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RECRUITMENT & EMPLOYER BRANDING



**We care
more**

2021

Employer Branding

Market Research Report

INTRODUCTION

AS THE CORONAVIRUS EVOLVED, EMPLOYERS AND EMPLOYEES WERE MET WITH MANY UNCERTAINTIES. COMPANIES WERE FORCED TO MAKE QUICK, SHORT-TERM DECISIONS TO MINIMIZE THE IMPACT OF THE PANDEMIC WHICH MEANT THAT FULL-SCALE EMPLOYER BRANDING CAMPAIGNS WERE ON HOLD FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.

Around March 2020, many companies (including some of our clients), ceased many, if not all their employer branding activities. Since then full employment branding programs never really recovered to their original status. However, the prospect of the world returning to some degree of normality at some point brought forward a positive change.

We observed that most of them realized that to attract the right talent and retain their current workforce during these uncertain times, they have to formulate and communicate a response that resonates with their evolving needs to build trust. Trust from employees and future candidates is earned by being committed to transparency, adaptability, and the well-being of people and reflecting this in every aspect of your employer brand.

AS SUCH, MANY DEVELOPED REMOTE WORKING POLICIES TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF THEIR EMPLOYEES AND HEALTH-RELATED BENEFITS TO SUPPORT THEIR MENTAL HEALTH. HOWEVER, THIS LEAVES MANY CHALLENGES UNADDRESSED SUCH AS KEEPING REMOTE TEAMS ENGAGED, RESILIENT, AND NOT TO MENTION, THE COMPETITION TO STAND OUT IN AN INTERNATIONAL TALENT POOL AS THE EMPLOYER OF CHOICE.

During the last 12 months, we took a deep-dive into the status of the Polish labour market and the results provide valuable insight into the biggest shifts in the Polish market in terms of employee benefits, engagement, work environments, and job satisfaction towards employers. We combined the most prominent employer branding trends and our own insights to make employer branding actionable which helps to keep your employees happy and your reputation as an employer of choice to grow.



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WHY IS EMPLOYER BRANDING IMPORTANT FOR EVERY EMPLOYER?

The pandemic brought forward many drastic changes to our work environments, hiring processes, and how to cut through the noise to stand out as an employer of choice. The employer branding challenges companies faced in 2020 are now expanded as candidates look to work for employers who offer the best support, reassurance, career prospects during these uncertain times. Employers are therefore expected to take a meaningful stand on how the company responds to the changes in the expectations and needs of talent while staying positive and sensitive to the current situation.

Today, people and prospective candidates pay extra attention to organizations that take care of employees during these uncertain times and how. Those who provide an excellent candidate experience both pre and post-hire are the ones that will be positively remembered which creates unprecedented opportunities for you as an employer to attract more great talent.

According to HRM Institute, 50% of the companies that participated in their survey planned to create a comprehensive employer branding strategy that allows them to create a value proposition that resonates better with their ideal candidates under the current conditions.

However, we understand that as the pandemic took a turn for the worse, most companies halted their plan as they had to reevaluate their employer branding budgets, company values, communication channels, and how new initiatives can keep their remote teams motivated, resilient, and productive.

When we look back at the beginning of 2020, we did observe that many of our clients expressed great interest in (re-)launching their employer branding programs. Two major reasons that sparked this interest was to either improve their employer brand recognition in the Polish market or to increase employee engagement rates.

CASE 1

One of our clients (an international provider of data management platform) started the process of building a development team in January 2020 but due to pandemic-related restrictions and uncertainty, the client put the recruitment project on hold and reviewed their employer value proposition and communication channels instead. After successfully implementing their new employer branding campaign, and communicating their new commitments, they managed to reduce the recruitment process to just 2 meetings.

What played an important role in the success of their recruitment efforts was conducting frequent webinars and transparent communication at each stage of the recruitment process that reflects what job seekers are looking for:



In addition, they tried not to make any promises that they could not fulfil. Instead, the emphasis was placed on communicating changes about the current work environment and how it will look in the future, what they did to address safety issues, and how joining their team looks like.

As a result, 40 new experienced programmers and digital security professionals decided to apply.

