

Four Battered Hotel Chains Still Make Fortune's Best Companies to Work For List

Despite a year like none other for the hospitality industry, Hilton, Marriott, Hyatt, and Kimpton were ranked in the top 17 percent of the annual 100 Best Companies to Work For List.

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Hilton, along with three other hospitality companies, has been recognized for its exceptional and resilient workplace culture with its ranking in the Top 20 of Fortune's Best Companies to Work For List. (Courtesy Hilton)

Fortune has published its annual list of the [100 Best Companies to Work For](https://fortune.com/2021/04/12/how-best-companies-to-work-for-helped-employees-endure-covid-pandemic/) (<https://fortune.com/2021/04/12/how-best-companies-to-work-for-helped-employees-endure-covid-pandemic/>), and during a year in which COVID decimated the hospitality industry, it's worth noting that four hotel companies made it to the top one-fifth of the list.

The list has become an authority on workplace culture, based on analysis of survey responses from more than half a million current employees at Great Place to Work–Certified organizations across the U.S. Company rankings are derived from more than 60 employee experience questions within the [Great Place to Work Trust Index](https://www.greatplacetowork.com/solutions/employee-surveys) (<https://www.greatplacetowork.com/solutions/employee-surveys>). Respondents are surveyed on issues including how trustworthy, caring, and fair companies are in times of crises; employees' physical, emotional, and financial health; and a company's broader community impact.

"It can be easy to be a great company when times are perfect," one employee wrote this year. "But they have shown they are a great company when times are more uncertain." And this year more than ever, *Fortune* wrote, "our [100 Best Companies to Work For](https://fortune.com/best-companies/2021/) (<https://fortune.com/best-companies/2021/>) list highlights the companies that put people over profits — and are poised to thrive again because of it."

Tech giants Cisco and Salesforce were No. 1 and No 2, respectively, on the list but Hilton came in third place — despite the fact that the company furloughed 45,000 of its workforce and laid off 20 percent of its corporate staff. Yet in those tough decisions, one employee noted, the company treated its workers with "dignity and compassion," by connecting former Hilton staff to short-term jobs new to the pandemic economy and by extending hotel rewards benefits like the Hilton Honors program and eligibility for the hospitality chain's team member travel program beyond the date when a departing worker would typically lose them. "Each decision was made to do the best the company could to help people in crisis," the employee wrote.

Coming in at No. 15, 16, and 17 are Marriott International, Hyatt Hotels, and Kimpton Hotels & Restaurants, respectively. **Marriott** furloughed tens of thousands of workers from its 84,000 employees, and Kimpton hotel staffers informed with monthly voluntary calls that shared the lodging giant's status and prospects for

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economic recovery. Marriott also helped those who did not expect to return to work at the company to seek jobs in industries that were hiring.

Although **Hyatt** furloughed a large percentage of workers during the pandemic, it allowed staff to stay on the company health plan and continued to cover all employee benefit premiums for up to two months. Beyond those initiatives, the CEO, executive chairman, and board of directors collected no salary for the majority of 2020, and the senior leadership took reductions in pay, with those monies instead going toward grants to colleagues globally — estimated at \$17 million by the end of last year.

"**Kimpton** truly goes to bat for its employees," one worker at this upscale boutique hospitality brand wrote. Although its business was almost totally shut down as of last March, Kimpton quickly stepped in to help furloughed employees find temp jobs at companies that were scaling up during the pandemic, including Amazon and grocery retailers. In many cases, according to *Fortune*, the applicants didn't even have to interview but were hired based solely on recommendations. Leadership also coordinated with "almost every state's unemployment agency," one employee said, to make sure people received their benefits.

"Businesses that treat employees well during the toughest times," *Fortune* said, "will attract talent, even when the war for talent heats up." The battered hospitality industry is poised — and chomping at the bit — for that battle to start.

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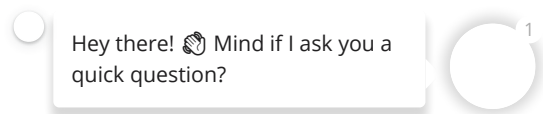
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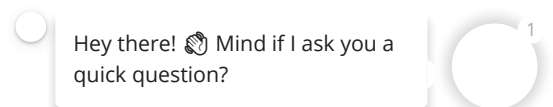


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