

U-M Grad Students Pick IBM Foremost Business

International Business Machines is regarded as America's foremost business enterprise by students at the University of Michigan's Graduate School of Business Administration.

Other companies rated among the nation's top 10 firms are, in descending order, General Motors, American Telephone & Telegraph, General Electric, Ford, Du Pont, McDonnell Douglas, Litton, Boeing, and Xerox.

The companies were evaluated by a representative sample -- 73 men and women -- of the school's 506-member daytime graduate student population. The poll, the first to evaluate student opinions of attitudes toward individual

business concerns, was conducted by Prof. David L. Lewis.

SURVEY participants rated companies on a number of counts. Most questions dealt with the students' ideas concerning present conditions: the most productive research laboratories, new manufacturing processes, price stability, salaries and wages, fairness to employees, attitude toward Negro employment, contributions toward America's space and defense efforts, consideration for the public interest in making business decisions, publicity, and ability of management.

Four questions looked to the future -- the failure of which company would represent the

greatest loss to America if it went out of business in 1968, the firm for which students would most prefer to work after graduation, the organization likely to be the most innovative through the remainder of the 20th century, and the enterprise expected to be the biggest money-maker in the year 2000.

Students were asked to name only one company in response to each question. The company named most frequently was given five points, the company named next most frequently four points, and so on down to one point. If a single company had been named most often in response to all 16 questions, its perfect score would have been 75.

On this basis, IBM led the scoring with 41 points. General Motors had 33, AT&T 31.2, GE 17, Ford 15, Du Pont 14.5, McDonnell Douglas 7.5, Litton 6.5, Boeing 6.5, and Xerox 4.7. In all, 115 companies were named at least once.

ALTHOUGH 43 per cent of the survey's participants were Michiganans, "almost all of the respondents have a national outlook on business, if only because they are in the national job market," Lewis said. "While in school students literally dissect scores of companies, deciding which among them offer the most potential as short term and long-range employers and as investments for their future earnings. As a result, participants in this study were better able to evaluate various firms than the executives of any single company or industry that might be named."

IBM also received the highest point. With few exceptions, the voting pattern was sound.

SURVEY participants rated IBM No. 1 in four categories, designating it the "most progressive" and "most innovative" manufacturer as the firm for which they would most like to work, which treats its employees most fairly, which is likely to be the most innovative through the remainder of the 20th century, and which, with Du Pont, leads the way today in introducing new manufacturing methods and processes.

GM also rated No. 1 in four categories -- as the corporation paying the highest wages to its employees, as the best-managed company, as the firm whose failure would represent the greatest loss to America, and as the biggest money-maker in the year 2000.

AT&T was believed to be the company which is most likely to take the public interest into consideration in making business decisions, which is to be the most innovative through the remainder of the 20th century, and which receives the most favorable publicity.

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After Du Pont, the most productive research laboratories are believed to be operated by AT&T, GE, Dow, and IBM, Parke-Davis, Minnesota Mining, Polaroid, and RCA also received support in this category. GE, Ford, and Minnesota Mining, with IBM and Du Pont, were rated among the five leading innovators in manufacturing methods and processes.

Telegraph, Gulf Oil, Hershey's Wrigley, Korvette, Sears, State Farm Insurance, United Airlines, and PepsiCo, the soft-drink manufacturer.

IBM was followed by GM, Ford, AT&T, Burroughs, and Texas Instruments in the most-fair-to-employees category.

AT&T, GM, Eastman, and IBM, after Ford, were cited as the firms which have the most liberal attitude toward Negro employment.

The most preferred employers, aside from IBM, were said to be Xerox, GM, Ford, Litton, Ling - Temco-Vought, GE, Proctor & Gamble, and Arthur Andersen, a public accounting firm.

One student rated IBM as the employer for which he would most prefer to work because it "places emphasis on intellectual achievement." Others said IBM is "engaged in challenging work of great potential benefit to mankind," and offers "plentiful opportunities for remunerative advancement."

Xerox received votes as a preferred employer because it is considered the "most progressive" and "most innovative" and has "excellent growth prospects." GM was favored because it offers "a challenging job in an interesting industry," "great room for advancement," and "top salaries for top management."

Ford was highly rated as an employer because it "ranks individuals more on their ability than on seniority" and "promotes faster." Litton was named because it "gives its managers an entrepreneurial freedom found in very few companies today." Students looked to Ling - Temco-Vought because of its "aggressive young management" and a desire to be "part of an exciting, adventurous, and dynamic corporation."

GE was regarded as a "well-managed, highly diverse employer with unlimited possibilities for advancement and

growth." P&G received votes because it "gives high job responsibility in early stages of employment." Andersen was cited because it "provides constant training" and "quick advancement" and furnishes "an opportunity to become involved in many areas of business."

NEXT TO AT&T, General Foods, GM and utilities in general were believed most likely to take the public interest into consideration in making business decisions.

After GM, the hypothetical failures of AT&T, IBM, Du Pont, and U.S. Steel were believed to represent the greatest losses to America. Ortho Pharmaceutical, a manufacturer of birth-control pills, and Coca-Cola received one vote each in this category.

After AT&T, the nation's most favorably publicized firms were said to be IBM, GE, Ford and GM. Students believed that IBM, Litton, Ling - Temco-Vought, GE, and Xerox, next to GM, were the best-managed firms in the country.

Students regarded GM as the best-managed firm because of its "superb organizational structure," "depth in every managerial position," "outstanding share of the market," and "consistently high return on investment."

IBM was rated as a well-managed company because it "ranks growth" and "dominance of the computer market, even though other firms started

neither of which was tallied in determining the outstanding companies -- accounted the negative; which firm is the recipient of the most unfavorable publicity, which is least likely to take the public interest into consideration in making business decisions.

Companies believed to receive more unfavorable publicity than any others were GM, Dow, U.S. Steel, American Motors, and Consolidated Edison (New York). Firms judged least likely to take the public interest into consideration in making business decisions were U.S. Steel, GM, IBM, American Tobacco, and GE.

"Expressions of both positive and negative views toward GM, IBM, GE, U.S. Steel, and other companies," said Prof. Lewis, "show that students have ambivalent attitudes toward a number of firms. They admire these corporations for their efficiency and ability to make money, yet question some of their policies and tactics."

Two survey questions --

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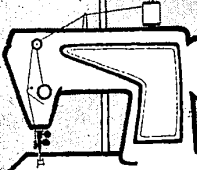
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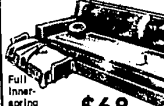
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