

Business
& BEYOND
With Rajeev Narang

REAL INSIGHTS.
PRACTICAL STEPS.
LASTING IMPACT.

Employer Marketing

The SME Growth Strategy You Can't Ignore

A 5-Part Guide to Attracting and Retaining Top Talent



RAJEEV NARANG

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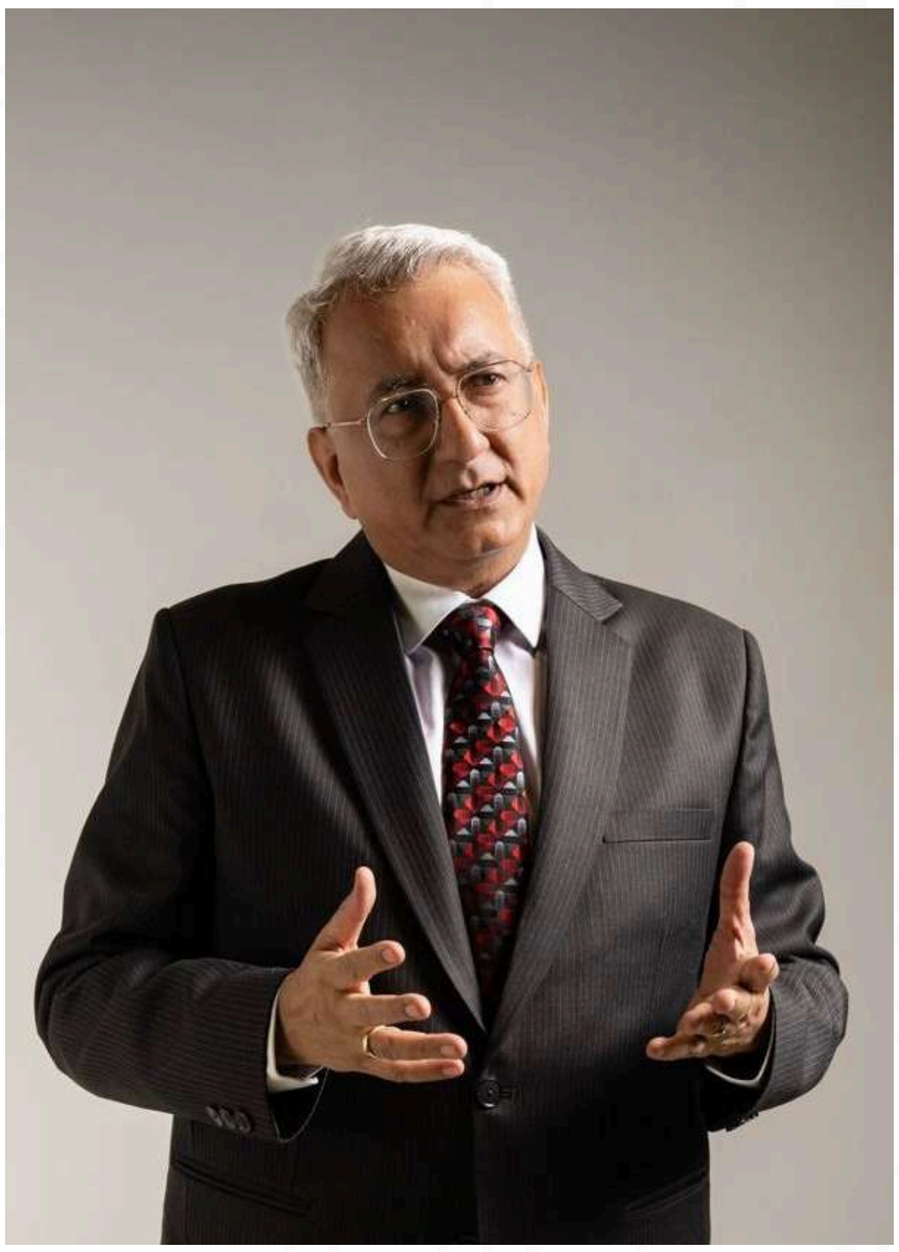
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WHY TALENT'S
SLIPPING THROUGH YOUR FINGERS



> Numbers don't build a business- people do.

For many SMEs, finding and keeping good people has become a real challenge.

Talented professionals have more choices today. They look beyond just a job and seek a workplace that offers growth, respect, flexibility, and a sense of purpose. Larger companies, start-ups and new-age workplaces are actively presenting these opportunities, making it even harder for SMEs to compete for talent.

The good news? By rethinking how you attract, engage and retain talent, SMEs can not only hold on to good people, but also become a preferred workplace.

