

EMPLOYEE BRANDING: A NEW MANTRA OF EMPLOYEE RETENTION FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH OF ORGANIZATION

Yashaswini Mishra *

Abstract:

In the current globalized competitive world, each company looks for the best talent around. Henceforth, there prevails a situation where, world class reputed organization have to come up with jaw dropping packages to ensure that talented employee can become a part of their work structure with admirable career opportunities. So to bring loyalty and commitment the business houses have started developing various retention tactics. For that 'Employee Branding', is used to internalize the desired brand image and are motivated to project the image to customers and other organizational constituents. It ensures a sense of belongingness in the people and this makes them to play an integral role in the achievement of success. Since employee brand is the value of a company that exists in the corporate, one can say that in the present scenario, one of the goals of a company is certainly related to employee branding which is to achieve customer satisfaction. In this paper the authors spotlight the significance, modes and various strategies followed by Indian corporate in employee branding.

Key words: core values, employee branding talent management, competitive intelligence, engagement ,etc.

* **Yashaswini Mishra, KIIT School of Social Sciences, KIIT University**

INTRODUCTION

In the competitive world of today every organization aspires to become internationally strategic and sustainable. Hence to achieve this, human resources play a vital role in generating productivity in form of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. As the companies have dramatically changed in the facets of globalization, pressure for innovation, advancement, liberalization and war for acquisition of talents. So in order to make success of organization, it must come to grips with the problems of attraction and retention of talents for stimulating growth. So employee branding is a new phenomenon as a source of strategic competitive advantage has been a fundamental notion in recent years. This employee branding concept have coined by Amble and Barrow in 1996 and has been derived from perspective of marketing and management. Organization have started to give more impart on investment of employee branding as actual product branding because employee is recruited for the purpose of alignment in organizational values with individual values for building vibrant image of organization. In order to meet the demand of rapidly changing employment environment, a new innovative model "living the brand" must be established by the organization managers for strengthening brand value position in the competitive market place through retention of expertise talent. So for delivering organization interest in a novel way and enhancing brand identity, employees are required to be treated as part and parcel of organization product and customers experience of brand. Thus indulgence of employee involvement with self-concept, initiative and responsibility should be induced to be reflected in work behavior. So attempt is to incorporate socialization practices of employee branding coined with alignment of own and brand identity backed by lack of conflict for advancement of organizational goals and performance. Consequently, world class companies today need to create an employee brand to attract and retain the talented employees towards them. So due to changes in work force demographic the concept of employer branding is turnkey of success. Hence, it is the responsibility of the employer to retain their best employees through elegant retention strategies and if they do not retain them, then they would be left with no good employees.

From an HR point of view branding is very essential. If the organization has a good brand image in the market, it will help in right placement of workforce right in having control over employee but in other side it has to sell out lots of money in attraction and retention if it has no brand name.

This paper 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 in a successful style. Types of Employer Branding, Branding Strategy and the benefits received by the organization, challenges and suggestions in the employee branding for sustainability in the flow of competition.

RISING IMPLICATION OF EMPLOYER BRANDING

In today's competitive driven market economy, companies have strong conception that their significant asset is human resource, which turn unproductivity to productivity and act as emergent tool for brand excellence. Butresearches reveal that more managers do not pay attention to it, soit's time to think how to attract right kind of job seekers for giving benefit to business through rich profitability and efficiency. Hence a hard look must be given to company's employer brand attractiveness structure to climb the corporate ladder. So a cultural shift should be done to devise branding plan in such a way which will scoop up all the top talent. The relevance of employee branding is also facilitated through brushing up new technological product features and attributes for moving business forward. Word of mouth and social media oftoday's increasing social world should not be ignored in the context of employee branding. So a vivid analysis must be done to this above aspect about how to promote and tailor benefits from brand identity and positive brand influence through allocating right position and precious resource to right kind of employees. So employee branding is more critical in today'stime, a research shows the employees of good brand fills a sense of pride and trust towards their employer, as it curb attrition and right branding act as a strong motivator to gain reliability. Somangement must use the core value of organization for productive engagement of employees for responsive attitude. In the end, it is believed that if the company takes care of people, people will take care of the company.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Edwards(2009) focused on employment experience which creates value and influence tangible and intangible attributes of brand. In order to sustain and attract current employees towards establishment of unique organization value proposition, due importance should be given to economic, social, psychological aspect.

