

IMPROVE YOUR EMPLOYMENT IDENTITY



UTILISING SOCIAL MEDIA, WORD-OF-MOUTH MARKETING AND OTHER
ELEMENTS TO BUILD YOUR TALENT MARKETPLACE BRAND



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In today's tight talent market, competition can be fierce for top candidates. To stand out as the most compelling employment option, your organisation needs to establish a positive employer brand — your reputation in the job marketplace.

Simply having an employer brand, however, isn't enough. Even with an extremely strong value proposition, employers who ineffectively promote their brand often struggle to attract and retain qualified, sought-after employees.

Typically, a multifaceted marketing approach — involving social media, a positive candidate experience and other key components — proves most effective.

This white paper will provide guidance to help your organisation:

- Successfully review and adjust your company culture and other attributes to produce the best possible employer brand
- Determine the ideal content format and frequency to use to effectively share your employer brand with potential candidates
- Clarify which promotional venues will yield the best results
- Organise your efforts to avoid damaging marketing missteps that can impair your efforts to recruit top talent — and potentially derail your attempt to establish and publicise a constructive employer brand



THE EMPLOYMENT IDENTITY EFFECT

If your organisation has begun to realise having a well-established employer brand is important, you're not alone.

Sixty-two percent of companies viewed employer brand efforts as a top priority last year, according to a LinkedIn global recruiting [study](#) — and with good reason. Companies that have a robust employer identity possess several advantages in the talent marketplace; despite fierce competition for candidates, they're often able to recruit new employees more easily and effectively. A CareerBuilder [survey](#) found companies with a strong employment brand attract at least 3.5 times more applicants per job posting than other companies in the same industry.

A well-defined employer brand can also increase the likelihood your top candidate choices will accept your offer. LinkedIn [research](#) found a company's employment brand was twice as likely to drive job consideration as its overall brand.

Companies with a poor reputation, on the other hand, may need to pay 10 percent more to attract candidates, according to the [Harvard Business Review](#). The cost can be significant — for organisations with 10,000 employees, up to \$7.6 million, or more than \$4,700 per hire.

In addition to helping with recruitment, an employment brand can also have a positive effect on retention, a threat a number of companies are reportedly facing. A 2017 Mercer [report](#) on global talent trends found one in three employees plans to leave their organisation in the next eight months.

Candidates unfortunately don't always get a clear picture of what to expect before accepting a position. A CareerBuilder [survey](#) discovered 43 percent found out during their interview that the job didn't match what the ad for it described.

Companies that have a strong employment identity, however, can proactively ward off the risk of employee departure. They should be able to give candidates a vivid sense of what working at the organisation would entail, increasing the likelihood applicants will be able to accurately gauge whether or not the company and position are a good fit for their needs.

A strong employer brand can clearly provide a number of recruitment and retention benefits. If your organisation isn't sure what it needs to do to strengthen its current branding attempts, though, confirming your brand contains enough compelling components is a good place to start.





ESTABLISHING AN EMPLOYER BRAND

Company culture matters to candidates. Culture is, in fact, the top element applicants want to know about when considering a job, according to a LinkedIn [survey](#). Defining how it's perceived in and outside of your organisation is the first step toward creating a dynamic employer brand.

If your organisation hasn't officially clarified its company culture or re-examined it in awhile, you'll need to review your employee value proposition — the things that make your organisation an enticing place to work — to ensure you're offering the people-centric culture workers want.

Some of the key aspects you may want to consider offering include:

WORK THAT IS SIGNIFICANT

Employees want their employer, according to Mercer, to adopt a holistic approach to address their individual needs.

Some have configured their business to enhance employee experience. Take Google, for example, which has been ranked as one of the world's 25 best multinational workplaces by the Great Place to Work Institute U.K.

Google's managers try to pair employees with projects that are meaningful to them. It's a smart approach; workers who derive meaning from their job, according to research from The Energy Project, are more than two times more likely to stay with their organisation, have 2.2 times higher employee satisfaction and are 93 percent more engaged.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES THAT HELP FURTHER A CAREER PATH

Challenging work and advancement opportunities are two of the top-rated elements candidates want in a job, according to 2016 LinkedIn [data](#).

The education you offer doesn't have to solely involve the traditional in-house speaker or tuition reimbursement options. Some organisations are providing unique, stylised training that presents valuable knowledge and, at the same time, helps strengthen the organisation's overall structure.

