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CHICAGO BUSINESS

## 2011 BEST PLACES TO WORK



ERIK UNGER

Employees pick up lunch before attending a speech on weight loss. The Lake Forest business school emphasizes work-life balance. "When you provide that atmosphere, people will give beyond what I can pay," says President John Popoli.

## LAKE FOREST GRADUATE SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

1905 W. Field Court, Lake Forest

**What it does:** Business school

**Year founded:** 1946

**Local employees:** 49

**Total employees:** 49

**Rank in 2010:** Unranked

At the Lake Forest Graduate School of Management, the formula for a great workplace starts with great people. Before making any hires, President and CEO John Popoli interviews every job candidate—regardless of level.

Another priority: transparency. Monthly town hall meetings have been in place since the recession, and management utilizes 360-degree reviews to evaluate every member of the staff, including Mr. Popoli. He says the reviews help the organization get stronger.

"We want work to be as satisfying and

full and enriching as possible," he says. "When you provide that atmosphere, people will give beyond what I can pay."

One priceless element is work-life balance. Employees at the school have the option of flexible hours, alternate work arrangements, compressed workweeks and summer hours. Staffers also enjoy a treat for their wallets with an annual fitness reimbursement, cash awards for employee referrals and free tuition to the school for employees, their spouses and their children.

*Allison Riggio*