

***Willis Harman Awards  
Spirit at Work Nomination***

***Embassy Graphics***

***February 14, 2002***

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**1. NAME OF COMPANY**

Embassy Graphics Ltd.

**2. CONTACT INFORMATION (address, website, etc.)**

1289 Mountain Ave  
Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada  
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www.embassygraphics.com

**3. CONTACT PERSON (name, position, phone, email)**

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**4. A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF:**

- a. The nature and scope of the business; current vision and mission; philosophy and core values; principal products and services; etc.**

**NATURE AND SCOPE**

Embassy Graphics is a prepress company located in Winnipeg, the heart of the Canadian prairies. The company was founded in 1990 by father and son team Brian Payne Sr. and Bryan Payne Jr., both of whom had extensive experience in the printing industry, representing 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generations, respectively. The relationship between the two was not a traditional father/son relationship. Both

were successful in separate businesses prior to joining forces and co-founding Embassy Graphics.

With the introduction of postscript in the late 1980s, the Paynes believed this new technology would fundamentally alter the dynamics of the entire printing industry. New technologies would move the industry from "craft-based" processes to digital workflow solutions. The Paynes' predictions were prophetic, and although some traditional "craft-based" prepress competitors were able to make the transition to digital, many did not. In forming Embassy Graphics, the Paynes were able to successfully build a company that provided a new generation of digital prepress products and services.

Since its inception, Embassy Graphics has grown rapidly, with a 10-year annual growth rate exceeding 33% per annum. Embassy Graphics has been able to sustain this growth by focusing most of their sales efforts outside of Winnipeg, in major U.S. and Canadian Cities, where they derive over 90% of their revenues. Some of their client's include high profile names such as Disney, Pixar, Random House, Harper Collins and Scholastic.

Embassy Graphics' current revenues are in the \$6 million dollar range and the company currently has a staff of 75. Embassy Graphics is in the process of making their first acquisition of a prepress company in Toronto. Scheduled to close March 1, 2002, this acquisition should increase revenues to more than \$10 million and the staff to more than 100 people.

Up until late 1997, Embassy Graphics operated in the same manner as most businesses, focusing primarily on bottom line growth and profits. At that time, the Paynes felt that although from an empirical perspective the business was doing extremely well, something was missing. They felt that the traditional business model tended to hurt or stifle the human spirit in many ways rather than nurture and develop it. Since that realization, the leadership at Embassy Graphics has been slowly evolving, developing a new model of business that allows people to grow and develop spiritually through the pursuit of corporate objectives and profits.

## **CURRENT MISSION**

Embassy Graphics, like many companies, has a written corporate mission statement. This mission statement took many people hundreds of hours to develop and was finally completed in January 1998. At Embassy Graphics, the mission statement is taken seriously; and was not designed as a marketing tool or something that would be put in a drawer, never to be seen again. It was designed to clearly explain what Embassy Graphics stands for and how their

success will be defined and measured. The mission statement was designed to be timeless, focusing on universal principles and values.

### **EMBASSY GRAPHICS CORPORATE MISSION**

- Embassy Graphics will be the vendor of choice by providing market driven solutions and services of superior value that improve our customers' businesses.
- Embassy Graphics will strive for excellence through a continuous improvement process and an empowering environment that recognizes performance.
- Embassy Graphics will meet or exceed the expectations of our customers and shareholders with honesty, integrity and respect for the individual.

### **CURRENT VISIONS**

Although Embassy Graphics has only one mission statement, it has many visions. At Embassy Graphics, visions are defined as the specific goals or projects that need to be achieved in order to “live” and bring “life” to the mission statement. Embassy Graphics' visions are constantly reviewed and can be updated or changed as milestones are achieved or times change. Since incorporating this system in 1999, Embassy Graphics has opened and completed over 183 company wide visions. Currently Embassy Graphics has 75 current visions open that they are pursuing throughout all areas of the organization. Due to the number of open visions, a list of them is not included here, although they can be assembled and forwarded if required. Instead, one key strategic vision that Embassy Graphics is pursuing, is as follows:

#### **Embassy Graphics Long-term strategic vision**

- Embassy Graphics will be the largest, most profitable, prepress (or whatever we evolve to being called) company in North America by 2018.

