

# Employer Branding: The Cornerstone of Sustainable Talent Acquisition

**Dr. Sunita Tank**

*Mentor, ATL, Niti Aayog, ICF PCC Coach, Founder, Leader in Making.*

A key factor in success in the cutthroat corporate world of today is luring and keeping top people. To create a high-performing staff, businesses can no longer rely only on conventional hiring practices or offering competitive pay. Rather, they need to invest in a strong employer brand, a well-crafted representation of what it's like to work for the company. Talent acquisition and employer branding have developed into a strategic alliance, and their influence on business expansion is indisputable. One of the most important aspects of attracting talent is company branding. This paper's primary goal is to examine the literature on employer branding and how it affects hiring, employee performance, organizational culture, and acquiring a competitive edge in the marketplace. A thorough literature analysis covers the effects of employers and contemporary employer branding strategies in attracting talent. Longer employee retention also gives the company a stable competitive edge and improves the company's reputation with workers, which in turn fosters a happier work environment and motivates workers to put in more effort. Establishing a clear connection between organizational production and employer branding is challenging (Vinayak et al., 2017). Employer branding is an intangible asset that helps businesses grow and expand by successfully attracting and retaining talented employees for longer periods, even though it can be difficult to directly correlate it with organizational output metrics like revenue and shareholder value.

**Keywords:** Employer Branding, Talent Acquisition, Talent Retention.

## 1. Introduction

Rapid technological development and the expansion of the knowledge economy are only two of the many issues that businesses face in the contemporary dynamic business environment (Catteuw, Johnson, Flynn, Johnson, Vonderhorst, & Johnson, 2007). The workforce's dynamic skills and the human resource competency requirement are thereby enforced by these changes. There is a great need for autonomous, talented, mobile, and intellectual capital for competent employees due to a shift in the demographic basis (Berthon, Ewing, & Lian, 2005). Competent workers have several possibilities, particularly in service-oriented and technical firms

(Berthon, Ewing, & Lian, 2005). Prospective workers are as particular about the company as they are about the position (Rynes & Cable, 2003). Consequently, businesses always work to improve their appeal to prospective workers (Highhouse, Zickar, Thorsteinson, & Stierwalt, 1999). Due to the implications of competent talent acquisition, this has a significant effect on the firms that are now recruiting. Attracting the right people with the right skill set and competencies to do the job is known as talent acquisition (Srivastava & Bhatnagar, 2010). Businesses that draw in more applicants have a potential competitive edge and more useful selection processes. The above-mentioned shortage of skilled workers necessitates a robust hiring strategy that will set the company apart from its rivals and subsequently market the special job offer it provides. Employer branding is a successful human resources tactic used in employment, particularly in knowledge-based economies where there is a lack of skilled workers (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). Employer branding is a long-term approach designed to maintain a steady and continuous flow of skills within the company, while traditional recruitment techniques are typically reactive, short-term, and dependent on job openings. Companies with exceptional employer brands include Google, Apple, and HubSpot. They can draw in top talent because of their carefully cultivated reputation for creativity, diversity, and employee well-being. Employer branding isn't limited to tech companies, though. Developing a unique and compelling employer brand may help any business, regardless of size or sector.

**1.1 The Connection Between Talent Acquisition and Employer Branding**  
Finding and employing the best applicants for your business is known as talent acquisition. Finding people who fit with your company's culture and can help it succeed in the long run is more important than simply filling unfilled positions. Employer branding becomes essential at this point. A strong employer brand increases your company's appeal to top talent. Companies with a strong employer brand attract 50% more qualified candidates than those without, according to studies. Today's candidates aren't simply looking for a job; they're also looking for a firm that shares their values, where they believe their work will have an impact, and where they can advance their careers.

The expense of hiring new employees can also be decreased with a strong employer brand. It takes a lot less effort to persuade applicants to apply when they are already familiar with your company's culture and reputation. Because new hires are more likely to fit in and remain longer, this results in quicker hiring procedures, cheaper recruitment expenses, and higher retention rates.

