



Welcome to LaBov

Understanding our culture



Welcome to LaBov & Beyond

You're here because you're good. We receive hundreds of applications every year. It takes a special person to be accepted and to succeed here. We are excited to have you.

LaBov & Beyond has grown every year for 30 years and has been profitable throughout. Less than 1 percent of all companies make it to their 30th year. But you'll see that we're just beginning; we have not plateaued. We're still hungry and excited. And as romantic as that sounds, that hunger and excitement might be the reason that a person may or may not love our culture. We're going to give you insight into our culture, who we are and what we do. Get ready for a great ride.

Our Amazing Secret

Most companies will say the key to their success is their people. Of course they say that—everyone listening will hear that and nod in tacit agreement and move on. Even some business books will tell you that employee turnover will kill a company; it will cost them their clients, profit and growth.

At LaBov & Beyond our clients don't work with us because of a particular person, they work with us because of us, our approach, our beliefs and more concretely, the work, service and relationship we provide. One person isn't bigger than all of that.

Our Niche

LaBov & Beyond is not just an "ad agency." We are non-traditional. We do both above and below "the line" marketing. We do not live off ad placement. In fact, we do very little ad placement.

We have a niche, and we will not work with just any company. We respectfully turn down two-thirds of all inquiries. We work for companies that have dealers, distributors or dozens if not hundreds of corporate locations. We find it fascinating that no matter how great a product is, without an engaged network that represents it, the brand will be in trouble. That's where we step in. We help those companies engage and motivate their dealers, distributors, representatives and customers. Sometimes that means we'll create a product launch, sometimes it requires internal branding, other times it's an ad campaign, or maybe it's owner communications.

Bottom line: Within that narrow niche of companies that have dealer/distributor networks (less than 1 percent of all corporations in the world) LaBov & Beyond does some amazing things. We develop marketing, training and communications programs to help our clients leverage their dealer/distributor networks. This means creative strategies, brand identity and development, event planning and coordination, print and multimedia design and training and curriculum development.



The answer lies in two questions

LaBov is a well-known company—people are proud about working here. For some it's an integral part of their identity. Some employees have called LaBov & Beyond the "land of opportunity." What is it? We'll answer that question with two questions.

If you are an employee at LaBov, we expect you to do what's right. The best way for you to decide that is to make sure everything you do answers "yes" to these two questions:

Is it best for the client?

Is it best for the company?

If you can answer "yes" to both those questions, you're doing something special. And by the way, we've been challenged to also include "Is it best for the employee?" as the third question. We believe that if the answer to the first two questions is "yes," then it will also be best for the employee.

We have to satisfy those two questions so we can be extraordinary—create great ideas and strategies, be great partners to our clients and have a wonderful culture. After all, if we don't do all that, why would any client choose to work with us out of Fort Wayne, Ind., Detroit, Mich., or Indianapolis, Ind., when there are 47,000 agencies throughout the nation?





If the walls had ears

We respect and appreciate our clients. We don't believe in an "us versus them" relationship with our clients. We do not accept negative talk about clients and if our clients could listen in and hear what we say at our offices and in our conversations, they'd be very pleased.

We have wonderful clients

As we search for our next client, we have high expectations; a clear definition of what kind of company will be great for us and vice versa. Our best clients are large corporations—usually a half billion in sales or more. They have a thousand or more employees, they have a dealer/distributor network and they have a hunger, a humility to want to grow and improve. Think about it—if our clients are hungry and humble—we must have employees who are the same. Those great companies come to LaBov for enthusiasm, ideas and a great relationship.

American Coach RV	Ferrari
Anthem	Freightliner
Arrow Tru-line	Harley-Davidson
Audi	Maserati
Bombardier	Ontario Systems
Recreational Products	OrthoWorx
Can-Am	Oxford FinancialGroup, Ltd.
Sea-Doo	Parkview Physicians Group
Ski-Doo	Precision Soya
Evinrude	QEK
BMW	Suzuki
Bucyrus	Sycamore Hills Golf Club
Chrysler	Terex
Destination Cellars	UPS
Wine Experience	Volkswagen
Eli Lilly	Wabash Valley Furniture
Fleetwood RV	Zimmer
FootJoy	



Outthinking versus Order-taking

We love what we do! Sure, it's great to have a job, but this isn't simply a job. It's not about getting a paycheck or a promotion. It's about waking up each morning, excited and eager to come in and make a difference. We develop and grow relationships with our clients, working as an extension of them and their brand. We are not order-takers, we're outthinkers.

