

Fortune magazine
research and writing project

Note from Cynthia: The IBM Corporation needed a dynamic and compelling application for *Fortune* magazine's "Best Company to Work For" competition, as part of the company's ongoing efforts to be known as a great employer and a thought leader. I researched and wrote an application that ran some 50 pages. Below are the application's introduction and an outline of the entire piece, which resulted in IBM being named a "Best Company to Work For" by *Fortune* magazine in 2003.

Introduction

Let's be candid.

Preparing this application was a big job. We struggled with the challenge of presenting the IBM story – how we compensate, recognize, celebrate, inform and develop our employees – in a way that would capture it all yet not overwhelm the *Fortune* judges...or, frankly, ourselves.

It's a big story.

So we looked for a theme to pull it all together and found one that's been there from the start. "Respect for the individual," an IBM founding belief, means "caring about the dignity and rights of each person in the organization."

Upon this single belief rests one of the most inspiring business success stories in American history. And from it flows every single policy and program detailed in this application. IBM's people and its success are indivisible.

We hope these pages demonstrate that a company that begins by valuing people ends up with a thoughtful and creative record of workplace innovation and leadership – virtually all of it pre-dating legislation or the pressures of public opinion.

Our *Annual Report* says it best:

Long before there was an Internet, before computers, or semiconductors, or even vacuum tubes, there were ethics, corporate citizenship, social and environmental responsibility and fairness.

We make our business in a high-tech revolution of the networked world. But we built our business on a system of beliefs. These values transcend the progression of one generation of technology to the next – or, for that matter, of one generation of people to the next.

This is a promise that a company and its people make to the institution and to one another: To remain faithful to values that never change. And to remember – at every step of the journey – who we are and what we stand for.

With that said, and on behalf of all IBM employees, we are pleased to submit the following answers to the questions posed by *Fortune*. We hope you enjoy the ride. We have.

Outline

The rest of the application contained detailed information on the following:

- IBM benefits
- Childcare and eldercare initiatives
- Workforce flexibility
- Compensation package
- Celebrating success
- Professional development offerings
- Opportunities for personal growth
- General awards and recognition events
- Service awards
- Technical awards
- Corporate ethics
- Commitment to diversity
- Commitment to community
- IBM Intranet