

HOW SIEMENS CHANGES EMPLOYER BRAND PERCEPTION

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More and more businesses are transforming to meet the demands of our digital-centric world. Siemens is among many leading the push toward digitalization and they have had to evolve their employer branding efforts to meet talent and culture expectations.

This week we're with **Chris Knorn, Siemens' Global Director of Employer Branding**, to get an understanding of how he helps the company stay attractive and relevant as an employer brand in over 200 countries.

Have a listen to the interview below, keep reading for a summary and be sure to subscribe to the [Employer Branding Podcast](#).

Describe the corporate culture at Siemens

- Our culture is what you would call an '**ownership culture**'. There are a lot of initiatives in this company that try to flatten hierarchies and gives power to the people.
- We want **freedom for our employees**, offering flexible working hours and being responsible for yourself, which in turn develops a fantastic working environment.

Where is Siemens now and where is it heading?

- **We don't do washing machines, mobile phones or home appliances anymore. But people have the perception that we do.** So this is what we're aiming to change, and this is why my job exists.
- We are still one of the largest conglomerates, and we are transforming into a what our CEO calls 'a fleet of ships' with a focus on automation and **transforming ourselves into a digitally-focused company.**

What talent challenges are you faced with at Siemens?

- **This issue goes hand in hand with the changes we're trying to make.** So years ago we were aiming to hire what you would call 'classic engineers'; engineering in a way that most people would understand.
- Now with the digital shift, **we're battling for talent with the likes of Google and Apple.**
- Our problem is now: How can we stand out? And, what makes us special?
- **Our employer brand helps change perception where the perception is wrong.** For example, when we speak to young professionals and ask them what most important to them? They would say flexible working hours. Then we ask them; 'Would you expect this at a company like Siemens? They would say no. This is the perception we're trying to change.

What is your EVP?

Three years ago we began reviewing our old EVP, we changed our strategy and through workshops and reviews we came up with the EVP; '**We make real what matters**'. This is broken down into 3 parts:

1. **Success in creating:** We all contribute to the development of great products.
2. **Growing through challenges:** We always take on tough projects.
3. **Embracing respect:** We are respectful, diverse and believe everyone deserves an opportunity.

How do you communicate this to talent?

- **Internal:** We started by deploying brand advocates from our own company, those who we knew would be pretty active on social channels. We found use cases to interact with the EVP in real life. We found that it helps employees feel proud about working for the company, and what it means for each employee to work for Siemens.
- **External:** It's important to create the right impressions and ensure that what we talk about in our EVP is what we can truly deliver to candidates.

What is 'Future Makers'?

- It is part of our employer branding program, **Future Makers started with an internal engagement campaign** where we handed out Google 360 viewers and branded them using our employer branding design.
- What you could see through the viewers were films taken by employees all around the world and why these people are future makers.
- **We want our potential candidates to be able to see into the company.** We believe this is the closest thing to real-life integration without actually being at the company.

- What has developed is a #FutureMakers network where people can share their stories all over social media!

Any hard lessons to share with our listeners?

1. The obvious one is; **Do not surprise your employees.** Put out messages that your employees buy into, because I strongly believe that the employer brand belongs to the employees.
2. The other thing is; **Get the backing of the board.** Nothing works without their backing and you need to have mutual trust between the board and the employer branding team.
3. Lastly; **The process is not for free.** You need a real budget to maximize your employer brand.

How do you measure your employer brand?

- We have a **complex dashboard** where we measure all sorts of things like retention rates, bounce rates, time spent on profiles and how many shares we get on social media.
- We also use **Most Attractive Employer Rankings** and have noticed that Siemens has declined in the ranking and an important measure for us is trying to stop the decline.

What's next for employer brand at Siemens and in general?

- At Siemens, **we'll continue the storytelling approach** in more markets. We're working on an augmented reality platform as well.
- Overall for employer branding, we're going to see a **shift from the pure external focus towards the customer journey of the**

employer brand. If you manage to cluster that into a program and get an understanding of what that means then I believe that will be very important.

- We also need to **overcome the silo mentality between HR and marketing**, by merging their strategies to create an overall vision for employer branding in the future.