

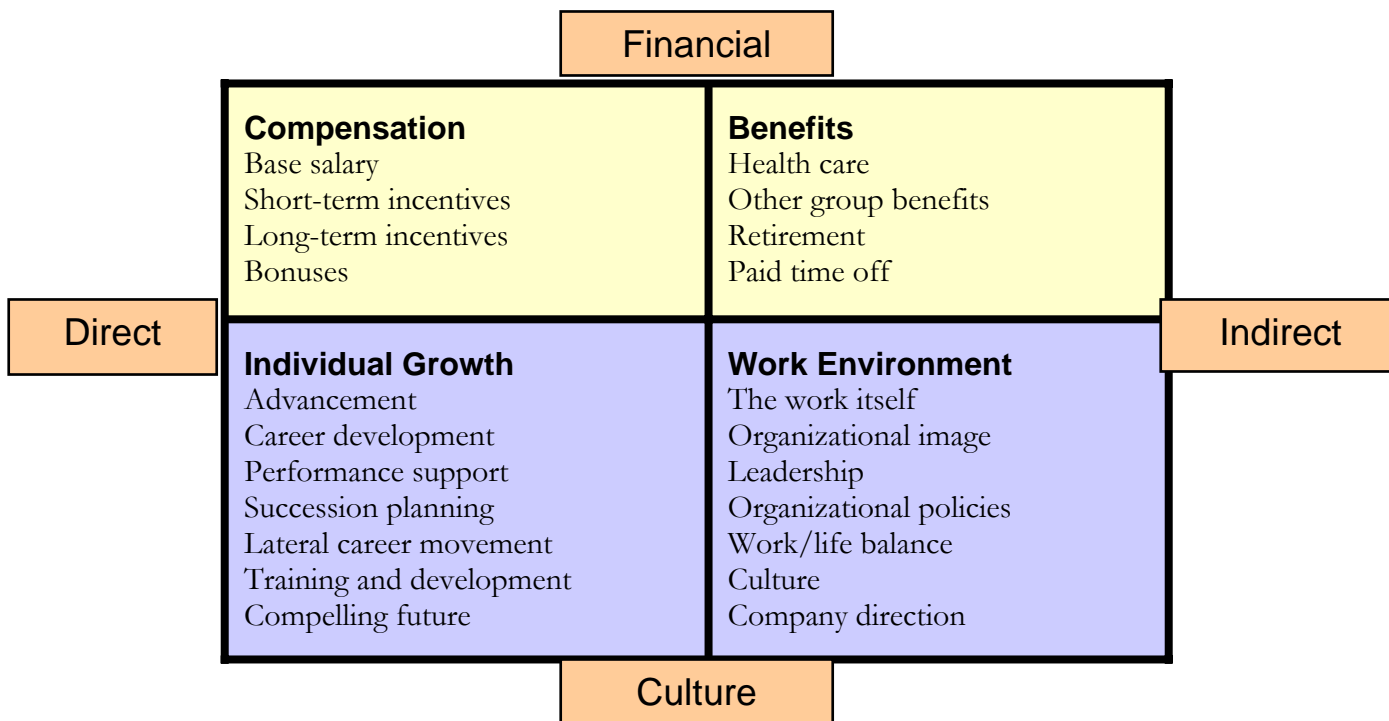
The Pathway to Becoming an Employer of Choice

The idea that a company can become an employer of choice has gained momentum over the past several years. Though its increased popularity has made the term “employer of choice” somewhat of an industry buzzword, truly becoming an employer of choice is much more than just terminology.

A company that can call itself an employer of choice is a company that, because of the reputation it has built, is a place where people want to work. And once they do work there, it’s a place where employees will be engaged and choose to truly commit to the company’s success. There are many benefits for an organization that achieves it.

Working to become an employer of choice requires an investment of time and resources. The long-term benefits of being a place where people want to work, however, far outweigh the costs. The results of becoming an employer of choice can include decreased turnover, increased productivity, and less focus on recruiting—which in turn all lead to more successful business outcomes. With these crucial aspects of the business under control, companies can spend a greater amount of their time and energy on growing their business.

MRA views employer of choice as both a *model* and *process* that helps an employer continuously evaluate and benchmark its human resources practices, policies, and ways of conducting business to consciously position itself as a place where individuals want to work. The model below shows four broad elements that work together to make a company a great place to work.



There is not a magic formula or a single path a company can take to become an employer of choice. What makes a company a great place to work for some people will not be great for others. A company that is an employer of choice, however, will consider this in their hiring process, showing as much interest in a candidate’s fit with the organization as in his or her level of talent.

The pathway to becoming an employer of choice is also a process, with these key steps:

- Gather metrics and benchmarks about how your company stacks up with other companies on the key elements that your company has chosen to emphasize from the model above.
- Gather metrics about how your own employees view your company and benchmark these findings with other companies.
- Develop a vision of what strengths the company wants to emphasize as an employer of choice.
- Armed with the metrics gathered in the first three steps, do a gap analysis to determine where the company is compared to where it wants to be. What are your current strengths? Where do you need to do further development?
- Finally, develop a plan based on the metrics, the company vision, and the gap analysis. Identify priority action projects that will establish your company as an employer of choice with the type of employees you want to attract and retain.

Those companies that have been formally recognized as “best places to work” have confirmed that this is an ongoing process and not a one-time event. Rather than resting on their plaques and awards, they work continuously to maintain the position they have achieved and to respond to changes in the marketplace—work that is well worth the investment because of the gains they have seen in their ability to attract and retain great talent, enhance customer satisfaction, and improve the bottom line.

In order to best understand how the financial, cultural, indirect, and direct rewards employees receive work together in your organization, you need an objective measure of where your company currently stands. For more information on measuring your current position as an employer, please contact Bonni Yordi, Ph.D., MRA’s Director, Surveys and Business Research, at 262-696-3547 or bonni@mranet.org.