



Offboarding Sites

June 2020

In a nutshell

An effective and empathetic offboarding experience is an essential part of how you manage your employer reputation.

Every organisation knows the value of effective onboarding – creating valuable first impressions and personal connections, getting the newbie up to speed and productive more quickly, showing them your purpose and, in so doing, the meaning in their work every day wherever and wherever they are – sadly organisations know this but don't practice it often enough). But what about when people leave? And especially when that departure is not something the employee would have chosen for themselves?

In this COVID world, employers are waking up to the fact that everything they do has to be approached in a different way. More are understanding their responsibilities as an employer and acting differently, however too many haven't realised that managing your employer reputation requires a truly holistic approach. And an effective offboarding process is an essential part of that. The risk is that, if (when) you do this badly your reputation and brand will be adversely influenced long after COVID has gone. However, do it well and you will build brand equity with all those key audiences like never before. More importantly you'll be doing the right thing at a time when people need you to.

The fact that organisations will restructure and downsize over the rest of 2020 is inevitably going to create profile and stories (internally and externally). The question is, 'What do you want yours to be'?

The business case

It's not just about doing the right thing however. The financial consideration speaks for itself.

If you look at any “best practice” guide on offboarding staff you’ll see all sorts of checklists to help you mercilessly process people out of your business. You’ll see a legal framework and some standard letters to keep the employer out of tribunals: you’ll see the checklist from IT that ensures all systems access is revoked, shared passwords are changed and sensitive data is blocked; you’ll see nasty memoranda from facilities to make sure all company property is recovered and a reminder, probably, to update the company org chart and phone book immediately to erase their memory altogether. And if you really don’t get it, you’ll see the demonising scare stories of the employees who ‘just forgot’; to give back their uniform, ID badge or staff discount card and profited as a result.

But come on. Really? Is that it? We put “best practice” in inverted commas as this is anything but. Where’s our humanity? As a business and as the sixth largest economy in the world we can do better. As an employer operating in the COVID world we can do better. So, yes, think about the process. The admin has to be done. And now think about the people and how approaching this more holistically will serve every audience in a much better way. So who are our key audiences?

Let’s start with your managers. They probably didn’t choose this and need structure and support to run the process empathetically.

Let’s look at ‘the survivors’. How are they? Building trust as an employer is a key pillar in the employment experience. Here’s your opportunity.

Let’s look at your customers and shareholders. What would they expect you to do?

The business case

And let's look at those affected in the process. Everyone is already facing increased levels of stress and anxiety and if the people leaving your business have already been furloughed since March, for example, that will be heightened. The outcome will be what it will be but how can you help them through the process in the best possible way? How can you equip them to cope? How can you catch them if they fall? How can you help them secure their next role? And how can you learn from the process?

The quick answer of course is mindset. The evidence of that is in a bespoke offboarding site that caters for all of those audiences and could feature the following as a start point.

Leadership comms – from you as to the what, why, how

Managers' support suite

- A note from the leader to the manager
 - A guide for managers
 - How to prepare and hold the conversations
 - Support for you
 - Support for your remaining team
 - FAQs
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The business case

Support to employees affected by the process

(some may stay some may depart of course)

- Helping you through the process
- FAQs
- Access to financial advice
- Access to emotional support 24/7
- EAP and other routes to help

Support for those seeking their next role

- Career considerations – what's right for the future you
 - A CV builder tool
 - Training on linked in and other social tools
 - Job hunting and networking advice
 - Training on interviews/assessment centres/remote interviews/example interview questions – you may be asked/you could ask
 - Access to career counselling (and perhaps links to local/national recruitment firms to aid job search)
 - Psychometric tests for career advice or practice
 - 'Skill pills' i.e. Videos on positivity, resilience, filling in applications etc
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The business case

Message board

(moderated)

This could be really valuable for those affected to encourage and care for each other.

Feedback and exit survey

A well executed, on brand online exit interview can be a powerful tool in your engagement armoury. For the departing employee it gives them the chance to offer constructive feedback and a sense of closure – and the courtesy of having been listened to as an individual. For the organisation it can be even more valuable. At the very least it can provide an opportunity to uncover health and safety or whistleblowing issues (it happens) but building from there it proves you are listening. And the right questions (what works well here, what's not so great) reveal what really goes on inside the organisation – you can dig into any potential disconnects. You might assert that, for example, 'We have a great one team culture' or 'Our investment in Training and Development is second to none' but that may not be the true reality after all, and for unwanted attrition, things like why are you leaving, is there anything we can do to keep you, how long have you been looking elsewhere?

You can also generate market intelligence on the offer and salaries of competitors. And, more significantly, it can turn departing employees into corporate ambassadors for years to come – they will refer friends to you and may even wish to return themselves.

The business case

Analysis of the data trends – by team, role, location, length of service – can also reveal where you may need to take remedial action to improve the employment experience of your current staff. And that's the key, 90% of what you do and ask in an exit interview is with the current staff in mind. And that makes it an investment worth making.

It's not just about doing the right thing however. The financial consideration is also key.

- You may well want to rehire the staff leaving you in the not too distant future. They can return having been well treated and will be effective much more quickly given their knowledge of your culture and systems. Ask them to put their CV in your talent pool and it won't cost you a penny in advertising to hire. Get it right and you can also use them as powerful referrers within their existing and new networks.
 - The online exit interview will give you powerful information about the employment experience you deliver – and recommendations on how to improve it as well as your products, services and more.
 - Your managers and remaining staff will feel reassured, trusting and engaged – which has to be better than the alternative in each case.
 - Your improved employer reputation will make hiring easier in the future. A bad reputation always means fewer quality applications and paying higher salaries for mediocre candidates.
 - And if you are the CEO or the HRD you'll sleep at night. Which isn't strictly financial but you'd pay good money to be able to do so.
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Cost model

It's an investment not a cost is the first thing we'd say. We'll quote transparent, no more than costs dependent upon your exact requirements. We'd scope, design, build, host and manage the site in your brand and with your authentic tone of voice. And we can do it very quickly so it's ready now for when you need it.





Thank you

Thank you for taking the time to consider this short document. We hope it's proved useful at this time. If we can help in any way please do let us know.

0117 300 3000 | hello@wearedna.co.uk | www.wearedna.co.uk