#### **Spiritual Vision (In progress)**

In addition to the empirical mission and visions, Embassy Graphics have an unwritten spiritual vision in progress that is not yet well articulated or publicized, although is openly discussed and in front of mind within the executive leadership group. This spiritual vision includes the following components.

## Embassy's spiritual mission (in progress) includes:

- to help evolve the current business model
- to change the way people think and feel about business
- to provide opportunities and an environment for people to grow personally through business

## PHILOSOPHY

This is a very difficult question to answer, simply and briefly. Some of Embassy Graphics' philosophies are referred to in the mission statement. Others include, but are not limited to:

- *Life is a Journey*: there is no beginning and no end to business or life, everything is a work in progress. Enjoy the moment.
- *Business is more than pursuing profits*: within a business, people cannot be simply viewed a resource solely for the purpose of pursuing profit. Business is more than a corporate entity, it is a modern day community that can foster a rich environment of personal growth and development, while achieving profits.
- *Business solutions require more than empirical data*: intuition and feeling are just as, if not more important that facts and figures. People need to learn to understand and develop their intuition and feelings.
- *Leadership is a calling*: leaders and managers differ. Managers manage empirically; Leaders use empirical targets, yet lead through the motivation and growth of others. Leadership requires one to build trust and take a personal interest in the success of others. Leadership requires depth of understanding and wisdom in balancing the on-going profit and people demands. Leadership is far from a promotional or monetary reward.
- *Do unto Others*: look at a situation from the others perspective. Create win / win or harmonious solutions to problems that work for everyone involved.
- *Over communicate*: let everyone in the organization know what is going on. Do not with hold information, good or bad.
- *Allow Communication without fear of Retribution*: create an environment of learning and growth, build confidence, let people make mistakes and learn from them. Don't "clip" people's wings, ever. The spirit cannot grow with retribution. Retribution can reduce self confidence, creating politics and distrust.

- *The means is as important as the result.* results at all costs aren't worth the result, especially when people are hurt in the process. Results must be in alignment with the company's philosophies and values.
- *Celebrate Success:* it does not have to be monetary. Recognize everyone's success and build on the wins.
- *Share the Wealth.* if the company does well, the people involved should also do well, through above average wages, bonuses, profit sharing, stock options, etc.
- *Corporate Structure conveys values:* As much as people write mission statements or talk about values, the "proof is in the pudding." Actions speak louder than words. Organizations need to build their values into process.
- *Perks don't build spirit:* people build spirit. At Embassy Graphics spending money to promote spirit activities is perceived window dressing. A true sense of spirit is fostered when people are treated with respect, something money can't buy.

## CORE VALUES

At the core, Embassy Graphics revolves around naturally balancing two key values – **truth and love** - which are the foundation of Embassy Graphics' leadership model. To describe how these values work together would require much more time and space than is allotted in this application. Bryan Payne Jr., is currently working on a book that describes their relationship and his vision for the business future, currently titled "Natural Leadership".

## PRINCIPAL PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Prepress, or Premedia as it is now evolving, is an intermediate step in the printing process, between the designer/content creator and the printer. Prepress is a behind-the-scenes service that not many people beyond the graphic arts industry understand or is even aware exists. Essentially, prepress involves the preparation of the graphics, processing of the files, and proofing of pages prior to printing. Embassy Graphics' business objective is to provide prepress and digital content management solutions that primarily service the magazine, book and catalogue industry. Services include scanning and retouching, file processing, proofing, data management, technical support, and workflow consulting.

Prepress is a technology-impacted, capital intensive industry, requiring highly skilled people. Prepress workflows and service offerings change constantly as technology evolves. A key factor in the success of a prepress company is its ability to manage and adapt to the constant change, internally and externally. In order to be successful, prepress providers typically have to evolve, re-invest, and re-present themselves every three to five years. Managing such a technology-impacted infrastructure can be extremely challenging, requiring quality people, management and leadership at all levels.

Some of the new services currently being offered by Embassy Graphics, include Digital Content Management and Variable Digital Printing.

