

Brand love, from the inside out

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Every business wants their customers to love their brand. But what about their employees?

In a digital world where work/life boundaries are blurred and employees can be both customers and brand ambassadors, companies need to be approaching brand love, from the inside out.



Brand love. It sounds like a bad Valentine's Day meme. But in a post-Covid era, where business success (and sustainability) is not just measured in figures, but in the profound connections between people, brand love is not a sentimental notion, it's a strategic imperative. That's because brand love is not merely about winning customers; it's about fostering a genuine and resilient connection with people. All people. But here's the plot twist – the journey to brand love starts from within your organisation (your employees) and ripples outward. That's because approaching brand love, from the inside out, is the unspoken key to not just surviving but thriving in a market where every other brand is out there peddling "authenticity" and "purpose" to its customers. Like everyone else.

What is brand love?

Brand love is built on four strategic pillars namely experience, connection, trust, and loyalty. Experience shapes the narrative – the everyday encounters, challenges and victories that leave a lasting impact. Connection fosters authenticity, bridging the gap between a brand and its audience. The third pillar, trust, is the foundation that empowers innovation and resilience. Finally, loyalty goes beyond just tenure, signifying a commitment that transforms employees into brand advocates. Together, these pillars form the heart (and soul) of brand love – a dynamic, almost invisible force that propels businesses into a realm where success intertwines with genuine and enduring connections.

Of course it's all very well to speak about experience, connection, trust, and loyalty but how do you action them in the workplace? Here are some simple, practical tools that can be built into any internal communications strategy, in line with the company's needs and culture.

1. Experience

Feeling seen, heard and valued is key to creating an employee experience that retains and attracts top talent. Start

enhancing your employee experience by:

- **Using digital platforms** to share information quickly and create easy access for all employees.
- **Encouraging a culture of feedback** by establishing channels for employees to voice opinions, suggestions, and concerns.
- **Maintaining a two-way street with regular feedback mechanisms.** Conduct surveys, consider “always-on” pulse tools, establish an open-door policy for feedback, and use internal communications to communicate changes based on employee input.
- **Valuing and celebrating individual contributions** through personalised recognition programmes that publicly acknowledge employee achievements, both big and small.
- **Demonstrating a commitment to employee growth** by offering diverse learning opportunities and access to training programmes.

2. Connection

Connection is all about the bigger picture – feeling part of a diverse and inclusive team, family and company that gives everyone a sense of belonging and purpose. Start building connection with employees by:

- **Acknowledging and celebrating cultural diversity** within your organisation through internal communications. Share stories, traditions and insights that contribute to a more inclusive and connected workplace and establish channels for employees to voice concerns or suggestions regarding inclusivity.
- **Facilitating team-building activities to strengthen connections within teams.** This could include regular team events, workshops or collaborative projects.
- **Encouraging collaboration between different departments or teams,** breaking down silos and promoting a unified organisational culture.
- **Acknowledging and celebrating collaborative achievements,** reinforcing a sense of connection and shared success.
- **Organising social events or informal gatherings** to create opportunities for casual interactions, fostering stronger interpersonal connections among employees.

3. Trust

Trust forms the bedrock of a thriving workplace. It extends beyond individuals to encompass company values and the brand, fostering a culture of transparency, credibility and resilience. In a trustworthy environment, employees thrive and the brand becomes a beacon of reliability.

- **Communicating company policies and expectations transparently,** leaving no room for ambiguity.
- **Reinforcing company values** through internal channels to align employee perspectives with organisational principles.
- **Promoting visible leadership and organising regular town hall meetings,** where leadership shares updates, challenges and future plans.
- **Creating open forums** where employees can ask questions and engage in direct dialogue with executives, encouraging honest feedback and open discussions.
- **Providing regular updates on organisational changes,** ensuring employees are informed about the organisation's direction.
- **Communicating clearly and promptly** during challenging times, demonstrating honesty and resilience and a commitment to keeping employees informed at all times.

4. Loyalty

Loyalty isn't just a measure of tenure, it's a strategic asset. Loyal employees drive productivity, contribute to a positive work culture and attract top talent. Loyalty is not created overnight, but you can foster it by:

- **Celebrating company milestones**, anniversaries and successes through internal communications, reinforcing a sense of collective achievement and loyalty to the greater organisation.
- **Fostering a culture of employee empowerment** by involving more employees in decision-making processes.
- **Encouraging participation in innovation initiatives** and seeking input through internal communication platforms.
- **Clearly outlining career development paths and growth opportunities** within the organisation. Use internal communications to guide employees on potential career trajectories and advancement possibilities.

It's clear that the journey to sustainable success is paved with transparent communication, genuine connections and the unwavering trust that transforms workplaces into thriving hubs of innovation and collective achievement. But there's another benefit too.

In a fiercely competitive job market, fostering brand love internally has a ripple effect that extends to talent acquisition. When employees authentically love the brand they work for, they become its most compelling advocates. Their genuine enthusiasm radiates externally, attracting like-minded individuals who are drawn to a workplace that prioritises positive experiences, meaningful connections and a culture of trust. In this way, a company's internal commitment to brand love becomes a powerful magnet for top talent seeking not only a job but a place where they can genuinely invest in their professional journey.

Want to improve brand love in your organisation?

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