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CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE FOR HIGHER RECRUITMENT ROI AND EMPLOYER BRAND

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In this e-book, we delve into the critical concept of candidate experience, examining its profound impact on both recruiting ROI and employer branding. We comprehensively explore the various stages of the candidate journey, offering invaluable insights on cultivating a consistently positive experience at every touchpoint. Our analysis also encompasses the pivotal role of technology in enhancing the candidate experience, as well as strategies for effectively measuring, evaluating, and continuously elevating the candidate journey. Furthermore, we present compelling real-world case studies and industry best practices that highlight the compelling link between candidate experience and employer branding. Lastly, we equip you with actionable strategies for ongoing improvement, accompanied by additional resources to support your journey towards delivering an exceptional candidate experience.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE

> **WE SEE OUR [CANDIDATES] AS INVITED GUESTS TO A PARTY, AND WE ARE THE HOSTS. IT'S OUR JOB EVERY DAY TO MAKE EVERY IMPORTANT ASPECT OF THE [CANDIDATE] EXPERIENCE A LITTLE BIT BETTER.**

In today's job market, one certainty prevails: tomorrow's competition will only intensify. As recruitment grows increasingly aggressive, the global skills shortage emerges as, if not already, the primary concern for recruiters and HR professionals. Consequently, comprehending the key elements that shape your brand's strategies in discovering, enticing, and retaining exceptional talent becomes paramount

A SURVEY OF OVER 400 GLOBAL AGENCIES REVEALED A RESOUNDING CONSENSUS AMONG 90% OF RECRUITERS THAT THE CURRENT RECRUITING ENVIRONMENT IS UNEQUIVOCALLY CANDIDATE-DRIVEN.

The candidate experience acts as a critical link to bolster your recruitment endeavors. However, it can also unknowingly contribute to your company's downfall if not given due attention.

a. Understand the candidate's experience

Candidate experience is a direct line to supporting your recruiting efforts

To effectively manage the candidate experience, adopting the perspective of the job seeker is crucial. Carefully consider candidates' emotions, expectations, and requirements as they progress through the hiring process. This encompasses their interactions with the company website, job postings, application procedures, interview stages, and post-offer communications. By comprehending the candidate's viewpoint, organizations can find pain points, recognize improvement opportunities, and enhance overall engagement.

b. Why is candidate experience important?

Remember, every candidate's experience is a ripple that can either strengthen or weaken your organization's reputation and ability to attract exceptional talent.

The candidate's experience exerts a substantial influence on an organization's reputation, employer brand, and overall success in attracting and retaining exceptional talent. A positive candidate experience cultivates advocates who not only accept job offers but also actively promote the organization, potentially expanding the talent pool. Conversely, a negative experience can result in lost candidates and inflict harm upon a company's employer brand, impeding its ability to attract top talent in the future.

c. The relationship between candidate experience, ROI and employer branding

80-90% of candidates state that a positive or negative candidate experience can change their opinion of the company.

Candidate engagement, although characterized by core pillars, exhibits diverse needs and expectations across age groups, locations, and industries. In the pursuit of attracting and retaining exceptional talent, a uniform approach to candidate engagement falls short.

Furthermore, the candidate's experience significantly shapes the employer's brand. Through various platforms such as social media and job review sites, candidates share their experiences, thus influencing the perceptions of potential candidates. A positive employer brand enhances an organization's capacity to attract high-caliber candidates, while a negative brand image dissuades top talent from exploring job opportunities.

THE CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE ENCOMPASSES ALL THE POSSIBLE FEELINGS, PERCEPTIONS, THOUGHTS AND EMOTIONS AS AN APPLICANT GOES THROUGH THE RECRUITING PROCESS.

75% of candidates never hear back from a company after sending in an application	**42% of disgruntled candidates will not apply for a position at the company again**
60% of candidates say they have gone for interviews and never heard back from the company	**22% will tell others not to apply for the company and 9% will ask others to boycott products**

The candidate experience is a crucial aspect of talent acquisition that greatly influences how potential candidates perceive your company during the hiring process. Their impressions, whether positive or negative, significantly impact their decision to apply for a position or accept a job offer. Making the candidate experience a priority is essential for achieving success in talent acquisition. This chapter will highlight important considerations, emphasize the significance of continuous improvement, and explore the benefits of prioritizing the candidate experience.

