

The Ultimate Guide to Best Places to Work™



Welcome to Best Places to Work!

Best Places to Work is a contest, designed to recognize companies where employees are valued and engaged.

Whether you're a first-time nominee or an annual competitor, you'll want to check out this guide!

Keep reading for:

- Key benefits of competing in Best Places to Work
- A step-by-step guide to participating
- Information on customizing your survey
- Details on maximizing your results with in-depth reporting
- Helpful answers to frequently asked questions and more!

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Why Participate in Best Places to Work?

- Keep your culture healthy with a **quick and easy** employee assessment!
- Understand where your organization stands with a **high-level overview of engagement**.
- Gain insight into your organization's **strengths and weaknesses**.
- Access an **intuitive data platform** with customizable presentations and advanced reporting.
- Grow your **brand integrity** with a little PR coverage as one of the Best Places to Work in your local business publication.
- Attract **top talent** in your area when you receive recognition as a Best Places to Work.



About the Survey

Developed in 2004, the Best Places to Work survey contains 30 scored items across six categories. Scored on a six-point Likert-scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree, the [30 scored items](#) are designed to measure employee engagement and other workplace factors including:

Communication
and Resources

Manager
Effectiveness

Team
Dynamics

Individual
Needs

Personal
Engagement

Trust in
Leadership

Best Places to Work gives organizations the chance to compete to be recognized as a place where people love to work. Held annually, Best Places to Work honors superior organizations where voices are heard, cultures are thriving, and employees are engaged.

We encourage you to explore our Insight Reports to fully utilize your results. Organizations will have the opportunity to purchase a customized survey as well as advanced reporting on their employees' feedback.

The Best Places to Work program allows you to quickly and easily assess your employees' perceptions of your workplace. The assessment will give you insight into your organization's strengths and weaknesses from the eyes of your employees.

Participate in the contest and takeaway invaluable information about your employees, while showcasing your workplace as a Best Place to Work.

49
CONTESTS

12,000+
COMPETING
COMPANIES

10
MINUTE
SURVEY

30
SCORED
QUESTIONS



Survey Questions and Categories

Survey questions are categorized into 6 key dimensions.

Communication and Resources

I have the information I need to do my job well

Manager Effectiveness

My immediate manager helps me to be successful in my job

Team Dynamics

The people I work with most closely are committed to producing top quality work

Individual Needs

My job gives me flexibility to meet the needs of both my work and personal life

Personal Engagement

I find my job interesting and challenging

Trust in Leadership

There is open and honest communication between employees and managers

The screenshot shows the Quantum Workplace Employee Opinion Survey interface. At the top, there is a logo for Quantum Workplace and a user ID: 101.198.333.429. Below the logo, the title "Employee Opinion Survey" is displayed. A confidentiality notice states: "Your response to this survey is confidential. Responses are compiled and analyzed as a group." The survey consists of nine questions, each with a Likert scale from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree". The questions are:

1. I'm happy with my job.
2. The people I work with treat each other with respect.
3. I find my job interesting and challenging.
4. Goals and accountabilities are clear to everyone on my team.
5. My opinions seem to count at work.
6. For quality control purposes, please select "Disagree."
7. I know I can depend on the other members of my team.
8. I am paid fairly.
9. I have the materials and equipment I need to do my job.

At the bottom of the survey, there is a "Continue" button and a link to the Quantum Workplace Privacy Policy.

Four Simple Steps to Participating

1. Find Your Contest

Go to your contest's nomination website to nominate your organization. Enter your information and submit your nomination to become one of your area's Best Places to Work! The following pages include a complete list of contests, including participating cities, industries, and their publication partners.