Gomez (2009) explored that employee perception and opinion regarding future and current branding strategies act as significant factors, for achieving brand success and global image through extensive research.

Kempen (2010) highlighted in creation of a mechanism through which corporate real-estate should communicate corporate brand. Focus must be given to corporate characters like structure, strategy, and design and communication system.

Jiang & Iles (2011) tried to find out the significance of organization attractiveness (OA) and employee based brand equity (EBBE). As an interview in private sector of china revealed that OA and EBBE should act as valuable factor to retain potential employees through innovative framework consist of reputation, interest, social and Economical value.

Irena bakanauskiene (2011) discussed about conceptuality of employers attractiveness and employee branding in an university. It focused on development of instrumental symbolic framework of organization attractiveness for fostering creativity through reducing turnover by retaining talented human resource.

Miles & Mangold (2011) imparted on examining factors which motivate employees to gain knowledge about brand message system from perspective of formal and Informal. So for delivering organization constituents successfully favorable outcomes like satisfaction, loyalty, and reputation must be drawn through guidance of psychological contract.

Shaari & Hussin (2012) highlighted on the relationship between brand knowledge and brand reward on brand citizenship behavior in hotel industry. He suggested theories of organizational commitment, social identity; leadership, recruitment; training and communication must be established in each organization for aligning employees brand behavior with employee engagement effectively.

Gupta (2012) gives insight into aviation sector for identifying equation between internal branding and employee branding through EBM, EVP and communication strategy. He suggested employee branding should act as a vibrant competitive tool for retaining potential employees through positioning positive corporate culture in the minds of employees, customers and stake holders.

Lepla (2013) focused on effective internal branding as a beneficial tool for service organization. Paramount importance must be given into the aspect of attitudinal outcomes of employees like

perceived autonomy, payment and reward, recognition with brand loyalty and commitment to bring successful corporate marketing culture image.

Semnani(2014) wanted to explore the role of individual and organizational values in employee branding. Study revealed some issues related to bank which must be addressed by creating identity models coined with different aspects like psychological contract, emotional intelligence, employee commitment and ethical competency.

Nancy R.jockwood (2008) Highlighted on competitive advantage of employer branding in staffing management through support of solid management. Author revealed that to achieve human capital challenge the organization should reap it through reward for retention, team based culture, Reputation as an employer choice.

N.R Aravamudhan (2009) Here in this article author wanted to give clear idea about significance of employee engagement of employer branding with bolstering two aspect internal & external support. Tangible & intangible part of an organization should be given due important for rich reputation. Here author also identified organization identity & internal branding is a powerful tool for employee branding to deliver external brand expectation.

V.Uma& R Marymetida(2012) Focused on workplace branding which leads to strong employer branding framework. Here author analyzed implication of different variable to find a way of elevation of image of company like employee centered affiliation initiative, positive word of mouth, retention programme for motivation. Research must be vibrant in the areas of emotional relationship between employer& employee for management of perception of potential employees which is not yet done.

OUTCOME OF EFFECTIVE EMPLOYER BRANDING

Employer branding is a tool to attract, hire and retain the right fit which has an impact on shareholder value, EVP, positive human capital practices, contribution to bottom line .it should be communicated to evoke emotive benefits for current and prospective employees. Thus to retain talents inside the organization not only during the bliss of the organization but also in its tough times employer branding strategy must be portrayed in actions and behaviors of leaders which will be affected by company policies and practices resulting in rich profitability.

CONCEPT OF EMPLOYEE BRANDING

A brand is more than the name given to a product, service, or organization; Employee branding is a specific kind of identity regulation by an organization, through which employees are directed to develop self-images and work orientations that are deemed congruent with managerially defined objectives (Willmott, 1993; Alvesson and Willmott, 2002; Sveningsson and Alvesson, 2003). It is the process by which employees internalize the desired brand image and are motivated to project that image to the guests. It takes the organizational brand – the characteristics and attributes that the organization wants to project about itself—and impresses it upon the employees.

Employee Branding

It is a new twist on identity regulation. It is a targeted long term strategy to manage employee's behavior so that they project brand identity of their organization products in their everyday work behavior. It is the package of functional, economic, psychological employment offering to potential and existing employees for maintaining loyalty inside and outside organization.