Recruiting and retaining top talent is of utmost importance for organizational success, and the candidate experience plays a pivotal role in accomplishing this objective. By focusing on key areas, continually developing and refining the process, and showcasing the advantages of prioritizing the candidate experience, organizations can gain a competitive edge and establish a reputation as an employer of choice. Investing in candidate experience is an investment in long-term success, as it attracts high-quality candidates, strengthens the employer brand, and yields positive outcomes in talent acquisition and retention.

DEFINITION OF CANDIDATE JOURNEY

The candidate journey refers to the process and experiences a candidate goes through from initial awareness of a job opportunity to becoming an employee or withdrawing from the hiring process. Understanding and optimizing the candidate journey is crucial for organizations to attract, engage, and retain top talent, creating a positive and seamless experience that sets the stage for a successful employer-candidate relationship.

a. Stages of the applicant's journey

Candidate engagement varies across age groups, locations, and industries, highlighting the need for a personalized approach to attract and retain exceptional talent, as a one-size-fits-all strategy falls short in meeting diverse expectations.

Additionally, the candidate experience plays a crucial role in shaping the employer's brand. Candidates share their experiences on platforms like social media and job review sites, impacting potential candidates' perceptions. A positive employer brand helps attract top talent, while a negative image discourages them from considering job opportunities.

b. Map of the candidate's journey

Mapping the candidate journey entails a strategic visualization of the stages and touch-points through which candidates engage with your organization. This exercise empowers you to pinpoint pivotal moments in candidate interaction, enabling meticulous planning and optimization of each touchpoint to foster a positive experience.

Deliberate on the diverse channels and platforms candidates utilize to connect with your organization, encompassing careers websites, social media profiles, job postings, and application portals. Thoroughly map the flow of candidate communication, spanning from initial awareness to onboarding, while ensuring seamless transitions between each stage.

c. Identifying pain points and opportunities

When mapping the candidate journey, it is imperative to identify pain points and opportunities for improvement. Pain points represent areas where candidates may encounter challenges or frustration, resulting in a negative perception of your organization. These pain points can manifest as complex application processes, delayed communication, ambiguous job descriptions, or unprofessional interviews.

On the other hand, opportunities for improvement are areas where you can enhance the candidate experience and differentiate your organization from competitors. This may involve streamlining the application process, maintaining regular and transparent communication, personalizing interactions, emphasizing company culture, or providing a positive onboarding experience.

By identifying pain points and capitalizing on opportunities, you can meet candidates' expectations, create a more engaging and positive journey, fortify your employer brand, and enhance recruitment outcomes.

In the subsequent sections of this e-book, we will delve into strategies and best practices for fostering a positive candidate experience throughout each stage of the candidate journey. This includes leveraging technology, measuring the candidate experience, adapting employer branding, and continuously refining the hiring process.

CREATE A POSITIVE CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE

In today's competitive job market, creating a positive application experience is critical to attracting and retaining top talent. This chapter explores key strategies and practices to ensure a smooth and engaging experience for candidates during the recruitment process. By prioritizing the following aspects, organizations can improve their employer brand, attract quality candidates, and improve overall recruitment results.

a. Clear and engaging job descriptions

According to a Glassdoor survey, 67% of job seekers said that a clear job description is the critical factor when deciding whether to apply for a job.

> **A well-written job description is the first step in attracting the right candidates.**

Tips for clear and engaging job descriptions:

▼ Use concise and persuasive language to clearly describe jobs and qualifications.

▼ Emphasize the unique selling points and growth opportunities of the role.

▼ Emphasize the company's values, culture and mission to attract like-minded candidates.

b. Smooth application process

> **A smooth application process sets the tone for a positive applicant experience.**

According to a CareerBuilder study, an astounding 60% of job seekers abandon their job search midway due to the lengthy or intricate nature of online job applications.

Tips for a smooth application process:

▼ Simplify the application form by asking for relevant and necessary information.

▼ Optimize the application process for mobile devices so applicants are on the go.

▼ Incorporate progress indicators or status updates to apprise applicants of the current status of their application.

c. Effective communication and timely feedback

Research conducted by the Talent Agency reveals a striking statistic - while a staggering 82% of candidates anticipate receiving post-interview feedback, only 41% do.