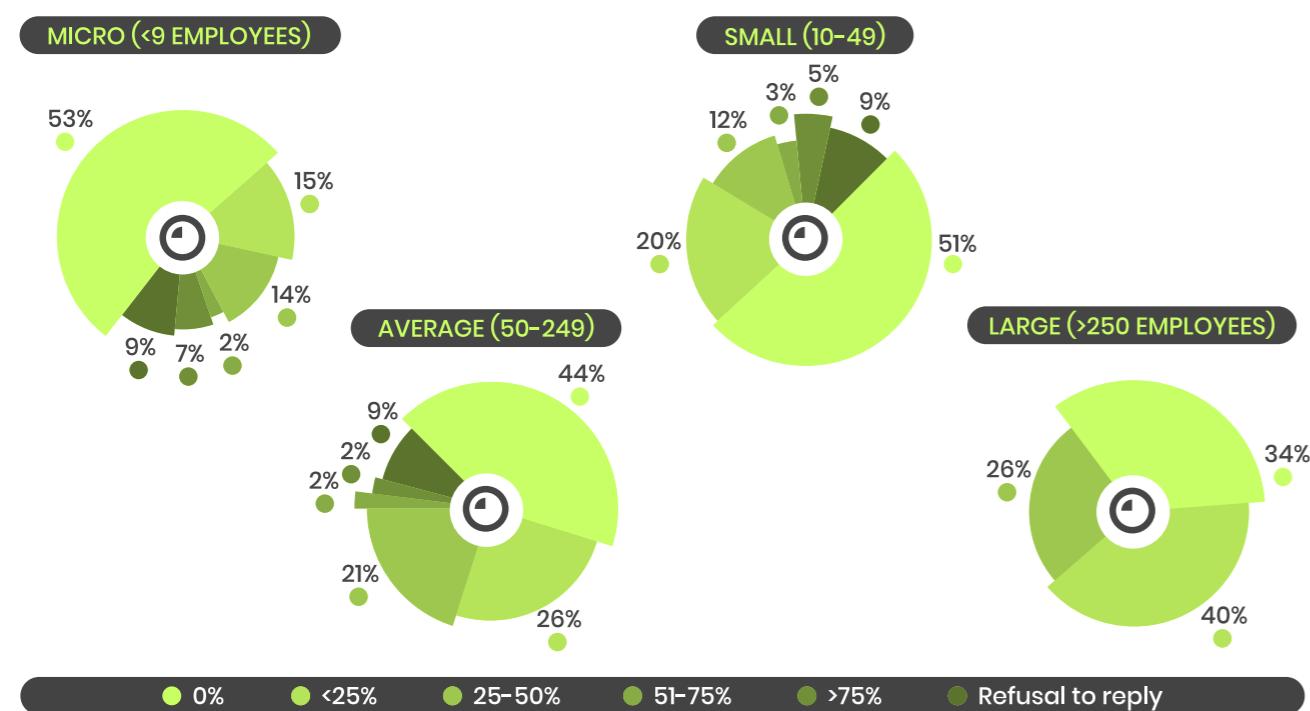


WHAT'S CHANGED FOR EMPLOYER BRANDING IN 2020 (AND WHAT HASN'T)?

Remote work is here to stay and many companies that have learned how to set up and manage global workforces instilled a remote(-first) philosophy in their company culture which creates job opportunities for talent from across the globe.

While this opened up many new gateways to untapped talent pools, HR leaders and departments are also challenged to build and communicate their employer brand that meets the change in needs and sparks the interest of an international audience.

SHARE OF EMPLOYEES WORKING REMOTELY DURING THE COVID-19 EPIDEMIC IN POLAND 2020



Source

While talent can be found virtually anywhere, employers need to have a clear understanding of how their current employer brand story impacts the perception of their brand. When revisiting the employer branding story for 2021, extra attention is required for the elements that reflect how the organization responds to the candidate's career drivers. This is where we see that companies tailor their employer branding strategies to connect with talent under the current circumstances.

After we compared the candidates' motivations in 2020 to join a company to those of 2021, we observed that candidates particularly value a company's willingness and ability to support the employee's well-being, provide flexible work arrangements, and insurance coverage. This prompted many companies to reevaluate their promise to current employees and future candidates and shape their employer brand strategy accordingly.