**b. The policies, programs, or practices that explicitly promote or enable spirit at work; nature and scope; when implemented; by whom; relevant background; public visibility; etc.**

To date, Embassy Graphics has implemented over 183 policies, programs, or practices that explicitly promote or enable spirit at work. Some of the foundational ones include:

**Mission statement** – Clearly defines the mission of the organization. Ensuring everyone knows what they have signed up for when joining the company. It also provides a framework for direction. The mission statement project was spearheaded by Bryan Payne Jr., and Brian Payne Sr., with input from associates at all levels within the organization and approval from the board. It took hundreds of hours to create and was officially adapted in January 1998. The mission statement hangs throughout the facility and is included in Embassy Graphics 5 steps of leadership booklet, as well as some marketing materials.

**Organizational infrastructure** – The infrastructure and leadership roles evolved out of the functions required, rather than a traditional textbook approach. Each leader is primarily responsible for their assigned department; however, the infrastructure allows them to work on visions (projects) outside of their assigned department. This structure allows and encourages fluid movement from one area to another based on workload and resources required. It very much fosters teamwork and creates new and challenging opportunities. This infrastructure model was designed and implemented by Bryan Payne Jr. and Brian Payne Sr., in January 1998.

**5 Steps of Leadership** – This is a process that Embassy Graphics learnt about and adopted throughout the company. In the abstract, it teaches that leadership

is a process and that key processes must be followed to ensure success. Some of the key elements of the process include: creating a clear vision, communicating the vision, motivating the vision, implementation of the vision, taking action, and feedback. Using this process, leadership is required to build consensus at all levels. This process ensures that any change happens in a consistent manner with input from all levels affected. The process was presented to Embassy Graphics by Gary Millet, a consultant. The 5 steps of leadership was implemented in January 1998 by the entire Embassy Graphics leadership team.

**The PIR (Process Improvement Request) Process:** This is a process that Embassy Graphics developed as a means to solve problems. It incorporated the 5 steps of leadership in the abstract, as well as Embassy Graphics' mission, values and culture, eventually resulting in a tangible and documented process that is followed to resolve issues. Using this process, anyone within the company is able to facilitate change, regardless of their role or status. The roles of leadership were defined and incorporated into the PIR process. The implementation of this process was spearheaded by the leadership team with input and consensus on the process from all levels within the organization. The PIR process was implemented in January 2000. Since inception more than 2008 PIR's (and counting) have been filled out, resulting in 183 enterprise-improving changes.

**People development:** Embassy Graphics believes that if you help people grow, they will help the business grow. Embassy Graphics believes that real learning happens in the moment, when one is emotionally involved and motivated to learn. The training model Embassy Graphics follows is JITT (Just in Time Training). The processes and workflows help people learn the hard skills, and constant involvement with experienced leadership helps them learn the soft skills. People are allowed the freedom to make mistakes. In addition to JITT, a personal interest is taken in each associate from within the leadership team. Each person has on-going and in the moment feedback, as well as a scheduled formal review every 6-months. In all cases, the President of the company is involved to some extent, either directly or indirectly, in each associates semi-annual review. One other policy in effect at Embassy Graphics is a 'promotion from within' philosophy. Every new position is first posted internally and, whenever possible, internal promotion is the preferred choice. This allows people to apply for new challenges as they feel they are ready for new challenges.

**Profit Sharing:** This year, Embassy Graphics' board approved at request to implement a profit sharing plan. The plan is a true profit sharing plan, with no special conditions. If the company makes money, 10% of the pre-tax profits go into a pool that is distributed to all the associates. This plan is currently being developed and details of how the monies are distributed are being determined.



The final result will come from the input and consensus throughout all levels. This is being implemented by our leadership team.

**c. Effect of policies, programs, or practices on stakeholder community - employees, owners, customers or clients, suppliers, communities in which business has a presence, etc.**

**Associates:** have become more open, trusting and motivated to contribute. They are empowered, have access to unlimited leadership opportunities, and have developed a new way of thinking that integrates a sense of spirit in the workplace. Also, see Section 4e where Embassy Graphics' associates describe, in their own words, what Embassy Graphics and their policies mean to them.

**Owners / Shareholders:** are making profits and believe they are helping to create an environment that allows people to grow. Making a difference in society.

**Customers:** believe that Embassy Graphics is more than a supplier, but more specifically a partner. As a company, Embassy Graphics works to serve customers' business, helping them increase profits, and possibly also helping them evolve in business and personally.

