

THE EMPLOYEE VALUE PROPOSITION (EVP)

What it is

The EVP states what the organisation stands for, what it offers to staff who meet expectations, and what it expects of its employees. It's essentially the espoused 'deal' between the organisation and its people.

Its purpose is to attract, recruit, retain and motivate the right kind of staff, who share what the organisation stands for and will deliver its promise to its customers.ⁱ This involves constantly re-selling the proposition to people as to why the organisation is the place where they should work ("Something unique to us, which resonates with people throughout the business").ⁱⁱ

The EVP is also known as the employer brand. 'The Employer Brand' is a registered trademark of People in Business.

Content

The EVP describesⁱⁱⁱ:

- The organisation's ethos: its core purpose and values, culture and mission, and its historical strengths. What the organisation stands for, and its vision for the future.
- What the employer offers. The EVP commits the employer to delivering certain benefits or opportunities to staff, across the spectrum of AMSO. It should include how the work drives the organisation's success, opportunities for development and career progression, the social environment (being part of a team, when appropriate, and working with co-workers who care), and so on. Thus at Compass Group, 'real opportunities' is fleshed out by statements such as 'learn and grow' and 'to be in the know'
- What the employer expects of staff - the types of behaviour that staff who 'live the brand' are expected to exemplify. At QinetiQ 'be an active partner' is elaborated as 'challenging the way we do things' and 'earning respect by bringing a "can do, will do" attitude to work'.

The EVP starts with a summary phrase. For instance, for Compass Group '*great people, real opportunities*'. The Prison Service has 'If you're fascinated by people and can relate to them effectively, you'll find long-term interest and satisfaction in a career with the Prison Service.'^{iv}

Segmentation

What the organisation needs from and offers to different staff groups varies by investment level and according to the motivators of different groups of people by age group, occupation and so on. So the EVP will need to be flexed within the overall brand, for different staff groups.

Delivering on the promise

The employee value proposition is what the organisation intends – it is a commitment or ‘promise’. For it to work, the employer must deliver on the deal to staff, and employees must deliver what’s promised both to the organisation and to customers. The acid test is the reality that staff and customers experience on a day to day basis, which creates the organisation’s internal climate and external reputation

‘Your brand is what people say about you when you’ve left the room’.^v

The consequences of being seen as an employer that breaks a brand promise may be worse, in effect, than if no promise had been made in the first place. So be careful to make promises that the organisation can fulfill, and then make sure they are kept.^{vi}

‘How to’ devise and implement an EVP

Stage One. *Identify perceptions of the employment experience from managers, employees, the talent market and others* – what the employee experience is perceived as being at the moment.

Stage Two: *define the espoused EVP, plus performance measures and success measures*. The EVP should be grounded in the reality of what the organisation really offers and on what’s important to the people it needs to attract, retain, motivate and inspire. Segment the brand as appropriate by job type, age etc.

Stage Three: *Ensure that the reality matches the EVP*. Define and put in place the policies and processes and management behaviours needed to deliver it, and communicate it internally.

Stage four: *External launch and communications*. Once the brand is being lived inside the organisation, communicate it externally to the labour market.

Stage five: *Review outcomes, using success measures*, to check that the EVP is working as intended and is providing the intended benefits for the organisation.

Stage Six: *On-going support and re-inforcement of the key messages*.

Sources

- Brewster C., Harris H. and Sparrow P., CIPD Executive Briefing *Globalising HR* CIPD 2002
- CIPD *Employer Branding: the latest fad or the future for HR?* Research insight, CIPD 2007
- IDS HR Study no. 809 *Employer Branding* Income Data Services London 2005.
- Walker P. *Employer Branding: a No Nonsense Approach* Guide, CIPD 2007
- Powerpoint presentation delivered by Paul Walker at Harrogate 2007.

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- ⁱ *Employer Branding: latest fad* CIPD 2007 p.4
 - ⁱⁱ Brewster et al 2002
 - ⁱⁱⁱ IDS Study 2005 p.5-6 and 8
 - ^{iv} IDS Study 2005 p.5-6 and 8; Walker 2007 P.43
 - ^v Larry Ellison, founder and CEO of Oracle, quoted in Walker 2007 p.11
 - ^{vi} IDS Study 2005 p 2, 5-6 and 8