THE OPPORTUNITY FOR **SMEs**

While larger companies may have bigger names and packages, SMEs have something equally powerful to offer - a work experience that is closer, richer and often more meaningful.



What makes **SMEs** a compelling choice for today's talent?

Meaningful Responsibilities
A chance to take ownership and see the real impact of your work.

Access to Leadership
Direct interaction, faster decisions and a greater chance to be heard.

Faster Learning
Broader exposure,diverse roles and the opportunity to grow quickly.

A Stronger Sense of Belonging
Acloser,more personal work environment where people truly matter.

*In short, SMEs can offer what many people today are looking for - **work that is more human, more impactful and more rewarding.***

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STEP 1

Recruitment is Marketing- Not Just HR

Turning Hiring into an Opportunity

> *Recruitment isn't a checklist–it's a pitch.*

STEP 1 | Recruitment is Marketing- Not Just HR

Why a Marketing Mindset Makes a Difference



For many SMEs, recruitment is still treated as a routine HR activity-post a job, review a few resumes, take interviews and fill the vacancy. But in today's talent market, that's no longer enough.

The best people have choices. They look beyond the job description. They see the bigger picture-what the company stands for, how people grow there, and whether they will be valued.

The Employer Value Proposition(EVP)

A marketing mindset helps you present a clear and compelling reason for someone to join your company.

It begins with your Employer Value Proposition (EVP)-the unique promise you make to your employees.



A Practical Takeaway

Why should someone choose to work with you?

Take a few minutes to define your EVP. Ask yourself:

- ☑ What purpose do we create-for our customers, our people and society?
- ☑ How do we enable people to grow-in overall skills, responsibility and their journey?
- ☑ How do we show respect- in the way we work, lead and recognise contribution?

STEP 1 | Recruitment is Marketing-Not Just HR

A Lesson from the Field

A mid-sized company was finding it hard to attract good talent, as it couldn't match the salaries offered by larger firms.

They changed their approach. Instead of just listing a job, they began sharing what it's really like to work with them-the projects, the learning and the impact people could create. The response was a clear improvement, with more relevant applications and better quality hires.



The takeaway?

You don't always have to offer more money. Sometimes, you need to communicate more clearly what makes working with you valuable.

Practical Steps to Attract Talent

Define Your Employer Value Proposition

Be clear about your purpose,growth opportunities and the respect you offer.

Show it Publicly

Bring your workplace culture to life through your website, LinkedIn and other relevant platforms.

Start Early

Build relationships with potential talent through industry events, campuses or professional networks.

Let People Talk

Share real employee stories and experiences. They are your most credible brand ambassadors.

The Payoff

You don't just fill roles-you build a reputation that keeps attracting the right people.

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STEP 2

Your Social Media Is Your Employer Brand

How your online presence shapes the talent you attract?

> ***Before they apply to work with you, they may already be following you.***

STEP 2 | Your Social Media Is Your Employer Brand

What Talent Sees Online

Today's talent rarely starts with a job application. More often, they first take a look at your social media to get a feel for what your company is really like.

In those few minutes, they form an impression-about your people, your work culture, the opportunities for growth and how you value your team. In many cases, that impression influences whether they choose to apply at all.



Four Things They Look For

People
The real people behind the business-your team, your leaders and their story.

Culture
The everyday work experience-how people collaborate, learn and support each other.

Growth
Opportunities to learn, take on new challenges and build a long-term career.

Recognition
How contributions are acknowledged and celebrated-big or small.

The Bottom Line

Your social media is more than a marketing channel. It's a window into your workplace, shaping how talent perceives and chooses your organisation.

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From Company Updates to Employer Stories

Most companies are active on social media. But many still use it like a notice board-sharing announcements, events and product updates.

The real opportunity is to go a step further-to tell stories that show what it's like to work with you.

A Company Update

Training programme completed for the sales team.

An Employer Story

"The recent training helped me understand our customers better and handle real challenges with more confidence.
- A Team Member (Example)

Four Content Ideas for SMEs

People Stories

Introduce your team, their roles, achievements and perspectives.

Learning & Growth

Share training, new skills and opportunities to take on bigger roles.

Life at Work

Capture everyday moments-team collaborations, celebrations and behind-the-scenes glimpses.

Recognition & Milestones

Celebrate contributions, project wins and team successes.



The Takeaway

Turn routine updates into real stories about your people, their learning, and the opportunities you create.

STEP 3

Culture Is What Employees Experience

A strong culture isn’t built through policies alone. It’s created in everyday experiences.

It's More Than a Set of Values

Most companies have a list of values- on their website, in presentations and on office walls. That's a good start. Butfor employees,what truly matters is not what's written, but what they experience every day at work.