> **Communication plays a key role in promoting a positive candidate experience.**

Tips for effective communication and timely feedback:

▼ Maintain consistent and transparent communication throughout the recruitment process.

▼ Set clear expectations for the timeline for each step and update them regularly.

▼ Provide constructive and timely feedback to unsuccessful candidates, highlighting areas for improvement.

d. Personalization and Tailored Experiences

> **Personalization shows candidates that you value their individuality.**

SmarterHQ research found that 72% of consumers, including applicants, expect personalized experiences.

Tips for personalization and personalized experiences:

▼ Address candidates by name and personalize emails.

▼ Tailor the interview questions to their individual background and experience.

▼ Provide the necessary information about the company and the role according to each candidate's interests and questions.

e. Providing a smooth interview experience

Tips for effective communication and timely feedback:

▼ Book interviews in advance to give candidates plenty of time to prepare.

▼ Share clear guidelines about interview format, logistics, and expectations.

▼ Make sure the interviewers are well prepared, professional and provide a welcoming environment.

> **A smooth interview process reflects positively on the organization.**

USE TECHNOLOGY FOR A BETTER CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE

In the modern digital era, harnessing technology offers substantial enhancements to the candidate experience throughout the recruitment process. Through the implementation of cutting-edge tools and platforms, organizations can optimize their workflows, amplify efficiency, and deliver a personalized and immersive candidate experience. This section examines pivotal technological advancements that contribute to an elevated candidate experience.

a. Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS)

Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) automate and simplify the recruitment process from job opening to candidate selection. ATS platforms help streamline job applications, resume screening, schedule interviews and connect with candidates.

Advantages of ATS:

▼ Efficiently manage and track applicant information in a centralized system.

▼ Enable easy collaboration between recruiting team members.

▼ Automate repetitive tasks, allowing recruiters to focus on building relationships with candidates.

▼ Improve the overall recruiting workflow and ensure a smoother candidate experience.

b. Artificial intelligence and automation in recruitment

Artificial intelligence (AI) and automation technologies have the potential to revolutionize recruitment by expediting processes and enhancing decision-making. AI-powered chat-bots and virtual assistants can engage with candidates, address frequently asked questions, and offer real-time assistance. Automation simplifies resume review, applicant management, and even personalized communication.

Advantages of artificial intelligence and automation:

▼ Improve candidate engagement with instant responses and personal interactions.

▼ Reduce time to hire and eliminate manual administrative tasks.

▼ Improve the accuracy and efficiency of resume shortlisting.

▼ Implement data-driven decision-making.

c. Video interviews and virtual assessments

Video interviews and virtual assessments provide a flexible and convenient approach for both candidates and recruiters. Video interviews facilitate remote communication, eliminate geographic limitations, and minimize scheduling conflicts. Virtual assessments, including coding problems and situational assessment tests, effectively evaluate candidates' skills and suitability for a job.

Advantages of video interviews and virtual assessments:

▼ Save time and resources by conducting initial interviews remotely.

▼ Facilitate more comprehensive recruitment by accepting applicants from different locations.

▼ Effectively assesses candidates' non-verbal communication and presentation skills.

▼ Provide a more engaging and interactive experience for candidates.

d. Candidate Relationship Management (CRM) tools

Candidate Relationship Management (CRM) tools assist organizations in establishing and nurturing long-term relationships with candidates. CRM systems store candidate data, monitor communications, and enable personalized interactions. These tools facilitate consistent engagement, extending even to passive candidates, thereby cultivating a talent pool for future opportunities.

Advantages of CRM tools:

▼ Maintain long-term relationships with candidates and promote a positive employer brand.

▼ Tailor communications based on the candidate's interests and preferences.

▼ Increase candidate engagement with targeted content and job opportunities.

▼ Improve talent acquisition efficiency by leveraging a pre-built candidate database.

e. Using data and analytics for continuous improvement

Data and analytics are pivotal in enhancing the recruitment process and optimizing the candidate experience. By analyzing data points such as time to hire, candidate feedback, and hiring sources, organizations can identify bottlenecks and areas in need of improvement. Leveraging data-driven insights empowers recruiters to make informed decisions, fine-tune recruitment strategies, and streamline the candidate journey.