**Suppliers:** are generally chosen on the basis that they share Embassy's philosophies. Suppliers trust and want to do business with Embassy Graphics.

**Communities:** Embassy Graphics believes it helps the community indirectly. They do not have any formalized, corporately driven "help the community" directives, which in many ways, can be forced and unnatural. It is Embassy Graphics belief that if they foster an environment where people can grow personally, the result will be highly motivated people who want to give to the community, on their terms.

**d. Effect of policies, programs, or practices on nominee's business success.**

- Average to slightly above average industry profits, with strong potential for above average earnings in the near future.
- Above average growth. First 10 years, over 33% growth per annum.
- Competitors are approaching Embassy Graphics re possible acquisitions.

- Greater ability to pursue new opportunities.
- Ability to continue high growth with internally grown leadership.

**e. How the company has been a model or inspiration for others.**

Embassy Graphics associates were asked to respond to this question in their own words. Response was optional and associates were given only 24 hours to put something together. To Embassy Graphics, these comments tell the true story:

Bryan -

As you of course are well aware, I joined Embassy Graphics over 6 years ago, having left an employer who considered fear-based management tactics and mental beatings to be the most effective style of management. I can't describe to you the feeling that you have when you're made to believe that you're lucky to have a job in such a poorly run company. My spirit was broken.

And then I joined Embassy Graphics. I can remember losing sleep over my decision to join Embassy. This was the job I had really wanted since my days at Red River Community College. But, the company I had left was a family owned company and so was Embassy. Is this the way all family owned companies treated the "outsiders"? I was soon to find out that this couldn't be any further from the truth.

I have seen many changes in the culture at Embassy over the last 6 years. There have been some "dark" days in years past but we got through those days and past them . . . and here we are now - bigger, better and stronger than ever! I could talk about the feeling I have that everyone is part of this great team we have formed and how I have never been made to feel as if I were an outsider from the "family". Let me just say that I am proud to be associated with Embassy Graphics and the people who work here. I'm lucky to have a job in such a great company!

*Susan Swanwick  
Customer Service*

Jr.,

Here's my contribution:

The culture evolving (and it has been a process) at Embassy Graphics has transformed my thinking. Whereas in the past I held a cynical view towards business- profit at any expense, people are expendable etc., my experience here has shown me things don't have to be that way. There is a genuine attempt to synthesize rather than polarize two business truths- profit is essential, people are essential.

Embassy culture has been the nurturing ground for my own development, leading to my current position as a Team Leader- the place where latent gifts were identified and given a chance to flourish.

*Gord Johnson*  
*Digital Printing Leader*

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For - Bryan,

May 1, 2002 marks my 35th year working in the prepress industry. Throughout the years I've been fortunate to have worked exclusively in the leading Trade Houses / Service Bureaus and enjoyed over a decade of instructing Graphic Arts at a primary community college in this area. Throughout my interactions with colleagues and students alike, an underlying focus has always been the desire for each person to do the best they can to provide the highest quality results for the client. I can recall many discussions with people recounting their frustrations in trying to accomplish their best with less than adequate support from the companies in which they were working. Citing problems from lack of modern equipment to keep pace with the ongoing changes in technology, lack of possibilities for personal upgrading or upgrading of staff, and a lack of company support in maintaining a focus on high quality output.

We at Embassy have been fortunate to work with a management team that is dedicated to nurturing a spirit for the corporate culture of QUALITY that it has been working to establish over the years. It has always impressed me that visions and plans laid out at company meetings do in fact materialize, and updated technology desperately needed to keep pace with our industry always seems to find it's way to the loading dock. It's easy to see the investment in planning, R&D and capital put towards providing the best environment to facilitate each of us in doing our best to provide a quality product. Embassy is constantly upgrading its technological infrastructure and encourages and

supports its associates to embrace change and upgrading through various courses delivered on and off site. Through Embassy's policy to promote from within, I have seen quite a number of associates who started their graphic careers here promoted to departments and positions that offer the quality of self fulfillment in the work place and away. Embassy Graphics is dedicated to quality service with a quality product and have implemented mechanisms such as ISO 9002 to focus attention towards this goal. In a circular motion the quality of Embassy's environment fuels our ability to provide quality service and products to our clients who in turn support the ability for Embassy to continue to build a better work environment, a better quality of life for us all.

