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Dallas Business Journal

#1 Business Headquartered Outside D-FW

Precision focus

at anteo group, Working hard and playing hard go hand-in-hand

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by [Karen Nielsen](#)

Correspondent

Flying Nerf Balls (indoor foam balls) and a young staff might be a tip-off that the Anteo Group knows how to have a good time. But the company's employees are definitely not slackers.

The company's Dallas office, which has 12 employees, has been open for only one year, but already is pulling in \$2 million in sales for its Atlanta-based parent.

And while there are dozens of information technology staffing companies in Dallas-Fort Worth, Anteo Group is "laser-focused" on finding qualified Java-trained candidates for clients such as The Weather Channel, Mercedes-Benz, EarthLink and Amvescap/Invesco. Java is a popular programming language that can run on all hardware platforms.

"In this market there are lot of (companies that) do what we do," said Jason Sheppard, director of sales for Texas. "We've established ourselves. That's what we're good at."

Such a precision focus requires that the staff be well-versed in the arena of Java software programming and, on the consulting side, on enterprise resource planning.

Anteo has a "battle cry" called FEEEO, which stands for fun, evolve, execute and opportunity. The working environment is open and inviting with no cubes or management offices to hinder the flow of communication and learning from each other. The Nerf balls are mainly for stress relief, Sheppard adds.

"We hire right out of college," Sheppard said. "What I enjoy is watching people evolve and becoming business people. We create an environment here to facilitate that. People are prone to be more productive."

Four-year-old Anteo, which also has offices in London and Los Angeles, has a corporate strategy to "hire thoroughbreds and let them run," said Margaret Hearne, manager of marketing and communications in the Atlanta office. "We take a lot of pride in who we hire and they give us a lot of freedom and put a lot of trust in us to make great decisions.

"The open environment is energetic and supportive at the same time," she said. "We are all very involved in the growth at Anteo. Every employee realizes their personal impact."

The company appears to be aptly named, since anteo is Latin for "to excel." The company boasts 100% client retention and low employee turnover. It's also scoring points with its outside consultants, striving to treat them as well as it does its clients and employees. To that end, Anteo pays its consultants quickly, a practice uncommon in the staffing industry.

And working hard leaves the door open to playing hard. The company schedules an 8 a.m. meeting every morning, but counters the early hour with fun themes such as trivia Tuesdays, joke Wednesdays and breakfast Fridays. Recently, the company sponsored a houseboat outing to celebrate its employees meeting an internal goal. It also provides one to two weeks of paid vacation around Christmas and New Year in addition to regular scheduled vacation time.

"We have a genuinely outstanding team where there is a very high level of trust, competitiveness and true concern for one another to accomplish their goals both personally and related to business," said one employee who completed the Best Places to Work in Dallas-Fort Worth online survey.

Another summed it up simply, saying: "Anteo Group is a great place to work!"

Nielsen is a Plano-based freelance writer.

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