

Connections

Insights from LIMRA and LOMA



September–October 2011

Improve Your Job Brand to Attract Top Talent

People have preconceived ideas about almost every job available. Just think of how you react when you read these: customer service rep, pharmacist, mortician, programmer, administrative assistant...

What are you reacting to? The job brand. To attract top talent to your job openings, you may need to rethink the messages your organization communicates. You can catch their attention by relating compelling benefits and opportunities. That will excite prospective applicants about *your* job brand!

(One cautionary note: Don't oversell or sugarcoat jobs. The people you hire are more likely to leave if their job expectations differ significantly from work realities.)

When developing your job brand to attract star applicants, you can address three levels of benefits: big-picture benefits, company benefits, and the work environment.

Big-Picture Benefits

People are attracted to jobs that imply a greater cause. Does your messaging convey how jobs at your organization are special?

Imagine that you are recruiting for a contact center handling prescription drug inquiries and refills. I'm sure you realize that many people have negative preconceptions about call centers. But you can address that. In the big picture, you can attract top talent to your center by conveying how team members help people use medicines safely and effectively to maintain health and well-being. This messaging would help you overcome peoples' knee-jerk reactions to "customer service" jobs.

Company Benefits

Companies often understate the value of their benefits packages. For example, your recruiting program may emphasize basic compensation yet fail to tout medical and dental insurance, a 401(k) retirement plan, sick pay, and holiday pay. You can leverage these benefits against employers that don't offer them or don't promote them — and instantly boost your appeal to many potential employees.

Training for Your Managers With Offsite Staff

Enroll your managers today for *Managing in a Virtual World* to enhance their skills for selecting and leading remote workers. For more information on this highly interactive online class, visit either of the following:

- [November class](#)
- [December class](#)

Training for Your Offsite Staff

You can help your remote staff thrive by registering them for *Virtual Worker Survival Skills*. Our two-part online class will help them stay on task and boost performance! The program helps participants

- Manage their workdays and workflow
- Deal with interruptions, limit distractions, and maintain focus
- Sharpen formal and informal communication skills
- Use technology efficiently and effectively

Visit us online for more information and to register your team for our [November class](#).

Learn How Financial Services Call Centers Are Dealing With a New World of Applicants

Customer service centers in the financial services industry face new challenges as they draw on two emergent talent pools: members of Gen Y and overqualified-but-unemployed individuals with no call center experience.

Do people who work in the job you're offering typically hope to move on to higher-paying jobs? If your answer is "Yes," then brand the job as a springboard for career opportunities within your company — an entry point providing challenge, growth, and advancement for the right person. This makes the job far more attractive to talented individuals.

One organization we worked with faced this exact challenge and quickly found their key to attracting top talent: the training that new hires receive. Each new hire receives eight weeks of training and the opportunity to sit for a financial services licensing exam. This represents \$10,000+ in training — and a securities license! Now they describe the job as an entry point for people with the talent, energy, and ambition to pursue careers in financial services. Managers make sure that applicants know the job is an entry level position with commensurate pay, but one that offers immediate training, growth opportunities, and a chance to develop expertise with substantial support from the company. They attract talented and highly motivated people who seek growth — the applicants they need.

A Special Work Environment

People are attracted to nurturing or fun work environments. What's your work environment like? If you're Southwest Airlines, you make sure potential employees know about your famously offbeat work culture. If you're Google, you tout your innovative and egalitarian spirit. You may be able to emphasize that your company

- Values people: Management respects the individual and recognizes individual contributions.
- Values team spirit: Management recognizes team contributions.
- Promotes job enjoyment

Tell Your Story Where It Will Be Heard

A new avenue has opened between your company and top talent in their teens and 20s: social media. Be aware that young people use social media to learn about potential employers, managers, and coworkers. Yes, they may view the static career information on your website, but they are more interested in mining the Web for the "real" story.

If you want to establish yourself as an employer of choice for star performers, use social media to establish and build your reputation online. You and your employees can leverage popular platforms such as LinkedIn, Facebook, and Twitter to communicate your job brand and connect with potential new hires.

Your New Job Brand

You may need a new recruiting message to overcome existing job stereotypes and communicate what makes your company and the job special. Identify what's in it for the individual, both now and in the future. Ask your marketing team for assistance in creating an exciting

Malcolm C. McCulloch, Ph.D., LIMRA and LOMA, will team with Foresters' Nancy Godin to discuss how centers are successfully recruiting, selecting, and managing these individuals at The 2012 LOMA Customer Service Conference.

This conference focuses on the unique needs of financial services call centers and will be held March 14–16 in Las Vegas.

Other speakers will include:

- Joseph Michelli, Ph.D., highly regarded speaker, organizational consultant, and author of *The Zappos Experience*, *Prescription for Excellence*, and *The New Gold Standard*
- Brad Cleveland, author, speaker, organizational consultant, and former president and CEO of the International Customer Service Institute

message that touches emotions. Everyone involved in recruiting and hiring — recruiters, HR staff, and hiring managers — need to stay on message. In this way, you'll attract applicants truly interested in your job and company.



For advice or assistance re-branding jobs, please contact Malcolm C. McCulloch, Ph.D., LIMRA and LOMA. Malcolm is an industrial/organizational psychologist who helps companies build and maintain quality work forces by implementing effective recruiting, assessment, and development practices. He can be reached at at 860-298-3970 or mmcculloch@limra.com.

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