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Employer branding y bienestar psicosocial

Employer branding and psychosocial wellbeing

Employer branding e bem-estar psicosocial

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Resumen

La importancia del employer branding en el proceso de reclutamiento está íntimamente relacionada con el bienestar psicosocial de las personas, ya que optimiza el nivel productivo como respuesta a un clima laboral adecuado que propicia un mejor desempeño y al mismo tiempo contribuye a la creatividad e innovación. Una empresa cuyos trabajadores están motivados permanentemente gana en productividad porque el trabajador es consciente de su compromiso con la organización que le brinda la oportunidad de crecer individualmente y encuentra satisfacción en su desempeño, mediante un balance entre la vida real y el trabajo, con una remuneración que le motiva y estimula a continuar en la búsqueda de mejores logros, un empleo seguro que le da estabilidad económica y psicológica, permite la existencia de una comunicación fluida y la cooperación interpersonal, asegurando de esta manera mejores resultados. Es evidente que un buen clima laboral incide en el estado anímico, físico y mental de los trabajadores, aporta a una mejor actitud en el trabajo, y contribuye al bienestar psicosocial.

Palabras clave: Employer branding; Bienestar psicosocial; Clima laboral.

Abstract

The importance of employer branding in the recruitment process is closely related to the psychosocial well-being of people, since it optimizes the productive level as a response to an adequate work environment that promotes better performance and at the same time contributes to creativity and innovation. A company whose workers are permanently motivated gains in productivity because the worker is aware of his commitment to the organization that gives him the opportunity to grow individually and finds satisfaction in his performance, through a balance between real life and work, with a salary that motivates and encourages you to continue in search of better achievements, a secure job that gives you economic and psychological stability, allows the existence of fluid communication and interpersonal cooperation, thus ensuring better results. It is evident that a good working environment affects the mood, physical and mental state of workers, contributes to a better attitude at work, and contributes to psychosocial well-being.

Keywords: Employer branding; Psychosocial well-being; Working environment.

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Resumo

A importância da marca empregadora no processo de recrutamento está intimamente relacionada com o bem-estar psicossocial das pessoas, uma vez que otimiza o nível produtivo como resposta a um ambiente de trabalho adequado que promove um melhor desempenho e ao mesmo tempo contribui para a criatividade e inovação. Uma empresa cujos trabalhadores estão permanentemente motivados ganha em produtividade porque o trabalhador tem consciência do seu compromisso com a organização que lhe dá oportunidade de crescer individualmente e encontra satisfação no seu desempenho, através do equilíbrio entre a vida real e o trabalho, com um salário que motiva e o estimula a continuar em busca de melhores conquistas, um emprego seguro que lhe dê estabilidade econômica e psicológica, permita a existência de uma comunicação fluida e cooperação interpessoal, garantindo assim melhores resultados. É evidente que um bom ambiente de trabalho afeta o humor, o estado físico e mental dos trabalhadores, contribui para uma melhor atitude no trabalho e contribui para o bem-estar psicossocial.

Palavras-chave: Employer branding; Bem-estar psicossocial; Ambiente de trabalho.

Introduction

In today's world, skilled talent is sometimes scarce, dramatically impacting employers. This new environment implies a race for talent, which causes organizations to focus on a fresh strategy: employer branding.

At the same time, that talent requires a suitable place to thrive, connect, and be appreciated in many ways. Psychosocial wellbeing is key to an individual's desire to stay in the organization.

This work presents an approach to the concept and importance of employer branding and its tight relationship with recruitment and employee psychosocial wellbeing. Some of the most outstanding attributes associated with employer branding are explained and categorized in order of importance from a candidate's perspective. Next, additional insights are provided of the three ranked as the most important.



Literature Review

Importance of Employer Branding in the Recruitment Process

Reputation is extremely critical in organizations around the world. Any idea, information, or thought about an organization contributes to building a reputation, which inspires a specific perception in all those who come in contact with it (Lybrand, 2018). Directly linked to this reputation or brand, the employer brand reflects the value proposition towards the employees. It is how a company is seen as an employer.

Employer branding is a strategy to enhance identity (Catano et al., 2019), and Bercourt et al. (2017) define it as the efforts a company makes to help existing and prospective workers understand why it is an attractive place to work. Therefore, employer branding is a way to see applicants as consumers, and this is why it is directly linked to the recruitment process.

