



Managing your  
employer brand  
in challenging  
times



---

## The importance of managing your employer brand in an uncertain world

“ Whilst still in the grips of the Covid-19 pandemic, the evidence of an economic reckoning couldn't be clearer. Not only has Covid-19 profoundly altered where we work, it's also redefining what work is being done and how it's being done.

Businesses have had to reassess their needs – and their employees have followed suit. Whether they were furloughed, laid off, forced to take a pay cut, or applied for income-support, many will be looking to move to an organisation that is more aligned with their values, expectations and career goals.

We're only now getting a firmer grasp of the continued uncertainty and challenges that lie ahead facing both the economy and the hiring landscape. Organisations, now more than ever, must proactively manage their employer brands (even if they aren't hiring) and adapt recruitment processes to meet candidates' changing expectations.

In this guide we will discuss how to manage your employer brand through valuing your people, utilising employee advocacy and relationship marketing, and designing a recruitment experience that highlights your employer brand – so when hiring volumes resume you are ready and competitive.

”

Adam Shay  
Global Marketing Director, Resource Solutions





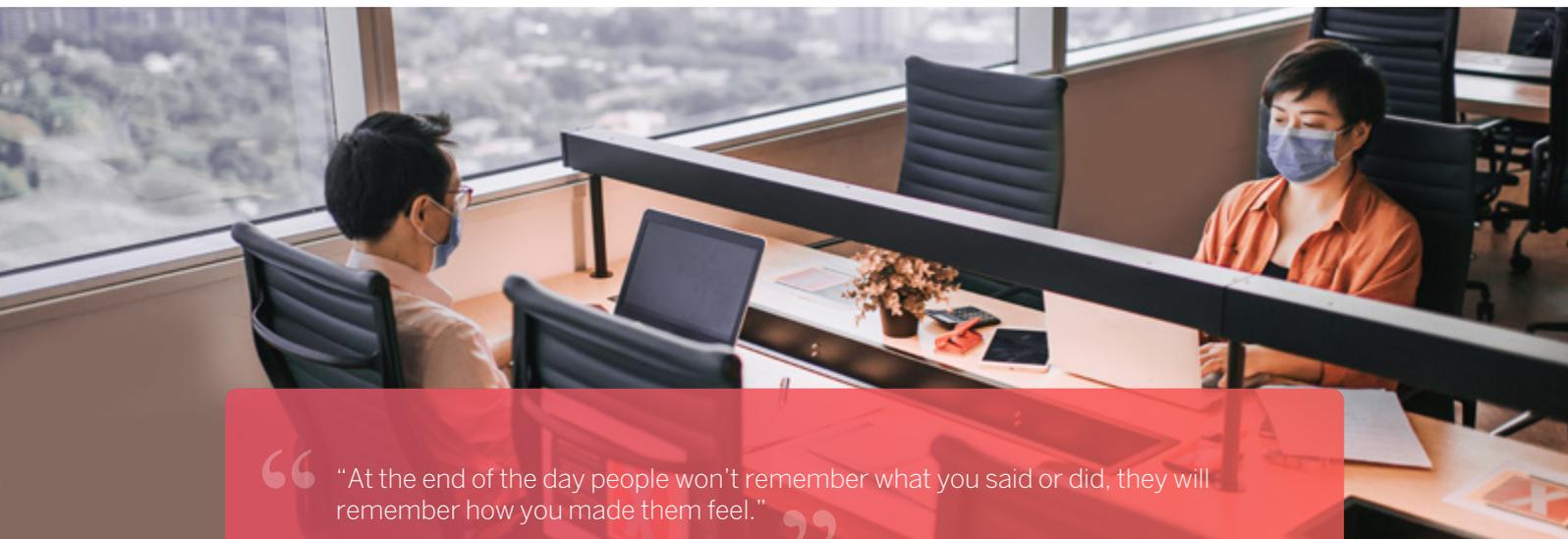
---

## Contents

- |    |  |    |
|----|--|----|
| 01 | Valuing your people in times of uncertainty                          | 01 |
| 02 | Employee Advocacy: empower your people to be brand ambassadors       | 11 |
| 03 | Relationship Marketing: telling your authentic employer brand story  | 18 |
| 04 | Designing a recruitment experience that supports your employer brand | 23 |
| 05 | Tips for hiring in challenging times                                 | 26 |
-

## Managing redundancies, furloughs and restructuring sensitively to protect your employer brand

In a time of crisis, actions speak louder than words. Employees will remember how they were treated during this time. From hello to being let go, every interaction will be scrutinised, so it's vital that organisations stay true to what they stand for and treat people like humans and not another number on the books. Empathy, respect, listening and providing support – the commitments you make to helping your people through this period of adversity is crucial to protecting and empowering your employer brand.



“At the end of the day people won't remember what you said or did, they will remember how you made them feel.”

Maya Angelou, Poet

### Treat people like humans and not another cog in the machine

Daily updates on Covid-19 outbreaks, financial hardship, juggling at-home responsibilities and trying to maintain a “regular” day in the face of a world-changing event – it's safe to say that the pandemic has compounded everyone's stress and anxiety to new levels.

There will be inevitable changes organisations have to face, but organisations can do right by their employees. Imagine what it might be like walking a mile in their shoes and act on it. Basic human skills like empathy, respect and compassion should be an organisation's North Star – it'll go a long way in supporting your employees' past, present and future.

## Keep your employees safe

Safety for current and future employees is currently the number one consideration that organisations need to be planning for. Ensure the right preparations are made (wayfinding, plexiglass barriers, hand sanitation stations, etc.) and keep your constant stream of communication with your employees transparent. Make sure you and the senior leadership team are making themselves available to hear employee concerns and anxieties, and respond swiftly while keeping their best interests at heart.

## Support your people to find additional work

The pandemic has created a turbulent employment market with little calm in the foreseeable future. With few job prospects on the horizon, employees can feel helpless after being laid off. To combat this, organisations like Zomato, Uber, Agoda, Klook and Airbnb, among others, have helped build a talent directory of their laid-off employees. Additionally, they've offered career counselling sessions to help their former employees find their next role.



“Empathy, mindfulness and encouraging openness at work is the cornerstone to making sure your people feel like people within your organisation.”

Kirsty Adams  
Global HR Director, Resource Solutions

## Think long-term where possible when managing redundancies

Redundancies, pay cuts and furloughs are a sour reality that many employees from a range of industries continue to experience during this pandemic. Organisations should continue focusing on employee engagement and retention efforts to ensure their existing talent are content, stable and looking to the future.

It can be very easy to react to the here and now without taking time to focus on what talent your organisation needs to protect and sustain their business. For furloughed employees, make a conceded effort to stay in regular contact with them, and make it a two-way conversation. You want to show them that they're still top-of-mind to your organisation and you look forward to welcoming them back. The same sentiment should be applied to talent pooling. Maintaining regular contact will enable you to activate a pool of candidates you have kept warm.

