

Building an Employer Brand

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Abstract— One of the challenging roles of Human Resource Management function is recruitment and placement of employees at various levels of organization. Organizational effectiveness is a big challenge in recruitment activities since that is the beginning of a philosophy that will result in achievement of the aims of recruitment that arises out of the philosophic commitment. The present paper explores the various organizational philosophies in acquiring talented employees through recruitment process that will ultimately result in employer brand building. The paper will consider first the various parameters which contribute to organizational brand building and then see how it will match the efforts to the management philosophies guiding the activities. Innovation as we are aware is a key factor, and newer skills and software have a long term impact in the process. Drivers of investment priorities and policies for recruitment software, out sourcing services and other parameters will be considered for an evaluation of the various processes and strategies for achieving the recruitment results. Potential costs and benefits will also be analyzed to arrive at conclusions and suggest ways and means of building a lasting brand. Various shortcomings in the recruitment policies also will be analyzed to suggest better strategies

Index Terms—Recruitment a challenging role of HRM, philosophy of management, talented employees, parameters for organizational effectiveness, key factors of innovation, software for recruitment, shortcomings, drivers of commitment for better strategies

I. INTRODUCTION

The recently published Webster Buchanan Research report analyses the findings of a survey of a hundred Human Resource directors and managers in the UK, carried out some time ago. The survey examined a broad range of people management issues, from absence management to investment in software and services. Key findings include Shortcomings in managing absence, lopsided Philosophies on recruitment, Investment in software and other priorities, poor analytical skills and perception of the usefulness of software. People are naturally social. They love to talk, engage. They are hungry for information. When forming a relationship, they want honesty, authenticity, integrity, transparency and communication, two-way communication. Relationships sell. When looking at employment branding, people want relationships with people, not faceless, bureaucratic

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companies. So the key is allowing people to have transparent, trustworthy, two-way communication with your company. And yes, a relationship.

Many companies spend a lot of money on their corporate brand identity. But they spend little or no time on defining an employment brand. Indeed some companies are so confident of their own brand image that they believe their corporate brand is enough to attract people to work for them. Amazingly many well-known corporate brands are nightmares to work for, as the arrogance of senior leadership and management feel it is a career pleasure to work for them and spend no time on developing/retaining their core assets. The brand of a business is *how it builds and packages its identity, from its origins and values, and what it promises to deliver to emotionally connect employees so that they in turn deliver what the business promises to customers. Building the employment brand from inside the business, with a consistent substance, voice, and authenticity, may be the most powerful tool a business can use to recruit and emotionally engage employees.*



Figure 1: Elements of Recruitment

II. OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The dynamic changes happening in the business environment need no explanation. But how companies cope with the situation will matter for business success. One of the ‘key areas’ for successful business is recruitment. Companies are vying with one another to attract the best talent from the skewed talent pool that is available in the global market. With this in view the researcher has attempted to find answers to the following research questions and problem areas.

1. Environmental changes in business scenario
2. Challenges of environment on recruitment today
3. How to build an ‘Employment Brand’
4. How companies presently deal with the challenges
5. Suggestions for future brand building of employers

While doing a preliminary literature survey, the researcher was mildly surprised by the amount of published work in the area and to find answers to the above research questions, it was found adequate to classify the literature available and analyze it to arrive at meaningful conclusions that would satisfy the objective of research.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The current global recruitment landscape is changing. The global war for the 'best' talent is real; talent is geographically mobile and happy to move for the best job; talent is more demanding, not only in pay but career progression and training and development; the experienced talent pool is shrinking in volume; convergence of talent, as recruiters fighting in a smaller talent pool attract candidates across different sectors; the graduate pool is scarily becoming "less skilled" as graduates come out of universities with watered-down degrees, ill-preparing them for working life; talent is less loyal and happy to switch companies every two years on average; competitors are getting smarter in mapping out talent pools and attracting your staff away; and recruitment agencies are failing to be creative in attracting *unique* talent to their databases, hence perpetuating "recruitment chess" of the same talent across companies.

Why do people join at different points on the destination? Some people know your brand and have a feel for your company and hence can reach the end of the journey quickly. Others may not have even heard of your company and hence a long journey of discovery and education is waiting. The key is how you attract their attention and how you engage with them. Social media is a great vehicle to take people on that voyage of discovery and hence asking oneself some deep questions about why social media is the key.

So, the organization goal is to create engaged communities who spread the word. That means any communication has to be two-way and interesting/ informative/entertaining to the reader. I have to admit that recruiting is going to change the Internet. Well I strongly believe that the speed of recruitment is the key, it must be fast and easy to allow candidates and recruiters to be in direct contact quickly. Many hold the view "recruitment is a sales and marketing exercise, not purely an HR task" and that organizations need "a good corporate image, marketing skills to identify the best candidates, and sales skills" to encourage them to join their organisation. HR will start to lose out in the race for talent if it fails to get involved with social media such as Face book, Twitter and Linked-In to reach potential recruits.

