Employer Branding in a Candidate-Driven *Market*
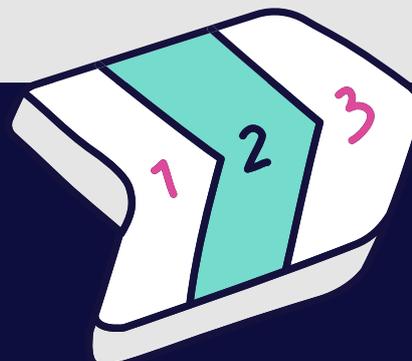
A Prominence Guide for Agency Owners & In-House Talent Teams

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RECRUITMENT MARKETING

1. Introduction

The recruitment world has changed dramatically. Over the past few years, economic uncertainty, hybrid working, and new candidate expectations have transformed how people choose where to work.

Candidates now look beyond salary. They want meaning, flexibility, and proof that a business genuinely cares about its people. Agencies and employers that fail to communicate that story risk losing great talent to brands that do.

This guide explores the practical steps you can take to build an employer brand that cuts through the noise and connects recruitment agencies with the consultants and internal teams they want to attract, engage and retain. It combines Prominence's experience supporting recruitment firms globally with proven frameworks you can apply immediately.

2. Why Employer Branding Matters Now

A decade ago, employer branding was seen as something only large corporates invested in. Today, it is one of the strongest competitive advantages a recruitment business can have.

Why it matters:

- **Candidates compare employers.** The likelihood is that most jobseekers you are interviewing are also speaking to multiple organisations at the same time. Employer branding means you already have a step up over your competitors before the interview even begins.

- **First impressions happen early.** Candidates form opinions long before an interview, based on your website, social media presence, job ads, and reputation.

- **Trust drives choice.** Candidates are more likely to accept offers from employers they recognise, understand, and feel aligned with.

- **Clients are watching too.** A strong employer brand signals credibility, stability, and professionalism to clients, showing that you can attract and retain quality talent.

When your employer brand is clear and consistent, it works on two levels. It helps candidates feel confident about joining your organisation, and it reassures clients that you are a strong, well-positioned employer that people want to work for.

3. What Employer Branding Really Means

Employer branding is not a logo, a slogan, or a careers page alone. It is the overall perception of what it is like to work for your organisation.

It is built through every experience a candidate has with your brand. This includes the tone of your job ads, the content you share on social media, the stories you tell about your people, the awards and achievements you promote externally, and how consistently your brand shows up across marketing channels.

Employer branding can be viewed as three connected elements:

Element	Description	Example in Practice
Perception	The external view shaped by candidates, employees, and clients.	"They're a modern, people-first agency."
Experience	The reality of interacting with your brand.	Quick feedback, respectful communication, transparent processes.
Expression	How you present that story publicly.	Website messaging, visuals, tone of voice, and social content.

When these elements are aligned, your employer brand feels credible and authentic. When they are not, candidates quickly lose trust.

4. The Six-Step Prominence Framework

Step 1: **Define Your EVP (Employee Value Proposition)**

Your EVP explains why people should choose you - as a recruiter, an employer, or a partner. It should answer three questions:

What do we stand for?   What do we offer that others don't?   How do we prove it?

Example EVP:

"We offer clear progression opportunities, flexible working, supportive leadership, and an environment where people are trusted to do their best work."

Avoid vague statements such as "we value our people." Instead, focus on tangible aspects like development, flexibility, culture, leadership style, and day-to-day experience.

Step 2: **Understand Your Audiences**

Employer branding speaks to multiple audiences, each with different priorities and touchpoints. While candidates and employees are often the primary focus, clients and stakeholders are also influenced by how you present your employer brand.

Employer branding can be viewed as three connected elements:

Audience	What They Care About	Where to Reach Them
Candidates	Flexibility, culture, purpose, growth	Job ads, career pages, LinkedIn, Glassdoor, social media, events
Employees	Recognition, development, wellbeing	Internal comms, reviews, team content, events
Clients	Credibility, quality, stability	Website, proposals, thought leadership

Employer branding is shaped by far more than recruitment activity alone. Social media content, event attendance, awards submissions, PR coverage, and how you showcase employees publicly all influence how your organisation is perceived.

When these touchpoints are aligned, candidates feel confident applying, employees feel proud to be associated with the brand, and clients see an organisation that attracts and retains strong talent.

Step 3: **Tell Your Story**

Employer branding speaks to multiple audiences, each with different priorities and touchpoints. While candidates and employees are often the primary focus, clients and stakeholders are also influenced by how you present your employer brand.

Use this three-part structure:

- **Origin:** Why you started or what problem you wanted to solve.

- **Belief:** The principles that guide how you work.

- **Impact:** How your people and culture deliver results.

Example:

"We built our organisation to create an environment where people can do meaningful work, develop their skills, and feel supported by their leaders. We focus on clarity, collaboration, and long-term growth."

Once your story is written, use it consistently across your website, social channels, and internal comms.

