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1. Talent Branding: Major HCI Research Report: The Branding Imperative In Talent Management

HCI White Papers & Case Studies reflect the issues, ideas and business priorities of crucial importance to forward looking Executives and Talent Management professionals, about the one remaining lever for sustainable competitive advantage: Strategic Human Capital & Talent Management

1. Talent Branding: [The Branding Imperative in Talent Management](#)

Executive Summary

Borrowing from the concepts of product and trademark brands, the talent brand is a relatively new idea. It represents the image and, hopefully, the reality of an organization's combination of culture, reputation, products and services, as well as the way the organization deals with and values its workers. In sum, the talent brand is what differentiates an organization as a good (or not so good) place to work for both potential and current employees.

In this research study, we looked at several key aspects of the talent branding concept:

1. How important is the talent brand to workers' decisions to join or stay with an organization?
2. What are the key elements of an effective talent brand?
3. Do organizations effectively use on-boarding as a way to create the talent brand?
4. Do organizations manage important transition periods in the lives of workers to effectively create and communicate the talent brand?

We discovered that, regardless of the size of an organization or the type of industry in which it is involved, there are common features to those organizations whose talent brand results in workers wanting to join and remain with a firm. These critical factors can be summarized as:

- Creating processes that onboard workers for fast socialization and time to productivity
- Creating processes that support workers in their jobs and during transitions
- Creating processes that engage workers with their organization in ways that make them their organizations' best recruiters.
- And these processes must lead to concrete results!

The most important finding of this research is that creating an organizational vision or designing formal talent management processes will not create a positive image or talent brand in the minds of workers. That will only be accomplished if the vision and formal processes are translated into actual results that lead to a better work environment.

We are all experiencing economic turbulence, and none of us have a crystal ball to announce with any certainty how long it will last. However, we do know that when the storm subsides, your strong performers will have a range of options available to them. Energizing, aligning, and retaining your critical talent is the necessary path to ongoing business success.

The Branding
Imperative in

Talent Management

A report by the Human Capital Institute
and SilkRoad technology

May 2008



The Branding Imperative in Talent Management

Executive Summary

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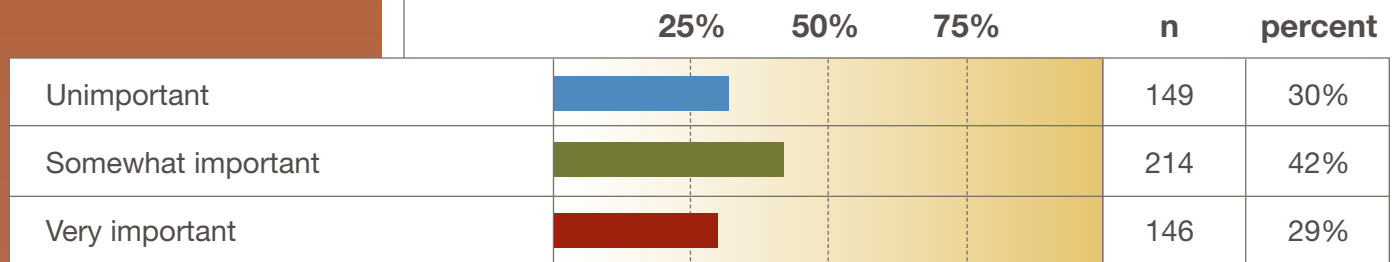
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The Branding Imperative in Talent Management

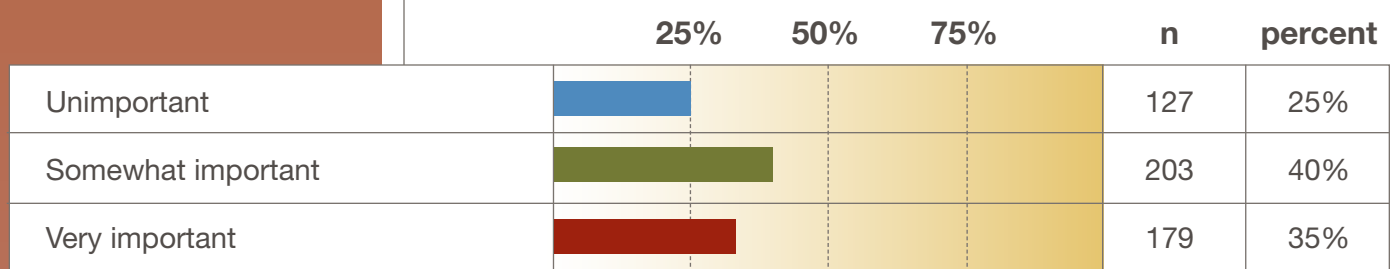
Part I: The Importance and Elements of the Talent Brand – The Workers’ View

An organization’s talent brand is critical to both talent acquisition and retention. The first fact is highlighted in **Figure 1**, which shows that 71% of our survey respondents viewed the talent brand as either “somewhat important” or “very important” in their decision to join their organization. Once they have a job, their decision to stay is also heavily influenced by their organization’s talent brand—with a full 75% of respondents stating that their organization’s talent brand is somewhat or very important in their decision to stay. In addition, respondents see the importance of talent branding beyond their own personal decisions to join or stay with an organization. They recognize it as an important factor in the organization’s effort to attract and retain other top talent (see **Figure 2**).

Figure 1*
When you joined your current and previous organizations, how important was the image or brand of that organization in your decision to join?



How important is your current employer’s image or brand in your decision to stay with the organization?



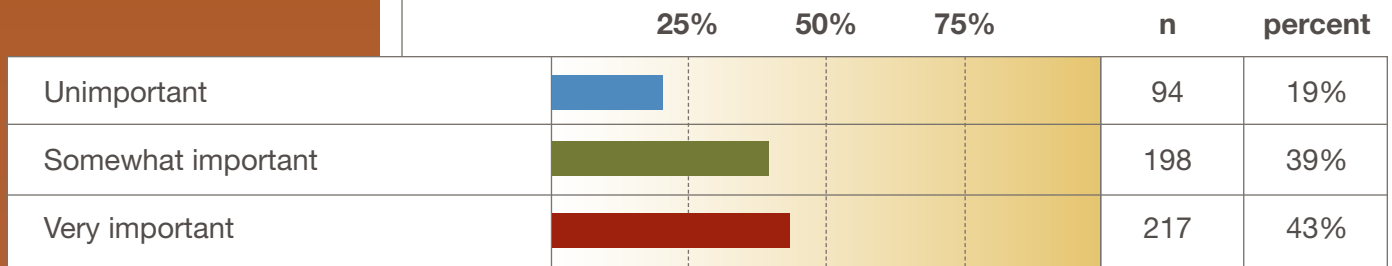
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* Due to rounding, figures in these and other charts in this study may not add to 100%.

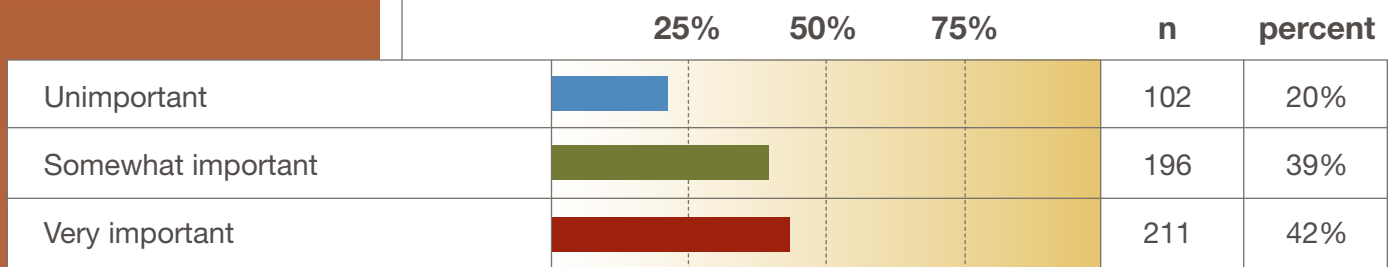
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Figure 2

In your current organization, how important do you think its image or brand is in attracting top talent?