According to a new IBM survey, less than half of global CEOs believe their enterprises are adequately prepared to handle a highly volatile, increasingly complex business environment. CEOs are confronted with massive shifts that, according to the study, can be overcome by instilling "creativity" throughout an organization. Chief executives believe that --more than rigor, management discipline, integrity or even vision -- successfully navigating an increasingly complex world will require creativity; in fact, more than 60% of CEOs believe industry transformation is the top factor contributing to the uncertainty, and the study's findings indicates a need to discover innovative ways of managing an organization's structure, finances, people and strategy. The study, which involved 1,500 chief executive officers from 60 countries and 33 industries worldwide, also uncovers starkly divergent strategic concerns and priorities among CEOs in China, Japan, Europe and North America.

Organizational effectiveness is about each individual doing everything they know how to do and doing it well; in other words organizational efficiency is the capacity of an organization to produce the desired results with a minimum expenditure of energy, time, money, and human and material

resources. The main measure of organizational effectiveness for a business will generally be expressed in terms of how well its net profitability compares with its target profitability. Additional measures might include growth data and the results of customer satisfaction surveys. Highly effective organizations exhibit strengths across five areas: leadership, decision making and structure, people, work processes and systems, and culture. For an organization to achieve and sustain success, it needs to adapt to its dynamic environment. Evaluating and improving organizational effectiveness and efficiency is one strategy used to help insure the continued growth and development of an organization.

Measuring organizational effectiveness can be inaccurate, since each individual will have a different list of criteria and priorities to weigh and consider through self-assessment. Understanding a company's level of organizational effectiveness is important for several reasons: it serves as a check-in to see how well internal procedures are meeting an initial vision, it provides investors, donors, or employees with an idea of the company's strengths, and it highlights areas of ineffectiveness that can be the focus of improvements. In many cases, a business's success or failure cannot be measured by financial performance as well. Even a company that is currently making a profit may be ineffective if it is failing to meet the core values of its mission statement, attract and retain talented workers, and plan for the next generation of projects. Organizational effectiveness measures the big-picture performance of a business, across a broad range of criteria. Financial performance, long-term planning, internal structure, and adherence to core values may all be critical components in understanding organizational effectiveness.

To get a clear idea of an organization's effectiveness, it is important to create a clear list of criteria to assess. No two organizations will have the same list of criteria, which is why many for-profit and non-profit groups measure effectiveness through self-assessment. Employees and company personnel are often in the best position to intimately understand the needs, goals, and performance of their company. Self-assessment of effectiveness can also help company personnel reconnect with the initial mission of an organization. By working creatively to invent new business strategies for areas of ineffectiveness, workers may develop a stronger sense of loyalty, purpose, and dedication to the job. Since organizational effectiveness is difficult to express in a concrete formula, a company may choose to state the results of an assessment through specific goals achieved or desired. Toning up areas of ineffectiveness can also be tremendously beneficial to an organization. Areas that need improvement give a company a concrete strategy for the future, and allow workers, shareholders, donors, or customers to get excited about the improvements coming down the pipeline..

Organizational effectiveness has a very broad and often vague definition, so much so that most sources explain the concept by example rather than definition. Basically, the effectiveness of a business constitutes its ability to perform a function with optimal levels of input and output. Companies use organizational effectiveness to measure any number of things, from the relationship between employee performance and company profits to the correlation between manufacturing processes and production volume. No set parameters exist for organizational effectiveness and it follows no definitive mathematical formula -- each organization creates its own method of measuring effectiveness. Measuring effectiveness

can help a small business without the ability to absorb ineffective processes modify its approach to avoid loss. Organizational efficiency proves much easier to calculate than organizational effectiveness in mathematical terms. Measuring organizational efficiency often entails little more than examining the relationship between company expenditure, equity and debt capital and profits. Measuring organizational effectiveness mathematically requires quantifying values. For instance, a company measuring the effectiveness of employee performance must create mathematical values representing employee work input and production output. Upon creating these values, someone must carefully monitor them and create a matrix displaying the relationships between quantified values.

IV. TALENT MANAGEMENT AND RECRUITMENT

The ability to attract and retain the best talent in the market is the key for any organization. One guide to employer branding examines how organizations can strengthen their relationship with existing and potential employees, and external stakeholders through the effective communication of the brand's values, personality and culture and creating a strong employer brand.