## **2. A Review of Literature: Branding of Employer**

The process of giving your business a distinctive character as a place to work is known as employer branding. It includes the mission, culture, values, and employee experience of your business. It is essentially your employer's reputation, which is influenced by both internal and external behaviours. Potential employees are informed about the work environment, career advancement, and general employee happiness by a strong employer brand. In the latter half of the 20th century, the term "employer brand" was initially used to describe an organization's reputation and character as an employer to a management audience. Employer branding was defined in the *Journal of Brand Management* by Tim Ambler, a Senior Fellow at the London Business School and the Chairman of People in Business named Simon Barrow. "The package

of functional, economic, and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company" is how they defined employer brand (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). Businesses are investing a significant amount of money in employer branding initiatives and campaigns, demonstrating the practice's long-term benefits. Employers now believe that effective employer branding strategies will provide them with a competitive edge and help staff members internalize the company's values and retain personnel. "A targeted, long-term strategy to manage the awareness and perceptions of employees, potential employees, and related stakeholders about a particular firm" is how Sullivan (2004) defines employer brand. The company is portrayed as a fantastic place to work by the employer brand (Sullivan, 2004).

Due to the lack of trained workers in a knowledge economy, employer branding has long been promoted as a concept and ideology (Berthon, Ewing, & Lian, 2005). Numerous scholars have emphasized that a company's brand image improves both the calibre and volume of prospective employees (Cable & Turban, 2001) and affects employee retention. Therefore, employer branding is a crucial tactic for waging the "war of talent" in the fast-paced commercial environment with fierce worldwide competition. Employer branding is a unique way for a company to differentiate itself in the fiercely competitive business world. Its USPs include employee happiness and contentment, which stems from retention, job security, and productivity. Employer branding, according to Sullivan (2004), is a long-term strategy that takes into consideration the expectations of the organization's stakeholders and makes significant efforts to manage the perceptions and thought processes of both present and potential employees. It strives to create a favourable employee value proposition and cultivates a favourable perception of the company as a desirable place to work. For the company to become a complete employer brand that represents the goals and reality of the workforce as well as the business, it tries to involve every employee, from the top down.

## 2.1 The components of the employer brand

Numerous characteristics make up the employer brand, and each one enhances and contributes to the brand's visibility. Scholars have regularly studied the characteristics that define the company's employment image (Cable & Turban, 2001). The elements that draw and keep both present and potential employees to a specific business were determined using the instrumental symbolic framework (Lievens, Van Hove, & Anseel, 2007). The close relationship between organizational attractiveness and symbolic qualities was confirmed by Slaughter et al. (2004) (Slaughter, Zickar, Highhouse, Mohr, Steinbrenner, & O'Connor, 2004). According to Army, Collins, and Stevens (2002), job searchers were more influenced by company-based traits than by role-specific ones.

The discussion suggests that employer brand is a multifaceted concept, making it challenging to examine every facet of it because different academics approach it from different angles. Research comparing how the employer brand message is perceived and the firm's reputation should be conducted in order to gain a fundamental and comprehensive grasp of the employer branding philosophy. "Those practices and activities carried on by the organization with the primary purpose of identifying and attracting potential employees" is Barber's definition, which can be used to analyze recruitment research. To date, recruitment research has focused on a company's efforts to create a pool of applicants, maintain application status, and influence the choice of job.

According to Fombrun (1996), corporate reputation is the "affective or emotional reaction Employer Knowledge and Recruitment - good or bad, weak or strong - of... the general public to the company's name." In simpler terms, organizational reputation is the public's assessment of an organization in relation to other firms (Fombrun, 1998). Employer reputation is defined as a job seeker's perception of the public's affective assessment of the company, in accordance with this understanding of corporate reputation. The concept of employer reputation differs from employer image in two ways. Firstly, the former lacks the affective component, while the latter does. More importantly, reputation is the prospective employee or applicant's perception of how the company is viewed by others. Vis-à-vis image is made up of the candidate's personal opinions about the company. To be clear, there are two key ways that employer reputation differs from employer image: (1) Employer reputation is a job seeker's opinion about how the company is viewed by others, but employer image is made up of the job seeker's own opinions about the firm (in terms of reputation), and (2) image does not have an affective evaluative component. Because there are differences in how scholars have conceptualized and operationalized employer image and reputation, it is critical to distinguish between the two notions. According to theory, applicants should be more concerned with the company's reputation because it is thought to be one of the "bonding signals" that emphasizes the company's competitive position as an employer in the face of incomplete information (Ployhart, 2006). The reputation of an employer is a unique and significant part of a job applicant's knowledge about the employer, as demonstrated and validated by empirical study. For example, Kilduff (1990) argued that friends' assessments of companies have a significant influence on job seekers since they "validate" companies as good employers, and Jacoby, Hoyer, and Brief (1992) proposed that when peers have a positive opinion of a company, it has a legitimizing effect. Honest employer branding messages are unquestionably essential to a company's success, but it's also critical to note that realistic job previews are crucial because they offer well-rounded communications. According to Werner and DeSimone (2011), a realistic job interview should convey both a positive and a negative message on the employment prospects.

