

THE WAY FORWARD GUIDE TO **BUILDING YOUR EMPLOYMENT BRAND AND SELLING YOUR EMPLOYEE VALUE PROPOSITION (EVP)**

Organisations compete for talent. This is particularly true in the resource, allied and construction industries where specific skills are in high demand and work environments are often remote and challenging. To attract and recruit talented employees, an organisation must win the attention of candidates by presenting an appealing 'personality' or employment brand. Enticing desired candidates to then join the organisation lies in its ability to answer '*what's in it for me?*'

This Way Forward Guide has been written and developed by the Australian Mines and Metals Association (AMMA) with support from the Australian Government as part of the Australian Women in Resources Alliance (AWRA) initiative.



AWRA is an industry-led initiative dedicated to helping employers attract, retain and reap the rewards of women in resources workplaces.



AWRA is driven by Australia's resource industry peak body, AMMA, and supported by the Australian Government through the National Resources Sector Workforce Strategy.

As outlined in *Way Forward Guide 01 Diversity as an Imperative for Business Leaders*, attracting and retaining women in an organisation has numerous business benefits. But how do employers become recognised in a competitive market and successfully retain employees? There are two related strategies that can assist – the employment brand and the Employee Value Proposition (EVP).

An organisation's employment brand represents its reputation as an employer (such as being a preferred employer of women). It is the image of your organisation as a 'great place to work'.¹

An Employee Value Proposition (EVP) is an organisation's employment offering. That is, what an employee would experience and gain from working at one organisation compared with another. This includes tangible and intangible elements such as the work environment, content, and rewards and benefits for workplace performance. It is the deal struck between an organisation and employee in return for the employee's contribution and performance. This characterises an employer to current and future employees, and differentiates it from competition in the labour market.

Many employers struggle to differentiate themselves from their competition. Differentiation is crucial if an organisation is to stand out from the 'sea of sameness' that characterises some industries.

All too often people join an organisation tempted by the brand but are disappointed by their experience —the packaging is appealing but it does not accurately reflect the contents. The effect of disappointed employees on the company's employment brand can be devastating.

A distinctive and appealing employment brand, coupled with a genuine, consistent and aspirational EVP enables an organisation to stand out but also ensures that the promise reflects the reality.

This guide explains the difference between the two concepts and outlines how to utilise these strategies to make an impression on not only women, but the entire labour market.

In order for the promise to sincerely reflect the reality, the EVP must be understood and developed first. Creating a strong and compelling employer brand, therefore, involves four steps:³

1. Research the EVP(s)
2. Develop the EVP(s)
3. Communicate the overall EVP
4. Measure the effectiveness

1. Research the EVP

When developing an EVP, an organisation needs to ensure that it:

- Is unique to the organisation.
- Is relevant to people interested in working in the industry.
- Is appealing and persuasive.

The unique nature of the resource industry can require organisations to employ staff in a variety of work environments across both regional and metropolitan areas. An EVP needs to be tailored to appeal to different types of employees in various sections of the workforce. For example, employees that work at a project site will be interested in an EVP that demonstrates competitive rostering. An organisation will likely have to develop a number of EVPs to suit its various parts.

Developing an EVP obviously begins with considerable research, both inside and outside the organisation, including:

- Consulting employees at different levels to understand what it is that they need and want from their employment, and how the employer provides this for them.
- Identifying available candidates outside the organisation and being clear about the type of candidate the organisation is seeking (be specific, otherwise the EVP will miss the mark). Consider the needs and wants of candidates and what competitors offer.

2. Develop the EVP

Articulating an EVP involves developing a concise and comprehensive statement about the experience an organisation offers its employees.

Key components of an EVP to attract female employees include both tangible and intangible benefits. These include:

- Compensation and rewards – salary, health benefits, annual leave and other entitlements, availability of childcare facilities, flexible work arrangements, and a transparent review process.
- Career opportunities – career development, clear career advancement and leadership opportunities, support networks, mentoring and/or sponsorship programs, and job security.
- Work content – interesting, meaningful, exciting and varied work opportunities.
- Organisational culture – female role models, gender inclusive policies and environment, a no-tolerance policy on discrimination and harassment, zero-harm health and safety policy, and a wellbeing policy.

Developing an EVP to Attract Women to Your Organisation

1. Identify the core values of your organisation e.g. professionalism, collaboration.
2. Determine how these core values translate into the daily function of the organisation.
3. Conduct an employee survey to determine employee needs and assess importance.
4. Use the data to draft an EVP.
5. Form a focus group of key people from all levels of the organisation to further develop the EVP.
6. Test the draft EVP on current male and female employees to determine whether it will suitably attract and retain employees. This will identify what may appeal to specific genders and other diversity groups.
7. Further test the draft EVP on potential applicants and outside stakeholders to understand how their views differ from current employees.

Did You Know?

Research² demonstrates that a well thought-out and executed Employee Value Proposition (EVP) can:

- Improve the commitment of new hires by up to 29%.
- Increase the likelihood of employees acting as advocates from an average of 24% to 47%.

3. Communicate the overall EVP (Build the Employment Brand)

Employer branding means communicating the overall EVP externally and internally, to create an impression of the organisation as a preferred employer.

