

employer brand



matters.

building, executing and measuring
employer branding success



how to win the war for talent

through a better brand strategy.

In today's uber-connected society, brand matters more than ever. Social media amplify everything we do. Review sites document all of our achievements and failures. Word spreads quickly thanks to technology. So attention to brand — whether personal or business — is critical.

More than ever, your employer brand needs to stand out. According to [LinkedIn](#), a U.S. company of 10,000 employees with a poor employer brand could pay up to \$7.6 million in additional wages to acquire the talent it needs. Companies that fail to invest in their employer brand spend up to \$4,723 more per hire than peers that do look after their brand. More worrisome, nearly half of those surveyed by LinkedIn said they wouldn't take a job with a company with a bad reputation, regardless of the salary.

Need more reasons to take care of your employer brand? The connection between the brand and [employee engagement](#) is irrefutable. How engaged your workforce is has a linear relationship with its reputation. The more your employees are tuned into their roles, the more likely they are to share their positive experience. Similarly, the stronger the employer brand, the greater the loyalty and productivity. This is a take-away that Heineken, the beverage giant, promoted in a [recent employer campaign](#).

You don't really need quantified data to tell you how much your company's employer brand matters. If you've spent any time on LinkedIn, [kununu](#) or relevant talent communities, you know how quickly employees and candidates share their experience. Furthermore, attracting the right talent has become an increasingly prolonged exercise for just about every organization, including probably yours. With talent scarcity rising around the world, workers have more choices than ever. And they're choosing **employers with the best brands**.

To help you get started with creating an admired and relevant employer brand, we've created five practical chapters to help you develop a strategy, assess your needs and successfully activate your brand. You'll need to invest some time, energy and budgeting to reach your goals, but in the end, you'll see it's well worth the effort.

One final thought: because an employer brand is an ongoing asset, you must continually foster and support it. Your efforts will not only make your business a more attractive place to jobseekers but also to employees who want a long-term relationship.



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why investing in your employer



brand makes good business sense.

Companies with a strong employer brand often enjoy a variety of business benefits, from lower hiring costs to enhanced retention to greater worker engagement leading to higher productivity. However, talent acquisition and HR leaders often encounter organizational inertia when looking to activate their brand caused by several reasons.

Among the key barriers are:

- Failure to [demonstrate a business case](#)
- Misunderstanding of [what motivates workers and candidates](#)
- No dedicated budget to support branding activities
- Lack of understanding of the subject matter
- Unclear ownership of the employer brand
- Lack of interest expressed by executive decision makers

Consider your own organization. Do you face any of these obstacles when seeking support for investing in your employer brand? Most companies today are challenged by these issues in one way or another. [Successful employers](#) address each through a comprehensive and holistic strategy, which we'll cover in chapter two, but these leading practitioners are in the minority. Most companies simply can't justify dedicating resources to enhancing their employer brand simply because they haven't considered all of the benefits.

While many executive leaders understand their employer brand plays an important role in their ability to attract the right talent, it's usually low on their priority list for investments until a problem occurs. These issues could be protracted time to hire, poor ratings on review sites or even losing customers, as [Virgin Media](#) learned when unhappy candidates cancelled their service with the company en masse. By not being proactive, companies stand to lose more than just qualified applicants.

One bright spot is that today's highly competitive market for talent is leading more companies to reassess their employer branding efforts. Executives are worried about their ability to acquire the skills they need to grow with the global economic expansion. PwC's [2018 CEO survey](#) again shows that availability of skills is still one of the top five threats leaders perceive to their business.

How can talent leaders, then, capitalize on prevailing sentiments and win over greater [C-suite support](#) for investing in employer branding activities? [Developing a clear business case](#) is the first step. By showing business leaders that a small budget increase can lead to significant enhancements to the brand and talent attraction, elements which should be clearly reflected in the organization's overall strategy in the current talent climate, brand champions are much more likely to get the resources they need.