---

## Invest in your employees' career development (whether they stay with you or not)

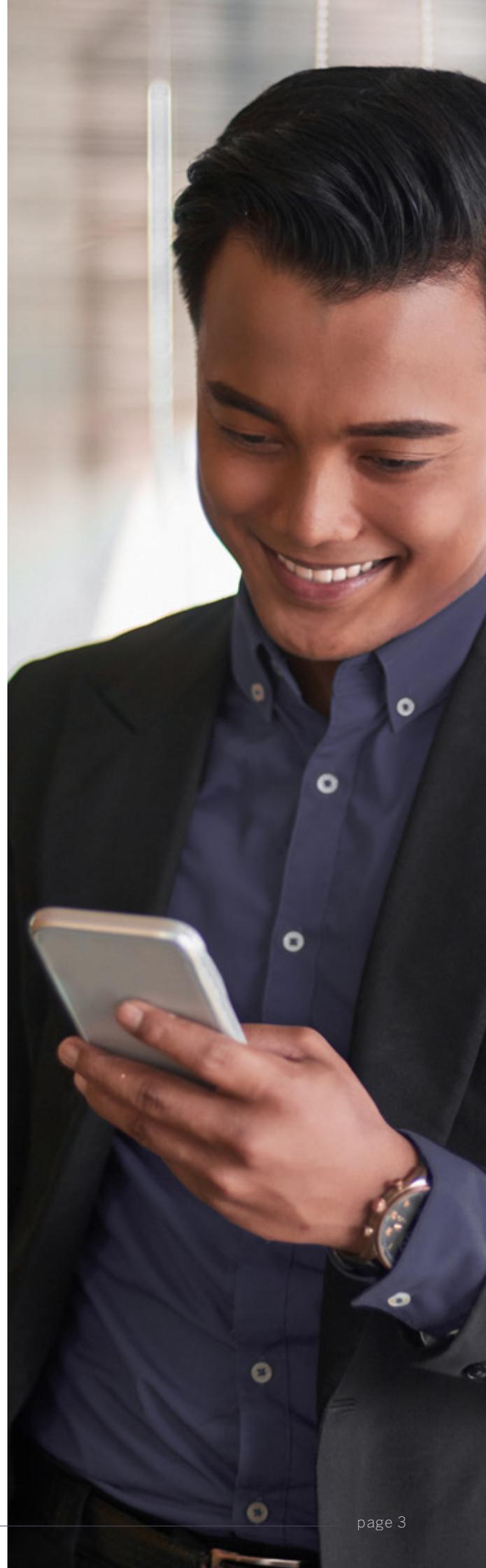
Organisations still need to keep their focus on employee retention. In pre-pandemic times, compensation planning had always been an important piece to an overall retention strategy to curb employee turnover, and it should continue to be so.

In today's world, organisations are less likely to have the bandwidth to support pay raises. Instead, the onus will be on them to promote their benefits offering and employer brand to retain high performers – the talent who will sustain your business through a struggling and recovering economy.

### Learning & Development

Given the financial toll of the pandemic, it can be easy to let learning and development opportunities fall to the wayside while organisations scramble to focus on their immediate health. However, in a study conducted by Research Solutions earlier this year, 60% of candidates consider career development opportunities as a very important part of a job offer. This number has likely increased greatly since the pandemic.

With budgets being cut and salary/hiring freezes implemented, leveraging on available learning and development opportunities become a great way of showing your employees that you're dedicated to their personal and professional growth. Regardless if their stay or leave, this commitment helps strengthen your employer brand and recognition as an employer of choice. Participating in training also provides an opportunity to connect and socialise at a time where feelings of isolation are at an all-time high.





“Ultimately, people want to come in to work and do a good job. Offering people the opportunity to do the best job they can either at your organisation or someone else’s only makes for good business sense.”

Indy Lachhar  
Group Talent Development Director, Robert Walters Group



Career development opportunities



Mission & values



Compensation & benefits

Almost half (49%) of candidates globally say career progression and career development opportunities is most important to them when considering a job offer from a new organisation - followed by a company’s mission and values (26%) and compensation & benefits (25%).

Cross-skilling

Disruption in the industry – whether through automation, AI, globalisation – has been a constant. However, when the pandemic reached our shores, organisations had to confront how mobile and agile they could be, almost overnight. With so many unknowns and with the positive ripple-effect from the Covid-19 vaccine months or years away, organisations have to be thinking proactively and be focused on cross-skilling their employees to adapt in a post-pandemic future.

Organisations need to lay out the blueprints to a talent strategy that develops employees’ abilities to be flexible and better understand different functions of different parts of the business ecosystem. Start by identifying what your new business model will look like, identify the critical skills required, and start building them so you’re able to launch those capabilities.



## Leveraging your Learning Value Proposition (LVP)

While upskilling and cross-skilling are important avenues to explore, a Learning Value Proposition (LVP) is your ongoing commitment to develop the employees you hire that includes all the various development opportunities available to them in their employee journey.

With millions of jobs around the world at risk of being lost due to Covid-19, a major trend that has emerged is self-initiated learning. Organisations are capitalising on talent who see lifelong learning as way to stay relevant and marketable by embedding learning opportunities at work. In a market shaken by Covid-19, successful organisations have created and leveraged LVP programs to build internal talent pools of employees with extended capabilities.



### Case study

#### Ernst & Young (EY)

EY used its LVP as part of an online student attraction campaign called, *Future Skills*, allowing students to learn more about the skills required to keep themselves relevant in the future in their graduate scheme.



EY's ongoing commitment to equip their employees with additional skills did not just start and stop with graduates. They also launched an EY Badge program allowing its people to invest in their own careers by earning digital credentials (badges) in skills that differentiates them from the market, such as data visualisation, AI, data transformation, information strategy and more – allowing them to adapt and thrive in a rapidly changing world.

---

## Prioritise the wellbeing of your people

What used to be a very clear line distinguishing work from home has since eroded and not everyone has the privilege of working out of a home office or having child support. Now, more than ever, employees are looking to their employers to support their mental health and wellbeing.

In an earlier pre-pandemic report, an overwhelming 87% of respondents ranked flexible working and health and wellness benefits as their top motivator before applying for a role. The results were a remarkable shift in a trend that has only been accelerated by today's events. Mental health support isn't a perk – it's become a business priority.



“L&D is more than just sending people to online courses - It's a conversation starter. It provides space for employees to talk about what's important to them, the contributions they'd like to make and how it aligns to your business.”

Indy Lachhar  
Group Talent Development Director, Robert Walters Group

### Acknowledge new stressors

The Covid-19 pandemic continues to be the largest, flexible working experiment that proved to organisations working from home is a feasible option. While there have been many benefits to working from home, this experiment has also required employees to confront a range of new challenges they wouldn't normally have had to experience in an office environment.

Now is the time your employees will be looking at you – the executive team – to help them through this time of crisis: feelings of isolation, at-home technology and access issues, parents juggling childcare and work commitments simultaneously, with differing level of success.