Amazon, for instance, offers an intensive, month-long training and leadership program before employees are officially hired, according to Monster. The company pre-pays 95 percent of the tuition for fulfillment center employees to take courses in in-demand fields; employees can also be trained to work from home through Amazon's Virtual Contact Center.





ESTABLISHING AN EMPLOYER BRAND

A CULTURE THAT SENSES INDIVIDUAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Sixty percent of organisations tie their employee recognition program into their company core values, which can help recognition programs positively influence staff engagement, company culture and retention, according to research from Globoforce and the Society for Human Resource Management.

Some companies' recognition efforts, however, seem to have room to grow. Ninety-seven percent of employees want to be recognised and rewarded for a wider range of contributions than they're currently acknowledged for, according to Mercer.

AN EMPHASIS ON QUALITY

Maintaining a strong sense of quality can set you apart in the job market from the competition.

Candidates who come from companies with a strong quality culture understand quality is important, according to CEB research. That may be an important factor when they're evaluating potential employers.

Given that 60 percent of employees work at an organisation where the culture of quality is less than half its potential, a focus on quality is obviously not something candidates will encounter at every company they interview with. Applicants who prioritise it may choose your organisation over one that doesn't emphasise quality.

A STRONG SENSE OF INNOVATION

Similarly, Gallup found job applicants with an advanced or graduate-level education place a greater emphasis on a company's mission, culture and sense of innovation. However, only about half of all companies say their corporate culture robustly supports their innovation strategy, according to a Booz & Company study. If yours does, that may give you an advantage.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS BENEFITS

More than half of employees would like employers to focus more on well-being programs, which can have a significant impact on engagement and organisational image, according to a global survey of workforce well-being strategies conducted by Xerox. More than 74 percent of employers consider a strong culture of well-being to be a key element of their value proposition.





ESTABLISHING AN EMPLOYER BRAND

The category can encompass more than just health-related offerings. In fact, retirement financial security and preparedness and financial literacy and skills programs are the two well-being items that are expanding most rapidly in use.

ADEQUATE PAY

Studies have shown a number of workers actually rate job perks more highly than pay; that said, your organisation will most likely need to provide a competitive rate to attract solid candidates. Thirty-four percent of HR professionals say their organisation has experienced recruiting difficulty because it didn't offer pay that was competitive with the going market rate, according to a Society for Human Resource Management survey.

Although it can be costly, you may find it helpful to obtain salary data through compensation benchmark surveys produced by consulting agencies, professional associations and other organisations to determine how you compare to competitors. More than 80 percent of companies use or participate in such surveys at least once a year, according to Salary.com.

If, upon review, you find your employee value proposition is lacking in any way, you may need to tweak your current initiatives and programs.

Although some large corporations have used lavish perks like daily in-office meals to fuel recruiting efforts, if your organisation can't afford to add similar new incentives, research has shown smaller offerings can still make a big impact.

A survey from Fractl found employees rank relatively low-cost benefits such as flexible hours, more paid vacation time and the ability to work from home as some of the most valued job amenities. Student loan assistance, free gym membership and day care services were also popular options.





CONVEYING YOUR COMPANY'S UNIQUE STORY

After firmly solidifying your employer brand, you need to reconsider what your identity looks like in the marketplace.

The various ways your company interacts with potential candidates should collectively emphasise key aspects of your brand — from the wording on your website to having a responsive, respectful talent acquisition process that candidates feel good about.

The following practices can help you successfully share your employer brand with potential hires:

REFOCUS YOUR COMPANY'S WEBSITE

Because the about us and career pages are two of the most popular places to showcase employer brand elements, they should be examined with particular care.

The career page, obviously, is written with potential hires in mind; and a fair amount of desirable candidates appear to use it during their search. Forty-five percent of top performers say they looked for opportunities on company websites before being hired for their last job.

Candidates may, however, also visit your website's about us page for additional information on the organisation. Make it sure it clarifies the employee work experience at your company, instead of just offering background on how the company was formed.

Consider adding employee and client testimonials, which are a phenomenal way to literally put a face on your company culture. Hiring a photographer to take professional portraits, candid office shots and photos at events can provide website content that shows your culture in action.