A STRATEGIC MODEL ON EMPLOYER BRANDING

In developing product branding strategy, a lot of factors are involved. They are i) nature of business, ii) nature of market, iii) target reception, iv) budget flexibility, v) long term mission of the organization, and vi) organizational structure. Similarly in employer branding, the organizations are following to develop their brands. Every organization has an external brand and an internal brand. The external brand is the image that an organization projects to the customers, suppliers, investors, and the public. The internal brand is the image of the employers to the employees. When properly planned and executed, an employer branding initiative can generate lively dialogue between an employer and its employees, build a rationale for a 'mutual working arrangement', and establish compelling reasons to commit to the arrangement.

INTERNAL BRANDING

Internal Branding is concerned with the current and potential employees' information about the employment experience and what is expected of them.

Front office – Always pay attention to your front office because first impression is last impression. It should be kept neat and clean with a pleasant 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, their alignment with the company, their feedback regarding their concerned departments, etc. These feedbacks could be analyzed and therefore an internal brand image of the country can be created.

Exit interview – An exit always carries a fair chance of initiating the chain reaction among the employees. By analyzing the exiting reasons, the organization can overcome the justified ones in the future.

Employee satisfaction: Employee satisfaction is always very important for any organization to grow. A satisfied employee is a productive employee. The company must create a good and positive rapport for the company in the market outside.

Policy information: A policy should be designed in such a way that it holds good even after a long period of time. A frequent internal policy change sends a message to the outer world that the company is not consistent and reliable.

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: Always try to ensure the maximum participation from the employee side, either in terms of internal events participation or external events.

Trained employees: The organization should impart proper training of employees before they are engaged in work. The training should be in all the aspects like policies, vision, mission and

activities of the organization. This will project a good picture of organization on the new employee

EXTERNAL BRANDING External branding refers to branding which is done by using external sources and which may (or may not) require some investment in monetary or other forms. The different means of doing external branding are;

Use of Job Sites – As HR the first thing which comes to the mind is recruitment, so Job sites also offer good branding opportunities through different means like Pop ups, pop ins etc. It's always better to go for pop ins as most of web browsers come with pop-up blocker

Banners – Banners are also a good mean for branding. Banners can be of both types' means Online Banner and Street banners. By Online banner, your organization name will be flashed on different web pages as per your choice and price. Street banners are good for bigger requirements.

Road Shows – Road shows are also an important mean for creating brand awareness. Corporate can organize talks, presentations, seminars etc. for attracting people towards your organization. Corporate Social Responsibility – Corporate social responsibility refers to corporate getting associated with society for some noble cause. The association can be in any mode either getting associated with a Charitable Trust or a NGO or some other public venture. Corporate can align and attach with any of these and share the stage. Always keep in mind that choose as per organization status meaning if its a small firm, do associate with a medium sized organization and if medium it can align with either of these- large or medium. Idea should be get a nice coverage in the popularity cake.

Public Events – Public events are one of the major ways of creating a brand image. An organization can participate in any of the public event and assuring that it does not get disappeared in the crowd of many brands or big names.

Newspapers – Branding can be done through newspapers as well. If you target the local public, you can go for advertisements considering the individual day circulation, target readers, rapport of newspaper, type of newspaper etc. If you target only to employ people for your workforce requirement, you can place job Ads which may seem expensive at the first glance but in terms of attracting the correct workforce, it can do magic. (g) Email – For mail ids related to job portals, you can create an auto reply which can contain brief description of the key aspects of candidate's and public interest and at the same time introducing your company to the public. It should be informative as well as crispy so that the audience reads it and just doesn't do Shift Delete.

Tagline – Create a nice, attractive tagline or a punch line for your brand and give it a significant visibility in all your branding efforts. The tag line should be in accordance with the organization values, goals, work etc. so that it reflects an overall image of the brand everywhere.

Align with celebrity – Aligning with a celebrity is also a good way of creating a brand image. But this may cost big bucks and ultimately increasing your cost dramatically. This is an expensive method of branding.

EMPLOYERBRANDINGVSEMPLOYEEBRANDING

Employer branding is the practice for alignment and generation of brand behavior with employee's behavior to project image to its external stakeholders. It is for strengthening attributes to be used for demonstration by employees.