## Give access to resources and wellbeing programmes

We are all navigating uncharted waters. The uncertainty only adds to the stress and anxiety, so organisations should consider providing access to a range of resources from counselling to financial aid. If you're unsure of where to start, sending out employee-wide surveys are an effective tool to monitor employee needs while using the results to inform your actions.

It's not "business as usual" – work will be impacted, staff might get sick or require mental health days, and many uncharted questions will arise. Consider offering tutorials or webinars on mindfulness and resilience, and regularly remind employees of available employee assistance programmes that could help them out during these trying times. Reassure your employees that these feelings of anxiety are normal and remind them to practice self-care activities – ultimately, we will all get through this together!

## Top-down open, transparent communication

Questions regarding the financial health of the business, the prospective return to the physical office, challenges of working from home and the general anxiety and unease around the pandemic are bound to afflict your employees. It's integral that the leaders of your organisation help allay any fears by providing regular updates incorporating the latest local Government health protocols and directives along with the organisations response to them.



59% of professionals feel their current employer isn't working to improve the mental health and wellbeing of its workforce.



## Case study

### Ernst & Young (EY)

EY believes mental health issues are prevalent in every area of life and work, and they are determined to ensure mental health is never ignored.

On their journey to break down the mental health stigma, EY shares stories of their own people, including senior leaders, talking openly about their own experiences of depression, anxiety, and alcoholism. EY's Mental Health Network, led by its employees, acts as a key source of support. They run a buddy scheme, pairing people who have had similar experiences, for example, returning to work following a period of ill health, to support each other.

### Provide ultimate flexibility

Employees have had to deal with a myriad of issues outside 'work' during the Covid-19 pandemic – managing childcare due to school closures, undertaking additional elder-care, sharing small living space with multiple people – the list goes on. It's crucially important for employers to enable flexibility so employees can balance their work and home lives as needed. Push for managers to have an open dialogue with their employees to determine what kind of flexible accommodations would help them personally (compressed work hours, leaves of absences, etc.).

Facebook recognised the importance of an at-home set-up to their employees' physical wellbeing and provided each of their employees a \$1,000 bonus to equip their home with the essentials (a desk, an ergonomic chair, etc.)

Organisations must look at existing policies and benefits and make sure they align with current and future-facing pandemic conditions and resonate with the needs of employees. Offering telecommuting, flexible work hours and additional accommodations for employees like days in lieu for stressful or busy periods at work are a simple and effective starting point to bolster employee wellness.





## Four ways employers can show their employees they care

With employees enduring pressure to perform remotely, organisations should be thinking about innovative ways to continue fostering a sense of community even if it must be done virtually. Anxiety is at an all-time high, so it's vital that employees' spirits are kept high during a time of unprecedented stress.

The lines of work and home have blurred significantly, so employers should move vigilantly and be flexible with how they can adjust their communications, internal engagement activities and employee support to reflect the new normal. If you're unsure of where to start, here are four ways employers can underscore their support for their employees:

### 1 Create a virtual office culture

Use this time to create the office culture that you wish you had before the pandemic hit. Consider kicking-off the work week off with a standing Monday coffee meeting and end the week with a virtual happy hour. Encourage your staff to not answer emails outside of work hours or to log-off early when work is slower. For some – every day is now 'Bring your Kids or Pets to Work' day; consider integrating them into your office culture. For example, LinkedIn hosted a sing-along session for 85 of their employees' children.

“We're creating peer coaching groups to connect people of similar roles across the group globally, thereby creating space for people to connect outside of their day jobs, share challenges and problem solve together.”

Indy Lachhar  
Group Talent Development Director, Robert Walters Group



2

### Create opportunities for connection

If your organisation is using Slack, Workplace, Microsoft Teams or another internal business communications tool, you could amend helpful links to resources with hashtags to create a stronger sense of community while sharing tips, such as #WFHTipsAndTricks, #ParentDiaries, and other important topics that may be affecting your employees.

3

### Help your people keep healthy

Company gym subsidies and cycle-to-work schemes have likely been put on the backburner given the pandemic. Consider supplementing the existing health benefits you currently offer with a regular programme of health, wellbeing and mindfulness activities such as online fitness classes and guided meditation sessions. Remember these programmes are only effective when your employees attend – senior leadership should encourage their staff to take advantage of these programmes and advocate for them to block out time in their diaries to take part.

4

### Overcommunicate

In a time of crisis, high anxiety, stress and an entirely remote work environment can severely hinder employees' capacity to absorb information. How your employees require information downloaded to them will change in a time of crisis. Organisations need to respond by overcommunicating essential information, repeated through a variety of channels to ensure it's received. Do not let the opportunity for misinformation arise, make sure communications are transparent, clear and provided in a timely manner.

## Employee Advocacy: empower your people to be brand ambassadors



“Liaise with your Internal Communications and Marketing teams to ensure you're aligned when launching your employee ambassadorship programme. Your ambassador content will either supplement your communications or be a conflict of interest – now more than ever – it's vital all this and the shared synergies are transparent before hitting go.”

Emma Lang  
Founder & CEO of Empower EB

Building a strong employer brand isn't something that happens overnight. It's an ongoing task where you're constantly maintaining and strengthening your reputation as a desirable employer. The values your organisation espouse should give employees and candidates something to believe, aspire and feel connected to.

The individuals who work at your organisation can be one of your strongest resources to power your employer brand strategy. Identify and encourage your employees to be champions and ambassadors of your brand – they're a cost-effective, retention-driving and progressive opportunity to highlight your brand story, driven by word-of-mouth. Research has shown that organisations who've invested in employee advocacy programmes saw a ten-fold increase in their audience outreach.

However, before you begin, ask yourself: *is this the right time to be launching an employee advocacy programme?*

If your organisation has recently restructured, then there are other employer brand initiatives that you can activate to be more sensitive to the situation. If you never had a programme in place, it'll be that much harder to drum up organisational-wide consensus and excitement when lay-offs are imminent, and your workforce overwhelmed. Lead with empathy – make sure your employee advocacy programme complements your brand voice and timing for employees.

---

## How to identify employer brand ambassadors

There are many ways to identify current and potential ambassadors and help you authentically tell your employer brand story. It's integral that the route you pursue is one that best reflects your company size and organisational culture. You want to maximise the likelihood of successfully activating your ambassadors, so planning how you will identify, approach and engage with them is key.

We asked Emma Lang, Founder & CEO at employer brand consultancy, Empower EB, to share her top tips on how to identify and engage your employees so they become employer brand ambassadors:

### Identify existing proactive ambassadors

Take an audit of your current employees – who's already creating social media posts that tag your company? Who is proactively contributing to the conversation by using hashtags relevant to your organisation? Consider looking beyond the usual suspects (LinkedIn, Facebook & Twitter) and dive into technology forums, industry sites and other trade-related mediums that are relevant to your industry and talent specialisms.

### Ask everyone if they'd be interested in joining

When you've identified key employees, you'd like to speak to, make sure you open the initiative to all your employees so everyone feels welcome to be a part of the programme. This is your opportunity to showcase what your ambassador programme looks like, what its purpose is, and why employees should be a part of it. To those employees already inclined to join, this will be the small push to grow your numbers organically. Some organisations have also seen greater engagement or success by gamifying their ambassadorship programme.