In your current organization, how important do you think its image or brand is in retaining top talent?



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But what do workers mean when they say that their organization has a positive talent brand? To explore this question, we asked respondents to score their organizations on a set of specific factors that we considered related to the talent brand:

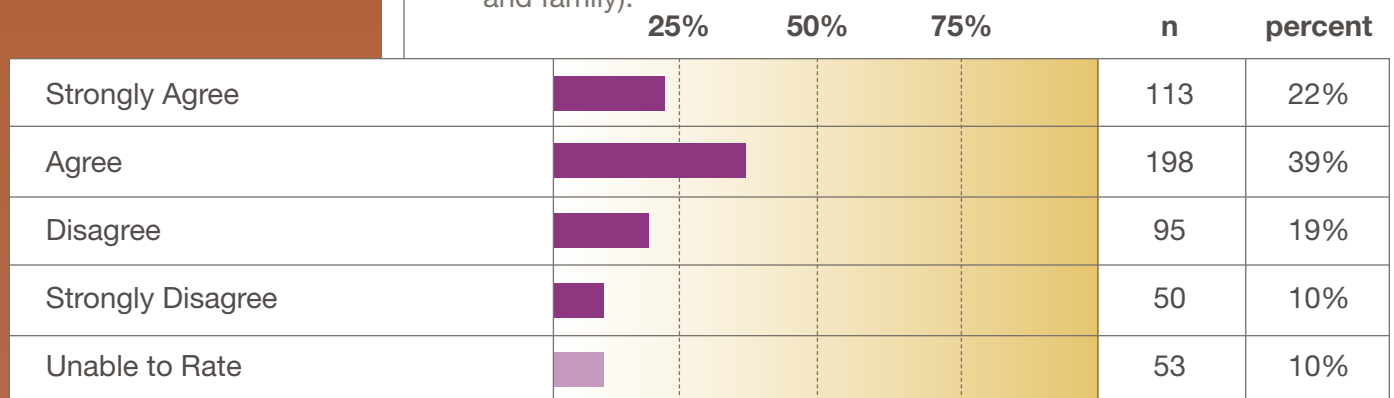
- > Current employees are one of the best sources of finding new talent—e.g., their positive image of their organization makes them a willing source of referrals.
- > In general, they see their fellow workers as being highly engaged and productive.
- > They believe that their organization’s talent retention is better than the industry average.

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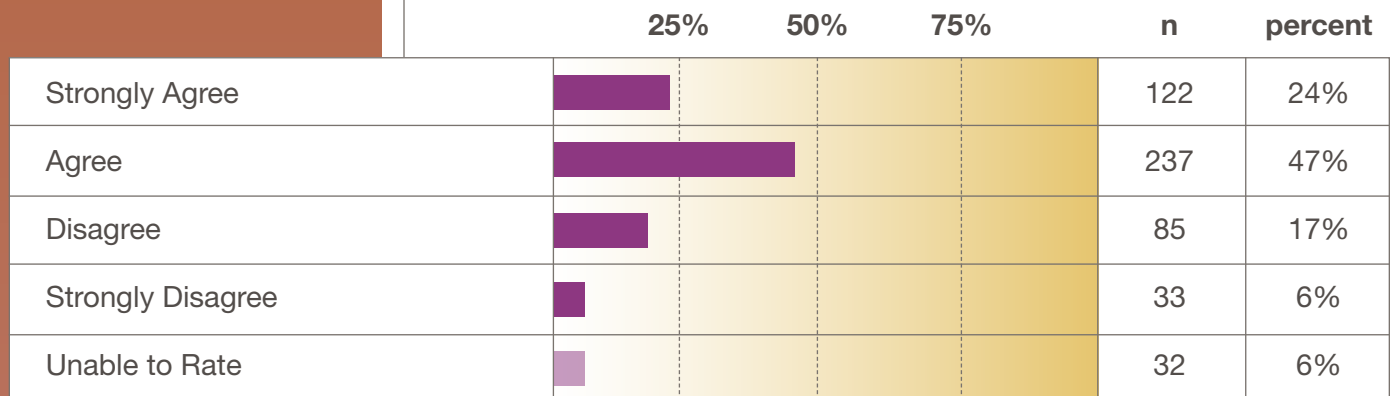
Figure 3 summarizes our participants' views of how well their organizations meet the above criteria. Clearly, a majority of respondents see their organizations and fellow workers in a positive light – with 61% agreeing to some degree that current employee referrals are the most important source of new talent, and that their fellow workers are generally engaged and productive. However, there is room for improvement in all the criteria – most notably, in how they see their organizations' retention rate as compared to the industry average (i.e., only 50% agree or strongly agree that their organizations are better at retention than the industry average).

Figure 3

In my organization, current employees are one of the best sources of finding new talent (i.e., they recommend the organization to friends and family).



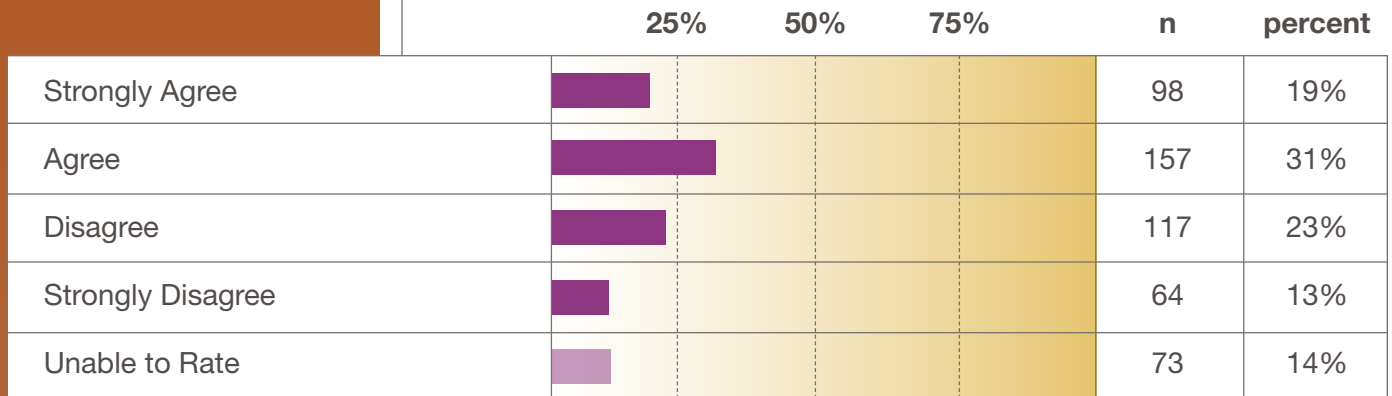
In my organization, employees are generally highly engaged and productive.



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In my organization, talent retention is better than the industry average.



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It is important to note that we chose the above criteria because we see them as important measures, or correlated factors, of a successful talent brand—not necessarily because we believe that workers equate them with talent branding. In fact, workers are very clear about what makes for a positive talent brand in their minds: good compensation and work/life balance! This result was expressed in several ways. For example, when asked to rank five factors in importance when deciding whether to stay with an organization, only two, compensation and work/life balance, were chosen first or second by more than 30% of respondents—with 64% of respondents selecting compensation as one of the two most important factors and 55% choosing work/life balance.¹

Even more directly, we asked respondents to choose, from a list of 10 factors, the two that they considered the most important elements for an organization’s talent brand. “Better than average compensation” and “excellent work/life balance” finished in a near dead heat, closely followed by being an organization “known to genuinely care about its employees.” See **Figure 4**. Finally, when asked in open-ended questions to produce their own lists of the most important elements for a top talent brand, some form of compensation and work/life balance were again selected as the two most important elements by a majority of respondents.

1. Investment in training and development, a clear career path, and the overall image and brand of the organization were the other three factors that respondents chose from when deciding what the most important factors were for them in deciding to stay with an organization.