City	Contest	Publication Partner
Albany	Best Places to Work in the Capital Region	Albany Business Review
Albuquerque	Best Places to Work in New Mexico	Albuquerque Business First
Atlanta	Best Places to Work in Atlanta	Atlanta Business Chronicle
Austin	Best Places to Work in Central Texas	Austin Business Journal
Baltimore	Best Places to Work in Baltimore	Baltimore Business Journal
Birmingham	Best Places to Work in Birmingham	Birmingham Business Journal
Boston	Best Places to Work in Boston	Boston Business Journal
Buffalo	Best Places to Work in Western New York	Buffalo Business First
Charlotte	Best Places to Work in Charlotte	Charlotte Business Journal
Cincinnati	Best Places to Work in Cincinnati	Cincinnati Business Courier
Columbus	Best Places to Work in Central Ohio	Columbus Business First
Dallas	Best Places to Work in Dallas	Dallas Business Journal
Dayton	Best Places to Work in Dayton	Dayton Business Journal
Denver	Best Places to Work in Denver	Denver Business Journal
Greensboro	Best Places to Work in Triad	Triad Business Journal
Hawaii	Best Places to Work in Hawaii	Pacific Business News
Houston	Best Places to Work in Houston	Houston Business Journal
Huntsville	Best Places to Work in Huntsville/Madison County	Chamber Huntsville/Madison County
Jacksonville	Best Places to Work in Jacksonville	Jacksonville Business Journal

Continued on next page...

1. Find Your Contest, Continued

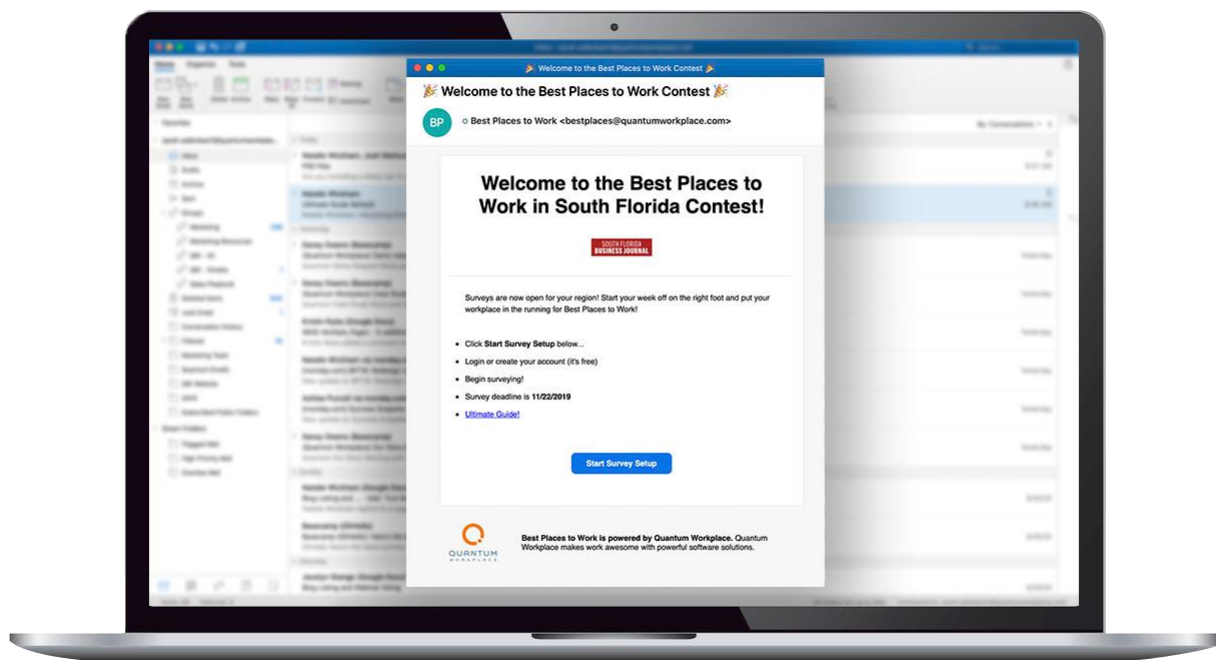
City	Contest	Publication Partner
Kansas City	Best Places to Work in Kansas City	Kansas City Business Journal
Lincoln	Best Places to Work in Lincoln	Lincoln Journal Star
Louisville	Best Places to Work in Louisville	Louisville Business First
Madison	Best Places to Work in Madison	Madison Magazine
Memphis	Best Places to Work in Memphis	Memphis Business Journal
Milwaukee	Best Places to Work in Milwaukee	Milwaukee Business Journal
Minneapolis	Best Places to Work in Minnesota	Minneapolis Business Journal
Nashville	Best Places to Work in Nashville	Nashville Business Journal
Omaha	Best Places to Work in Omaha	Omaha World Herald
Orlando	Best Places to Work in Orlando	Orlando Business Journal
Philadelphia	Best Places to Work in Philadelphia	Philadelphia Business Journal
Phoenix	Best Places to Work in the Valley	Phoenix Business Journal
Pittsburgh	Best Places to Work in Western Pennsylvania	Pittsburgh Business Journal
Puget Sound	Washington's Best Workplaces	Puget Sound Business Journal
Raleigh	Best Places to Work in the Triangle	Triangle Business Journal
Reno	Best Places to Work in Reno/Tahoe	Northern Nevada Human Resources Association
Sacramento	Best Places to Work in Sacramento	Sacramento Business Journal
San Antonio	Best Places to Work in San Antonio	San Antonio Business Journal
San Francisco	Best Places to Work in the Bay Area	San Francisco Business Times & Silicon Valley Business Journal
South Florida	Best Places to Work in South Florida	South Florida Business Journal
St. Louis	Best Places to Work in St. Louis	St. Louis Business Journal
Tampa Bay	Best Places to Work in Tampa Bay	Tampa Business Journal
Washington, D.C.	Best Places to Work in Washington, D.C.	Washington Business Journal
Wichita	Best Places to Work in Wichita	Wichita Business Journal

