INNOVATIONS IN EMPLOYER BRANDING – A REVIEW

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Abstract

In the present competitive labor market to attract and retain the future and existing human capital, all employers try innovations and innovative practices in creating a strong employer brand which is specifically looked at as a new job responsibility of the Human Resource team. The Process of using innovative methods in employer branding starts on day one during on-boarding of employees. In the modern world where employees are displaying behavior similar to customers human resource function is facing the challenges to find creative and innovative methods to on-board new employees. The creative methods used by companies include a dance by existing employees to welcome the new Hire, joining on a Friday, a bonus to quit post orientation, a laughter club, a greeting card personally attested by CEO or senior management personnel. This paper presents the review of innovations and innovative practices which have been practiced in employer branding. It also includes the various innovative practices used by employers in branding.

Keywords: Employer branding, Employer branding model, Innovative practices.

I. Introduction

Brett Minchington (The Employer Brand Institute), defines employer branding as “the image of the organization as a ‘great place to work’ in the minds of current employees and key stakeholders in the external market” [1]. It is the ‘sum of a company’s efforts to communicate to existing and prospective staff that it is a desirable place to work’ (Lloyd 2002). Increasingly, it is likely to also be used to create what has in the popular business press recently been referred to as ‘employment brands’ building and sustaining employment propositions that are compelling and different [2]. The ‘employer brand’ was first coined by (Ambler and Barrow 1996) [3]. There are four steps to developing a strong employer brand:

a) understand your organization,
b) create a ‘compelling brand promise’ for employees that mirrors the brand promise for customers,

c) develop standards to measure the fulfillment of the brand promise,

d) ‘Ruthlessly align’ all people practices to support and reinforce the brand promise (Dr. V.T.R Vijayakumar and Mrs. S. AshaParvin 2010).

Cooper (2008) discussed employer branding in terms of “what a company has to offer its existing and prospective hires. Employer branding is all about creating a unique place in the minds of existing as well as prospective employees, this process of branding is same as product positioning done by any marketer”.

II. Employer branding model

In employer branding, the organizations follow to develop their branding image. Different organization follows the external and an internal brand. The branding that an organization projects from the external sources that includes: customers, suppliers, investors, and the public are known as external branding. The internal brand is the branding image of the employers to the current and potential employees. A well planned and implemented employer branding program may have both internal and external implications as shown in Figure 1 (Suman Kumar Dawn and SuparnaBiswas 2010).

![Employer Branding Model](source)

2.1 External Branding

External branding includes branding which is done by using external sources.

**Use of job sites** – use of job sites are one of the means for recruiting the talented human capital.

**Banners** – Banners are good ways of employer branding. They are of two types: Online or a digital banner and Street banners or a billboard advertisement. Online digital banner is placed at websites used by potential hires like job portals, online discussion forums and social media platforms to ensure high levels of visibility.

**Organizing seminar, presentation**– The employer can organize seminar, talks etc for attracting the employees.
Corporate social responsibility (CSR)-Corporate social responsibility refers to corporate getting associated with society. Some Examples include Coca-Cola company providing drinking water facility to millions of Africans or sponsoring country wide mass polio immunization program in India.

Public events– Public events create a unique ways of creating a brand image.

Newspapers – Branding can be advertised through newspapers describing the work and the experience required either through job walk in or scheduled interview.

Email – Email communications describing the company is sent to prospective employees who register with the company website or those who sign up for any newsletter with the company. This is used to communicate information about the company and projecting the company as a great place to work.

2.2 Internal Branding

Internal Branding is focused on existing employees who are the best brand ambassadors to the world outside. What an employee tells his family and friends about his place of work will make a big difference to the brand perception.

Front office – Front office should be handled by the receptionist who always maintains freshness and welcomes the guests with courtesy.

Stays interview – HR department can always conduct stay interviews in which they can interact with the employee and ask them regarding their career prospects. These feedbacks could be analyzed and therefore an internal brand image of the organization can be created.

Exit interview – An exit always carries a fair chance of initiating the chain reaction among the employees.

Employee satisfaction- Employee satisfaction should be measured through a survey on a periodic basis to assess the level of employee satisfaction. This exercise provides objective feedback about the company from the viewpoint of employees at same time it also makes your existing employees feel that their voice is heard.

