

THE EMPLOYER BRAND PLAYBOOK



A PLAYBOOK FOR STRATEGIC EMPLOYER BRANDING

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WHY WE CREATED THIS GUIDE



Driving Forward

The Future of Talent Acquisition

"We've supported 100+ companies strengthen their employer brands from the inside out. This guide distills what actually works in fast-changing hiring markets especially when TA and HR teams are under pressure to deliver more, with less."

— Mark Loughnane, COO, Rent a Recruiter



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Employer Branding

Guide book

Talent Acquisition Support



EMPLOYER BRANDING THAT WORKS

A PLAYBOOK FOR STRATEGIC TALENT ATTRACTION

Employer branding isn't a 'nice-to-have' it's a highly strategic business strategy.

Your employer brand is already out there. The question is: who's telling the story - you, your people, or disgruntled ex-employees with a vendetta and a Glassdoor login?

When hiring is defined by pay transparency, AI acceleration, and remote work, the narrative around your company has real business impact. This playbook is designed to help you take control of that narrative, fast.

This whitepaper cuts through the noise and tackles real-world strategies to help HR leaders and C-suite execs manage, evolve, and capitalise on their employer brand. We explore no-cost culture hacks, fast wins through AI and recognition, long-term reputation investments, and when to put your money where your mouth is.

Whether you're a startup scaling your culture or an enterprise rebranding your EVP, this guide gives you the roadmap.



THE 4 PILLARS OF EMPLOYER BRAND EXECUTION

Narrative Control



Experience Consistency



Engagement at Scale



Reputation Management



Clarify and articulate your EVP and company story

Align internal culture with external messaging

Activate employees and content engines

Respond to feedback, reviews, and public sentiment

Ask Yourself: Where Are You Strong And Where Are You Leaking Talent?



Narrative Control

→ Do your job ads, EVP, Glassdoor reviews, and career page tell the same story?



Experience Consistency

→ Would a new hire's experience match your onboarding promise or values page?



Engagement at Scale

→ Are employees actively sharing, shaping, or contributing to your brand?



Reputation Management

→ Are you responding to feedback or leaving your reputation in someone else's hands?

Better Narrative → More Consistency → More Engagement → Better Reputation → Reinforces Narrative



FAST, FREE, AND SCALABLE TACTICS TO START NOW

Something Free: Low-Cost, High-Impact Tactics

- **Employee Recognition:** Recognition isn't a nice-to-have it's a brand asset. According to Brendan Ring, capturing and sharing recognition moments reinforces culture and provides rich, authentic content.
- **Employee-Generated Content (EGC):** Gillian Horan urges teams to treat staff as co-creators. Personal stories build authenticity, foster engagement, and offer a goldmine of shareable content.
- **Review Engagement:** Kevin Brennan highlights that companies can respond to Indeed and Glassdoor reviews for free. Timely, empathetic responses enhance credibility and trust.

Something Quick: Fast Wins with AI & Reviews

- **AI-Enhanced Job Posts:** Kevin recommends reformatting job descriptions using ChatGPT to emphasise benefits within the first 7 seconds, the average time job seekers spend reading.
- **Internal Education:** Brendan suggests quick workshops to educate teams on employer branding. Alignment across departments boosts consistency and accountability.
- **Leverage Reviews Strategically:** Prompt happy employees (e.g., after probation) to leave reviews. Timing is everything. Think less "manipulative," more "strategic influence."



Something Slow: Long-Term Strategy Plays

- **Develop or Revisit Your EVP:** Gillian underscores the need to constantly refine your Employee (or People) Value Proposition. It must reflect evolving culture, align with strategic goals, and feel authentic.
- **Culture-Led Branding:** Brendan reminds us: if the story you're telling doesn't match the lived experience, you'll hemorrhage trust and talent. Purpose and values must permeate.
- **Improving Ratings Over Time:** Consistently collecting positive reviews (especially recent ones) on Glassdoor/Indeed boosts visibility and conversions.

Something with a Cost: Where to Invest

- **People:** Hire an internal employer branding lead or community specialist. Someone needs to own the narrative and drive content.
- **Platforms:** Brendan's team uses Workvivo to unite a remote workforce, drive engagement, and generate EGC at scale.
- **Paid Employer Brand Tools:** Kevin recommends Glassdoor/Indeed's employer branding hub. Control top reviews, remove competitor ads, and increase conversions.
- **External Expertise:** Bring in strategists to clarify messaging, develop EVP, or run training. Think of it as brand therapy.
- **Paid AI Tools:** Invest in secure AI platforms for scalable content, automation, and data storytelling.