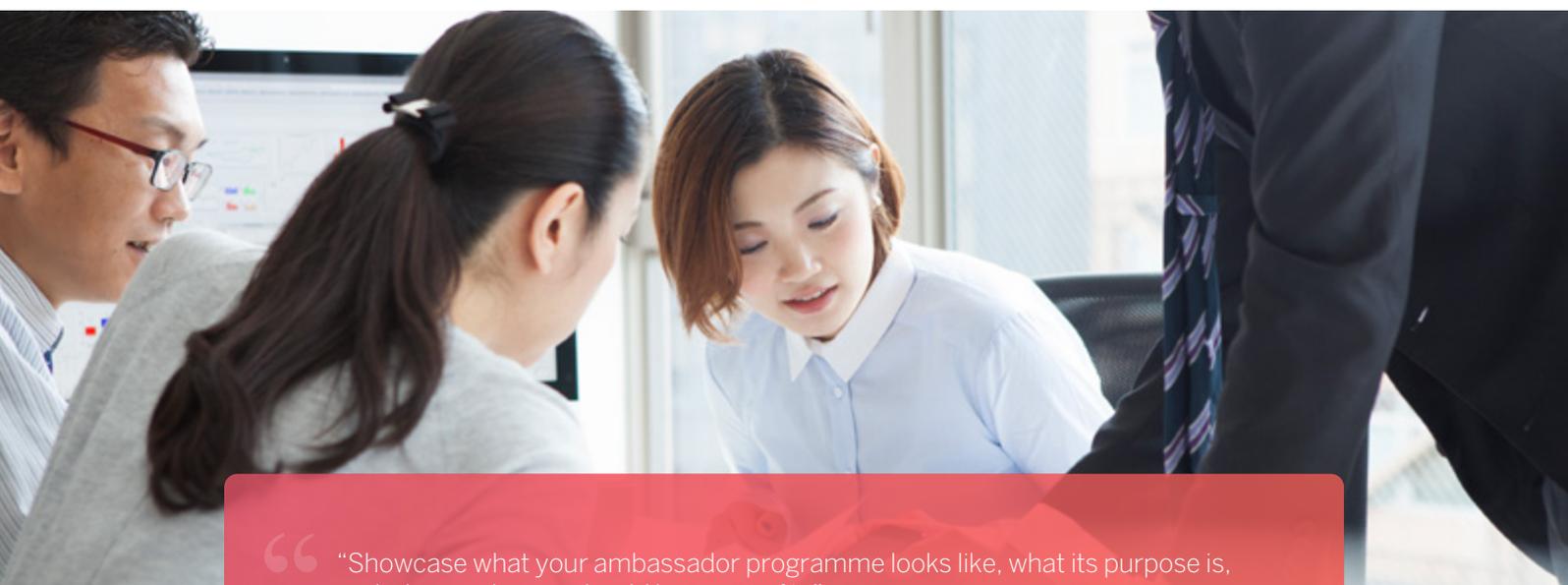


## Ensure diversity is represented amongst your ambassadors

While top performers and leaders may seem like the easy choice to elevate and leverage as ambassadors, it's important to ensure diversity and representation of different audiences is reflected. Leverage individuals by approaching existing internal Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) such as LGBTQ+, working parents, mental health, veteran groups to become part of the programme. Employees of all stripes and titles want to hear from peers that they can relate to.

Another way to ensure representation is to segment your ambassadors by grade and seniority. Include graduates, managers, and employees in specialist roles across different disciplines. A wide variety of employees adds clout to the programme.

And the adage 'lead by example' could not be truer here. HR and TA should always lead or be closely entwined with any ambassador programme – if your leaders and HR department cannot showcase their ambassadorship, then why would others feel encouraged to follow suit?



“Showcase what your ambassador programme looks like, what its purpose is, and why employees should be a part of it.”

## Integrate your ambassadorship programme into employee milestones

There are many advantageous opportunities within an employee's life cycle to socialise and promote an ambassadorship programme. Map out these touchpoints: onboarding, company events, promotions and off-boarding. Each presents a unique moment to embed the ambassadorship programme to incoming, current and outgoing employees.

Also consider the sensitivity when approaching your diverse employees – it may be perceived as insensitive or inauthentic if there's little consideration or preparation for different groups. Work directly with HR team when building your strategy to identify, approach and kickstart an ambassador programme. Both HR and TA also function as great test groups as they're the closest supporters for these initiatives – run a trial with them to study and refine the programme before communicating it to the rest of the organisation.



---

## Keeping your employee ambassadors engaged

The hardest part of any ambassadorship programme is providing enough opportunities, content and encouragement for your employees to stay engaged for the long-term. As one of the few employer brand initiatives that isn't solely reliant on the Employer Brand team (or vendor) to execute on, you have to enable and trust your busy employees to keep it top-of-mind over a sustained period of time. Emma Lang provides the following advice to organisations looking to maintain employee engagement in an employee ambassador program:

### Boost, socialise and highlight

To combat any potential encumberment, host regular drop-in sessions and socialise newsletters that reiterate the 'why' of the initiative and thanks them for their support. Include the results you are seeing by highlighting the strong pieces of content your employees are creating and sharing – this doesn't mean only the content that's received the highest number of likes or views. This includes items like an employee sharing a personal story, a day in the life, attendance at a company mental health initiative, an overview of a company event, or pieces that are simply fun and creative.

“The hardest part of any ambassadorship programme is providing enough opportunities, content and encouragement for your employees to stay engaged for the long-term.”

Emma Lang  
Founder & CEO of Empower EB

”

## Don't forget to listen

Remember every opportunity to engage with your employee ambassadors is just as much your chance to ask questions as it is for your employees to do the same. You need to listen and review what is being shared to determine what is going well and what roadblocks need to be mitigated. For example, some are unsure of what can and can't be shared externally. Empower them by making sure everyone feels comfortable in what they are doing and the process behind it.

Active listening is also an important exercise to help you validate your Employee Value Proposition (EVP) in a localised way: what are graduates in different parts of the world saying about your organisation?

Content provided to your sales team is going to look a lot different to that of your technology team. The exercise of listening to your diverse employee groups helps you model and retool your ambassadorship programme. If you know that you'll be increasing volumes in your technology team soon but don't have an active group of ambassadors from that team, it'll be a good exercise to find out why and what you can do to stimulate them to help with your future recruitment efforts.

## Schedule pulse checks

Read the content that is being shared and engaged with – is the content and tone aligned with your company and employer brand? In a time of crisis, organisations are in reactive mode, with cultures morphing in response. An organisation's EVP is likely to become irrelevant and needs constant review. Annual satisfaction surveys will not provide timely data in order to make informed decisions. Consider getting feedback through monthly or bi-annual surveys. Tools like Workplace can be used to conduct quick pulse checks via its live poll feature. It's always good practice to audit, edit and validate your EVP – especially when it feels like the pace of the world has been dialled up in the face of the pandemic.

