

Hiring

**Treat Job Candidates Well
For Brand-Name Boost**

Employment branding has become a popular term for how job applicants view a company as a potential employer, but it also plays a role in how they view the company as consumers. In other words, if an applicant has a bad experience at a company, he or she is less likely to buy what that employer is selling.

“Employer branding is a way for employers to showcase what it’s like to work for the company to attract the right kind of talent, and to attract customers,” Susan Vitale, chief marketing officer at iCIMS, a talent acquisition software provider based in Matawan, N.J., told Bloomberg BNA in an April 13 email. “A company’s employer brand is an accurate view into the work environment they cultivate and the work ethic they expect from employees,” she said. “In this age of transparency with social media, and job boards like Glassdoor, Indeed and LinkedIn that offer testimonies and reviews from real employees, consumers want to work and buy from companies they respect, trust and believe in.”

The link is backed by a recent survey by New York City-based consultancy Future Workplace and HR technology company CareerArc. They found that 64 percent of job seekers “say that a poor candidate experience would make them less likely to purchase goods and services from the employer,” and that whereas 91 percent of employers acknowledge this, “only 26 percent measure this effect.” The companies released the survey results, which featured 616 employers and 438 job seekers, April 1.

Similarly, Vitale said iCIMS found in a survey that nearly “70 percent of candidates are less likely to buy from a company after a bad hiring experience, and just as many are more likely to buy from a company if they were treated with respect during the interview process.” And with almost half of job seekers looking poorly on the experience of applying for a job and a similar proportion complaining they never even hear back from potential employers, she said, “the scale of impact a negative employer brand can have to a company’s bottom line is tremendous.”

The link between job candidates’ experience and their behavior as consumers also appeared in a 2015

survey by jobs website CareerBuilder, Rosemary Haefner, chief human resources officer for the Chicago-based company, told Bloomberg BNA in an April 13 email. “The majority of candidates do not take poor treatment lying down: 58 percent are less likely to buy from a company to which they’ve applied if they don’t get a response to their application; 69 percent are less likely if they have a bad experience in the interview; and the same is true of 65 percent if they didn’t hear back after an interview.”

Happy Candidates, Happy Customers But there’s a bright side for employers that go the extra mile. “Conversely, a good candidate experience can have the reverse effect: 69 percent of candidates are more likely to buy from a company to which they’ve applied if they’re treated with respect throughout the application process, and 67 percent are likely to do the same if they receive consistent updates throughout the recruitment process,” Haefner said.

“In today’s age of transparency, consumers want to buy from and work for companies they trust and respect. In other words, job seekers are making a consumer decision, too: If you aren’t good enough to work for, why buy anything from you?” she said.

“If your candidates have poor experiences with your company, you are absolutely alienating your current, and possibly future customers. Beyond that, just like any consumer who has a poor experience, they are likely to share their experience with others,” Lindsay Witcher, director of practice strategy at San Jose, Calif.-based outplacement services company RiseSmart, told Bloomberg BNA in an April 12 email.

“Treat your job candidates just as well as you would treat an employee or customer,” she suggested. “Humanize and personalize your recruiting and hiring processes and treat candidates with respect. Your brand will thank you.”

CareerBuilder, iCIMS and RiseSmart were not involved with the CareerArc survey.

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