Industry	Contest	Publication Partner
Direct Selling	Best Places to Work in Direct Selling	Direct Selling News
Inc. Magazine	Inc. Best Workplaces	Inc. Magazine
Staffing	Best Staffing Firms to Work For Contest	Staffing Industry Analysts

2. Set Up Your Survey

After the nomination period closes, you will receive an invitation from Quantum Workplace to set up your survey.

In less than 15 minutes you'll complete our guided setup process, easily accessible online. At this time, you will be able to customize your survey and select advanced reporting options. You can preview the survey setup questions [here](#).



3. Decide Whether to Customize

You can tailor the Best Places to Work survey to meet the needs of your organization.

Why customize? Every organization is unique. Your departments, locations, and the managers who lead them are all different. For this reason, Quantum Workplace provides a survey customization option.

Our Survey Customization Option Includes:

Up to 10 scaled, open-ended, or demographic items

Add your own survey items* to gather feedback unique to your organization. Add open-ended questions to let employees share in their own words. Add your own demographics such as department, division, or location to analyze your results in more detail.

Survey employees where they are

To receive comprehensive feedback from all of your employees, survey employees outside of your contest areas. This includes remote* employees and employees from any location. The first 250 are free!

Customizable presentations

Perfect for sharing with your organization's leaders - presentations can be filtered and customized for your specific needs. This includes overviews and breakdowns of your organization's scores.

Insight reports

These intuitive reports allow you to make the most of your results. You will have access to more than 10 detailed reports and employee comments with benchmarking to see how you compare to your competitors.

***Note:** Custom questions and out-of-contest-area employees do not affect your contest score.

Samples

Custom Scaled Items:

1. The mission and purpose of the company makes me feel that my job is important.
2. I believe that customer satisfaction is a top priority in this organization.
3. I feel that my race, gender, age, or sexual orientation have nothing to do with how I am treated at this company.

Custom Open-Ended:

1. What two or three things about the company's strategy do you agree with?
2. If you could describe your culture in one word, what would it be?
3. In your opinion what are your direct leader's biggest strengths and weaknesses?

Review the standard survey [here](#).

4. Upload Your Employees' Email Addresses

Our program requires companies to upload an email address for all employees who have one. This allows Quantum Workplace to email the survey invitation directly to each employee.

This method of survey distribution ensures the most accurate and comprehensive collection of employee data. This makes our Best Places to Work lists more meaningful and trusted by employees and job-seekers alike.

Email Upload FAQs

- Will our email addresses be used for anything other than the survey program?

No. We are committed to the highest standards of privacy. The only time we email your employees is to provide the initial survey, or if they opt in to be included in future research studies. These studies are few and far between, and employees must manually enter their email address if they're interested. We do not reprint, resell, or redistribute your employee's email addresses. View our official privacy policy [here](#).