According to what I've heard over the years, not something you will find in every company!

*Best regards,  
Daniel Leonhardt  
Customer Service*

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For Bryan Payne Jr.

I am writing this at a time when every second I spend is critical to completing a task to keep work moving off my desk. Jobs, e-mails, faxes, phone calls, and questions are coming in faster than I can deal with them and things pile up on my desk. I come in early in the morning, come back at night, & work Saturdays to try and stay on top of it all. I sometimes feel like I'm drowning.

But - I am not alone.

I put my hand on my nearly empty water bottle to have a swig of water and find that it has mysteriously been refilled by a caring co-worker.

I enter my office in the morning to find a coworker has drawn a picture and labeled it "Wanda's bouquet of flowers" taping it to my computer screen to make me smile and know they care.

Co-workers help me package and ship the mountains of titles I send out of here every day.

Co-workers help me get my pre-invoicing done so the invoices go out and the money comes in.

Co-workers pat me on the arm as I rush by and tell me to "Hang in there!"

Co-workers call meetings to figure out a way to even out the workload so I can breath.

- And it's not just me who gets help when they need it. During our server crisis everyone pulled together and we all got the job done.

SPIRIT IN THE WORKPLACE - YOU BETCHA!

*Wanda Whitesell  
Customer Service*

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Bryan,

What I would say off the top of my head is this:

In most companies, if not all, policies are in place as unwritten rules of conduct and practice. These policies, for the most part, go unchallenged and if the policies are not understood and practiced can determine the length and breadth of your career. At Embassy, everything is up for change if it betters our service, procedures and even our personal lives. We don't just say that we speak without fear of retribution, we practice it. If I can see that the King has no clothes, I can say so, without worrying that what I say can be held against me at a later date. This knowledge gives me the courage to strive for more than just what others think I can be, it makes me push myself to be what I think I can be.

*Domenic Tozzo  
DCM Leader*

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I feel that Embassy values their employees a lot, which makes us want to give more of ourselves to this company. Also after working here for about 8 months I feel that Embassy encourages the associates to work as a team. We all know that if people work as a team there is always a positive result.

*Roger Bonneville  
Imaging Department*

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One of the policies that I appreciate at Embassy Graphics is the Process Improvement Request (P.I.R.). The P.I.R. allows any associate to suggest an idea that they feel will improve our operation. Having worked in companies where employees were not encouraged to offer any suggestions for improvement, Embassy's P.I.R. policy was a refreshing change. A P.I.R. is taken very seriously and is always followed through to a conclusion. Of course not all P.I.R.'s result in a change, but the simple fact that the possibility exists for all employees to affect a change is greatly appreciated.

I also appreciate some of the things we do around here to keep our workday light. Whether it's a lunch hour barbeque, "bring in baking" day or "call everyone by their nickname" week, we do a few things around here to make it easy to come to work.

*Don Sourisseau*  
*Imaging Department*

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Being part of the Embassy Graphics team, I've watched the business grow, not only in production, methods, and technology, but also in the work ethics of the team. I have the opportunity to grow with Embassy and continue to gain valuable knowledge, keeping in mind that everyday holds a new challenge.

*Luella Laurel*  
*Colour Department*

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I enjoy my surroundings very much at Embassy Graphics. There is an absence of the 'stuffiness' associated with many offices, including ones for which I have worked in the past. I feel that I can be myself and even laugh with my superiors, and to me that is very important. Embassy Graphics has supported me in furthering my education, and in doing so, supports me in improving myself. In almost three years of employment with the company, my experiences have been almost entirely positive.

*Ruby A. Pommer*  
*Accounting Department*

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It used to be that when I woke up in the morning, I would use my creativity to try and find an excuse not to go into work. However when I joined Embassy the people and the atmosphere made me forget about my mental roll-a-dex of sickly excuses, and offered a fresh and friendly workplace. After only five months of employment here, I have developed positive relationships with my co-workers and appreciate that they made my transition into a new workplace as easy as they could.

Being in one of the most demanding industries with the most demanding of deadlines it's hard to believe that everyone remains so upbeat and positive. Well I best get going because the "Fish bowl" idea for Friday is wear a crazy paper hat and I haven't even started the blueprints for it yet.

P.S. I can't make it in tomorrow – the moat around my house flooded and I can't open the door. HA HA.

