

FSquared

Our Ethics

People

Which people do we mean here? On the whole we mean FSquared people. The people that we spend close to one quarter of our year with. The people that we sit next to and opposite. The people we laugh and at times argue with. At FSquared we believe your job should not be a painful experience. Admittedly, if you asked an F2 employee “would you keep working if you won the lottery” they would say “er, No.” but if you ask them “do you like where you work”, hopefully, on most days, they would say “Yes”.

At FSquared we regularly re-assess our working environment, our communications methods, our working practices and our playtime practices. Although KPIs are a hard thing to set and measure when it comes to people’s happiness and stress levels, we do as much as we can and we keep looking for ways to do more.

In early 2005 we were awarded Investors in People. We also hold the Quality Management awards ISO9001 and ISO14001. Covering working processes and environmental practices respectively, these awards demand continuous analysis and, although they sound terribly dull, have assisted us in keeping a real track on how well our systems work and whether we really practice what we preach.

Every year, the team have opportunities for training applicable to their growth, role and interest. On top of external training, we push ourselves to improve and grow, to increase our knowledge base and to strive for more than an average answer. We keep track of this by quarterly One to Ones with our Management Team, and through bi-monthly Communications meeting for the whole team.

We find a big part of not feeling ground down in the greyness of a Monday morning is the physical environment we’re in. We find that our open plan style, with plants, music and couches gives us an atmosphere in which we can feel at ease. This feeling of light and space, with music and plenty of chocolate, helps creativity to flow more freely, and helps us to avoid the tramline thinking which many office environments can promote.

We try to accommodate as many work placement and work experience students as we can cope with. Being a fairly small team this is only usually 2 per year but we’re still pretty proud of this number. We take on post-graduates only, on a voluntary basis, one student at a time and for anywhere between 2 and 6 months.

Health and Safety is a fairly minimal worry in an office but we still have a full Risk Assessment, a Fire Emergency Plan and a Health and Safety info page, all available via our intranet.

We’ve given a lot of thought to what we want to say about equality, about diversity, about inclusion. Not because we don’t know what we think, but because we don’t want to be glib, to use empty words and phrases, to make promises we can’t keep.

Like most companies, we have an equal opportunity policy, taken seriously by all of us, managed by our MD.... But we know policy and procedures aren’t enough. We know it all needs to be brought to life by our actions – where and how we recruit, for example – by our commitment – how hard we’re prepared to work to accommodate differences in our everyday practices – and by our attitude and culture – how we respect and welcome the differences between us.

We haven’t got it perfect yet. We can always keep improving. We plan to keep trying and we intend to keep being honest and inviting honesty from others.

Community

In our time, we’ve worked with communities of interest; communities of need; communities with a sense of common purpose; our knowledge community; communities of geographical location. We understand communities...

FSquared helps its community via its supply chain, employing Fair Wage cleaners, social enterprises, SMEs and most recently a security company with its own Equality and Diversity policy – which we thought for a security company was pretty darn great.

Our new office art was produced by a Community Arts Group called Arc. Arc stands for Art for Recovery in the Community and it works with people with mental health issues. We’re very excited about our new unique pieces being developed and we want lots of you to come and see it.

The F2 Foundation, to which we donate 10% of our pre-tax profit, will reach out to achieve wider community impact. Its focus is to prevent and reduce poverty – not necessarily that of high profile groups, but the kind of day to day, low level grinding poverty that millions of people endure. We want to apply our knowledge of all three sectors, of social enterprise, of social and organisational change, to the benefit of organisations working in this field, to help them fulfil their commercial and social objectives, to improve the lives of their customer groups – to make a difference with people rather than for people. Check out the Foundation’s website for the latest developments and for the kind of work our charity and its trading arm have undertaken recently.

Environment

We all know that the environment is a major topic in today’s business place and today’s society. Since the beginning of the industrial revolution we’ve been using up natural resources, and churning out so many gases and so many waste by-products that some say it’s already too late to make a difference on the future of the planet....but not us.

We are many things at FSquared, but negative and without hope, we aren’t. There’s a huge amount of study going on in the world of

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environmental impacts today and we're reading all the science and doing our best to understand it.

Of course we don't rest on our laurels and wait for the magic answer but day by day we do all we can to assist:

Our first steps towards being a Greener company began in our first office on Fairfield Street. We employed a social enterprise called Emerge to come and pick up our waste paper and take it for recycling. More than 8 years on our relationship with Emerge is still going strong as we now recycle all our unwanted paper, plastic bottles, glass, aluminium cans, printer cartridges and PCs.

At the beginning of 2006, FSquared was awarded ISO14001. Along the same lines of ISO 9001, this is a nationally recognised accreditation but applies solely to environmental issues in the workplace. From CO2 emissions to wastewater and excess chemical usage 14001 has given us a framework to help us keep track of and continuously improve upon our effect on the environment.

We've changed our contracted cleaning company to a company that uses only biological based cleaning products. These cleaning products are not an off-the-shelf "Eco brand" but are thoroughly researched to have the most minimal effect on the environment but at the same time, actually do the job they are supposed to do: clean.

Although we fully agree that to off-set does not mean to be let-off, we are realistic in our views that in business we must still travel to see our clients in order to give them the best service and to gain the deepest understanding. We must use computers, lights and in winter we must heat our office; we therefore off-set what emissions we do create so that we are Climate Neutral. Since 2008 we're supplied with 100% renewable energy company through Good Energy.

As we believe in reducing not just offsetting, we have a travel policy that states: wherever possible we will travel by public transport instead of car and rail instead of plane; we also have a Turn It Off policy for the lights and equipment that aren't needed in the office.

We think hard about what we buy, and why. For example, we spent a long time researching what was the best type of paper to use for our new business cards, as the wonderful world of 100% recycled paper is not in fact all you would expect. Did you know for example that paper can only be recycled 3 or 4 times before its fibres break down and become unusable. 50% recycled and 50% virgin fibre paper is therefore most sustainable it would seem – just so long as it's Process Chlorine Free of course!!

Marketplace

Through our work we can have a huge influence on the way in which large organisations make key decisions. It's our intention to continue to influence the delivery of projects so that they achieve more sustainable outcomes – environmentally, socially and economically.

To do this we work collaboratively with some of the largest and most influential organisations in the United Kingdom. Naturally we're excited to work with new clients and to share our vision of the impact intelligent project delivery can make upon local communities and the environment.

In the public sector, we continue to exert influence far beyond our size.

Although we are a small consultancy we also recognise that we ourselves can have an influence on sustainability through the way in which we choose the firms we do business with. Our natural instincts are to look for suppliers who are:

- Small
- Local
- Social enterprises
- Ethical
- Environmentally aware
- Or who show a good cultural fit with ourselves and make good partners

So these are the criteria that our procurement policy stands by.

Due to our values: Bravery, Wisdom, Integrity and Love, and the fact that as a small company with a strong ethos, it's always been important to work with organisations who share our commitment to delivering high levels of social, economic and environmental outcomes, we're always looking for new opportunities to improve the impact we have.

So, to sum up, we're being the best we can be, hoping to get as good as we can get, and hoping you'll join us on the journey...