

Occupop's Comprehensive Guide:

Build the Ultimate
Employer Brand
for Talent Acquisition

Introduction

BUILD THE ULTIMATE EMPLOYER BRAND FOR TALENT ACQUISITION

Employer brand has become a real buzz word in the last few years, but for good reason. The stats show why employer brand for talent attraction has become so important; **75% of job seekers consider an employer's brand before even applying for a job (LinkedIn)**, with **96% of companies reporting that employer brand and reputation positively or negatively impacts revenue (CareerArc)**.

But underlying these compelling stats is the real reason that having a great employer brand for talent acquisition is so important - the majority of candidates are passive, meaning they're not even looking for you! Therefore, you have to create and promote an employer brand that is going to capture their attention. With **92% of employees stating they would leave a company for another company with an excellent reputation (CR Magazine)**, even a basic investment is hugely worthwhile.

Luckily, we have created a comprehensive and easy to follow guide that will help you create an excellent employer brand without costing a year's budget, and the best part, you can start right now!

What we'll cover:

- ✓ The difference between employer brand and employer branding.
- ✓ Treating your employees like your customers.
- ✓ Examples of great employer brands.
- ✓ Understanding the employer brand ecosystem.
- ✓ The employer brand funnel for candidates.
- ✓ How to start building your employer brand.
- ✓ Defining your employer brand for talent attraction.
- ✓ Measuring the impact of your employer brand.



What is an employer brand?

Commonly, there is a lack of distinction between the term employer brand and employer branding. An employer brand is different from employer branding, but they are both used to attract and retain top talent.

- 🗨️ An employer brand is how you are perceived by your current employees and your wider reputation to potential future employees. An employer brand takes into account your employee value proposition (EVP), company culture, employee engagement and satisfaction. It is your promise to your employees and how you exhibit this.
- 🗨️ Employer branding, on the other hand, is the process of creating strategies to actively promote and maintain your employer brand. This happens both internally within the workplace and externally on platforms such as social media, careers pages and review sites, with the objective of talent attraction of both active and passive candidates.



Treat your employees like your customers

The central reason a company should develop an excellent employer brand is not for talent attraction, or even retention, but to create a happy and healthy workplace. There is so much emphasis nowadays on the consumer brand that the employer brand is seen as secondary, but **64% of consumers have stopped purchasing from a brand after hearing news of that company's poor employee treatment** (CareerArc), so it's time for companies to start paying equal, if not more attention to the employer brand.



Questions to ask yourself when comparing your consumer & employer brands:

Am I investing the same level of tech for my customers as my employees? Companies make huge investments into websites, portals and apps for their customers but fail to provide the infrastructure for their employees. Providing up to date tools & technologies to help employees be successful and productive is vital.

Am I prioritising immediate communication with my customers, but leave my candidates for weeks?

Companies have whole customer success teams to ensure customers never feel they are left without an answer but candidates can sometimes go weeks, even months without an update on their job progression status.

Do I spend huge amounts of money on ensuring my customers are satisfied but not my employees? Companies invest a lot of time and money to make sure that customers love their product or service and want to come back but often fail to offer employees fair benefits and perks for carrying out their job successfully.

Examples of great employer brands

With the rise of **Glassdoor** and **Indeed** reviews, companies can no longer hide their poor employer brand. **With 83% of job seekers stating they will research a company when considering a job (Glassdoor)**, it is in the interest of a company to actively promote and encourage employee reviews. This is further reinforced by the fact that candidates trust company employees **3x more than the company itself** to provide credible information on what it's like to work there (**LinkedIn**).

Here are a few examples of companies that have done this really well:

HubSpot: having recently won Glassdoor's 'Best Place to Work 2020' employee choice award, it is understandable why HubSpot is such an in-demand company to work for. Most importantly for HubSpot, this was an employee choice award, demonstrating that the employees themselves are satisfied and happy with working for this company. Their workforce are their biggest advocates and ambassadors, promoting the company brand individually on social media and review sites.