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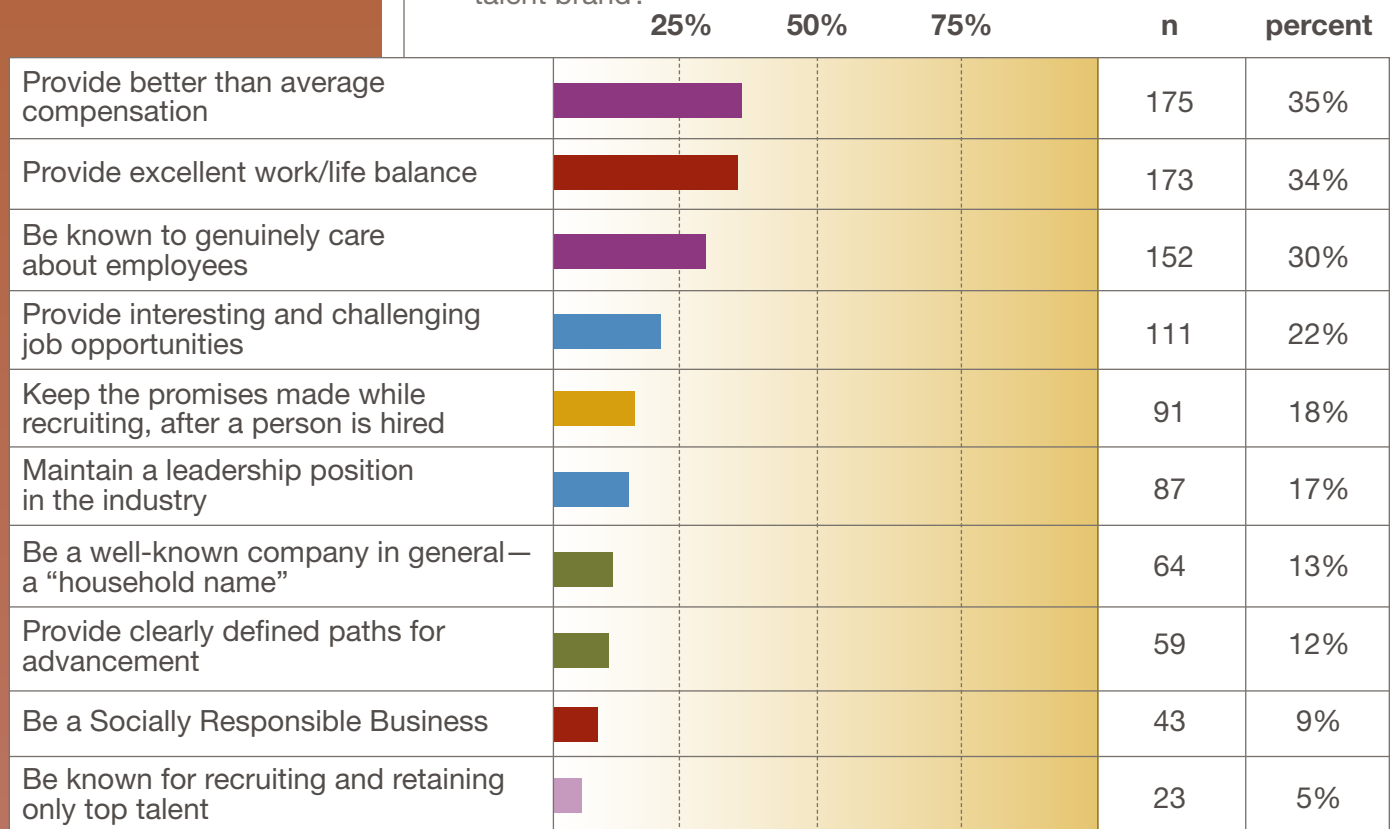
What is Work/Life Balance?

While compensation is a fairly easy factor to understand—workers want to be paid a fair wage given their industry, cost of living and the job that they do—work/life balance is a complex factor that can mean different things to different people. When allowed to express their opinions in their own words, in response to open-ended questions on the elements of talent branding, the opinions of what constituted excellent work/life balance included such things as:

- > “Truly care about current employees.”
- > “Keep the promises made while recruiting, after a person is hired. Be known to genuinely care about employees.”
- > “The ability to be flexible on a weekly basis due to changing circumstances.”
- > “Family-oriented”

Figure 4

What do you consider the top two elements of an organization’s talent brand?



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Part II: The Importance of Onboarding in Establishing the Talent Brand

If an organization's talent brand is going to improve retention, and not just talent acquisition, then the positive effect should begin early in a worker's tenure with an organization—e.g., during the first few days, weeks, or months that, for most organizations, are the time of the formal or informal onboarding process. According to our survey, 62% of organizations have a formal process, while 15% of respondents stated that their organization has no formal process. Surprisingly, another 23% of respondents stated that they were unsure about whether their organization had a formal onboarding process—which, at the very least, speaks to a lack of intra-organization communication of policies and programs.

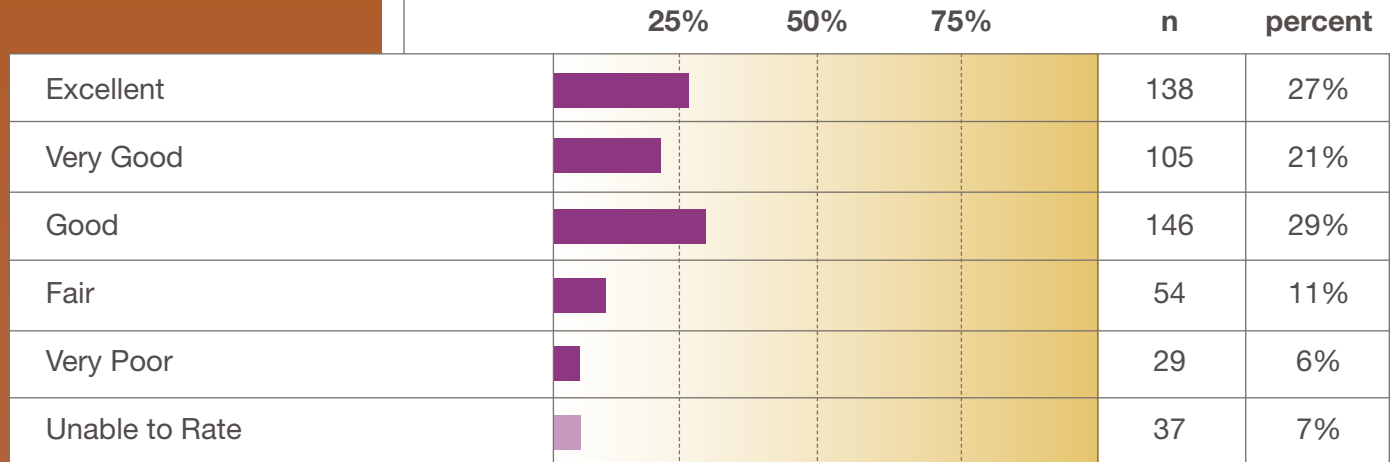
Among those organizations that do have a formal onboarding process, 42% of these programs last less than one week and another 24% last 30 days or less. Only 35% of onboarding processes last longer than 30 days—with only 13% lasting longer than the 90 days that many experts consider the optimum length for an effective program. Among those respondents whose organizations do have a formal process, the survey showed a clear satisfaction with the process. Specifically, we asked respondents to rate their organization's onboarding process from very poor to excellent for five key aspects of the process:

- > Making new hires feel welcome
- > Connecting new hires to others quickly and proactively
- > Making it easy for new hires to ask for and find the resources they need
- > Proactively assisting new hires to be productive quickly
- > Showing workers the link between their actions and the company's success.