Trends to Watch

- Pay transparency legislation is increasing globally forcing companies to align compensation messaging with employer branding.
- Marketing recruiters and people-marketing hybrids are on the rise blurring the lines between brand, content, and hiring.
- AI-powered EVP articulation and personalisation is gaining traction especially in how career sites and job ads are tailored by candidate intent.

SPEAKER KEY TAKEAWAYS



Brendan Ring
Chief People Officer - Otonomee

Key Quote:

"You can't fake a good culture. If you try, Glassdoor will out you in three weeks flat."

Key Takeaway:

Recognition is brand equity. Culture is only believable if it's consistently lived and seen.



Gillian Horan
Founder - The Pudding

Key Quote:

"You don't need more content. You need to unlock the content you already have."

Key Takeaway:

Your best content is already in the building. Enable employees to be co-creators, not passive recipients.



Kevin Brennan
National Account Manager - Indeed

Key Quote:

"If you're not responding to reviews, you're letting someone else write your brand story."

Key Takeaway:

Control what you can. From job ads to Glassdoor, every touchpoint tells your story, whether you shape it or not.

EMPLOYER BRANDING INSIGHTS



Despite the increasing importance of employer branding, many HR teams are still struggling to take action. Based on data from 463 HR professionals across our webinar and LinkedIn community, here's what's getting in their way:

1

Lack of Internal Resources is the #1 Barrier

58% Of LinkedIn poll respondents cited limited internal resources as their top challenge.

This reinforces the need for scalable, low-lift solutions such as content frameworks, review strategies, and targeted outsourced support. But just as critical is assigning a clear internal champion someone responsible for driving EB activity, coordinating across teams, and ensuring focus. Without ownership, even the best tools and partners struggle to deliver results.

2

A Missing Employer Brand = A Missing Foundation

43% In the webinar poll, 43% of participants said they don't have a defined employer brand.

That's a foundational gap. Without a clear EVP, companies lack consistency, direction, and differentiation in the market. It's why our employer brand audit always starts with narrative clarity and positioning.

3

Leadership Buy-In Still Lags Behind

21% of respondents across both polls pointed to a lack of company or leadership support.

This signals a strategic opportunity: EB needs to be framed as a commercial lever. Tying employer branding to hard metrics like cost-per-hire, time-to-fill, or retention can help secure buy-in from the top.

4

Standing Out Is a Struggle - But Not the Biggest

9% Only 9% in the larger LinkedIn group cited "struggling to stand out" as their primary issue.

This shows that awareness isn't the issue execution is. Most brands aren't losing the talent war because they're invisible, but because their internal systems, messaging, and ownership are broken.



WHY MOST EB EFFORTS FAIL AND HOW TO FIX THEM

These quick-fire fails show up in everything from EVP launches to Glassdoor responses. Fortunately, so do the fixes.

MISMATCH BETWEEN EVP AND REALITY

You can craft a beautifully worded EVP, but if it doesn't reflect what employees actually experience, it will do more harm than good. Candidates will feel bait-and-switched, and current staff will disengage. Nothing erodes trust faster than branding that over-promises and under-delivers.



Fix:

Run internal listening sessions before refreshing your EVP. Get unfiltered insights on what people value, not just what leadership wants to say. If your values are purely aspirational, turn them into roadmap goals - not slogans.

INVISIBLE EMPLOYER BRAND OWNERSHIP

When everyone owns employer branding, no one owns it. Lack of clarity around who's responsible for execution leads to siloed content, inconsistent messaging, and zero momentum. Most employer brand strategies die in committee.



Fix:

Assign a single point of accountability ideally a talent, brand, or people-marketing lead. Even if it's just 20% of their role, someone needs to drive the engine, gather inputs, and make decisions.

GENERIC EMPLOYER BRANDING THAT SAYS NOTHING

Most employer brand messaging sounds eerily similar: "We're collaborative, fast-paced, and value our people." Great but so does everyone else. When your EVP sounds like it came from a B2B branding template, it won't cut through. Generic positioning means your brand blends in, not stands out and top candidates scroll right past.



Fix:

Audit your current messaging and remove anything that could apply to any other company. Double down on specificity: what actually makes your work environment different, harder, better, or even charmingly awkward? The details make the brand.



GETTING PEOPLE INVOLVED

-When They'd Rather Just Do Their Job

Let's be real. Most employees don't show up to work excited to co-star in your next LinkedIn video.