Employer branding is therefore about effectively communicating your organization's values, personality and culture to create the desired perceptions. Employer branding affects every touch point the organization has with the employee, starting with the recruitment process. It then extends to every aspect of their employment including; training and development, support networks, the development of career paths and benefits and incentives, right through to their exit from the organization and beyond.

A clear and defined employer brand can offer significant benefits to your organization. It can significantly improve application rates and put your company in the enviable position of having a wide pool of talent to choose from. In tight recruitment markets, where competition for the best talent is fierce, it can also help keep the organization top of mind, make your company stand out in a crowded market and provide compelling reasons to join your company rather than going elsewhere. In companies where values, personality and desired behaviors have been deeply embedded across the organization employers are also likely to benefit from increased engagement from employees. Greater employee engagement and motivation has been shown to result in greater productivity and higher retention rates – all of which contribute to retaining skills and knowledge, and ultimately improving your bottom line. Increased engagement with the brand will also help build employee loyalty reducing the risk of losing your best people to competitors, and therefore avoiding the financial implications of recruiting and on-boarding their replacements.

Attracting new talent

Attracting new talent is the first stage of any recruitment process and whilst it is widely recognized that in order to attract applicants organizations need to promote the strongest attributes of the organization, what many fail to recognize is that they may be fighting a losing battle if the pre-existing perceptions held by employees aren't addressed. Consider every encounter a job seeker may have had with your organization – these previous encounters will have already created an impression of your brand and could potentially

determine whether they decide to even apply for a role or not. It is also highly likely a potential applicant will research your company, whether looking at the careers section of your website or tapping into the experiences of others on social networking sites, so it's crucial the information you provide, or the experiences of others, support your core messages.



Figure 2: Attracting Talent

By understanding existing perceptions and the people you are trying to attract you can also create a more compelling case for you as an employer. For example, focusing on more than just technical requirements in job specifications and considering why a role would be attractive, what your organization can offer (culture/work life balance/benefits etc) and what would make you more appealing than other companies or opportunities goes a long way to developing a strong employer brand. Similarly ensure that the careers section of your website reflects the brand to its full potential. Remember to treat all applicants with respect and courtesy. Whether they are right for the role or not, they have invested time and interest in your brand and are potential brand advocates and their opinions should not be disregarded. Your employer brand should be reinforced regularly; employees need to be reminded of the qualities that first attracted them to the organization. More importantly though you need to deliver on the brand promises you have made to those employees, whether through reward and recognition, training and development or a clearly defined career path. Brand reputation is built on perceptions that are matched by the actual experience of engaging with the brand.

V. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Global business environment is changing. As the findings of IBM survey of CEOs indicate innovation is the key to success in an increasingly complex business environment. Creativity and innovation in turn can come about from new recruits who are likely to have out of box thinking. There is a growing perception that Recruitment is not the concern of only Human Resources but more of marketing to identify candidates from industry through networking suitable for filling up vacancies. Social media is a good vehicle to keep tracking the prospective candidates who will gel with your organization philosophy and climate.

In this complex environment social media is important to communicate the organization's philosophy and commitment. The expansion of the power of the Internet communication is unstoppable. The "Twitter revolutions" all over the world show that people are grasping and using technology to communicate their views. Social media is not about readymade candidates to fill your vacant positions. It will not lead to immediate mass new hires or pipeline. It is a vehicle to take people on a journey; a journey that people will board at

different junctures but when reaching the destination, the goal is that they either want to work for your company or they are Brand Ambassadors. Brand Ambassadors are people who may not want to work for you, but they participate in discussions, sing your song to friends and act as a champion of your brand.

Employer brand building exercises have to be on an ongoing basis to attract and retain talent. An employer brand refers to the perceptions key stakeholders, and more specifically current and potential employees, have of your organization. It is about how they view the company; from how you conduct yourselves in the market, through to what they think it would be like to work for your organization. An effective employer brand presents your organization as a good employer and a great place to work and can, as a result, help with recruitment, retention and generally affect market perception of your company. A detailed account of the efforts that companies can initiate is given under the heading of Talent management. Just like building brand equity for your products this exercise has to be carried out by companies so that an Employer brand is created to automatically attract and retain talent. The results of your efforts can be seen through the effortless recruitment process!

Companies deal with these challenges through creative ways of talent management and company brand building exercises. Sometimes help is sought with an external consultant and also through recruitment soft ware to screen and develop a pool of employable talented people so that when the need arises, this pool can be tapped. One of the important suggestions for Organizational effectiveness is Talent management and through this philosophy, Recruitment and retention of employees who are committed. Recruitment, in the light of the above findings is the key for organizational performance and is becoming more and more a strategic weapon for progressive companies. Treating current weaknesses as a road map for future changes is a great way to increase effectiveness!

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