Benefits of using data and analytics:

▼ Identify patterns and trends to improve recruitment efficiency and effectiveness.

▼ Make informed decisions to optimize recruitment processes and resources.

▼ Measure and track key metrics to assess the success of candidate experience initiatives.

▼ Continue to improve the candidate experience by adding feedback and insights.

MEASURE AND EVALUATE CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE

Measuring the candidate experience is essential for organizations seeking to optimize and streamline their recruitment operations, ensuring the attraction and retention of the ideal candidates for their open positions.

An overwhelming majority of candidates, exceeding 78%, perceive the candidate experience as a reflection of a company's values and their overall sentiment towards its employees.

Measuring the candidate experience is critical for organizations looking to optimize their recruiting efforts and attract and retain the best candidates.

The vast majority of candidates, more than 78%, see the experience of the candidates as a reflection of the company's values and the general attitude of the employees. This highlights the importance of creating a positive and candidate-centric culture in your recruitment strategy, which can help foster a strong employer brand that entices candidates to take action and apply for your open positions.

However, many talent acquisition teams face challenges in prioritizing and improving the candidate experience in their hiring process. This includes difficulties in effectively measuring and implementing measures to improve the candidate experience. To overcome these challenges, organizations can implement metrics such as Net Promoter Score (NPS) to gauge candidate satisfaction and identify areas for improvement. Gathering feedback

through surveys and interviews and evaluating candidate NPS scores provides valuable insight into the candidate experience. This data can then be analyzed to identify pain points, make informed decisions and implement changes that improve the overall candidate experience.

By investing heavily in measuring and improving the candidate experience, organizations can create a competitive advantage, attract top talent and build a reputation as an employer of choice.

In short

Collecting candidate feedback and measuring the candidate's experience is the first step in showing job seekers that your organization values their opinions.

Measuring a candidate's experience has several benefits:

▼ Improve employer brand and brand perception.

▼ Improve the quality of your recruitment.

▼ Compare your performance to others globally and in your industry benchmarking and find ways to hire faster and better than your competition.

▼ Attract and hire the right candidates by demonstrating a people-oriented approach.

The Net Promoter Score (NPS) is crucial for gauging consumer experience. In this section, we will define Net Promoter Score, calculate it, apply it, and discuss its value to your firm. Net Promoter Score is critical for customer experience. It determines corporate consumer loyalty. The Net Promoter Score is a single-question survey that returns a number between -100 and +100, with higher ratings being better.

This statistic is the gold standard for consumer experience. Bain and Company established NPS in 2003, and millions of companies use it. The Net Promoter Score separates good and negative comments.

The core NPS question is:

"How likely would you recommend [Organization X/Product Y/Service Z] to a friend or colleague?"

Respondents rate from 0 (not likely) to 10 (very likely). The NPS score is based on customer answers into three categories:

▼ **Promoters:** Respondents scoring 9 or 10 who are loyal and zealous.

▼ **Passives:** Scores of 7 or 8, suggesting pleasure without excitement.

▼ **Detractors:** Scores 0–6, signifying unsatisfied customers who are unlikely to buy again and may negatively influence others.

Net Promoter Score calculation:

NPS is calculated by subtracting detractors from promoters. The ultimate score is -100 to +100. If 10% of respondents are critics, 20% are passives, and 70% are promoters, your customer satisfaction score is 60.

a. Benefits of NPS:

The benefits of NPS for companies include:

▼ **Customer Insights:** The Net Promoter Score (NPS) is a simple and effective way to assess how customers feel about your company and what influences their loyalty.

▼ **Benchmarking:** Compare your NPS score to industry benchmarks to evaluate your performance.

▼ **Analysis:** The NPS segments consumers by score, allowing pattern analysis and strategy customization for different client groups.

▼ **Actionable Data:** NPS survey comments may improve consumer experience.

b. Using NPS for Employee Feedback

Employee Net Promoter Score (eNPS) surveys may also measure employee satisfaction. However, eNPS is often used as a beginning point and may lack the depth of more extensive employee engagement surveys.

Making the NPS Survey:

Creating an NPS survey needs these questions:

▼ Optional demographic inquiries (age, gender, etc.) help contextualize analysis.

▼ A free-text inquiry asking responders to justify their score.