VISUAL

WHAT HAS CHANGED	WHAT HAS NOT CHANGED
Fiercer competition for global talent	Employer branding remains a priority for companies
Keeping the workforce engaged and motivated in a virtual environment	The most desirable aspects of employment
Companies attend more online events to find new talent	How talent searches for jobs
Benefits packages that are tailored to the employees' current needs	Poor work atmosphere/relationships colleagues as a reason to switch employer
Many offices are no longer a place to connect with colleagues	Employees want an employer who invests in their development
Communication strategies and channels to connect with talent	Leveraging personal connections and referrals to find new job jobs remains popular
Remote working during and post covid became essential for nearly all companies	Social media is leveraged by companies to communicate their EVP
Recruitment processes happen completely online	Company culture, diversity and, inclusion remains a top priority for talent
Talent is more inclined than before to switch employers if the additional benefits offered are better	Cultural fit remains top priority for recruiters
People had to get used to new communication tools	The talent's eagerness to develop their skills

TALENT MOBILITY DURING THE PANDEMIC

During this hectic period, we completely understand that companies spend less attention and resources on their employer branding activities. The number of hires dropped significantly and talent is less likely to change companies given the uncertainty that surrounds job security. While the forecast has discouraged many to launch new employer branding campaigns, you will find that the results below provide ample reasons to continue with strengthening your employer brand.

Research revealed that Polish candidates are more open to making career switches compared to candidates from other European countries. Namely 35% of Polish candidates planned to change jobs in 2020, and 22% actively switched careers during that year. That is respectively 10% and 5% more compared to the candidates from other European countries.



22% vs 17%

SWITCHERS:

changed employer in the past year



35% vs 25%

INTENDERS:

plan to change employer within the next year



REVIEWING WHY PEOPLE QUIT THEIR JOBS REVEALED THAT MANY PERTAIN TO THE EMPLOYERS' DESIRABLE ASPECTS BUT ALSO SHOWS OTHER FACTORS THAT RELATE MORE TO THE COMPANY'S CULTURE.

- 64% are likely to leave an employer when they can receive a higher salary elsewhere
- 55% consider leaving their employer if additional benefits by other companies are more attractive
- 33% feel that a poor relationship with their manager is a serious reason for them to switch careers
- 38% of millennials consider leaving their employer if there is no match between the company's values and their personal values
- 48% is likely to leave when they feel there is a lack of purpose in their job.

Source: **Statista**

WHAT MAKES PELES QUIT THEIR JOBS? DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE GROUPS.

salary being lower than elsewhere

64%

Of the **gen x** are likely to leave an employer if they receive a higher salary elsewhere.

This is higher than **gen z** (55%).

additional benefits less attractive

55%

Of the **gen x** are likely to leave their employer if additional benefits offered by other employers are more attractive.

This is higher than **gen z** (48%).

poor relationship with manager

33%

Of the **gen x** agree that a poor relationship with their manager is a serious reason to consider working elsewhere.

This is higher than **boomers** (22%).

mismatch between personal and organizational values

38%

Of the **millennials** would leave their employer if the organizational values do not match their personal values.

This is higher than **boomers** (27%).

