

When HR MEETS MARKETING

Collaboration is the name of the game if you want to excel.



Dr M Amr Sadik

The aim of marketing is to know and understand the customer so well the product or service fits him and sells itself." Peter Drucker

I'm always fascinated by those creative marketing ads we see on TV or along the roads. If they're good and attractive, they persuade you to go and buy the product. That is what marketing does, not only sponsoring musical and sports events and much more to let the mob focus on organizational activities. All such activities are targeting current and future customers to the organisation.

Having said so, I think we will notice great similarities between the Marketing and HR disciplines, from which HR practitioners can learn

and can implement. It's called Branding. This concept is one of the hot phrases at the moment in contemporary HR issues.

There are many benefits to be gained if HR and Marketing practitioners get engaged in more effective execution, higher productivity and innovation in the work they do.

Yet, the majority of us continue to work predominantly in silos. But the world of work has changed.

Hiring of highly qualified and skilled people became the top concern amongst CEOs, thus employer branding is fast becoming a critical strategy to address current and future skills shortages.

With less than 20% of organisations having an employer branding strategy and only 30% of companies with teams of two or more departments responsible for managing the employer brand, we see a huge opportunity for Marketing and HR executives to collaborate on this critical issue.

But maybe you're still not convinced that there are great similarities between both, so let me explain further.

What are the marketing activities?

Marketing consists of the strategies and tactics used to identify, create and maintain satisfying relationships with customers that result in value for both the customer and the organisation and is also responsible for most tasks that bring revenue and profits. And as Peter Drucker said, "The purpose of a business is to create customers". In doing so, Marketing creates customer loyalty programmes, creates new brands and may celebrate success with regular customers.

The American Marketing Association defines Marketing as: "Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large".

What does this mean to HR?

It means that marketing encompasses everything you have to do in coming up with a needed product or service, making potential customers aware of it, making them want it, and then selling it to them. It is therefore their responsibility to:

- Focus on the customer;
- Monitor the competition;
- Own the brand;
- Create new ideas;

- Communicate internally as well as externally; and
- Set the strategy, plan the attack, and execute.

What are the Human Resources activities?

The Human Resources Department deals with management of people within the organisation. They create policies and procedures, systems and programmes in order to attract potential employees, hire and retain them and ensure that they perform to expectation. In addition, they are also responsible for developing and implementing incentive and rewards programmes for exceptional performers.

Having defined the activities of both functions, let us now illustrate the similarities between them and the mindset in dealing with their own customers in the table below.

Is the below table a good metaphor? We can still go on and on.

Today, in such an extraordinary business climate, if HR and Marketing meets together, we can ensure better HR communication, positive image, good staff recruitment, and much more.

Finally, having a good understanding of marketing can help HR practitioners to better promote the services of the HR department to line managers, executives and employees internally and externally. Moreover, since marketing, like HR, concentrates on the people side of the business both disciplines therefore have strong connections with psychology and sociology. ■

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Mindset

	MARKETING	HUMAN RESOURCES
1. Portfolio	Track effectiveness of marketing programmes versus business goals.	Track effectiveness of staff and rewards strategies versus business goals.
2. Customer	Zero churn and higher return of customers.	High stability and minimum turnover rates.
3. Communication	Customers know what we are doing and why it matters.	Employees know what you're doing and why it matters.
4. Sales	Arm sales with tools, information and messages to sell products and services.	Arm leaders with tools, information and messages to make better talent decisions.
5. Loyalty	Programmes that appreciate loyalty of customers to your organisations, with the aim to retain them?	Programmes that appreciate loyalty of employees to your organisations, with the aim of retaining them.
6. Brand Creation	To attract potential customers.	To attract potential employees.
7. Customer Satisfaction	This is the state of mind that customers have about a company when their expectations have been met or exceeded by the product or service. The achievement of customer satisfaction leads to company loyalty and product repurchase.	This is the state of mind that employees have about a company when their needs/expectations have been met or exceeded over the service. The achievement of employee satisfaction leads to company loyalty and service improvement.
8. Types of Customer	External	External and Internal