From HR feedback we've heard consistently: "It's difficult to get people involved." Why? Because in many work cultures, visibility = vulnerability. Sharing personal stories, appearing in employer branding content, or even posting a Glassdoor review can feel risky, performative, or like extra work.

What's Really Going On

- People are busy. If there's no clear benefit, they won't opt in.
- Top-down asks feel corporate. "We need content" isn't inspiring.
- Trust is a prerequisite. If culture doesn't feel psychologically safe, people won't go public.

What Works Instead: Four Low-Friction Tactics

1

Observe, Don't Ask (at first)

Start by mining existing internal moments: Slack wins, peer praise, or onboarding stories. Turn these into content without asking people to perform.

3

Start Small with the Willing Few

Build a "Culture Content Crew" just 5–10% of employees who are naturally more vocal or creative. Let them lead, test, and inspire others.

2

Give Before You Ask

Offer early access to perks, swag, or visibility opportunities in exchange for small actions like nominating a colleague or sharing a quick insight.

4

Frame It as Career Currency

Show how contributing to employer branding isn't just about the company—it's a portfolio piece, a leadership signal, and a way to build professional reputation.



30/60/90-DAY Action Plan

Small-to-Mid Companies

For growing companies, employer branding often falls into the "important but not urgent" bucket until hiring stalls, Glassdoor reviews tank, or top candidates ghost after final round interviews. The challenge isn't intent; it's bandwidth and ownership. These next 90 days are designed to help small teams build employer brand momentum with limited resources, turning underused internal content and employee goodwill into real traction.

30

30 Days

- Run a team session on employer branding 101
- Audit existing employee content (photos, posts, testimonials)
- Claim and update your Glassdoor/Indeed pages

60

60 Days

- Launch an employee-generated content challenge (e.g. "A Day in the Life")
- Encourage Glassdoor reviews post-onboarding
- Use ChatGPT to optimise job ads and social copy

90

90 Days

- Draft or refresh your EVP
- Present a data-led employer branding business case to leadership
- Begin testing low-cost platforms like Workvivo, Hailo, or Sociuu



30/60/90-DAY Action Plan

Enterprise Organisations

In larger organisations, the challenge isn't awareness, it's alignment. Employer branding often sits fragmented across HR, marketing, and talent acquisition, with inconsistent messaging, duplicated efforts, or internal politics blocking progress. This 90-day plan focuses on establishing ownership, unlocking internal stories at scale, and tying employer branding back to business impact - without getting buried in cross-functional noise.

30

30 Days

- Assign employer branding ownership internally
- Review review data and benchmark competitors
- Conduct listening sessions across departments

60

60 Days

- Develop a multi-channel content calendar (LinkedIn, email, Glassdoor)
- Launch recognition and referral campaigns
- Invest in paid review tools or brand hubs (Indeed/Glassdoor)

90

90 Days

- Engage an external strategist to refine EVP
- Launch branded internal training on culture storytelling
- Start quarterly reporting to leadership on impact and ROI



EMPLOYER BRANDING SELF AUDIT

Before you invest time or budget into your employer brand, it helps to get brutally honest about where you stand today.

This quick self-audit is designed to give you a snapshot of your brand's current strengths, gaps, and blind spots based on five core pillars of employer branding. Use it to spark internal conversations, prioritise your next moves, and build a stronger business case for change.

Brand Self-Audit Tool

Score your employer brand on 5 factors (1–5):

- EVP clarity
- Internal alignment
- Review visibility
- Employee-generated content
- Platform utilisation

Add up your score and see where you land:

- 5–10 = Invisible
- 11–15 = Emerging
- 16–20 = Strong Contender
- 21–25 = Brand Magnet



[Get in touch with our team to book a personalised Employer Brand Audit.](#)



AWARD WINNING TALENT SOLUTIONS

We help businesses turn recruitment into a brand asset.

Our flexible embedded talent acquisition model gives you on-demand recruitment support that doesn't just reduce cost and time to hire, it strengthens your employer brand from the inside out. Whether you're scaling fast or refining your EVP, we integrate with your team to attract, engage, and convert the right talent faster, smarter, and with less noise.

Our Partnership Objectives:

- ✓ Drive down your overall cost of talent acquisition.
- ✓ Reduce your team's time spent on recruitment duties.
- ✓ Increase the efficiency of your company's time-to-hire.
- ✓ Release the pressure points in your current recruitment model.



Book a complimentary consultation with our talent team



Thank You.

**Contact our team today
for professional talent acquisition support.**

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