But employee branding is considered as actual image and reputation of an organization which help to reduce competition. So HR heads are focusing on building up specialist management supports system inside the premise. It will be carried out outside with influence in proceedings of company. The management of every country has to understand a very simple fact that it can't lay a narrow focus on the employee branding. If this is done, it would only be a departmental project and would not have been entitled to be a part of the overall business strategy of the company

EMPLOYEEBRANDINGPROGRAMME

Employee branding programs are intended to impress brand attributes onto the work behavior of employees, who are then expected to infuse brand attributes throughout their work (Ind, 2001;

Mitchell, 2002; Miles and Mangold, 2004). Branded employees are expected to project the brand's identity through all of their behavior, including their demeanor, appearance, and manner of interacting with customers. Indian companies follow many tools and strategies to brand themselves and their employees. Employee branding programs include

- Regular job training
- Training in customer service or customer interaction,
- Corporate orientation
- Education in the corporate brand
- Ongoing training
- Performance evaluation
- Rewards systems that support the employees' display of on brand behaviors

SIGNIFICANCE AND BENEFITS OF BRANDING THE EMPLOYEES

Every organization must realize the concept of organization core values which is defined to the extent of productiveness and responsive attitude towards customers. As it is a belief that if company takes care of people, people would certainly take care of company. So the benefits of branding must be a reason to create “best place to work list” which are given bellow-

Showcases ones organization and highlights organization as a great place to work.

- Gives the organization a distinctive competitive edge in the labor market.
- Improves recruitment and retention.
- Builds a positive image of your organization and motivates potential "best" applicants to apply for jobs there.
- Increases employee satisfaction and pride in being an employee of your organization.
- Develops a deeper understanding of the leadership perception of the current and desired employment experience.
- Creates improved/increased/effective relationships between managers and employees.
- Promotes management practices that are respected by employees (values/goals of organization are promoted, modeled and reinforced).WhichHelps sustain growth, accommodates attrition and adds new skills and talents to your organization

EMPLOYER BRANDING IN INDIA “The Employer Branding—A Strategic Tool and long term strategy which promotes organization culture with team based employer of choice must be highlighted by human resource. To make fit between employer and employee for hiring compatibility the leading Indian firms should rethink their employee brand. It should build up opportunities for strong world economy with focus to competitive advantage. Yet, research shows that Indian companies do not always intentionally develop employer branding interventions. “Infosys, Wipro and TCS did not intentionally build their brands; rather, they focused on building a productive workplace, resulting in happy employees, and their brands were the result of that foundation,” “For other organizations in India, such as RMSI and Google, which already have strong employer brands, their goal is to ‘live’ the brand. Employee branding becomes tokenism to create a fit which will turn to become oneself through self-sustained and conscious effort as HR roles has tremendously expanded from the angle of diversity, turnaround, internalization human capital performance in India.

CHALLENGES AND SUGGESTIONS IN BUILDING A STRONG EMPLOYER BRAND

CHALLENGES

The biggest challenge in employer branding is ownership as the responsibility need balance between marketing, human resource and communication for sponsoring it. To succeed there is need of endorsement and pragmatic approach from highest level. As company has globally dispersed workforce, cultural diversity they face obstacles in implementing changes regarding clarity, capability. So enhanced level of investment should be allocated for employee branding initiatives. HR personnel need to understand the future needs of the organization and put forward a compelling business case for enhancing the company’s employer brand to attract and retain talent and build an engaged workforce. Research has shown conclusively that an engaged workforce delivers stronger financial returns and shareholder value.

SUGGESTIONS

In driving business performance, it is a trend globally, which propels companies to concentrate on the role of employees from top tier to bottom tier. As it is hard to find talented employees .so this would suggest that consistency in the delivery of employee branding is utmost important which will help In taking cream of talent through service excellence in people, product, premises

for 24*7,365 days to make employee branding live. so leading employer should conduct research in collection of information in employer brand cycle through employer branding community which include stakeholders from inside and outside. Alignment of image of company with target audience must be encouraged to deliver brand promise messages for communication touch points both online and offline. Opinion leaders of employer branding must be indulged with strategic plan to develop connection between companies. Like Philips and Google put employees at the center of their business strategy and drive improved business performance through engaging their employees to deliver a truly memorable customer experience. The significant key areas where organizations need to shift its outlook to improve their desirability as an employer to employees are like bellow-

- (1) Ensure matching of employment experience with perception of experience from outside.
- (2) Organization need to ensure that delivery system of messages about the employment offerings is done by integrated online & offline communication plan for target audience.
- (3) Companies must create a culture for building up brand ambassadors through engagement and mouth referral.
- (4) Fostering a culture of learning and development for skill & capability development to attract talent with retention.