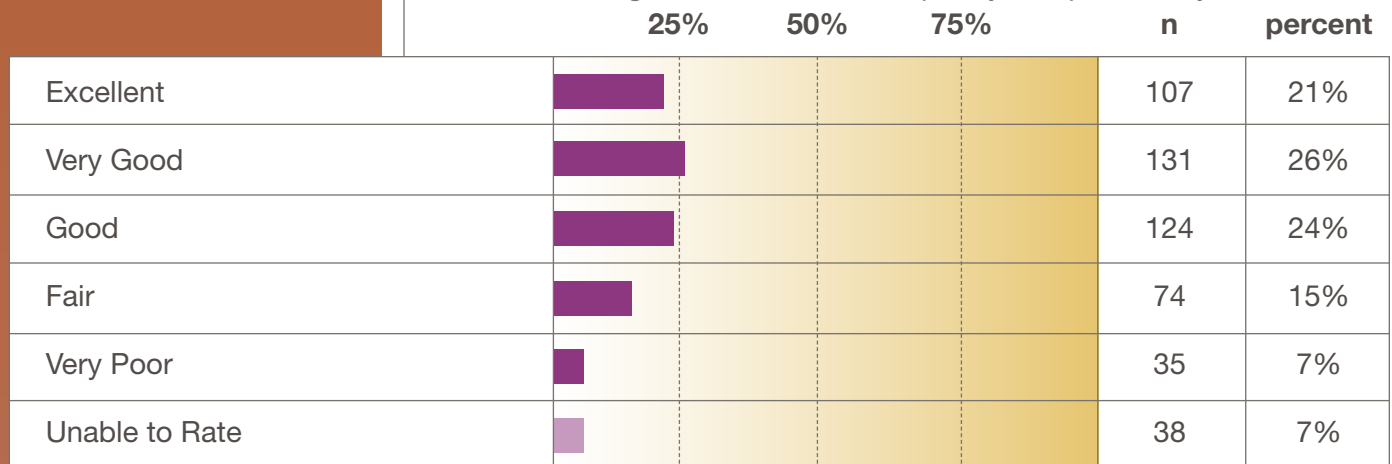
The respondents' opinions of how well their organizations perform against the above tasks are shown in **Figure 5**. Between 70% and 80% of respondents felt their organizations' success at the above tasks ranged from good to excellent. Interestingly, this range is larger than the 62% of respondents who knew that their organization had a formal onboarding process—meaning that many people felt that their organizations were good at these tasks even without a formal process.

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Figure 5
Effectiveness of Onboarding Process
Making new hires feel welcome



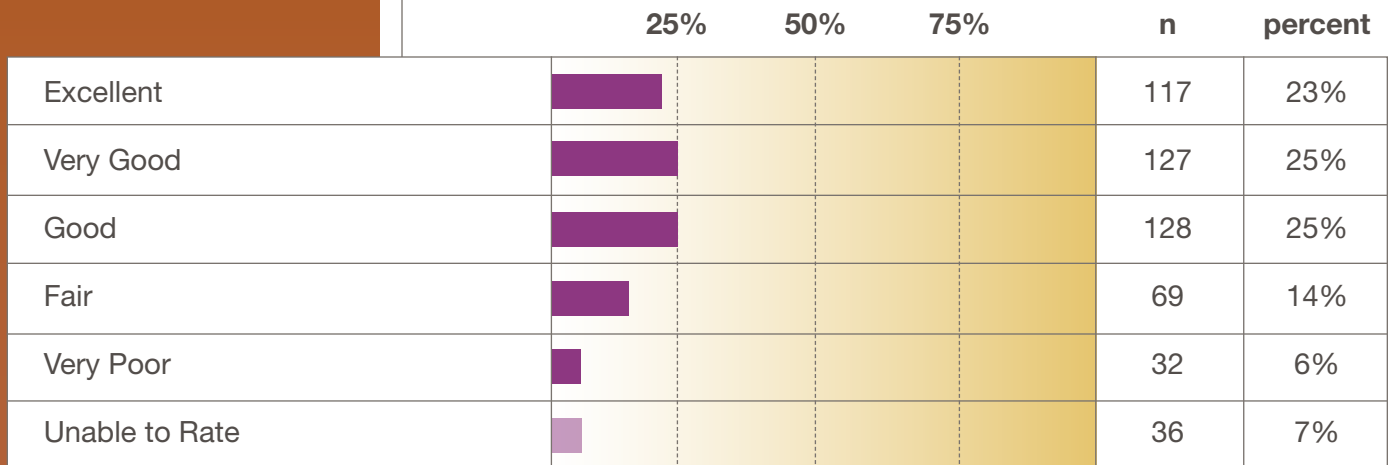
Connecting new hires to others quickly and proactively



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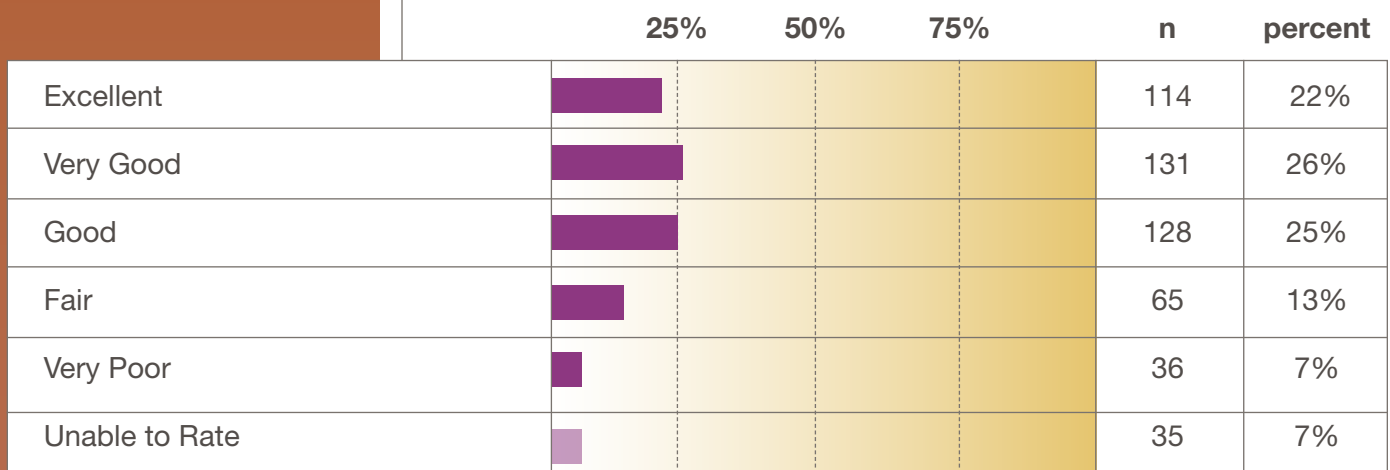
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Making it easy for new hires to ask for and find the resources they need



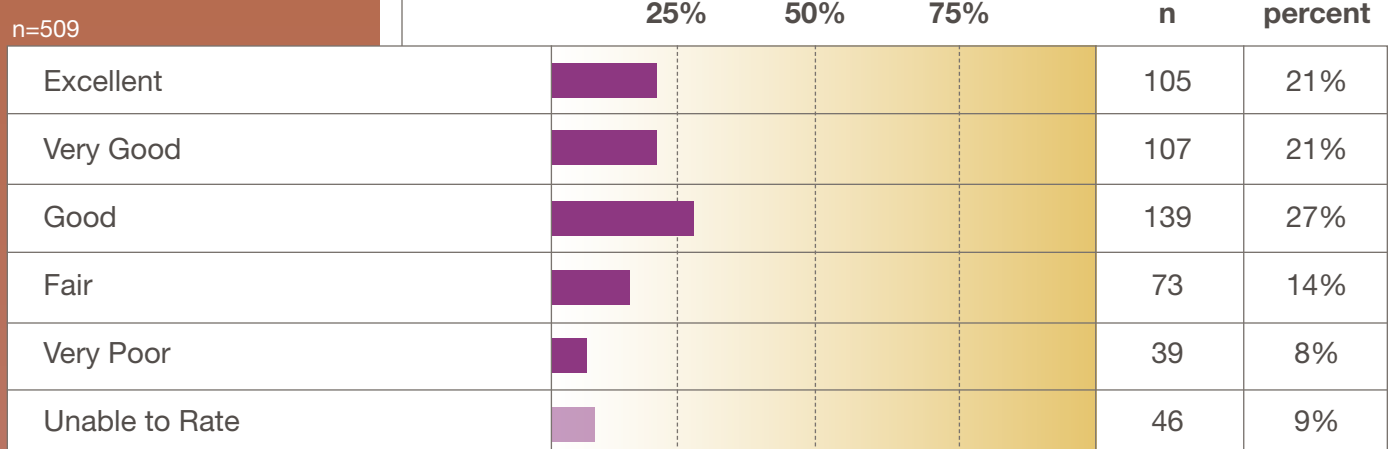
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Proactively assisting new hires to be productive quickly