Salesforce: Salesforce have won various awards over the years including UK best place to work (super large category) and excellence in wellbeing. Salesforce actively promotes their inclusion & diversity strategies, continuous learning and a positive adaptable company culture. They act on current workforce trends rather than just speaking on them, and their employees admire them for it.



AirBnb: having a winning employer brand can sometimes be demonstrated in how you treat your employees during difficult times. This is definitely the case for AirBnb. Unfortunately due to the impact of COVID-19, the organisation had to let go of 25% of their workforce. But how Brian Chesky, CEO of AirBnb, handled the situation showed the importance of living by your brand message, values and mission. He wrote a compelling open letter that focused on the human side of business rather than the figures and actively helped employees being let go to find new opportunities.

Greggs: Greggs is an excellent example of keeping up with trends to attract a workforce. From the vegan sausage rolls to the Greggs Foundation which helps communities and individuals with mental health issues, Greggs understands that employees don't want to work for a company that isn't actively adding value back. They are now seen as a top ethical brand to work for and have gained huge positivity around their interview process.



Understand the employer brand ecosystem

The employer brand ecosystem demonstrates the crossover between your employee experience and your candidate experience. This is the matrix of the various elements that make up an employer brand and shows the impact of one side to the other.

For example, if you do not have a positive company culture that you can't promote internally you will have unengaged employees. In addition, you will be unable to promote your culture on your careers page which will have an impact on your talent attraction. Therefore, an excellent employer brand has a direct bearing on both attraction and retention.

Attraction & Retention



● *Employee experience*

● *Candidate experience*

The employer brand funnel for candidates

The image to the right is a reimagining of the well-known marketing funnel. The theory is that at each stage of the funnel you should be providing your leads with relevant content and bringing them along the journey, all with the goal of influencing their decision to choose you.

In terms of the recruitment journey, at each stage of the funnel you should be providing your candidates with relevant content and bringing them along the hiring journey; educating, informing and delighting them. The funnel should be designed to answer all questions candidates might have on their journey.

The last step, traditionally called 'conversion' is marked 'apply or hire' because the previous elements within the funnel may be relevant before applying for a position and throughout the candidate journey before hiring. Candidates might apply quickly but want to learn more along the hiring process and need more consideration information i.e. what employee development you offer or your well-being approach.



The Employer brand funnel for candidates

Build your employer brand

The first step in building your employer brand is thinking about what your current and future employees want from you as a business, what will keep them motivated and encourage them to promote your brand to others. This is achieved through focusing on employee experience and company culture and should now be reconsidered with the global pandemic in mind.

Employee experience is not to be confused with work experience i.e. compensation, benefits and job tasks, it's the feeling individuals get from their jobs and the place they work. It is broken down into:



✓ **The work environment:** with many employees now remote working, have you ensured that they are equipped with the best possible environment to work in? Companies, for example, sent individuals laptop stands and desks to assist in creating a functional workspace. Further to this, when individuals start to return to work, will the work environment elevate the fears employees might have around hygiene and social distancing?

✓ **Employee development:** tenure for a younger generational workforce is now much shorter, less than **2 years on average (Independent)**. Employers need to focus on developing and nurturing their talent, showing a vested interest in their future, encouraging them to stay with their organisation.

✓ **Tools & tech:** reflecting back to the earlier chapter on treating your employees like your customers, identify gaps and opportunities to see where you can automate, modernise and improve your employees working capabilities.



✓ **Performance management:** we are shifting from the once yearly annual review to the more frequent ongoing performance management model. The pandemic has led to a great opportunity to do this as roles and responsibilities and how we communicate with each other has altered.