Determine how well the organisational brand is communicated to the target (female) audience:

1. Is the brand embedded in the overall business communication strategy?
2. Have the factors that motivate women to join an organisation compared to men been researched?
3. Are existing communication channels effective in reaching women?
4. Does the brand appeal to the type of female candidate the organisation wishes to attract?
5. Does the brand appeal to a wide range of female candidates?

These questions will help to identify gaps in a brand strategy and how it can be improved to appeal to women.

Once satisfied with the framework to build the brand:

- Use the EVP in job advertisements, particularly the aspects that appeal to women.
- Feature women role models from both traditional and non-traditional roles to demonstrate a range of career opportunities for women.
- Continue to research e.g. hold focus groups with women within and outside the organisation, for brand improvement.
- Advertise through traditional media channels relevant to target audiences (e.g. print, online and broadcast).
- Directly engage with target audiences and promote the brand and EVP on social media (e.g. LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Google+).

Organisations often confuse their EVP with the employer brand, which can result in the EVP being used solely to attract new employees and limited by the constraints of external marketing media.

While it must be conveyed in brand promotion, an EVP must also be powerfully communicated to current and incoming employees as a means of satisfying, committing and retaining them, and aiding future attraction and recruitment.

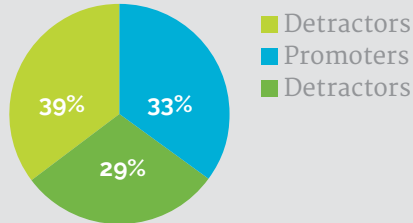
Word-of-mouth is a powerful influence on jobseekers' choice of employer.⁵

It is often existing employees who provide the most influential advocacy for the employer – both positive and negative.

Existing Employees as Advocates of the EVP

Research by Insync Survey and RedBalloon in 2011⁴ found that only one-third of the 7,157 Australian and New Zealand workers surveyed would promote their current employer to others.

Detractors most want to improve communication, reward and recognition and leadership in their current organisation.



4. Measure the effectiveness

The final and crucial step is to evaluate the effectiveness of the branding strategy and adjust the strategy where necessary.

Questions to answer include:

- Does the EVP reflect reality?
 - Turnover/retention rates, particularly departures soon after starting
 - Employee satisfaction surveys
 - Loyalty and engagement
- Does the brand communicate the EVP?
- Does the brand reach the target audience and does it persuade them?
 - Brand awareness and attractiveness survey
 - Flow of applications
- Is the branding exercise cost effective?
 - Cost per hire

Case Study: Anglo American Metallurgical Coal

Increasing diversity and inclusion was seen as a real opportunity for Anglo American Metallurgical Coal to source talent for future roles. They saw their approach to diversity and inclusion as a competitive advantage and part of their objective of becoming an employer of choice. They saw an opportunity to highlight women working in their business as well as some of the inclusive initiatives they had as part of a broader recruitment and positioning strategy. They aimed to promote real people working in the business and featured existing employee Simone Forbes – a woman working in a non-traditional role – in a recruitment campaign.

Newspaper advertisements were developed for national and regional press. They appeared throughout the latter half of 2012 in papers including *The Australian*, *The Australian Financial Review*, *The Courier-Mail*, *The Daily Mercury*, *The Queensland Times* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

The advertisement's headline focused on Anglo American Metallurgical Coal's equal opportunity promise, but committed to more than that. Employment with the company would provide women and other people from diverse backgrounds the opportunity to reach their true potential.

The ad read: *Anglo American is a company of great diversity, but with a unity of purpose: to lead the way. Simone Forbes, a Moranbah girl, works 12 hour shifts underground, and last year won Queensland female tradesperson of the year. But we're not just breaking new ground for women. Our diversity initiatives like the 'hot seat crew' for working parents and the 'advanced entry trades programme' for mature-aged apprentices have opened up mining to people from all walks of life. Find out more at angloamerican.com.au*

The ads were designed to provoke conversation and intrigue, and encourage people to discover more about employment opportunities with Anglo American Metallurgical Coal.

The advertisements generated a lot of interest both internally and externally and complemented a broader strategy to attract more women to the organisation. Anglo American has experienced consistent growth in female representation with overall representation at 14.5%. Female diversity has improved by 32% from 2010 (up from 11%). Throughout 2012, 23% of all new appointments to the business were women and the emerging leadership or talent population increased by 37% to an overall representation of females of 40%.



The campaign won the AMMA 2013 Industry Award for Most Creative Recruitment Campaign.

Business Benefits of an Effective and Well-Developed EVP

- Increases engagement and commitment of employees which assists productivity.
- Increases employer's competitiveness in a tight labour market.
- Facilitates access to passive candidates from other industries.
- Creates a positive culture across the workplace.
- Re-engages with dissatisfied employees.
- Recruits people with the right skills, aligns the workforce with productivity goals.
- Attracts and retains talented employees.
- Demonstrates values and commitments to potential employees, also pre-screens unsuitable applicants.

Other Resources On This Topic

- <http://www.amma.org.au/awra/awra-knowledge-centre#Attraction>

References

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