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Showing employees the link between their actions and the company's success



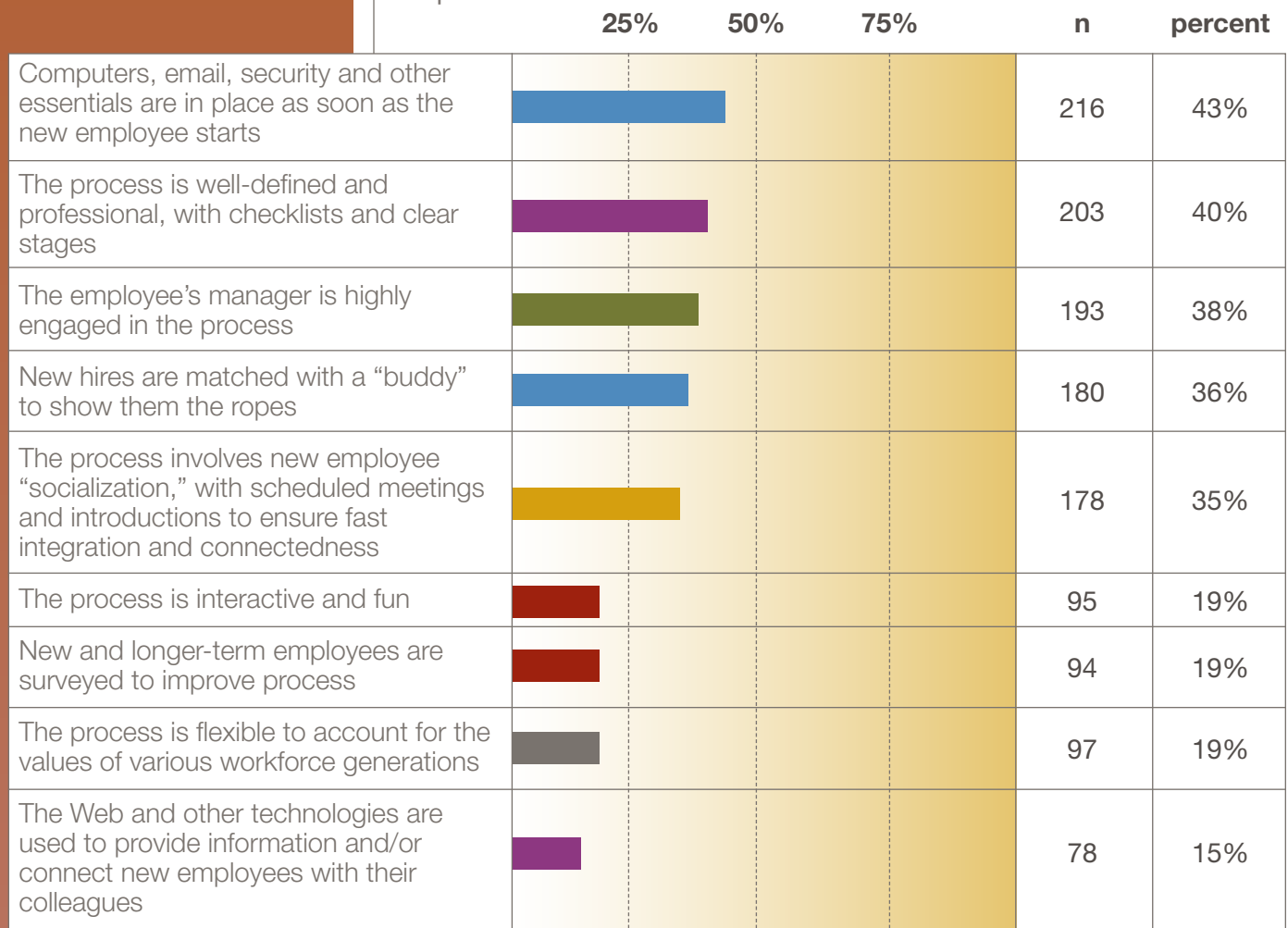
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The above describes the results of a good onboarding process— formal or informal. However, it does not explain *how* those results are achieved. To understand that, we asked respondents to choose what they saw as the three most important elements of their organization’s onboarding process. As **Figure 6** shows, there are many important elements to an effective process—but the three that stand out are:

- > Providing the necessary tools (computers, emails, etc.) for new hires to start their jobs
- > A well-defined, professional, and easily understood process
- > Active engagement by the new hire’s manager in the process.

Figure 6
The 3 most important elements of the organization’s onboarding process



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While the above results show that many organizations may be doing an excellent job of integrating new hires, it is not as clear how these results are related to an organization's talent brand. In other words, do the effective onboarding processes outlined above create a positive image or brand in the minds of these workers? Or, are onboarding and talent branding related but ultimately separate processes?

At first glance, the results would seem to favor an affirmative answer to a causal link between onboarding and talent branding. For example, the 70% to 80% of respondents who felt that their organization was good to excellent at achieving the key onboarding tasks matches the 75% of workers who see their organization's talent brand as being somewhat or very important in their decision to stay (see above). However, similar results among talent branding and onboarding do not prove that one causes the other. In fact, it is entirely possible that people can feel happy with the way they were integrated into the organization (onboarding) *without* viewing the talent brand as important.

To explore the above topic, we conducted a more in-depth analysis of the relationship between the respondents' views on talent branding and onboarding. The first question we explored was, "Do the same people who say that their organization has a positive talent brand also believe that it has an effective onboarding process?" To answer this question, we looked for statistically significant correlations between the four criteria that we identified as being part of a positive talent brand (the statements in **red** in **Appendix One, Table 2**) and the indicators of an effective onboarding process (the statements in **green**, **Appendix One, Table 2**). The results show that respondents who believed that their organization had a positive talent brand also believed that it had a very effective onboarding process—as indicated by the highly significant correlations among all the talent branding and onboarding criteria.

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The fact that our talent branding and onboarding variables are highly related (correlated) is interesting, if not surprising: Organizations good at one talent management tool (talent branding) might also be good at using other tools (e.g, onboarding). However, these same high correlations can make it difficult to fully understand the survey results. Specifically, here are the facts we really want to know:

1. Are there underlying beliefs or concerns among workers that drive their responses to the survey and, therefore, to their opinions on the importance of talent branding?
2. Which factors are *most important* in determining workers' opinions of their organization's talent branding?

The first question is best answered by determining the underlying factors that caused workers to respond to all the questions they way they did. We did this through factor analysis, a method by which the pattern of variation and covariation² among the responses is used to group various questions together into natural groups or components. These factor components are very powerful methods for shrinking the number of variables to a more manageable level. More importantly, these groupings often allow us to see patterns in the results that are obscured by the sheer number of original variables. In other words, they allow us to identify new, previously unnamed variables that underlie and drive the variables in our survey.

We performed a factor analysis on 13 survey questions: 6 dealing with talent branding and 7 with onboarding. We were able to group all 13 of the original questions into one of 4 components that explained 73.4% of the variation in worker responses; this is a very high level of explanation. The results are summarized in **Appendix One, Table 3**, which shows how much the original questions contribute to each of the four groups.

2. Variation can be thought of as the range of answers, among all workers, for each question. Covariation is the way that answers to different questions were similar or dissimilar.