Ultimately, your employer brand is why people work for you. How your employees help you shape this perception among future employees is critical in your employee brand activation strategy.



---

## How to maintain an employee advocacy programme

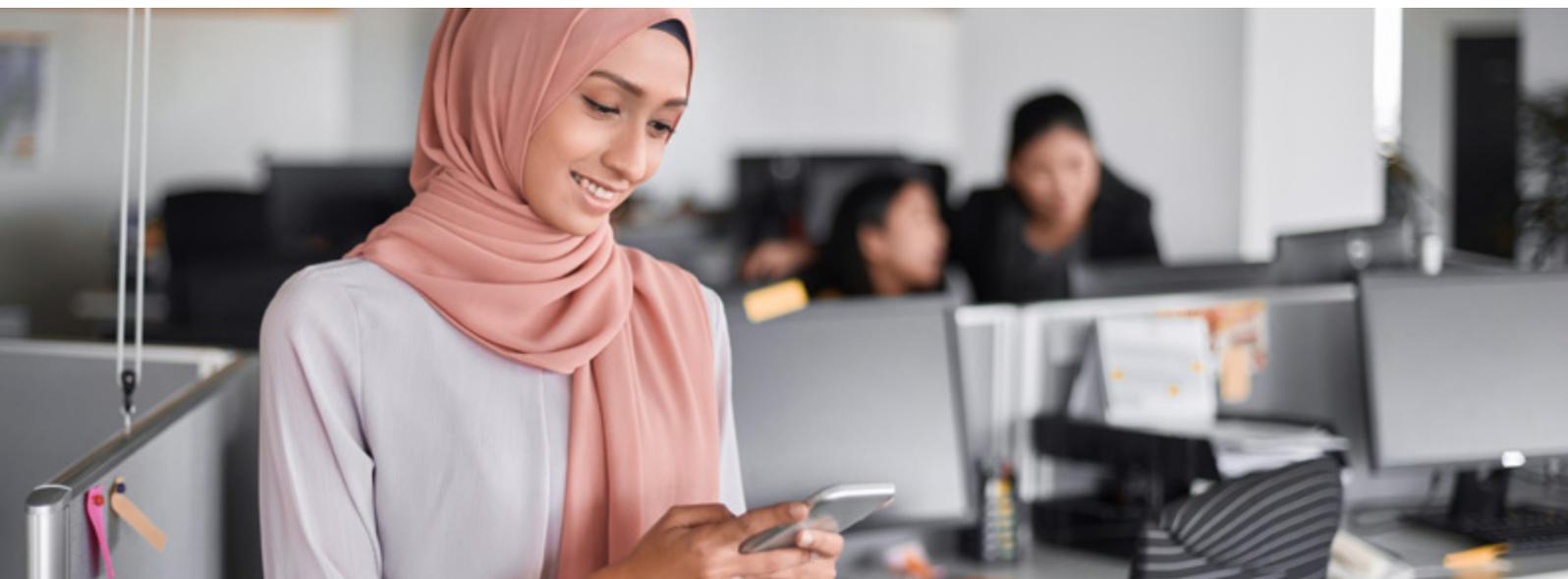
Creating an ecosystem where your employee advocacy program can thrive is essential to ensuring its long-term success. Emma Lang, Founder & CEO of Empower EB, provides four ways organisations can ensure their employee advocacy programme becomes self-regulating:

### Make it easy to create content

Set up your employees so they can easily share, boost or repurpose branded organisational content on their social media profiles. From welcome kits and online meeting backgrounds, to team photos – make sure any employer content is easily accessible and shareable. This ensures your branding can be seen beyond your internal or company-led channels. Utilise your employees' networks to boost brand awareness and attract new business and candidates. Don't forget to circulate this content internally as well.

### Measure your employer brand efforts

Employer branding tools that measure sentiment and reputation will help you conduct an internal audit to identify what your current employees think of your company. Once you have this baseline in place the tools can help you measure and track performance via social listening, employer reviews and reputational surveys. By measuring employer branding initiatives you can align your employer brand strategy to changing market conditions or for the longer-term.



### Engage different employees with every cycle

Consider changing up your ambassadors every 6 to 12 months by engaging different groups to join your employee advocacy programme so they're taking turns having their voices heard. With intern and/or graduate schemes, consider integrating the programme into their day-to-day so you're always getting fresh perspectives socialised on your social networks every time there's a new cohort joining your organisation. This will also allow you to keep pace with employee sentiment.



## Repurpose content and encourage employees to post locally

To leverage your employee generated content further. Consider creating a central library and translating content that worked well in one market, adapting it and posting it in another.

Depending on how you've designed, strategized and governed the programme, empower your employees to create authentic content in their local language to be shared on relevant local platforms, in addition to your core corporate channels. For example, when an employee in Japan creates a localised post and shares it on the app, Line, this can then be translated into Chinese and posted on WeChat. To leverage this fantastic user-generated content further, you may want to creating a central library for potential and existing employees to access globally.



