

How to build an employer brand on LinkedIn which sells

A strong employer brand is a powerful tool for talent attraction and retention which reduces hiring costs. It tells job seekers about your company's mission, values and culture. As a result, companies with compelling employer branding are more likely to find individuals whose preferences match what the company offers from the outset, and thus are more likely to stick around as a result.

LinkedIn is one of the first places job seekers turn to learn more about an employer. So, for startups looking to save money to ride out the economic turmoil this year, building an employer brand on LinkedIn is a good place to start.

Here are my tips on how startups can grow their following and showcase their employer brand on LinkedIn...

Identify your USP's

To be effective, your employer brand has to be clear. It has to tell job seekers with no prior knowledge of the company exactly who you are; and what your core values, mission, and company culture are, very quickly.

So to ensure your messaging is clear, consistent and accurate across all channels, it's helpful to identify three key themes which encapsulate your company's USPs as an employer. For example, it may be your strong commitment to diversity and inclusion, your flexible working environment or having "community" as one of your core company values. You can take these themes straight from your EVP (Employee Value Proposition) if you have one!

Once you've identified your three themes, they can then be used as a checklist to ensure that all content posted to LinkedIn and other forms of social media fit into these categories. This way, the style and type of content you post may differ depending on the medium, but your company branding will stay consistent. This will make it easier for job seekers who are aligned with your company mission to find you.

2. Create engaging content

While it's vital to communicate company messaging, it doesn't mean you should compromise on creating compelling content. Posts that feel too professional or technical don't tend to perform well on LinkedIn, and can come across as impersonal. This won't win you many LinkedIn followers, and certainly won't make the company feel like somewhere job seekers want to work.

To make posts engaging, bring in humour and anecdotes, comment on industry trends, and get creative with images. At my company, Flexa, we're also big fans of using emojis to break up sentences – no hard-to-read blocks of text for us.

3. Tailor your tone of voice

It's¹ marketing 101 that a brand should tailor their tone of voice to their ideal customer. But leaders often forget that this same rule should apply to employer branding, too. If you're looking to attract a certain type of candidate,

you need to speak their language. Some workers will respond far better to posts which reference digital trends and use a more playful tone, while others will prefer more formal language.

To get your tone of voice right, start by analysing the traits, values and aspirations of your ideal candidate. After walking a mile in their shoes, you'll be able to create posts which resonate better with the type of candidates you wish to attract.

4. Post 'behind the scenes' content

LinkedIn is a noisy space with thousands of employers shouting about why their company is the best place to work. So to stand out from the crowd, you need to prove it.

Show what it's really like to work at your company with behind-the-scenes content like a team-building day snapshot or a post celebrating team wins. But just make sure that your company's LinkedIn doesn't become a highlight reel. Employee-generated content can help with this.

Featuring posts from employees where they discuss what a typical day at work looks like, or talk about how they've grown professionally as a result of company mentorship and training programs, will show the people behind the brand. To be most effective, ensure these posts feature staff at all levels of the business, not just senior leadership. Job seekers are more likely to engage with content from someone they identify with.

5. Start a conversation

Posting interesting content will mean nothing if you're not interacting with other LinkedIn accounts. To build an engaged community of people, including job seekers and other workers (who may flag relevant roles to friends and family), it's important to interact and engage with others on LinkedIn.

Start by taking the time to respond to comments on your own posts. It's equally important to like, comment or even share other LinkedIn user's content, too. This could be your employees, job seekers, industry influencers and leaders, as well as other companies. Not only will this help build connections, but it will also increase your reach as these interactions will be visible on other user's feeds. This will help more job seekers discover you.

Remember, comments don't have to be long to be effective. On Flexa's LinkedIn (as well as on my own), you'll often find us commenting things like "Love what you're doing" or "Say it louder for the people at the back". We also find engagement guidelines helpful to ensure the tone of all our comments reflects our employer brand.

6. Start now... and be patient

It's important to remember that building your presence on LinkedIn will take time. Don't wait to start until a new wave of hiring. Start now and post consistently. But don't be afraid to switch up your strategy, if needed. Adapt your style, tone and content as you go, depending on what's performing well. This way, you'll be in the best possible position to showcase your employer brand and attract top candidates who are the ideal match for the needs of the business. This will save you time and money on hiring, onboarding and training, too.

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