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WASHINGTON'S BEST WORKPLACES

Large companies, Silver, Tableau Software

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Tableau Software

Tableau Software builds analytics software that helps people see and understand their business data.

Washington HQ: Seattle

Founded: 1981

Employees: 350

How you and your leadership team motivate your work force: We hire passionate, self-motivated people who are dedicated to the company's mission. Doing this is more important than any amount of top-down motivational management. We also hold regular all-hands-on-deck company meetings (globally about 300 people now). They feature full discussion of our business plan, business progress and financial condition. We also fly-in a customer speaker for each meeting. We bring in employees from all over the world to attend these events. We hold an annual customer conference, which all employees attend. It is really motivating to people who build products for a living to meet the people who use them. And, we build a culture based on the open flow of information and corporate transparency.

How you celebrate victories among your staff: We celebrate team achievements with parties. For instance, every product launch has its own launch party (usually twice per year). We recognize extraordinary contributions with The Founder's Award and with the Extraordinary Achievement Award. Also, we promote people internally.

How you provide feedback to staff: Regular, daily in-person communication, regular, daily in-email communication, performance reviews, and celebrating victories, big and small.

Communication is always top of mind for leaders. Share how you do it effectively: My immediate executive team meets in-person every Monday. Each of the departmental teams has its own regular team meetings, as well. We have regular company meetings and communication from management. We maintain a relatively flat organizational structure and culture in which information flows fairly efficiently.

Because most great leaders say they are blessed with a great team, these are the top qualities you look for when hiring: We look for people who believe in, and are passionate about advancing our mission. We look for people who are creative problem solvers. We look for people who are “humble smart.” We look for people who seek to understand before forming opinions. We look for people who fundamentally respect others. We look for people who like to work on a team.

Best management advice: “A leader is best when people barely know he exists, when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: We did it ourselves.”
— Lao Tsu

Favorite employee perks: Once a year a group of dedicated Tableau employees organizes a companywide fitness challenge where teams compete by logging their exercise, eating and sleep habits on a weekly basis over a three-month period. The event is a great way to promote a team environment while supporting a healthy lifestyle. We have a monthly “Fun Factory” event to recognize birthdays, anniversaries and achievements.

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