Building the business case starts with establishing clear goals you want to achieve such as increasing the sharing of job vacancies through social media or building content for candidates. Whatever the goal, make sure it is measurable and has a demonstrated value to

your organization and your employer brand. The goal also needs to be connected to a business impact such as filling sales roles more quickly or attracting more qualified job applicants, which can lead to a reduction in hiring costs.

One of the difficulties of building a business case is defining **quantifiable benefits** that matter to all stakeholders. Without this, it may be difficult to gain buy-in, especially when an organization is highly decentralized and decision-making is spread out across many business units among different program owners. It is important to map the stakeholders and gain their full support.

Realizing stakeholder benefits is the basis for determining the return on investment for your brand project, so make sure to clarify them in your business case. Some metrics you may want to track include:

- **Cost per hire**

This may seem straightforward, but focusing on the costs affected by the strength of an employer brand will better determine the real return on investment. For instance, a weak brand may result in insufficient number of applicants for a particular brand, requiring more advertising or social media promotion. However, operating costs such as subscribing to a recruiting marketing platform is a standard cost of talent acquisition and shouldn't be included in your calculation.

- **Time to fill**

A critical component of the business case should focus on improving time to hire. Typically this is determined by counting the days from when a requisition is submitted to when a worker is hired, but there are administrative steps that the employer brand has no influence on. Focus on the metrics that can be improved with a stronger brand.

- **Quality of candidate**

A strong employer brand will help you attract more high-quality candidates, which ultimately result in improved organizational performance. If your hiring managers are dissatisfied with the candidate slates presented to them and are requesting for more applicants, your brand may be failing to resonate with the talent the business needs.

- **Employee Retention**

An employer's brand doesn't just affect the attraction of candidates but also the retention of employees. **A strong brand can help an organization reduce turnover**, which in turn reduces recruitment costs.

Whatever the goal you hope to achieve in your branding efforts, make sure you can correlate the outcome to investments. By setting quantifiable targets and demonstrated value to the business, you can create a compelling story for continuous investments in your company's employer brand.

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five tips for justifying investments in your employer brand

- 1 Start by clarifying your goals and how enhancing your employer brand can help achieve them. Involve all relevant stakeholders — hiring managers, HR executives, business leaders — in defining the deliverables. In other words, know what you are trying to achieve before you start.
- 2 Clearly define the scope of activities you will undertake in support of your goals. Is it a specific campaign to build brand recognition on university campuses or to attract truck drivers for a specific region? Avoid being inclusive of too many needs at one time and, if necessary, build a progressive plan with key milestones and sub-projects to be delivered over a timeframe.
- 3 Clarify the costs of resources you need to execute on your plan. Whether it's additional budgeting to spend on ad campaigns or extra employee time to draft messaging, account for all the support required to accomplish your goals.
- 4 State the ROI to executive sponsors. This should be as quantifiable as possible so they can make a decision based on data and not on anecdotal evidence.
- 5 Ensure you have an influential project sponsor who is able to negotiate on your behalf with key stakeholders. And never lose focus of the key goals, which will be used to always guide your actions.

getting started with an



employer brand strategy

Developing a holistic employer brand strategy to support your talent goals is paramount, but it can be challenging because the function is often administered in fragmented fashion, especially at large organizations with numerous businesses operating in many markets. In your company, HR may manage employer branding activities for one business unit while at another marketing is responsible. At some companies, hiring managers are the ones who end up promoting the brand. The fact that the brand impacts and influences every stage of the candidate and employee lifecycle makes such complexity inherent. But it's also why it's such an important discipline and why it needs senior leadership direction.

Even when a centralized function exists within an organization, different lines of business may execute on their own brand promotion simply because budgeting is set up this way. Corporate provides guidance but local stakeholders make decisions on how investments are made, messaging is crafted and outcomes are measured. The absence of a coordinated effort can result in duplication of work, inconsistent and even conflicting messaging and a failure to build on existing campaigns. Most importantly, it may mean failing to **properly leverage** the company's employer brand.

