

A Study of Campus Engagement Practices in India

Vishnu Sreenivasan

Abstract: *The present research was conducted to understand the student's perspective of campus engagement events. Campus engagement events is a powerful tool to engage students across campuses. These events helps to build an employer branding and attract the right candidates from such campuses. For that a questionnaire has been framed to collect the information from students. Based on the responses of students made analysis on different criteria like, the month in which students prefer to conduct events, type of information that campuses prefer at engagement events, employer representative they prefer to meet at engagement events.*

Keywords: *Employer branding, Campus engagement event*

I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of campus engagement is to create brand awareness of an organization amongst the students. Employer brand is a reputation for the employees who are working in a company. Employer branding is a method which is used to attract candidates. Employer Value Proposition is delivered to the employees by branding their organization. The culture and Value of a company inspires more the candidates. Employee's opinion about the company can be gathered from online forum like facebook, linkedin, glassdoor etc. Employer branding is important in recruiting & talent acquisition. Recruitment cost is a big challenge for the companies. Finding quality talent comes at a high price, especially when staffing agencies are involved. For reducing that creating awareness amongst the people is the best method of employer branding. If the candidate is aware of that particular company, then it will be easy for the organization to acquire them. Comparison is another thing that companies do all the time. Comparing with their competitors helps them to understand the uniqueness in the industry. And from there they can develop employer branding techniques. This includes tracking the competitor performance through Glassdoor, linkedin etc... helps to understand the key area of improvement. Recruiting the right talent at the right time is a difficult task for recruiters. Campus engagement is a method of employer branding which helps in talent acquisition.

It is beneficial for both recruiting organization and the students. It allows the students to connect with the culture of the organization from level zero. It is beneficial to the employer in terms of increasing brand visibility and recognition. It helps in attract and hire from a highly talented lot of students. A strong campus connect program would engage students, build stronger relationships between campuses and corporates.

The main objective of this research is to identify the student's perception towards the campus engagement events, which consists of the preferred month in which they like to conduct such events and the representatives that students would like to interact with at engagement events.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Employer branding is the way an organization sells itself specifically to its potential employees and the general public. What the applicant is looking for when applying for a position in the company is an employer-brand. Employer brand can be defined as "package of functional, economic, and psychological benefits provided through employment and identified with the employing company" (Ambler and Barrow, 1996) Brett Minchington (as quoted in Parmar, 2014) defined the employer brand as "the image of an organization as a great place to work in the minds of current staff and key external market stakeholders (active and passive candidates, clients, customers and other key stakeholders)." Brands are seen to be symbolically important, as consumers tend to associate with the brand their own personality traits (Highhouse et al., 2003). "Corporate image is in the receiver's eye," says Ind (cited in Knox and Freeman, 2006). It] is simply a picture of an organization's audience by accumulating all the messages received. Employer branding can be defined as "the efforts of a firm to promote a clear view of what makes it different and desirable as an employer, both internally and externally" (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). There are five steps to create a strong employer brand, according to human resources consultants:

1. Understand your organization;
2. Create a 'compelling brand promise' for employees that reflects customers' brand promise;
3. Develop standards for measuring brand promise fulfilment;
4. Align all human practices ruthlessly to support and strengthen brand promise; and
5. Perform the measure.

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Current employees of any organization are such organization's brand ambassadors. Current employees are a direct source of information on organizational culture, work-life balance, and appropriate advancement opportunities. This means that the acquisition of talent is closely linked to the commitment of employees (Flesher, 2016). A company capable of achieving a high level of employee engagement will also attract talent of high quality. Employee engagement can therefore also be viewed as a strategy for recruitment. In the case of face-to-face interactions with current employees, the unsaid things, along with the tone, eye contact and other body language, have to be carefully observed.

GE sends its employees to 38 U.S. universities to establish themselves as a strong employer brand for faculty and students, and to remain at the forefront of potential applicants' minds ("In Search," 2005).

What works at PWC for the Millennials and how the HR policies of the company have evolved over time? It also discusses the drastic difference between baby boomers' thinking processes and Generation Y. The article also describes why management needs to change their attitudes towards them. (Bob Moritz, 2014)

Employer branding issues in job recruitment & talent acquisition because it helps to increase skilled candidates' job pool, saves on cost recruitment, improves social media perceptions of the company. (Todd Kunsman, 2018)

Identify the channels used by the competitors to acquire talent. A truly successful brand of employers is based on five pillars: data analysis, transparency, employee engagement, visual identity, mobile presence. (Alicia A. Garibaldi, 2014)

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The data for this study were collected from MBA (Master of Business Administration) students of six Indian universities located in India. Purposive sampling method was used to select the respondents. For that a script has prepared explaining purpose of the study and sent it through e-mail to all the students of 6 campuses. Total population of this 6 campuses where 500 students and received 57 responses. Several follow ups were made to achieve this. Approximately 46% of the respondents were female and approximately 39% of the respondents were first year students of MBA. Five open ended semi structured questions were designed to collect the data from respondents.

Secondary data are processed data, searched for articles related to employer branding and campus engagement events. The final analysis has been made using MS Excel.

