

How to Build a Great Employer Brand

Stand out from the crowd and attract the employees you really want



JOBVITE

Table of contents

- Introduction 3**
- What is an employer brand? 4**
- Why employer brand matters 5**
- 7 steps to help you get started 7**
- 5 employer branding mistakes to avoid 9**
- Conclusion 11**

Introduction

These days, research is the first step in almost any activity. Whether we're making brunch plans, booking a vacation, or choosing a new doctor, we want to be sure we're making good decisions. Information is plentiful, so we gather input from multiple sources — including Google searches, social media, online reviews, and even asking friends about their experiences.

Looking for a new job is no different. Long before a candidate starts applying for jobs, they do their homework — and they're likely to use multiple sources. Our [2020 Job Seeker Nation report](#) indicates that candidates consult online job boards (69%), friends (45%), social media (42%), and professional connections (31%) in their job search.

A strong employer brand can help ensure that candidates' research leads them straight to you.

In this e-book, we'll take a closer look at what employer branding is all about and why it's important. We'll also give you some tips for getting started — and point out some pitfalls you'll want to avoid.

Most workers find out about job openings through:



69%
Online job boards



45%
Friends



42%
Social media



31%
Professional connections

2020 Job Seeker Nation report

What is an employer brand?

In the simplest terms, employer brand is your company's reputation as an employer. It encompasses everything you do to position your company in the employment marketplace. It also includes what your employees (and potential employees) think about you.

Is your company a good place to work? Do employees feel valued? Would they recommend your company to friends? What story does your career site tell? How do you come across on social media and review sites? What do job applicants say about the candidate experience? These are all important questions that play into your employer brand.

The other thing to understand is that employer brand isn't static, so it requires constant cultivation across every touchpoint. **From the first time a potential candidate learns about your company through the application, interview, and hiring process and the entire tenure of their employment — every moment contributes to your employer brand.**



Why employer brand matters

In an age of information and choice, it's almost impossible to overstate the value of a strong employer brand. While building and maintaining a strong employer brand is no small task, it's an asset that will benefit your company in countless ways. Here are just a few.

Reduce hiring costs

Companies with a stellar employer brand don't have to spend as much on recruiting, because they don't have to work as hard to attract high-quality talent. In fact, [LinkedIn research](#) shows that employer brand can help to attract more qualified applicants and improve key hiring metrics like cost-per-hire and time-to-hire.

Referral hiring also becomes easier with a strong employer brand. Employee referrals are among the most efficient and cost-effective ways to bring in top talent — and employees who are satisfied and proud of their employer are more likely to invite their connections to join them.

Build talent pipelines

According to [LinkedIn research](#), three quarters of job seekers consider an employer's brand before they apply for a job. That means most candidates — both active and passive — will already have an opinion of your company before you know anything about them.

Regardless of economic conditions, a solid employer brand is key to building and maintaining your talent pipeline. In a strong economy when candidates are scarce, it can help differentiate your company from the competition, ensuring you have enough talent in your pipeline to fill open roles. And in a tight job market, it can help to attract quality candidates who might not otherwise consider leaving their current position.



Improve workplace diversity

A strong employer brand should showcase your commitment to building a diverse and inclusive workforce, which in turn can help to attract more diverse candidates. Companies derive countless benefits from workplace diversity, including more innovation, greater adaptability, and a wider variety of viewpoints. According to [McKinsey](#), diversity also has a very real impact on the bottom line.

Keep in mind, however, that any efforts to showcase your brand's diversity should be authentic. In other words, candidates should not see a disconnect between what your brand portrays and what they experience in real life.

Own the conversation on social and review sites

When job seekers start researching a company, social media channels and online review sites like Glassdoor are among their first stops. What they find on those sites depends a lot on your employer brand.

A strong employer brand helps to create a consistent, cohesive experience across various social media platforms. And companies with a strong employer brand are likely to receive positive reviews from employees, former employees, and job candidates — which in turn reinforce the brand you've created.

Showcase careers — not just jobs

Top candidates need more than just a job posting to catch their interest. They want to hear real stories from real employees and they want to understand what your company can offer them long term. Show them a pathway to success and highlight those who have grown with your company through employee testimonials, “day in the life” articles, videos, and more.





7 steps to help you get started

Now that you understand the “what” and the “why” of employer branding, the next logical question is... “How?” The bad news is, building a strong employer brand doesn’t happen overnight. It’s a long, complex process that’s different for every company.

The good news is, you probably have some of the building blocks in place already. Here are a few best practices to help you start putting them together.

1. Define your employer brand

Employer brand is all about showing who you are — so the first step in building that brand is to solidify your identity as an employer. Start by reviewing your company’s mission, vision, and values. How do they translate to recruiting and talent acquisition? What kind of candidates will help to fulfill your objectives? What do those candidates need to know about your company? What sets your company apart from others in your space?

2. Make it the heart of your career site

Your career site isn’t just a collection of job listings — it’s your company’s most powerful recruiting asset and the embodiment of your employer brand. When job seekers look at your career site, they should immediately understand your company’s identity, personality, and values. A robust solution like [Jobvite’s Career Sites](#) puts your employer brand front-and-center, creating a compelling first impression that captures the attention of top candidates.