A description of the corporate culture and the reasons the organization is special and unique are fundamental components of the *promise* made to the job seekers, applicants, and employees and their opinion of how well it is delivered (Bouchard, 2007). According to Dessler and Chhinzer (2020), it involves feelings, emotions, senses, realities, and benefits, which can be functional, economic, and psychological.

More than just a message, employer branding is a sum of experiences that start before the recruitment process. Employers must remain visible with clear and concrete inputs to create and sustain relationships with potential candidates even before they apply. In the same way that job seekers compete for a position, so do companies in an attempt to attract the best human resources. Moreover, the importance of employer branding does not end there, it continues to retain that talent, reducing turnover and thus, costs (John & Jagathy Raj, 2020).

With the help of employer brand, perceived differentiation, affinity, satisfaction, identification, and loyalty increase among employees (Davies, 2008), which creates an atmosphere that impulses them to stay in the organization. So, besides giving the company an advantage in the war for talent, a strong employer brand causes existing employees to be productive, proud, and happy.

In this way, employees choose where they want to work. When a company's attributes align with what a collaborator needs strengthening their wellbeing, the process also reflects the employer has been selected (Ronda et al., 2018).

Psychosocial well-being is related to the physical, mental and social well-being of a person. Psychosocial factors interact with the work, the environment, the conditions of the organization, and

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also with the worker's skills and abilities, personal situation, culture and previous experiences. Considering these factors within the organizations is essential because it allows a harmonious business coexistence that enables the best work performance. Therefore, taking care of the mental health of employees is crucial for the success of companies.

Mental wellbeing of employees is crucial for successful organizations. According to Lipovac et al. (2020), psychosocial interventions that target highly contagious individuals could efficiently improve overall wellbeing in the workplace.

Attributes Associated

Just as people's tastes, preferences, personalities, and needs are diverse, so are their values and preconceptions. This means there is no fixed standard when it comes to attracting talent (Chandler, 2019), and organizations must define their essence and craft and align their aspirations with the people they want to attract.

There are many attributes associated with employer branding and exciting research on the topic. For instance, Bonaiuto et al. (2013) used 40 brand attributes in their study to identify the ones that are particularly relevant to attract young candidates with the potential to become leaders and the perceptions of those attributes in an ideal employer versus the reality.

This paper distinguishes some of the most significant employer branding attributes: creativity and innovation, work-life balance, future earnings, secure employment, diversity and inclusion, employee recognition, career development, corporate social responsibility, employee well-being, work climate, and remuneration and benefits.

Each of the attributes selected contributes to the company's distinctiveness in a specific way. As opposed to a traditional point of view that equally considered hard and soft aspects, today, the tendency is to prioritize soft qualities given that they are more difficult for competitors to copy (Wilden et al., 2010). Following this logic, the attributes to be explained are mostly soft.

Creativity and Innovation. Being creativity the ability to generate ideas, innovation refers to their implementation (Sokolova, 2015). Creativity is innovation's driving force, and as such, it is essential for problem-solving, allowing the surge of new insights and the introduction of processes, products, services, and strategies. A company with these characteristics and potential owns a competitive edge and a vital ingredient for success.

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Creativity and innovation are linked to employer brand promotion because they are related to openness and predisposition to listening and thinking outside the box. It means people are ready to take ideas and feedback and provide resources to explore possibilities, which can be very attractive for job seekers and, naturally, employees.

Work-Life Balance. It can be understood as the distribution of work and the rest of activities in life, not only family-related (Shankar & Bhatnagar, 2010), based on changing needs and responsibilities during different life stages. Work-life balance is experienced by everyone in a distinct way, and it answers to each individual's perception. A company that offers it understands employees are human beings first and must satisfy other necessities to perform and excel at work.

Work-life balance has a relationship with employer brand promotion. It is an appealing value proposition, especially in today's day and age, when burnout is a common denominator in many workplaces. A company that sees critical components of a person's life in health and relationships will attract talent, boost retention rates, and improve productivity and performance.

Future Earnings. Perceived prestige and industry reputation might be associated with future earnings (Universum, 2017). In addition, the global spread of a company is also linked because it involves international colleagues, clients, and travel. However, this attribute must not be misunderstood, and smaller companies should acknowledge that they have the opportunity to change this perception, enhancing other attributes such as innovation and career development.

When job seekers look at a company as an excellent potential opportunity to receive higher earnings in the future, it is a powerful reason to work for it. Young graduates, in particular—as evidenced in a study conducted by Universum (2020) in 12 countries around the globe—showed a preference for this attribute when assessing a possible employer.

