

Are you serious about your Employer Brand?

As all recruiters know, we're currently in the midst of a talent shortage. The recruitment industry is no different. Great recruitment talent has become harder and harder to find, and that talent now has the freedom to cherry-pick roles as they see fit. There's been a shift in what candidates prioritise when looking for a new job, from salary and job security to better flexibility and culture at work. That means that employer brand is now more important than ever in helping you win the war for talent. By ensuring that you have a strong employer brand, you can attract a higher level of talent, retain your top performers and ensure that your internal culture stays strong. Your digital footprint is a key medium to help your employer brand work for you. Read this guide for tips on how to achieve a good employer brand.

What Is Employer Branding?

Your employer brand is your reputation within the market. It's what your Recruiters think it's like to work for your company. This external reputation is the manifestation of your company's internal values, ideas and culture. Previously, word of your employer brand mostly got around through word of mouth, meaning that taking a proactive approach to it, although advantageous, wasn't necessary. However, the rise of the internet and mediums like Glassdoor, LinkedIn, Indeed and Seek, have changed the landscape. Having an employer brand is no longer a choice, and the ease of access people have to information has made it possible for people to decide whether they want to work with your company at the click of a button.

Taking control of your employer brand proactively is now crucial, and doing so requires a long term strategic approach. The first step is to define your goals and figure out what you want to achieve. Ask yourself; do you want to attract a higher calibre of Recruiters to your agency, or is your focus on positioning yourself higher in the marketplace? Naturally, your strategy and tactics will change depending on what outcomes you're looking to achieve.

Establishing Your Brand

Before you can truly take control of your employer brand, you need to discover what it actually looks like. Although you may feel you know your company better than anybody else, keep in mind that different people will have different opinions. To get a true representation of your employment brand, there's no better place to start than with your team of recruiters. These are the people who you're trying to attract, so getting an honest appraisal from them is a great way to get started on the right foot.

However, directly asking your staff what they think of their employer will likely be a little awkward for everyone, and probably won't get you very far. Instead, you can use anonymous survey tools like Survey Monkey or AskNicely to get that insight on your culture, or conduct surveys through third parties such as CultureAmp or AskYourTeam to extract this information without putting your people on the spot. This doesn't mean to say that everyone else dislikes working for your agency, but how they view the culture may differ depending on their role, department or personal preferences. If any issues are flagged, then make it a priority to think about ways you can address them. Do people feel undervalued? Maybe it's time to overhaul your incentive scheme. Do people feel overworked? Perhaps look at implementing flexible hours.

As well as what your Recruiters think about your company, you also need to discover what already exists about your business publicly. Top candidates are savvy enough, and selective enough, to use digital and social media to research your company within seconds, so they'll likely come across those Glassdoor or Indeed employer reviews that you might be dreading. If these are an issue, then identify the problem and remember that as much as these mediums can be a threat, you can also use them to your advantage. Encourage your employees to spread the word about what it's like to work with you on social media, and to leave their own reviews online. By empowering your team in this way will gain their trust, and likely have a positive impact on the culture.

The most important part of building your employer brand, however, is to maintain its authenticity. If your employer brand misrepresents your internal culture, this will quickly result in unhappy employees who aren't working in the environment they expected. This makes defining what your company's internal culture is, and ensuring this aligns with your external brand, vital to employer branding success.

Understanding Your Audience

Next, you'll need to define the ideal Recruiter you want to attract. A great way to do this is to build brand personas that include the demographics, skills, experience and interests of your ideal recruits. You can then stack this data against the insights you've gained from internal culture surveys. This will provide an indication on whether you're already attracting your target audience.

If these don't align, then you may need to make changes to your workplace's day-to-day activities to shift your culture and reflect the employer brand you aspire to have. Alternatively, if you're perfectly happy with your team, you might want to change the type of people that you're looking for. Ultimately, the key here is to find the sweet spot between the people and culture that you already have, and the people and culture that you aspire to have.

Showcasing Your Brand

Discovering and establishing your employer brand is of course crucial, but all that hard work will go to waste if no-one sees it. Showcasing your brand to the world, and finding the most effective ways to reach your target audience, is the next step from here. From supportive testimonials to carefully planned blogs (and, crucially, by recognising the importance of your employees as brand ambassadors), there are plenty of ways to effectively market your employer brand. Here are our top four tips:

1. Careers Page

Having a careers page on your website is a fantastic place to start. You can essentially use this page as a hub for your employer brand, using the platform to talk about your culture in a well-crafted about us section and by using genuine employee testimonials. One in three candidates rate employee testimonials as the most valuable piece of recruitment marketing content, so don't overlook them. Including a well put-together, professional looking recruitment video is another great tool to close the deal on Recruiters looking to work for you.