Sure, we are doing whatever it takes to help our clients. But we have to be more than order-takers. We have to bring more to the table than that. We have to show our clients that we care enough and have enough talent to outthink them—yes, outthink them! After all, the client has a multitude of projects that they're responsible for. We have to be 100-percent responsible for the relationships and the work we have with them. We should outthink them in our area of expertise. That's what we're paid for, and that's why our clients choose us. Otherwise, we're very, very replaceable.

And internally, that's just what we want and need—employees who will outthink what we're doing now to make us better. Being an order-taker company can be very profitable for a short period of time. Being an outthinker may be less profitable in the short run, but it will pay off in the long run.

Engagement: We wrote the book

Literally. Our founder, along with numerous employees, has authored business parables on passion, customer loyalty, ethics, branding, corporate/dealer relationships, etc., based on our experiences. How many companies have employees who have the passion to write books? That's engagement. It's what we call **LaBovthink™**





We expect Passion, integrity, teamwork and respect toward all individuals—clients, suppliers, visitors and co-workers. We expect hard work, eating your lunch at your desk now and then, skipping lunch altogether on occasion. And, did we mention, respect?

We don't expect You to walk on eggshells, perfection, Master's degrees and Doctorates. Titles don't impress us. Hard work, a great attitude and doing your best will. When you have passion, you don't need perfection.

We like Cooperation, a willingness to think outside the box (maybe even throwing the box out), being on time, supportive, taking initiative and pitching in and exhibiting versatility, flexibility and creativity.

We don't like Gossip, bashing, an unwillingness to learn new things, whining, not being able to say "I screwed up," not being able to say "I'm sorry" or inflated egos.

What makes us angry We want an environment of passion, excitement, new ideas—we've come to expect that as the norm. When an employee looks at what we do—dealing with changes, jumping in to fix a problem, understanding a client, re-thinking something, traveling to see a client or talking to their dealers—as a burden, that's infuriating. The chasm between passion and burden is unacceptable.

We value ethics and integrity We choose to work with employees, clients and suppliers who share our values. We never settle. We are selective in choosing our clients, suppliers and staff. If we screw up, we admit it. We will sever relationships that are not healthy for our employees regardless of how much money the relationship represents. We admit our mistakes and move forward to improve the next time around.



What about working long hours, sweat, pain and sacrifice?

Sound pretty depressing? It should, if it's the rule and not the exception. We're willing to do whatever it takes to do the right thing, to help the client, to make something great. BUT, that should be done in the most positive healthy environment possible. Sure, sometimes it takes sacrifice, but if that's the way a person runs a project or an account every day, that's crazy. We applaud those who are willing to work hard and are even more impressed with those who can figure out how to do it better and quicker and make it less stressful.

Fluffers

Our traffic manager has a term for unproductive people that stretch a little work as far as they can to avoid doing more. She calls them "fluffers." "Fluffing" hurts all of us—our morale, our deadlines, our speed, our culture, our clients. We won't tolerate fluffing.

Deadlines

You'd think a creative company would be easygoing on deadlines. After all, it's all about great work isn't it? NO. Our clients depend on us to deliver great work on time. If we miss a deadline, we let the client down. You have to:

- 1) Know what the deadline is
- 2) Make sure all your effort and creativity is focused on achieving it

Sometimes the scope of a project changes or there are unavoidable issues. You are expected to communicate that immediately before it becomes a last-minute surprise. Think about it. It's very subjective to judge a creative idea—some may or may not love it. BUT, to judge a deadline—that's concrete. You either made it or missed it. Don't let our great ideas and relationships be brought down by missing a deadline.

Ownership

We have a half-dozen or so owners at LaBov & Beyond. There is no one path to ownership. Some of the owners invested five or six years into proving themselves, helping us to grow. Some have been with us from the beginning—30 years. Others were with us for only a year before being offered ownership. Their actions drew them the opportunity to become an owner. There may be a dozen more owners in the future or none—it all depends on the individual and his or her interest and performance.