Source

lack of sense of purpose

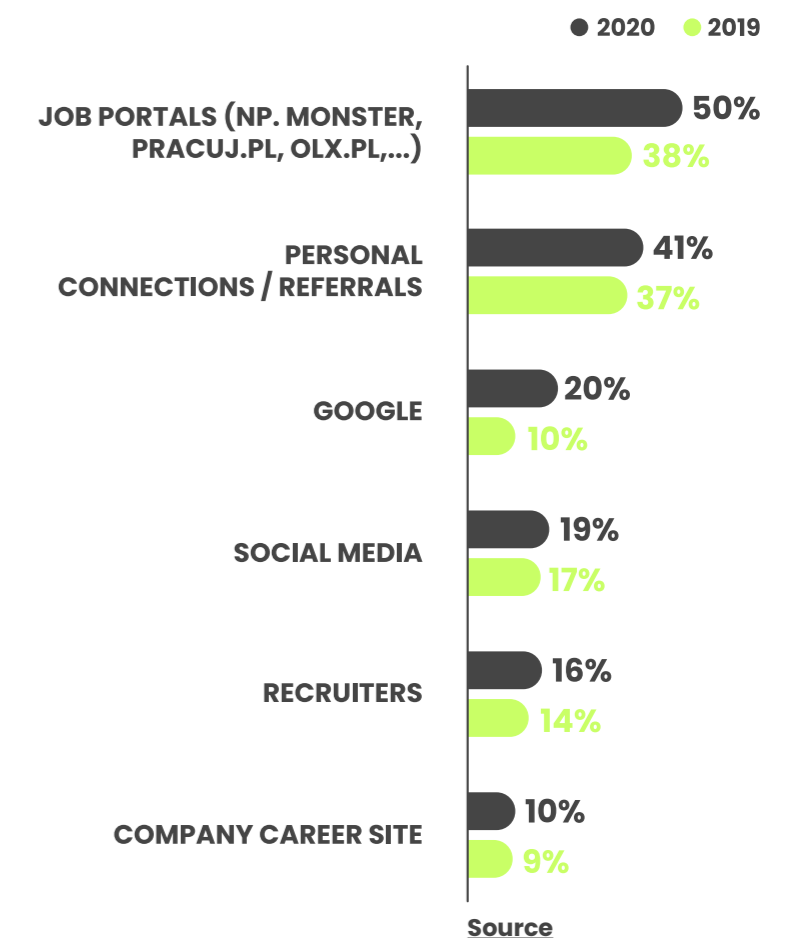
48%

Of the **gen x** may leave or have left their employer if they lack a sense of purpose in their job.

This is higher than **gen z** (35%) and **boomers** (38%).



TO FIND NEW JOB OPPORTUNITIES WE SEE THAT JOB PORTALS ARE STILL THE NUMBER ONE CHOICE BUT WE ALSO OBSERVED THAT PERSONAL CONNECTIONS / AND REFERRALS HAVE INCREASED IN POPULARITY BY 4%.



Source

The data above shows that staying top-of-mind and maintaining and improving your employer brand remains vital if you seek to attract and retain talent in the Polish market.

However, it is important to keep in mind that employer branding is not only for attracting talent

and retaining your current employees, it is also meant to maintain your employees' commitment to your brand. Without this commitment, even the strongest employers may find it hard to limit the imminent effect the pandemic has on their employer brand.



SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYER BRANDING + EXAMPLES – TAKEAWAYS/BULLET POINTS.

Employer branding is a story about making your employees and candidates happy. By factoring in their personal values, needs, and expectations when you craft your EVP, your chances to be their employer of choice increase.

Especially at times when the Polish labour market is reshaping itself, it is important to continuously monitor what is important for employees and how the market perceives your brand and react quickly and responsibly. For example, promises that cannot be fulfilled due to the pandemic should be replaced

with new era benefits that are aligned with the changes of the employers' needs and expectations. Failing to do so might result in irreparable damage to your employer brand which could put you back at square one.

One-off efforts to improve one aspect of your employer brand as an employer might get you short-term gains, but the effects of a sound employer branding strategy should positively impact your recruitment in the long run.

NEW ERA BENEFITS

FLEXIBILITY OF BENEFITS

- Ability to cancel quickly
- Easy access
- Instead of classroom courses, there are training platforms
- Must respond to the needs of employees
- Ask what is a benefit for employees
- Online classes for children
- Gift baskets for employees
- On-line concert for employees
- On-line theatre performance for employees
- On-line stand-ups for employees
- E-zoo for employees' children
- On-line day camps for employees' children
- On-line kindergarten for employees' children
- Meeting with an interesting person online for employees' children
- A platform with fairy tales for employees' children

- Programming and dance workshops for employees' children
- Competitions for employees' children
- Joint film screenings
- Surprise packages
- Helpline
- Internal forums
- Psychological support
- Mutual support networks (e.g. doing homework together)
- Yoga, meditation, online fitness for employees
- Extra payment for coming to the office
- Ask Henry family-run concierge
- Travel agency voucher for 12 months
- Suspension of sales plans in branches
- A voucher for the purchase of office equipment
- Remote learning computers for children
- Delivery of food home
- Purchase of subscriptions, Netflix, Spotify
- Links to online training
- Training in coping with stress



CASE 2

Employer branding is a story about making your employees and candidates happy. By factoring in their personal values, needs, and expectations when you craft your EVP, your chances to be their employer of choice increases.

Especially at times when the Polish labour market is reshaping itself, it is important to continuously monitor what is important for employees and how the market perceives your brand and react quickly and responsibly. For example, promises that cannot be fulfilled due to the pandemic should be replaced with new era benefits that are aligned with the changes of the employers' needs and expectations. Failing to do so might result in irreparable damage to your employer brand which could put you back at square one.