*Ryan Coomber  
Imaging Department*

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I like working for Embassy Graphics because of the wide variety of jobs we get. I enjoy working on images from companies like Disney and movies like Star Wars. Because when someone asks me what I do for a living I can be proud and excited to tell them about it.

*Jeremy Plett  
Colour Department*

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Embassy Graphics is always on the cutting edge of technology, which keeps us all learning and growing. It is not the typical "management/worker" environment but very much a **TEAM** environment where everyone can feel that they contribute to the success of the company.

*Marion Marko  
Imaging Department*

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I have only been with Embassy Graphics for just about three months but I would have to say this is the most dynamic environment I have ever worked in. The first thing you notice is how friendly everyone is. As the “new girl” I was expecting an awkward adjustment period while everyone got to know me and I got to know them. That was just not the case! Everyone from owners to management to co-workers make you feel welcome and part of the team right from day one. I felt as though I had known these people for much longer than just a couple of days.

For the first couple of weeks I was in the production area getting to know everyone and learning more about the company. I would ask each person I sat with how they liked working at Embassy. I was amazed to find that everyone loved their job and had nothing but good things to say. I was also surprised to find that there were a lot of long-term employees in the production area, and not a high turnover as I had expected.

I attended the company’s Christmas party and was again taken with the company when they not only acknowledged the employees who had been with the company for many years, but also the employees who had been with the company for only one year. That’s not something you often see done. It really makes you feel like you are an appreciated member of the team.

In my position, I am fortunate to work directly with the Sales Leader. He is a dynamic person who is very encouraging and wants me to succeed. I have never in my past employment felt so challenged and appreciated.

Around every corner, you can hear your co-workers laughing together. Everyone smiles and says hello when you pass by. This is the greatest group of people I have ever had the privilege to work with.

When I was offered this position it came with a significant pay cut from what I was currently earning. Sometimes you have to look beyond your paycheck and take into account what a company has to offer, the quality of people you will be working with, and most of all your own personal satisfaction and desire to go to work in the morning with a smile on your face. Embassy Graphics has definitely proved over and over again that I made the right choice when I came to work with them.

*Kristine Luke*  
*Sales Assistant*





Embassy Graphics is a family company with family values. In a world of chaos and upset it is comforting to know these values live on in everyone who works for Embassy. These values; mutual respect, honesty, compassion and empathy are visible at all levels and in all departments, here at Embassy.

Everyone who works here knows that they are a part of something great and we all work together to ensure this greatness continues. I take enormous amounts of pride in helping to make Embassy Graphics the fun, exciting and dynamic work environment it is today. We work hard and play hard – as a company. I couldn't ask for a better place to work.

*Donna Gerbrandt  
PreFlight Operator*

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Why I Like Embassy Graphics  
or  
(The Redemption Of A Disenchanted Cynic)

Embassy Graphics provides an inclusive, positive work environment. Growth, learning and excellence are encouraged and rewarded. I've never worked at a company that was so open to testing new ideas and technologies, so interested in the opinions and ideas of their associates or so focused on providing the best possible service to their clients. Embassy management and staff are as fine a group to work with as I've ever known. I gave up 15 years of seniority and a week of vacation time to join Embassy Graphics and I've never regretted my decision.

*Mark Heber  
Colour Department*

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I have worked at Embassy Graphics for almost 5 years and have seen a lot of change during that time. But through all the growth Embassy has experienced the upbeat and family-like attitude throughout the company has always stayed the same. Embassy has allowed me to grow professionally and personally and that helps make Embassy Graphics a great place to work.

*Paul Mackie  
Colour Department*

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Embassy Graphics incorporates a very open architecture. Value is placed on each individual within the organization, making the workplace an enjoyable and exciting place to be. Company goals and objectives are effectively communicated throughout the plant. Processes are in place to allow every individual to have input to better the product or better the process. Any new idea or process incorporates a feedback loop to ensure company objectives are being met. Embassy Graphics' policy of "Celebrating Success", whether it be a process, procedure or someone going that extra mile helps bring out the drive and determination in everyone.

*Mike Stewart  
Colour Department Leader*

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In the ten years working at Embassy Graphics the things I like are the support and encouragement from superiors and co-workers. The people and atmosphere of my workplace and the way everybody works together as a team.