### Case study

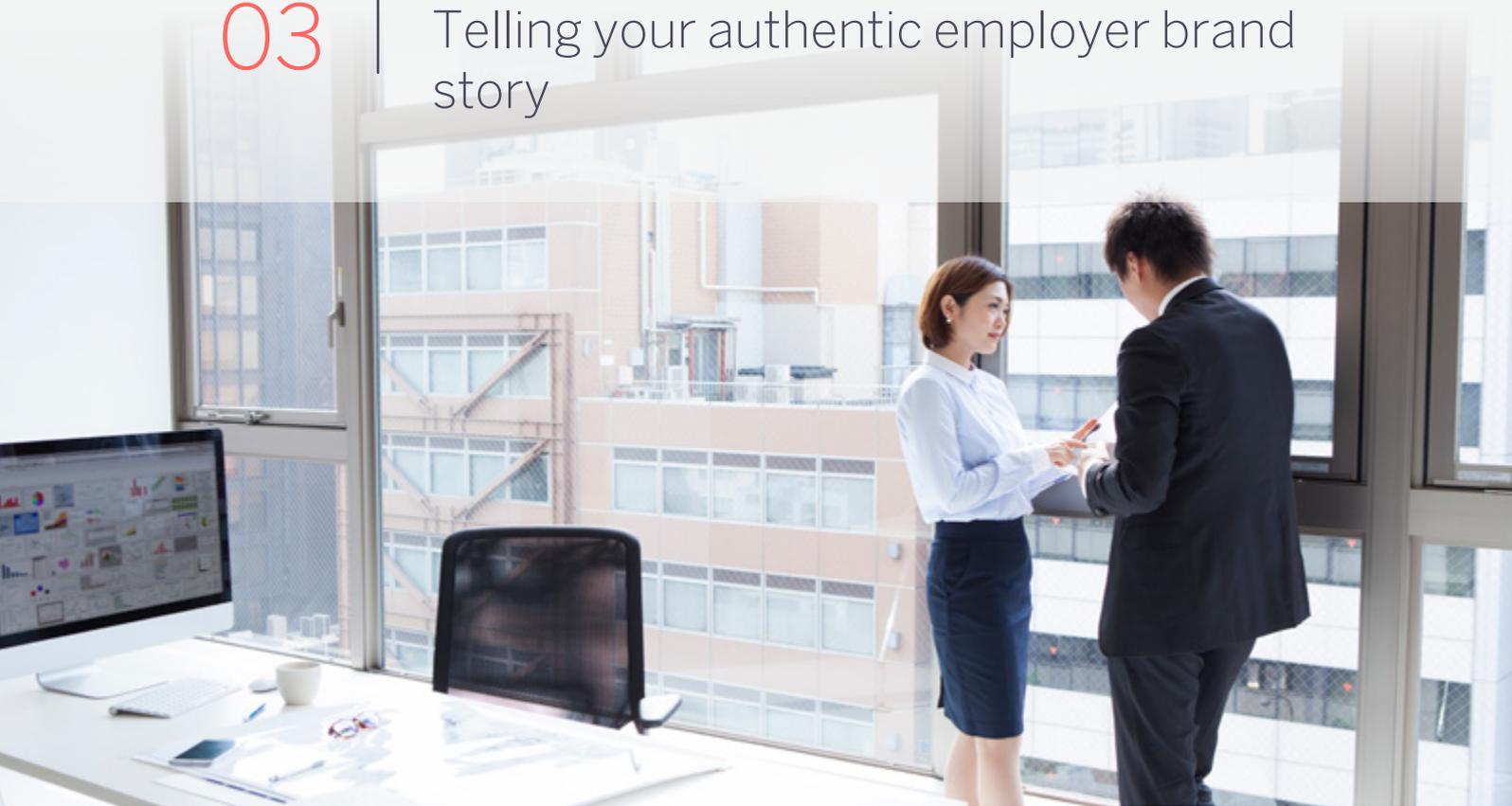
#### LinkedIn

When social media giant, LinkedIn announced they'd be laying off nearly 1,000 employees across the globe, CEO Ryan Roslansky published an internal memo transparently and truthfully speaking about the pandemic that led them to this difficult business decision.



Employees who were being let go were supported financially with a minimum of 10-weeks of severance pay, 12 additional months of health insurance in the US, and they were placed into an internal programme called Momentum where former employees had access to one-to-one mentoring, workshops, LinkedIn Learning courses as well as an opt-in directory to showcase their skills to future employers – they were allowed to keep their work phone and laptop.

The response from former LinkedIn employees was swift, and far reaching – they were proud to have been part of LinkedIn's journey, shared anecdotes and positive stories about their experience working there, and they continue to advocate for the company's success and well-being post-employment.



## Why relationship marketing and brand connection has never been more important

During a crisis, the companies and brands that step up are the ones remembered by consumers and candidates alike. Employers and employees are facing the crisis together – changing their dynamic and relationship overnight.

Now, more than ever, organisations need to be humanising their brands and connecting with candidates and employees on a personal level. With mutual respect, inclusivity and shared goals taking new meaning in a post-pandemic recovery, there is no better time than today for employers to demonstrate their values to the candidate market.

### Start creating long-term engagement

In uncertain times, the anxiety surrounding an organisation's future will test employee and candidate relationships and loyalty. Organisations need to think about serving their candidates and keeping their best interests in mind to retain their trust. Relationship marketing is a long-term, two-way exchange between employers and candidates that relies on authentic, trustworthy communication, engagement and connection.



## Case study

Aldi  
Search data from global worldwide employment search engine, Indeed, revealed an increase of vacancy searches with precise organisation names.

Instead of searching 'retail jobs', Indeed reported many searching 'Aldi jobs' as a reaction to the supermarket chain's response to the pandemic with bonus pay for workers; specific opening hours for healthcare workers, the elderly and vulnerable; and providing employment opportunities for those without work by offering same-day interviews and job offers.

Aldi led with their values and have created an impression that's garnered them lots of goodwill from employees and candidates – their actions will be remembered long after the pandemic is over.

### Your Employer Value Proposition (EVP) may be set but it can be adapted

Given how much the pandemic has disrupted the market overnight, now is the time for companies to redefine and refine their Employer Value Proposition (EVP). In the face of adversity and disruption (notable shifts in candidate behaviours, shifts in supply and demand, how media is consumed, and the surge of social media usage,) organisations should reconsider how they're reaching and relating to their candidates with an EVP refresh.

Ask yourself, your employees and prospective talent what they're looking for from a role in the current climate and adapt accordingly. The onus is on employers to demonstrate that they are listening and adjusting to the changing expectations of candidates.





---

## What tools can be leveraged to promote authenticity?

There is no silver bullet for how organisations can navigate these unprecedented times. Relationship marketing done authentically throughout your candidate focused communications will build candidate trust and improve the perception of your business. Be mindful of the situation everyone is in and think about how your communications can be received honestly and positively, even if that means showing the good and the not so good.

LinkedIn continues to be an ideal platform to be sharing employer branding content, and according to the world's largest professional network, these three outreach formats are having the most success:

“Authenticity is the basis of trust and that feeling of authenticity needs to be embedded in the culture of the company. Candidates will see straight through a company that is suddenly trying to position itself as authentic to capitalise on the situation.”

Adam Shay  
Global Marketing Director, Resource Solutions

## Video posts

With everyone having to shift gears to remote working, video has been key in the current crisis. Media consumption habits changed overnight, and while professional video shoots have been impossible to create during lockdown, marketing teams and production agencies have become creative, nimble and agile in creating authentic content.

## Employee-generated content

Forget picture-perfect, curated content. In a pandemic, candidates expect to see real people in your employer brand communications. Share authentic and inclusive content to build trust. For example, employees have been sharing photos and videos of their work-from-home set-up. Give your employees an opportunity to showcase their perspectives to create moments of authenticity that prospective employees can relate to and situations they might see themselves in.

## Long-form posts

Share, amplify and boost longer written posts by your employees detailing their current situation, their experiences and how their organisation has been helping them. This format lends itself well to C-suite and senior leaders with big LinkedIn presences to publish thought leadership articles on how they're coping. Be vulnerable and transparent about how you're feeling so prospective employees can see the humanity and empathy behind your words.

34x

Authentic video content resonates with candidates. In our global roll out of video job advertisements, video postings attracted up to 34x more views.

“Senior leaders have an important role to play here as we know that companies that have at least one engaged senior leader receive 3.5X more company page views on average compared to companies without engaged senior leaders.”