A realistic job preview reduces position ambiguity by lowering staff turnover and providing a clear preview of expectations, which in turn boosts trust and honesty. Employer brand messaging that conveys important pre-employment information can benefit from additional assistance and a solid foundation from organizational culture research. It goes without saying that corporate culture is a major factor in choosing a job. A job applicant's self-selection judgments are heavily influenced by the company's cultural values. As a result, it is important that employer branding communications convey accurate and appropriate information about the company culture.

It has been noted that the employer's information causes applicants to misinterpret important cultural norms. They may then feel unsatisfied due to unfulfilled expectations and have the possibility of quitting (CABLE & JUDGE, 1996). Therefore, it is undeniable that the primary responsibility of managers is to maintain a supportive and productive organizational culture. The goal of internal marketing initiatives is to create an organizational culture that supports each person's quality of work-life balance and emphasizes desired job expectations. Organizations utilize internal marketing techniques to create positive cultural changes or promote the firm's current values to accomplish these goals. Employee loyalty to the company

will increase with the degree to which the culture promotes a high quality of work life (Lawler, 2005). Employer branding, as it is known, is an endeavour to improve the employment value proposition to increase the value of human capital through recruitment and retention. The organizational career management initiative is also supported by the HR initiatives that fall under the employer brand activity category. Streamlining individual career needs with organizational work needs and employer branding is known as organizational career management. This approach is intended to give employees the knowledge they need to evaluate themselves after they are employed by the company. Candidates are informed about expected behaviours, work norms, and other success-related aspects by the brand image present within the company. The most intriguing query, according to Ambler and Barrow, is whether employer branding makes it easier to attain unique organizational performance. This is undoubtedly a complicated question. Examining a direct correlation between a company's performance and its human resources program can be challenging. It is rather simple to assess the degree to which the program has impacted organizational resources, such as human capital or employee behavior (Knox & Freeman, 2006). Stated otherwise, it would be required to determine the intermediaries that function between the employer branding initiative and the company's profit margin.

Therefore, queries like "do organizations use employer branding experience have better recruitment outcomes?" and "are recruitment outcomes enhanced?" may be more pertinent and quantifiable. To monitor changes in hiring, employee satisfaction, and retention before and after implementing employer branding as a strategy, researchers may carry out longitudinal studies. Significant proof of branding success has been provided by the Conference Board (2001). Therefore, qualitative assessments of employees' knowledge, abilities, and skills may be a suitable way to gauge the performance of employer branding. If the retention rate was higher at the start of the branding campaign, the staff turnover rate can be a second feature. In many respects, though, employee conduct at work may be more significant than retention. Businesses using employer branding tactics might gauge their performance by looking at overall productivity at the individual level.

## 2.2 Employer Branding Techniques for Successful Hiring

1. **Make Use of Social Media:** Use sites like LinkedIn, Instagram, and Twitter to highlight your company's culture, values, and employee success stories. Social media is a great way to connect with potential recruits and humanize your brand.
2. **Improve the Candidate Experience:** Make sure that every encounter a candidate has with your business, from the application process to onboarding, is favorable. Your employer brand will benefit from a smooth, open, and interesting hiring process.
3. **Employee Advocacy:** Motivate your staff members to post about their accomplishments and experiences on social media. Genuine endorsements from present employees are extremely helpful when trying to draw in new talent.
4. **Consistent Communication:** Make sure that your employer branding is consistent throughout all platforms, including social media, employment advertisements, and your website.