So where do you begin? At the heart of the strategy sits the employee value proposition (EVP), which should convey the strong, distinctive and relevant reasons why a candidate would want to work for a company. It should clearly state the benefits but also align with the company's values and mission to convey to prospective workers the kind of organization it is, what it stands for, the demands it makes and how it treats its workers. This contractual give and take is the foundation upon which all employer brand activities are built.

According to **Gartner**, a well-managed EVP can significantly improve talent attraction. In a global market survey conducted by the firm, companies with a strong EVP have a 50% deeper

reach of passive candidates than those that don't. In addition, these companies have 69% lower employee turnover and pay 50% less in compensation premiums to entice workers to switch jobs. So when organizations set out to develop an EVP, getting it right has significant rewards. According to the **Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)**, companies with a strong employer brand achieve 50% lower cost per hire and 28% lower turnover. They also have 2.4 times more revenue growth and 1.8 times larger profit margins.

However, many don't get it right, resulting in an inarticulate argument to win candidates and workers over. One common pitfall is EVP architects don't adequately or accurately capture their company's core value, mission and opportunities, leading to an incomplete portrayal of the organization. While compensation is the **No. 1 factor that attracts workers to take a new job**, other considerations also play an important role in their decision to accept an offer. In today's competitive talent marketplace, businesses need a comprehensive EVP in order to become an employer of choice. They also have a tendency to highlight only the positive. But presenting a complete picture is critical to making sure expectations are met and new employees choose to stay.

The **2018 Randstad Employer Brand Research** shows that even among large enterprises, creating a relevant EVP isn't easy. Workers surveyed said while attractive salary and benefits are the most important attribute they look for in a potential employer, they don't believe large companies in their market do a good job offering these. In fact, of the five most important attributes they seek from an employer — attractive salary, job security, good work-life balance, pleasant workplace and career progression opportunities — only job security is something they associate with the largest employers. This suggests that enterprise organizations are either missing out on what's important to candidates or are doing a poor job of communicating their offer.

Corporate and employer brands: strands of the same DNA

When developing an employer brand strategy, companies should always align it to their corporate brand strategy. Because candidates often already have exposure to the corporate brand, they expect the employer brand to mirror the same values. Think of the two as different strands of the same DNA, and misalignment can cause confusion in the marketplace.

For instance, a company that touts itself as an innovator and market leader should reflect these sentiments in its EVP and all of its brand messaging. It should make clear how the efforts of its workforce help to differentiate from its competitors and how a career with the business brings meaning and a sense of achievement for its employees. More than this, the experience offered to every candidate and employee should demonstrate this innovation and market-leading spirit. People don't want to be told what something is; they want to see and feel it. The employer brand should be completely complementary to the corporate brand, treating candidates as both prospective workers and valued customers.

"When developing an employer brand strategy, always keep in mind the attributes that make your company stand out as a business. By reinforcing these values to candidates, employees and any other constituents, the impression you leave with them will become amplified over time," said **Francesca Campalani**, Employer Branding, Sourcing and Recruitment marketing director at Randstad Sourceright, EMEA.

She points out that companies mistakenly view employer branding as a tactic of **talent acquisition**. In reality, it's a core component of the overall business strategy, as essential as the corporate or product brand. Talent acquisition is more accurately a tactic of employer brand activation. Failing to align all of these functions means companies aren't taking advantage of the additive effects each brand can contribute to the other.

One final thought: organizations should consider creating a global leader to head up their employer brand function if they haven't already. The role will provide critical guidance around creating messaging about the company's core values, mission and EVP. The leader should have visibility if not management of all employer branding activities, ensuring the company is consistent in its approach. Even when brand activities take on different flavors to enable targeting based on geography or lines of business, the brand leader will ensure these don't stray from the company's principles and remain true to the overarching offer.

