

Nine years among the best

Baird ranks No. 21 on FORTUNE's list of the 100 Best Companies to Work For



For the ninth consecutive year, Baird has earned recognition among the FORTUNE 100 Best Companies to Work For®. This year the firm ranks No. 21, placing it in the Top 25 for the fourth year in a row. Among mid-sized companies on the list, Baird ranked No. 8.

Paul Purcell, Chairman, President and CEO, said: "We are humbled and gratified to be recognized among the elite companies in the nation on this very prestigious list. Consistently earning this recognition through a very challenging time demonstrates how much we all care about what we do and how we do it."

"When I'm asked about the secret to our success, I emphasize that our business is really about people," said Paul. "We take great care of clients and each other because that is what is most important. Baird is a great place to work because of the way we live our culture and do business as a privately held, associate-owned firm. When passionate professionals share an owner's interest in their clients' success, it shows. Our FORTUNE recognition reflects this."

A great place to work: what it means for Baird

Being a great place to work is a key reason Baird is able to attract and retain the best people, who, in turn, provide the best financial advice and service to clients. Our consistent recognition also has helped win new business and build client relationships.

"Our consistency in being recognized on the FORTUNE list for so many years proves that we really are a great place to work," said Sara Reed, Talent Acquisition Manager. "I would say nine out of 10 candidates mention FORTUNE in their first interview."

"It's one thing to say we're a great place to work, but it's another thing when a prominent national business publication tells people we're a great place to work," Sara noted.

"Whether a candidate has been referred by another associate, recruited to the firm, or comes through our careers website, to a person FORTUNE has been a key element in every case," said Tim Byrne, Chief Information Officer and Director of PWM Research, Products and Services. Byrne's Information Technology Department has hired 50 new associates over the past 18 months. "Our recognition as a best place to work takes the worry out of what kind of firm we are for a potential new associate. They know it's a warm place to work, where culture matters, because it is and we are recognized for it," Tim said.

Mike Nelson, hired in December as Director of IT-Operations, agrees: "It's the sole reason I came onsite for the first interview. FORTUNE's recognition of Baird's people, integrity, and ethics as being strong traits of our firm are absolutely true. It was apparent throughout my interview process and continues now. As a new associate, I feel my ideas are sought out and welcomed by my peers and firm leaders. Coming to Baird has re-energized me personally and professionally." ►

Baird is featured on the 100 Best list alongside other elite organizations including Google, which ranked No. 1 this year, as well as well-known companies: Zappos.com (No. 11), Dreamworks Animation (No. 14) and Microsoft (No. 76) and financial services firms like Edward Jones (No. 5), Goldman Sachs (No. 33) and Morningstar (No. 89).

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A valuable business differentiator

"Clients understand that the FORTUNE recognition is a reflection that our people are not only the best at what they do, but that they're happy to be doing it," said Leslie Dixon, Chief Human Capital Officer.

"In almost every client interaction where we are introducing the firm, we proudly share our FORTUNE recognition," said Bob Venable, Head of Equities. "It is a benchmark and a proof point for the kind of firm we are, particularly with firms or industries where Baird isn't a household name. For example, in the Technology sector on the West Coast, companies realize that the best in breed companies are on the FORTUNE list, including names like Google. Companies want to be on that list."

In another case, a new Asset Management client originally sought out Baird based on the firm's money management performance. However, the initial discussion was all about the FORTUNE recognition. "This company was impressed by our culture and the FORTUNE 100 recognition. Our care for associates and the fact we were privately held and employee owned was important to them," said Mary Ellen Stanek, Director of Asset Management. "Long before we talked about our investment approach and performance, we discussed our culture and the value we place on our people. That resonated with them."

Ranking reflects associate's pride

Some of Baird's highest scores in the associate survey that helps determine the FORTUNE ranking come in questions reflecting the pride associates have in working here.

"Our associates consistently feel they make a difference here – because they do," adds Leslie Dixon. "They see what they accomplish and it makes them feel good – not just about the firm's business performance, but also about how we contribute to our communities."

How the 100 Best are selected

The 100 Best are selected from data compiled by the Great Place to Work® Institute, an independent organization that defines a great workplace as one where employees "trust the people they work for, have pride in what they do, and enjoy the people they work with."

Two-thirds of the score comes from results of a survey sent to randomly selected employees representing 60% of an applicant's U.S. workforce. One-third of the score is based on responses to the "Culture Audit," a written application comprising detailed responses to a series of open-ended questions. ■