Why I enjoy working for this company is because of all the new challenges, and the company being on top of new technology. The company thrives on associates to better themselves by encouraging them to try new things, and Enjoy being a part of the company's growth, and how the company makes you feel a part of something. Thank you!

*Ramon Dupuis  
Colour Department*

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Embassy Graphics is a company with purpose and character. Its qualities are clearly defined and mirrored by the owners, leaders, and staff. This is a group who are hungry for work and desire to please their clients. This is evidenced by the use of a top sales force, well experienced and trained production workers, and an effective atmosphere or communication throughout. Clients are given confidence by the company's success in acquiring their ISO 9002 designation. As to the present and future, Embassy Graphics is constantly vigilant, keeping abreast of all developments. In this and associated industries. Customers know that their requirements are fostered through this far reaching vision.

*Victor Dyck  
Colour Department*

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I have been sitting and thinking for over an hour trying to put into words what I think of Embassy Graphics. There are so many thoughts that I have, but I am having a hard time putting them down on paper. I have worked at a few different places so far in my life, and Embassy Graphics will always be a company that will stick out in my mind as having the best people, the most enjoyable, pleasant work environment.

My first experience with Bryan Jr. was when I had my interview with him and that will forever stick out in my mind as the worst interview in the history of interviews. For whatever reason, I was more nervous than usual. The interview went so poorly, I could hardly stutter out two words, let alone string together a coherent sentence. Needless to say, after two trips to the water cooler, the interview couldn't have gone worse even if I had thrown up on his shoes and ran away screaming. Bryan was extremely understanding and rescheduled the interview for the next day. I explained to him that I never get that nervous and I apologized for making a complete mess out of a simple interview, and he said that he completely understood, and assured me that I shouldn't worry about it. I am pretty sure that if this had happened in an interview for any other job, they would have laughed me right out of the office, and I probably would have been the topic of conversation over dinner. He was very easy to talk to, down to earth, so much that I don't think I even really believed him at first.

Just shortly after I started working for Embassy Graphics, there was a Mexico themed party, and everybody was supposed to dress like Mexicans. Most of the people came in dressed up, and then in strolled Junior and Senior, dressed like Mexicans, Senior complete with the fake moustache. I have never seen that level of involvement from owners before. It's events like this that makes them seem so much more approachable and human.

Maybe this seems crazy, but it is one of my favourite things about Embassy, is that when you go into the lunchroom, everybody sits together. In other places I have worked at, management sits at one table, and everybody else sits somewhere else. Everybody sits together in the lunchroom and has normal conversations about what disgusting things happened on Fear Factor the night before or how the Canadians got robbed of the gold medal in figure skating. I think it's great that when we aren't working, we are just people and everybody is equal.

Most of the other places that I worked at, you were just another number, you were just one of the many people that were somewhere in between the owner and the bottom line. A poor work environment greatly affects a person, both emotional and physically. A person who doesn't feel appreciated at work can have a poor attitude, poor performance, and can be destructive. A little appreciation goes a long way in the way an employee feels and performs. I have

never worked for a company that values their employees as much as Embassy. It shows in the work that we do and the relationships that we have with our coworkers.

*Kristine Trudeau  
Preflight Operator*

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Throughout the years, I have seen the industry go through some drastic and wonderful changes, always better and faster. Unfortunately, I have seen the industry eliminate the stripping department that I worked so long trying to be part of.

I was employed by Embassy Graphics, just over a year ago, to do stripping, with the possibilities of learning some computer work.

Talk about winning the lottery, with my trade all but gone, I have been given the opportunity to learn the computer, and different applications and programs that together with my old skills and my new found skills, give me a new lease on my graphic arts life.

It is a joy to come to work for Embassy Graphics, with its wide range of skills and people. It truly feels like one big family.

*Phil Goss  
Stripping Department*

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The reason I came to work for Embassy Graphics 3 years ago was because I recognized that I could be part of something ground-breaking and exciting. I thought that would fill my need for excitement, rapid change and innovation. I figured that in about 3 years I would be bored with the technology and would want to move on.

What I didn't expect was that the people would become so important to me. We are one huge family – the owners, the management, the associates; everyone helps each other out in a time of need and supports each other in all endeavours. Every day is as exciting, is as rapidly changing as the next; because of the people, not the technology.

