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Five Ways to Up-Level your Employer Brand

Key Recommendations for Companies from
our 2018 Global Brand Health Report



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A strong employer brand can be among a company's strongest assets, helping to lay the foundation to attract the best talent and achieve long-term business goals. But crafting a great employer brand isn't as easy as it sounds. It runs much deeper than your company brand, which is usually a reflection of your market, your customers, and financial success. An employer brand reveals your company DNA: it tells the story of your workforce; it showcases your culture as an organization; and it features your core values like market leadership, employee empowerment and diversity of thought.

Unfortunately, employer brand isn't something you can just conjure out of thin air. It takes a great deal of time, planning, innovation and an investment in and by your people to get it right. And as our Global Brand Health Report reveals, a strong employer brand is exactly what today's tech candidates are looking for. This e-book is designed to give you an action plan for improving your employer brand with various recommendations, all based on the feedback from real tech talent.

Why Employer Brand Matters

As recruiters are well aware, technology recruiting is highly competitive. Top candidates are in high demand and hold most of the cards in the recruiting process. The top 10 percent of candidates are often gone from the marketplace within 10 days.¹ There are a plethora of strong companies out there to compete with, and candidates are empowered with online tools, social media, market and salary benchmarks and other information to help guide them to their desired employer.

That means recruiters must always be thinking creatively to put their best foot forward with a strong employer brand that makes a lasting impression. They must understand what candidates are looking for, and take steps to meet those needs. A well-crafted employer brand — and most importantly a strategy for using that brand to engage candidates and convert them into new hires — can actually do a lot of the heavy lifting for you and make your recruiting efforts easier.

Top 10%

of candidates are often gone from the marketplace within 10 days

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(www.ere.net/top-candidates-are-gone-within-10-days-so-assign-each-a-hire-by-date/)

Key Takeaways from the Brand Health Report

Our 2018 Global Brand Health Report features a detailed analysis of technology talent preferences in 12 cities worldwide: which companies tech talent are most interested in, what attracts them to an employer's brand, how they want to be engaged and key motivators to accept or reject an offer.

Summary of Results

Top 5 Factors Job Seekers Consider When Applying

- 01 Compensation and Benefits
- 02 Company Culture
- 03 Opportunity to Learn New Skills
- 04 Challenging Technical Problems to Solve
- 05 Team

Top 5 Reasons Employees Leave Their Jobs

- 01 Higher Base Salary
- 02 New Challenges and Problems to Solve
- 03 Location and Commute
- 04 Not Feeling Valued by Manager
- 05 Higher Title

Top 5 Factors that Turn Job Seekers Away

- 01 No Interested in the Product
- 02 Poor Reputation
- 03 Not Interested in the Mission
- 04 Negative Company Culture
- 05 Lack of Knowledge About the Company

Top 5 Reasons Candidates Engage with a Company

- 01 Salary Range Up Front
- 02 Work Experience Expectations
- 03 Personalized Message
- 04 Recognizable Company Name
- 05 Friend/Former Colleague Works There

Recommendations for Recruiters

Follow these five ideas to form your employer brand action plan and begin differentiating yourself to tech talents in the market.

01 Distinguish Employer Brand from Company Brand

It may be tempting to simply apply the qualities of your company brand as you define your employer brand, but this tactic will put you on the wrong path. Your company brand is likely peppered with language that is designed to resonate with end users (either businesses or consumers). It usually focuses on product capabilities, business benefits and brand image, tone, and personality.

But candidates are different. They are about to pull back the curtain and see the character that exists inside your company. Company brand is often built on an ideal, not necessarily reality. Employer brand must be genuine and authentic for candidates to appreciate and respect it, and it must reflect what makes your company special on a personal, day-to-day level. This is a career we're talking about here, not a product that can be turned off or returned easily.

With tech talent, your employer brand should represent the product they will want to build, in addition to the product a customer will want to buy. Recruiters have a chance to turn a two-dimensional company brand into a deeper, three-dimensional portrayal of what your company is really all about. Many engineers never get a chance to see the full scope of a product and its impact on the outside world. Sell them on the big picture: show them how they will contribute to the greater value of the company, and how your unique work environment and workforce make your enterprise a desirable place to spend their days.

Company Brand

Product capabilities to a customer

Business benefits

Brand image, tone, personality

Employer Brand

What makes your company special to employees

The product candidates want to build

How a candidate would contribute

02 Show a Path to Career Development

Our Global Brand Health Report reveals some key insights into what types of professional opportunities will make a difference with candidates. Forty percent of job seekers want skills training and development to be an important focus of their employment, and sixty-four percent will leave their current company for a new company that provides better challenges and allows them to solve new problems. They welcome changes in the job landscape and look forward to overcoming challenges to cement their place in the technology world.

