

Insurance

B E S S

insurancebusinessonline.com.au

Issue 5.5

MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING

The insurer that calls imagining the unimaginable the name of the game

REMAIN ALERT

The upcoming changes to data protection laws at home and abroad

AN OUT-OF-DATE RISK?

The increasing risk posed by obsolescent technology and equipment

SET FOR SUCCESS

MPF CEO Rachael Lavars on the business and its new Edge



Insurance Business has undertaken its annual search for the top brokerages across Australia

CONVINCING THE BRAND DETECTIVES

New research highlights the high value jobseekers ascribe to company brand. How can your business' brand impress candidates? An insurance professional shares her experience

A RECENT report by recruitment process outsourcing provider ManpowerGroup Solutions suggests employers need to be cognisant of their public reputation today more than ever before.

Entitled *Brand Detectives: The New Generation of Global Candidates*, the report surveyed more than 4,500 jobseekers across the globe – including more than 750 Australians – and revealed that almost half of all Australians surveyed (48%) think an employer's brand and reputation is more important today than it was five years ago, and that millennials between the ages of 25 and

35 are the most brand-driven candidates.

"The number one item that prospective employees look for in a company these days is brand and the trust and integrity of that brand," says Sue Howse, general manager at ManpowerGroup Solutions, Australia and New Zealand.

She says factors such as compensation and work type are becoming more standardised across companies and therefore jobseekers look at employer brand and reputation as a key differentiator that can assist in distinguishing one organisation from another.

These days, it's fair to say that in a job

interview, an employer is under the microscope as much as the job applicant.

"It absolutely is a two-way decision," Howse says. She adds that companies and hiring managers should appreciate there's no need to do a hard sell on a company during an interview because most candidates have already done their homework on the organisation, whether that be via an in-house recruiter, hiring manager or using technology or social media.

"They've already made an assessment so far that this is a company that [they'd] be happy to work for, but then they put it to the test when they meet the personal representatives of that company," she says.

And that's why, she says, it's essential to ensure that conversations with candidates are robust and transparent and that it's absolutely clear to the candidate what the company will or won't be able to do for them.

According to the research, more than eight in 10 Australian surveyed candidates (84%) rated employer-employee trust as the most important aspect of a company's brand.

A candidate's experience

Elisa Hitchens, a client services manager at Employers Mutual (EML), says that reputation was the number one attribute she sought when seeking a new employer recently.

"I think one of the major reasons why

CONTENT TO ENHANCE YOUR BRAND

Assessing a company's brand begins when candidates source initial information about their potential employer.

"When you think of the best way that individuals will seek information about the company, they'll jump online straight away," Sue Howse says. "So, is your content appealing? Is it agile? Does it bring the company to life?"

Utilising multimedia elements is important, Howse says, but adds that "one size doesn't fit all".

"So how are you looking at different ways of using social media [and] online channels to continue to position your brand in the marketplace, knowing that the information is consumed in different ways

by different potential candidates?"

When it comes to employers' use of social media outlets, Howse thinks organisations need to have proactive strategies as to how they want to position their brand in the marketplace.

"It doesn't have to be complex or complicated, but it needs to be multi-faceted," she says.

"It could be simple messages, it could be videos, it could be – depending on what industry you're in – pushing out any awards or recognition that the company's had and any awards or recognition that prominent members of the organisation have had, in order to create that strong perception of brand."



I decided to jump ship was certainly not feeling a connection to where I worked any more, in terms of the values,” Hitchens says.

“EML was certainly known for that in the market, and it was probably the only place I would’ve chosen to work, which speaks volumes, I think.”

Hitchens says that she did her own due diligence on EML before deciding to join the organisation.

“The first thing for me was leadership and understanding who the leaders [were], what their background [was] and, certainly, what they could offer me, in terms of my career and my development,” she says.

“I think you can usually gauge a company



“The number one item that prospective employees look for in a company these days is brand and the trust and integrity of that brand”

Sue Howse, ManpowerGroup Solutions

by the leadership team and who’s on board, how long they’ve been there and certainly the direction of the company.

“That was number one for me. If I didn’t sense that connection with either my potential leader or broader leadership

group, I think I would’ve probably moved on.”

She adds: “The other thing that was incredibly important is could I have seen myself in the company in five to 10 years’ time.” For Hitchens, that involved understanding the company’s direction and plans for growth.

COMPANY BRANDING

THE FIGURES



48%

of surveyed Australian jobseekers say an employer's brand and reputation is more important today than it was five years ago



21%

of surveyed Australian jobseekers identify as brand-driven. Millennials between the ages of 25 and 34 are the most likely group to be motivated by brand



84%

of surveyed Australian jobseekers said employer-employee trust was the most important aspect of a company's brand



8%

Brand-driven candidates are 8% more likely than non-brand-driven candidates to actively source company brand information prior to an interview

Source: *Brand Detectives: The New Generation of Global Candidates*, ManpowerGroup Solutions

"I spent 13 years with my former employer, so I'm incredibly loyal, and I thought if this was only a 12-month proposition for me, then I'm not really sure if I'd be up for that."

She also emphasises the importance of potential employers making clear from the outset that a candidate has a career path within the organisation.

"So, really setting the scene that your career is only limited by you – 'If you want to do really well here, we'll make that happen for you, and we want to give you exposure to different opportunities, different roles or different parts of the business,'" Hitchens says.

"I think it was made really clear for me, and certainly the discussions that were had right from the start were: 'Where do you see

yourself going? How can we help you get there? What program can we get you in to support you?'

"They don't want you stuck in the same spot, and I do know that certainly some other insurers tend to want to see you in the same spot because it's easier, rather than seeing people's growth and their development and what that might actually bring, particularly when it comes to loyalty."

Some advice for employers

Speaking about what she thinks companies in the insurance space should be doing in order to attract jobseekers, Hitchens says she thinks transparency and honesty are key.

"You can usually gauge a company by the leadership team and who's on board, how long they've been there and certainly the direction of the company"

Elisa Hitchens, Employers Mutual

"I think one of the things that resonated with me when I sat down through the interview process for this job was that ... the questions that were being asked were really directed around where they wanted to see the role go, where they thought that I could add value if I was successful. And I didn't come into the business with any misunderstanding about what I was here to achieve," she says.

"I think, sometimes, people can sugar-coat what a role is there to do and people get disenfranchised within the first five minutes. I didn't walk into the business with that feeling. In fact, post the interview, my expectations were really exceeded because there was that honesty and transparency from day one."

Hitchens also speaks of the importance of workplace culture in the selection process.

"[Jobseekers] want to know that they can

come in and they can do a good job, but also that there's a really nice vibe and a really nice energy to the workplace that they're committing themselves to," she says.

"I was truly thinking by lunchtime on my first day, 'Wow! I know I've made the right choice. Everyone wants to see my success here.' And that was the dialogue that was being used: 'We want to see you do really well here. What do we need to set you up for success?'

"I don't think that anyone can downplay culture in a selection and, sometimes you might not know until you turn up and get in the door but, usually, I think you can tell that through the interview process."

Howse emphasises the importance of

companies in the professional services sector fostering deep engagement and productivity.

"There has to be a culture that invests in employees' careers and it has to be evident, but it has to be enabled by the employees as well, because people want to be accountable for their outcomes these days, but they want to have the channel to be able to do it. Progress is what millennials want, and they want to see there's a path to that. That really is one of the things that's going to drive the productivity and the engagement of those people.

"In the stages of early interaction with a potential employee, be real about the expectations because they're going to find out within 30 days anyway, once they've started, and they'll either be a strong voice or a poor voice for your brand, once they're in or out." ■