Your **company culture** shouldn't change as a consequence of COVID-19 i.e. you shouldn't change your values or principles, but how you approach your culture will need to be adapted. Company cultures that promote collaboration, holistic well-being and employee engagement are all the companies that have the most satisfaction and the best brands. These companies encompass culture in everything they do through their values and operations and ensure that it is instilled in their employees. **Company culture should be more prominent than ever before to make up for the physical distance.**



The most effective way to learn and develop on the previous points is by asking the people that work for you. You might develop a very comprehensive strategy for employee experience and company culture but if your employees aren't satisfied or there is misalignment, then these strategies are pointless. **Employee feedback is the most important element in establishing your employer brand.** Pulse/ongoing surveys are a great way to achieve this. Tools like **Peakon** and **Glint** can help you gain insights effectively and on an ongoing basis.

It is advisable to break up your surveys into three parts, taking the global pandemic into consideration, as your brand and what your employees want and need will invariably have changed. Here is what we suggest as the 3 areas of focus:

1. How your brand was perceived by employees before COVID-19.
2. How your employees feel during this time/how is your company dealing with the pandemic.
3. What your employees want in the "new normal".

Define your employer brand for talent attraction

Once you have carried out your employee surveys you will have all the data you need to create or pivot your brand accordingly. Focus on these areas with talent attraction in mind:

EVP: review your employee value proposition. This may need to be adapted in light of the pandemic. What are you offering your employees and what is your promise to them?

Redesign your job descriptions: review what is actually required in job roles and what needs to be included in a job description. Don't underestimate the importance of promoting your redefined brand and your EVP within your job descriptions.

Adapt your benefits & perks package: consider, based on your employee feedback, what will be most important to your individual employees going forward.

Update your interview process: traditional interview processes are dead! Coronavirus has taught us that companies can hire

completely remotely and successfully without ever needing to meet an individual. There is now a huge opportunity to open up your talent pool outside of your office radius so it's worthwhile to invest in a process that is efficient and manageable from anywhere without compromising the quality of hires. Further to this, the biggest candidate experience issue is the hiring process, there is an opportunity to modernise and improve this process and in turn, create a more positive employer brand.

Promote the technology you offer: as mentioned, technology demonstrates a company's investment into an employees experience, enabling them to do their job to the best of their ability and achieve job tasks in a more efficient way.

Look to the future: a brand that thinks ahead and knows where it is going is a brand that someone will believe in. Strategise with your business leaders on the immediate, short term and long term goals for the business and who you need to hire to achieve these goals.

Measure the impact of your efforts

It is important to ensure that the impact of your employer brand and the measurements you take will have a bearing on your employee satisfaction, engagement and ultimately, attraction & retention. You can measure your employer brand efforts in the following ways:

Retention rates: though similar, retention rate and turnover rate measure different things. Turnover rate measures the number of people that leave within a period and your retention rate measures those who stay for a certain period. The importance of tracking your retention rate is that it gives you insight into the employer brand and the initiatives that influence your employees to stay or leave.

Employee reviews: if an employee is compelled enough to leave you a review it demonstrates their true feelings about your brand, positive or negative. Carry out an audit of sites where you have reviews, marking down recurring trends. This will give you insights on how your brand is perceived by employees and where there are potential areas of focus required.

Employee referrals: much like the previous point, if employees are happy enough within your company to recommend a job to a friend, it is an excellent demonstration of your brand and positive employee experiences. You will also have an instant employee ambassador that can be used for recruitment marketing campaigns, candidate content and testimonials.

Employee experience surveys: as previously mentioned, you want to ensure that your employees experiences are aligned with your vision of yourself as a brand and company. The best way to do this is through surveys or more recently, net promoter scores (NPS). Another way to do this is through exit interviews. **Exit interviews** are an excellent way to establish where you stand with outgoing employees in an honest and open environment.

Onboarding process: your onboarding process is your first chance to promote your employer brand to your new employees. A good onboarding process should show a company's vested interest into an employees position within the company and into their future but also highlight your promise to your employees and the importance of your employer brand.