	What Organisations Say	*What Employees Actually Experience*
People First	"Our people are our greatest asset."	Do I feel respected, heard and supported here?
Growth	"We believe in continuous learning and development."	Am I getting opportunities to learn, improve and take on bigger roles?
Teamwork	"We work as one team."	Do I see collaboration and mutual support in real situations?
Purpose	"We are driven by a larger purpose."	Do I understand how my work contributes to the company's goals and impact?
Recognition	"We value and recognise contribution."	Is good work noticed and appreciated here?

The Takeaway

Values build a brand. But consistent, everyday experiences build a culture that attracts, engages and retains talent.

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A Simple Culture Health Check



Every organisation has a culture, whether it's consciously designed or just evolved over time.

Use this quick check to see how your people experience the culture at your workplace today.

Area	*What to Ask Yourself*	*How True Is This in Your Organisation?*			
		Rarely (1)	*Sometimes (2)*	*Often (3)*	*Always (4)*
Relationships	Do people feel respected, heard and supported by their team and leaders?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Growth	Do we provide opportunities to learn, build new skills and take on bigger responsibilities?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Purpose	Do people understand how their work contributes to the bigger goals of the organisation?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Recognition	Do we acknowledge good work and celebrate contributions in a meaningful way?	☐	☐	☐	☐
Well-being	Do we care for people's overall well-being, including a healthy work-life balance?	☐	☐	☐	☐

How to Use It ?

Add up your score (maximum 20) and reflect on what it indicates.

17 - 20

A strong and healthy culture. Keep it going.

12 - 16

A good foundation with room to strengthen in a few areas.

Below 12

Asignal totake a closer look and start a focused culture conversation.

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STEP 4

Beyond Salary: What Keeps Talent



A competitive salary may bring people in. But it's what they experience, feel and see a future in that makes them stay.

The Real Drivers of Retention

People don't leave companies only for a higher salary.

More often, they leave when they no longer feel valued, challenged or connected.

Here are five key dimensions of the employee experience that have a far greater impact on retention.



Growth

People stay when they can learn, take on new challenges and see a clear path to progress.

Belonging

They stay when they feel part of a supportive team, where their ideas are heard and they can be themselves.

Recognition

They stay when good work is noticed and appreciated - not just in big achievements, but in everyday efforts too.

Purpose

They stay when they understand how their work makes a difference - for the business, for customers and for a larger goal.

Well-being

They stay when the workplace respects their time, supports their health and allows them to bring their best self to work.

Retention isn't about one big thing. It's the combination of many small, meaningful experiences.

Practical Retention Checklist



Simple, high- impact actions that can help you keep you people engaged, committed and motivated.

Create Growth plans

People stay when they see progress, not just a job.

- ☐ Have regular, simple career conversations.
- ☐ Offer new responsibilities and skill-building opportunities.
- ☐ Give internal candidates a fair chance for new roles.

Build a Sense of belonging

People stay where they feel valued and connected.

- ☐ Keep communication open and two-way.
- ☐ Involve people in solving real business challenges.
- ☐ Celebrate team wins, big and small.

Recognise and appreciate

Timely and genuine recognition fuels long-term commitment.

- ☐ Acknowledge good work in team meetings or internal channels.
- ☐ Appreciate effort, not just results.
- ☐ Make recognition a regular habit, not an occasional event.

Give a Sense of purpose

People are more loyal when they see meaning in their work.

- ☐ Share the bigger picture - where the business is headed and why it matters.
- ☐ Help employees see how their work contributes to that goal.
- ☐ Reinforce the value they create for customers, partners or society.

Support Well-being

People perform and stay better when they feel balanced and supported.

- ☐ Be mindful of workload and avoid constant fire-fighting.
- ☐ Encourage time off and respect personal boundaries.
- ☐ Show genuine care during personal or challenging times.

The Takeaway

Retention isn't about doing everything. It's about consistently getting a few key things right for your people.

STEP 5

Employee Advocacy - The Talent Magnet



> *Your employees can be your most credible voice - telling the real story of your workplace to future talent.*

Turn Your Employees into Your Strongest Talent Brand



People trust people more than they trust corporate messages. When employees share real stories about their work, and their team and their growth, it brings your workplace to life- and that's attract good talent.

How Employee Advocacy Attracts Talent

Builds Credibility
Real voices feel more authentic and trust worthy.

Showcases the Real Work Culture
Gives a genuine glimpse of life at your workplace.

Attracts Like-Minded Talent
Brings in people who value what you value.

Boosts Pride and Engagement
Employees feel valued and become more committed.