Rett Minchington, CEO of Employer Brand International, stated in his recent article: "The next generation of workers are seeking more than just a paycheck: They long for purpose, meaning and a chance to have an impact on tomorrow." To tap in to that talent, just touching on who you are and what you do isn't enough. You need to clearly talk about your mission, purpose and why do you do what you do. Use this opportunity to talk about your internal culture and what makes you a unique employer to

work for: do you have a relaxed dress code? Great perks and benefits? Are you in a fantastic location? Well, shout about it. Adecco's Careers with us page is a great example of this being done right.

2. **Get Your Recruiters Blogging**

Blogs give your Recruiters a voice, further building that empowerment we touched on earlier. Not only is it great for client and candidate engagement and attraction, but blogs can also be used to communicate your employer brand and attract recruiters. Using your blog to give a behind the scenes glimpse at your workplace, showcase employee achievements and highlight your thought-leadership as an organisation by commenting on the latest news and trends within the industry, all align with the goal of enhancing your employer brand, and will also drive traffic to your website.

When it comes to giving Recruiters a voice, many agencies prevent themselves from gaining a strong employer brand because they're reluctant to allow their staff to tell their own stories. Often, this reluctance comes from the fear of having their Recruiters poached by competitors. However, if you want to succeed in establishing a strong, authentic employer brand, it's important to move past this fear and embrace the opportunity. Encourage your Recruiters to actively blog about their projects, conferences or events they've attended, and even milestones outside of work. For example, if you're recruiting overseas candidates, have a Recruiter who has already immigrated from another country write a blog about their experience. This provides relatable and organic content for your target audience to engage with.

3. **Leverage Social Media**

Social media is a powerful external branding tool, and although it's likely your primary means of engaging with clients and candidates, it can be leveraged to target Recruiters as well. Differentiating your main brand from your employer brand can be a difficult task. My advice is to use targeted social media campaigns and dual-purpose content.

LinkedIn is a fantastic platform to drum up business and engage with candidates within certain industries, however, it's also filled with active Recruiters. I ran a quick search on LinkedIn and found over 5,500 Recruiters in Sydney alone, all of which can be targeted. As an example, you could promote a blog on '10 Reasons to Work with Us' to a targeted audience containing that pool of recruitment talent.

Constant, relevant content will improve your overall external brand and put your company at the front of your audience's minds. Posts highlighting the internal culture of your business, such as Meet the Team cards and videos showcasing what it's like to work for your company can be great ways to attract Recruiters to your business. If you don't have the time or capacity to write unique content, there are agencies out there that will do the hard work for you.

Lastly the new job-searching app Hunted allows Recruiters to anonymously look for new opportunities within the recruitment industry. Consider setting up an employer page as another online avenue for recruitment talent. This is certainly a social media platform to keep an eye on.

4. **Turn Your Recruiters into Brand Advocates**

That aforementioned fear of having their Recruiters poached also causes recruitment agencies to shy away from making their staff brand ambassadors. What they fail to realise however, is just how important it is to go that extra mile. A strong employer brand strategy will fall flat on its face if it doesn't

have the support of your Recruiters. If you have a great internal culture, and support your Recruiters' development, they're going to be far more likely to stick around even if they are approached.

With that in mind, remember that your employees are the best ambassadors you could have for your employer brand, so make sure you make the most of this potential. Get your Recruiters out there by sending them to meetups and industry events as brand advocates for your business. Having your Recruiters engage with your community will get your brand seen and heard. Encouraging your Directors to share their insights at conferences, such as the RCSA Annual Conference will expand this exposure even further.

Summary

The acquisition of great recruitment talent is getting harder. Although new buzzwords are getting thrown around every day, employer branding is one to take seriously if you want an edge over your competitors. Sitting down with your Recruiters, discovering what your internal culture is and whether your external brand reflects this, are the crucial first steps towards securing the best talent in the industry. After that, take our four tips on how to showcase your employer brand to targeted audiences on board, to further elevate your talent attraction strategy.

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