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# Work Life Balance

Now that I am on my fifth and final year at Chico State pursuing my undergraduate degree, I need to start figuring out where I want to work. I know that choosing a job is more than just finding the highest salary and going with that company. Especially for me having a girlfriend that I plan on keeping around, I have to consider her goals and how we can develop a future where we are both happy and growing in our careers. With that being said, I have to factor in where the job requires me to relocate, if the job provides medical coverage (preferably for me and her), how much the company expects me to work, how happy the current employees are with the company, how I will fit in with the company culture, how they will contribute to furthering my education and professional career, and obviously how much they are willing to pay me. Wow, I thought I was stressed out before I just wrote that list. Clearly I have a lot to think about and research before I go blindly applying for jobs. The rest of this paper is going to discuss the research I did on three companies I thought I would enjoy working for, including Intel, Tesla, and Aruba Networks.

Ever since I took Computer Architecture with Professor Kredo, I have wanted to work for Intel. Computer Architecture is very interesting to me and being that Intel makes the best processors in the world I believe working there would be very exciting. Here is some of the "intel" I found about what Intel can offer me as an Engineer. Intel offers a flexible work schedule by giving people the options to compress their workweek or work remotely part time for valid personal reasons. Intel offers full health coverage including vision and dental. The majority of their campuses have fitness centers and recreation facilities. Intel also offers childcare at most of their campuses, and if not they have resources to help you find childcare. Intel does a lot to help their employees with professional development. They offer tuition reimbursement, training courses, and paid sabbaticals. Intel offers annual vacation, however I can't find any data that states the actual amount of days offered annually. I looked around on Glass Door and the majority of the positions I am interested in (firmware engineering) offered a salary base of around 90-120k. The majority of the reviews I read, the employees sounded happy with the company. However, there were a few people who complained about the company culture and how the company is so big they felt, "lost in the fray." There were more positive reviews than negative ones so I am going to say that the majority of people seemed happy about working there, and would recommend it to a friend.

If you read PDA1 or know much about me you know how much I love cars, dirt bikes, and robots. Every Engineer with those three passions has at least thought about working for Tesla. Personally, Tesla was one of my top choices of places I wanted to apply, before doing my research that is. One of the Glass Door reviews said, "the best apart about working for Tesla is being able to say you work for Tesla, but everything else pretty much sucks." Apparently the company is not yet profitable, which is a big problem considering how many employees they have and

how much it costs to keep the company from going under. Tesla offers a 401k plan, but they do not match what you put in like a lot of other companies do (Boo!). Engineers get three weeks of annual paid time off and that doesn't change based on the amount of years with the company. However many comments noted that taking your time off is hard because the company demands a lot from their employees. Tesla offers full medical coverage including vision, dental, and health insurance. One thing that is personally a big deal to me is that Tesla will not help with continuing your education. The average pay for firmware engineers is 117k with a range varying from 96k to 133k. The pay sounds great, but the employee reviews are quite frightening. Almost every review I read said that work-life balance is terrible and the company has a high turnover rate. The employees sounded like they really liked the work itself, but the amount of work hours they were expected to put in were excessive. This is a big problem for me, especially if I was a salary employee not being paid extra for my extensive overtime hours. Almost all of the reviews were negative, and they have changed my mind about wanting to work here.

I never heard of Aruba Networks until last year. Aruba makes a lot of networking products, which I am just learning about in my Introduction to Computer Networks course. So far I have really enjoyed the class and I think working for a networking company would be a good experience and I would learn a lot. Also, my friend and recent graduate Gurleen just got hired as a full-time Firmware Engineer and said he is enjoying working there. Aruba Networks was recently bought by Hewlett Packard Enterprise, and seems to be doing well with the change. Glass Door had nothing but positive employee reviews. Aruba Networks offers a 401k plan and since being bought out by HPE they now offer 4% matching. They offer full medical coverage and I saw nothing but good reviews about their medical packages. I couldn't find anything that said how much time off they give their engineers but almost every review said very flexible with requesting time off. Aruba sounds like a great company to work for, and I will definitely be talking to them at the career fair. I looked at multiple different engineering salaries on Glass Door, and just about all of them averaged around 130k a year or more.  I know they start their entry level Firmware Engineers at around 80-90k, which is right in the range I want to be in. The pay sounds great, the reviews sound great, and they have a campus in Santa Clara, which is close to my girlfriend's family and I know she would love being close to her family.

This exercise was actually really helpful for me and I plan on doing this research for every company I apply too. I still plan on applying for positions at Intel and Aruba Networks, but I will not be applying to Tesla.