Here at home, we also observed how one of the biggest international brands in Wrocław/ Poland focused their employer brand efforts on strengthening the bond between teams and improving employee engagement.

Instead of launching new, external, employer branding activities, they decided to reshape their benefits package to meet the new expectations of their employees and launch internal initiatives that bring their teams closer together. These include:

- Psychological / therapeutic support - 4 sessions of half an hour each performed by licensed psychologists/therapists
- Remote animations for children
- Online exercising - Online fitness with a professional trainer once per week
- Online new year's party - Half a day of workshops, beer tasting, charity work, building forests in a jar, online cooking courses
- Creative assignments like building nesting boxes for birds for which the courier delivers the materials and online workshops are set up for instructions
- Meal vouchers to order and meet with colleagues online
- Earth day: Cleaning the world with equipment that is provided by the company
- Funniest home videos competition with Empik Vouchers as a prize
- Distance competition where the person who travelled the most kilometers are rewarded with a Decathlon voucher

THE RESULT OF THESE NEW INITIATIVES HELPED THEM TO BRING DOWN THEIR ATTRITION RATE TO A SINGLE DIGIT, A PRODUCTIVE AND ENGAGED WORKFORCE, AND A GREAT COMPANY CULTURE THEIR EMPLOYEES ARE HAPPY TO BE A PART OF.

TAKEAWAYS

1. THINK ABOUT WHAT YOUR EMPLOYEES NEED THE MOST TODAY

2. WHAT KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS WILL BE THE MOST USEFUL FOR THEM IN CONNECTION WITH THE CHANGE IN THE WAY THEY WORK (EG REMOTE WORK)?

3. WHAT MAY THEY NEED IN A MOMENT (IF THEY NEED TO RETRAIN)?

4. WHICH COMPETENCIES DO WE ALL NEED TO DEVELOP TODAY?

5. WHAT EQUIPMENT MAY BE NEEDED TODAY? MASKS, GLOVES? HOW ABOUT A HOME OFFICE CHAIR?

6. ARE YOUR EMPLOYEES INFORMED ABOUT THE SITUATION IN THE COMPANY, DO THEY KNOW WHAT IS GOING ON? WHAT WILL HAPPEN?

7. DO YOU HAVE REGULAR CONTACT WITH EMPLOYEES?

8. DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE SITUATION OF YOUR TEAM MEMBERS IS? DO THEY LIVE ALONE OR WITH THEIR FAMILY?

