

Benefits of building employer brands around a people-centric approach

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Introduction by staff from across all levels of the organisation is key to developing an aspirational employer brand, which helps attract, engage and retain scarce talent. Going further, taking a different approach to traditional human capital - and creating a structure where each staff member has a dedicated people manager - can help sustain high performance, motivated teams, while also ensuring employee well-being.



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To position oneself as an employer of choice starts with the use of several long-term approaches that are aligned to the existing integrated workforce planning and strategies. One approach centres on employer branding. Employer branding focusses on managing perceptions of the organisation among current and potential employees, conveying the values and characteristics that define the company, and cultivating a high level of commitment, pride, and engagement towards the organisation. Apart from being crucial to attracting and retaining scarce skills, this adds visibility and can also help improve perceptions among current and potential customers.

Effective EVP

The employee value proposition (EVP) is closely linked to employer branding and addresses the intangible ways in which the business can attract the skills that they require, while keeping employees engaged and motivated. The EVP must be unique, authentic, relevant and compelling to an organisation if it is to act as the critical driver for talent attraction, engagement and retention.

Companies need to further define the whole workforce experience, such as what makes them superior to other organisations, and what steps they can take to further differentiate themselves. The marketing and communications team will play an instrumental role in both these areas, by telling the unique story of the company and its people. This includes a focus on content that promotes company culture, employees' experience, internal events and awards, goals and

achievements.

Effective employer branding is important for potential staff to envision themselves working at your organisation - or even aspire to work for you. It also contributes to retaining existing staff by highlighting the positive work environment. To date, candidates interviewed for positions at Altron Karabina have mentioned that past videos featuring staff talking about why they love working for Altron Karabina played an important role in them wanting to work at the company.

EVP communicates the culture of the organisation and takes the focus off remuneration and bonuses as the sole benefit of working at the organisation. When implemented correctly, this results in a highly committed and productive workforce, which is the main goal of an employee-centred culture.



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Attracting the right people

Given the shortage of scarce skills in South Africa, attracting top talent has to form part of the company's workforce strategy. Internal recruitment teams play a critical role in ensuring that the company finds the right talent, with the right skill set and culture - while also taking into account inclusiveness, diversity and more - in a highly competitive job market.

Beyond the interview (which can be in person or through video conferencing), technical competency tests, feedback from references and performing appropriate psychometric tests help to identify whether the candidate would be a good fit for the position that they are applying for. There are hundreds of tests, including personality, cognitive ability, general reasoning and more that organisations can use, depending on what position they are recruiting for.

When implemented across all levels of the organisation, these types of assessments also play a major role in enabling leaders to manage employees within their teams, by understanding their strengths and areas of development, and how best to work with and support them. Having this information before a candidate even joins the organisation sets a solid foundation for the managerial relationship, and supports employees to perform to their full potential.

Since implementing psychometric assessments, which are registered by the Health Professions Council of South Africa (HPCSA), Altron Karabina has seen a significantly lower staff turnover, while this method has also proven to be especially effective when recruiting graduates who are just entering the job market.

In line with providing a positive, consistent, fair and engaging experience, successful candidates are moved through the next stages without delays. Delaying the appointment process unnecessarily can be costly when businesses are looking for scarce skills. Successful candidates are put through a comprehensive onboarding process where they are familiarised with

the organisation, its processes and procedures, performance structure, the EVP, company culture and more.



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People management 2.0

Investing in your employees is key to maintaining high levels of engagement and productivity. Using a people management approach, focus on attracting and retaining talented employees, and ensuring that the whole employee experience is excellent and welcoming.

Regular meetings with 'people managers' allows employees to build a trusted relationship with them over the long term, thus helping the organisation to create a more positive employee experience.

An important part of building high-performance teams is learning to work with people with different personalities, and here people management plays a crucial role.

It should be noted that people management is not a one-size-fits-all solution, and large companies may need different approaches and structures to become more people-centric organisations.

Building a people-centric brand

The responsibility for building a strong employee brand and rich employee experience lies across the breadth of the organisation - from the top leadership to middle management. It requires bringing together different departments such as marketing, recruitment and people management. It should definitely include existing employees, who are the company's biggest brand ambassadors, and can even play an important role in finding the right talent from within their own professional networks.

There is a growing opportunity in the market for companies to create a role within the organisation that will focus not only on traditional HR initiatives, but on EVP, including employee engagement, experience, wellbeing, and performance, as well as career path development, succession planning, surveys, rewards and recognition and much more.

Measuring the success of employer branding and EVP initiatives is a challenge, as these approaches are continually evolving. While it can be simpler to focus on metrics such as performance and retention, it has to be taken into account that external factors influence this. One also has to look at employee engagement, candidate quality, how successful the organisation is in filling vacancies, the employee experience and even the customer experience through net promoter scores (NPS). Regular staff surveys are insightful for the business to understand whether what they have implemented as an EVP is working and whether it contributes to employee retention.

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