

Employer of choice

IMAGE FIX There's increased focus on employer branding as organisations find they're gaining an edge over the competition and attracting talent

Gauri Kohli

gauri.kohli@hindustantimes.com

What do you look for in a company when you start applying for jobs? Does it offer an exciting work environment, job security, lucrative pay package or flexible work culture? For a number of people hunting for jobs, an organisation's brand name matters the most.

As per Randstad India, an HR services company, a strong employer brand plays a key role in attracting talent and positively impacts the hiring process. For example, Google or Microsoft have become big brands and the preferred choices for job seekers because they offer an exciting workplace where one can earn, learn, and grow. This means that by developing their brand and aligning it with long-term business needs, organisations can have an edge over their competitors.

According to the Randstad Awards - India Report 2014, the attractiveness of employer brands increased by 4% globally, while in India attractiveness of employer brands improved by 2%. It was noted that the five most important attributes

when choosing an employer were competitive salary and employee benefits, long-term job security, financially healthy organisations, good work-life balance, and a pleasant working atmosphere.

So how are companies focusing on building themselves as brands? And how is brand-building impacting potential employees? Experts say it goes beyond designer offices, colourful logos and big salaries.

Raghu Viswanath, chairman, Vertebrand, a brand strategy advisory, says, "Employer branding is chiefly aimed at two groups of stakeholders — internal, which comprises your existing team of people and external, which includes the potential talent you want to hire for your company. You have to build a strong emotional connect with your existing team, get them to take ownership of the company's values and feel proud that they are doing something meaningful and substantive. This is important for retention. A similar logic works with the external stakeholders also, and helps you attract the best talent in the market."

Naveen Rajdev, chief marketing officer, Wipro Ltd, agrees, "Each employee is a touch-point



ONE UP ON THE COMPETITION

- A strong employer brand plays a key role in attracting talent from the market and positively impacts the hiring process
- By developing their brand and aligning it with long-term business needs, organisations can have an edge over their competitors
- For most employees a competitive salary and employee benefits, long-term job security, and a pleasant working atmosphere were aspects they considered before choosing an employee
- Employer branding also helps in retaining the best of existing talent pool



Wipro's values, business strategy, employee value proposition and culture are key messages that weave into its brand as an employer. Its employee value proposition called Grow aims at creating an engaging and employee-friendly work culture

NAVEEN RAJDEV, chief marketing officer, Wipro Ltd

for the brand experience, a brand ambassador and a recruiter - all rolled into one. Therefore, a strong employer brand can translate directly into top line and bottom-line growth through improved customer experience and lower costs of hiring and retaining."

Citing an example, Rajdev says, "Wipro Holmes is our leading computing platform for delivering artificial intelligence applications to our customers. Yet it's also a core part of our employer branding strategy to

attract bright individuals who aspire to work in the technologies of the future."

Wipro's values, business strategy, employee value proposition and culture are key messages that weave into its brand as an employer. The company's employee value proposition called Grow aims at creating an engaging and employee-friendly work culture. "We encourage professional and personal growth through well-designed initiatives that range from learning and development, career man-

agement, benefit plans, wellness as well as the opportunities to participate in athletics, cultural and sustainability initiatives," adds Rajdev.

Most of the employer branding propaganda at Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), a leading IT services, consulting and business solutions provider, revolves around its employer value proposition — challenging multiple domains, international exposure and work-life balance. "We have a completely digitised HR process workflow. Externally, our focus is bettering candidate delight by letting them experience 'career on the go' which means our candidates can view the progress of their offer, download and accept offer letters and receive details about joining TCS on mobile devices on real-time basis," says Ajoy Mukherjee, EVP and head, global HR, TCS.

How does employer branding help in attracting talent? "Given the plethora of employment choices people have today, it becomes vital for companies to become the preferred choice of potential candidates and make them (potential candidates) want to apply to them. Employer branding, therefore, has a direct impact on attracting talent from the market as well as retaining the best of your existing talent pool," says Viswanath.

"Work-life integration has become an integral part of our company's work culture today. Beyond this, we believe that great workplace, personal motivation, the infrastructure of the work environment and employee engagements are inevitable parameters in the brand-building exercise," says Adarsh Mishra, head, HR and GA, Panasonic India.