

Hello, this is Rhys Jones and welcome to my latest podcast.

What I'm looking to talk about today is what is employer branding and the reason why I'm talking about the definition today rather than actually how to develop a good employer brand is to clear up actually what it is because with the expansion of the need for content whether it be podcasts, whether it be blogs, whether it be video podcasts, people are in such a rush to get content out they don't really know what they're talking about.

I did do a little bit of research on what is employer branding and I did see a podcast where the chat concern was talking about the logo and the website and how it projected to the customers - I failed to see what that's got to do with employer branding, that's just generally branding.

So, I wanted to talk about the definition of actually what employer branding is because unless you know what it is you're not going to create a good one.

I have actually done a couple of other definition blogs and podcasts on different subjects - for example, scaling. I did a podcast on 'can you actually scale the recruiting business' and also did a blog on how to scale a recruitment business. The reason being is the buzzword is how to scale a business and when you talk to would-be recruit business owners - and a lot of recruitment business owners, they talk about wanting to scale the business. Well, spoiler alert for the podcast, you can't actually scale a recruiting business!

I have written a blog on how to scale a recruiting business and part of the reason for that is even if the definition is wrong! if the general consensus or the popular opinion is that a definition is 'x' then that's what you're going to go with. But, with the scaling situation, the definition of scaling is by increasing revenue for your company but without increasing cost, and with the recruiting business the vast majority of any recruitment business's cost is the staff - it's salaries - so you can't actually scale. You can grow and my blog just talks about how you can help the pseudo scaling process, rather than just hiring staff but again. You'll have to read the blog to find out.

I also did a blog on why coaching is dying off from the recruitment industry. And again, a spoiler at that one is coaching is now the most fashionable way of talking about training and people get confused as to what training and coaching are and quite often they call training coaching. But coaching is a much more advanced way of growing and upskilling your staff. But again, read the blog and it'll tell you how to do it.

Going back on to the subject of this particular podcast, I want to talk about employer branding because - what is employer branding, what is employee branding, and what is EVP. I confess that or 12 months ago somebody said to me what is EVP and I said well I know what an SUV is and what an SVP is, but I don't know what EVP is. I understood what it is

but not from the definition point of view. What it is, is the employee value proposition - that's basically the proposition that you are looking to put to a would-be employee to get them to join your business.

But I'll come on to that. If you talk about what is employee or employer branding, I'm not going to get too hung up on which is which because there are different aspects to employer branding and I'm going to go through now what they are then that'll help you understand what the actual definitions are.

So, if you can look at an employee branding point of view this is how your employee projects your business's brand. So, that's how your employee projects the brand on social media, on LinkedIn, and how they project it in the service they offer - in the core values. How they encompass the brand when they are dealing with job seekers and whether they're dealing with hiring managers and all forms of customers. And, there's also how your employees project your business from the point of view of potential would-be employees, viewing the opportunity working with you.

So how do your staff portray the proposition of working for you? Because, ideally, what you want is your employees to be evangelists for working for your business. And, that could be obviously verbally - that's the best one - but in the way that they promote themselves. If you've got your competitors looking at your member of staff on how they promote themselves on digital media, how they project themselves in various other ways, that gives the impression they'd like to work for you as an employer because of the way that their image is portrayed.

There's also how your employer brand is from an internal point of view. How do your team and how do your staff see your business? How do they see you look after your staff? What the core values are like? What the culture's like? How are they managed? How are they rewarded?

It's very much key to cutting down staff attrition by understanding what your employee proposition is and what your employer branding is from an internal point of view. I will talk about how to improve all these in future blogs or podcasts, but, just with your employee one, it's dead easy. One, is to ask the staff that are working for you 'why did they join the business?' How do they feel they would like the business to be improved? If they could change anything how would it be? And that will help you get an insight as to how you can improve your employee brand.

From that point of view, there's also the branding where you're looking at future employees - where and how you brand your business, from an external point of view, for would-be employees to work for you.

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I saw a comment on LinkedIn a few weeks ago, which I thought was absolutely spot on – that ‘we are hiring’ – Well, your recruiters – you’re going to be hiring now! Are we are hiring staff for your business? Are we are hiring on behalf of your customers? It’s white noise! If you are going to promote working for your business and you’re looking to attract people on LinkedIn – because after all, that’s where an awful lot of recruiters live is on LinkedIn – is by promoting it in a different way. How to catch the attention of the would-be employees, because how slick, how different, and how eye-catching that is, is going to go a long way to that employee branding.

Because when a potential employee’s looking to join a business, there’s an awful lot more they’re interested in than the basic salary, commission and package. I can guarantee you – from my own personal point of view, from the point of view the partners I work with, and also my wife who owns are very respected Rec-2-Rec. And she will tell anybody that, yes the basic salary is important, and if you’re looking at the commission and the benefits package yeah they should be good. But, if it comes down to what percentage of the decision-making process is placed upon that, it’s actually pretty small.

I’ve got some stats here... If you go back to why is your employer branding important, these are the stats: LinkedIn have found that a strong employer brand has led to a 28% reduction in staff turnover i.e so improving your attrition. A 50% reduction in the cost of hire, and 50% more qualified applicants working for your business. Now, this is a broad brush – this isn’t the recruitment industry, but with those statistics, you can see how important it is. Additionally, 75% of job seekers consider employer brand before applying and 78% of candidates say the overall candidate experience they get is an indicator of how a company values its people.

