

How to be the best employer there can be

Author: Lindah Mavengere . December 2020

Ever wondered what it takes or what qualifies other companies to be employers of choice and others failing to meet the mark? Year after year, the Fortune 500 list is published as well as the top employer list, with companies such as Google and Apple just to mention a few, featuring on these lists. According to Sutherland, Torricelli, & Karg (2002), many employers desire to be employers of choice, but they are not sure how to do this. What then really sets the *best employers* from all other employers? Is it their remuneration packages or how engaged the employees are? This article will explore what the *best employer* is, and how organizations can attain this.

Firstly, the *best employer* is defined as an organization that manages, “To effectively attract, motivate, and retain talented employees” (Molis, 2019). Many firms try to become employers of choice defined as firms that are always the first choice of first-class candidates due to their status and reputation in terms of corporate culture and HR practices (Sutherland et al., 2002). The *best employer* is an organization that can beat its competitors by attracting, developing, and retaining the best talent. The major aim or goals of *best employer* organizations is to achieve a good reputation through innovative and compelling HR practices that benefit both employees and their organizations.

According to Gubman (2004), employees of *best employers* have a higher level of engagement or a heightened emotional connection to the job and organization. Being considered an employer of choice can provide a firm with various advantages, ranging from better recruiting to stronger community relations. Over time, this may result in outcomes such as improved customer service and stronger relationships with customers (Hannon & Milkovich, 1996).

Having defined what the *best employer* looks like, one is brought to question what it takes or needs to be done by an employer to be able to cultivate characteristics of the *best employer* out of their current organization. It is surprising that the most agreed factors to be the *best employer* come back to the basic needs of a human being. When we talk about the basic needs of a human being Abraham Maslow’s hierarchy of needs seems to be the most referred to theory, Maslow (1943, 1954).

Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, highlights that humans have five basic physiological needs, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization. Similarly, researchers agree that the degree to which employers actively invest in meeting the multidimensional needs of their employees leads to being an employer of choice. Four major needs in the workplace are sighted which include physical, emotional, mental and spiritual needs that an employer has to satisfy for it to be the *best employer*. These are further explained below:

Sustainability (Physical)

The physical attributes refer to an organization’s ability to fulfil the monetary needs of its employees so

that employees can adequately survive. However, what distinguishes good-paying employees and *best employers* is the ability of *best employer* organizations going further than just fulfilling the monetary needs of employees' but also being mindful of employees' wellbeing and health. Employers invest a lot of money and time on maintaining machinery and avoiding break downs neglecting their most valuable asset which is the workforce and the employees' wellbeing.

Security (Emotional)

Secondly, the *best employer* needs to offer security to its employees. Employers can achieve this by showing employees that they are valued, recognizing their efforts and appreciating their efforts in executing their duties. Appreciation by employers to their employees has been linked to more productivity this is because if employees feel that they are not valued they spend more time and energy trying to get recognition from their superiors instead of generating value for their employer. *Best employers* make sure that employees know that their hard work is valued, and this leads to higher motivation and employees proudly hype the organization as the *best employer*. Emotions are an important determinate of performance.

Self-Expression (Mental)

Best employers recognize that people are unique individuals and hence need to be given freedom of self-expression. When employees are let to express themselves fully it breeds a ground where employees bring up innovative ideas, they can use their unique skills and talents. Employers who allow self-expression enable employees to figure out the best way to get their work done and in the process discover new ways of achieving the same goal that might even be cost-effective. When employees are micromanaged they lose confidence and focus on following the commands given to them and offer no innovation in the process. *Best employers* should be able to trust their employees to do a good job and give employees some level of power and control over their work.

Significance (Spiritual)

Best employers are explicit about their goals, values, mission and vision. *Best employers* are clear on each employee's role or significance to the organization's ultimate goal. Employers that make their employees feel that the work they do matters can be *best employers*.

In conclusion, for an organization to be the *best employer* it needs to ensure that all the survival needs of its employees are met and far above this that their mental wellbeing is also catered for. *Best employers* go far beyond attaining the best talent but also take it upon themselves to develop current skills and investing in their employees.

Lindah Mavengere is a Business Consultant at Industrial Psychology Consultants (Pvt) Ltd, a business management and human resources consulting firm.

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/lindah-mavengere-552b32b2/>

Phone: +263 242 481946-48/481950

Mobile: +263 717 988 319

Email: lindah@ipccconsultants.com

Main Website: www.ipccconsultants.com

<https://thehumancapitalhub.com/articles/How-To-Be-The-Best-Employer-There-Can-Be>