

NH's Best Companies To Work For

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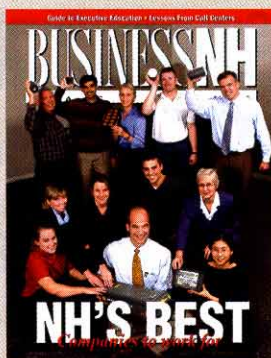
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Large Companies

1. MARKEM Corporation
2. Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center
3. Millipore Corporation
4. Lonza Biologics
5. Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield

Small Companies

1. Appledore Engineering, Inc.
2. High Point Communications
3. Trade Point Systems
4. Atomic Ski USA
5. Schleuniger



One company distributes ski equipment and another makes software for international trade. One employs more than 4,000 people in NH, another has 11. One company has been an institution in Keene for nearly a century, while another was born in Portsmouth in 1993.

These vastly different businesses do share a common trait. They make up this year's list of the 10 Best Companies To Work For in NH.

Aside from making *Business NH Magazine's* annual list, these companies share similar characteristics. They stress open communication between the executives and the employees, keeping everyone up to date on the company's finances and vision. They understand that employees have families and want to spend time with them. They know that employees value leadership by example and stress how employees' contributions are important to the company's success.

These companies have learned that recognition and respect go a long way in building morale, especially when the economy is less than robust. In fact, the economy had a profound impact on some of the companies, yet they maintained a positive work environment and are prepared for better financial times.

There are six new companies on the top 10 list for 2003, with three others making the list for a second time. MARKEM Corporation of Keene made an impressive debut by

topping the list of large companies, while Schleuniger of Manchester makes its fourth appearance on the small companies list. The companies represent a cross section of the state, from the big cities of Manchester, Nashua and Portsmouth to the further reaches of Jaffrey, Amherst, Bow and Lebanon.

Being named to the list is a testament to these 10 companies, as competition was tight. Businesses from across NH submitted applications explaining their benefit packages, company cultures and mission statements and included employee statements to bolster the facts. An internal panel of judges selected 20 companies to be semi-finalists.

This year, a Hall of Fame has been established, made of companies consistently named to the Best Companies To Work For list. The leaders of these companies judged the semi-finalist round, taking on the arduous task of whittling them down to 10 finalists. To help them, 20 executives and human resources managers went on site tours, organized by Bruce Mast & Associates of Exeter. Their findings helped to determine the top 10 companies. The judges selected the top five businesses in two categories: large companies (100 or more employees) and small companies (fewer than 100 employees).

Whether a large medical facility or a small public relations firm, these companies are committed to creating a positive work environment for their employees. They continue to raise the bar for NH's business community. ➤

Number Three – Small Company Trade Point Systems

Trade Point Systems

Location: Nashua

Years in Business: 31

NH Employees: 65 full-time, 5 part-time

Avg. Annual Turnover: 3.7%

Years on Best Companies List: 1

President and CEO: Christopher J. Crane

Provider of import-export software for freight-forwarders, custom-house brokers and those in charge of compliance

“Working for Trade Point Systems has been a positive experience due to the fact that the company supports personal learning, development and growth.”

Elaine Danielian

Customer Support Analyst

Like to wear jeans to work? At Trade Point, it will cost you.

The company has a program where employees, normally required to dress more formally for work, can donate money to charity and be rewarded with a more relaxed work atmosphere. The top tier is \$300, allowing a donor to wear jeans to work all year.

“Most of our employees participate in the program. At the end of the year we have a party to distribute the funds to the various charities,” says Kenneth Halle, executive vice president and COO of Trade Point.

Casual attire notwithstanding, Trade Point prides itself on being a professional organization that treats its employees like family.

“Practically every person in middle and upper management of Trade Point came up through the ranks,” says Halle, who began at Trade Point 25 years ago. “We have had a lot of employees that have climbed the ladder.”

Beyond the family atmosphere at work, Halle says that Trade Point has made every effort to accommodate families of employees. Employees have flextime to work around family commitments. The company also allows employees to telecommute if they move from the area. Of Trade Point’s 81 employees, 11 telecommute from various places across the country.

Trade Point, despite experiencing some downturn during the past three years, recently expanded. “We’ve made acquisitions to broaden our scope and focus on the full range of import/export software needs,” says Halle. “This means more opportunities and more room for employee growth.”



Christopher Crane, front center, president and CEO of Trade Point Systems, and his winning team.

With an influx of growth, communication is as important as ever. “To succeed, you need a lot of open communication. We have an open book and open door policy at the company,” says Halle. “We have a monthly meeting with our staff to keep them up-to-

date on our company’s strategic and financial vision,” says Halle. “I think there is a tangible benefit to letting them know how their work is affecting the company. By doing that, it helps them work harder.”