

Best Employers realize higher sales, higher profit and better employee retention, according to Aon Study

The 17th annual survey identifies Canada's leading employers for workplace excellence

TORONTO (November 5, 2015) – [Aon Hewitt](#), the global talent, retirement and health solutions business of [Aon plc](#) (NYSE:AON), today released the results of its 2016 Best Employers in Canada Study, which found that 80 companies set the mark for engaging employees, demonstrating effective leadership, building a performance culture and leveraging the strength of their employer brand. The recognized companies include 39 large organizations (more than 400 employees) and 41 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs.)

The benefits of being a Best Employer are compelling. Globally, Aon has found that [Best Employers](#) drive four percentage points higher operating profit than the average organization and six percentage points higher sales growth. They also have a third less staff turnover than their counterparts.

Aon's [Best Employers in Canada Study](#) has been the country's most comprehensive and widely recognized assessment of workplace excellence. Aon's methodology reflects 20 years of learnings and best practices from Aon Best Employer and employee engagement studies conducted all over the world. Over the last five years alone, data was collected in more than 150 markets from over 5,000 organizations in 68 industries, including over 625,000 employees and more than 600 companies of all sizes in Canada.

"In an increasingly international business landscape, more and more Canadian companies have been looking for a consistent global standard to assess their work environment and identify ways to improve," said Neil Crawford, Partner and Canada Talent Practice Leader at Aon Hewitt. "The 2016 Best Employers Study provides that standard, while providing a much more comprehensive picture of the qualities that define employer excellence."

Where previous studies focused on employee engagement as the primary requirement for Best Employer status, this year's study is based on four indices of workplace effectiveness:

- **Engagement:** Employees speak positively about their employer (Say), intend to stay (Stay) and are motivated to exert extra effort at work (Strive)
- **Leadership:** Leaders treat employees as valued contributors, engage employees in the vision and lead the organization to success
- **Performance Culture:** Employees are aligned to organizational goals and are rewarded and recognized for their contribution
- **Employer Brand:** Employees are proud of being part of the organization and can clearly explain what makes their employer different from others

The Challenge of Change

The business environment since the global recession has, arguably, been marked by an unprecedented degree of change. Faced with generally slower economic growth and heightened regulation, while seeking to respond to accommodative monetary policies, companies in Canada and around the world have undertaken new strategies, implemented staff restructuring, or participated in mergers and acquisitions. All of these developments can place enormous stress on the employer-employee dynamic and on organizational leaders.

Aon's global research of Best Employers has found that the factors driving workplace success change in periods of change. For instance, during periods of no change, the visibility of senior leadership is a relatively small contributor to employee engagement. However, during a merger or acquisition – which causes the number of highly engaged employees to dip more than 10% below the global baseline for an average period of two to three years – senior leadership's visibility becomes a top engagement driver. Aon's Best Employers understand the need for best practices in times of change, and respond accordingly.

A Canadian example of how Best Employers successfully navigate change is Intact Financial Corporation, an insurance company with 11,000 employees across the country. Intact began surveying employee engagement with Aon in 2009 – its first year of independence from its previous majority owner, facing the fresh challenge of establishing a new consumer and employer brand. As well, the company undertook a major acquisition in 2011, and consistent with Aon’s research, this significant change did disrupt some of the initial momentum Intact had experienced in improving their overall level of employee engagement. Intact continued applying a very disciplined focus on key drivers of engagement, and by 2014 its performance in the Best Employers Study had risen well above the industry average. The key to that success: commitment at all levels of the organization, driven by placing senior leadership and management front and centre – and holding them accountable – to drive employee engagement.

“What we have seen, year in and year out, is that Best Employers are not just good at maintaining best practices, but are also smart and responsive when faced with the challenge of change,” said Crawford. “All companies undergo change, sometimes negative, sometimes positive, but either can have important impacts on employee engagement and performance. Responding effectively begins with a commitment to understanding exactly how effective your employment practices are – and, as with Intact, being open to adopting new ways of doing things and getting their leadership team involved ensured that employees stay engaged.”

Aon’s 2016 List of the Best Employers in Canada

To be designated a Best Employer using the global standard, each participant’s employee survey scores on engagement, leadership, performance culture, and employment brand were assessed against Aon Hewitt’s Canadian Survey Database. Organizations who scored in the top 25% of the Canadian database achieved the Platinum Level, while those scoring in the top third achieved Gold level.

This year’s Best Employers in Canada study identified 29 large organizations that achieved Platinum status; as well, 12 large organizations qualified for Gold Best Employer status. On average, 80 per cent of employees were engaged at Platinum Level Best Employers this year. At the Gold Level, 72 percent of employees were engaged. Among small and mid-sized companies (less than 400 employees), 28 qualified as Platinum Best Employers, while 11 achieved Gold status.