Rich Moore  
Global Customer Success Manager, LinkedIn

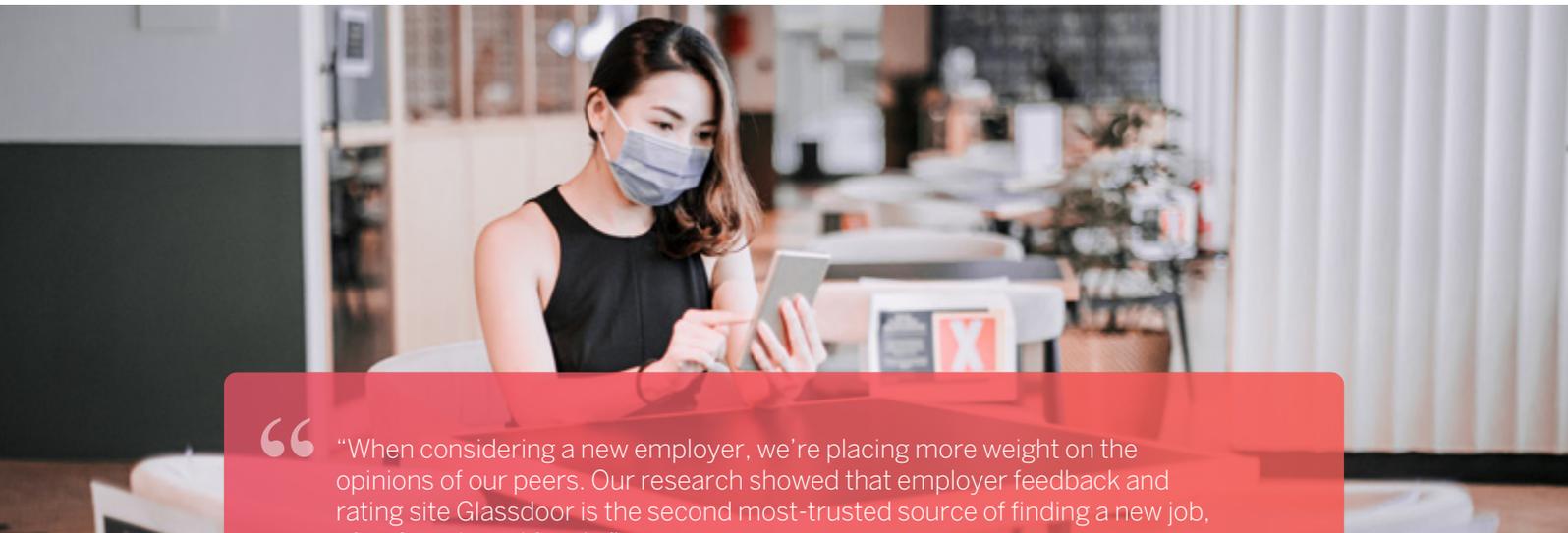
”

---

## Managing your reputation

The pandemic has made online reputation more important than ever, with locked-down candidates relying on online reviews, and being more attune to the behaviour and actions of companies they engage with. A survey by online review site Trustpilot found that a third of their users were checking reviews of organisations more often than they did before lockdown.

Regardless of how well organisations manage their redundancies and restructuring, any sort of transformative change they undergo during this time will bring a high level of scrutiny from employees and candidates – past and present.



“When considering a new employer, we’re placing more weight on the opinions of our peers. Our research showed that employer feedback and rating site Glassdoor is the second most-trusted source of finding a new job, after friends and family.”

Tom Lakin  
Senior Innovation Manager, Robert Walters Group

### Seven tips for responding to company reviews:

- 1 Acknowledge all feedback - whether positive or negative. Feedback is essential part of the improvement journey.
- 2 Address specific concerns honestly and transparently. Acknowledge if mistakes were made and rectify issues swiftly.
- 3 Draft responses first in Word or Google Docs to allow for proper editing of spelling, grammar, and corporate tone.
- 4 Avoid internal jargon so people who don't work for your company get the full story.
- 5 Do not publicly attack or threaten those who you believe wrote the review.
- 6 Always respond courteously and professionally.
- 7 Offer to take negative conversations offline for a more personalised response.

chapter

04

## Designing a recruitment experience that supports your employer brand

With the coronavirus largely crippling the labour market, many organisations have had to face an uphill battle with restructuring, layoffs, furloughs and moving staff to a home-based working model overnight. At a time when many organisations are just trying to survive, should recruitment and employer branding remain a priority?

Beyond retention and recruitment, employer branding is the tool that keeps your brand front-of-mind for candidates. Once the horizon becomes a little brighter, business decisions will be that much clearer – and the hiring action will be swift. Organisations shouldn't park employer branding initiatives during this time. Even if you are not hiring, ensuring your employer brand remains strong and relevant to job seekers will help you to continue to attract candidates for roles you will be advertising in the future. This shows resilience and forward-thinking planning – traits that really identify and resonate with candidates in this trying time.



---

## How to keep your employer brand visible when you're not hiring

Your organisation may not be looking to scale hiring efforts for some time, but that doesn't mean your employer brand should fall to the wayside. In fact, employees' attention will be acutely focused on how their organisation will support them during this tumultuous time. The actions taken now are critical to how your organisation will be perceived by past, present and future employees. Now is the time where your network will test whether your identity and reputation hold up against the values purported through your Employee Value Proposition (EVP).

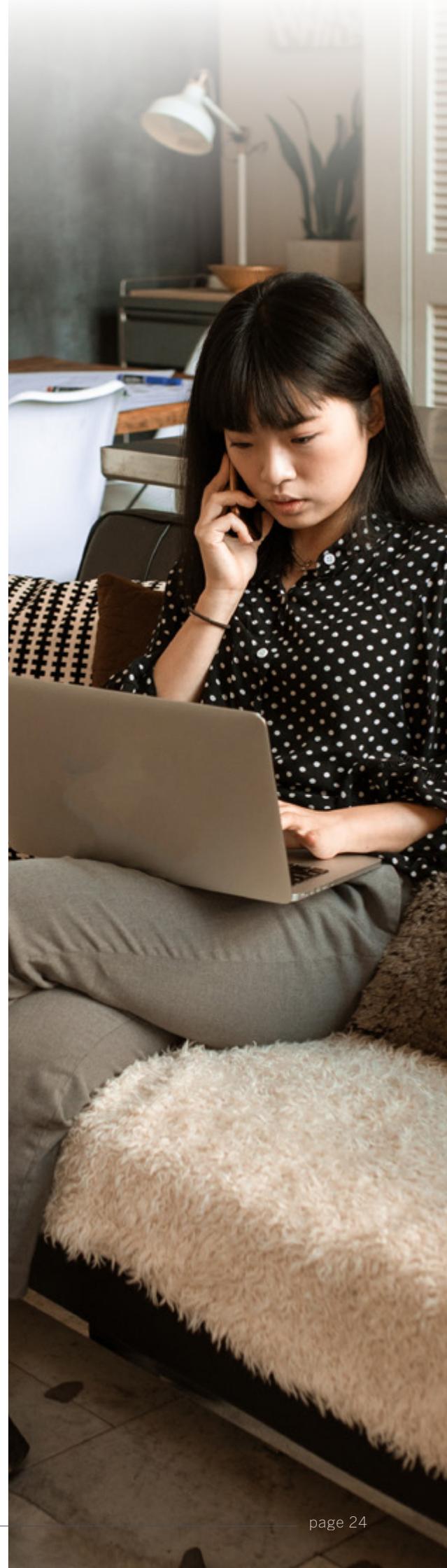
Organisations need to remain competitive and emerge strong out of the gate when the economy begins to recover. While hiring may not be in the immediate foreseeable future – protecting your employer brand, your people and setting your organisation up to succeed is.

