What's So Interesting About Employer Branding?

Employer Branding - An Image Maker

4 Branded Employer
8
13 HR Events

Forté
Your Human Score
Employer branding is a targeted long term strategy, to manage awareness and perceptions of employees, potential employees and related stakeholders with regards to a particular firm.” - Sullivan

Just like we have customers for a particular product we have customers for the organization as well. And they are nobody but the “employees” themselves. The employer brand builds an image confirming the organization as a good place to work. An effective employer brand is essential for competitive advantage. To be competitive in this world every organization has to establish its own brand in order to attract current and future talent. A popular brand of customer product conveys a particular message and thus appeals to customer among various other product brands. Similarly an organization constructs its corporate identity and appeals to its current as well as future employees.

The key aspect of employer branding is that it is not just about advertisements or communication collaterals. It is the reflection of what is the reality, present or future that the employees experience in the organisation. As Dr. Sandeep Krishnan (Vice President, Acropetal Technologies Ltd) opines “The clear measure of a better employer brand would be the ratio of number of offers given to people to the number of people who finally joined.” Recruiting people will be much easier as the organization builds its brand which attracts talent for its attractiveness. The right brand will definitely retain people and the reasons will be more than monetary considerations.

The Christ University stint thus gracefully comes to an end and as we hand over the baton of the HR Learning Laboratory ‘Forte’ to our enthusiastic gang of budding HR managers, we wish them all success for their upcoming literary endeavours and prospective careers ahead. As my mother rightly says, ‘change is the only permanence’, we wish that the coming change in Forte heralds a new phase of enlightenment as well as entertainment. Readers stay tuned!

Expand your literary wingspan with Forte. Good luck and Godspeed!

Aparna Panda
Co-editor

Acknowledgement

As we the new team, are gearing up for our first issue of Forte, we would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the senior Forte team, who have helped us take up this new responsibility. We acknowledge their efforts over the last year and wish them a most successful future ahead!

We also thank Fr T.V. Thomas, Director, Christ University Institute of Management, our Head Administration, Prof. C.K.T. Chandrashekara and concerned HR Faculty members for encouraging and guiding us the right way.

Our special thanks to the Publications department, Christ University, for their valuable inputs to enhance the quality of Forte.
The word Employer Brand symbolizes the employer as ‘a great place to work for’, especially in the mind of the existing employees and in the mind of the key stakeholders. Basically, it is concerned with the idea of retaining the current employees, furthermore, to attract other potential candidates. The term was coined in 1990 by Simon Barrow and Tim Ambler, in the Journal of Brand Management, London. With the years, the art and science of Employer Branding have evolved considerably. Today, Employer Brand Management has evolved as a separate discipline and is considered as a topic of research. Mostly, for the consumer brands, employer brand practitioners are of the view that, effective employer branding and brand management requires a clear ‘Employer Brand Proposition’. This defines what the organization would be most likely to be associated with as an employer and highlight the attributes that differentiate the organization from other employers. When organizations make the effort to create a Magnetic Employer Brand, they usually save the work of trying to convince employees of choice that you, they are the potential employer to work with. With a Magnetic Employer Brand, employer reputation acts like a huge talent magnet, drawing the best, most talented people to the organization. The main aim is to deliver a unique and attractive work experience, ‘a branded work experience’ that sets the employer apart in the labor market. Creating a Magnetic Employer Brand isn’t only about the HRD getting together and coming up with the promotional campaigns but requires rigorously examining all facets of the work experience the organization delivers and makes sure they create an experience that leads to an employer of choice reputation.

In the 2011 Employer Branding Global Research Study, it has been revealed that, HR and Marketing are now being challenged by Executives for control of the Employer Brand strategy. The study has found that the Executives are taking more responsibility for the employer brand strategy with a 13% increase over the past two years at the same time HR departments solely responsible for the strategy have declined by 12%. The survey also revealed that the companies which invest in developing their employer brand can expect an increase in employee engagement and ease in attracting candidates with 38% than that of companies who don’t. The expenditure into social media to build online communities they can recruit from and engage with has resulted in a 209% increase since 2009, in social media usage by companies to communicate their employer brand.

Companies that do not differentiate themselves by building a powerful employment brand are at a disadvantage in attracting the required talent. Among the advantages of a strong employment brand is more effective recruiting, lower recruiting costs, improved quality of candidates, more engaged employees and lower turnover.

