How employee experience enhances employer branding

By Ravi Panthi   11 Apr 2019

An employee experience is defined as what people encounter, observe or feel during the course of their employee journey at an organisation. In short, employee experience is everything an employee experiences at work - their interactions with their boss, their team, work-place infrastructure and a multitude of other things.

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The relationship between an employer and an employee is the most important aspect of the employee experience, which in turn is a major contributor to employer branding.

The brand value of an organisation, as well as the environment within the organisation, will determine how favourable it is for the employer to experiment with new ways of working and growing its talent.

Today, jobs are not structured as they were before and retaining talent is not just about providing them with nine-to-five jobs, but it's about navigating and exploring new ways of working and creating a culture of hunger and appetite for learning among the employees.

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The link between employer and employee

In terms of building and maintaining a positive employer-employee relationship, it must be remembered that while an employee is a specific individual, the employer is everything that surrounds this individual – from the physical facilities of the workplace to the emails that employees receive during the course of their work. Hence, every aspect of how an employer interacts with its employees is extremely important.

It's also important to keep in mind that the employee experience is the value proposition that an employer presents to the outside world. Employees are the ones that communicate the values of an organisation beyond the workplace. Therefore, not focusing on the employee experience means that an organisation may be seen as a good brand, but a bad employer.

Understanding the employee needs

An organisation that experiences a sizeable staff churn needs to take note of why their employees are not interested in sticking around and why the organisation is losing out on its value proposition. In the day and age of social media, people communicate very quickly and effectively and when an employer starts losing its value proposition, it may struggle to sustain its culture. And this impacts the organisation's ability to attract good talent and may also increasingly struggle to retain its existing talent. Successful organisations are those that suit their employees' needs and aspirations. When talent retention becomes a problem, it can quickly lead to an organisation developing a bad reputation.

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When embarking on an employee experience strategy, employers should realise that it must form a part of their business strategy and be an integral element of where they are headed as an organisation. They need to ask themselves what the bigger picture is and need to realise that everything has to be aligned to the overall business strategy of the organisation.

It comes down to knowing your employees, their needs and their culture. Then you have to align your organisation's culture with your talent base. So, in order to create a successful employee experience, you need to know what a certain person would need in order to come and work for you, if you want to attract a specific talent.

Including the employee experience in your strategy

It is vitally important that organisations take note of different countries' cultures and accustom themselves to these specific cultures.

Once a company has established its focus on the employee experience and knows what it wants to achieve, it then needs to find ways to achieve those goals. An employee experience is a subjective concept, so there is no rigid or structured way to achieve it.

Some organisations might want to employ a cultural officer who will promote internal employer branding and have a significant amount of interactions with employees. Cultural officers need to position the employee experience as the need of the hour.

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At the same time, team managers need to constantly measure the satisfaction levels of their team members. Managers have to be made responsible for driving the employee experience, because they are the leaders on the ground and would know the likes/dislikes of their team members.

A cultural strategy is implemented from top to bottom and from bottom to top, with the link in the middle being the manager. Transformation cannot happen unless managers step up. This might require a carrot and stick approach, but that's the best way to build this sense of responsibility into your organisation's DNA.

Organisations need to remember that any number of mistakes can be made when implementing an employee experience strategy. To an extent, it has become an industry fad, which is talked about in the boardroom, but not implemented on the ground.

Companies must realise that they cannot go by a general approach to employee experience, as it is a very subjective matter. They must be in real-time touch with their employees.

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