

“The best company to work for”

Every year in the UK, a leading national newspaper lists the 100 best companies to work for. What makes these companies good employers?

1 “A high salary is the most important reason to work” Put a cross on the line at the point which shows your opinion.

Agree strongly ←————→ Disagree strongly

2 Complete the chart with the names of the top five UK companies to work for. Find the answers in the article below.

Best big companies to work for	Company type	Employees	Employee turnover
1	Financial services	Over 15,000	9%
2	Supermarket retailer	Nearly 140,00	24%
3	Audit & tax services	Over 9,000	14%
4	Mobile telecoms retailer	Nearly 6,700	29%
5	Retailer	Over 5,000	35%

List compiled by *The Sunday Times* 2005.

The best company to work for

Each year in the UK, *The Sunday Times* newspaper publishes a list of the best small companies to work for, based on employee satisfaction. For the first time it has published a list of the best big firms – those with over 5,000 employees. The research asks workers to evaluate aspects of their company such as leadership and possibilities for personal growth.

The new list shows that companies are seeking increasingly interesting ways of retaining staff loyalty and motivation. Staff at two branches of *Nationwide*, the winner, can relax in a “lifestyle haven room” and enjoy complimentary therapies! At *KPMG*, number three on the list, employees can purchase an additional 35 days’ holiday each year – a nice option if you are trying to get a better work–life balance. *Mothercare*, fifth in the list, offer career breaks, which can last from three months to two years.

Training is important. Training for staff at *Asda*, number two on the list, follows the guiding principles of a cult US leadership manual called *Gung Ho!* All employees at *KPMG* can plan their own individual learning path on the company’s e-learning website. *KPMG* also offer staff the opportunity to try out different jobs in other departments. *Carphone Warehouse*, number four in the list, has a 90-day induction programme and everyone has a performance development plan.

Key motivators which emerge from the report are the ideas that you can really influence your company’s success and the feeling that the workforce believe their managers talk openly and honestly with them. Flexible shifts and the chance for internal promotion are also valued. One thing is clear – there is more to working for a company than receiving a high salary!

3 Read the article again. List the schemes companies use to motivate staff.

4 Use the following words and expressions taken from the article to talk about your company.

employee turnover staff loyalty flexible shifts promotion induction e-learning

5 Complete the questionnaire. Work in small groups and compare your answers. Report your ideas to the class.

HOW GOOD IS YOUR COMPANY?

As an employee, how important are the following to you?

Mark each item: 0 – 5 (0 = not important; 5 = very important)

A room to relax	...	Good holidays	...	Chance to influence policy	...	Training	...
Bonus scheme	...	Job exchange system	...	Promotion prospects	...	Flexible hours	...
Career break	...	Open-style management	...	Strong corporate culture	...	Maternity pay	...
Any other factors						