As it is widely said, the same coin has two sides thus employer branding is also disfavoured in some respects. Firstly, companies usually to allure candidates try to create and maintain a strong brand presence which sometimes involves a lot of design and marketing costs. A strong brand is memorable; this often requires a lot of advertising over a long period of time, which can be very expensive. Secondly, another main problem with many branded businesses is that they lose their personal image. The ability to deal on a personal basis with employees is one of the biggest advantages. Those small businesses have, and poorly designed branding could give employees the impression that your business is losing its personal touch.

Again, the process of creating a brand image takes a long period of time. Creating a brand and updating it, needs exposure to the potential market. It is commonly shown that people need to see an advert at least three times before they absorb it, which means the employer needs to advertise and promote the brand for a considerable amount of time before it becomes well known.

However, these days it is critical for employers to set realistic expectations when they are recruiting candidates. If organizations lack compelling reasons for people to come and work for them and to stay, they risk losing out to competitors that make a more convincing case or that have the resources to lure people with higher salaries.

Thus, an effective employment branding requires an ongoing commitment. At the end, it is usually a well worth the effort. By investing in a rigorous, ongoing process to build the organization’s employment brand, companies improve their ability to attract and retain the best talent, and help in enhancing their competitiveness in both good and bad economic times.

Deebadwita De
Why Employer Branding?

Until recently, customers were only seen as an external entity of the organization. However, organizations these days identified that missing link in the form of internal customers, who were considered as the ‘first market’ of any organization. In fact, many researchers argue upon the fact that it is only through internal marketing, external marketing is made effective and possible. In this context, the job which companies offer becomes the tangible (or intangible) product for measuring the effectiveness (satisfaction) of the internal customers i.e., our employees. These job products must suitably be used to ‘attract,’ ‘develop’ and ‘motivate’ the employees in order to achieve individual and organization objectives.

The celebrated marketing guru Philip Kotler defines internal marketing as ‘the task of successfully hiring, training and motivating able employees to serve the customers well.’ Hence, it becomes pertinent to maintain the internal ‘market’ stable to focus on the external market in the organization. These days companies have started realizing employees as their audience to make things happen. For instance, we may remember the IBM advertisement which focused not only on the technology and process of IBM, but also on the people who are behind the success of the company. In the end, everybody featured in the advertisement would conclude with an ‘I am an IBM-r’ tag, which inspires their internal audience as well and creates a belief that it’s a great place to work. This can also align with the need hierarchy theory of Abraham Maslow. Employer’s brand is centrally dependent upon the employee’s values and behaviour of the company. Care should be taken not to project anything artificial, as it affects the credibility not only from outside, but inside as well. An employer brand is a promise to the internal customers which offers them a right job, right opportunities and a great place to work. This can also align with the need hierarchy theory of Abraham Maslow. Employer’s brand is centrally dependent upon the employee’s values and behaviour of the company. Care should be taken not to project anything artificial, as it affects the credibility not only from outside, but inside as well. An employer brand is a promise to the internal customers which offers them a right job, right opportunities and a great place to work. This can also align with the need hierarchy theory of Abraham Maslow. Employer’s brand is centrally dependent upon the employee’s values and behaviour of the company. Care should be taken not to project anything artificial, as it affects the credibility not only from outside, but inside as well. An employer brand is a promise to the internal customers which offers them a right job, right opportunities and a great place to work. This can also align with the need hierarchy theory of Abraham Maslow. Employer’s brand is centrally dependent upon the employee’s values and behaviour of the company. Care should be taken not to project anything artificial, as it affects the credibility not only from outside, but inside as well. An employer brand is a promise to the internal customers which offers them a right job, right opportunities and a great place to work. This can also align with the need hierarchy theory of Abraham Maslow. Employer’s brand is centrally dependent upon the employee’s values and behaviour of the company. Care should be taken not to project anything artificial, as it affects the credibility not only from outside, but inside as well. An employer brand is a promise to the internal customers which offers them a right job, right opportunities and a great place to work. This can also align with the need hierarchy theory of Abraham Maslow.

Anand T. S.

Philosophy Of Employer Branding

Do we really know how an employer creates a brand image for himself and how brand loyalty is created among the employees? It does not come so easy for an employer. This happens only when the employer sees a bigger picture in treating his employees as customers, rather than just employees. So, value proposition to the employee should be the primary objective of the employer, even before he adds value to the customer. An employer will be recognized as a strong brand only when he can unleash the potential of employees by assigning them the roles where he can put his body, mind, and heart. He should impressively use ‘assessment centres’ productively in order to know the true strengths of the employee during selection. The roles which are offered to the employee should be in line with the strengths as well as his qualifications, since the major drive for any employee to work in any organization is the satisfaction which they derive out of their work. Understanding the needs and requirements of the employees will decide the success of the organization.