Creates a Positive Cycle
Happy,engaged employees attract more good talent.

A Practical Roadmap to Build Employee Advocacy



Turn employee pride into a powerful employer brand. Here's a simple, practical roadmap to get started.

1 Create a Safe Sharing Culture

Build trust and encourage employees to share their real experiences.

- ☐ Keep it voluntary, not mandatory.
- ☐ Be open to honest, balanced stories.
- ☐ Leaders to participate and set the tone.

2 Identify and Enable Your Advocates

Start with employees who are naturally proud of their work and the organisation.

- ☐ Spot enthusiastic and engaged team members.
- ☐ Give them a platform and basic guidelines.
- ☐ Support them with relevant content and updates.

3 Make It Easy to Share

Give simple story ideas and formats so employees can share with confidence.

- ☐ Provide story prompts (projects, learnings, team moments, growth journeys).
- ☐ Share easy-to-use templates (text, photo, video).
- ☐ Highlight and reshare employee posts internally.

4 Recognise and Appreciate

Celebrate employees who actively represent and support the organisation.

- ☐ Acknowledge and thank them publicly.
- ☐ Feature their stories on company channels.
- ☐ Consider small, meaningful recognition (e.g., spot awards, shout-outs).

5 See the Impact

Track what's working and keep improving.

- ☐ Monitor engagement (likes, shares, comments).
- ☐ Note the effects on hiring (more applications, better quality, faster closure).
- ☐ Take feedback and refine the approach regularly.

The best stories about your organisation are the ones told by your own people.

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PART TWO

The Employer Marketing Toolkit

Bonus Value

From Insight to Action

The ideas in this guide can make a real difference for your business. Here are five practical actions to help you build a stronger employer brand, starting now.

1 **Define Your Employee Promise**

2 **Plan Your Communication**

3 **Examine Your Workplace Culture**

4 **Strengthen Employee Retention**

5 **Encourage Employee Advocacy**

> ***A great employer brand isn't built by what you promise. It's built by what your people experience.***



EMPLOYER MARKETING TOOLKIT

Employer Value Proposition Canvas

Define what it really means to work with you — and why the right people should choose you.

What is an EVP?

Your Employer Value Proposition (EVP) is a simple, clear promise to current and future employees — what they can expect, experience and gain by being part of your team.

THE CANVAS

Use the prompts below to build a clear and authentic EVP for your organisation.

1. What We Offer

What do employees get by working with us?
(Select and add more)

- ☐ Learning & growth
- ☐ Meaningful work
- ☐ Recognition
- ☐ Other: _____

2. How We Work

What is it like to work here?
(Select and add more)

- ☐ Collaborative
- ☐ Open & transparent
- ☐ Flexible
- ☐ Other: _____

3. Why People Stay

What keeps our people with us?
(Select and add more)

- ☐ Trust & respect
- ☐ Opportunities to grow
- ☐ Sense of belonging
- ☐ Other: _____

4. What Makes Us Different

What sets us apart from other employers in our industry?
(Select and add more)

- ☐ Closer to leadership
- ☐ Greater responsibility
- ☐ Faster learning
- ☐ Other: _____

5. Proof from Employees

What do our people say about working here? Capture real quotes or feedback.

Our Employer Value Proposition (EVP)

Bring it all together. Write a clear, one–two sentence EVP for your organisation.

EMPLOYER MARKETING TOOLKIT

Employer Brand Content Planner

Turn your workplace stories into a consistent and purposeful content plan. Use this template to plan, create and publish authentic content that brings your employer brand to life.

> *Real stories from real people build a stronger and more credible employer brand.*

1 Choose Your Content Focus

Select the types of content you want to create (you can choose more than one).

- ☐ **Employee stories** (e.g. growth, learning, achievements)
- ☐ **Life at work** (e.g. culture, team moments)
- ☐ **Leadership insights** (e.g. vision, people, values)
- ☐ **Learning & development** (e.g. training, new skills)
- ☐ **Purpose & impact** (e.g. customer stories, social impact)
- ☐ **Job opportunities** (e.g. open roles, career paths)

2 Plan Your Content

Use the table below to capture and plan your content ideas for the next 4–6 weeks.

No.	Story Idea / Topic	Target Audience (e.g. freshers, experienced, etc.)	Key Message (What do you want to convey?)	Employee Voice / Proof (e.g. quote, story, achievement, photo)	Channel (e.g. LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, etc.)	Format (e.g. post, video, article, reel, etc.)	Owner (Who will create it?)	Publishing Date (Planned)
1								
2								
3								
4								
5								

Quick Checklist Before You Publish

- ☐ Is the story authentic and people-focused?
- ☐ Does it reflect our values and culture?
- ☐ Is the message clear and positive?
- ☐ Have we included a real employee voice or example?
- ☐ Is the right channel and format chosen?

