



MAINTAINING EMPLOYER BRAND IN PIVOTAL TIMES



OUTPLACEMENT INSIGHTS

POWERED BY CAPTURELY

Maintaining Employer Brand

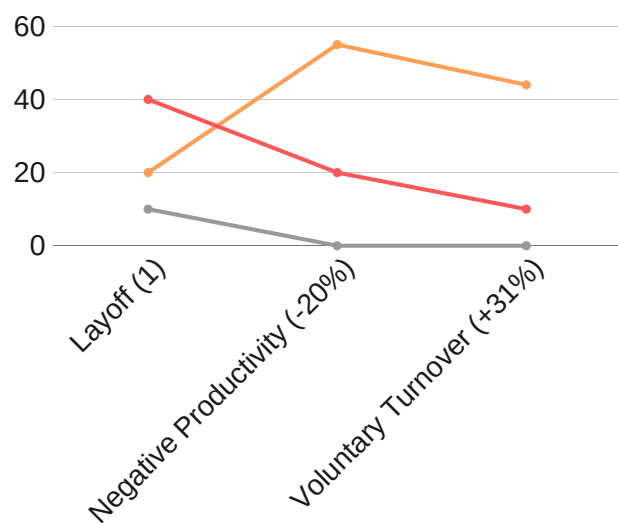
OUTPLACEMENT INSIGHTS TO GUIDE YOUR BRAND THROUGH PIVOTAL TIMES

What's At Stake

Like many companies during the economic boom of the roaring twenty-teens, you have maintained a positive influence on your organization's reputation, or employer brand. You succeeded at showcasing a positive perception to job seekers and employees, positioning yourself as an employer of choice. Be that as it may, market corrections like the COVID19 pandemic have delivered a disorienting challenge to nearly every business in the world and engaged employees can become disengaged really fast if we take our eye off the ball.

So now your organization may now be faced with the difficult decision of restructuring its workforce to align with a reduction in market demand of its goods or services. But as managers rush to control costs through downsizing, there is another side of the equation that must be considered.

Harvard conducted a study and found layoffs done poorly lead to unrealistic workload redistribution, job insecurity, survivor's guilt and other factors that result in a 20% reduction in productivity. Laying off just 1% of your workforce can lead to a 31% increase in voluntary turnover the following year.



HOW EMPLOYER BRAND AFFECTS THE BOTTOM LINE

Having a strong employer brand can bring the expenses related to hiring and training down by as much as 50% according to LinkedIn. Additionally, companies with poor employer branding pay +10% higher salaries according to a Harvard Business Review study and 64% of consumers stopped purchasing from a brand after hearing news of that company's poor employee treatment according to CareerArc.

Reducing payroll expenses initially might seem like a favorable solution to rebalance the business but when managers dig deeper, they will find highly engaged teams show 21% greater profitability according to Forbes. So if decisions are enacted too quickly or without thoughtfulness, managers will undo years of work to build an engaged workforce. Oh and the engaged people are the one you will need most to pivot the business to adapt to a new normal.

SIX COMMON
MISTAKES MADE
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6 COMMON MISTAKES MADE DURING DOWNSIZING

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1. Multiple Rounds of Layoffs

Failing to accurately predict the number of employees you will need after a downturn, may lead to multiple rounds of layoffs. Multiple rounds of downsizing in the same time period can be catastrophic. Employees and customers will feel a lack of confidence in your leadership and look to other more secure places to spend their time and money. ([Source](#))

2. Confidential Conversations

The rumor mill is a very powerful force and leaked information about a layoff or other negative employment consequence causes panic. Be honest, be transparent, be vulnerable, but be quiet until it is time to disclose plans to the organization as a whole and the public. As an example, publicly traded companies that see leaks of information hurt the employer brand and put the shareholders at greater risk of loss.

3. Lack of Performance Data

If you regularly conduct reviews of your employees you may know in advance who will be terminated, laid off, or perhaps shifted to a different role or department. Having a lack of historical performance data means that reductions may be made by managers based on feelings vs. performance facts. Knowing this data is being used to evaluate who goes and who stays gives your employees a sense of fairness when making cuts.

4. Explain The Decision

Your employees deserve to know that your decision was not made lightly. Framing the choices allows you to focus on the employees' contributions and productivity as well as on how difficult they would be to replace. The employee wants to feel valued and respected. Being transparent on how and why decisions are made can help them understand that it is not personal. When they understand the decision they will more than likely respect it.

5. Leave With A Positive Impression

Focus on how you can support the employee on the real task at hand, their next career move, when they're ready. Providing outplacement support will not only help the employee land on their feet faster, it mitigates risk and helps your reputation management. Your company and employer brand is dependent on how you treat your off-boarded employees during a very difficult time. Remember they will share their experience of their former employer's compassion and thoughtfulness with your remaining employees and social media.

6. Meetings with Remaining Employees

Act quickly and effectively, preferably on the same day as the affected employees are informed, before rumors have taken hold. How you treat your off-boarded employees will quickly be communicated to remaining employees. By investing in your employer brand you can not only maintain your brand reputation, you can turn your remaining employees into brand ambassadors.

