

The Top Midsize Employers in the United States for 2019

Midsize employers exhibit the best of both worlds. With the size, reach, resources, and name-brand recognition to compete at the pinnacle of their industries, they are still small enough to retain the agility and personal touch of small, family-run companies. Beyond these factors, what makes a midsize employer great? Which company policies—from benefits to company culture to hiring—make a midsize company a place where people want to work?

This white paper will explore these questions to help midsize employers up their game to compete for top talent in a job seeker's economy.

The Source

For this white paper, we drew from the Forbes list of “America’s Best Midsize Employers 2019.” Each year, Forbes teams with Statista, a German-based market research firm, to compile a list of the top employers in the United States. The companies on this list—which can include businesses of any size—tend to be businesses that employees love that maintain growth and job gains for many consecutive months. These companies have displayed a knack for attracting top talent.

The midsize employers list pulls data from a Statista-compiled “best employers” list and focuses on medium-sized companies, or businesses that employ between 1,000 and 5,000 employees.

The Companies

The Fortune and Built In NYC lists cover a wide variety of businesses; both lists feature high-ranking companies in almost every industry. Below, we look at several industries and the businesses within each that have been recognized for operating idyllic workplaces. What makes these companies attractive places to work, and how did each business score such a high ranking on a high-profile list of top workplaces?

The Forbes “America’s Best Midsize Employers” list for 2019 includes 500 employers. In this white paper, we focused on the top 150, drawing out a variety of businesses and highlighting the things that they do best. Here are seven employers that landed high on the list with details about the core selling points of these business for existing employees and job seekers.

Now you know.

1. TripAdvisor

Overview: TripAdvisor bills itself as the “World’s Largest Travel Website.” The business gives travelers an easy way to compare prices for airfare and hotel reservations, book flights and hotels, explore vacation rental options, read reviews of restaurants and attractions, and much more. The site includes more than 600 million reviews from travelers covering everything from hotels to parks to hotdog stands. It is among the most popular online resources for planning a trip in part because of a unique feature: it allows users to customize travel itineraries for their vacations.

Selling Points: In a lengthy writeup about TripAdvisor, which topped the Forbes Best Midsize Employers 2019 list, contributor Vicky Valet wrote about the company’s highly personal interview process. TripAdvisor focuses heavily on the applicant experience, making sure that candidates feel valued and cared for throughout.

This employee screening philosophy carries over to the organization’s company culture. TripAdvisor makes sure that employees understand how their roles affect the bigger picture and works to encourage learning, professional development, and growth in every worker.

Other benefits include the amenities at the TripAdvisor campus—free lunch, an extensive gym, and on-site dry cleaning and massage services. It’s a comfortable, inviting place to work, something that job seekers today are eager to find.

2. ACTIVE Network

Overview: Based in Dallas, Texas, ACTIVE Network is a Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) provider that delivers cloud-based software solutions for camps, races, events, and other activity organizers. ACTIVE software helps to streamline event or activity management by handling registration, membership payment processing, and other essentials. From marathons to Thanksgiving Day “turkey trots,” ACTIVE is the software provider behind many popular events throughout the country.

Selling Points: Upon visiting the Careers page on the ACTIVE Network website, job seekers are immediately greeted by a scroll of testimonials from current employees. The common refrain is that the company culture at ACTIVE is driven by shared passions, interests, and hobbies—and that it fosters deeper and longer-lasting friendships than what you find at many other workplaces.

The company offers “weekly employee engagement opportunities” including a running club, yoga outings, lunchtime TED Talks, and board game nights. Other perks include discounts at retail stores and movie theaters, free membership to ACTIVE Advantage (which offers discounts on race dues and other activities and events nationwide), and the chance to win all-expenses-paid vacations for top performance.

3. Airbnb

Overview: Airbnb has changed the way that people travel by making it easy to find or offer vacation rentals just about anywhere in the world. Rather than staying in a hotel while on a trip, a traveler can use Airbnb to rent a house, apartment, or condo for a unique experience that blends right into a local neighborhood. The service allows homeowners to become entrepreneurs simply by renting out their properties.

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Selling Points: Airbnb's mission statement is, "Create a world where anyone can belong anywhere," and that sense of belonging defines the company culture and employee experience. Rather than lunch being a time during which employees eat at their desks or head out for a bite individually, Airbnb makes lunchtime a daily social hour.

The company employs an in-house chef who prepares lunch for the whole office. When the food is ready, the chef rings a bell and everyone gathers for a shared meal. These lunchtime gathers create a communal, almost familial work environment. It's one reason why job seekers looking to build friendships and communities through their work gravitate toward Airbnb.

Other benefits include paid volunteering hours, annual credits for "travel and experiences," and generous parental and family leave: 22 weeks of paid leave for new birth parents and 10 weeks of paid leave for new non-birth parents.

4. Workday

Overview: Based in Pleasanton, California, Workday is a software company that offers cloud-based solutions for human capital management, financial management, and business planning. The software aids businesses in putting together learning and development programs for their employees, automating payroll and financial processes, creating revenue forecasts, and other tasks.

Selling Points: A major component of Workday software is helping other businesses to drive employee satisfaction and retention. As such, it's no surprise that the company emphasizes corporate culture above all else. The company's culture goals don't just revolve around creating a fun place to work or empowering employees to succeed: Workday pushes for a culture defined by diversity and equity. The company keeps a close eye on the demographic makeup of teams, pay rates, and promotions, all to create a more inclusive and welcoming workplace for all.

