



Focus on Building Your Employer Brand Now!

In current times where there is a high focus on employer actions it is imperative to think beyond this immediate period and towards how current decisions will build future perceptions of an employer's brand.

Ben Neil, Director for niche recruiting firm Hospitality Recruitment Solutions assists clients in not only sourcing and securing talent for hospitality businesses but also in retention strategies to reduce the need for recruitment.

"In a climate where redundancy's, cut backs and recruitment freezes have been a requirement for some businesses there is a definitive difference between employers that conduct these processes in the most compassionate, precise and open way and those that do so in a blunt and careless way. The difference will ensure in which regard a business will be seen by hospitality job seekers in the coming months and beyond" he says.

Some of the more damaging steps include:

- Making wholesale changes to the business including redundancies, redeployment or reduction/change in services without communication to staff – leads to 'Chinese Whispers' about business direction rather than clear directions from senior managers.
- Reducing training and development opportunities – often leads to staff looking elsewhere for an environment where T&D is a continued focus.
- Waiting for things to get better – holding off on positive changes, feedback or implementation of initiatives until the economic situation is better. Any change that either improves the customer experience or staff engagement is crucial to ensure a positive opportunity isn't missed.

"Building a strong employer brand doesn't need to come at an expense either. Some of simplest initiatives don't necessarily cost" says Ben. Some can include:

- Create an open forum for communication to understand individual's needs and ideas. This can be in the form of regular 'One on Ones' with their direct supervisor/manager. Inviting feedback or ideas creates a sense of employee engagement which then relates to a feeling of security and better understanding of the businesses need's and direction.
- Don't skimp on the warm and fuzzy stuff – acknowledge people on their birthdays, anniversary of employment and celebrate individual or business wins/achievements. Praise and recognition are two key motivators for employee morale.
- Conduct exit interviews where possible. Conservatively, it costs a hospitality business at least \$5,000 for every staff member that leaves an employer means that knowledge from departing staff can prove invaluable in addressing potential turnover.

If you are recruiting for a position and advertising your business name ensure all applications are handled with the knowledge that it is inevitable that our employment climate will stabilize and this will mean the shortage of being able to attract good people continues. Where possible advise in your adverts that only short listed candidates will be contacted and send a personal email to those that you genuinely would like to keep on file. Candidates remember who treated them with compassion during the tough times, which may make for an easier time when you have a recruitment need!