### Hang onto your people

Managing heightened stress, helping with the transition to remote working conditions, and relieving any added pressure from work and non-work-related concerns is vital to retaining your employees. Communicate openly, display genuine care and empathy in your communications and share the steps you are taking to protect the livelihoods of your employees.

### How your employee advocates can help

While there is no playbook to follow, employee ambassadorship programmes should be tweaked to ensure any published content is not perceived as promotional, or worse, exploitative. Instead, mobilise your employee ambassadors to give back to their respective communities – be a part of the solution by helping others and being a force of good during this difficult time. Sharing positive stories about how your employees are working from home and pitching in to assist their communities during a time of need will keep your employer brand top-of-mind for when the economy recovers.



## Engage diverse groups and promote inclusive hiring

With organisations focusing their attention on securing their financial health, there's a real risk that diversity and inclusion programmes are being downgraded on the strategic priority list. Research has shown time and time again that gender, ethnic and sexual diversity and inclusion builds stronger, more agile and more advantageous organisations compared to their peers. However, the pandemic has made jobs vulnerable and the diverse talent that occupy them are more likely of losing their roles compared to their counterparts.

The pandemic is taking a greater toll on women and minorities. The former, often shoulder a disproportionate share of family duties. The latter occupy more service-oriented roles – an industry severely threatened by the pandemic. To remain competitively advantageous, organisations need to look at diversity and inclusion as a way to draw upon a full spectrum of diverse talent to help them rebound in the post-pandemic recovery phase.

## Communicate changing benefits

Show candidates that how you are taking care of your employees is woven through your policies. Everyone is facing this crisis in their own unique way, so there is no one-size-fits all approach. By providing options, resources and access to a range of benefits (e.g. virtual meditation sessions, a work office stipend, personal finance workshops, flexible working arrangements, software and technology solutions, etc.), candidates can see employers demonstrating a human-centred approach to their welfare.



### Case study

#### PayPal

Active minority group hiring remains a priority for PayPal in the face of Covid-19 and, as with most recruitment, has moved into the virtual realm for the foreseeable future.

Resource Solutions is working with PayPal to facilitate their diversity & inclusion commitment and is working to proactively recruit minority groups into their Philippines contact centre operations.

The first cohort of hearing-impaired individuals were onboarded into non-verbal chat and email roles in November 2020. Through established links with local education institutions, we created a pathway for hearing-impaired candidates to explore career opportunities with PayPal. Candidates are interviewed remotely, through an interpreter, and undergo digital language assessments. Measures have been developed to facilitate the program's success; including the adaptation of training materials and a dedicated hearing-impaired management team to support the employees. All staff have attended a 'deaf awareness' orientation and participated in 'working with the deaf' workshops to develop skills to ease the minority group's integration into the workplace. Minority group hiring in 2021 will also include high-functioning autism.



Job losses associated with the Covid-19 has highlighted the need for organisations to rethink the future of their business, while stabilising their immediate financial health. Even in times of economic distress, not every industry slows down or recovers.

While many industries may be implementing hiring freezes, most organisations will still require new talent to address business continuity and to remain competitive and ride out the storm.

---

## How to manage high numbers of applications

Thankfully, technology and innovative suites of software can assist with virtual recruitment to produce quality hires and talent pooling. It's vital that HR and recruitment leaders harness new approaches to increase efficiency and reliability.

### Talent pooling

Talent pooling is an incredibly important piece of infrastructure in your recruitment strategy – even in the face of a pandemic with rising unemployment. Currently, there is an opportunity for organisations to tap into the candidate marketplace, which has grown bigger since unemployment has increased sharply. Immediate hiring may not a priority but communicating with prospective candidates whether you have roles available or not allows you to find and track suitable talent faster when your hiring volumes increase again.

### Go digital

Lean on technology to help your recruitment function manage candidate communications efficiently, especially as they face rising application numbers. While you may not be able to provide the face-to-face 'personal touch' that HR and recruitment teams are used to, digital tools can help create personalised interactive experiences for are greatly appreciated by potential candidates and current employees alike.



## Case study

### impress.ai & Resource Solutions chatbots

The early state of a job application is often the most challenging for candidates – a tedious process that still results in 75% of candidates never hearing back from their potential employer.

Knowing this is a near-universal problem in recruitment, Resource Solutions proposed creating chatbots to streamline the application-to-interview process for one of our global financial clients. The chatbot encouraged candidates to apply, moved them seamlessly through the shortlisting process, triggered them to complete relevant assessments and schedule their own interviews, all from a mobile device.

Collaborating with impress.ai, we developed chatbots as an automatic ranking and screening tool to support recruiters' assessment and applicant reviews to identify talent quicker. The chatbot enabled candidates to:

- Apply for a role via a mobile device at any time, or place
- Complete experience and eligibility questions that could 'fast-track' candidates through the process
- Complete skills and knowledge assessments and, if successful, progress immediately to self-schedule an interview in only three clicks

### The results

- Over 2,000 applicants were ranked and screened using the chatbot
- 6.5 minutes is all it took, on average, for candidates to apply, complete a technical assessment and schedule their own interview (as opposed to a process that previously took 6 days)
- 99% of candidates felt comfortable disclosing their gender to the chatbot (compared to a 40-80% gender disclosure rate using traditional application forms or career portals)
- Less than 1% of candidates who dropped out either before or after the technical assessment met the requirements (suggesting the bot encouraged candidates to self-filter through the process)
- 93% of candidates gave 4 or 5 stars out of 5 in their customer satisfaction ratings



Australia  
Belgium  
Brazil  
Canada  
Chile  
Czech Republic  
France  
Germany  
Hong Kong  
India  
Indonesia  
Ireland  
Japan  
Luxembourg  
Mainland China  
Malaysia  
Mexico  
Netherlands  
New Zealand  
Philippines  
Portugal  
Singapore  
South Africa  
South Korea  
Spain  
Switzerland  
Taiwan  
Thailand  
UAE  
UK  
USA  
Vietnam

---

## About Resource Solutions

Established in 1997, Resource Solutions is a provider of Recruitment Process Outsourcing (RPO) and Managed Service Provider (MSP) solutions. As part of the Robert Walters Group – a world-leading specialist professional recruitment consultancy, our business has considerable resources at its disposal. With a global footprint across 31 countries, we're able to work in close partnership with organisations and manage everything from global accounts with demanding resourcing strategies to single sites with lower recruitment volumes. We currently source and recruit for clients in over 60 countries, manage a recruitment budget of over £2 billion and hire tens of thousands of employees each year.

---

## Connect with us

### Mairianne Reardon

Head of Sales, APAC

[mairianne.reardon@resourcesolutions.com](mailto:mairianne.reardon@resourcesolutions.com)

### Lynn Goh

Sales Executive, Singapore

[lynn.goh@resourcesolutions.com](mailto:lynn.goh@resourcesolutions.com)

