The
Employee Experience Journey

Optimizing each stage of the journey with the right strategies and technology can help you find and keep great people in your organization.

The employee experience is a journey that starts with recruiting and continues throughout an employee's tenure with your organization. Whether they just applied for the job or they've been with you for a decade, your employees are a lot like Dorothy taking her first trip through Oz. They want to know what's coming down the yellow brick road of their careers. Optimizing each stage of the journey with the right strategies and technology can help you find and keep great people in your organization.

Managing the employee experience is a continuous process. For employees to succeed, there are a few parallels to Dorothy's journey that need to happen. They need to know their organization has a heart, they need to develop the courage to engage, and they need to know that your organization has a strategy. So come along as we go through these checkpoints and find out how optimizing the employee experience can make all the difference.

The Recruiting Funnel
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They're Not in Kansas Anymore

Taking a new job is always a big decision. For candidates who move to your organization, this means leaving familiar responsibilities, learning new processes, and starting over with coworker relationships. It's not a decision that should be made quickly or thoughtlessly. Even for star employees sitting in gray cubicles dreaming of what's over the rainbow, it still takes time to make connections with a new organization.

Too many recruiters feel the urgency of an empty position and turn to short-term recruiting strategies that fall short of helping candidates understand the employee experience in their organizations. If the recruiting process doesn't provide a chance for candidates and organizations to learn about each other, it's more likely that a new hire will turn into a mis-hire, leading to additional costs.

The Society for Human Resource Management estimates that replacing an employee costs between six and nine months of his or her salary. These costs include recruitment advertising fees, training costs for replacement hires, a negative impact on team performance, and disruption to incomplete projects. And those are just the internal costs—in the worst cases, the situation could cascade into lost customers, litigation fees, and a weakened employer brand.

Optimizing the recruiting process starts at the top of the recruiting funnel, when your prospects hear about your organization for the first time. Before they can know whether the job is a good match for their needs, your organization needs to create the right job description and post it in the right places.

Job descriptions range between two extremes. On one side, there's the overly-specific job description that treats nice-to-haves as essentials. Some managers take this approach hoping to find their pretty candidate and a little dog, too. Instead, the additional qualifications narrow the candidate pool almost out of existence as only over-qualified or out-of-budget candidates respond.

The Recruiting Funnel

At the other extreme, an overly-broad description posted in too many places turns the recruiting funnel into a funnel cloud, sucking up all the half-qualified applicants in its path and crowding out the best candidates.

Where is the balance on this spectrum? It starts with modeling the job description on core job requirements instead of a current employee or a previous description. Ask these questions:

What skills and attributes will a candidate need to have on day one?

What role will prior education play in this employee's success?

How do training and development costs balance with salary requirements?

Where does this position fit on a successful candidate's career path?

Answering these questions helps you and your hiring managers choose the right channels for matching your recruiting funnel to the available talent pool. This technology should make it easy for candidates to apply through whichever channel they prefer, whether they're fresh college graduates finding your posting on social media or a seasoned professional taking a moment to complete a mobile application on a lunch break.

In the end, recruiting isn't just about finding more candidates with better qualifications in less time. It's about setting up the right conditions to improve the chances of connecting with the right candidate, and more isn't always better.

The Recruiting Funnel

Candidate Screening

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The Right Mix of Tech and Heart

Optimizing the recruiting funnel continues with the next step: effective candidate screening. Like the Tin Man, recruiters may worry that their technological approach can come across as heartless. But used correctly, technology can remove some of the hurdles that stop authentic connection from taking place.

In today's job climate, the candidate experience is essential. In March and April 2018, job openings in the US outnumbered job applicants for the first time in fifteen years. Candidates have the power to choose the best fit for their life, and they will.

In this climate, you can't afford to have your candidates wait until they rust over while you process and store paper resumes or sort all the applications in your inbox. Implementing an applicant tracking system (ATS) can help free up the administrative time you need to get to know your most promising candidates.

Tools like *video interviewing* add another way to save time while developing a more personal connection to your candidates. There are two types of video interviews, one-way video interviews, and live video interviews. In a one-way video interview, you can compile a pre-set list of questions in text or video format for candidates to answer. Candidates answer these questions at their convenience and recruiters then review the recordings when it fits their schedule. Live video interviews allow you to interview candidates in real time no matter where they are and record the interview for better collaboration with key stakeholders in the hiring process. This allows you to connect personally with your candidates when meeting in person isn't feasible or cost-effective.The right tech tools help you quickly discover whether a candidate that looks good on paper is going to fit in with your organization's culture. When both sides know as much as they can about each other, it leads to stronger, more successful job offers.

Unlike an in-person interview, you won't be able to answer candidate questions in a video interview. But you can anticipate questions about your organization's mission, vision, and values and direct your candidates to answers on your careers website.

The right tech tools can help you discover whether a candidate that looks good on paper is willing to connect with your organization. When both sides know as much as they can about each other, it leads to stronger, more successful job offers.

Candidate Screening

The Recruiting Funnel

Recognition and Performance
—

Giving Employees the Courage to Grow

Completing the hiring process is important. But for your organization to realize the full benefits of employee engagement, it takes more than bringing new hires on board and checking up on them at the annual review. For employees to engage with your organization, your organization needs to stay engaged with your employees' performance. This includes regular performance evaluations and effective employee recognition practices.