Other benefits include stock bonuses for top performers, company sports teams and clubs, a fitness reimbursement program, and on-site bars. In some offices, employees even have the option to bring pets to work.

5. Indeed

Overview: Indeed helps countless companies around the world find employees. The job board and employment search engine allows job seekers to find open positions in multiple locations and industries. It is one of the world's top tools for both finding and filling jobs—statistically, Indeed outstrips other job sites such as CareerBuilder, Monster, and even LinkedIn in helping people find or fill jobs. According to a 2017 study conducted by employee onboarding software company SilkRoad, Indeed accounts for 65 percent of all hires made from job sites.

Selling Points: One feature of the Indeed job board is that every employer on the service has its own page where past employees can rate that company. By grading a business across categories such as "work-life balance," "pay and benefits," and "culture," workers can either endorse an employer or warn job seekers to stay away.

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Based on 440 reviews and counting, Indeed has a 4.4 out of 5 rating on its own site. The high rating speaks to the sense of satisfaction that most employees have at Indeed. From culture to benefits, most employees have nothing bad to say about the company.

If there is a core selling point, it might be Indeed's "Open PTO" policy, which offers unlimited vacation and sick days to all employers. It's Indeed's way of fighting America's reputation as "the No Vacation Nation." Other perks abound, too, including free breakfast at the office every day and plentiful opportunities for learning new skills and progressing within the company.

6. Briggs & Stratton

Overview: Landing at number 17 on the Forbes list of top midsize employers is Briggs & Stratton, a Wisconsin-based manufacturer known for making small gasoline-powered engines. According to the Briggs & Stratton website, the company's engines power the majority of American lawnmower brands. The company also manufactures snowblowers, snowblower engines, pressure washers, air compressors, and other pieces of equipment. The business averages 10 million units per year and is "backed by the largest service network in the industry."

Selling Points: Briggs & Stratton offers a strong mix of fair pay, family-friendly benefits, and forward momentum to its employees. Benefits include robust group health and life insurance plans, pension plans, and even profit-sharing arrangements, but the company's biggest perk might be its dedication to employee development.

Each employee has access to career planning, coaching, and mentoring support and resources. The onboarding program is carefully personalized to integrate new hires into the existing teams and projects at Briggs & Stratton. The company also offers leadership programs, workshops, and learning groups for employee growth and advancement.

In addition to these internal programs, Briggs & Stratton has a tuition reimbursement program that pays for 50 percent of college coursework or other outside training programs as long as the learning relates to the individual's current or desired role within the company.

7. Heinen's Grocery Stores

Overview: Heinen's is a family-owned chain of grocery stores based in Cleveland with 29 locations spread across northeast Ohio and parts of Illinois. Founded in 1929, the business has retained its small, family-owned ethos for 90 years and counting. The company is devoted to offering fresh food and friendly customer service that are both a cut above what other supermarkets offer.

Following the recession, Heinen's invested in revitalizing downtown Cleveland, opening a flagship store in the Ameritrust Tower and Swetland Building in the heart of the city. Delish, a well-known food website, has recognized this Heinen's location as one of the most beautiful grocery stores in America.

Selling Points: To uphold its commitment to friendly customer service, Heinen's seeks to cultivate pleasant work environments for employees that are grounded in respect, honesty, and collaboration. The business is an attractive spot for job seekers due to its competitive pay and dynamic benefits list, which stretches beyond what many similar grocery and retail businesses offer: Heinen's benefits include health, dental, and vision coverage; employee discounts; paid holidays, vacation days, and personal time; pensions; 401(k) retirement savings plans; and group life insurance.

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The Lessons

While these seven midsize businesses range from software developers to travel companies to manufacturers to retailers, they have one critical thing in common: the understanding that great employees make a great business. These companies are responding to the job seeker's market by showing workers that they matter.

TripAdvisor shows its commitment to employees by taking an experience-driven approach to everything from the interview process to the office environment. Workday demonstrates its commitment by focusing on diversity and inclusion. Heinen's sets itself apart by showing that retail workers deserve top-tier benefits packages just as other professionals do.

In the benefits policies and cultures of businesses such as these, you will find more than just evidence of why each one ranked favorably on Forbes' list of the best midsize employers. You will find strategies and practices that other businesses—including your own—can implement to win favor among current employees and job seekers. With unemployment rates at near-record lows, job seekers are increasingly looking at benefits, company culture, and employee experience as the factors that drive their decision regarding where to work. Elevating these elements of your business can make all the difference when it comes to the depth and breadth of your candidate pool.

Of course, it's important not to forget due diligence. Just because you are working harder to court top talent doesn't mean you should ever lower your standards for employment. Staying vigilant by using detailed interviews and thorough background checks is a must, not only for hiring the right people but also for establishing and defending company culture, morale, and workplace safety.

At backgroundchecks.com, we can help your midsize business to develop a smart background check strategy to fortify every facet of your hiring process.

Conclusion

Midsize employers don't hire as many people as larger companies, but they often land at or near the top of "Best Companies to Work For" lists. The businesses spotlighted in this white paper embody all that a midsize employer can be: a haven for job seekers known for tight-knit company culture and strong benefits that remains influential enough to earn brand-name recognition.

If your business falls in the midsize category regarding number of employees—or if you are hoping to grow your venture beyond its current "small business" designation—there is much to learn from the tactics that these top

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