THE NEW NORMAL & HOW BUSINESSES COME OUT AHEAD

Organizational Culture

During and after this difficult time in history, businesses who focus more on helping people than solely promoting their services or offering bigger discounts will come out ahead. Consumers are speaking with their wallets and want to hear from brands. They are choosing to do business with companies who care about the health and wellbeing of their employees. They want authenticity, honesty, compassion, and optimism. ([McKinsey](#))

- Candidates are also listening and watching how you are responding. If your company is innovative and supporting the best interests of your community you will be remembered favorably. Make yourself an employer of choice by being relevant, adaptable, and positive.
- By focusing on people first, you show the human side of business and win over the loyalty of customers and employees (current and future). This shift to positive employee treatment has filtered down to the consumer level; this is here to stay. Compassion wins and the stakeholders know it.

Embrace Adaptability & Engagement

We must all embrace what innovations and adaptations in technology this time has created. It is certainly a challenge to pivot and adjust to the new normal but this pressure to adapt has historically been beneficial for reshaping brands in a positive way. ([Carnegie](#))

- How are you preparing to engage your employees in new ways?
- How does hiring, onboarding, off-boarding, RIFs, and employee engagement change in the Zoom era?
- How many of your employees will permanently work from home due to this crisis?
- How does the above change your business needs?

What you do to connect with your team and provide support to your former employees will determine how your brand is viewed from a consumer and employee perspective.





PROVIDING RESOURCES TOP OUTPLACEMENT SERVICES

Offering your employees outplacement is the best way to insure when parting ways there's no hard feelings. It shows the company appreciated their contribution and wants to set them up for future success. Offering these parting benefits do not go unnoticed by the people using them, the remaining employees or the community your business serves. So what are the right benefits to offer? Not all outplacement services are equal and with limited budget its important to offer the services

1. Extend Severance Pay and Healthcare Benefits

While it is the most expensive outplacement service, extending benefits and offering severance is the first and best gesture a business can offer a newly departed employee. It may be a tough pill to swallow paying out 2 to 6 weeks of severance, but the ROI from preventing additional attrition, turnover, and loss of brand loyalty (employer and company brand) can justify the additional cost in certain situations.

2. Extend Mental Health Services

For many people, losing their job is a very traumatic emotional experience. There are numerous studies that show increased risk of depression, anxiety and suicide for recent furloughed employees. While every person is different, and some may not require support to get through this trauma, others will. So by adding emotional needs counseling to your outplacement offerings you can more quickly identify those who need the emotional support to recover from the trauma. To find a job in a competitive market candidates must be mentally ready to interview.





PROVIDING RESOURCES TOP OUTPLACEMENT SERVICES

3. Professional Headshots

Offering headshots to your outplacement packages is an extremely affordable (ranging from \$60 to \$220/person), yet impactful tool to offer new job seekers. Profile images are often the first impression a future employer sees when investing a job candidate. Think of how many you looked at in your last rounds of job interviews. In fact, according to LinkedIn 87% of recruiters visit a candidate's online profile before bringing them in for an interview. LinkedIn profiles with a professional headshot get 21x more views and 36x more engagement. Just like you, other hiring managers now investigate top candidates online before bringing them in for an interview and 50% said they were looking to see if a candidate has a professional online persona. Of those hired 33% of managers said it was because they saw the candidate's site conveyed a professional image and 31% said they got a good feel for the job candidate's personality and could see a good fit within the company culture. Great imagery leads to opportunity.

4. Resume, LinkedIn & Interview Coaching

After updating their professional image it is time to enhance their LinkedIn profile and learn to utilize the platform effectively. Great resources such as LinkedIn coaches and DIY guides will help improve their profile by adding necessary key words, images, links, videos, and other content to prepare them to reenter the job market. Introduce off-boarded employees to the tools and services you are providing and how they can implement them in the current economic climate. Understanding industry trends will help in deciding how to showcase their skills, talents, and experience in new ways. Interview coaching and resume services, especially if it has been a few years since your employees have had to interview for a job, will prove very helpful to quickly land a job. The new digital landscape has changed the way many interviews are conducted. Most initial interviews are virtual now, using Zoom or other platforms. In fact many companies are fully transitioning to a remote workforce, which means they may not meet your interviewer or colleagues in person at all. Adding coaching for virtual interviews specifically to your outplacement offerings helps former team members make a great impression regardless of where and how their interview is conducted.





GREAT EMPLOYER BRANDS CREATE ALUMNI

In every economic climate, thoughtful and engaging employer branding is ultimately about developing a strong company culture and communicating authentically and consistently about the organization's employee experience. Through the entire span of an employee's interactions with your organization, from on-boarding to off-boarding, each of your brand's touchpoints carry a message that is carried on into your brand's public identity and reputation. Those who adapt to change and embrace employee transparency & engagement will have an easier time with recruitment, increased employee advocacy, and better retention. Like in college, graduates are celebrated and supported. By adopting this same mindset your business will turn former employees into advocating Alumni for your brand.