



The Truth About Successful Workplaces for Women

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From the pay gap to maternity benefits, even a spotlight on one female CEO's maternity leave, there has been a lot of talk this year about women in the workplace. Women today are [more likely to complete college](#) and attend graduate school, and they make up nearly half of the U.S. workforce. At Alliance Data, women even slightly outnumber men. Recently, we were recognized as one of the [100 Best Workplaces for Women](#), a recognition we're proud of especially since it's given based on what women in our workforce reported via Fortune Magazine's annual best workplaces survey about our culture and their experience here.

Each year we survey our associates to learn how we can be the best employer possible. When we received this recognition, we took a look into our own internal survey data to better understand what our female associates specifically are saying about our workplace that earned us this recognition, and we asked two of our Plano associates for their perspective.

Here are the 5 things our female workforce highlighted as important to them:

1. Transparency

Women want to work for a company where they understand management's decisions and the direction of the company.

Sharing information is what we do at Alliance Data, so we should be naturals at this, and our female associates give us high marks in this area. At every level, including senior leadership, managers are encouraged to meet with their teams and be open and honest. Our CEO takes this directive to heart, traveling the country throughout the year visiting locations (more than 30 in 2014) and meeting with associates at all levels to make sure they are connected and getting their questions answered.

"I feel our management does an excellent job keeping me "in the know," and communication is a key part of that. Through either internal memos, group meetings or in my one-on-one with my manager, I feel they provide me the latest important changes or issues coming up that my effect my work." – Melinda Dismuke

2. Recognition

A pat on the back for a job well done is always welcomed, and nothing can deflate a passionate associate faster than feeling like their hard work is not recognized.

At Alliance Data, we have several ways that people are recognized for their extra effort here. Informal kudos, achievement awards, and even high-profile annual awards are handed out to deserving associates. When you're giving it your all, we try to ensure someone will notice, and that feels good.

"Alliance Data and the associates are fantastic at recognizing co-workers when they go above and beyond. This happens both formally and informally via emails or in-person thank you's. Everyone here seems to truly understand the value of making others feel special through recognition." – Alisha Danchak

3. Fairness

Fairness is one of the earliest traits we recognize. Kids quickly identify biases and unfair situations, and as adults, explicit or implied unfairness can make great employees leave for greener (and fairer) pastures.

From May 2014 to May 2015, more than 800 women received promotions at Alliance Data. These associates were recognized because of the hard work they put in each and every day, plain and simple. It doesn't matter what your background is or where you come from, if you're the best person for the job, you should succeed, and we see this time and time again across our organization.

"I don't view promotions as being deserved or a given. To me, a promotion is given when your work scope has changed significantly and additional responsibilities and technical competencies are required. When I see individuals promoted for these reasons, I'm extremely excited for them and their future career." – Melinda Dismuke

4. Caring Atmosphere

When you spend 40 hours a week (sometimes more) with people, liking them is definitely a bonus. Even more so, you want to feel like you're part of a second family and that the people you spend your days with care about you.

At Alliance Data, we have potlucks, happy hours, team building events, community service, and all kinds of other activities that bring people together.

When you like the people you spend the majority of your waking time with, you want to keep coming back. In our corporate office in Plano, TX, we also employ three clients of [LaunchAbility](#), a job-placement organization for adults with cognitive disabilities.

"The culture is very friendly and welcoming. I've been with Alliance Data for just over 2 years and that was one of the first things I noticed. Associates here truly care about and take the time to get to know one another. We celebrate successes both personal and professional and support each other in tough times. It's a pretty special place." — Alisha Danchak

5. Pride

A great quote from theological writer Hosea Ballou says "[No one has a greater asset for his business than a man's pride in his work.](#)" How do you create pride in associates, when it's such an intangible quality? A great part of pride can be tied to the other four characteristics I talked about before. If you work somewhere where you are informed about the company's mission, are recognized for your great work, are treated fairly, and feel cared for, one side effect will be that you are proud to work for such a company. Pride also comes from feeling that your company's mission is aligned with [being a responsible corporate citizen](#).

At Alliance Data, the work we do for our clients touches every household in America, even households across the globe. When you think about that, it's a huge responsibility, but our associates know they're a big part of that responsibility, which leads to pride in the work that they do. Every interaction with a customer makes a difference. The pride people feel in the work they do is important and a main reason for our success.

"I love that I get to advocate on behalf of the company and convince those outside the organization that Alliance Data truly is an amazing place to work and puts its associates first. When I succeed in that, there is most definitely a sense of pride." — Alisha Danchak

There are other characteristics women look for in an employer, of course, but these are the top five areas that our female associates highlighted about why they like working for Alliance Data. Although we are honored to be included on the Fortune Best Workplaces for Women list, our associate survey scores show that men also called out these same five qualities about our culture. Across our organization of more than 15,000 associates, these five areas resonate no matter who you are or where you live. To me, they are what makes Alliance Data one of the Best Places to Work for everyone.
