

**BUSINESS
FINLAND**

BUSINESS FINLAND'S CULTURE HANDBOOK



WELCOME!



Welcome to Business Finland's Culture Handbook – a resource that has been designed by our people, for our people.

Maybe it's your first day as a "BFer" (yes, that's what we call ourselves) or perhaps you're thinking of applying for a job with us – either way, you are warmly welcomed!

Over the coming pages, we'll dive into various aspects of our culture that make life here so unique. You'll learn about our diverse team of experts, spread across more than 40 locations globally; you'll hear from BFers themselves on the aspects of our culture that matter most to them; and we'll explore the BF values and Leadership Principles that guide us in creating a workplace where people can thrive and be themselves.

Thank you for taking an interest in life at Business Finland. We're by no means perfect, so developing a healthier and happier work culture is something we are constantly striving towards. For us, this is a journey – so we hope you can join us for the ride.

LET'S DIVE IN!

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WELCOME TO THE **HAPPIEST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD**

We think Finland is pretty awesome, and it seems we're not the only ones. Did you know that in 2023, for the sixth consecutive year, Finland was named the happiest country in the world? Below are just some of the features that explain why BFers are so proud to work for this amazing country.

THE HAPPIEST COUNTRY IN THE WORLD

**SAFE AND STABLE
COUNTRY**

**BALANCING
WORK WITH LIFE**

**FAMILY-
FRIENDLY**

**TECHNOLOGY
SUPERPOWER**

**THE WORLD'S
TOP INNOVATIVE
COUNTRIES**

**HIGH QUALITY
EDUCATION
FOR ALL**

**THE FIRST IN SKILL
DEVELOPMENT AT WORK**

**THE MOST EMPLOYEE
FRIENDLY WORKING HOURS**

**THE GREENEST COUNTRY
IN THE WORLD**

**GENDER
EQUALITY**

**SUSTAINABLE
COUNTRY**

DID YOU KNOW?

Like many countries, Finland celebrates its own Independence Day as a public holiday. Unlike many employers however, Business Finland offers this holiday to all employees – regardless of their location in the world.

Just one of the ways we are aiming to bring the happiness of our country into the workplace.



“It’s an amazing feeling to know I am contributing to a country like Finland through my work. It’s a country that’s rocking the global stage with its sustainability mojo and planet-saving innovations. Working at Business Finland means that I am living up to my own values every single day!”

ALESSANDRA LEONE
TALENT MANAGER, BRAZIL

WHAT IT TAKES TO WORK FOR FINLAND

DID YOU KNOW?

Every year, we hold our “BFer of the Year Awards”. Four inspirational individuals who have lived and breathed our values receive the reward and recognition they deserve.

It’s no exaggeration to say that every one of us here at Business Finland is working *for* Finland. And if there’s one thing you should know about us, it’s that we are incredibly proud of what we do.

We work with Finnish companies and a wide range of players at home and abroad – all in an effort to continue building a better Finland and future for everyone. We believe that promoting Finland to the world, striving towards a better society and building a more sustainable planet, gives our work greater meaning and creates countless opportunities for you to work with customers of all sizes. It’s not always an easy job but we always try to do so with a smile, while also being guided by our four values.

Our values are not just words – we take them very seriously. They guide us in our everyday work and we strive to make them visible in everything we do – from our processes to how we work together.

WITH PASSION

Everything we do, we do with passion. It’s the fuel that drives us in our daily work because we know we are working for Finland. BFers go above and beyond for our customers (and each other) while having fun in the process!

THINK BIG

We’re constantly curious, asking difficult questions, coming up with new ideas and tackling challenges at a global scale. The world is constantly changing, so in order to remain at the forefront of change, it’s vital we set the benchmark. Even if we don’t get it right all the time, we’re learning with every step.

ALL TOGETHER

Sure, there’s more than 700 of us from over 30 different countries, but we operate as one team. And although our expertise differs from person to person and team to team, we are all working towards the same common goal. Our diversity and differences in opinions bring us closer together and enable us to work more effectively.

WITH SISU

You can call it resilience, grit or courage – we call it *sisu*. Even in the face of adversity or the challenges that can appear without warning, BFers have a unique ability to get the job done no matter the obstacles before us.

So if like us, you too can work **with passion, with *sisu* and think big** – all the while **working together** with your fellow colleagues, customers and stakeholders – you too could have what it takes to work for Finland.



“Working with Business Finland has been an incredible experience. The seamless collaboration and sense of achievement among customers, partners, and colleagues creates a strong feeling of belonging, trust, and mutual growth. It’s inspiring to see what can be achieved when we work together towards a common goal.”

TIMI BARTELS
SENIOR ADVISOR, AMERICAS AND AFRICA

COME AS YOU ARE

DID YOU KNOW?

We love to nurture high-class expertise and also provide accelerated opportunities for learning and development to our 700+ experts. For us, the thought leadership of our people plays a critical role in impacting and influencing key stakeholders across global society – not just in Finland.