3. Build an exceptional candidate experience

Your employer brand should carry through every touchpoint along the candidate journey. With an [end-to-end recruitment marketing platform](#) like Talemtry by Jobvite, you can streamline the recruiting process and keep candidates engaged with consistent, cohesive campaigns across email, social, web, text, and more.

4. Make the most of social

Job seekers use social media sites like LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to research potential employers. Make sure you're leveraging these channels to connect with candidates and show them who you are. Your social media strategy should include not just sharing job postings, but also compelling content that supports your employer brand message.

5. Get your employees involved

When job seekers conduct their research, they're looking for more than your corporate messaging. They want to know what it's really like to work at your company, and they want to hear it from real employees. So leverage your current workforce by creating testimonial content that can be featured on your career site — whether it's in the form of video interviews, career-path articles, or even simple quotes. These stories will help to express your employer brand in a way that resonates with candidates.

6. Don't neglect D&I

In today's employment marketplace, workplace diversity is more than just a nice-to-have — it's a strategic imperative. As you shape your employer brand, it's critical to highlight your efforts toward building a diverse and inclusive workplace. Of course, many employers are still working toward their diversity goals — and [Jobvite's D&I offering](#) can help. You can also read [this ebook to learn more about attracting and engaging diverse audiences](#).

7. Refine as you go

As we mentioned at the outset, employer brand isn't static. It's constantly evolving and requires “care and feeding” over time. Part of the ongoing work is to monitor things that influence your employer brand: online reviews, social media chatter, exit interviews, and feedback on the candidate experience. Then use that information to refine your brand message and apply it in ways that will help you attract top talent — and keep current employees engaged with your mission and values.



5 employer branding mistakes to avoid

Every employer brand is unique, and the process of building that brand is different for every company. But there's one universal truth: you're going to make some mistakes along the way.

Here are some common pitfalls to avoid on your journey to building a strong employer brand.

1. Believing you “control” your employer brand

All too often, companies fall into the trap of believing they have total responsibility for their reputation as an employer. You can take steps to create and manage your brand, but you aren't the only one who has a say in the matter. Every employee can be a company ambassador — or a detractor. Every candidate who interacts with your company can share their experience. Even customer opinions can impact your employer brand, for better or worse.

That's why the **ongoing** aspect of employer branding is so important. Make sure you're doing everything you can to create an exceptional experience for both employees and candidates. Then ask them to share those positive experiences across social media and review sites. Real-life testimonials are a powerful asset for building and maintaining your employer brand.

2. Failing to think ahead

Building an employer brand isn't a “set it and forget it” exercise. It's an ongoing process that requires frequent attention. (See item 7 in the previous section.) Smart companies take this into account and plan for the long term as they build their employer brand.

It's easy enough to build a career site, post some job openings on social media, and shoot a couple of employee videos. The mistake comes in failing to recognize that your employer brand will continue to evolve over time and missing opportunities to build on that evolution. A forward-looking perspective and long-term planning will position you to attract and retain top talent for many years to come.



3. Being inauthentic

Job seekers want to know about the companies they're considering. The rise of sites like Glassdoor demonstrates that candidates are serious about learning as much as they can. One thing that's sure to dampen their curiosity is a lack of authenticity.

There are plenty of ways to sniff out a disingenuous brand. For example, **if your website imagery suggests workplace diversity but your career site has one diverse employee who is seen repeatedly, people will notice.** And don't forget — misleading expectations may get someone in the door, but there's no guarantee they'll stay. So make sure your employer brand represents your company accurately, or you'll end up with unhappy employees and high turnover.



4. Making things difficult for candidates

Candidate experience plays a major role in your employer brand — and an overly complex hiring process is the surest path to a negative candidate experience. The most qualified and in-demand talent will be the least motivated to jump through hoops, so removing barriers will benefit both your employer brand and your hiring efforts.

This is one area where recruiting software can give you a competitive advantage. An [applicant tracking system](#) that automates repetitive, manual tasks and streamlines the hiring process is a win for employers and candidates alike.

5. Forgetting about current employees

We've said it before, but current employees play a big role in your employer brand. They know more about working for your company than anyone else, and the information they share can either enhance your brand or bring it crashing down.

Opening the lines of communication for current employees not only provides visibility into their day-to-day lives, but it also gives them an outlet that's more private (and controlled) than venting on social media. Try conducting anonymous quarterly pulse surveys to learn and address any issues as they arrive. Employees who feel seen and heard are more likely to give employers the opportunity to resolve any issues. And when things are good, they'll be more inclined to brag about what a great job they have.

Conclusion

Building and managing an employer brand might feel like an overwhelming challenge. But like any complex task, it becomes easier when you break it into smaller, more manageable chunks. We've given you some pointers to get you started. The most important thing is just taking that first step.

Employer brand is only going to get more important over time, as job seekers become more savvy in their research. A strong brand will help you stand out from the competition and bring in the top talent you really want — regardless of changes in the employment market.

Ready to take the next step? We're here with the knowledge and tools to get you started building a place where the best talent wants to work. [Learn more](#) about how we can help and [contact us](#) today.



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