9. CAN YOU ORGANIZE SKYPE OR VIDEO CONFERENCES FOR A TEAM WHERE YOU LET EACH PERSON TALK ABOUT HOW THEY FEEL?

10. IF YOU HAVE A LARGE TEAM, MAYBE THERE IS A CHANCE TO BREAK INTO GROUPS AND ARRANGE TALKS WEEKLY

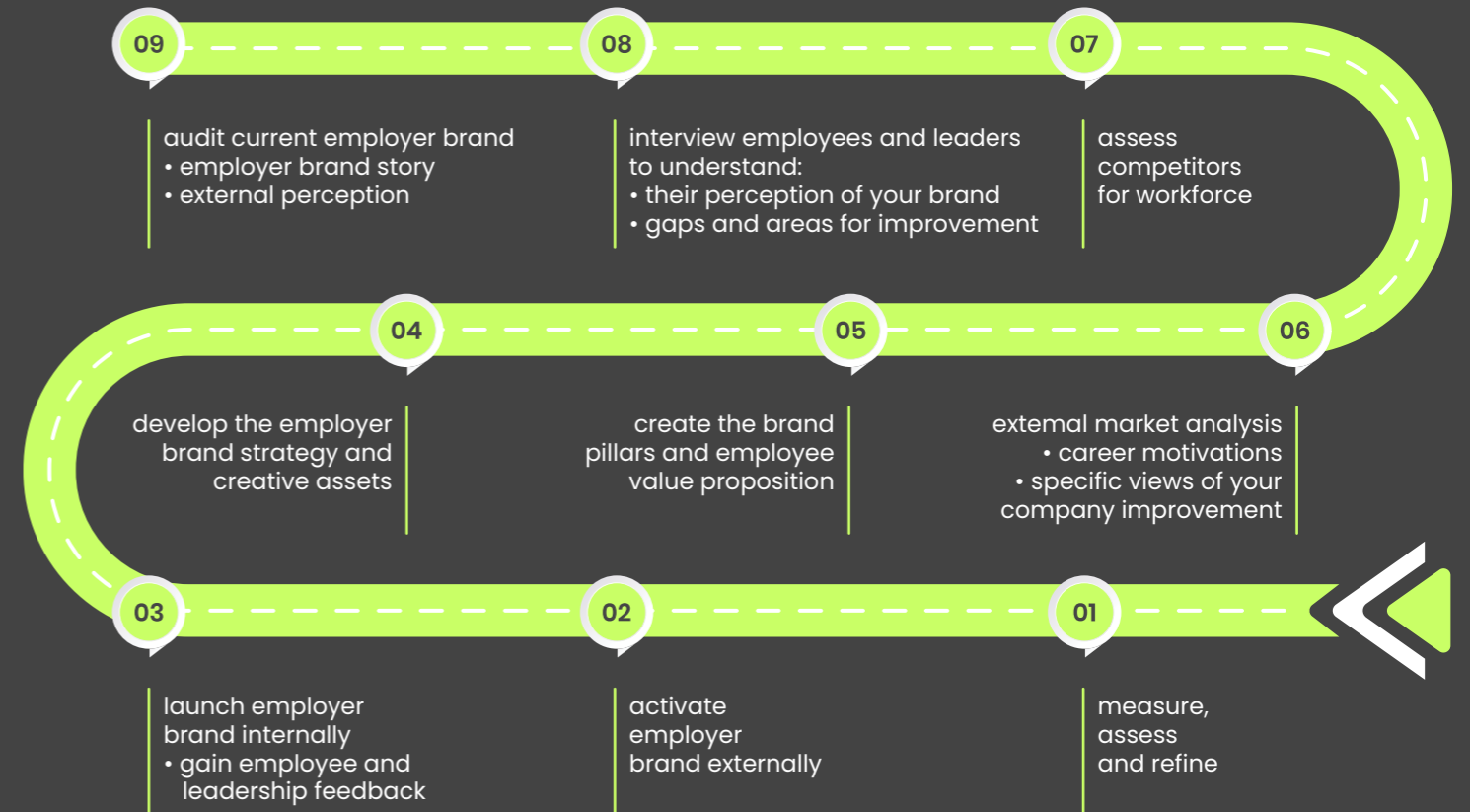
HOW TO POSITION YOUR COMPANY AS AN EMPLOYER OF CHOICE IN 2021

Creating an optimized employer brand that is accompanied by an enticing employer value proposition is no small feat. There are many different definitions as to what Employer Branding is and what actions companies need to take to position themselves as an employer of choice.

To avoid any potential confusion we decided to make employer branding actionable by sharing the process that has worked tremendously for us and our clients. For anyone who is looking to build (or) their employer brand, we do not doubt that the steps outlined below will prove useful.

UNFULFILLED EMPLOYEES' EXPECTATIONS ARE AN OPPORTUNITY TO DEVELOP THE EMPLOYER'S BRAND EVP. WHERE TO START?

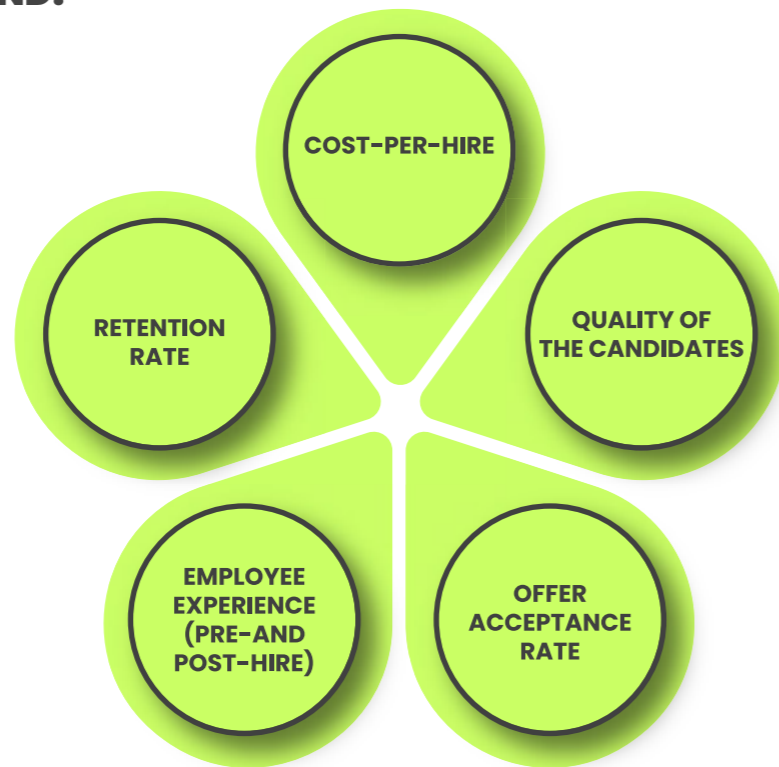
THE EMPLOYER BRAND ROADMAP.



