



- ***What is Best Companies Accreditation?***

Best Companies Accreditation follows the elite 'Michelin style' star rating system for organisations that demonstrate high levels of employee engagement. Based on staff feedback, organisations receive a Best Companies index score which will determine their star rating compared to a fixed standard. One star is first class, two stars are outstanding and three stars are extraordinary.

- ***How did the idea come about?***

Six years ago when Best Companies was established the vision was to identify the drivers of sustainable business performance. Our research shows that the key is 'Workplace Engagement'. Using our experience of surveying over 400,000 employees in thousands of organisations, we have developed an academically rigorous methodology to measure levels of 'Workplace Engagement'. Best Companies Accreditation scheme then recognises those organisations that have achieved high levels in this area.

- ***How does Accreditation work?***

Accreditation is based on an unchanging standard. Organisations are measured on eight key factors by using 16 questions (BC16) identified by Best Companies to create a Best Companies index score (BCI). This score determines whether they achieve a star rating.

- ***Is this similar to the investors in people standard?***

Whilst complementary, the two are quite different. Best Companies is interested in the levels of Workplace Engagement present in organisations, whereas IIP primarily focuses on organisational process.

- ***What qualifies Best Companies to launch an Accreditation system?***

Over the last six years Best Companies has focused its research around the important area of Workplace Engagement, surveying well over 400,000 employees in thousands of organisations. This research has created a world class database of employee opinion based on a unique and robust methodology, making us experts in our field.

- ***What will happen to "The Sunday Times Best Companies to Work For Lists"?***

Best Companies will continue to research, develop and compile the Best Companies to Work For lists, published annually in The Sunday Times.

- ***Can companies sign up for both the competition and Accreditation?***

Yes, we would recommend that they sign up for both. Success on the list will provide significant profile for organisations at the time of publication and Accreditation will continue that profile throughout the year.

- ***Is it a time-consuming process?***

The process is similar, whether you enter Best Companies Accreditation or The Sunday Times 'Best Companies to Work For' lists. If an organisation enters both, as we would recommend, then there is still just one 'Company Questionnaire' and a set number of 'Employee Surveys' to be completed. From the 70 questions on the employee survey, 16



key questions are used for the Accreditation process and there is a choice whether to fill these out electronically 'on-line' or using paper surveys.

- ***What will companies get out of it?***

Firstly, there will be the kudos associated with being one of the very few, elite organisations carrying the Accreditation logo. Accredited organisations will be able to use the logo and their star rating in their own marketing and recruitment activity.

An annual 'Best Red Book' will carry the names and star ratings of all Accredited organisations. This book will be widely marketed to all available recruitment centres such as universities, libraries, careers offices, etc. as well as being available for purchase at leading book stores.

Organisations will also be published on the 'Best Companies Accreditation' website with their Best Companies Index score and their star rating.

Currently an organisation missing a list by one place could be quite unaware of how close they were to the standard of the top 100 organisations. Every organisation completing the Accreditation process will receive a Best Companies Index score, making it possible to identify exactly where they stand.

- ***What's the first step?***

It is very simple. All an organisation needs to do is register on our website at www.bestcompanies.co.uk. They will then be contacted during September with details of the next steps.

- ***When can I find out more?***

The accreditation will be celebrated for the second year at the Berkeley Hotel in London. Full details will then be available on our website www.bestcompanies.co.uk.

- ***Why would a company apply for both Accreditation and the list and how is the Accreditation different?***

Whereas the Lists of 'Best Companies to Work For' have a massive impact at the time of publication, Accreditation is a constant, year-round reminder of an organisation's status of being an exceptional place to work, with high levels of Workplace Engagement. The process is similar, so without any added complication, you can get the best of both worlds.

Accreditation will be awarded on the analysis of 16 key questions (BC16) within the Best Companies survey. These 16 questions will remain consistent over years, providing an unchanging platform for measurement, unlike the constantly evolving list process.

- ***Is it possible for a non-listed company to achieve Accreditation 'Star Status'?***

Yes, there are a maximum of 100 places on each list, yet these are not the only great workplaces displaying high levels of Workplace Engagement. Providing that an organisation reaches the required standard then they will be accredited. Accreditation is not restricted to the number of places on our lists, but to the number of organisations that are good enough to achieve the relevant standard.



- **Accreditation in 2007?**

This year, 434 organisations registered to go for 'Star Status', and since September over 100,000 employees from these organisations have been surveyed. In total 273 organisations achieved 'Star Status' success;

- 42 organisations achieved Three Star Status
- 107 organisations achieved Two Star Status
- 124 Companies achieved One Star Status

- **Can I see a copy of the accreditation questions?**

Yes, the process is totally open and transparent.

The questions measured for the purposes of accreditation are actually statements. For each statement, employees are asked to select a response on a seven point scale, with responses ranging from 'Strongly Disagree', to 'Strongly Agree'. Many years of research and development have resulted in the fine tuning of these statements. It is therefore important to note that these statements are protected by intellectual property rights and laws of copyright, so they may not be reproduced and can only be used by Best Companies Limited. However, our process is quite open and transparent so we are happy to list the statements we use, as follows:

- My work is stimulating
- I am under too much pressure at work to perform well
- I love working for this organisation
- Profit is the only thing driving this organisation
- My team is fun to work with
- Working in this team gives me a buzz
- My organisation makes a positive difference to the world we live in
- My manager cares about how satisfied I am in my job
- This organisation is run on strong values/principles
- I am bored with the work I do
- I have a great deal of faith in the person leading this organisation
- My health is suffering because of my work
- I feel proud to work for this organisation
- Senior managers of this organisation do a lot of telling but not much listening
- My manager helps me to fulfil my potential
- I feel I receive fair pay for the responsibilities I have in my job

- **Will a list of accredited companies be published?**

Accredited organisations will appear in the 'Best Red Book' to be published annually and will be widely marketed to recruitment centres such as universities, libraries, careers offices, etc. as well as being available for purchase at leading book stores. Details will also appear on our website.



best companies™

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