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The results of the factor analysis are striking:

Factor 1 is made up primarily of the responses for the questions designed to gauge *the results of onboarding* (numbers in blue). However, it *does not include* the response to the question of whether the organization actually has a formal onboarding process. The clear implication is that there is an underlying variable that depends on how well organizations integrate new hires into the organization—and this does not matter if the process is formal, informal, or even called “onboarding.” This factor can be treated as a new variable that we will call “**Helping New Hires.**”

Factor 2 is made up primarily of the four questions related to *the results of a talent branding process* (numbers in orange), with only a small contribution by the question related to whether the organization has a clear vision that differentiates it from its competitors. As with **Factor 1**, this new variable focuses on results—it is not very important in this group whether the organization has a “talent branding process.” What matters is that respondents see the positive results that we believe should come from a positive talent brand. We can call this variable, “**Engaged Workers.**”

Factor 3 links talent branding and the onboarding process and is primarily made up of the three questions (numbers in violet) that are arguably related to the organization’s attempts to *create formal processes*, strategies and/or vision related to creating an integrated, formalized talent management process. We will call this new variable, “**Formal Process.**”

Factor 4 is essentially identical to the original question, asking respondents to describe the length of their organization’s onboarding process (number in pink)—the “**Length of Onboarding**” variable.

Interestingly, of all the original variables, only one is important to more than one factor. The question dealing with whether an organization has a vision that differentiates it from competitors is equally important to the Engaged Workers and Formal Process variables—indicating that creating a clear vision for the talent brand may be an important method of linking strategy and action.

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3. For this analysis, we used the three new variables identified in the factor analysis as the independent variables in four separate multiple linear regression models, in which the dependent variables were the four following survey questions:

- When you joined your current and previous organizations, how important was the image or brand of that organization in your decision to join?
- How important is your current employer's image or brand in your decision to stay with the organization?
- In your current organization, how important do you think its image or brand is in attracting top talent?
- In your current organization, how important do you think its image or brand is in retaining top talent?

4. Results were similar for the regressions models in which one of the other (of four) talent branding questions above was used as the dependent variable.

The previous analysis provides us with a powerful look at the underlying organizational actions that drive worker satisfaction and belief in a positive talent brand. However, it does not tell us which factor is most important in determining how effective a positive talent brand is in the acquisition and retention of talent. To study this question we used another analytical tool, multiple linear regression, to determine how important the new variables are in linking talent branding with talent acquisition and retention. **Appendix One, Table 4** summarizes the results of one specific analysis.³

The key numbers in **Appendix One, Table 4** are the Standardized Betas. These numbers are scaled on a range of -1 to +1 and the absolute value of the number (i.e., the closer it is to -1 or +1) is a measure of the relative importance of each of our new variables in explaining the importance of the image or brand of an organization in workers making a decision to stay at an organization.

The results are clear: Helping new workers integrate into an organization is the single most important factor linking an organization's talent brand and talent retention.

However, this factor is followed closely by the *Engaged Workers* variable that is made up of the factors we chose as critical results of an organization having a strong positive image with its potential and current workers. A critical result of this analysis is that neither of the other variables from our factor analysis, the formality/vision of the process nor the length of onboarding, are significant factors in determining if a positive talent brand will result in increased talent retention.⁴ Put simply, the above results point to two important conclusions:

- Some organizations are better at developing formal processes and visions related to talent branding and onboarding than they are at delivering the results expected from these processes.
- The average worker cares about how well organizations deliver on the promises of an image, vision or process, but not the formality behind the image or process.

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Part III: Personal & Professional Transitions— Key Times for the Talent Brand

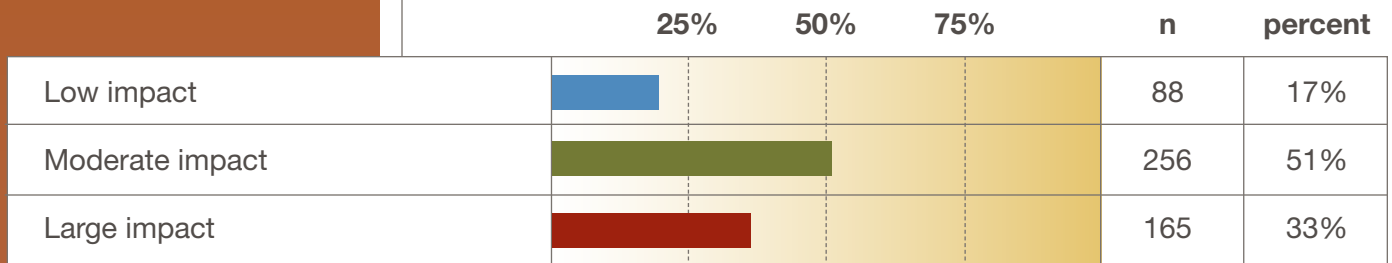
Nothing can create goodwill (or ill will) between an employer and its workers more quickly than how people are treated during times of professional and personal transitions. These can include changes in duties or relocations, as well as personal issues such as maternity/paternity responsibilities and family illness. It would seem obvious that those organizations with a positive talent brand (among current workers) would also be the ones that deal with these transitions better than the average organization. To put it another way, organizations should be able to create a positive talent brand, in part, by implementing worker-friendly processes to deal with major work/life transitions.

Not surprisingly, support during professional and personal transitions is important to workers. This is clear from **Figure 7**, which shows that 84% and 83% of respondents believed the success or failure of their organization to support them through professional or personal transitions, respectively, had a moderate to large impact on their work. The results show that organizations have room for improvement in this critical area of talent management. For example, only 58% of respondents felt that their organization does a good, very good or excellent job at helping them through professional transitions (see **Figure 7C**)—not disastrous, but far short of the 70%–80% positive response for our organizations' talent branding and onboarding processes. It appears that many organizations are better at providing support for personal, rather than professional transitions, with 66% of survey participants stating that the support they received for these types of life changes ranged from good to excellent (see **Figure 7D**).

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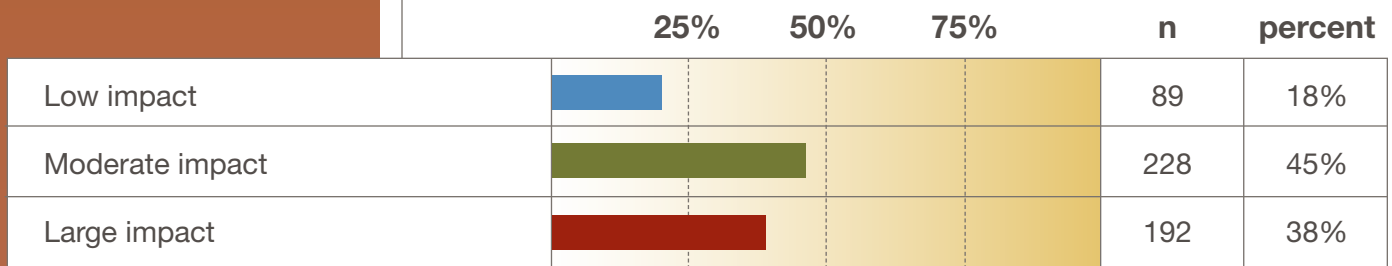
Figure 7
How well do organizations deal with transitions?

A. What impact did the success or failure of your organization to provide support during professional transitions have on your work (or your attitude toward your employer)?



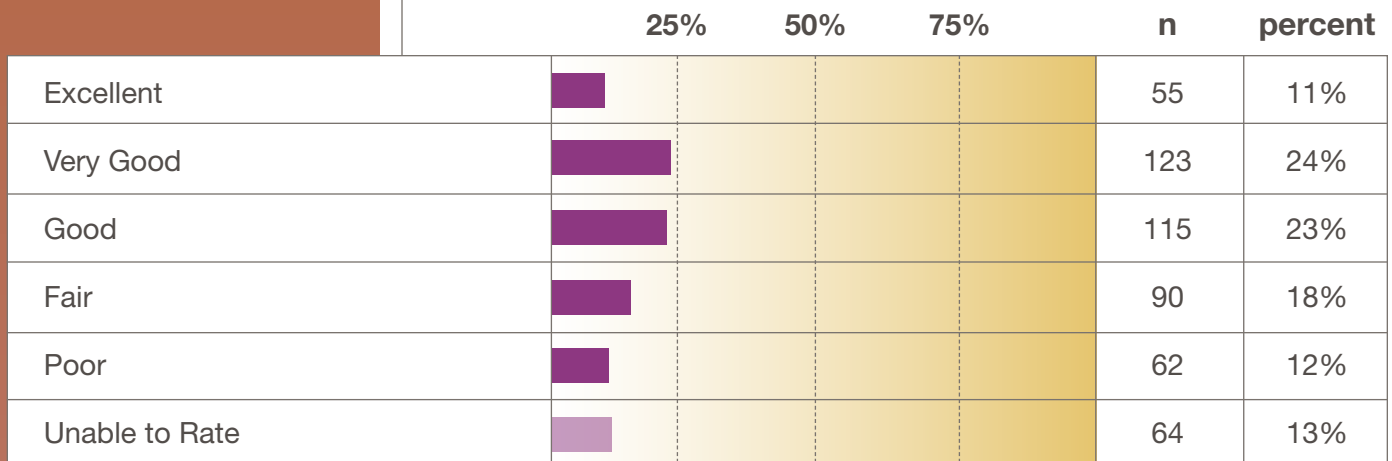
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B. What impact did the success or failure of your organization to provide support during personal transitions have on your work (or your attitude toward your employer)?