Step 4: Create a Voice and Visual Identity

There is no single "correct" tone of voice for employer branding. The right approach depends on your culture, sector, leadership style, and the type of candidates you want to attract.

Below are examples of common employer brand tone of voice styles, with guidance on how each might sound in practice.

Tone of Voice Styles

Tone Style	How It Comes Across	Example
Professional and assured	Calm, confident, credible	"We offer structured development, supportive leadership, and clear expectations."
Friendly and people-focused	Approachable, warm, inclusive	"You'll be supported by a team that genuinely wants you to succeed."
Direct and transparent	Honest, clear, no jargon	"We are upfront about targets, progression, and what success looks like."
Purpose-led	Values-driven and meaningful	"Our work focuses on creating long-term careers, not short-term placements."
Energetic and ambitious	Fast-paced, driven, growth-oriented	"We are building a team that wants to move quickly and make an impact."

What Matters Most

The most important factor is consistency. Whichever tone you choose, it should feel genuine and be reflected across your website, job ads, social media, and employer branding activity.

Candidates are less concerned with which tone you adopt, and far more concerned with whether it feels authentic and aligned with the experience they can expect.

Tone of voice sets expectations, while visual identity reinforces them.

Visual Identity: Different Visual Approaches

Visual identity plays a key role in how candidates and clients interpret your employer brand. As with tone of voice, there is no single correct approach. The right visual style depends on your culture, sector, and the type of people you want to attract.

Below are examples of common visual approaches used in employer branding.

Visual Style	How It Appears	Example in Practice
Polished and corporate	Clean layouts, structured imagery, minimal colour	Studio photography, formal team headshots, consistent grid layouts
People-led and authentic	Natural imagery, real moments, informal composition	Office photos, event snapshots, behind-the-scenes content
Modern and digital	Bold typography, strong colour, dynamic layouts	Graphic-led social posts, animated visuals, short-form video
Subtle and understated	Neutral tones, white space, restrained design	Simple careers pages, text-led messaging, muted colour palette
Energetic and expressive	High contrast, movement, personality	Video-first content, reels, campaign-style visuals

What Matters Most

Whichever visual approach you adopt, consistency is more important than perfection. Candidates and clients should recognise your brand whether they see it on your website, a job ad, social media, or at an event.

Visual identity works best when it reflects the real experience of working in your organisation, rather than an idealised version of it.
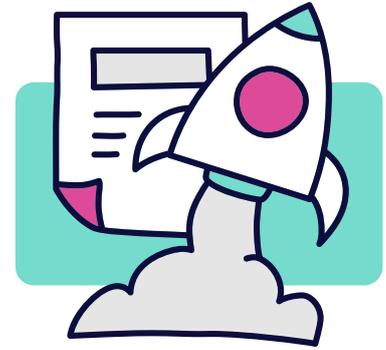
Step 5: **Activate Your Brand Internally**

Employer branding must be lived internally before it can succeed externally. Employees play a key role in shaping perception.

Practical actions to take:

- Run tone of voice workshops to align teams on how the brand communicates

- Update your careers or "Work for Us" pages to reflect your EVP clearly

- Create an EVP or culture overview that supports interviews and onboarding

- Ensure your social media strategy includes culture content, employee stories, and behind-the-scenes insight

- Encourage employee advocacy through clear guidance and content prompts

When employees understand and believe in the employer brand, authenticity follows naturally.

Step 6: **Measure and Maintain**

Measurement is often overlooked but critical. A strong employer brand should show results across three dimensions:

Area	What to Track	Why It Matters
Awareness	Follower growth, website visits, brand mentions	Indicates visibility
Engagement	Click-through rates, post interactions, candidate survey feedback	Shows emotional connection
Conversion	Applications, referrals, client enquiries	Proves commercial impact
Subtle and understated	Neutral tones, white space, restrained design	Simple careers pages, text-led messaging, muted colour palette
Energetic and expressive	High contrast, movement, personality	Video-first content, reels, campaign-style visuals

Review these metrics quarterly and refine your activity accordingly. Your brand should evolve with your people, not stay static.

5. Practical Ways to Strengthen Your Employer Brand

If you want to improve your employer brand, focus on actions that candidates notice most:
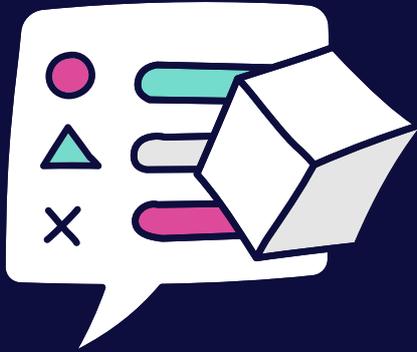
- Replace stock imagery with real employee photography
- Review careers content to ensure it reflects reality
- Introduce regular employee spotlight or culture-led content
- Share stories that show how people are supported, not just what roles exist
- Align marketing messages with the actual employee experience

Small, consistent improvements often deliver the biggest impact..