1. ASSESS CURRENT RESULTS AND THE INTERNAL PERCEPTION OF YOUR BRAND.

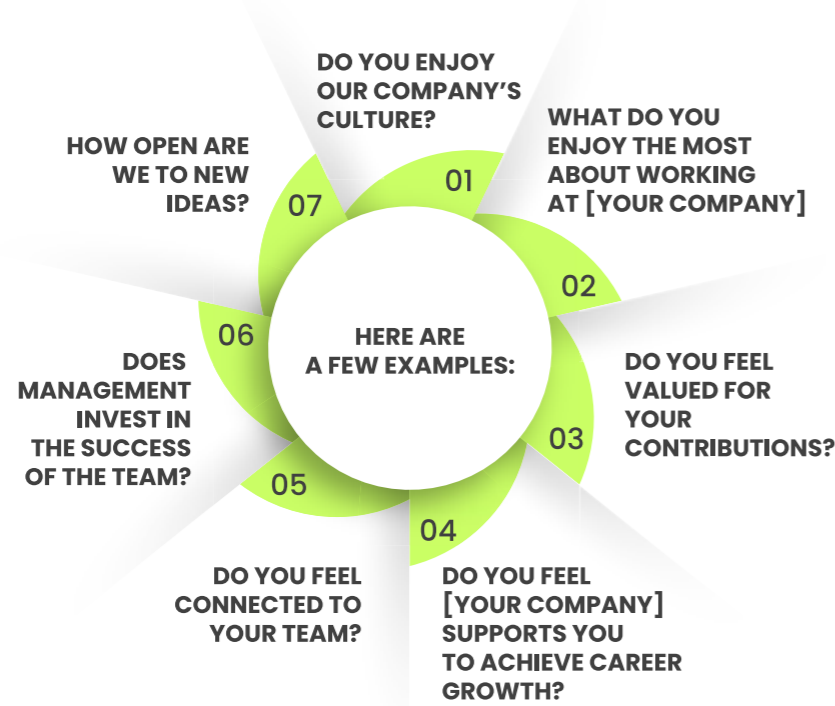
MAKING A SNAPSHOT OF YOUR EMPLOYER BRANDING PERFORMANCE AND HOW YOUR BRAND IS CURRENTLY PERCEIVED LAYS THE GROUNDWORK FOR ALL SUBSEQUENT STEPS.

ANALYZE THE METRICS YOU SET UP FOR YOUR EMPLOYER BRANDING CAMPAIGN AND HIGHLIGHT THOSE THAT SHOW UNFAVOURABLE RESULTS. SOME KEY METRICS TO MEASURE YOUR EMPLOYER BRANDING SUCCESS ARE:



Next, by interviewing your workforce. This provides valuable insight into your strengths as an employer and highlights potentially unfulfilled employees' expectations. Depending on the size of the

organization, you could conduct workshops or use surveys to gather this information. The key is to ask the right questions. Those that reveal real strengths and areas for improvement.



