



BEST EMPLOYERS FOR WORKERS OVER 50

Stanley Consultants: 2008 AARP Best Employers for Workers Over 50

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Winning years: 2008, [2007](#), [2006](#), 2005, 2004, 2002

Industry: Consulting Services

Location: Muscatine, Iowa

URL: www.stanleyconsultants.com

2008 Rank: 8

Highlights of 2008 Winning Strategies

One of AARP's top-10 Best Employers for Workers Over 50 in 2008, Stanley Consultants actively recruits and retains mature workers, partly by offering age-friendly, flexible work schedules. Stanley Consultants welcomes formal phased retirement from its employees and works with each of them on a case-by-case basis to create flexibility with reduced work schedules. As a retirement bonus, retirees receive their sick balance leave as a lump-sum bonus (up to 400 hours), an AARP membership, and an invitation to attend the annual benefits fair. Thirty-four percent of the company's employees are age 50+.

Additional Policies and Practices:

Workplace Culture/Continued Opportunities: Stanley Consultants offers learning and development programs to its full- and part-time employees, including in-house classroom training and online training. It offers tuition reimbursement and certification classes exclusively to full-time employees. Employees must work 20+ hours per week to be eligible for the tuition reimbursement program, in-house classroom training, and certification classes. In the past 12 months, 82 percent of Stanley employees participated in at least one of its training programs, with an average of 18 hours spent in training.

Mature employees serve as mentors to younger staff members. The company celebrates long-service anniversaries with announcements, parties, and awards.

Based on employee feedback, Stanley has made the following improvements to policies and benefits: hiring a full-time training and development administrator to enhance member training initiatives, adding training opportunities, and expanding and better publicizing training on financial and retirement planning. Classes are broken into age-appropriate segments.

In other improvements, Stanley introduced a new vision benefit to enhance coverage, increased the fitness reimbursement benefit, and increased the amount the company covers for the insurance premium on dependents. Employees gain new experience and develop new skills by working on temporary assignments in other departments, working on team projects, and also by having access to formal job-rotation programs.

With 17 domestic offices and almost as many international offices, the company gives many employees opportunities to work in other parts of the country or the world.

Examples of how the company has accommodated employees with special needs include offering one employee suffering from cancer the opportunity to work only 10 hours a week, providing private rooms for mothers needing to pump breast milk, and offering ergonomically friendly chairs, split keyboard trays, wrist supports, mouse pads with special supports, and ergonomic foot rests. In addition, preferred parking is available for pregnant employees or for those recuperating from illness or surgery.

Benefits/Health: Full- and part-time employees working 20 or more hours per week receive individual and family medical coverage, individual and family prescription-drug coverage, individual and family vision and dental insurance, and short- and long-term disability.

Health benefits for retirees under age 65 include individual and spouse medical and drug coverage, and vision and dental insurance as well as EAP services. Health benefits for retirees age 65+ include individual and spouse medical coverage. New hires, whether under or above age 65, are eligible for all of these benefits upon retirement. Stanley offers employees a flexible-spending account to assist in covering out-of-pocket health care costs.

The company also has a Member Charity Fund, which is an employee-donated hardship fund available to employees facing hardships of any nature.

Benefits/Financial: Stanley offers a 401(k) with a company match and stock options to its full- and part-time employees. Employees are automatically enrolled in the 401(k) plan, may invest in lifecycle funds, and employees age 50+ can make catch-up contributions.

Employees receive financial-planning information from staff members, from the firm that administers their 401(k) plan, and from external financial-planning experts not affiliated with the 401(k).

The company offers short-term time off without pay and long-term leaves of absence without pay to allow for caregiving. Employees can also receive time off through a time-off bank funded by employee donations of vacation time.

The following wellness programs are offered to full- and part-time employees: flu shots, health screenings, smoking cessation programs, and physical activity and exercise programs. Full-time employees can also take advantage of discounts to local health clubs. The company reimburses each employee \$150 annually for health club memberships and for home-exercise equipment. Fifty-eight percent of the company's employees have used at least one of its wellness benefits during the past 12 months.

Stanley offers referral services to its full- and part-time employees to assist with child care and eldercare.

Benefits/Alternative Work Arrangements: Stanley offers alternative work arrangements such as flextime, telecommuting, and a formal phased-retirement program, to its full- and part-time employees. It also offers full-time employees compressed work schedules. Full-time employees are eligible to move to part-time work on a permanent or temporary basis.

Opportunities for Retirees: Stanley currently has 144 retirees and an employee who is directly responsible for retiree relations. The company stays connected with its retirees by communicating regularly, inviting retirees to organization events and

celebrations, providing ongoing access to retirement-planning workshops and information, and formally acknowledging retirees when they retire. The company offers retirees temporary work assignments, consulting and contract work, telecommuting, and full-and part-time work.

Age of Workforce: Thirty-four percent of the company's employees are age 50+. The average tenure of employees age 50+ is 5.74 years.

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