Ask yourself this: what is the purpose of performance evaluations and recognition at my organization? Are they to justify compensation decisions? Or are they to help employees know how they can improve? For many employees and managers, not knowing the answer to this question makes performance management feel like stepping into a forest with who knows how many lions, tigers, and/or bears. Oh my.

When BambooHR researched annual reviews, the responses came back with some surprising data in how managers conduct the yearly ritual:

40 percent of raters fail to follow up with the employee to check progress

38 percent of annual reviews focus only on the employee's most recent performance

26 percent of reviews result in no plan for improvement

When Adobe performed a study on annual reviews, they found that the aftermath isn't pretty for employees, either:

22 percent reported crying during performance reviews

37 percent reported looking for a new job

20 percent quit their job after a performance review

If this is how your organization asks managers to conduct performance reviews, then it shouldn't be surprised when they approach it like cowardly lions. The traditional annual review process is enough to make anyone lose their nerve.

Recognition and Performance

Candidate Screening

The Recruiting Funnel

Recognition and Performance
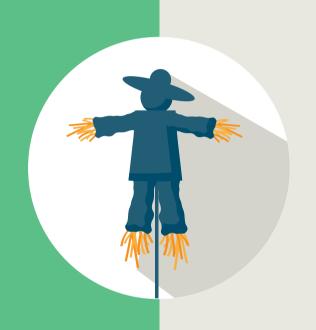
Candidate Screening

The Recruiting Funnel

But when performance management includes informal, in-the-moment feedback and regular one-on-one meetings between employees and their managers, supported with the right technology, it shifts from inaccurate and punishing to proactive and productive.

A BambooHR study found that 94% of employees who reported receiving recognition on a daily basis were either satisfied or very satisfied with their organization. The same study also asked employees to describe what indicates a successful employee, and the top choice was "consistently contributes to successful teams", with more responses than either promotions or salary.

This reflects what employees want to know about their work performance. They want to understand how their work contributes to their team. Providing this

information more frequently than once a year removes the pressure of compensation decisions, letting employees and managers open up with each other about what is working well and what needs to improve. Regular feedback can also help employees make corrections with their manager's support before small issues turn into failed projects or other setbacks.

It takes courage on both sides to give and accept feedback. But developing this process helps everyone in your organization take accountability for their performance. Pair performance management with meaningful recognition, and you'll show employees that your organization appreciates it when they take ownership in your shared success.

Strategy and Employee Satisfaction

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*It Takes Brains to Create
a Great Long-Term Experience*

Strategy and Employee Satisfaction

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This isn't to say that your organization shouldn't have long-term plans for compensation, talent, and positioning in your industry. Keeping the end goal in mind is just as important as supporting your employees' day-to-day activities. When you can tie these routines to your organization's mission, vision, and values, you help employees see how their great work contributes to everyone's success.

This long-term view is essential to developing employee engagement in your organization. But, like the Scarecrow, many recruiters and HR professionals may think that they don't have the brains to analyze the data that their leadership team needs to make strategic decisions.

How do you analyze the employee experience? Salary is only the first factor. Employees will also consider how they spend their time (both in and out of the office), how their employment affects their relationships (including family, friends, and coworkers), and how their choices today affect their future (finances, benefits, and career progression).

It's easy to understand that each of your employees has personal needs and professional goals. But it's much harder to coordinate a workplace experience that meets those needs for a diverse group of employees while balancing your organization's larger goals for growth and success.

Meeting employee needs isn't just about avoiding the cost of employee turnover. Current and former employees can post reviews on employer review sites, detailing the best and worst that your organization has to offer. This can affect how future candidates view your organization and make it harder to recruit.

There is no one right way to run an organization. But there are tools that help you understand what matters to your employees so your organization can factor it into your strategy.

Strategy and Employee Satisfaction

Recognition and Performance

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One of these tools is an eNPS survey, which asks employees two simple questions:

On a scale of 1 to 10, how likely are you to recommend your organization as a place to work?

What is your organization doing well?/What can we do to improve?

This survey helps identify percentages of promoters (scoring 9-10), neutrals (scoring 7-8), and detractors (scoring 1-6). Pairing their comments with their ratings gives you a snapshot of the trends happening in your organization, letting you provide data-informed suggestions in the next leadership meeting.

eNPS surveys won't address individual employee problems—that's what frequent feedback and one-on-ones are for. But they can provide insights into how organizational-level changes (such as compensation, staffing, and culture) affect the employee experience. Combining performance management with a solid top-level strategy lets you optimize your organization from the bottom up and the top down.

We don't have a wizard to give out diplomas, testimonials, and medals. But in the end, these things matter less than having the confidence to make HR technology recommendations. Used properly, the right HR technology can prove to your applicants and your employees that you're dedicated to developing a successful place to work. And as they settle in for the next stage of their career, they'll find that there's really no place like home.

bambooHR™

BambooHR is the No. 1 online HR software for small and medium-sized businesses that have outgrown using spreadsheets to manage their employee information. BambooHR's intuitive interface, streamlined implementation process and responsive support team ensure a fail-safe transition from spreadsheets to our flexible Human Resource Information System (HRIS) that adapts to your changing needs. Clients make time for meaningful work by using BambooHR's Applicant Tracking System (ATS) and HRIS to manage the employee lifecycle. Listed by PCMag as the Best HR Mobile App of 2017, BambooHR serves hundreds of thousands of employees in 109 countries worldwide.
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