6. Toolkit: Employer Branding Checklist

If you were running a structured employer branding project, these are the core components to address:

Area	What This Involves	Status
EVP definition	Clear articulation of what employees gain	✓
Tone of voice	Consistent messaging across all channels	☐
Careers content	Up-to-date and authentic employer messaging	☐
Visual identity	Real imagery and aligned branding	☐
Refresh visuals and assets	Ensure your imagery and design reflect your EVP	☐
Activate internally	Run sessions, share templates, and empower employees	☐
Measure impact	Review metrics quarterly and adjust messaging	☐

Tick each box as you complete it, small, consistent steps build long-term results.

7. Common Mistakes to Avoid

- **Copying competitors.** Authenticity beats imitation every time.

- **Over-complicating messaging.** Simplicity sticks.

- **Ignoring internal perception.** If your team isn't proud of the brand, your audience won't be either.

- **Focusing only on aesthetics.** Great design without substance won't change perception.

- **Failing to measure results.** You can't improve what you don't track.

8. Bringing It All Together

A strong employer brand is built on clarity, credibility and consistency. It's not about being louder, it's about being more aligned with who you truly are.

Start small: define your EVP, share real stories, and build from there. Over time, you'll find that your brand becomes a natural magnet for the right people, both candidates and clients.
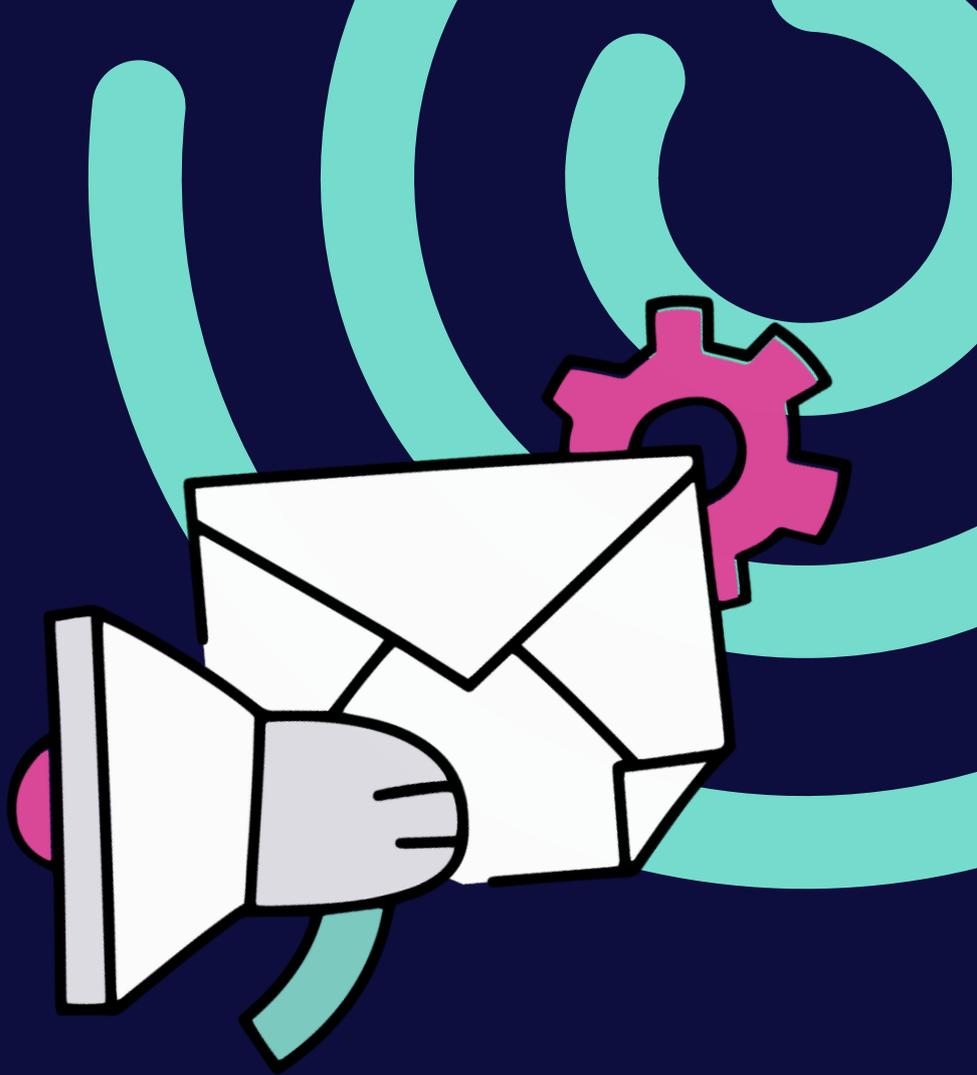
9. About Prominence

Prominence is the ready-to-go marketing team for recruitment agencies.

We help agencies around the world build brand visibility, attract quality candidates, and win new business through smart, data-driven marketing.

If you'd like support developing your employer brand, get in touch.

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Get in Touch

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