- I have employees who don't have email addresses. Can they take the survey?

Absolutely! There are two options: 1) If your employee has access to a computer (shared or kiosk), they will need a unique URL to take the survey. When you upload your Excel template, leave the "email address" column blank for these employees. You will then be able to generate URLs for each of these employees. 2) Employees without computer access can take paper surveys. We charge a \$2 fee for all paper surveys submitted, which covers the cost of data entry.

- My legal department won't let me share my email addresses with outside companies. Is there another way to invite employees?

While we understand these concerns, we take great lengths to make the transfer and use of your employee's data secure and protected. Our [privacy policy](#) outlines how we do this. To ensure the consistency and integrity of this program, we require employers to upload email addresses.

Note: If your organization has more than 1,000 employees, please contact us regarding alternative ways to distribute the survey.

Email Upload Step-by-Step Guide

1. Email Our Deliverability Guide to IT

To ensure deliverability of emails, the first thing you'll need to do is notify IT of our email protocol. Download our [deliverability guide](#).

2. Download Our Excel Template

After finishing your organization's setup process, the first thing you'll need to do is download our Excel template. You can find it on the survey website, or download it [here](#).

3. Add Your Employees

Add your employees and their demographics; be sure to keep the headers (First Name, Last Name, Email Address, etc.) as they appear on the template. For employees who don't have email addresses but want to take the survey online, leave the email field blank.

4. Change the From Address and Email Subject Line

You can edit the subject line of the invitation email your employees will receive. You can also change the "from" email address so that it appears to come from you (or someone else in your company). Note that the email will still come from bestplaces@quantumworkplace.com.

5. Send a Test Email

Ready to launch? Send yourself a test email to make sure everything looks as you want it to appear.

6. Schedule Your Email (Or Start Sending!)

You can schedule your emails to go out at a later date, or you can start sending them right away - your choice!

7. Monitor Responses and Send Reminders

Once your surveys have launched, you can check back at any time to see how many have been completed (click on the "Monitor Responses" tab). Automatic reminders will be sent every four business days to employees who have not completed the survey.

Still have questions?

We're happy to help! Email us at bestplaces@quantumworkplace.com

Reporting options

The Best Places to Work contest gives you the opportunity to be nationally recognized as a Best Places to Work—but that’s not all! Quantum Workplace provides your company with advanced reporting options so you can make the most of your survey results.

Compare our three reporting options below.

	CUSTOM SURVEY	REPORTING TOOLS	OVERVIEW Report
Overview Report: Colorful, brief, and simple summary of your organization’s engagement	X	X	X
Category Report: (Scores for each of the six survey categories)	X	X	
Items Report: List of results for each of the survey items, grouped by category	X	X	
Comments Report: Answers to open-ended questions	X	X	
Culture Cloud: The words or phrases your employees use most	X	X	
Idea Library: Industry-leading ideas for improving your employees’ work experience	X	X	
NPS Report: See how the Net Promoter score translates with your employees	X	X	
Benchmarking: Compare your results by size category or industry	X	X	
Year-Over-Year Comparison: Results comparison over two consecutive years	X	X	
Printable Reports: Available in PDF or Excel format	X	X	
Presentation: Downloadable PowerPoint executive summary	X	X	
Custom Demographics: Add your own function, department, and position level demographics to match your organization	X		
Up to 250 Additional Survey Invites: To invite employees who are out of the contest area	X		
Up to 10 Customizable Survey Questions: Includes scaled items, demographics, and open-ended	X		

Note: Pricing of Insight Reporting varies by contest and company size. When you set up your survey, you’ll see your price options and be able to select your reporting package.



FAQs

Who runs Best Places to Work?

Quantum Workplace manages Best Places to Work in partnership with American City Business Journals and various other organizations such as chambers of commerce, trade publications, and corporate sponsors. As the survey administrator, Quantum Workplace provides the analytical engine powering more than 10,000 companies annually and delivers the rankings to the publishing partners. Partnering business journals and associations announce the contest finalists and handle accompanying recognition events and publicity.

