

# How to Get Started With Employer Branding

Attracting talent is a primary concern with businesses across all industries, sizes, and types. And it's been made even more competitive recently with fallout from the pandemic causing people to reevaluate what they want from life in general and from work specifically. Flexible hours, work-from-home options, health and safety protocols, and wellbeing initiatives have all emerged as primary considerations as people return to work or decide to look for different employment options.

Your employer brand can help distinguish you from the crowd and ensure highly qualified people not only apply for job openings, they actively seek you out as an employer of choice leaving you with many options when you need to recruit talent.



## What is an Employer Brand?

Fundamentally your employer brand is your way of communicating your values and culture to an audience of people you want to attract. It includes how you present yourself to the people currently working for you as well as potential candidates. Using your brand you can:

- Distinguish yourself from your competitors.
- Highlight why people would choose to work for you.
- Demonstrate what you value most and how that translates to the workplace.

## Why It Matters

Pride is an important element of job satisfaction – both in the work people do and the organizations people work for. Across our Best Workplace™ lists, employees consistently agree, at or above the 90% mark, with surveys statements related to pride. These statements include:

- When I look at what we accomplish, I feel a sense of pride.
- I would strongly endorse my organization to friends and family as a great place to work.
- I'm proud to tell others I work here.
- I want to work here for a long time.

By building a strong employer brand you can tap into that pride and use it as a source of competitive advantage in your recruitment and retention strategies. This allows you to increase the pool of candidate applications, spend less on recruitment costs as word-of-mouth will increase, and improve your overall reputation in the market as people learn about, and engage with, your brand beyond the customer perspective.



## Plan Your Strategy

Once you get onboard with employer branding you need to figure out what exactly makes you stand out and how you will connect with the people you want to attract to your organization.

- Audit your current reputation – figure out what people think of you right now. Consult Google reviews and sites like Glassdoor, review your social media presence, and conduct surveys with your employees to gain valuable insight into how you are being perceived currently.
- Decide what makes you unique – examine your mission, vision and values for clues. Try to articulate your culture and establish some key differentiators that you want to emphasize.
- Decide what your ideal employee looks like – ask yourself:
  - What qualities do they possess? Hard working, professional, etc.
  - What motivates them? Salary, benefits, time off, etc.
  - What interests them? Exciting projects, global opportunities, etc.
  - Do they share similar social responsibility goals? Environmental causes, community relief, global initiatives, etc.
  - What do they value? Work-life balance, flexible hours, unique perks, etc.

Working through these steps helps you develop your Employer Value Proposition (EVP) and that is the message you will 'bring to market' and use to attract candidates and retain the staff you currently have.

## Execution

Here is where HR and marketing meet to hone your EVP and create a statement or set of catch phrases that you can repeat over and over to build and reinforce your employer brand.



- Communicate your employee branding strategy with your people – make sure they know what you are trying to achieve, why and how.
- Get their input on the messaging to ensure it is relevant and honest. Remember, you are using this for retention as well as recruitment.
- Gather real employee stories – nothing resonates more with potential candidates than hearing directly from someone already working in the organization.
  - Host employee blogs on your website.
  - Highlight fun events on your social media channels and feature lots of pictures of the people participating.
  - Record testimonials and post those to the career section of your website (If you don't have a career section, create one!)
  - Feature stories that show 'day in the life' type moments at work including rewards people receive, professional designations they achieve, perks they are enjoying, and realities they experience day to day.
- Use career sites for maximum exposure – these sites are powerful marketing tools and they have a lot of space dedicated to helping you promote your brand while advertising your open positions. Make sure you address any negative feedback proactively, respectfully, and where necessary with humility.
- Be active on social media – LinkedIn, Facebook and Instagram are a must. Ensure you link to these pages on your website. Go through old posts and clean them up to ensure your message is on-brand and that it reflects the image you want to promote.
- Enlist employees as brand ambassadors – encourage them to post reviews and contribute regularly to your social media pages.



- Review your application process – make sure people’s first impression matches your brand message. If you are trying to promote a fun, hip culture and your automatic messages back to applicants read like something from a 1950’s law firm, you need to re-work them!
- Gather feedback and repeat as necessary – your branding strategy will evolve and your EVP may shift. You may miss the mark and have to shuffle things around. Use post interview surveys to gather feedback, talk to employees about their impressions and stay attuned to the message you are sending.

Employer branding is vitally important for attracting high quality candidates. The options for work are becoming more flexible, more global and more competitive. To stay on top of your recruitment efforts and to retain your top talent, take some time to think about how you want to be perceived in the market as an employer. Invest in making yourself an employer of choice through a strong branding message that supports the great culture you’ve worked so hard to achieve.

### **Want to ensure your company is attracting the best candidates?**

Great Place to Work® is here to help. Reach out to us today about our employer brand and employee experience solutions.

Great Place to Work® makes it easy to survey your employees, uncover actionable insights and get recognized for your great company culture. Clients apply our insights, advice and tools to fuel the vision, decisions and actions that drive business performance.

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