### 2.3 Branding of Employers in Indian Businesses

A major economic and intellectual force, India is one of the world's developing economies and has achieved enormous strides in its social and economic growth over the last 20 years (Kapur & Rarnamurti, 2001). The world's largest English-speaking, low-cost workforce with advanced technical and managerial talent is sourced from this region. Thanks to top-tier institutions like IITs and IIMs, Indians with technical and human skills are highly sought after by multinational corporations. Employee retention results from the significant turnover caused by the availability of new employment for Indian talent. Due to the high power distance and collectivist nature of Indian society, there hasn't been much theoretical analysis of the concept of employer branding in the Indian context. As a result, it's important to understand the dimensions of employer brand in the Indian context, and many Indian multinational corporations have done so. Some instances of Indian multinational corporations that have recognized the value of employer branding and implemented it in their businesses are cited in the conceptual paper.

### 2.4 Employer Brand: Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)

TCS make significant investments in retraining and upskilling their employees. To make sure staff remain relevant in a continuously evolving technology environment, they make use of digital learning systems. This is essential for luring and keeping talent. Additionally, a lot of these businesses are concentrating on training in emerging technologies like artificial intelligence and machine learning. TCS aims to establish a welcoming and upbeat workplace. Through several programs, such as wellness initiatives, support services, and work-life balance initiatives, they place a high priority on the well-being of their employees. They support the well-being of its employees through initiatives like TCS Cares. Creating a Powerful Online Presence To improve its employer brand and reach out to prospective employees, TCS makes use of digital channels, especially LinkedIn. To highlight their work culture and ideals, they frequently share employee tales, corporate news, and thoughts. Examples of how they use digital platforms to identify talent include the TCS CodeVita programming competition and the TCS National Qualifier Test (NQT).

### 2.5 Employer Brand: HDFC Bank

HDFC Bank makes use of its solid reputation as a top financial organization. Creating a steady and fulfilling work environment, offering chances for professional advancement, and using its strong brand recognition to draw in top talent are the main goals of HDFC Bank's employer branding strategy. Additionally, they use technology to improve the prospect experience and expedite their hiring procedures. HDFC Bank places a strong emphasis on giving staff members chances to grow in their careers. Internal promotions, training courses, and exposure to a range of organizational responsibilities are all included in this. HDFC Bank strives to take advantage of the numerous opportunities for career advancement that the banking industry itself offers. HDFC Bank makes training program investments to make sure its staff members have the skills they need in the quickly changing financial sector. This covers instruction in customer service, financial rules, and modern technologies. They are aware of how valuable a well-trained workforce is. Throughout the hiring process, they strive to give candidates a satisfying and effective experience. This is an essential component of creating a powerful employer brand.



Diversity and Inclusion: HDFC Bank is attempting to create a workforce that is inclusive and diversified, much like many other leading businesses.

## 2.6 Managerial Consequences

Multinational corporations must comprehend the reasoning behind luring and keeping a skilled and competitive workforce. Understanding the elements that influence the employer of choice for prospective workers in the market is essential. The current study makes numerous contributions to the facts mentioned above. Managers are given the knowledge they need to understand how an employer brand is created and operates through the theoretical discussion of key employer branding principles. The study opens the door for empirical research on some topics, including employer success, attractiveness, and salary, among others, allowing the researcher to examine these features in detail and in a unique way.

## 3. Conclusion

Employer branding is unquestionably important for establishing a competitive edge in today's market, and Indian businesses are constantly concentrating on this strategy to draw in and keep a talented workforce that will support their future expansion and success. The explanation above makes it abundantly evident that a good employer brand can help attract and retain personnel, serve as a quality representation to clients, and sustainably promote global reputation. It has several benefits, streamlines other procedures like hiring, and communicates the company's expectations in a consistent way right from the start. These days, employer branding and talent acquisition are crucial parts of any business's expansion plan. In addition to drawing in top talent, developing a great employer brand makes your workers more engaged and effective. The firm does well when people do in today's time and that is the success for long-term growth.

By emphasizing employer branding, one may influence a company's future by not just hiring talented and qualified candidates but also by fostering an atmosphere that attracts and retains them. To achieve both corporate and individual goals, it may be concluded that employer branding strategy refers to matching organizational and individual demands. Ultimately, it guarantees that the top workers remain for a longer time and aids in achieving the higher-level goals of an organisation.

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