Policy information– A policy should be consistent and reliable for a longer period of time. Customer orientation - Customers are always the most important factors in business activities. The workforce should always be motivated towards delivery of customers’ perceived requirements.

Employee participation– Employee participation in internal events such as competitions, sporting events, festival celebrations are very common avenues for building a brand among employees. Creating a perception of fun filled workplace will be a big boost to employer branding efforts.

Trained employees– The organization should provide proper training to the employees.
III. Literature Review

Muhammad AwaisMemon and Dr. Nadir Ali Kolachi [5], in this paper it is based on the premise that today’s competition for talent acquisition has forced human resource department and the marketing department to work on a unified strategy for employee branding. The findings of this research study suggest potential fit between HR activities and marketing metrics. This study also propounds a model that concludes important issues to be addressed by employee branding efforts. Suman Kumar Dawn and SuparnaBiswas [6], in this article they discuss about Indian companies that have successfully managed to build an employer brand and how it has helped them to effectively recruit and retain the best of human resources.

Pierre Berthon, et al [7], identifies and operationalizes the components of employer attractiveness from the perspective of potential employees. Specifically they develop a scale for the measurement of employer attractiveness. N Malati and PratikshaTiwari [8], in this paper, the authors tries to compare the employee branding practices of three top Information Technology companies by size- TCS, Infosys and Wipro to compare and contrasts their employer branding practices. This paper observes with citations that branding practices of TCS and Wipro are significantly different while Infosys has practices common to both the organizations.

Dr. V.T.R Vijayakumar and Mrs. S. AshaParvin [9], begins by defining the concept of Employer Branding practices carried out by the organizations to attract talents which help them to move towards their vision.

Dr. ShivdasiniSingh Amin and ShilpaBhaskar [10], in this paper describe about employer branding strategies in India which are practiced by companies in various functions of Human resource department specifically focused on recruitment.

Meera Singh [11], presents the overview of employee branding through talent management for customer satisfaction. The task of HR is to support the role of the employee branding through talent management.

Michelle Wallace et al [12], discusses employer branding and industry image as two important components of attraction strategies and describes ways companies can maximize their brand awareness in the employment market to both current and future employees.

IV. Innovative practices used by employers in branding; companies practice welcoming new employees

The new employee must be greeted warmly on their first day and this might include the programs like welcoming with a song, dancing, a round of applause, a surprise event to make the first day on the job memorable. On boarding which is also referred as ‘induction’ in many organizations is a week-long event to ensure that the practices,
values and ethos of the organization is effectively communicated to the new hires. This helps the hires adjusted to the social and performance aspects of their new jobs quickly and smoothly. Onboarding program varies widely across industries and organizational culture. Almost all organizations today have a well-documented process of on-boarding which lists down set of tasks to be completed by different stakeholders including the manager of the new hire. It’s well known fact that on-boarding takes time - using milestones - 30 – 60 – 90 – 120 days on the job up to 1 year post-organizational entry. Getting all the new employee paperwork completed on their first day is a great way to check that off the list and get new employee on their way to being productive. Training sessions are scheduled so the employee can learn special skills necessary to perform the job. Helping a new hire to socialize with peer group and existing employees is also an important step in onboarding which ensures an employee stays for long time with the organization. Outline company expectations and values. Take the new hire on a tour and personally introduce them to any team members with whom they will interact directly. This helps to make the new hire feel welcome, and helps existing employees feel valued. Having a team lunch to welcome new hire to the group helps new team member the opportunity to meet everyone in a casual setting before getting right into the training process. Assigning one of your veteran or top employees to mentor the new hire has a twofold affect; the new team member now has a confident, someone they can turn to, while the veteran employee gets empowered with the responsibility of helping to train new employees. A small welcome gift that is meaningful and related to the business can be a nice gesture that they are now part of the team.

V. Conclusion

The review briefs about the concepts of employer branding. It also briefs the various innovative branding practices followed to attract employees by the Indian organizations. Employer branding innovation is an important dimension to maximize the productivity and organization performance and commitment of employees. A ‘Great Place to work’ image will help an organization to attract the best of Human resources which will have a direct positive impact on the business results.

References


