



**Brand  
almighty**

# Brand almighty

**In a talent-scarce market, focus is now on innovative ways to attract talent and widen already small talent pools. A visible employer brand could and should be a very good tool for TA team arsenals.**

In a move across The Pond, TALiNT Partners hosted an in-person dinner in Atlanta where we brought together a fascinating cross section of HR and Talent leaders from Atlanta's largest and most dynamic employers to discuss and debate some key issues around building an effective employer brand and engaging talent pools in talent scarce market.

Sudhakar Maruvada, CEO and Founder of WorkLlama, the comprehensive talent community platform, opened the discussion: "It is increasingly well-understood that in today's market employers need to engage talent as customers, and use their brand to help with that. Engagement needs to be looked at holistically, not just in silos. For example, in the US, contingent recruiting is increasingly popular for candidates."

#### DETAILED DATA

One of the biggest challenges for employers is having the accessibility to the right data in order to formulate effective hiring strategies, especially when it comes to who is engaging with them and why.



Ken Brotherston  
Chief Executive  
TALiNT Partners

Cheryl Coulthurst, AVP Recruiting for Emory University representing Emory – Atlanta's largest employer commented on the competitiveness of trying to hire from a noticeably shrinking labor pool which has been affected by more people retiring, women leaving the workforce and professionals starting their own businesses.

Barbara Blevens, Vice President TA, LexisNexis Risk Solutions added: "In today's market no one feels the need to have to apply for a job because they are receiving regular outreaches from recruiters."

"The nurturing part of the process needs to be about 'them' the candidate and too much of it is about 'you' the employer, so it's important to think about what you can deliver that isn't just about 'do you want a job with us?' Most people won't engage much with brands they love so why would they engage with you?"

Barbara added that too often traditional recruitment metrics get in the way of what's really important in engaging candidates.

#### EMPLOYER BRAND: A DOUBLE EDGED SWORD

As Brian Fink, Senior Technical Recruiter, Twitter pointed out: "A proportion of candidates will view a brand like Twitter through a political lens and may be less likely to want to work there, whereas a lesser-known brand has fewer preconceptions..."

#### THE SOCIAL FACTOR

Do not underestimate the importance of continued evaluation of different social media channels when building talent pools. LinkedIn is often the go-to but Facebook is still hugely important and very effective when used well. Instagram and TikTok may be more about awareness than conversion but still need to be considered, as well as a whole range of specialist channels, depending on the audience you are trying to reach.

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### CULTURE FIT

One of the most important themes of our discussion was around what ‘culture fit’ means. Historically it can be perceived as ‘we only hire people who look like us’ and increasingly this is seen as being inimical to a supporting DE&I. However, organizations still do have distinct ways of doing things, so it is still important that new hires do fit in. DE&I has been extended to include a feeling of belonging as well. Since the pandemic, the workforce’s priorities have changed and they’re more inclined to seek employment at a company that aligns with their values and makes them feel as if they are part of a bigger picture.

Another key point when looking to build a truly engaged talent pool is to focus on candidates’ future aspirations. Ask them questions like: “what do you want to do next” rather than “tell us about yourself” which is about what they have done in the past. Gaining a deeper understanding of who the candidates actually are will not only ensure they align with your brand, but may mean the difference between an early drop off and a long-term employee who is focused on building the business and themselves.

In summary, the market for talent across the US shows no sign of slowing anytime soon and the responding to the demands of a post-pandemic economy only makes the role of HR and TA leaders harder. But, not impossible. Improving how your employer brand is aligned with what candidates want doesn’t have to be complex or expensive but it will certainly pay dividends in helping you find and keep the people you need.

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Barbara Blevens, Vice President  
TA, LexisNexis Risk Solutions

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