Secure Employment. It refers to the guarantee that employees can keep their jobs regardless of external risks, or at least with minimal influence. In this fashion, they can focus on their responsibilities, perform well and advance in their careers. For them, it means income security and less turnover for the company.

It is significant to mention that job security is one of the career anchors that Edgar Schein identified in the career planning context (Schein, 1996). This means it is one of the elements or values that a person is unwilling to relinquish whenever a choice should be made (Dessler & Chhinzer (2020). For recruiting purposes, highlighting this proposition is key to attracting those who align themselves

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with it, who during these Covid times might not be a few. However, the idea of a job for life is long gone, and this attribute should be assumed as stability in the foreseen future.

Diversity and Inclusion. Providing the same opportunities, regardless of who the individuals are and making them feel involved and supported, goes beyond policies or laws. Genuinely caring about people from traditionally excluded groups and appreciating diversity further than plain numerical representation identifies leaders who are committed to this attribute (Wells et al., 2021).

When potential and existing employees trust their treatment will be fair, they are more likely to be motivated, proud, and willing to stay in the organization. At the same time, for the employer, it represents a higher ability to recruit a diverse talent pool, retain the diverse talent already acquired, and ultimately grow revenue.

Employee Recognition. Bussin and Diez (2017) explain that some organizations and their leaders do not spend enough time in the creation of well-designed recognition strategies and policies, resulting in dangerous negligence. Recognition is part of a total reward system, and it comprehends incentives and recognition itself, covering both financial and psychological values for the employee. Being recognition an element of reward that targets organizational behaviors and cultural principles (Bussin & Diez, 2017), it becomes an interesting tool to attempt to align the candidates that best fit it. The chances that these collaborators feel respected and appreciated increase, so the recruitment efforts and retention can be successful.

Career Development. Learning opportunities, mentoring, training, and any other effort that impulses knowledge, expertise, and career advancement are undoubtedly components of a powerful value proposition. Improving skills and looking at a horizon full of possibilities that allow achieving goals through a career path with growing challenges is an apparent reason for many to choose an organization over others and to remain part of it.

Promoting the improvement of cross-functional skills allows learning a wide range of subjects. Hence, employees have the opportunity to not only move up within the organizational structure but also sideways. Enabling collaborators to become life-long learners (Bussin & Blair, 2019) and offering them tangible outcomes such as clear promotion policies is indeed a motivator.

Corporate Social Responsibility. CSR is defined by Salanță et al. (2019) as the significant success obtained by giving respect to the people, honoring ethical values and protecting the natural environment. Though it is not mandated by law, many companies, big or small, consider it. The most important decision is not engaging or not in these practices but determining the type of

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activities and campaigns that better align with the business strategy and which have the best potential advantage.

Individuals, on their end, are more and more interested and committed to being part of a higher purpose that aims to protect nature and benefit society. When an organization clearly states its concern and involvement in this matter, its reputation is enhanced, and job seekers who share these priorities will feel enticed to belong and join forces.

Employee Well-Being. Prioritizing well-being and mental health could include many strategies. Today, besides a physical point of view, well-being is about a holistic approach where emotion, society, community, career, finance, and purpose are also part of it (Meister, 2021). The pandemic has been a reason to understand the struggles employees live daily. Employers should consider that more than just benefits or strategies to attract candidates, well-being efforts reflect that the organization genuinely sees a human being in the employee.

Ultimately, a person who is healthy and keeps a certain balance among the different areas of life is ready to perform as required in the workplace, and thus, the organization can benefit from potential higher motivation and engagement levels followed by many other positive consequences.

Work Climate. An analogy expressed by Cyprus (2022) says that "just as weather, climates affect people who live in them." An idea with many components implied but easy to understand. Stimuli experienced at work, and the meanings that derive from them build the climate in an organization. It is interesting to realize how climate and culture are related because everything that happens in organizations is due to climate and culture, and everything that happens affects climate and culture (Barbera & Schneider, 2014).

Without a doubt, an excellent organizational climate is a magnet for attracting and retaining people who are ready to commit and go the extra mile. Effective communication and leadership are essential to shaping a positive environment for everyone to do their best.

Remuneration and Benefits. Remuneration and compensation are terms that are used most of the time interchangeably and are described by some authors as the monetary payment in exchange for a service or work performed. However, some claim remuneration encompasses a broader perspective and includes non-monetary benefits, while others say that is the definition of compensation. The truth is that both monetary and non-monetary aspects are key to attracting, engaging, and retaining human capital.