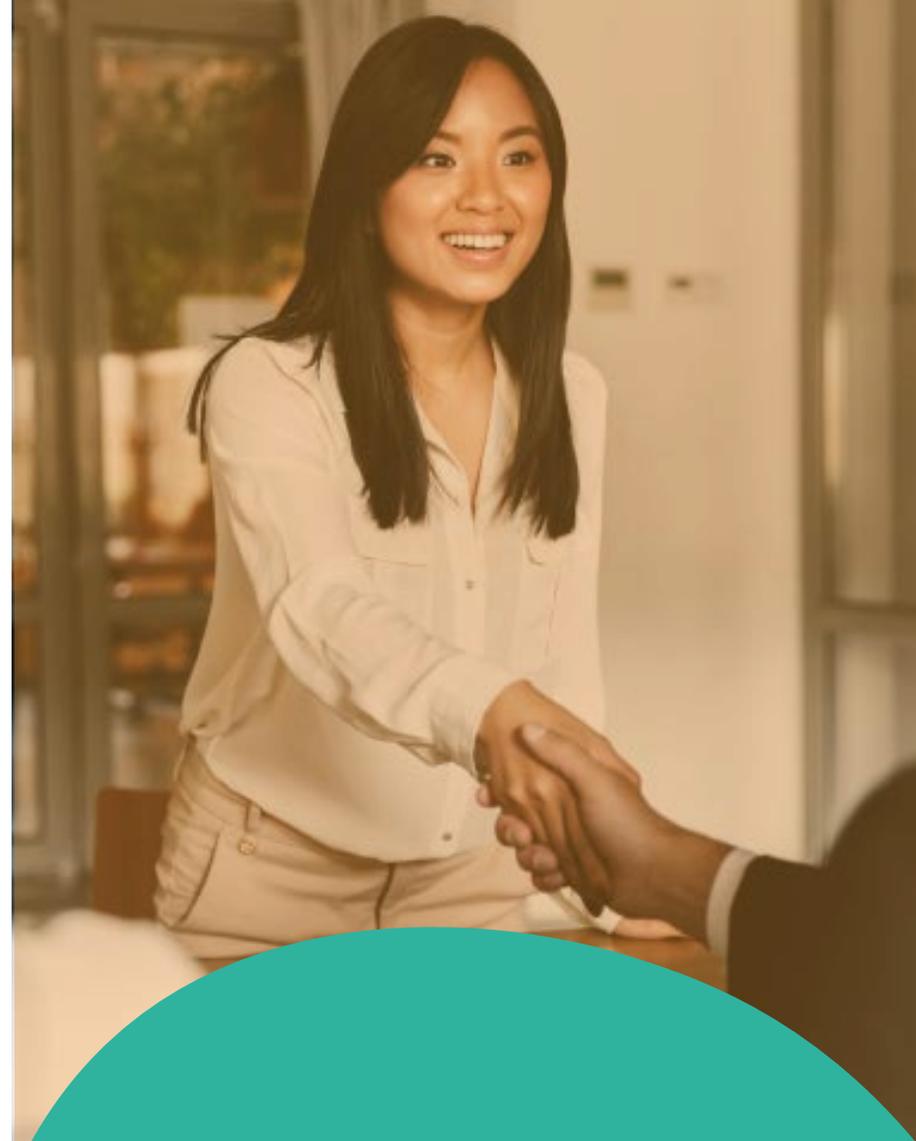
Conclusion

The impact of your employer brand starts the moment a candidate engages with you. The important takeaway for companies is that they ensure the candidate has a positive experience and association with your brand from the get-go. Once candidates apply for a role within an organisation the experience can be greatly enhanced by the use of an applicant tracking system like **Occupop**.

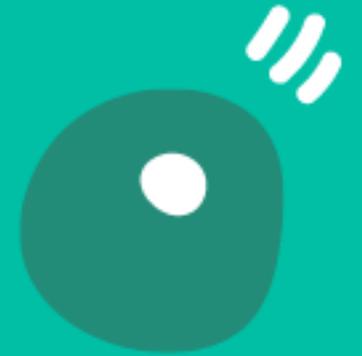
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