Why should I enter my organization in this contest?

The benefits of entering the Best Places to Work contest are invaluable. Yes, you will have the chance to become a nationally recognized Best Places to Work finalist. But you can also innovatively promote your employer brand with new recruitment and marketing strategies, gain insight on the likes and dislikes of your employees, and utilize your feedback to improve workplace productivity, enhance loyalty of clientele, and make business better. Plus, it's a very inexpensive way to measure employee engagement within your organization.

How much does it cost?

Most programs require an application fee and all participants receive an Overview of their survey results. But, for those organizations that desire more than recognition — such as happier employees, a positive workplace culture, and better business — we offer survey customization and in-depth reports.

How long does this process take?

The survey period is approximately four to five weeks, which allows employees to complete the survey at their convenience. After the survey closes, Quantum Workplace will process the data and send the results to the sponsoring organization. Non-finalists will receive their results within three weeks of the survey close date. Finalists will receive their results on the date of the sponsoring organization's publication and/or event.

Which organizations sponsor the contest, and how can I find them?

The organizations that sponsor the contests are listed on pages 8 and 9. You can find more information about all of our contests, including timelines and nomination sites, by visiting bestplacestowork.com.

How are winners determined?

In order to gather statistically sound results, companies must reach a minimum level of employee participation (based on total number of employees) to be eligible as a finalist. Responses from each question on the survey are compiled and evaluated. Companies are ranked and finalists are chosen in each size category according to their overall engagement score. The engagement score is calculated by compiling all raw data from the questions on a six-point Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree) to find an average score that is then indexed to a 100-point scale. Overall number of responses is also factored into the engagement score. Winners are chosen solely based on the results of the survey and, in essence, by the employees themselves.



Who should take the survey?

All employees who have been with the company at least 30 days and live within the contest area must be invited to take the survey. These employees have the most impact on your corporate culture and are usually a better judge of employee engagement.

- **Most of my employees work part time. Can I include them?**
Yes! Part time employees must be invited to take the survey.
- **Should I invite partners/owners to take the survey?**
No, employees with more than 5 percent ownership in the company are not allowed to take the survey.
- **My organization has offices in multiple cities and states, should I include all of my employees?**
For competition purposes, you can only include employees who work within the region of your sponsoring organization. If you would like to include all employees regardless of geographic location, you can customize your survey. Information on customization can be found on page 11.

The number of employees at my organization has changed since I first set up the survey, what should I do?

No problem! You can change your employee count and invite more employees when you log in.

Can my company participate if some (or all) of my employees don't have Internet access?

Of course. If your employees do not have access to the internet, we offer paper surveys. For each paper survey completed and mailed in, a \$2 fee will be invoiced. If your organization is interested in using paper surveys, you can indicate this during the survey set-up.

How will I know how many employees have completed the survey?

The survey coordinator for each organization will receive daily updates with the survey completion rate. You can also view this by clicking on the "Monitor Responses" tab on your survey site. Note that to protect employees' confidentiality, we never share who has or has not completed the survey.

How do I view the results?

All participating organizations will receive access to an online summary report. Results will be available to non-finalists shortly after the survey close date; finalists will receive access after the sponsoring organization's event and/ or publication. For those companies that would like more extensive reporting options, please see the advanced choices on page 14.

Questions about the publication or event?

Contact your sponsoring organization.



About Quantum Workplace

Quantum Workplace, a human resources technology provider, delivers modern tools for employee success that high-performance organizations have come to rely upon. Nearly 20 years ago, Quantum Workplace pioneered some of the earliest employee engagement and performance software, and has since partnered with thousands of organizations to elevate employee, team, and business success.

Quantum Workplace helps leaders connect the dots between engagement and performance with intuitive and user-friendly tools including comprehensive and automated employee surveys; goal setting and tracking tools; peer-to-peer recognition; real-time feedback; continuous one on one conversations; smart talent reviews; and, robust people analytics.

With 12,000 organizations surveyed annually, Quantum Workplace has grown into North America's largest database of employee engagement data—through its core engagement and performance platform and nationally recognized Best Places to Work program.

[Request a Demo](#)