

SOUTH FLORIDA SunSentinel

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**SOUTH FLORIDA
TOP
WORKPLACES
OF 2016**

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How we picked the top workplaces

Who determines the Top Workplaces? Those who know them best: the employees.

The Sun Sentinel partnered with Philadelphia-based WorkplaceDynamics, a workplace research firm, to determine the region's Top Workplaces rankings.

Beginning in August, the Sun Sentinel ran articles and advertisements encouraging employees in the region to nominate companies as Top Workplaces. WorkplaceDynamics invited those companies, as well as other organizations in the region, to participate in the program.

Anyone could nominate a company. The only requirement was that the organization must employ at least 35 people in South Florida. The organization could be public, private, nonprofit or governmental.

WorkplaceDynamics invited 1,219 workplaces to participate and surveyed 85 of them. Only those organizations that agreed to participate were surveyed.

The surveyed organizations employ 17,353 people in South Florida. Of those employees who received questionnaires, 9,018 responded, either on paper or online.

After the surveys were completed, WorkplaceDynamics ran statistical tests to look for any questionable results. (It sometimes disqualifies a small number of employers based on those tests.)

Why is a particular employer not on the list? Perhaps the company took the survey and scored too low. Or, it might have chosen not to participate.

Employers were categorized as small, medium or large because smaller employers tend to score higher than midsize employers, and midsize employers tend to score higher than large employers.

What it means to work at a Top Workplace

Employees share why they love their jobs

Staff report

Some people just can't wait to go to work in the morning.

Wouldn't you like to know where they're going?

For the second straight year, the Sun Sentinel set out to find those employers. Today we reveal 55 Top Workplaces in South Florida for 2016, a list based on surveys with more than 9,000 employees in Broward, Palm Beach and Miami-Dade counties.

The employers are a diverse group, from hotels to manufacturers to nonprofit groups. But their employees tell similar stories about why they love their jobs.

Here's a sample.



Sarris

David Sarris, Place of Hope

Sarris' employer gave him more than a job.

His journey to the faith-based, state-licensed children's organization began when he was a teenager.

"I was taken from my home and entered foster care when I was 14 years old," Sarris says. "I lived in a group home until I aged out at 18."

Two days before he was to leave the group home, a bed opened up at Villages of Hope, a transitional living community for young adults affiliated with Place of Hope. While there, Sarris finished high school and started college. A staff member taught him to drive, and he got a job at the Treasurers for Hope Charity Store.



Only the best

Look for the special Top Workplaces section in today's paper — along with additional coverage at sunsentinel.com/topworkplaces2016

"I was one of their first employees," he says. "My job at Treasures taught me important skills and a strong work ethic."

It also led to his buying a house. "The people around me cared about me and encouraged me to apply for a home through Habitat for Humanity," Sarris says. "I was one of 285 applicants for only four available homes. By the grace of God, I was accepted and I am a grateful homeowner."

Today, Sarris holds an associate degree and is working on a bachelor's. He works part time on Place of Hope's IT help desk.

"I love what I do," he says, "but most of all, I am grateful to be able to give back to those who helped me get to where I am today."