

Employer Branding of Hospitals: Recruitment and Retention of Employees

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Introduction

Ambler and Barrow's defined the 'employer brand' as "the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company"¹. According to Barrow, "great employer brands are built from inside out and the process starts at the top."² Employment branding is "the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employer and identified with the employing organisation"³. Employer Branding is not about positioning one specific product or positioning the organisation as a whole. It is about the organisation as a place to work. It is about attracting new and suitable employees to the organisation and retaining the current employees.

In today's highly competitive job market, employer branding is a crucial tool for attracting and retaining the right kind of talent. It helps you to recruit highly skilled and promising new employees and it enhances their loyalty by increasing their identification with the organisation. It also raises an organisation's visibility in the job market and makes it stand out from the competition. Employer branding describes how an organisation markets what it has to offer to potential and existing employees. Employer branding involves applying a similar approach to people management.

Employer branding is the 'image of the organisation' as perceived by the employees as well as their customers. It helps the organisation to differentiate from its competitors. It involves promoting both within as well as outside the firm and makes a firm different and desirable as an employer. The main objective of employer branding is to convince the employees that their organisation is a good work place, to retain them and to ensure their understanding of the organisation's goals and commitment is in harmonization with the organisation's vision and mission. The employer branding focuses on the obligations of the employer to the benefit of the employees without spelling out any proportionate return in terms of positive outcomes for the organisation. "Organisations are increasingly competing to attract highly skilled personnel in various professional areas."⁴

Employer Branding communicates your identity as an organisation to others. It is the essence of what your organisation stands for and should specify the fundamental nature of the organisation. Essentially, it is the process of placing

an image of being a “great place to work” in the minds of existing and prospective employees. HR managers in the hospital sector are challenged by a rise in the shortage of skilled workforce and competition from within the hospital sector. Both these factors, combined with the inability of new comers to deal with the work pressure, are contributory to the high attention level in the hospital sector. To overcome this challenge, the HR managers in the hospital sector tend to make use of ‘employer branding’ as a strategy to appeal to desired current and future ideal talent. There are a lot of branding practices that are adopted by the hospitals to develop a good brand image and attract better employees as well as increased customers.

Objectives of Employer Branding

- To attract and recruit relevant employees in hospitals.
- To understand the impact of employer branding in hospital.
- To know the factors influencing employer branding in hospitals.
- To increase the level of job satisfaction among the employees.
- To enable higher levels of reputation as a result of greater employee commitment.
- To improve the retention rate.
- To improve employee engagement, commitment and performance.

Key Benefits of Employer Branding

- Recruiting the right people is essential for any business success and is a significant competitive advantage.
- A strong employer brand will help to differentiate the organisation in the market place and attract the best people.
- All businesses are unique, so by identifying and communicating the organisation’s employer brand, the organisation are more likely to attract candidates who are an ideal ‘fit’.
- Employees with the right ‘fit’ or match to your company’s culture will be more likely to thrive in your organisation and are likely to have a higher retention potential.
- When used successfully, a strong employment brand should lower turnover and reduce hiring costs. It should also, by association, increase productivity.
- A strong employer brand creates a sense of pride in people working for the organisation.