Videos can also offer a compelling look at your employer brand. Fifty-one percent of marketing professionals worldwide say video is the type of content that offers the best ROI.

USE A BLOG AS A BRANDING TOOL

A regularly updated blog that's housed on your website can provide an opportunity to share company news and updates, make connections to other sites and obtain a wider overall reach.

By addressing relevant news and topics, the blog can serve as a source of thought leadership to reinforce your company's status as a knowledgeable, forward-thinking member of its industry.

Blog posts help keep site content looking fresh, which can help emphasise that your company is active in the marketplace; and they can also potentially increase your total amount of viewers.





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When determining search results, Google [reportedly may give preference](#) in some instances to sites with frequently updated content. By using SEO keyword optimisation, posts about specific topics can help drive people who are searching for industry-related terms to your site.

PLAN TARGETED SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

More than half — 59 percent of jobseekers — use social media to research the company culture of organisations they're interested in, according to a Jobvite [survey](#).

Sixty-seven percent looked employers up on Facebook; however, to also accommodate passive candidates, you may want to consider posting on more than one social media site.

Different outlets can potentially help you reach different audiences. Knowing each site's largest demographic may, based on the necessary experience/general time in the workforce a position would require, help you post more targeted content.

Facebook, according to recent HubSpot [research](#), is the best place to reach Gen X members and millennials. Ninety percent of Instagram users are under 35. Twitter's user group is comprised mainly of 18- to 29-year-olds.

Forty-five percent of people making \$75,000 or more a year use LinkedIn.

In addition, when trying to reach an international audience, Instagram may prove helpful. More than [80 percent](#) of its users are outside the U.S.

Once you know which social media venues may be the most effective, you can craft posts that contain a number of engaging elements — including:

VALUABLE CONTENT

Some posts might mention upcoming company events or awards; however, posts shouldn't be always be promotional.

To avoid your social media feed looking like an advertisement for employment, add items that feature industry news and other topics, along with more promotional posts that showcase your workplace's personality.

VISUAL ELEMENTS

Businesses that include images with tweets are 34 percent more likely to have those items retweeted, according to [HubSpot](#).

Video — client testimonials; clips of leadership members describing key programs; information on recent charitable efforts or industry-related advice — can be particularly effective. [Eighty-two percent of Twitter users](#) watch video content, and 45 percent of people watch more than an hour of Facebook or





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Research has shown social media video can generate 1,200 percent more shares than text and images combined.

MOBILE OPTIMIZATION

Mobile use is high among some social media users — such as Pinterest users, for example; so make sure your site can easily be viewed on portable devices. Parts of each page shouldn't run off the screen, and text shouldn't be too small to read.

INSIGHT INTO THE EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

Whenever possible, personalise posts. Company values and employee testimonials are two of the most valuable types of marketing content, according to recent data; 42 percent and 36 percent of candidates, respectively, view them as important.

Including a diverse group of employees in testimonials can indicate your commitment to diversity. Research has indicated jobseekers note the racial composition of employee testimonials and infer a focus on or lack of diversity within the organisation as a result.

For social media efforts to be successful, frequency is key. Consistent, targeted posts need to be made to reach the right audience. Establish a calendar to ensure posts representing your brand are made on a regular schedule.

If you don't want to create your own, you can download free a social media calendar from providers such as HubSpot or CoSchedule. Appoint one or more employees to be in charge of the posting schedule, which can help provide accountability and ensure consistency in your messaging's tone.

Studies have shown the best time of day to post and the ideal frequency vary by social media venue.

Facebook, for instance, has the most activity between 9 a.m. and 7 p.m. either EST or CST, according to Social Media Week; posts made at 1 p.m. earn the most shares, and 3 p.m. posts get the most likes. The publication recommends posting Thursdays and Fridays for the best response.

For Twitter, 1 p.m. is also the seemingly perfect posting hour; items added at that time get the most retweets. Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays are said to be the best days to post.





CONVEYING YOUR COMPANY'S UNIQUE STORY

Pinterest's peak post time is 9 p.m. According to Social Media Week, Saturdays are the best days to share items on both Pinterest and Instagram, although 3-4 p.m. every day of the week is a peak time to post on Instagram. Aim for Tuesdays between 10-11 a.m. for LinkedIn posts.

