

HEAD of THEIR CLASS

Providing Power to the People

By Rebecca Patrick

No company rises to the top of the Best Places to Work list without demonstrating these main attributes: good people – management and employees, the right culture and showing some R-E-S-P-E-C-T.

When we talked separately to the leaders of three of this year’s No. 1 companies, their refrains were like blueprints to what a worker wants to hear. And, unsurprisingly, they were frequently on a similar page.

#1 Small Employer: Luther Consulting, LLC

Founded in 1998, this Carmel-based public health software firm “pioneered web-based data collection and reporting through the creation of EvaluationWeb®.”

Jim Luther, CEO

Leadership style: “I focus on empowering and supporting employees, and producing a great product. The profit will follow.”

Work environment: “We certainly focus on a flexible work environment and we’ve added technology to make those who work remotely even for a day feel connected to the office. We really strive for a supportive family-like group and home-like environment. Our reporting structure is as flat as possible without my having to personally supervise every employee. In most cases, we only have one level of management between every employee and me. I place a very high regard on providing positive feedback to employees and we make sure that happens throughout the company and at various times.

“We have dogs in the office almost every day. We have a full kitchen and we use it all the time to cook together. The smell of fresh baked goods wafts through the air at least



Team building meets fun at Luther Consulting in this exercise featuring Legos.

once a week. We have yoga classes during the cooler months and a crate of fruit delivered weekly. Staff meetings are usually followed by catered staff lunches, along with occasional

theme parties and family events twice a year.”

What I want to hear employees say: “I’m really proud to work here.”

#1 Medium Employer: Mainstreet

A national company specializing in real estate development, value investments and health care; headquarters in Carmel.

Zeke Turner, CEO



Mainstreet “paparazzi” await the red carpet arrival of the stars – aka the children – at a Big Brothers Big Sisters annual event.

Leadership style: “To actively empower people to do things themselves. Sometimes I’ve been very successful at that and other times not as much, but that’s where I feel like we are in the best

position. When we can clearly articulate desires and goals of what we want to achieve and then really empower people to go do it. That’s where I get the most joy ... when I see those things happening. There is the (President) Truman quote that says it’s amazing how much we can accomplish if no one cares who gets the credit. That’s one that I really adhere to.”

Work environment: “If you characterized our organization, it would be ‘all-in commitment.’ Our mission is to transform lives, so we want to have a positive impact on the world around us and do it through excellent business practice. It’s been amazing for me to see as we’ve grown – and we’ve grown rapidly in terms of the number of people we have on staff – how that level of commitment has actually gotten deeper.

“And people have more bought into that. What ultimately results is we have a great culture of people who are wonderful to work with, but we are also out there doing great work. It gives us the results of that culture and that’s been neat to see.”

What I want to hear employees say: “This company cares deeply about me as a person and treats me like an adult. And that I can spend the rest of my career at this company.”

#1 Major Employer: Microsoft Corporation

Global technology company; Indianapolis office delivers business consulting on software and technology solutions.

Jeff Bradley, Director Midwest District, Enterprise Product Group

Leadership style: “I like to encourage a growth mindset. I want them to ask questions, but ultimately I want to give them an environment where it’s okay to make mistakes and take risks. If something happens and it doesn’t quite work out, well that’s okay. Because when we do that is when innovation and good things happen for our customers and the people who use our products – whether at a personal level or corporate level.”

Work environment: “We have a very flexible workplace. You can work anywhere, anytime. We allow employees, within reason – depending on whether they are support or not – to make their own schedules around customer needs. I think it also helps to try new things. I think we give that flexibility for a reason. Because of that, it really pays off in the long run.

“We’re out there as a company building new technology and tools that we hope make a difference, not only for our clients and

Microsoft gives back to its local communities. An example: Indianapolis workers prepare boxes of food for hungry children.



customers, but that changes the world. We also take a lot of those technologies to different charities in Indiana and school districts. It helps us give a broader impact.”

What I want to hear employees say: “That they are proud to work here and that they are empowered to make a difference.”