Training & development should be one of the primary factors for any employer for enhancing his strengths even more by building on the skills required for them. Provision of suitable environment for enhancing employee satisfaction will help to create strong moments for the employee in his work, which is a critical factor in driving organisational success. This helps to retain employee talent thereby leveraging organisational efficiency and productivity. So, internal communication plays a major role in terms of the value proposition which the employer offers to the employee during recruitment as well as internal promotions and also delivering it to them. Employees are always willing to work with an organization where the return for the efforts which they put is compensated very well on par with their efforts or above. Apart from this employer should create an environment which fosters the work-life balance of the employee and eliminating the stress factor by initiatives such as flexible timings so that he delivers his finest in the foremost interests of the organization.

Since an employee on an average spends one-third of his day in the organization, innovative human-resource practices will help in leveraging the value for the employees. This further helps in achieving the vision of the organization. Maximization of shareholder’s wealth, increase in revenues and profits will be the outcomes of innovative human-resource practices. So using assessment centres for recognizing the talents of the employees should be the primary focus for any organization. This is how an employer creates a brand for himself!

Sai Kumar Adala
Employer Branding can be an image maker or an image makeover factor, depending on how one sees it. It has become the most important word that tops the checklist for people on the look-out for jobs. Just as how personality gives an individual his or her identity, employer branding gives an organization its reputation as an employer.

Employer branding refers to ‘the image of a company as a great place to work in’ – in the eyes of current employees, potential candidates, clients and other stakeholders. It is very significant in today’s workplace as employer branding involves employee attraction, employee engagement and employee retention. In this way, talented human resource is acquired and made available which in turn enhances the company’s overall image and name.

The term Employer Branding was first used in the early 1990s and has gained prominence since then. The company should deliver what it promises and only this way brand building happens. Employer branding cannot happen overnight and so continuous efforts must be directed towards achieving this differentiating factor. In fact, it has become a part of business strategy itself for some companies.

A report released last year, showed how Google, across many countries, still ranks first in the employer branding category since 2009 as it is unanimously agreed to be THE best place to work in. Even in India, Google India Pvt Ltd retained its numero uno position. It is followed by Intel Technology India Pvt Ltd, Makemytrip India Pvt Ltd, American Express India Pvt Ltd and Marriott Hotels India Pvt Ltd. Strangely one can see that majority of these companies happen to be the Indian subsidiaries of foreign-born firms! This shows the extent to which Employer Branding needs to grow in leaps and bounds for Indian companies.

It was seen that four factors from the above list have a bearing on high-performing employees. They are - culture, pay and benefits, leadership and management, performance management, growth and development. Further, only two factors from the above list play a very crucial role of the employer brand of majority of companies. They are -

- A highly-developed culture
- Outstanding leadership and management qualities.

Through the above filtration process, a linkage can be established - Employee satisfaction causes employer branding process to grow and when employer branding matures, employee expectations are on the rise. Thus, they work diligently knowing that their company has got a ‘good brand name’ tag and so when the employees work well, they are satisfied with what the job and the company offer. This ends up becoming a cause-and-effect concept.

To conclude, Employer Branding initiatives should be carefully done – not underdone or overdone. It is an art of attracting the right kind of people for the right kind of job. But it is also a science in doing the attraction and retention the right way at the right time. Noteworthy campaigns and novel recruiting tools bridge the gap between perceptions before joining work and real experiences of people who are actually working for the company. Employer branding is indeed an exciting area to work on as it is a mix of HR, marketing and communication planning.

Sharnitha Ramachandran

"I have always been fully persuaded that, through co-operation, labor could become its own employer.” - Leland Stanford

Recruitment and selection may seem like a day to day task in any organization. But this process involves people who are very much dynamic in nature and a lot of factors affect them. Even after an employee enters into an organization he is persuaded by various factors, one of them being the ‘employer’.

The saga of an employee in an organization has a big role of his supervisor or his employer. If we take today’s working an employment environment, we can very well say that even an employer do create his own brand value to attract the best human resources available in the business scenario. He does this by effectively interacting with his peers and subordinates and also by including them in decision making, giving them authority, leading them to their objectives, and giving them a healthy orientation. Such employers, more than a manager, act as a mentor to them.

Companies like TCS, HUL, INFOSYS, and L&T are considered to be best employers worldwide. Employees are attracted by the brand value that they have created over the years and ready to join them even at a low salary because the future, training, working culture they promise is extra-ordinary.

