

METHODOLOGY

America's Best Small Employers

June 2023

Methodology – America’s Best Small Employers

Summary

Small is a relative term.

While a lot of attention is given to larger companies with household names, the reality is that 99.9% of businesses in the USA are small businesses¹. In total, small businesses employ 46.4% of the American workforce¹. For the purposes of this list, a small employer is defined as a company or organization with **more than 200 employees, but fewer than 1000**. From the tens of thousands of companies that fulfill this basic criteria, a shortlist was generated of those that had their business focus in the USA and were not part of a larger organization². Placement on the final list was awarded based on a scoring model that considered the following aspects. These demonstrate if a particular company is an employer of choice:

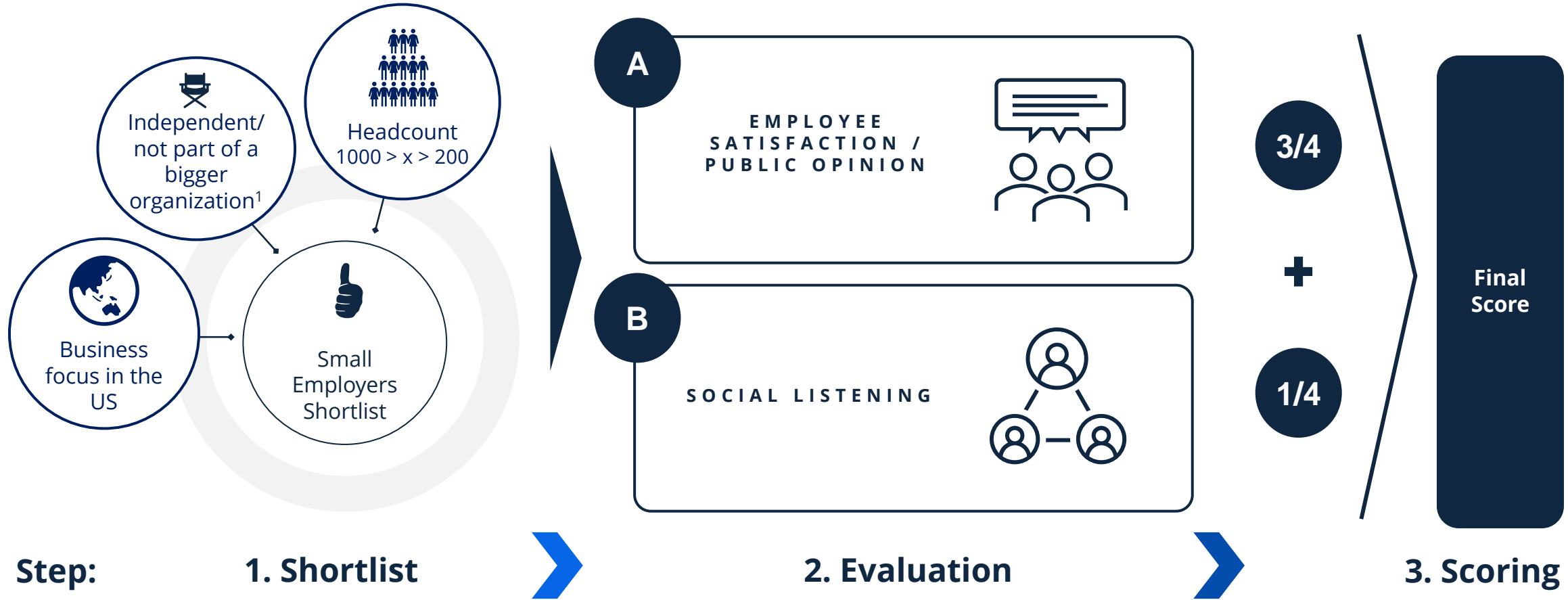
- A. Employee satisfaction / public opinion data:** This took the form of recommendations given by employees **anonymously** through online surveys. These were either **direct recommendations** (0 to 10 scores from employees of the company) or **indirect recommendations** (positive/negative evaluations of companies, reflecting public opinion). Additionally, employee retention (avg. length of employment in relation to founding year and industry) was considered.
- B. Social listening data:** the sentiment reflected in various sources across thousands of social media posts related to the company’s relationship with its employees is identified through an algorithm and deemed either positive, negative, or neutral based on textual analysis



The 300 companies receiving the highest total score are considered America’s Best Small Employers

Over 300,000 datapoints were gathered from a variety of sources using advanced methods and desk research to create a shortlist, evaluate companies

Ranking steps: qualification criteria, basis of evaluation, scoring model



3 | Notes (1) Unless the organization in question has a demonstrably distinct employer brand, or it is the explicit wish from the organization that it is considered as independent from its parent.

The calculation of the direct and indirect score is based on the recommendations of employees

Details on part A. of the evaluation: survey data

A EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION / PUBLIC OPINION

Surveys have been conducted in part using **online access panels**, as well as through an **open call to participate** through the **Forbes website** and through the **Forbes social media channels**.



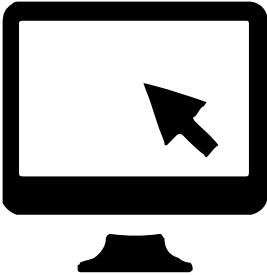
Online access panel + Forbes open call

An **online access panel** is a sample group set up by a survey company and available for custom-built surveys. People register and agree to take part in online surveys.



Participants:

- Full-time** (> 35 hours per week)
- Part-time** (< 35 hours per week)
- Unemployed**
- Self-employed**
- Company size < **200 employees**
- Company size > **1000 employees**



Survey

Online Access Panels + Forbes Open Call
Forbes Article: [Link](#)
Direct Survey: [Link](#)

Social listening tracks and categorizes social media channels and web sources

Details on part B. of the evaluation: social listening

B

SOCIAL LISTENING



- Data on employer reputation is collected using a social listening approach. This approach tracks information from social media channels and web sources and categorizes it.
- Relevant workplace aspects are defined, and search terms tested (e.g., employee engagement, company/corporate culture, employee benefits, ...).
- For six months, news sites, micro-blogs, blogs, and social networks are tracked regarding these aspects. The results describe employer attractiveness based on direct information linked to our specified shortlisted companies.

WHAT IS MEASURED?

- Relevant posts and articles are highlighted and through algorithm-based **textual analysis** categorized as **positive**, **neutral** or **negative**. With this data, the share of positive content can be evaluated.
- Positive reflections about the employer brand improve its overall score and likeliness to be included in the list, and negative reflections reduce its overall score.
- Furthermore, the total volume of documents per company, a post's **virality** and **reach** (no. of linkages, shares and estimated readership) factored into the evaluation.

Each employer in the ranking is assigned to one of the following industries

Industries

1. Construction, Oil & Gas Operations, Mining and Chemicals
2. Utilities
3. Engineering, Manufacturing
4. Automotive (Automotive and Suppliers)
5. Aerospace & Defense
6. Drugs & Biotechnology
7. Semiconductors, Electronics, Electrical Engineering, Technology Hardware & Equipment
8. Health Care Equipment & Services
9. Packaged Goods
10. Food, Soft Beverages, Alcohol & Tobacco
11. Transportation & Logistics
12. Banking & Financial Services
13. Insurance
14. Telecommunications Services, Cable Supplier
15. IT, Internet, Software & Services
16. Professional Services
17. Media & Advertising
18. Business Services & Supplies
19. Government Services
20. Education
21. Healthcare & Social
22. Retail & Wholesale
23. Clothing, Shoes, Sports Equipment (Manufacturing and Retail)
24. Restaurants
25. Travel & Leisure