We're a team of around 700 very talented individuals who are working together for a more sustainable, competitive, and economically strong Finland. Although our experts come from all walks of life, we share the same vision and values. No matter who you are or where you come from, we promise to help you develop your expertise and unleash your full potential!

We pride ourselves on the makeup of our people. Our Trainee program recruits some of the brightest young minds and exposes them to real world projects where their contribution is not only valued but also impactful. In addition, our recruitment process is fair and inclusive – so much so in fact, that between 2019 and 2023, 25% of our new recruits were over the age of 50.

Our diversity is our strength, which is why we are constantly striving towards a workplace that is respectful and safe – with equal opportunities for all employees. There will always be more work for us to do in this area, but already we can boast that our people are

- based across 33 countries and 53 cities
- made up of 34 nationalities
- led by a leadership team with a 50/50 male to female ratio.





“With its 700+ experts based across multiple continents, I think Business Finland is excellently placed to foster connections and promote cross-cultural understanding globally. I truly believe we are enriching the world through this collaboration and unity – and it makes me proud to be part of such a vibrant international community.”

TALHA DAYI
ADVISOR, TURKEY

YOUR WELLBEING COMES FIRST

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2023, Finland's capital, Helsinki, was ranked the third best place to live for work-life balance based on data about work intensity, institutional support, legislation, and livability.

Taking care of your wellbeing is a top priority. For us, this is a no-brainer and an area of our culture we will never stop developing. When you're in good health and feeling well, everything's just better – at home and at work.

We want to ensure all Bfers are able to maintain a healthy work-life balance. We respect our people's personal lives so we offer very flexible remote work opportunities and substantial holidays in every country we operate in.

TOOLBOX FOR BETTER WORK WEEKS

Let's be honest: nobody wants to go from meeting to meeting to meeting. Too many meetings can disrupt productivity, can drain time and energy, and can even lead to decreased focus and work satisfaction.

That is why we introduced our toolbox for better work weeks.

Firstly, our shorter meetings policy means we only book 50-minute meetings instead of 60, 25-minute meetings instead of 30 – and in longer meetings, we remember to

schedule time for breaks. Those extra minutes are for you and can make a huge difference to your working day and week.

Secondly, we want our people to have time to focus (and eat lunch!), which is why we've set up meeting free hours for every day of the week. You're not expected to accept meeting invites for these hours – so please don't send any!

And thirdly: we also introduced meeting free Fridays (well, Friday afternoons to be precise). From 2pm onwards every Friday, we expect you to keep your calendar free of meetings. This gives you time to wrap up the week and eases you gently into the weekend!

In addition to the toolbox for better work weeks (and encouraging Bfers to look out for each other), we also offer support designed to help you stay energized – such as short therapy as part of our occupational health and an online wellbeing service.



“Business Finland is more than a workplace – it’s a community that genuinely cares about employee wellbeing. From supportive colleagues to wellness initiatives, I appreciate the holistic approach to fostering a healthy work-life balance. Here I not only make professional contributions but I also find personal fulfilment, making it an exceptional place to work.”

EMMA LEE
SENIOR ADVISOR, MIDDLE EAST AND ASIA PACIFIC

WE BELIEVE IN YOU

We don't hire the best talent only to have them follow a strict set of rules and guidelines. We want you to be in the driving seat at Business Finland – and nowhere is this better demonstrated than through our ways of working.

We believe you know best. Whether it's how to spend your learning days, where you work from or what you focus on during your meeting free time each day – we trust you to make the best decisions for yourself and for Business Finland.

Here are just some of our forward-thinking ways of working:

HYBRID WORK

We offer all employees the flexibility to work from home or the office – in a way that is best suited to them and their team. While there is no replacement when it comes to the value of face-to-face interaction with teammates and colleagues, we also appreciate the benefits that working from home can bring to our busy schedules. Find the right hybrid balance for *your* work life.

LEARNING DAYS

We want our experts to be continually developing and growing. That is why we are committed to offering numer-

ous opportunities for them to expand their expertise daily. With Learning Days, BFers have up to eight days a year to develop learning routines and habits, manage time and focus on learning themes of their choosing. Develop the skills and knowledge you want, that you need – at a time that suits you.

COACHING STYLE LEADERSHIP

We believe that our experts know how to do their job and that our Leaders should be there to support them in achieving success. We want our leaders to act as coaches, which is why every leader that comes to Business Finland goes through comprehensive coaching training.

Of course, we also do everything we can to elevate the good times and shine a spotlight on the successes of our people and teams. We recognize a job well done, a positive attitude or individual wins – no matter how big or small. For example, we encourage a continuous feedback culture among all employees all year round; we run a monetary one-off rewards initiative; and, once a year, we also award four individuals who have lived and breathed our values with our BFer of the Year Awards.

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2023, Business Finland was selected into the top three for the Pro Coaching Awards. Organized by ICF Finland and EMCC Finland, the awards promote professional coaching throughout Finland.