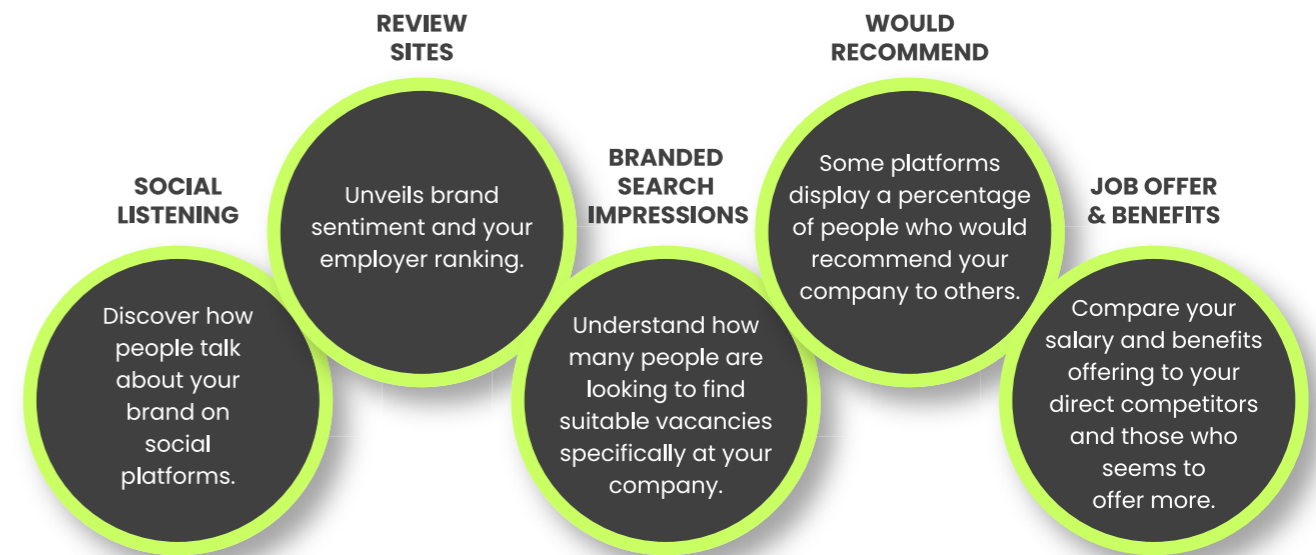
ONCE THE AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT AND STRENGTHS THAT AROSE FROM THE INTERNAL ANALYSIS, THE NEXT STEP IS TO GAUGE HOW THE MARKET PERCEIVES YOUR BRAND.



2. EXTERNAL PERCEPTION OF YOUR BRAND.

Especially during these uncertain times, companies observe many changes in the motivation and drivers of employees when it comes to choosing their next employer. Responding to these changes and communicating your new value proposition effectively has a great influence on the decision of potential candidates to apply for your offer, or not.

To get a better idea of the market's perception of your employer brand you could do the following:



3. DEVELOP THE EMPLOYER BRAND STRATEGY AND CREATIVE ASSETS.

WITH AN INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL DEEP-DIVE INTO THE STRENGTHS AND OPPORTUNITIES OF YOUR EMPLOYER BRAND, YOU ARE EQUIPPED WITH SUFFICIENT DATA TO CRAFT AN EMPLOYER BRANDING STRATEGY THAT IS ACCOMPANIED BY A NEW EMPLOYER VALUE PROPOSITION THAT IS CLOSELY TIED TO THE EXPECTATIONS OF CURRENT AND FUTURE CANDIDATES.

HERE ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT ITEMS TO CONSIDER WHEN CREATING YOUR EMPLOYER BRANDING STRATEGY:

- Develop a profile of the ideal candidate(s) you are looking to attract
- Craft your Employee Value Proposition - Why would applying at your company be the obvious choice for the talent you aspire to hire?
- Determine what areas in the recruitment process your employer branding strategy should improve
- Define KPIs that make sense to track to measure the success of your campaign
- Prepare a budget and allocate resources accordingly
- Decide which elements of your employee value proposition should be translated into employer branding materials
- Decide which communication channels are important to utilise to hire your ideal candidate
- Examine your current recruitment process and candidate experience

4. MEASURE YOUR EFFORTS, REFINE, AND RE-ASSESS.

Quantitative data and numerical measures are a great way to measure results but you also want to track any direct feedback from employees that express concerns or joy about your employer brand. This allows you to refine your employer branding program and your EVP message where needed and re-assess whether those changes had a positive effect on the metrics you prioritized. As you examine your metrics, remind yourself of the goals of your employer branding program. For example, if your goal was to create a positive

sentiment for your brand, you might want to measure employee engagement and employee satisfaction rates.

When you have satisfying employee engagement rates but you wish to increase the quality of your hires, you want to look if the ratio of qualified applicants to the total number of applications has increased after the launch of your employer branding program.

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