5 key steps in building an effective employer brand strategy

- 1 Create a dedicated brand leader and centralize the function. By doing this, you'll be able to coordinate all branding activities and promote a consistent message throughout the organization.
- 2 Define the **EVP**. This should be the first step and the guiding principle for all subsequent activities. It is essential to accurately capture the broader offerings your company can deliver.
- 3 Conduct a **SWOT** analysis. By identifying your brand's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, you can better develop a holistic strategy to address the concerns of all stakeholders in the organization.
- 4 Plan for the long term. An employer brand is an ongoing initiative that doesn't stop with a successful campaign or campaigns. It needs constant attention and monitoring to keep your brand top of mind of workers.
- 5 Leverage your corporate brand. Companies with a strong corporate brand should use this asset as much as possible to enhance its reputation as an employer of choice. The success of **Google**, Apple and other market leaders demonstrate how valuable its corporate brand is when it comes to talent attraction.

activating your

employer brand.

Once you have executive buy-in and clarity of mission, activating your strategy is the next priority. There are many ways to do this, so you should be deliberate in the activities you want to undertake. After all, employer branding is still underfunded at most organizations so the challenge is to stretch budgets as far as possible. However, when smartly directed, a small investment can have a big impact.

According to [Becky Sluck](#), Senior Director, Employer Brand, U.S., at Randstad Sourceright, company executives are becoming more educated about employer branding and want to know in detail from HR and talent acquisition leaders how they plan to enhance their brand. The C-suite may have signed off on more funding for brand building, and now they want to know how it's being spent, she points out.

"When it comes to brand activation, there are many choices — some obvious and others not so much. A good strategy should align your employer brand to the company's business strategy," she says. "Business leaders are willing to continue to invest in your employer brand, but it's up to the brand managers to demonstrate value for each dollar spent."

Where to start? As mentioned in the previous chapters, with your current goals in mind, examine how you can quickly effect change in the perceptions and behaviors of your target audience. Are you hoping to attract a specific skill set or workers in a particular location? Have you been lax in promoting your company [social media presence](#) and now want to elevate it to a higher level? Are you finding that competitors are doing a better job promoting their EVP on their careers site? The goals you've established should help direct you down the right path.

That said, there are some common internal and external activities to undertake that may have a broad effect across your employer brand strategy. These steps address gaps that exist at nearly every organization so start by considering how you can improve these touchpoints for all of your constituents. You may need to undertake additional steps to reach your goals, but a few quick fixes will help lighten the lifting elsewhere.

career site audit

This is an area often overlooked and underestimated when it comes to having an impact on talent attraction. Companies that don't invest in their career site can leave candidates wondering if these organizations are as negligent with their employees. A career site should be supported by robust technology, contain messaging consistent with the EVP and help applicants better understand its culture and people as well as support an efficient application process.

However, employers commonly fail to offer a cohesive experience to candidates at their site (more on the candidate experience is covered in the next chapter). Conducting a site audit helps identify the reasons why job seekers may be turning away from your career opportunities. You can also use this exercise to update content and messaging to ensure you are providing the latest information about your business and people. It's an effective channel to tell [your story](#). "It's surprising how many companies don't regularly update their career sites other than for postings. Candidates who come to an outdated page are less likely to apply for a position," Sluck adds.

Careers portals should quickly present the company at its best, showing its culture, mission and people. A highly compelling way to sell the organization is through employee advocates speaking on videos about their positive workplace experience. The site should also contain leadership comments on the company's EVP to demonstrate their hands-on involvement in the brand.

Finally, job description should be concisely and accurately written to pique interest, and the apply process should be unencumbered and effortless. According to a [study](#) published on [recruiter.com](#), only 10.6% of jobseekers complete an online application with fewer than 25 questions. That percentage drops to 5.7% when an application contains 50 or more questions.

social media game plan

Another area of activation with a broad impact is social media. In today's connected economy, jobseekers often share career opportunities, and employers lacking a social strategy are potentially missing out on many applicants. Beyond the sharing of job postings, the big social channels such as Facebook, Twitter and

Instagram offer employers a way to publicize their people and company culture in a fun and informal way. It also takes advantage of one of the most important assets for activation: employee ambassadors.