So, as the typical recruiter is anything from the age of 20 up to – well, I can’t be ageist and say 30, but you know upwards to 60. Generally, you’re looking at recruiters will be the age of 20 to 35, so they tend to be more of the demographic that’s going to be interested in other things that are more forward-thinking. That could be forward-thinking from a culture point of view, from a core values point of view – how inclusive is the business? Also, is your marketing? How is the business portrayed? What is your attitude towards training, up-skilling, and investing in existing staff? What is the career progression? What is the opportunity for remote working and flexible hours? And, do you provide the latest recruitment tech?

Now all this comes under the category of employee value proposition and this is where you are looking to secure the employee with your employer branding. What you’re looking to do is, obviously, increase your effectiveness in attracting staff to work for your business. And also, it’s securing the staff. Because recruiters are transient individuals and they work in the recruitment industry, so they know that if they’re looking for a new role they can get an awful lot of opportunities. So, the battle, the fight to win that talent war of getting the top recruiters to work for your business, is highly competitive. And, that’s why, when we’re

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working with the startups and small business we work with, we pay an awful lot of attention to helping the businesses with the tangible aspects of how to produce the digital marketing to attract staff. How to help with the branding and the look and feel of the company. So before people even walk through the door they're interested. But also how are they dealt with during the interview process - how are they engaged with? And, ultimately, what we're doing is looking at ratios.

I'm a big fan of ratios. If you look at the KPI blogs and podcasts that I've done, it's about conversion ratios. So, if you look at how many people you attract to the business, that's a KPI, How many people you get to interviews, that's a KPI. How many you offer is a KPI, and how many you actually convert to working for you is a KPI. Now I'm not saying I ask the business owners to KPI themselves, but these are the things that you look at. And one of the metrics I think is really important is how many people actually accept an offer. So, when you offer a recruiter a job, how many people actually accept that offer. And there's one of the businesses that we're working with - I've been working for some time - and they grew from two staff to - I forget exactly - it's like 15 staff within two years. And, over the course of that time, they only had two people who they offered the job that didn't take the job. Which is absolutely magnificent!

Now, I'll go into explaining how that was achieved in the future blogs and podcasts - how to create a good employee and employer brand. But that's the sort of thing that David's going to be interested in he's helping you increase that conversion. Because what we do at Davidson Gray is not just explain what we do around the sales pitch. but there's a technique as well. As a startup recruiter, your job really is to bring in the cash. Initially, it's to build and bring the money in because that is the petrol that drives the engine. We help build the engine, which is dependent on the parts we put in, but also we help you deliver the petrol. Without overdoing the car analogy, what we're looking to do is to help you grow your business and, part of helping you grow your business is putting in place the right tech, the right marketing, the right branding, the right processes allowing you to recruit with ease without having to get involved with the day-to-day stuff.

But, what we can't get away from is, that the biggest barrier to growth for any recruiting business is the staff. That's attracting good staff, recruiting good staff, and keeping good staff. Because a recruiting business is largely based on your staff because it is a service business. It's a service provision business. You're not selling products, what you're doing is you're providing a service. You could say you're selling candidates - you are - but it's based on service. You can't go and buy them from somewhere and then sell them on. You know you've got to attract them and then you've got to find people who want to hire them. So it's a service provider.

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With any service provider, a tremendous amount of that is based on how a would-be customer feels about you. Because it's intangible and it's the same way you look at employee branding is because it's intangible. You've got to put a lot of thought into how you give that impression to a would-be employee. How do you give that impression to somebody within your business, and how do your employees represent your business. How they represent your core values, how they represent the quality of service, and how they look and feel on the internet. You know all those things are important. So, when we're coming back to what is the definition - the definition of employer branding, employee branding, employee value proposition - if I can say it properly, they're all in a broad brush but you've got to think of it in different aspects. You've got the aspects of what is the proposition that's going to secure somebody once you've attracted them. How do your employees project your brand to customers, to job seekers and to would-be employees? How do your people internally feel about your business? How do they feel about the core values, the culture? How do they feel about how they're rewarded?

All this is branding and your branding needs to be consistent, because what if you read and you listen to a new podcast on branding? One of the keys is to be consistent - decide what your brand is and then run with it now. Your branding isn't just how you look and feel, it's how you act, how you believe your business should be, it's your core values. You know, branding is a big subject - most people focus on how it feels and how it looks from an external point of view, but branding goes a lot deeper than that.

But rather than get too heavy on it, the point of this podcast was just to establish what actually is employee/employer branding, and that is the aspect that we've spoken about. If you can improve each aspect - which is how to attract staff, how your staff project themselves, how you secure the staff, how you keep the staff - that is the winning formula that you need to grow your business and grow it fast and also have a secure strong business. Because the recruitment industry is massively competitive for good staff, but if you can win that war on talent that's the key to growing, fast-growing a high-profit business and having a very strong stable business.

If you are looking to build a business to sell, it's critical that you get that right. I don't necessarily advocate selling businesses because, if you get it right, you don't have to sell it because you can develop a succession plan. Your team will run the business for you. But, what I do say is, always build your business as if you're gonna sell it because the aspects that you would have in growing your business to sell are important to have in your business. And, part of that is your employer branding.

I hope you've enjoyed this podcast, I will be doing, as I mentioned, blogs and podcasts on how actually to improve your employee and employer branding, how to view your employee value proposition to give you more detail. But hopefully this has given you a flavour of what it actually is and why it's important thanks for listening