▼ A request for customer experience improvements.

▼ Ask respondents whether they want to be contacted for more information.

NPS Data Evaluation:

The Net Promoter Score (NPS) gives a complete picture of consumer opinion, but additional aspects must be considered. Analyzing NPS factors like AHT(Average Handling Time) and FCR (First Call Resolution) helps prioritize improvements.

Use of NPS in Predictive Modeling:

NPS data combined with customer attrition data can forecast service termination. This links customer experience and operational data to help retain customers.

c. Classifying NPS Responses:

NPS scores can be segmented by behavior, demographics, or other characteristics to highlight patterns and enable personalized touchpoint improvements. The Net Promoter Score measures client loyalty and improves customer experience. Businesses may make smart decisions to expand and improve customer relations by studying NPS scores and data.

LINK THE CANDIDATE EXPERIENCE TO THE EMPLOYER BRAND

The candidate experience and the employer brand are closely intertwined. A positive candidate experience can have a significant impact on how candidates view an organization as an employer. Explore strategies for aligning the candidate experience with the employer brand and ensuring consistency and authenticity throughout the hiring process.

a. The Interconnection between Candidate Experience and Employer Brand

The candidate experience and employer brand are intrinsically linked, with a positive candidate experience significantly influencing candidates' perception of an organization as an employer. This section explores strategies for aligning the candidate experience with the employer brand, ensuring consistency and authenticity throughout the hiring process.

b. Introducing Company Culture and Values

Company culture and values are vital for building an employer brand that attracts suitable candidates. Introduce your organization's unique culture, mission, and values at various touch points throughout the candidate journey. Highlight employee experiences, success stories, and initiatives that exemplify your company's culture and commitment to its values. This presentation helps candidates gain insights into what it would be like to work for your organization and determine if it aligns with their aspirations and beliefs.

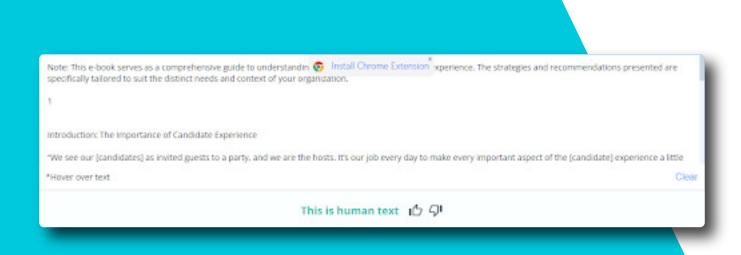## c. Employer Branding in Job Descriptions and Communications

Job descriptions and communication channels provide opportunities to showcase your employer brand. Craft job descriptions that reflect your company's culture, values, and unique selling points. Maintain a consistent message and voice across all communication channels, including email, social media, and career websites. Incorporate elements of employer branding, such as brand imagery, cues, and storytelling, to create a memorable and cohesive candidate experience.

d. Consistency Across Advertising Channels

Consistency is paramount in building a robust employer brand and ensuring a positive candidate experience. Ensure your employer brand is consistently represented across all promotional channels, including social media, career fairs, and recruiting events. Align messages, images, and values to create a cohesive and authentic portrayal of your organization. Consistency instills confidence in candidates, strengthens your employer brand, and sets your organization apart from the competition.

CONCLUSION

By integrating the candidate experience with the employer brand, organizations can craft a compelling and unified narrative that attracts top talent. Introducing company culture and values, embedding the employer brand within job descriptions, and maintaining consistency across communication and marketing channels are crucial strategies for reinforcing the employer brand's continuity. A robust and authentic employer brand enhances the candidate experience, elevates the organization's reputation, and attracts candidates who align with its values and mission.

Ready to modernise your recruiting process with candidate engagement, intelligent automation and the power of data without changing the existing recruiting software?

We'd love
to talk!

Reach us @ **contact@hyreo.com**
Visit **hyreo.com** to request a demo

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Hyreo empowers our customers with tools to craft truly bespoke candidate journeys. We help curate compelling brand narratives, nurture rich interactions, and offer dedicated support at each stage of the recruitment lifecycle. By leveraging intelligent automation and deep insights, we strengthen your recruitment team's ability to deliver an exceptional candidate experience. For more information, visit www.hyreo.com.