Beyond Aviation

How do we reach our clients from Fort Wayne, Indiana? We own and operate our own corporate jet. It's a beautiful Cessna Citation CJ1. And it's branded LaBov & Beyond. Our creatives designed the paint scheme and interior. The jet demonstrates what's important to us. We bought it for two reasons:

- 1) To be extraordinarily responsive to our clients
- 2) To allow our employees the opportunity to spend the day with a client across the country and still be home for dinner that night





Rewards

We don't even like calling this "work" because we have so much fun. But let it be known, we DO appreciate the sweat. We show that by the things we do for our employees: bonuses, profit sharing, catered lunches, company celebrations, awesome insurance benefits, etc. But all these mean nothing unless you really like what you're doing and who you're doing it for. We realize that. We offer profit sharing to our employees to reward them, of course. But we do it for more than that. We want employees to understand the value of a client, the cost if a project goes south and the investment it takes to begin a new client relationship.

Fun

The company defines fun as "creating something that has never existed before," "seeing a person grow far beyond what their dreams imagined" or "being willing to do the right thing, even if it was harder or less profitable" or "being willing to confront a situation and try to solve it." That's fun—following our passion to do something that will help the client. Ready for fun? This is a unique place. Our office is our playground (at least eight hours a day) but we also know there is fun outside of the office. At LaBov, we are intuitive enough to know that time and effort at the office needs to be balanced with family time and fun time. Monthly cookouts, informal brown bag lunches, LaBov-sponsored athletics, birthday holidays, birthday lunches, office olympics, Easter egg hunts—we even have a LaBov pet gallery to show off our beloved pets! This is all part of our family environment.





Giving

We think philanthropy is cool—LaBov & Beyond donates our resources (money, time and talent) to local and national non-profits. We believe it's our responsibility. It also allows us to do great things because the non-profit is happy to have someone to do the work.

But the serious side of philanthropy is personal giving. It's not enough to have the company pay you to do charitable work—because you're really being paid. That's why we respect and support employees who give of their own time and resources to the causes they believe in. The company will make an annual match to a charitable organization of the employee's choice to show our appreciation for supporting and giving back to wonderful causes.

We also have a Charitable Donations Committee that helps organize our charitable giving by adopting a family every Christmas, collecting food for the food bank and donating school supplies to a local elementary school. Several of our employees also donate an hour of their time every week to participate in the Big Brothers, Big Sisters Lunch Buddy program.

LaBov & Beyond has been blessed with success and that's great. We enjoy giving some of that back to the community and feel blessed we're able to do that.





Want to do great work? It's simple

First come up with a great idea. If you don't know how to get it done or if you need help in any way, you will be given 100-percent support. But it starts with you first—your great idea and your passion to see that it comes to life.

Ideas. We love ideas

We conduct dozens of creative meetings every week. Our creative meetings are our idea factory. Employees of all levels and job descriptions participate. Why? Because you never know where your next great idea will come from and you never know who will come up with it—it may be the receptionist, controller, a project manager, anyone. It might be the traffic coordinator who comes up with our next awesome idea. To us, that idea is as valuable as if it came from the creative director. Or, instead of a great idea, you bring a new client to LaBov & Beyond. You'll be rewarded for that too. We have a program to reward employees who help us grow.





Take a seat

Working here is like sitting in the chief pilot's seat in our corporate jet. It's just comfortable enough, but at your fingers is an amazing array of power, technology and maneuverability. It's not anything like sitting in a La-Z-Boy—cushy, comfortable, easy to snooze in. Here, you have the opportunity to be exhilarated and to go farther and higher than you'd ever expect.

You bring your experience with you

As we interview prospective employees, we sometimes discover that the individual had worked for three or four companies previously and that not one of those companies respected him/her, showed appreciation or gave him/her a chance to grow. Think about it—if you've had numerous similar experiences—what's the one common denominator? If that's your story too, you had better have a tremendous reason why it won't be the same outcome after you come here. Quite often a person brings the bad employment experience with them—please help us avoid this.

Clay vs. Cement

Some brilliant people have applied to work with us—smart and with great pedigrees—but they don't want to learn anymore. Instead, they want to be listened to and feel that they are entitled. They think that being open and humbly learning is a sign of weakness. But to us, it's a sign of strength.

We want people "made of clay," someone who is open to growing and changing. We don't want dry cement—even beautifully ornate cement. Cement may work at other companies, but here it is impossible to work with. You either leave it alone or you break it—either way, it does not work here.



Want to knock us out?