Recruiters should work with hiring managers to document how these roles align with each candidate's future goals and ambitions. Show them that your company is dedicated to empowering tech workers to take control of their career development, and that you offer a path (or paths) they can follow. Offering skills training is a start, but the concepts of continuous education and building a culture of learning are driving many organizations today. And be sure to make it personal. Anyone can deliver the standard pitch that candidates will be successful in their new endeavor. The key is to show them you understand their needs and can put them on a path to success that they can own.

40%

of job seekers want skills training and development to be an important focus of their employment

64%

will leave their current company for a new company that provides better challenges and allows them to solve new problems

03 Remember that Comp and Benefits Are Still Top Factors

Some things never change, and in the end, compensation and benefits still remain the top factor for more than half of all tech talent. As the report reveals, most job seekers in every city (by a big margin) would leave their current job for a better salary. But this shouldn't be a deterrent for recruiters. We also know that it's not the only factor that candidates weigh. That's why recruiters should focus on discussing salary right from the beginning of the process. Sixty two percent of candidates said they are most likely to engage with a company if they know the salary range upfront. By discussing this early, you introduce the most important issue ahead of time to help you establish trust all the way through to the critical closing stage. That's a great foundation on which to build your employer brand.

62%

of tech talent said they are most likely to engage with a company if they know the salary range upfront



04 Make Your Company Culture Shine

Company culture has remained a major factor that job seekers look for, moving from the #3 spot last year to #2 this year (behind only compensation and benefits). That says a lot about how strongly candidates feel these days about the character of their future workplace: 45 percent are looking for the right culture fit. Accordingly, the most important thing recruiters can do is to illustrate the alignment of their core values and culture with each candidate's goals and aspirations.

If you haven't already done so, take the time and go through the process of clearly articulating your culture. Document your core values, whether that's a passion for technology, your mission to innovate, how you invest in people power, your commitment to diversity, or any other distinction that sets you apart. Be sure that the list isn't created in a vacuum; get the buy-in of multiple influencers from multiple levels of your organization to be sure that what you're saying is accurate and realistic. And even consider having your marketing team write and position your values document to ensure it is using compelling language and will resonate with tech talent audiences.

A key component of your culture is your work environment, so it's important to illustrate why yours is different. More than 70 percent of candidates express an interest in working entirely remotely, and while that may be a stretch for most companies to offer in full, look into those options and offer it at least on some level. Flexibility matters to candidates more than ever, so give them a reason to believe you'll offer a good work-life balance.

70%

of job seekers express an interest in working entirely remotely

Fifty seven percent of candidates overall want to know up front what it will be like to work at your company, and a great way to show them is to feature profiles of your most prolific employees on your social media and employment sites. Put a face on your company and invite candidates to see the personalities, skills and personal qualities that make up your rock-star workforce. Highly visible executives or other key personnel who are known in your industry are also big pulls for candidates.

And a final note on brand, culture and fit: showcasing your authentic brand is a great way of weeding out bad fits from the beginning. Once candidates see what your brand and culture are really like, they are empowered to either select in or out of your message. Selling them a false bill of goods can only hurt later, so be genuine and let them decide if they're a good fit or not. In the end, you'll pull together a more cohesive team that all share the same basic values and goals.



05 Create a Memorable Candidate Experience

Today's job seekers are particularly sensitive to how you interact with them. They insist on a good experience, from sourcing to hiring to onboarding. The experience you create early on for a candidate is an indication to them of how their experience will be as an employee. You must make a good first impression, and ensure that that impression endures throughout the recruiting lifecycle.

A great way to start is to send personalized notes to your candidates, a fact that 50 percent said would make them engage with a company, cited in our brand health report, and it was 12 percent more important for women. Candidates can see a form letter coming a mile away, so put in the extra time to customizing your messages and try to build a stronger bond up front.

When it comes to interviewing, your process should be transparent and informative. Create a reliable schedule and let them know exactly what to expect at every stage and with every interview. Set them up for success and they'll perform that much better. And on the other side of the equation, train your team to be good employer brand ambassadors. Showcase your culture and your brand throughout the interview process; show them product demos to get them excited about new features and market successes; give them access to the product and let them test drive it; and even consider take-home assignments to keep them engaged.

50%

of candidates would engage with a company if they received a personalized note

Conclusion

In today's competitive tech landscape, the data all seems to point to one immutable fact: that employer brand has become the indispensable tool for recruiting professionals. A well-honed employer brand puts your company's best assets on display, and it can have a dramatic impact on selective candidates who are clearly looking for that extra edge in their next workplace. It may take some innovative thinking and focused effort, but your efforts today will pay dividends later as you make your case to top talent in every one of your markets.

For full results from our 2018 Global Brand Health Report, visit www.hired.com/brand-health-report