TIGHTEN UP THE INTERVIEW AND TALENT ACQUISITION PROCESS

The way candidates are treated can have a major effect on the public perception of your employer brand. Use interviews as an opportunity to emphasise your commitment to making future employees feel respected. Properly prescreen candidates so the ones you speak to aren't interviewing at an incorrect level. Be on time for interviews so candidates aren't kept waiting. Read resumes beforehand.

Ensure panel interviews are well-structured and executed. Assemble diverse hiring panels, particularly if you're hiring for diversity, and focus on scorecard-based, non-discriminatory hiring practices, instead of any subjective factors.

Failing to adhere to responsible hiring practices can, with the advent of company rating sites, essentially poison your brand in the talent marketplace.

Seventy-two percent of job seekers who felt discouraged by the applicant process have vented their frustrations to a colleague or friend or mentioned the experience on a social networking or employer review site, according to a [study](#) from Future Workplace and CareerArc.

Companies that do not notify declined candidates about final hiring decisions may inadvertently shrink their potential talent pool. Eighty percent of job seekers say they wouldn't consider other relevant job openings at a company that had failed to let them know their application status. If they were notified, however, candidates would be 3.5 times more likely to re-apply, according to the study.

ENCOURAGE EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION

By contributing original social media posts, employees can help convey your organisation's personality and provide a greater sense of authenticity.

Jobseekers trust current employees' opinions more than former employees', recruiters' or any news coverage about the company, according to a CareerArc [survey](#). Current employees also have more cache than company CEOs and executives.

If possible, encourage employees to share job openings, in addition to company events and news, to help you reach a wider audience. Their posts may be seen by their professional associates and former colleagues — a group that could be a potentially lucrative source for job candidates. More than three-fourths of recruiters find their best quality applicants from referrals, according to [Jobvite](#).





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Establishing an employee alumni network may also help you expand your scope. By reaching out regularly to former workers who have left the organisation, you may find some are ready to return — or at least would be willing to share information about openings with their contact base. View our blog post on [establishing an alumni network](#) for tips on setting one up.





CONCLUSION

Defining and promoting an employer brand can be a complex — and sometimes confusing — process.

Some organisations may find they lack enough desirable characteristics to be a true contender for top candidates. Other organisations may struggle to create content, the employer branding action item recruiters and marketers said in a Jibe [survey](#) is the most challenging.

Successfully executing both branding phases, however — ascertaining your identity, and then publicising it — is crucial. The success of your organisation's branding efforts can directly affect how successful it is in the talent marketplace.

To effectively recruit passive and active candidates, you need to maintain an ongoing campaign to promote a distinct employer brand. Company websites (90 percent) and social media (80 percent) are two of the top three channels organisations have used, according to [Universum](#).

Sharing information through posts, blogging and other kinds of content can help provide candidates with a more thorough picture of what working at your company is like; as a result, it will hopefully increase the chance they'll apply for and want to accept a job with your organisation.

Employer branding can also help increase retention. Involving employees in your branding efforts shows them they're an integral, valued part of the organisation. Emphasise your amenities, diversity efforts and other positive attributes to reinforce the value proposition you offer employees.

With all that's involved, establishing an employer brand isn't easy work. In some instances, an outside provider may be able to help HR successfully execute the process.

Talent Intelligence's Employer Brand Intelligence program involves a thorough, independently conducted assessment that accurately identifies how an organisation is perceived in the marketplace.

The assessment also reveals how the organisation's compensation and benefits package compares to its competitors' and pinpoints career development and advancement opportunities that may need to be addressed — along with any other areas for improvement within the organisation's hiring process that are causing it to lose out on top talent.

To find out more about employer branding and what the Employer Brand Intelligence program involves, contact Simon Ferns, Talent Intelligence Senior Vice President, at 312 -284-2964 or simon.fern@talentintelligence.com.



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ABOUT TALENT INTELLIGENCE :

Talent Intelligence is a global leadership risk management company that solves its clients' critical talent challenges by integrating external talent intelligence in four key areas: succession planning, talent pipelining, diversity intelligence and human capital competitive intelligence. All intelligence is securely stored so clients can access it on demand and integrate it into their existing workforce planning process. Our Intelligence Delivery Teams flag high-potential candidates, bringing them directly to our clients' attention — so when the time is right, we can facilitate a networking engagement between you and any candidate of interest.

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