Come up with great ideas.
Take 100-percent ownership.
Be someone whom every employee wants on the team.
Figure out how to do the things they say can't be done.
Be open and honest to yourself and others.
Bring energy, passion and speed to everything.
Simplify everything you touch.
Live up to your promises.
Be humble.
Trust first.
Learn, research, dig in.
Volunteer.
Solve problems quickly.
Embrace change.
Add value.

Want to turn us off?

Complain to others.
Spend time preparing to fail.
"Fluff" your work.
Fight learning and growing.
Be sarcastic.
Be vague and elusive.
Be negative toward our clients, employees or vendors.
Complicate things.
Play the victim.
Hand off your work.
Play the "busy" card.
Fail to honor promises and commitments.
Say "it can't be done."
Keep your head low.
Distrust before trust.



Trust before distrust

That's the best way to deal with any situation or person. There will be plenty of new things or unique situations at LaBov & Beyond. Assume first that the person or the situation is a good one and be open to it. If, after you've been open to it, you find there's a better way, let us know. That's infinitely easier than rejecting "different" and distrusting.

Push vs. Pull

Ever been pushed by a client or a boss? They wanted more. Remember how irritating it was? If so, imagine how irritating it was for them to push someone with talent. At LaBov & Beyond, we'll work with you. We'll give you insights and we'll want you to succeed. But we don't want to have to push. We want your efforts and enthusiasm to pull us to new heights. If you feel you're being pushed to perform, start pulling us. We ask new employees not to fit in. We brought you here to make a difference and to enrich our culture and work. Don't fit in. Stand out! Continue to prove yourself each day with our clients and fellow employees.

Getting it done

At an agency that does so much, there has to be a great approach to getting things done. We start by showing up—not just coming in each morning, but by being totally immersed—present mentally, emotionally, physically. The whole package. It's all about being engaged. We get things done with a lot of blood, sweat and yes—at times—tears. There are times when event planning can have team members pulling all-nighters. That's where the tears come in. When a staff member sees the amount of teamwork and effort that went into pulling together a successful event, they start to flow. If you like to work, if you show up ready, if you are humble, dedicated and innovative, then you'll love LaBov.



Leaving it all on the field

We recently had the opportunity to meet Hall of Fame football players, Ronnie Lott and Marcus Allen. They told us that when they played, even when they practiced—nobody on the field worked harder than they did. That's what they were known for. They left it all on the field—when they left practice, they were drained. It sent a great message to the rookies and the other players. It showed that if the star was going to give it his all, they had better also. There was no complacency on their teams. That's why they won Super Bowls.

Marcus and Ronnie were told early on that no matter how talented they were, their goal needed to be to play on a winning team. To be the top player on the last-place team was no big deal—no endorsements, no Hall of Fame, no mega-salary. It was made clear that for them to succeed they had to make sure their team succeeded. That's how it is on every great team and in every great company.

If you want the big bucks, the big client, the attention, and all that goes with it, then you need to have a great company. We need great performers who will be honored to work with others to help them serve the client—great performers who are willing to work harder than even the rookie that just hired in.

So what happens if you have a problem with someone?

First, go to the person you have a problem with and be honest. Try to resolve it. If that doesn't work, go to your manager, their manager, and if that doesn't work, go all the way to the CEO. But do it quickly, don't waste energy, time and don't bring down the morale of others by complaining. It's not about whether or not you'll have a problem; it's how you deal with it. Did we say, "Do it quickly?"



Some learn it now, others later

We said earlier that some people will love LaBov, others will not. Several dozens of former employees have reached out to us in recent years. Their comments were wonderful: “LaBov was the best place I ever worked at,” “I didn’t know what I had until I lost it,” “I wish I knew then what I know now— I would’ve stayed” or “Thanks for working so hard to make me better.”

In some cases, the former employees were asking to come back to work here. In most cases though, most had moved to other locales or industries and were simply calling to thank us. Wouldn’t it have been great if they would’ve felt that way while they were still with us? That’s one reason we have intensified our efforts to make sure we hire the right people and clarify what is expected.

Welcome aboard

So you see, we do great things at LaBov & Beyond. Getting these great things done depends on the right blend of staff, clients and suppliers. All of these complement each other and bring top-notch service, while providing the greatest environment possible for our staff to thrive, aspire and grow.

Again, welcome to LaBov & Beyond!

Come on board and make us even better!