Some companies have adopted highly innovative approaches to social sharing. For instance, Cisco as part of its [WeAreCisco](#) campaign has customized its approach to using Instagram to promote its employer brand. (Read [here](#) about the company's effort to reinvent its employer brand.) Aer Lingus tells the behind-the-scenes story of its operations using Snapchat. Employers such as L'Oreal (L'Oreal Talent) have a dedicated [YouTube channel](#) they regularly update with fresh content featuring its workers.

For several reasons, social media is an area that requires significant attention in your employer brand work. A constant feed of fresh content is the only way to engage an audience. Expectations are that your company and its people will post often. At the same time, you should monitor what is said about you on key channels to gain feedback from your constituents. Some companies may already employ a team of social media specialist for their business so they could potentially tap this resource to support their employer brand.

engage the evangelists

Your current and former employees are great promoters of your brand so make sure to leverage their network. Beyond these internal evangelists, don't forget to engage with the many external ones as well. These could be your customers, your partners, media and anyone else within your orbit. Sharing what your workforce is doing and the fun and unique culture they operate in is a great approach to further amplifying your message.

There are many ways to activate your employer brand strategy so don't worry that you can't address all of them at once. Prioritize the activities that you can tend to quickly and with the resources available to you. Keep in mind that your journey is ongoing so pace your efforts accordingly.

five tips for successfully activating your strategy

- 1 Prioritize activities that can achieve quick and measurable wins. This will help your program to gain momentum and demonstrate to executive sponsors that the ROI is real and meaningful.
- 2 Continue internal education. You may have sold internal stakeholders to initially support your brand-building efforts but if you want to sustain that support, keep them informed of the work you plan to undertake and explain what's in it for them.
- 3 Adhere to the global message but localize the activities. Your EVP should be reinforced across all regions, but when activating your strategy, make sure your campaigns account for local nuances.
- 4 Consider all distribution channels. Aside from major social channels, have you thought about sharing through others such as talent communities or professional societies? You'll be able to better target the specific kind of skills you need.
- 5 Be innovative. Just as Cisco and other companies have looked to reinvent its brand, consider how your organization needs to evolve in its employer brand messaging.

creating a memorable



candidate experience.

No discussion about employer branding is complete without addressing one of its most critical components: the candidate experience. What is it and why does it matter? The candidate experience is the journey that your company creates for applicants navigating through the application process. IT should leave new hires and candidates who have been passed over feeling good about their interaction with your organization.

An effective candidate experience achieves several goals:

- Reinforce workers' positive impression of your brand so they may be open to accepting a different position, whether as a permanent employee or a contingent contractor.
- Ensure passed-over candidates do not walk away disillusioned both with your employer and corporate brand. As pointed out earlier, Virgin Media lost customers who were dissatisfied job applicants.
- New hires who rate their experience highly typically become engaged more quickly with their work. This has a direct impact on business performance.

Talent acquisition leaders increasingly are investing in their candidate experience. Randstad Sourceright's 2019 [Talent Trends global survey](#) of human capital and C-suite leaders say 54% have budgeted more for this area of their employer brand strategy. LinkedIn's Corporate Recruiting Trends 2017 report, which was compiled based on a survey of nearly 4,000 talent acquisition leaders in 35 countries, 30% say if budgets were unlimited, they would invest more in improving candidate experience.

In your organization, has candidate experience been a focal point or is it an afterthought in need of attention? To help you better create a memorable journey, let's examine some important considerations.

You might see the candidate journey start from when applicants enter the funnel by viewing job postings and registering with your applicant tracking systems. The truth, however, is most have already researched your company online. According to the [2018 Talent Board North American Candidate Experience Research Report](#), 43% of candidates have a previous relationship with a prospective employer, and nearly two-thirds (71%) conduct their own research through sites such as [kununu](#).

This means even before jobseekers enter the funnel, they have already formed an opinion of your organization. Good or bad, your goal is to further enhance that impression deeper into the funnel.

going mobile is key

As we mentioned in the previous chapter, your career portal is one of the most important of many touch points applicants have of your company, so optimizing it should be at the top of your priorities when crafting the applicant's journey. This means making applying for a job as accessible and effortless as possible. However, many companies still fail to account of one of the most important considerations for this process: mobile access.