The following Aon Best Employers in Canada list appears in the November issue of [Canadian Business](#) magazine, [PROFITguide.com](#), and in the December 10 edition of La Presse.

The Best Employers in Canada 2016

Platinum Best Employers

Aecon Group Inc.
Allstate Insurance Company of Canada
ATB Financial
Bennett Jones LLP
Birchwood Automotive Group
Canadian Apartment Properties Real Estate Investment Trust
Chubb Insurance Company of Canada
CIMA+ Partenaire de genie
Clark Builders
Davis Automotive Group
Delta Hotels and Resorts
Edward Jones
EllisDon Corporation
Farm Credit Canada
Federal Express Canada Ltd.
Intact Financial Corporation
Keg Restaurants Ltd.
Keyera Corp.
Libro Credit Union
LoyaltyOne, Co
Maritime Travel

Marriott International
MNP LLP
OpenRoad Auto Group Ltd.
PCL Constructors Inc.
Purdys' Chocolatier
Stikeman Elliott LLP
The Co-operators Group Ltd.
The Dilawri Group

Gold Best Employers

Banque Nationale
BCAA
Cintas Canada Limited
Cossette Communication Inc.
Equitable Bank
Gowling Lafleur Henderson LLP
La Coop fédérée
Lush Fresh Handmade Cosmetics
Mouvement Desjardins
Pembina Pipeline Corporation
Pomeroy Lodging
Skyline Group of Companies

Best Small and Medium-size Employers in Canada

Platinum Best Employers

Assumption Life
Back in Motion Rehab Inc.
BlueShore Financial
Canadian Internet Registration Authority (CIRA)
Cybertech Group of Companies
DLGL Technologies Corporation
DevFacto Technologies Inc.
Edmonton Southside Primary Care Network
Etelesolv
GEF Seniors Housing
Gibraltar Solutions Inc.
Grantek Systems Integration
Intalex Technologies Inc.
Jayman BUILT Group of Companies
Klick Health
LGM Financial Services Inc.
National Leasing
Nulogy
PGL Environmental Consultants
Réal Huot Inc.
RLB LLP

Ryan, ULC
Solutions 2 GO Inc.
Solvera Solutions
The Berkeley Retirement Residences
Trisura Guarantee Insurance Company
Unitron
Vigilant Global

Gold Best Employers

Addenda Capital Inc. (The Co-operators Group Ltd.)
Boa-Franc S.E.N.C.
Boone Plumbing and Heating Supply Inc.
Groupe financier PEAK Inc.
Kawartha Credit Union Limited
Kingston Ross Pasnak LLP
Lakeside Process Controls Ltd.
Medgate Inc.
Mitsubishi Motor Sales of Canada, Inc.
OPTIMUS - SBR Inc.
The Sovereign General Insurance Company (The Co-operators Group Ltd.)

News From Aon

About the Aon Best Employers in Canada Study

A total of 236 Canadian employers were assessed this year as part of Aon's Best Employers studies. Aon's methodology reflects 20 years of learnings and best practices from Aon Best Employer and employee engagement studies conducted all over the world. Each participant's employee survey scores on engagement, leadership, performance culture, and employer brand were assessed against Aon Hewitt's Canadian Survey database, which includes opinions of over 625,000 Canadian workers across more than 600 organizations. Organizations who scored in the top 25% of the Canadian database achieved the Platinum Level, while those scoring in the top third achieved Gold level. According to Aon Hewitt's definition, employees are engaged when they "say, stay and strive": They speak positively about their employer to others, are committed to staying with their current employer and are motivated by their organization's leaders and culture to go "above and beyond" to contribute to business success. On average, 80 per cent of employees were engaged at Platinum Level Best Employers this year. At the Gold Level, 72 per cent of employees were engaged.

About Aon

[Aon plc](#) (NYSE:AON) is a leading global provider of [risk management](#), insurance brokerage and [reinsurance](#) brokerage, and [human resources](#) solutions and outsourcing services. Through its more than 69,000 colleagues worldwide, [Aon](#) unites to empower results for clients in over 120 countries via [innovative risk](#) and [people](#) solutions. For further information on our capabilities and to learn how we empower results for clients, please visit: <http://aon.mediaroom.com>.

Follow Aon on Twitter: [@AonHewittCA](#)

Sign up for News Alerts: aon.mediaroom.com

Media Contacts

[Rosa Damonte](#) (+1.416.402.2177) or [Alexandre Daudelin](#) (+1.514.467.9330)