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Competitive remuneration strategies are critical, but alone, in the long term, they are not practical. The emphasis on retention strategies has changed with time, and today a one-size-fits-all model is not as good as customization, including remuneration and benefits (Bussin & Diez, 2017).

A Candidate's Perspective

This section intends to categorize the above attributes according to their relevance from a candidate's perspective.

Many studies suggest different preferences based on job seekers' age, origin, and industry, among other variables (Alnıaçık et al., 2014; Jain & Bhatt, 2015). In this case, an attempt to collect that information in a general way has been made while acknowledging that the bottom-ranked attributes are only the last in a list among the most important, without implying that they are not.

The following attributes are highlighted in positions *one*, *two*, and *three*: creativity and innovation, work-life balance, and career development.

Creativity and innovation are at the top of the list because the organization would not survive without them. It needs human capital identified and aligned with those values to ensure continuity of those efforts. In an ever-changing environment, companies around the world must be aware of the great relevance this has on their success. The market, in general, is dependent on technology, which is constantly evolving, meaning that organizations can thrive through creative minds that can turn ideas into reality. These creative minds seek the perfect place that welcomes their potential.

Work-life balance in the present day has become more important than compensation and monetary rewards among Millenials—who are already the largest segment in the workplace. This is why it is second on the list of attributes. A significant transformation that has occurred in the last few years is the increased possibility of telecommuting, which has opened the door for a better understanding of the needs—non necessarily work-related— that an employee has outside the traditional in-office work model.

Career development is third on the list of attributes, given that it empowers people. Having opportunities to advance a career without having to look for another workplace is simply an advantage because it gives individuals a sense of pride and fulfillment in a place where they are already valued. Even though *job-hopping* is a tendency, smart companies nurture an environment of growth where employees can develop and prepare for future positions while encouraging the organizational vision.

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Recommendations for Improvement

Organizations should consider overall growth strategy, research of prospects, and competitors. It is important to develop a strategy and build tools to communicate the brand, which has been launched and optimized for visibility and impact (Hinge, 2021).

Optimizing the Selection Process. Studying carefully every application shows how much organizations care about the alignment of principles between them and their personnel. However, some have criticized the long periods between interviews and the overall long selection process (Glassdoor, 2021). Given their low turnover rates, the need for constant hire is also low, and probably this is why they have not perfected this process in terms of speed.

It is advised to break down the process and identify the stage causing a delay as top talented candidates are off the market on average in 10 days (Skeeled, n.d.). If the time to hire is reduced, the best candidates—job and organization-fitted— will not consider going anywhere else.

Improving Career Planning Practices. It is recommended for organizations to have a career planning program that reflects how interested they are in their people's skills, knowledge, and potential. The focus in this improvement is about communicating clearly the policies and guidelines so that everyone understands them from the start. Employees should know what the expectations are to avoid disappointments when looking to scale up.

Perfecting the Antiracism Policy. To develop an antiracism policy and to ensure the inclusion levels organizations are determined to reach should definitely be encouraged. Not losing sight of the urgency of a robust framework on the matter will match their concern for people on a greater scale. Listening more thoroughly and amplifying equity and justice in the outdoor industry and environmental movement will further validate the social responsibility they stand for.

Conclusion

Companies are different, and the ideal formula containing the perfect combination of employer brand attributes is also different. No matter the unique characteristics that define it or the requirements for success, every organization can attract the candidates and the skills it needs as long as it carefully analyzes and evaluates the current value proposition to be able to make adjustments. The best recruiter tool is differentiating strengths and selling them (Eskenazi, 2021).

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What successful companies do reflect its leaders' convictions, knowledge, and practice of the elements needed to succeed while doing the right thing through the right people. The concept of culture fit goes beyond standards, allowing a *culture add* orientation. However, there is always space for progress and provided that the recommendations proposed are initiated and monitored, the company will increase its already high levels of acceptance and loyalty.

Satisfied collaborators are likely to become ambassadors for their workplace and the company brand (Skýpalová et al., 2021), spreading a positive image and reputation throughout the external labor market. In this way, it is evident that suitable and well-approached branding efforts will trigger a cycle where recruitment and retention can satisfactorily feed on each other.

Improving mental wellbeing is a challenging task, especially when attempting to improve wellbeing of a large group of people. All organizations should consider that the psychosocial well-being of their employees is closely related to work performance, which determines that it is necessary to implement a correct business policy focused on the person, considering the whole context that surrounds their daily life; this is in the family, work and social, in a comprehensive manner, making possible the achievement of the goals set within the mission and vision of each company.

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