In 2015, the [Pew Research Center](#) found that 28% of Americans — and half of young adults — used a mobile device to search for a job. Since then, global mobile device usage has continued to grow, leading to an even higher number of mobile job applicants.

Despite this development, the career portals of many companies still aren't optimized for mobile job applications, resulting in missed opportunities to attract experienced and younger workers whose digital skills are in high demand. If your business hasn't invested in mobile application capabilities, this should be among the first touchpoints you address.

By the time candidates reach your job application page, they have already performed much research about your company. This means you should actively monitor as many channels as possible to understand the prevailing perception workers have of your organization. Remember, you have limited control over some of these channels, especially review sites, but you can create content that counter negative comments and accentuates the positives.

For instance, encouraging your employee ambassadors to write reviews will help lift your ratings. Ask them to also share positive developments in their work and at the workplace as additional testimony to your employer brand. Not only will this help engage external candidates but it also facilitates communication with peers in the company. This doesn't always require huge amounts of investments; rather, consider this to be a daily or weekly exercise in which individuals or teams are awarded for outstanding effort. Encouraging your ambassadors can be a fun and productive experience.

creating a positive candidate experience should be a key component of any employer brand strategy

keeping applicants happy

After jobseekers have submitted applications, it's important to maintain a positive journey. This starts with providing regular communication and feedback, ensuring they don't feel as if their resume has been swallowed up by a black box. Surprisingly, most companies fail to follow up after an application has been submitted. According to the Talent Board's 2018 North American Candidate Experience Research Report, only 14.3% of employers survey candidates about their application journey.

These dismal figures show that prospective employers provide no guidance for them to improve as candidates nor are they seeking input on how to make the applicant journey better. With only a quarter of companies seeking feedback, it means most aren't capturing data that can help improve their candidate experience. By simply following up with a few questions, employers can develop a much better understanding of how applicants — those who are hired and those passed over — view their organization.

Creating a positive candidate experience should be a key component of any employer brand strategy, but many companies are failing to regularly monitor improve on this. This could have a long term impact on their ability attract the right kind of workers and the costs of acquiring them.

five tips for creating a memorable candidate experience

- 1 Begin with an audit of your candidate experience. Walk through every touchpoint a jobseeker may encounter, from employer review sites to disposition of their application. The results will help direct your improvement efforts.
- 2 Provide differentiated content. Your career portal should contain messaging and content that sets you apart. Among all of the resources a candidate turns to for information about a company, the careers page is the leading source. Make sure you use it to deliver compelling content.
- 3 Maximize your use of internal and external champions. The words of people — employees, customers and other evangelists — carry more weight than corporate messaging. Include their testimony wherever you can.
- 4 Write good job descriptions. A perpetual complaint that candidates have is job description don't match what is presented to them at interview. According to the [Talent Board](#), 50% of candidates say the description is the most important content they review in a job search.
- 5 Adopt a team approach. Because there are so many touchpoints, you may want to create an internal team to review and make changes to those touch points.

sustaining a robust



employer brand.

What do the most admired employers have in common? They never stop monitoring and building on their employer brand, so significant investments in time and resources are just part of business as usual. To ensure your employer brand maintains its effectiveness, make sure you are prepared to make similar commitments.

You'll need to regularly communicate the gains made through your strategy. Stakeholders need to know the efforts they've made — whether it's hiring managers coached on presenting the EVP or marketing teams asked to help monitor social media — contribute to the success of the employer brand. There are [many ways to convey the wins](#), but the most important is knowing the organization is acquiring the talent it needs to keep growing. Sharing these developments will encourage your supporters to continue to invest.

