



Your Employment Brand: Asset or Liability?

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What comes to mind when you hear or read “Google”? Perhaps among your first thoughts are: “strong brand,” “search engine,” “innovation”... and maybe “would probably be a good company to work for,” even if you’re not looking for a job. That’s what brand perception is all about, and a direct extension of brand impact is a company’s employment value proposition, or EVP. Every organization has an EVP but, like employees, they differ in shape, substance and effectiveness.

Does your employment brand attract high-quality job seekers, or is it driving top talent to competitors? What attracts a candidate to a particular company, and, more importantly, what encourages him or her to stay there once employed? How is your company viewed by potential candidates? How does your consumer brand relate to your employee brand? The perceptions of both these groups, as well as targeted prospects, dictate your brand equity.

At first glance, EVP may sound like it falls into the emotional realm, and that belief is reinforced by recruitment advertising that relies solely on anecdote versus fact. Conversely, an effective EVP involves a purposeful combination of science and creativity.

Companies that fully understand their EVP and tailor their talent management strategy to support it gain a key advantage.

A Scientific Methodology and Disciplined Approach

Over the past several years, I’ve seen a great increase in awareness of the EVP factor among companies as they examine their talent operations. Our clients, particularly those that have leveraged Futurestep and its Newman

Group talent management strategy services, have come to recognize that EVP can be the differentiator they need to successfully attract hard-to-find talent for key positions.

Experience has shown us that the key to understanding EVP is to look beyond subjective evaluation to develop objective quantifiable analysis—i.e., turning opinion-related research into quantifiable “scores” that can be measured, managed and improved. Toward that end, we developed and refined an EVP evaluation and development framework that is now the standard among our clients for building an EVP strategy.

Several key concepts underlie that framework, and they reflect the realities that determine how well an EVP helps an organization secure key talent. First, in order to construct an effective EVP, you need to understand how your employment brand is perceived today. To do that, you need to capture data from employees and prospective candidates, compare it to industry benchmarks, and develop a new EVP that more effectively positions your company in the talent marketplace. Then, it is important to implement programs to measure and manage your promise of value. All these steps contribute to quantifying, qualifying, and tracking the impact of your EVP.

Marketing the Message: Articulating the EVP

After identifying the most important attributes for your company and industry, the challenge is to isolate the attributes that your employees say you’re best at delivering. These are your competitive differentiators in the war for talent. These attributes are the core to an effective communications effort. They help you describe what it’s like to be an employee at your company, and that targeted messaging becomes the foundation for branding efforts on your careers

Perspective: How does EVP apply?

EVP Applies Directly to all Parts of a Talent Acquisition and Talent Management Strategy



site and in recruiting collateral, as well as your end-to-end talent acquisition process.

Futurestep Consulting: EVP

Futurestep and The Newman Group provide a proven evaluation framework and development program to help you turn EVP into a competitive advantage. To learn more, contact info@futurestep.com.

For all EVP efforts, the desired goal is organizational fit. No matter how intelligent or skilled a candidate is, if that candidate's comfort factors and career goals don't match your company's culture and guiding principles, it's a mismatch. In addition, the focus of an effective EVP is not only on the unique attributes that add up to competitive advantage for attracting desirable candidates, but on the full lifecycle of an employee's tenure with the company. Does the employee experience (i.e., performance

management, career development) mirror your promise of value? If so, you will have more committed, satisfied employees and higher retention rates. All the elements of an effective EVP interact and connect to your business strategy. The good news is that EVP development is an effort of expanding returns. As you attract and retain the best available talent in your industry, you build your brand strength.

Employment brand has become so critical in today's tight talent market that established, reputable companies with powerful brands are looking to "get smarter" about their EVPs. Attracting qualified candidates is not enough; they want to attract and retain the best talent available in order to maintain or gain a competitive edge. Successful companies understand that a conscious and continuous focus on EVP is vital in competing for talent. Companies that do this well dominate their industries.

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