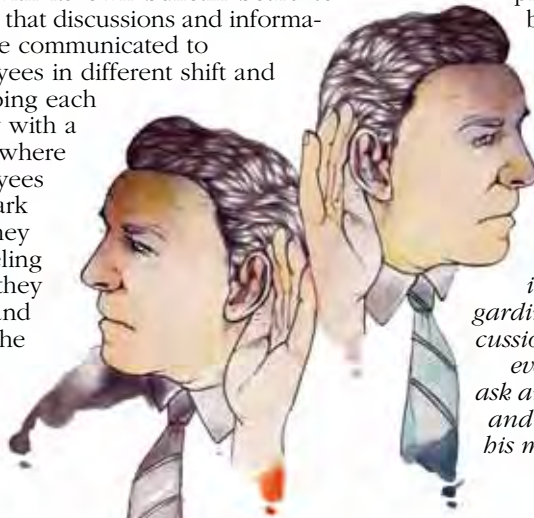
Pipelife utilizes a variety of practices and programs to ensure that employees are actively involved in the decision making process.

*"We have an inside system, which is a sort of ideas generator so people are rewarded and have to bring improvement ideas for the total working environment, so within four to five years, we have made more than 5,000 improvements to improve our working environment. That has created a feeling for people that they can really have an influence. Instead of just being subordinate, they have a responsibility as well,"* states **Kimmo Kedonpaa**, MD at Pipelife. *"Another thing we have in Pipelife is this superior workers discussion four times a year, and I personally interview all my workers once a year so that they have a direct contact with me. I also dedicate two to four hours a week to employ-*

*ees."* Pipelife uses several small, but highly effective practices to sustain the "listening" process between major events, such as senior leader visits. Examples include providing each team with its own bulletin board to ensure that discussions and information are communicated to employees in different shift and equipping each factory with a board where employees can mark how they are feeling when they enter and leave the work-

place, as well as recognize colleagues who inspired them that day. The end result of Pipelife's best people practices is a flow of communication between leadership and factory employees that is anything

but one-way or hierarchical. *"Top management is exceptionally approachable and takes everyone into consideration as an individual,"* notes one employee. *"We are being generously involved in decision-making regarding our own work (discussions, team boards) and every employee is able to ask and present suggestions and ideas to any issues on his mind."* ●



### Winner

- **Pipelife (Finland)** is a leading manufacturer and supplier of plastic pipe systems, as well as a Finnish "Top 10 Best Company" for the third consecutive year. "Listening" is fully integrated into Pipelife corporate values, creating a unique culture where all upper management demonstrate an exceptional commitment to listening to the needs and suggestions of their frontline employees.

### Runner-ups



- **Topaz Energy (Ireland)**, a fuel supplier, is one nominee for this year's award. While all companies on the European Best Workplaces List 2011 annually take the Trust Index Survey, Topaz Energy is unique in that every station has a "Gptw Team" to follow up on survey feedback. Each team selects a Team Champion, whose role is to keep the survey results on the agenda, oversee the implementation of new processes, and continue gathering ideas from staff.

- **Microsoft (Italy)**. As a global software maker, Microsoft utilizes its technological abilities to listen to employees and involve them in the decision making process. To collect internal feedback, for example, the company developed a tool called "Consensus," which creates online, anonymous email questionnaires. This allows the company to rapidly collect employees' opinions and advice on specific subjects.



**Speaking.** The award recognizes a company that excels in speaking the truth. Information is shared fully and frequently in a variety of methods, such as in-person, by email, or by video. Company leaders also foster a culture of transparency, providing information openly and honestly. This can be particularly important during trying situations – such as layoffs – where leaders need to be counted on to share all relevant information to their employees.

## Innovation and technology to communicate openly and honestly

The “Speaking” process at Cisco begins with its internal intranet site, where all Cisco employees can find information and news about business strategy, corporate culture, customers, partners, and colleagues. “*Collaboration and flexibility are part of the genetic heritage of the company. To communicate in a transparent, honest, credible at all company levels, plays an important role,*” says **David Bevilacqua**, CEO at CISCO Italy and VP at CISCO Corporate. At Cisco the most notable program is Telepresence, a new technology category that uses advanced visual, audio, and interactive technologies to deliver an in-person experience over the network. With Telepresence users can meet “face to face” around a single virtual table, with life-size images and real-time interactions. “*This*

*eliminates the barriers that normally we face when we communicate by telephone or through traditional video conferences. This aspect is crucial for a company that has chosen to make transparency a management style,*” adds Bevilacqua. Cisco further stands out among its peers through the company’s commitment to fully integrating social media technologies as a means of facilitating communication. Key here is the Cisco Communications



Center of Excellence (CCoE). Designed to increase collaboration and motivate innovation, “*Three aspects are crucial for the Cisco culture, because it’s on these values that our communication style is based. 1) Trust: Cisco is a place where an opinion of each is treated with the utmost consideration and guarantees each individual can put their experience within specific models of governance, but without interference. 2) Respect. Every employee is treated as a professional, no matter what task he does. 3) The promotion of flexibility. We all work hard but we have made policies and instruments so that we can reconcile the work and the personal needs.*” Cisco employees across Europe praise the company’s efforts to speak openly and honestly to all staff, across (and despite) global borders. “*Thanks to these tools, we can better understand the company and more deeply understand themes related to day-by-day activity,*” affirms an Italian employee. ●

### Winner

- **Cisco Systems (Europe)**, a leading global provider of networking and information technologies, represented on nine national Best Workplaces Lists in Europe. Successfully harnessing its internal technological expertise, Cisco utilizes innovative online and virtual communication practices to sustain a high level of communication with its global workforce.

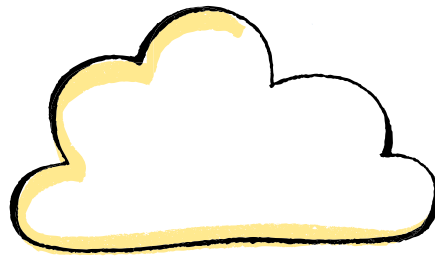
### Runner-ups



- **Euro Car Parks (Ireland)**. Faced with the challenge of communicating to 189 employees dispersed at car park sites in all 32 counties in Ireland, the company’s leadership has responded with several simple yet innovative best people practices. Every four weeks, staff members receive both a letter and newsletter from the CEO, informing them about how the company is performing, as well as any developments or changes.

- **FedEx (Switzerland)**. FedEx ensures a consistent, two-way flow of information between management and employees through “Skip Level Meetings” that allow staff to “skip” their immediate manager and speak directly to their “boss’ boss.” Employees thus gain a valuable opportunity to raise any issues regarding their department, while senior management in turn gains the opportunity to communicate new corporate developments directly to frontline employees.





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