“Business Finland’s Learning Days initiative provides me with a valuable opportunity to dive deeper into topics that interest me and expand my knowledge in areas I’m eager to learn more about. They’re a source of inspiration and give me a chance to reflect on my progress. I’m confident that when I deepen my knowledge, I’ll be able to add more value to my team.”

MERI SIPILÄ
PR & MEDIA MANAGER, VISIT FINLAND

OUR LEADERSHIP

The kind of leadership we value and strive for at Business Finland is best explained through our leadership principles: four guiding cornerstones that were defined together with our leaders.

#1 OUR LEADERS BUILD TRUST.

We believe trust is the glue that holds our organization together – which is why we encourage leadership that can build and nourish trust within teams and across the whole of Business Finland.

DID YOU KNOW?

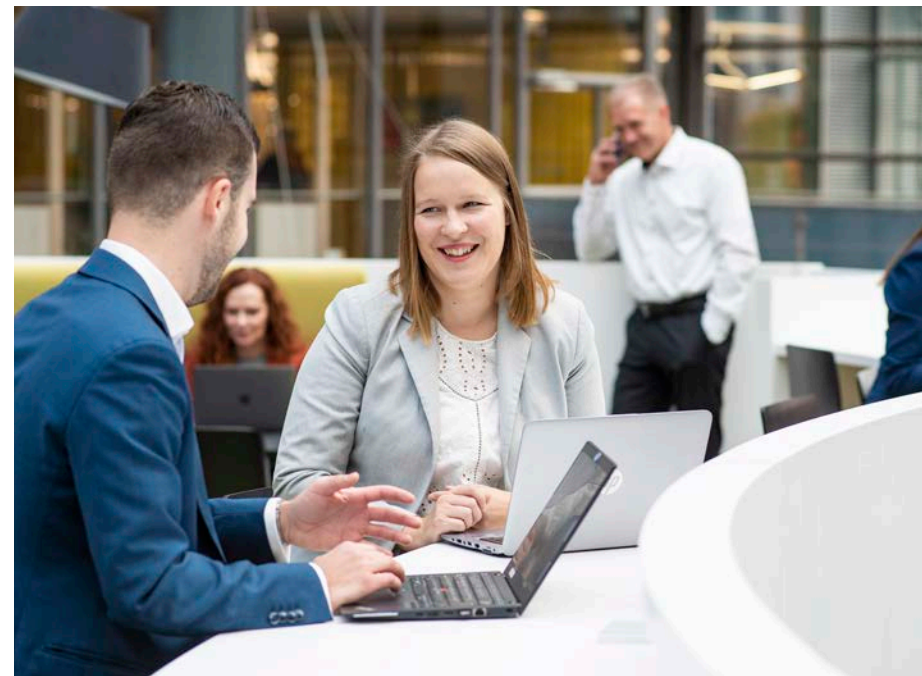
Business Finland was voted #6 in Universum's 2023 study of "The Most Attractive Employers" in Finland. The study was conducted among 7,776 professionals with 8 years of work experience.

#2 OUR LEADERS KEEP IT SIMPLE.

Be it in communication, planning, or execution. All complexity is waste – so get rid of it.

#3 OUR LEADERS ARE ALWAYS AVAILABLE AND ALWAYS PRESENT.

You can only lead, coach, and support if you are available and present. At Business Finland, being a leader is always a service profession.



#4 OUR LEADERS ALIGN DIRECTION AND MOVEMENT.

One of the most important tasks for our leaders is to make sure teams keep their eyes on the ball. This ensures the execution of our strategy.

In addition to our leadership principles, Business Finland is committed to coaching style leadership. All our leaders go through this training, which focuses on the unlocking of potential within teams – via collaboration, active listening, feedback and empowerment.



“As a Business Finland leader, I have the pleasure of not only serving our people but also learning something new every single day. My best leadership moments are those that involve conversations with our talented team members, where they can reflect on their own work and realize that they too are learning new things about themselves. It is in those moments that I grow as a leader.”

LAURA YLÄ-SULKAVA
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, HR, IT & DEVELOPMENT

An aerial photograph of a large lake with several forested islands. The sun is low on the horizon to the left, creating a warm orange glow and reflecting on the water. The sky is filled with soft, white and grey clouds. The islands and surrounding forest are dark green, and their reflections are visible in the calm water.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

Hopefully by now you have a sense of our culture – of who we are, what we do, how we do it and why we do it. We're not perfect but we're constantly striving to improve.

If you are not yet part of the team but like what you've read so far, why not take a look at the open positions on our [careers website](#)? And if you have your foot in the door already – even better. Business Finland is on an incredible journey, and we hope you will join us for the ride!

BUSINESS FINLAND

Business Finland is an accelerator of global growth. We create new growth by helping businesses go global and by supporting and funding innovations. Our top experts and the latest research data enable companies to seize market opportunities and turn them into success stories.

WWW.BUSINESSFINLAND.FI/EN