The people will always be here; technology will change. What will keep every day exciting and new is the sense of camaraderie and support that we offer and accept from each other. You can't beat that.

*Lee Carleton  
Customer Service Leader*

I simply love coming to work every day. I have never worked for a company that had such a positive spirit as Embassy Graphics. My whole day is lit up as soon as I walk into the building. I have yet to make it through a morning without hearing a cheery "Good morning, Lovita!" from every one I pass in the hallways (especially from both Brian Sr. and Jr. Payne). I'm not used to having bosses that care enough about their employees to stop and ask how life is treating them. Even the smiles received throughout the day are enough to brighten someone's worst mood. But it doesn't stop there because we are given the opportunity to converse with some of the most diverse and creative group of individuals. Half of them are the "artistic" type after all, and aren't those the best kinds of people? One would almost think that it's company policy to experience a good laugh at least once a day. We work hard but we laugh even harder.

Another way Embassy Graphics tries to lighten the intense mood of a prepress work environment is by having such activities as company celebrations, summer theme barbecues, and my favourite, the congeniality and idea boxes. The story with the congeniality box (actually, it's a fish bowl) is whenever someone does something to or for someone else that they would consider a kind deed; their name is put in the box (bowl). The person with the largest amount of votes gets a prize and has to wear a sash or medal of some sort. The second box is an idea box in which employees put in a fun suggestion for what everyone should do the next Friday. Some examples would be bringing in baking, silly themes like accent day, calling everyone by their middle names, etc. It helps us get to know each other a little better and have fun while we're working.

I thank God for giving me such a caring company to work for and such excellent people to work with. (I'll be expecting my raise next Monday. Just joking!)

*Lovita Vandor*  
*Proofing Department*

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I have been with Embassy Graphics for 11 years. From Day One I was made to feel as I was part of a family and a team. After 11 years that feeling has not diminished. Over the years Embassy Graphics has developed an incredible support system which enables all associates within the company to progress and contribute to its success. Working in an atmosphere that encourages associate participation in workflows and processes means a lot to me and helps keep the Spirit in the Workplace High!

*Dan Paukovic*  
*Imaging Department*

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Bryan

## SPIRIT IN THE WORKPLACE.....

System Admin - "Where you usually don't hear from people unless there is something wrong."

Your job is fulfilling when the day ends and you think it is 12 noon (so much better than watching the clock and waiting for the day to end). The 3 am calls can be alarming, but there is a person on the other end of the phone saying "I'm really, really sorry to be calling you but..." On the drive over you shake the cobwebs out of your head and instantly begin to think of your game plan.

A week can be full of "technical challenges" and you just hate to be the bearer of bad news. You have an optimistic solution - and then it doesn't work out as planned. Again, you must go back and bear the bad news. The recipients of the bad news know that you are doing everything in your power to resolve the issues, and they support you all the way, with a friendly "I know you are doing the best that you can." Everyone pulls together and puts their best foot forward in coming up with ways *they* can help the situation, not just counting on the next person to handle things - prioritizing jobs, rescheduling deadlines, working around the clock. But when it's all said and done, it's a feeling of accomplishments:

1. The accomplishment of being involved in the solution.
2. The accomplishment of working as a team.
3. The accomplishment of doing your best.

Unfortunately, a lot of times the greatest satisfaction is achieved after a major crisis has taken place.

*Kim Feniuk & Doug Bird  
System Admin. Department*

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I enjoy working at Embassy. The work atmosphere is always buzzing with everyone communication in a friendly manor. Because of procedures and the vision method we all get to voice our ideas and goals. This really makes me feel as part of a team. It's not just a job I'm going to each day, it is more like a team of people working together to achieve the same goals. This environment sure lets you grow as a person and feel accomplishments.

*Pam LeClerc-Smith  
Stripping Department*

**5. Name of nominating party, including contact information and their relationship to the company being nominated.**

Bryan Payne Jr., President, Embassy Graphics.

**6. References (two or more are recommended) including name, contact information and their relationship to the nominee.**

Please use any of the associates who submitted comments. Each of them can be contacted at 204.697.3338

**7. Sources of additional information on the nominee; include website links, articles or other resources.**

Please find attached some promotional materials.