

TPD named #1 by CE News

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The 130 person transportation engineering firm, Traffic Planning and Design (TPD) has been named CE News' best civil engineering firm to work for in the nation.

TPD has been in business since 1989 and today has five offices, including one on East High Street in Pottstown. They are the company responsible for the French Creek Parkway that is currently in the design stages, the streetscapes project along Bridge Street in Phoenixville and the road improvements for Providence Town Centre in Collegeville.

CE News is a nationwide publication for civil engineering firms.

The Best Place to Work award is based 50 percent on company surveys, but also 50 percent on an employee survey (and 70 percent of the employees have to respond to be considered for the award).

In the past five year, TPD has finished in the top 20 every year. In 2004, they were number five, their previous best.

The judges liked several things about TPD. The company makes heavy investments into both their employees' training but also into the technology for their employees to implement that training.

President, Kevin Johnson, said TPD was one of the first companies to give every employee their own computer to work on.

The company does 360 degree reviews, both annually and midyear. Not only does management review their employees, but the employees also review their management.

The company also has a high rate of employee retention, averaging 99

percent retention rate for the past three years. For 2009, the company is currently at a 100 percent retention rate of employees.

TPD has also made a "no layoffs" commitment to their employees. The company cut back on co-op hiring for the year and asked that all employees stick to the 40 hour work week. The judges from CE News said that a no lay-off commitment helps the employees at the firm because they don't have to worry about losing their job and can focus on their job.

Johnson said the company made this commitment to their employees because they had made a major commitment and a major investment in these people and they don't want to lose them.

The company also has a quality of life commitment to their employees and have stood by it through the recession. The company takes bus trips, most recently to the Renaissance Faire and offers a deal with the YMCA for their employees.

The same goes for healthcare – in the past nine years, the company has only raised health care costs once for their employees.

What Johnson likes about the CE News surveys is TPD provides a summary of the answers and the comments without giving specific answers. This allows the company to know what their employees like and don't like. This has allowed TPD to implement something that their employees want each year.

In the past they have increased the quality of life bus trips (now they run four each year), the work from home opportunities, and increased 401K matching.

In 2004, TPD was also named Best Places to work in Pennsylvania.