

# 5 Steps Toward Making Your Employment Brand a Talent Magnet

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Money doesn't buy job loyalty. That's the loud and clear message from our most recent 24 Seven Salary & Job Market Study—one that supports a trend we've seen every year since we began fielding our annual survey. Despite increases to overall compensation, employee job satisfaction continues to tank, and 9 out of 10 talent surveyed are looking to make a career move in the next 12 months.

So what's an employer to do? Well, you can start by focusing on what talent told us this year: a company's employment brand (i.e. their reputation as an employer) matters. Here are some insights from our study to help spruce up your employment brand offering, while improving on-the-job satisfaction of your employees and staving off attrition.

## 1. Include Talent Management earlier in your strategic planning

As recruiters in the hiring trenches, we can attest that attrition issues are often due to the fact that talent management consideration occurs too far downstream in the strategic planning process of many companies. Our study bears this out. This year, Marketing executives (VP and higher) said that while the pressure to attract and retain game changing talent continues to mount (and will have the greatest impact on their ability to lead), only one third say that their company has a formalized approach to cultivating high potential talent. Talent recruiting and talent retention are interrelated. Invest the time and resources in understanding what your offering is today, where you need it to go, and how you will deliver on your employment brand expectations.

## 2. Benchmark your employment brand

Like a company who thinks through the consumer experience across the arc from pre- to post-purchase, employers need to think about the talent experience across the employment branding arc—from awareness to on-boarding to career-pathing. Use social media to actively listen to what current employees are saying, what job candidates are articulating, and what

competitors are doing when it comes to hiring, working and career progression. Map out the "as is" experience based on this social listening along with real-time interviews of current employees and recent hires, and, if you're brave, recent departures. Where did the experience delight? Where did it fall short? Create a map of what the ideal arc should look like and identify the seeds for your employment brand message.

## 3. Identify the unique selling proposition of your employment brand

With opportunities for your brand messaging emerging, start building message points based on the unique features and benefits that come with working for your company. Some areas that are perennial favorites in our study center around life-balancing benefits and career concerns. Our study shows that talent want a company that has a holistic view on their well-being: personal wellness (compensation with a nice combination of traditional and softer benefits), career wellness (training, professional development, clear career paths, potentially-rewarding career detours, opportunities for advancement) and corporate wellness (inspiring leadership, well-articulated vision/mission, capable management).

## 4. Be authentic & transparent

We all know how digital media has disrupted marketing—but it's also disrupted corporate communications. Remember the social listening mentioned early on in this article? Make sure your brand positioning and messaging is genuine and accurate because in today's social media driven world, talent will point out contradictions, detail a poor employment brand experience and share it on the web forever. Our study finds that talent is disillusioned and looking to flee because promises made during the hiring process have been broken. So, when filling out your employment brand messaging—be honest about what your company is and isn't. Separate what's aspirational versus what today's reality is. Setting a realistic experience expectation leaves room open for delight as you add attractive features and benefits over time.

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## 5. Start spreading the news

Just as you would use content marketing to share news about your consumer brand, apply the same strategies to create messaging through social media to connect with potential "consumers" of your employment brand. When creating that content, don't overlook what may be the most powerful tool in your employment branding arsenal: current, happy employees. Like consumer product reviews, employee endorsements go a long way in providing job seekers with a reason to believe in what your employment brand is putting out there.

And what better what to attract new ideal consumers of your employment brand than to have current ideal consumers recommend their network of contacts. Establish or improve your employee referral program—your best employees are your best brand ambassadors.

As our 2013 Salary & Job Market Study indicates, with so many professionals admitting they've got their job-move feelers out, there's never been a more critical time to define your employment brand, invest in your brand offering, and stick to your brand promises to attract the most desirable talent.



**ABOUT THE AUTHOR** Celeste Gudas is a leading authority on workforce strategy for creatively-driven companies. A distinguished entrepreneur and recruiting industry innovator, Ms. Gudas has grown 24 Seven from a single New York office to 13 global offices, spanning 25 countries including the UK and Asia. Today 24 Seven is the go-to talent source supporting the world's top teams in Fashion, Retail, Advertising, Marketing, Design, Interactive & Digital, E-commerce, Beauty, Events and Sports & Lifestyle. A certified Women's Business Enterprise by the Women's Business Enterprise National Council, 24 Seven is also a recipient of the prestigious Ernst & Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award. For more information about how you can create a successful workforce strategy for your company call your local 24 Seven office or email CEO Celeste Gudas at [cgudas@24seveninc.com](mailto:cgudas@24seveninc.com). Follow Celeste on Twitter @celestegudas.

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