EMPLOYER MARKETING TOOLKIT

Culture Reality Check

A strong employer brand is built on a culture people can actually feel, not just what's written on a wall. Use this checklist to see how your stated culture compares with the real experience of your employees — and where you can take action.

The Goal

Spot the gaps, keep what's working, and take focused steps to strengthen your workplace culture.

How to Use

1. List the key values or cultural qualities you promote.
2. Reflect on what employees actually experience.
3. Rate the gap, and note what you can do to improve.

	Stated Value / Cultural Promise *(What you say or stand for)*	What Employees Actually Experience *(What it feels like in reality)*	Evidence / Examples *(People, practices, or situations that show this)*	Gap Rating *(How big is the gap?)* 1 2 3 4 5	Action Needed *(What will you do to bridge the gap?)*
1				☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	
2				☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	
3				☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	
4				☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	
5				☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐	

Quick Reflection

Tick the statements that feel true for your organisation today.

- ☐ Our stated values are well understood by the team.
- ☐ Employees generally experience what we promise.
- ☐ We have regular and open two-way communication.
- ☐ People feel recognised and valued for their work.
- ☐ There is a sense of trust and belonging.
- ☐ We act on feedback and make visible improvements.

Key Takeaway

A great culture isn't about having the right words. It's about creating the right experience — consistently.

My Top 3 Actions

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

EMPLOYER MARKETING TOOLKIT

Employee Retention Action Planner

Turn insights into timely actions that help you keep your best people, and create a workplace where they want to stay and grow.

The Goal

Identify key retention challenges, find practical solutions, and track their impact.

Retention Challenge	Likely Cause	Proposed Improvement
What is causing people to leave or think about leaving?	What's driving this challenge? (e.g., limited growth, recognition, workload, manager support, etc.)	What can we do to address it? (Be practical and specific.)

1

Owner (Who will lead it?)	Deadline (By when?)	Priority	Success Measure (How will we know it's working?)	Review Date (When to check progress?)
		☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low		

2

Owner (Who will lead it?)	Deadline (By when?)	Priority	Success Measure (How will we know it's working?)	Review Date (When to check progress?)
		☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low		

3

Owner (Who will lead it?)	Deadline (By when?)	Priority	Success Measure (How will we know it's working?)	Review Date (When to check progress?)
		☐ High ☐ Medium ☐ Low		

Quick Check

Have you considered these key areas for retention?

- ☐ Career growth and learning opportunities
- ☐ Recognition and appreciation
- ☐ Role clarity and meaningful work
- ☐ Manager support and regular feedback
- ☐ Workplace flexibility and work–life balance
- ☐ A positive and inclusive culture

Additional Notes / Ideas

EMPLOYER MARKETING TOOLKIT

Employee Advocacy Starter Kit

Help your employees share their real experiences, in their own words, on a voluntary basis.

> *The most credible stories about your workplace come from the people who live it every day.*

1 Choose Your Story Themes

What kind of employee stories best reflect your workplace? (Tick what fits and add more)

- ☐ My journey at the company
- ☐ Learning and growth
- ☐ A meaningful project
- ☐ Support from my team or leader
- ☐ Workplace culture and values
- ☐ Work-life balance
- ☐ What keeps me here
- ☐ Other: _____

2 Identify Willing Contributors

List employees who may be open to sharing their experiences (e.g., different roles, teams, locations, tenure).

3 Set Clear Consent & Boundaries

Ensure **participation is voluntary and comfortable for everyone.**

- ☐ Share the purpose and how the stories will be used.
- ☐ Get clear consent (written or via email).
- ☐ Respect personal boundaries (e.g., no sensitive or private information).
- ☐ Give the option to review the content before it goes live.

4 Choose the Right Channels

Where will you share these employee stories? (Tick and add more)

- ☐ LinkedIn (Company Page)
- ☐ Company Website (Careers)
- ☐ Internal Channels (Intranet, Newsletter)
- ☐ Other: _____

5 Provide the Right Support

What will help employees feel confident and make it easy for them to participate?

- ☐ Topic ideas and simple prompts
- ☐ A short one-on-one discussion
- ☐ Help with writing, editing or recording
- ☐ Other: _____

6 Sample Opening Lines (Use or Adapt)

- *"Here's a little about my journey at [Company Name]..."*
- *"One of the things I really value here is..."*
- *"A project I'm proud of was..."*
- *"What keeps me motivated is..."*

7 Your Next Action

What will you do in the next 7–10 days to get started?