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C. How well does your organization support employees through major professional transitions (e.g., onboarding, promotions, transfers, relocations, foreign assignments, repatriations, etc.)?



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D. How well does your organization support employees through major personal transitions (e.g., maternity, illness, divorce, death of a loved one, caregiving responsibilities, family emergencies, etc.)?

	25%	50%	75%	n	percent
Excellent				106	21%
Very Good				119	23%
Good				111	22%
Fair				78	15%
Poor				59	12%
Unable to Rate				36	7%

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However, the same questions we asked related to the relationship between talent branding and onboarding can and should be asked for how organizations support workers during transitions. Namely, how important is organizational support during periods of transitions to the creation of a positive talent brand? To answer this question we repeated the factor and regression analysis described above with the addition of the four transition-specific questions. Accordingly, this analysis included 6 talent branding variables, 7 onboarding variables, and 4 transitions variables. **Appendix Two, Table 5** shows the results of this new factor analysis.⁵

The results were very similar to our initial factor analysis, with two important additions:

- 1) The two questions dealing with *how well* an organization deals with professional or personal transitions became part of the **“Helping New Workers”** variable. Since these two questions dealt with both new and established workers, it leads us to rethink the definition we gave the variable. Perhaps the more useful way to think of this is the **“Supporting Workers”** variable—expressed, in our survey, both in the way new hires are integrated into the organization and by how well all workers are supported in times of transition.

5. The addition of the four transition-specific variables resulted in the creation of 5 new factor components, instead of the 4 components seen in the original factor analysis. Together, these 5 components explain 73% of the variation seen in the original 17 questions.

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2) The creation of a new variable that includes only the two questions gauging the impact of organizational support on workers' attitudes toward their work (i.e., Factor 3 [in plum] in Appendix Two, Table 5 or the "Impact of Support" variable).

One of the surprising results of this entire study is this disconnect between how workers view the ability of their organization to provide support during transitions and the impact that this support has on their attitude toward their work. This is clearly an issue worth more study.

Finally, to determine the relative importance of support during transitions in linking talent branding and talent retention, we repeated our multiple regression analysis—this time using all five new variables (including the newly renamed variable, *Supporting Workers*, and the new variable, *Impact of Support*). The results of this analysis are shown in Appendix Two, Table 6.

The addition of the four questions focusing on support (and impact of that support) during periods of professional and personal transitions reinforces our earlier results. Namely, *the factors associated with how well organizations deliver on producing a positive image, integrating new hires, and supporting workers are all important to whether workers see a positive talent brand as an important factor in staying with their organization* (although it is important to note that the variable dealing with the impact of organizational support is a distant third in its relative importance). In contrast, simply putting a formal process in place, regardless of the good intentions behind it, is not enough.

The Branding Imperative in Talent Management

Conclusions: Tying it Together—The Relationship Between the Talent Brand & Good Talent Management Practices

In order to tie the above results together, we conducted a cluster analysis designed to discover if the respondents' answers to the survey questions divided them into groups. In fact, the results of that analysis provide us with a good take-home message for this study. **Table 1** shows how the 500+ respondents can be divided into three distinct groups.⁶ **Figure 8** shows how these clusters can be identified—the height of each bar represents the number of individuals within each cluster who believe that their organization's talent brand is an unimportant, somewhat important or very important factor in their decision to stay with their job.

It is clear that Cluster 1 represents those workers with a mostly negative to moderately positive view of their organization's talent brand, onboarding and support. Cluster 2 are those people with a mostly positive view, and Cluster 3 are those with a mixed opinion. In fact, almost identical charts can be produced when the responses of the three clusters are compared for all the survey questions—regardless of whether the question is dealing with talent branding, onboarding or transitions. Approximately one quarter of our survey respondents have a negative or only moderately positive view of their organization and, *as many of the comments to open ended questions reflect, many in this group would leave if there were other, better opportunities.*

Among these organizations are ones who have either tried, and failed, or not tried to implement processes to engage their workers. In contrast, approximately one third of respondents tended to be happy with the image of their organization and how that image is put into action as far as integrating new hires and supporting all employees. Obviously, these are the organizations that “get it” and are implementing more modern and effective talent management processes. However, the biggest group represents those organizations that are doing some things right and other things wrong—the organizations that have much room for improvement but, at least, seem to be trying.

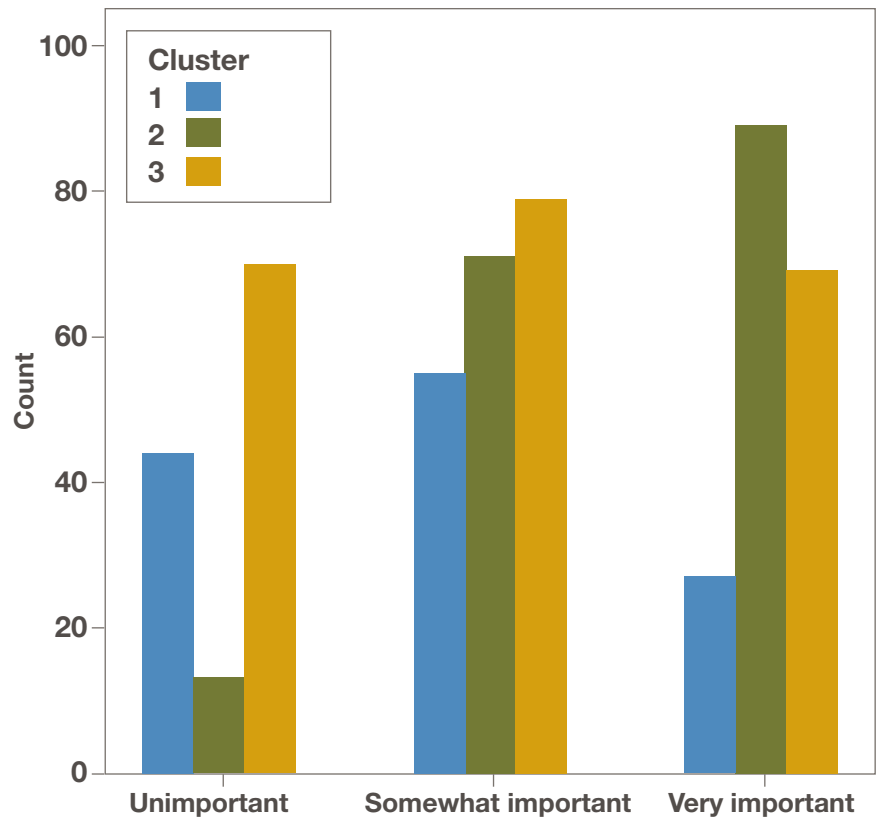
6. Strictly speaking, “Cluster 3” is not a cluster but represents all the individual respondents who could not be divided into the “Predominately Positive Answer” group or the “Predominately Negative Answer” group. In other words, this group represents those individuals who gave a mixed set of responses to the various questions on talent branding, onboarding, and transition support—indicating that their organizations were more variable in how well they created positive images and followed through on producing positive results.