CONCLUSION

In the increasingly competitive labor market, organization need to focus on brand management thinking for attracting and retaining talent with relevance to current and future employees. Human capital which is a great source of competitive advantage are becoming strategic power to retain talent for expansion and growth in Indian corporations. To achieve the global recognition in a sustainable manner, right kind of employee branding plays a dominant role which provides a personality to a company and helps structure recruitment. Importantly it can be concluded that to ensure the best talent to be remained in an organization for smooth operations, thrust must be given to the key factor that is the alignment between expectations and realities of working for the organization.

REFERENCES

- Jean Cushen, (2009), “ Branding employees”, *Qualitative Research in Accounting & Management*, Vol. 6 Iss 1/2 PP.102-114
- Martin R. Edwards, (2009), “ An integrative review of employer branding and OB theory”, *Personnel Review*, Vol. 39(1) PP.5-23
- KhanyapussPunjaisri, HeinerEvanschitzkyand Alan Wilson (2009), “ Internal Branding: An enabler of employees brand supporting behaviors,” *Journal of service Management* Vol.20(2),PP.209-226
- Michael Ba BanutuGomez,PatrickT.Coyle, Sandy J. Ebenhoech, Kevin A. Fallucea, ChrisM.Minetti and Michele M.Sarin,(2009), “ International branding effectiveness: The global image of Nestle brand name and employee perception of strategies and brands,” *The journal of global business issues*, Vol.3(2) PP.17-24
- NarumonKimpakorn Gerard Tocquer, (2010), “ Service brand equity and employee brand commitment”, *Journal of Services Marketing*, Vol.24 Iss. 5 PP.378-388
- Rianne Appel-Meulenbroek Dave Havermans Ingrid Janssen Anneke van Kempen, (2010), “ Corporatebranding: an exploration of the influence of CRE”, *Journal of Corporate Real Estate*, Vol. 12 Iss. 1 PP. 47 -59
- TingTing Jiang Paul Iles, (2011), “ Employer-brand equity, organizational attractiveness and talentmanagement in the Zhejiang private sector, China”, *Journal of Technology Management in China*, Vol. 6 Iss. 1 PP. 97-110
- Tobias Schlager,MareikeBodderas,Peter Maas and FoelLuccachelin,(2011), “ The influence of the employer brand on employee attitudes relevant for service branding: an empirical investigation,” *Journal of service marketing* Vol.25(7),PP.497-508
- Irena Bakanauskiene,RitaBendaravicien,RicardasKrikstolaitisandZigmasLydeka(2011), “ discovering an employer branding :identifying dimensions of employees attractiveness in University”,ISSN 1392-1142 *Organizacijuvadyba: SistminiaiTyrimai*: Vol.59,PP.1-17
- Sandra JeanquartMiles,W.GlynnMangold ,SusitaAsree and JenniferRevell,(2011), “ Assessing the employee brand: A census of one company”, *Journal of Managerial issues*, Vol.23(4) PP.491-507
- HasnizamShaari,SalnizaMd.Sallehand ZolkafliHussin(2012), “ Relationship between brand knowledge and brand rewards, and employees brand citizenship behavior; The

mediating roles of brand commitment”, *International Journal of business and society*, Vol.13(3)PP.335-354

- SanjanaGupta,(2012), “ Branding international customers in aviation sector: A case study of Indigo Airlines”, *International journal of Applied services marketing perspectives*,Vol.1(2)PP.2279-0958
- Mukesh Biswas and DamodarSuar,(2013), “ Which employees values matter most in the creation of employee branding?”,*Journal of marketing development and competitiveness*,Vol. 7(1) PP.93-100
- F.JosephLepla,(2013), “ The impact of internal branding on employee motivation and competitive advantage”,*Employment Relations Today*,Vol.40 Iss. 1 PP.19-24
- Behrouz LariSemnani and RasoulSanavifard(2014), “ Employee branding model based on individual and organizational values in the Iranian banking industry”, *Asian economic and financial review*, Vol.4(12) PP.1726-1740
- BurawatPiyachat, KuntonbutrChanongkornandMechindaPanisa,(2014), “ The mediate effect of employer engagement on the relationship between perceived employer branding and discretionary effort”, *DLSU Business & Economic Review*, Vol.24 (1), PP.59-72
- Rohit Minton, “ Employer Branding – A New HR Arena”, www.contentwriter.in
- Minchington.B(2006), *Your Employer Brand – Attract, Engage, Retain*, collective Learning Australia
- Madhukar Shukla, *Employer Branding is tokenism in India*, www.economicstimes/indiatimes.com