The best way to share is referring to quantifiable results. Measuring the metrics mentioned in Chapter 1 is important, but conducting post-hire surveys will also reveal whether you're meeting your most important mandates. Hiring manager satisfaction usually indicates how well the talent acquisition process has performed, but questions relating to quality of candidates, offer rejection rates and any other insights can paint a bigger picture of your employer brand. After all, if a candidate turns down an offer for reasons other than compensation, then the employer has failed to present a more compelling EVP than its competitor. Most importantly, approach your strategy with rigor and consistency, beginning with baselines and [real-world metrics](#).

Early successes will help you gain more high level-level support and demonstrate the impact a well-executed employer brand strategy has on winning talent. These gains should be well-documented, and in some can be used as a template to follow by. For instance, a university recruiting event that draws a strong turnout could be replicated at campuses in all of your market. Similarly, a pilot program promoting a pleasant work environment at one site could be expanded to all of your facilities. The most important thing to remember is capturing every achievement — big or small.

updating your brand to market changes

To ensure your employer brand continues to grow and reach your target talent pool, be agile and open to changing directions if the market dictates. Take the example of GE, one of the most well-recognized brands in diversified manufacturing and engineering. In 2016, it launched a [campaign](#) featuring a fictitious, nerdy programmer named Owen, who finds a job with GE. The company spent millions of dollars promoting the commercial in hopes of attracting programmers.

the brand you develop should be a constant beacon to attract and win over the human capital that will propel your organization forward

The campaign was part of the company's strategy to change its employer brand, which as an old-economy business struggled to compete for programmers and software engineers that are critical to the development of its manufactured products. Because of its size and manufacturing roots, it lacked the entrepreneurial and startup glamour that many dot.com businesses offer. In 2013, the company launched GE Ventures to inject the entrepreneurial feel to the organization. It followed up with the ads in 2016 to further attract the STEM workers needed to drive growth.

GE is not alone. A number of other well-established global businesses have changed their employer brand to better compete for digital economy skills. These include networking and cybersecurity giant Cisco and aerospace manufacturer Airbus and others.

stay relevant with content

Another important way for companies to sustain a strong employer brand is through [content](#). Engaging with talent is only effective when an employer has fresh content to share. It's the only way to hold on to the attention of prospective workers. Whether it's employee testimonials, a culture book, news of company events, blogs or other types of content, an organization must continuously invest in this area to stay relevant and interesting. Fortunately, content can be crowd sourced within the organization or curated externally so costs can be kept to a minimum.

Finally, think of your employer brand as a complete part of the entire employee life cycle. Consider the impact on your brand every time a worker leaves your organization voluntarily or involuntarily. They will share their experience — good or bad — with their network and make an impact on your brand. Stories posted on Glassdoor and elsewhere will live there perpetually so make sure your organization's offboarding process is considerate of this implication. Not only will a well-developed process help former employees maintain a positive impression as they offboard, it may also help convert them to become champions of your brand post-employment. Additionally, for those who leave voluntarily, an amicable separation leaves open the possibility of re-employment in the future.

Your employer brand requires continuous nurturing and attention, so make sure your strategy is sustainable. As economies expand and contract, as market trends come and go and as availability of talent rises and falls, the brand you develop should be a constant beacon to attract and win over the human capital that will propel your organization forward.

five tips to keep growing and enhancing your employer brand

- 1 Continually reinforce to your company's leaders the value of investing in your employer brand. Without constant gentle reminders of the program's achievements or benefits, you risk losing support over time.
- 2 Identify new areas of your brand efforts that can be measured and used as a baseline to determine gains. Glassdoor ratings are effective but what other KPIs will show you how well your employer brand is performing against those of competitors?
- 3 Don't stop assessing. Auditing your candidate experience and other components of your brand shouldn't be a one-time exercised. Even a broken link on your careers portal can detract from your brand so make sure to regularly assess your touchpoints.
- 4 Revisit the business case. Your initial investment may not be sufficient to address all of the gaps in your employer brand. You may have to lobby for additional budgeting to remedy shortcomings in your brand strategy.
- 5 Conduct annual planning. Map out the projects and campaigns you want to undertake at the beginning of the calendar or fiscal year to provide clarity on how you will invest for the year ahead.