This brand value created by employers help them to retain their employee over a longer period of time, earn more goodwill, attract the best talent across the globe, reduce turnover and offers a competitive advantage. Moreover it simulates the employees to develop a loyalty with the organization, motivates them and increases their productivity.

So we can say that this employer’s branding is a win – win condition for both employees and employers.

Ayush Chhallani
Employer Branding - Here to Stay

‘Which are the companies people would love to work for?’ The placement season is on and this naturally ocorrs to me. A strange question I’d say, where the words ‘love’ & ‘work’ appear at the same time! But I ask this question to the multitude of students around me & I get all high-profile company names thrown back at me such as Google, Intel, HCL, Accenture, Adobe, Microsoft, Tata, Bajaj Capital, and so on. What intrigues me is why do these companies appeal to youngsters so much and how have these employers managed to create this aura around their brand? This brings us to the entire premise of ‘Employer Branding.’

The origin of employer branding can be traced to the cross-functional application of marketing in HRM in the 1990s. Since then it has come a long way where employees get to rate companies on how good they are as a place to work in terms of their aspirations or officially in HR surveys. Employer Branding therefore can be seen from two angles what efforts a company can make to showcase its desirability and how current & prospective employees perceive it based on several factors which may be internal or external to a company. Employer brand is affected by three major dimensions of purpose, culture & employment (Dodds, 2009).

In this highly competitive business environment, the only way one can differentiate a company based on the HRM practices is by shifting to strategic HRM. This process begins with the single and most important step of hiring, which of course means a company should develop an image that attracts the right kind of people. Enter employer branding! While a company is scrutinizing an employee, what do you think the employee is doing? He forms his own perceptions based on what he sees, hears and thinks. He forms a psychological contract with his employer, which gets reinforced or shaped based on the culture and values exhibited by the organization. This further cements the need for employer branding. But these two components are evident, so what really caught my fancy is how this purpose can be served by the senior leadership or the organization. This further cements the need for employer branding. But these two components are evident, so what really caught my fancy is how this purpose can be served by the senior leadership or the organization. This further cements the need for employer branding.

In his landmark book ‘Good to Great’, James Collins talks about the seven characteristics of such companies—two of which are resonant with the dimensions covered here.

One more aspect that has the power to drastically change the image of a company is the CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) initiatives it takes. Almost every company today does some sort of social work in a bid to portray itself in a better light. Many companies have their own foundations for fulfilling the CSR motive. At times the concern for society may be genuine but at times it may put us in doubt when the company’s core business is harmful to society & its CSR initiative looks more like an attempt to clear its guilty conscience. However, irrespective of the reasons, this little bit of social work does benefit the society in general, which in turn raises the brand value of the company.

This broadly depicts the purpose of employer branding as served by the top management’s leadership, CSR activities and the marketing efforts undertaken. According to Christopher Van Mossevelde, the three channels that will be used for employer brand promotion for some years will be corporate websites, on-campus activities & social media. This means, Employer branding is here to stay.

Pavitra Pai

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Identify Them - Personalities We All Have Read About

A

He was born in 1856 to a wealthy Quaker family in Germantown, Philadelphia. He joined Harvard Law, however due to rapidly deteriorating eyesight, he had to consider an alternative career. He became an industrial apprentice patternmaker, gaining shop-floor experience at a pump-manufacturing company, Enterprise Hydraulic Works, Philadelphia.

In 1893 his business card at his consulting practice read "Systematizing Shop Management and Manufacturing Costs a Specialty." In 1898, he joined Bethlehem Steel, where he, Maunsel White, and a team of assistants developed high speed steel for which he received a personal gold medal at the Paris exposition in 1900.

He wrote 'Shop Management' after parting company with Bethlehem Steel.

B

He was born in 1841 in a suburb of Istanbul, Turkey. He was a French mining engineer at "Compagnie de Commentry-Fourchambou-Decazeville." He became director in 1888, and held that position over 30 years until 1918.

In 1916 he published his experience in the book "Administration Industrielle et Générale".

He is the founding father of what has become known as the administration school of management. He was little known outside France until the late 40s when Constance Storrs published her translation of his book.

C

He was born in 1908 the eldest of seven children and raised in Brooklyn. His parents were uneducated Jewish immigrants from Russia. He is noted for his conceptualization of a "hierarchy of human needs," and is considered the father of humanistic psychology.

