

The importance of employer branding

By Peter Hoyte

In today's competitive work environment, where competent workers are in high demand and competition for talent is fierce, companies are once again now understanding the importance of employer branding and as such are implementing it as a key strategy for attracting and retaining top talent.

Every company has an employer brand, whether it was intended or not. This can make or break your image to the outside world, especially when trying to attract applicants.

Before one can understand the importance employer branding can play in an organisation, they must first understand what exactly employer branding is. Kircheng (2005) stated that an employer brand is the image of a company as an employer, which is unmistakable and firmly embedded in the mind of the former, current, and prospective employees. Further, it was mentioned that employer branding defines the strategic management process of the employer brand.

Competitive advantage

Another view from Sullivan (2004) was that employer branding is a long-term strategy to manage the awareness and perceptions of employee's stakeholders and potential employees regarding a particular firm. To put it simpler, employer branding involves developing a distinctive view and reputation for an organisation to highlight its values system, culture, and dedication to its employees. I will share a brief snapshot of its importance to your company's competitive advantage and attractiveness.

As mentioned, job vacancies need to be filled by adept and flexible employees. Here is where a company's employer brand comes into play. Since the employer brand represents what makes the company unique from the competition and how they want to be viewed by potential employees, a strong image is needed. This image is created through the company's value proposition. By utilising positive intangible and tangible elements from your



An effective employer brand is attractive to existing employees and job seekers. (Internet image)



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organisation, a company would be able to attract talented candidates who also share their corporate goals, values, and culture.

Examples of these can be in the form of products and services, management styles, innovation, work environment, flexible work hours, attractive salaries, profit sharing, retirement packages and the qualities of those currently employed. An effective employer brand can naturally limit the cost involved in recruitment as job seekers would naturally seek out and apply for positions in reputable organisations. If your brand portrays your organisation as being innovative, potential

applicants will seek out your company as being the ideal place to play their talents in a modern work environment.

If an organisation is lacking in any of these areas, implementing these initiatives can enhance their employer brand and attract top talent. Once a strong employer brand is established, it can now help retain the best talent by fostering pride and loyalty in their organisation.

The methods, a company utilises when it markets itself can also affect the overall retention rate, employee satisfaction and experience (Mosley, Schmidt, 2017). It was also noted within the literature that a positive employee experience can strengthen an employer's brand.

These positive experiences improve productivity and assist in recruitment and retention. Potential job seekers will be influenced by those current employees in the organisation as satisfied employees can then turn into advocates and referrals for the company. An aspect that can affect the employee's experience is the benefits they enjoy.

A strong understanding of an employee's needs, and those needs being satisfied by attractive benefits, can aid in the company's external image in their pursuit of attracting top talent. Organisations who highlight their commitment to employee growth through offering top-tier development programmes also add

to the employee experience.

By offering these programmes, organisations demonstrate their commitment to employees' personal and professional growth. This is even more effective when combined with social media, which allows companies to highlight personalised content and improve their external image.

To this end, employee experience is seen as a crucial variable in fostering the employer brand in the minds of potential candidates. By highlighting these positive and memorable candidate experiences, as well as encouraging positive word-of-mouth in the job market from employees, it can be effective ways for organisations to strengthen and improve their employer brand.

In conclusion, employer branding is crucial in today's competitive work environment. A strong employer brand attracts and retains top talent, limits recruitment costs, and fosters loyalty. Companies can enhance their branding efforts through a compelling value proposition, positive candidate experience, social media, and development programmes. Employer branding is continuous, and should be prioritised, as it benefits current employees and assists with the goals of your recruitment strategy.

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