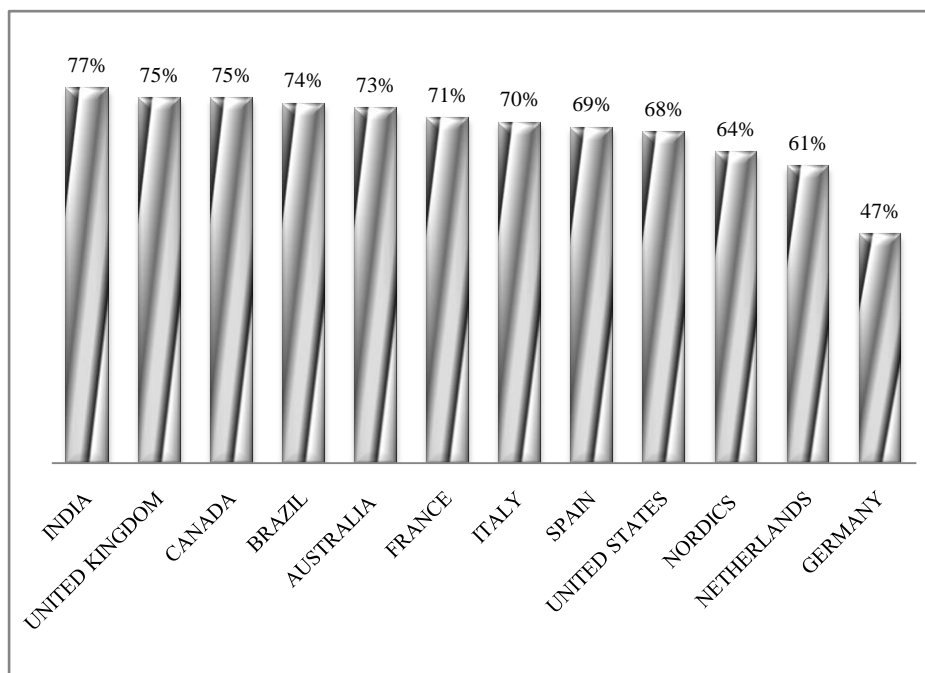
Recruitment of Employees

Due to an ongoing demographic change and increasing job mobility in the labour market, the recruitment of key employees has become a challenge. Employer branding offers the best way to redefine and improve the way a company recruits. Employer branding as a tool for recruitment finds it effective. Employer branding is a crucial tool for attracting and retaining the right kind of

talent. The recruitment process plays an important role in building the employer brand. The process of employer branding can be viewed as a holistic one, which presents the way in which the organisation develops its employees positive attitude and commitment towards the organisation. The employees are the most important ambassadors, and therefore it is vital to have the best employees. The shortage of skilled labour, due to an ongoing demographic change and the increasing demand for skilled personnel, organisations have to face growing job mobility among their talented work force. In hospital sector, branding plays an important role in the recruitment of right kind of talented employees.

Employer branding is a top priority for companies worldwide

Talent Acquisition leaders who agree brand is a top priority (by country)



Source: A global report on the talent acquisition⁵

The above figure shows the employer branding is a top priority for companies worldwide. It shows that Indian organisations significantly give prioritize to the employer brand. The German organisations furnish fewer significant to the employer brand.

Attraction and Retention of Employees

The concept of attraction and retention of skilled personnel leads to employer branding, which has become more and more popular in recent years. The concept of employer attractiveness provides another approach to branding an

organisation in relation to recruitment through the identification of attributes which positively influence its perception in the eyes of job applicants. It helps the hospital sector in the process of profiling themselves in the labour market as an employer of choice for future employees as well as ensure organisational identification among the current employees. Employer branding contribute to an improvement of the attraction and retention approach in the hospital sector and thus enhance the hospital sector's competitiveness in the labour market in its 'battle for talents'. As skills shortages continue to test candidate sourcing and attraction strategies, and competition for the best possible staff remains high, the issue of employment branding continues to gain attention. This war for the right talent is placing pressure on organisations to become an employer of choice. A strong employer branding might have the capability to tip the scale in the competition of talented job applicants and the retention of key employees. The strength of the corporate brand has an immediate impact on the employer brand. An organisation with a weaker corporate brand will have to do a lot more work on its employer brand to attract and retain talented employees.

Satisfaction and Commitment of Employees

Employee satisfaction and commitment are not the ends in themselves but rather mediating variables between identification with the employer brand and outcomes such as retention and job performance. While it is acknowledged that there is a link with product brand identification and employee commitment to delivering the brand promise (Boone, 2000),⁶ the relationship between employer brand, employee satisfaction and commitment and job performance is yet to be supported empirically.

Establishing the employer brand is highly dependent on the health sector's ability to communicate its values and expectations to employees. This can be done through formal process associated with HRM activities like training and development, compensation and performance management. Employee satisfaction and commitment will be considered as definitive outcomes of employer branding in hospital sector. Employer branding is an important area in the hospital sector as there is a high level of interaction between employer and employee.

Conclusion

Employer branding is an emerging topic, and the hospital sector is trying to formulate practices to implement the same in the hospitals. Branding plays a special role in services such as hospital sector because strong employer branding increases trust among the customers. In order to keep brand successful, trust must be standard which hospitals and employees offer their customers. When customer complains, both the hospital and its employees must do their best to respond to the complaints, and thereby maintain or rebuild trust.

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