He studied what he called exemplary people such as Albert Einstein, Jane Addams, Eleanor Roosevelt, and Frederick Douglass rather than mentally ill or neurotic people, writing that "the study of crippled, stunted, immature, and unhealthy specimens can yield only a cripple psychology and a cripple philosophy.

His hierarchy of needs is predetermined in order of importance.

National Human Resource Conference

Christ University Institute of Management is a pioneer institute in Bangalore that supports all-round development of students. The National Conference held on March 09, 2012 is another initiative that aims to build research orientation and leadership capabilities in students. More than 60 research papers were presented at five venues in two campuses. The various conferences were on General Management, HR, LOS, Finance and Marketing.

The theme for this year’s HR conference was ‘Organisation Citizenship Behaviour’ (OCB). The conference was organised by CUIM HR students (seniors & juniors). We had the privilege of listening to eminent people in the field of HR. After the inauguration & the welcome, we had our panel judges address the audience. The keynote address was by Mr. Kaushik Gopalan (Symphony Services) who talked about the origin, evolution and dimensions of OCB. Mr. Joseph George (Workplace Catalysts LLP) talked about the potential paradox of OCB. The next speaker, Mr. Kumar S Krishnaswamy (Fortis) concluded the topic with a few relevant real-life examples. The other judges were Dr. Vivekanand (IBS & IJOB) and Dr. Poornima S C (BMS College).

Post refreshments began the channel round of paper presentations. We had a range of interesting topics related to OCB.

For the final round, we had five shortlisted participants. The address by the panel judges comprised of Mr. Hari Iyer (prev. at Sasken) who spoke passionately about OCB, Dr. Pallabh Bandhopadhyay (Citrix) who talked about the need for sharing knowledge and developing OCB. The other judges were Dr. Vivekanand & Mr D. Sriganesh (3M). The event concluded with the common valedictory.

Overall it was a very enlightening and enriching experience for the students as well as the participants.
Excel Certification Course for HR Junior Students

MS Excel is a very important software tool in the workplace today. It is imperative for both employees and prospective employees to know the intricacies of excel.

Understanding this need for expertise in excel, the HR club of CUIM conducted a 4-day excel workshop under the professional guidance of Mr. Mahidhara Davangere. The workshop was conducted on 2nd, 5th, 7th and 12th of March 2012. He started with the very basics and some interesting shortcuts, as most of us were new to excel. Gradually he progressed to the mathematical and operational functions. He also taught us to create and modify spreadsheets as well as to author web pages with links, complex formatting specifications, create macros and scripts.

All these helped us to gain an overview and understand excel as a calculator, a decision support tool, a data converter or even a display spreadsheet for information interpretation. Finally a test was conducted which assessed our learning over the 4 days.

In conclusion I would like to state, that it was a great learning experience and we are indebted to our professors for making this course possible.

Coach Calls - A Workshop on Coaching

Coaching is one step ahead of training and CUIM-HR thought of taking this extra leap to make the HR juniors aware of the recent trends in this field. For this, we had two-day session on coaching which was led by Mr. Angappan from the organisation ‘Coach Calls.’ Though everyone had their worry about the upcoming exams, presentations, assignments etc. it was a pleasure to see most of the junior HR’s turn up for the session.

Coach Angappan, introduced us to the basic concepts of coaching, with the Iceberg Model, through which we could identify the fact that the real problem of an issue didn’t lie in the top layers of the iceberg, the problem was with the base of the iceberg, which everyone has to identify in order to avoid recurrence of the same problem in a later period of our life. The group attending the workshop was enthusiastic about it and responded really well to the coach.

Ms Gundicha Salgoshem, an HR junior, shared her experiences in the light of the iceberg model, through which she could identify the major aspects of her life for which she had to pay more attention to. By sharing her experience, she was acknowledged by cheer and applause from the other members attending the workshop.

It would be a great opportunity to thank all the faculty members who had arranged this workshop, also we the junior HR batch is looking forward to have more lively activities like this, in the near future.

Solitude

I took my hand to touch that flower,
I poked my nose to smell that beautiful fragrance,
But I am amazed to know it all vanished,
And I am left all alone in this world.

I feel lonely I am sad,
Is there no one to fill my sorrows?
To remove my sadness?
And clean my tears?

See O’God! I am crying,
Because I am all alone,
With no one to love,
With no one to bless.

I feel no such emotion,
As I have started hating everyone,
This is the truth of our existence,
You and only you are there for yourself.

But I am still praying,
And hoping for happiness,
One day I would definitely feel,
The beautiful fragrance of rose and wonderful touch of flower.

Shiny Devassy Arun

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Feel free to mail in your suggestions!

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