

Build a powerful career portal to attract top talent

In many ways, your company already has an employment brand. You cannot build it from scratch. It consists of the things that your employees already feel and know to be true about working there.

It is your unique workplace environment, the attributes that are peculiar to your employers, and the experiences that occur every day at work. If it is not yet the brand that you want to keep, it can be modified – but it will take some time.

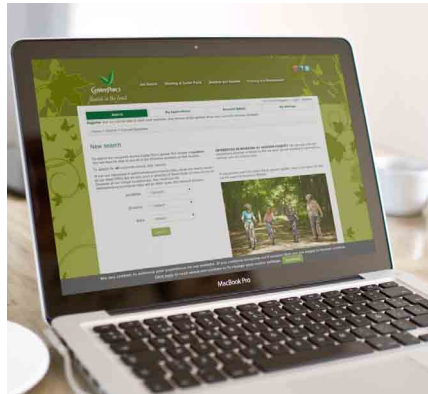
When creating an employment brand, you want to take your company brand and then modify it to establish a strong employment brand. You will also want to use the testimonials of your high performers to get the word out about what it is like to work there.

Success will follow a strong brand. This is the one thing that will enable your company to attract the top talent you want, and it will do so with legitimacy and longevity like nothing else can. It is an irreplaceable commodity. The commodity of a valuable employment brand is what will draw your future top talent. It will do this by engaging them,



Patrick B. Ropella
Chairman & CEO, Ropella
Tel: (850) 983-4777
Web: www.Ropella.com

Patrick Ropella is Chairman & CEO of the Ropella Group an international Executive Search, Leadership Transformation, and Corporate Consulting firm. He authored the book and web-based training program, *The Right Hire – Mastering the Art of SMART Talent Management*, and has seen his content featured in many trade magazines, business publications, and industry journals. Patrick regularly speaks at webinars, career fairs, and conferences.



appealing to them, and then showing them why your organization is the better choice.

LAUNCHING AN EMPLOYMENT BRAND THAT WORKS

One employment branding campaign performed by the Bernard Hodes Group was done for the MediCorp Health Group, which is based out of Virginia. The Hodes Group used a brand development process that has since resulted in a guide on how to develop and produce an employment brand, and has been used since to set the tone of many communications campaigns between external candidates and internal employees.

The MediCorp Health Group already had a rich history, and it wanted to expand its services with a brand new facility. It wanted to start out right and attract new employees by creating an unforgettable image to the watching eyes of the community. When it opened the new Stafford Hospital Center in Fredericksburg, VA, MediCorp extended its much-needed regional healthcare system outreach to an entirely new portion of the state.

THE UNIQUE SELLING POINTS OF THE MEDICORP SYSTEM

Hospitals everywhere are largely the same wherever you go. Creating unique

selling points for a brand new hospital is not easy. After performing extensive research, however, it was discovered that MediCorp already had one of the best unique selling points possible – that of a highly engaged employee population that fosters a culture of sincere goodwill.

With this idea in mind, Hodes was able to focus on four different aspects of their unique selling points:

- Integrity: We do the right thing.
- Authenticity: Every voice counts.
- Dynamic Environment: We are continually evolving.
- Celebratory Culture: We delight in surprises.

Upon looking over these USP's, you can see that these are emotionally based, rather than using rational comparisons. Rational comparisons only create conclusions, whereas an emotionally based USP will create an action.

ADOPT CAREER WEB PAGES TO MATCH EMPLOYMENT BRANDING

After you have completed your employment brand for your company, it is time to make adjustments to your career portal. You want to adjust the web pages so that they reflect the main points of your employment brand. It is in these pages that new candidates will be drawn to your company, because they have read about and understand your work culture and the benefits they can get from working with your company.

A successful career portal, it needs to be understood, is more than just a few static web pages. It needs to be the place where all of your social networking links, all of your job openings and job advertising, your researchers and recruiters are listed, and perhaps most importantly, all of your job talent. Because of the many

pages that you will end up with when all this material is presented, you will quickly see how it can be used to gather all kinds of valuable information from potential candidates. It is a great place to launch all of your recruiting and retention communication efforts. The different types of pages will enable you to use many different touch points in the form of resumes, forms, templates, and information requests. One good thing about this is that special software is available to create this kind of portal and they are often customizable to enable you to match your current website.

The most valuable kind of web portal to use as a career section is one that provides visitors with all kinds of information. You will want to include things like plenty of free articles, tips for writing top-notch resumes, and career coaching. It should also include some free tools and assessments so that job seekers can be helped along the way on their own – before they ever contact you to seek live help.

THE BENEFITS OF SETTING UP A CAREER PORTAL

Providing a career portal enables you to accomplish several valuable tasks at the same time. In an article in HR Magazine, Drew Robb writes: “To cut costs and reduce the time to fill empty positions, an ever increasing number of companies are setting up career portals on their corporate Websites.” Any company can take advantage of using online recruiting through a career portal. It is not necessary to have all the features, but by being selective, you can gear it to attract the individuals of your choice and give it the features you want. Prior to creating a career portal, however, it is important that you determine the delivery options. This includes things like:

- What software are you going to use?
- Who is going to install and program it, and who will maintain it?
- What are the staffing needs for it?

THREE CATEGORIES OF WEB RECRUITING SOFTWARE

When it comes time to look into setting up a career portal, there are three different approaches to it.

1. Work with an Enterprise or Department-wide IT Solution Software can be obtained that will enable your whole organization (or just a department) to interconnect – which is referred to as being enterprise wide. Steve Gillooly, the senior consultant for the New York based Mercer Human Resource Consulting LLC, says in the above article by Robb that “When an organization has purchased an HR suite, it is just a matter of turning on the web-based front end.”

2. Purchase a Specialized Recruitment Application Built-in functions are often very limited and may not enable you to customize it to suit your needs. Specialized recruitment software programs, however, can enable you to get the best of breed programs to give you the widest possible customizable features. Some software companies may specialize in specific industries, and other ones may target businesses based on the size of the business. Many of these programs can operate as a standalone product, or they can often be linked to the organization’s HR management system (HRMS).

3. Use an Application Service Provider (ASP) When you want a best of breed situation, you will find that many vendors will offer their software on a hosted basis. This means that everything is set up for you and that there is already a database attached. This may be of especial value to you if you do not want candidates operating inside of your firewall. When it comes time to set up this type of software, it can take anywhere between 30 to 150 days. One type that typically takes about this much time is.

SAP’s E-Recruiting software. SAP is one of the world’s largest software companies. Some types may take up to a year to set up. On the other hand,

some organizations can set up a complete career portal in as little time as one month, such as the Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU). They chose to use the iRecruitment module from Oracle (based in Redmond, CA), which enabled them to give their web pages the same look and feel of their OHSU Website.

In the year after the software had been installed, says Joe Tonn in the HR Magazine article, who is the HRMS manager, there has been an increase in the applicant pool by 65 percent. In addition, the time it takes to fill a vacant position has been reduced from eight weeks to four. Another benefit the school discovered was that by using the career portal to collect information, it has provided them with resumes in digital formats, which has greatly reduced many of the manual tasks that they had been using. When combined, it can easily be seen how this change can result in increased ROI – a smart investment indeed!

“Using a career portal cuts the costs per hire, decreases the cycle time to fill a job, and reduces dependency on agencies,” says Ann Meany, who is a consultant for Watson Wyatt Worldwide, a Washington, D.C.-based human capital consulting company. She was also quoted in Robb’s article as saying, “It certainly changes the whole complexion of recruiting.” A career portal can certainly change everything – including your company’s bottom line.