

Baltimore's "Best Places To Work" Essay

Often times, an individual enters into new employment out of some dissatisfaction with a previous job. The new job seems refreshing and things are incredible for some period of time, but over time, the same mundane tasks and lack of acknowledgment leave a person dissatisfied and job-hunting all over again. This is not the case with the employees of Evolution, LLC in Columbia, Maryland, an IT security and managed technology services provider. It's exciting times for the company as we are growing at an incredible pace and each day brings new and exciting tasks and challenges. Not only do our employees like their jobs, they actually enjoy coming to the office everyday.

Evolution is a young company with old school values - family and self first. Be it a child's holiday pageant or a school closing due to the winter weather, Evolution understands that the well-being of their employees and their families is a priority. We are lucky to have the ability to work remotely from home offices to be where we may be needed most and still meet the day-to-day demands of the job. If you're sick - stay home! Do the rest of us a favor and keep your germs to yourself. We wish you a speedy recovery!

Our day begins with a different start than most other company's employees - no time clocks. There's no need. We all have different commutes, different schedules, with different variables that affect them on a daily basis. The founders of Evolution know this very well as they too have ever-changing schedules, responsibilities, and families of their own.

The chemistry among the group is unlike most that you'll find in other companies. Management and staff work together constantly, from meetings, to work related outings, to social time spent away from the office. No one individual within the organization plays a lesser role than another. We all depend on each other for the smooth sailing of the day to day functions of the job. If it is going to be a late night for one of us in order to meet a client's needs, then it may be a late night for a few of us, but you'll never hear a complaint. It is a true example of a team environment.

If you have a concern - Speak Up. All doors are open to listen to the good and bad and learn where there is room for improvement. We are constantly "evolving" ourselves as the company grows and new minds enter into the mix. Employee satisfaction is of great concern and suggestions always considered. At the end of 2006, the management team brought in a consultant to meet with the staff, without the presence of management, so that the staff could talk openly about the company and their own ideas of possible strategies for success for both the company and themselves.

Evolution employees could never say in honesty that their job was tedious or mundane. Everyone on board strives for excellence. If you reach a point where you feel as though you are not working at your full potential or you'd like to add something new to your agenda, ask and you will receive. We promote heavily from within. Roles are ever-changing to keep things interesting and acknowledge work well done.

Our company culture is shared among our clients at the various events that we host throughout the year. It's a chance for our clients to see what we and our partners are all about and let them get a feel for the personality of company. These events are fun and informative for both the clients and the employees. Early morning breakfasts, cruises on the harbor, Super Bowl-themed events at the ESPN Zone are just a few examples. Even company meetings are taken off-site to allow for relaxation and socializing after the meeting is over.

Evolution always has the well-being of their employees in mind. They provide us with incredible benefits and a minimum of three weeks PTO a year is given. In '06, the company put a 401 K plan in place in which the company meets us dollar for dollar on the first 4% of our employee contributions. We're also starting to spread our concern for others into the community. In 2006 we raised 128 lbs of food for the Maryland Food Drive. This year we are looking to get involved with other charitable organizations.

The perks to our jobs don't stop there! Generous incentives are always a part of the payoff for our great team effort. "Thank you's" range from American Express Gift Checks, to cash bonuses, to trips to the Grand Bahamas. Company events are usually family-oriented so we can bring our spouses and significant others. Acknowledgment for hard work is given where it is deserved and given often. Company emails to alert even those employees who don't visit the office on a regular basis due to work done off-premise usually fill our inboxes within minutes of work well done by our fellow teammates.

Our conference room is home to our "captain's bell" that gets rung from time to time to let the whole office (and maybe our whole side of the building) know we've reached a milestone or an achievement and we want to take a moment to acknowledge it. A few of us here try our hardest to hide the guitar that often times gets pulled out when someone feels like singing to celebrate. We try and we try but that thing still reappears....

Has it been a long day? A good day? A tough day? A truly outstanding day? We're here for you! It's not uncommon for the team to spend a long day together and still want to hang out after hours. We visit the local Nottingham's to kick back and relax after a long day or week's work and share a meal and beverage together.

It's a work hard-play hard environment here at Evolution. All players have a great sense of responsibility; we all want to succeed individually and play a role in the company's success. There's very much so a "family feel" to our company, where all members step up to help when needed. There's no disruption in our flow, just business as usual. Evolution realizes that the first step to achieving this success is having happy employees. We are the face and voice of the company and if we aren't happy in our roles and with the company, how can we project confidence in us to our clients? That's never the case in our business. We don't need to have worked anywhere else to know that we are lucky to be part of this team.

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