IV. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

A. Figures and Tables

3 types of information has been collected during the research. Which are, the months which students prefer to conduct campus engagement events, the employer representatives that students prefer to meet at engagement events and type of information that students prefer at campus engagement events.

The month in which students prefer to arrange campus engagement events

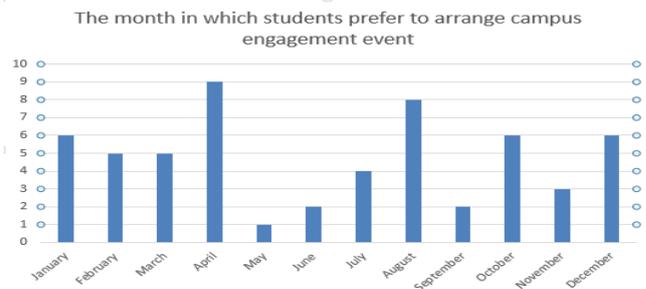


Figure 1: Months in which students prefer to arrange campus engagement events

From the above graph (figure 1) which shows that most of the events which students prefer to be conducted in April month and the least preference to conduct in the month of May.

Employer representative the student that student prefer at campus engagement events

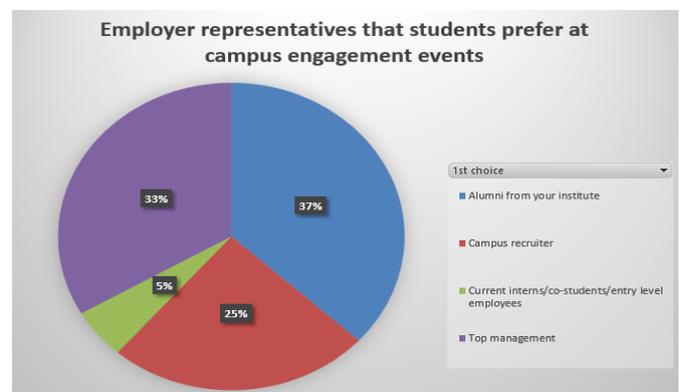


Figure 2: Employer representative that students prefer at engagement events

From the above chart (figure 2), 37% of the students prefer to meet Alumni's for the engagement events. 33% of the students prefer to meet Top management for the engagement events. 25% of the campuses prefer to meet Campus recruiter for the engagement events. 5% of the campuses prefer to meet Current interns/co-students/entry level from the company for engagement events.

Type of information that campuses prefer at engagement events

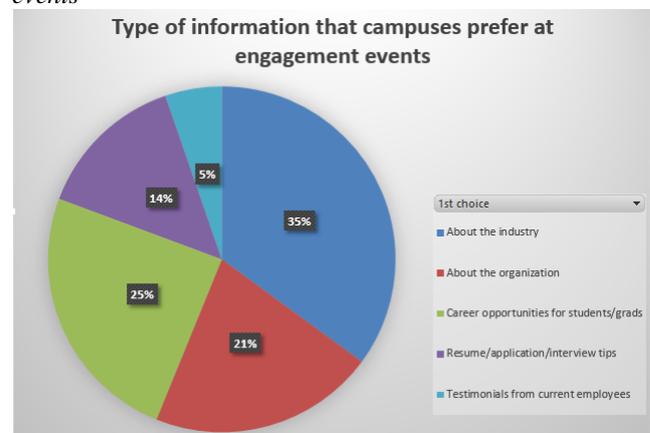


Figure 3: Type of information that students prefer at engagement events

From the above chart (figure 3) 35% of the students prefer to know about the industry. 25% of the students prefer to know about career opportunities for students/grads. 21% of the students prefer to know about the organization. 14% of the students has selected Resume/application/interview. 5% of the students prefer Testimonials from current employees. The type of information which most campuses prefer at engagement event is about the industry.

V. IMPLICATIONS

From the results itself, it is clear that the preferences of students for conducting engagement events in the month of April and August. The assumption on this is because April is the month where MBA students generally doesn't have classes. After March 31st most of the campuses will be preferably take a trimester break. So, at this time students would be not participating or involved into any other activity. This helps the organization to diffuse their strategies on engagement activities on campuses. Getting contact with the students and creating a calendar will helpful for the organization to conduct such events on campus. From this research organizations should learn why the students has chosen April month for conducting engagement events. And why the students preferring Alumni's to interact with them on campus engagement.

VI. CONCLUSION

The companies are more strategic on choosing B-Schools for placements. So, there is competition amongst the companies to get best talents from B-Schools. At the time of placements, they need to get the first slot in top B-Schools for placements. For that, they have to build the employer brand within the campuses. Campus engagement is the way to achieve this. This is the main objective of campus recruiters of companies. Identifying and implementing the campus connection helps the HR team on campus recruitment. Organizations wanted to engage with campuses beyond just internships and pre-placement talks. The data collection has been taken from 6 B-Schools. After collecting the valuable responses, identified the seasons which students prefer to conduct the campus engagement events. This will helps the organization to build a strong relationship with the campuses. And in addition to that identified the representatives that students prefer the most in engagement events.

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