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Table 1
Cluster Distribution

Cluster	Number of Respondents	% of Total
1 (Negative)	126	24%
2 (Positive)	173	34%
3 (Mixed)	218	42%

Figure 8
How important is your current employer's image or brand in your decision to stay with the organization?



Variation in Importance of Talent Brand for Retention Among the 3 Respondent Clusters: 1 = Mostly Negative; 2 = Mostly Positive; 3 = Mixed Opinions

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Finally, it is important to note that all of the analysis in this study was conducted not only for the entire group of respondents, but also for groups of respondents divided by industry type, function within organization and size of organization (see **Appendix Three, Methodology** section for definitions of those groups). No important differences were observed for the results across these groups. *This means that, regardless of an organization's size or the type of industry it is involved in, there is good reason for it to look at the image—and reality—it is creating among potential and current workers.*

Appendix One

Table 2

Correlations Between Effective Talent Branding and Onboarding Processes

Red=Talent Branding Green=Onboarding	My current organization has a strong, positive image	Current employees are one of the best sources	Employees are generally highly engaged and productive	In my organization, talent retention is better than industry average	Making new hires feel welcome	Connecting new hires to others quickly and proactively	Making it easy for new hires to ask for and find the resources they need	Proactively assisting new hires to be productive quickly	Showing employees the link between their actions and the company's success
My current organization has a strong positive image and brand among its current employees.	1	.620(**)	.598(**)	.594(**)	.520(**)	.536(**)	.501(**)	.548(**)	.500(**)
In my organization, current employees are one of the best sources of finding new talent.		1	.573(**)	.528(**)	.466(**)	.469(**)	.454(**)	.458(**)	.440(**)
In my organization, employees are generally highly engaged and productive.			1	.646(**)	.491(**)	.447(**)	.451(**)	.507(**)	.471(**)
In my organization, talent retention is better than industry average.				1	.462(**)	.468(**)	.449(**)	.463(**)	.451(**)
Making new hires feel welcome					1	.831(**)	.788(**)	.750(**)	.728(**)
Connecting new hires						1	.786(**)	.787(**)	.737(**)
Making it easy for new hires							1	.820(**)	.746(**)
Proactively assisting new hires								1	.788(**)
Showing employees the link									1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

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Table 3

Factor Analysis Results: The larger the absolute value of the number in each box (the closer it is to 1 or -1), the more important it is to the creation of each group.

Red=Talent Branding Green=Onboarding	Factor			
	1	2	3	4
My current organization has a strong, positive image and brand among its current employees.	.362	.775	-.146	-.092
In my organization, current employees are one of the best sources of finding new talent (i.e., they recommend the organization to friends and family).	.307	.738	-.060	.048
In my organization, employees are generally highly engaged and productive.	.270	.801	.012	.141
In my organization, talent retention is better than the industry average.	.207	.810	.029	.047
Does your organization have a clear vision of what differentiates it from competitors as an employer of choice? ⁷	-.186	.443	-.439	.234
Does your organization differentiate between external (potential employees) and internal (current employees) in talent branding?	-.046	.044	-.761	-.240
Does your organization have a formal onboarding process for new hires?	-.025	-.060	-.674	.134
How long does your organization's formal onboarding process last?	.046	.084	-.006	.942
Making new hires feel welcome	.867	.275	-.055	-.057
Connecting new hires to others quickly and proactively	.893	.260	-.049	-.030
Making it easy for new hires to ask for and find the resources they need	.894	.237	-.055	.047
Proactively assisting new hires to be productive quickly	.876	.271	-.059	.069
Showing employees the link between their actions and the company's success	.836	.299	-.064	.049

⁷ The responses to this question were important in determining both factors 2 and 3—indicating that having a clear vision is not only considered part of the formal process of talent branding and onboarding, but also an important component of developing engaged workers through a positive organizational image.

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Dependent Variable: How important is your current employer's image or brand in your decision to stay with the organization?

Regression Model Summary: $R=.422$; model significant at 0.01 level.

Table 4

Results of Multiple Linear Regression of 4 Independent Variables (Helping New Workers, Engaged Workers, Formal Process; Length of Onboarding) on the Dependent Variable: How important is your current employer's image or brand in your decision to stay with the organization?

Independent Variable	Standardized Beta	Significance
Helping New Workers	.304	.000
Engaged Workers	.283	.000
Formal Process	-.071	.179 (not significant)
Length of Onboarding	-.013	.807 (not significant)

Appendix Two

Table 5

Factor Analysis of Talent Branding, Onboarding & Transition Support questions: The larger the absolute value of the number in each box (the closer it is to 1 or -1), the more important it is to the creation of each group.

	Factor				
	1	2	3	4	5
My current organization has a strong, positive image and brand among its current employees.	.395	.747	.023	-.159	-.090
In my organization, current employees are one of the best sources of finding new talent (i.e., they recommend the organization to friends and family).	.333	.710	.048	-.087	.051
In my organization, employees are generally highly engaged and productive.	.304	.775	-.003	.001	.146
In my organization, talent retention is better than the industry average.	.229	.809	-.102	.027	.030
Does your organization have a clear vision of what differentiates it from competitors as an employer of choice?	-.203	-.421	-.106	.440	.184
Does your organization differentiate between external (potential employees) and internal (current employees) in talent branding?	-.041	-.011	.184	.744	-.231
Does your organization have a formal onboarding process for new hires?	-.023	-.032	-.125	.704	.120
How long does your organization's formal onboarding process last?	.063	.072	.008	-.003	.953
Making new hires feel welcome.	.864	.229	.027	-.071	-.056
Connecting new hires to others quickly and proactively	.899	.216	.005	-.061	-.025
Making it easy for new hires ask for and find the resources they need	.891	.202	-.026	-.059	.052
Proactively assisting new hires to be productive quickly	.875	.241	.068	-.068	.072
Showing employees the link between their actions and the company's success	.829	.266	.139	-.072	.070
How well does your organization support employees through major professional transitions (e.g., onboarding, promotions, transfers, relocations, foreign assignments, repatriations, etc.)?	.698	.482	.047	.001	.044
What impact did the success or failure of your organization to provide support have on your work (or your attitude toward your employer)?	.090	-.025	.882	-.014	-.035
How well does your organization support employees through major personal transitions (e.g., maternity, illness, divorce, death of a loved one, caregiving responsibilities, family emergencies, etc.)?	.715	.327	.125	.015	-.003
What impact did the success or failure of your organization to provide support have on your work (or your attitude toward your employer)?	.067	.011	.886	-.004	.033

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Dependent Variable: How important is your current employer's image or brand in your decision to stay with the organization??

Regression Model Summary: R=.442; model significant at 0.01 level.

Appendix Three

Table 6

Results of Multiple Linear Regression of 5 Independent Variables (Supporting Workers, Engaged Workers, Impact of Support, Formal Process, Length of Onboarding) on the Dependent Variable: How important is your current employer's image or brand in your decision to stay with the organization?

Independent Variable	Standardized Beta	Significance
Supporting Workers	.294	.000
Engaged Workers	.281	.000
Impact of Support	.156	.004
Formal Process	-.072	.179 (not significant)
Length of Onboarding	.019	.724 (not significant)

Methodology

We surveyed 517 people identified as part of the “general workforce.” The online survey consisted of 31 questions concerning issues related to talent branding and related topics and 6 demographic questions. The survey took respondents, on average, about 15 to 20 minutes to complete. The 31 questions on talent branding were divided into three main parts:

1. **Talent Branding in General**—workers' views on the importance and elements of a talent brand
2. **Talent Branding and Onboarding**—how well organizations use the onboarding of new workers to effectively communicate their talent brand
3. **Talent Branding and Transitions**—how well organizations turn a talent brand into reality during times of workers' personal and professional transitions

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A two-step analysis of the survey data was performed:

1. Analysis of responses within each survey part to determine, separately, respondents' views on Talent Branding, Onboarding, and Transitions
2. Analysis of relationships among the three survey parts to answer such questions as:
 - Is a longer and/or more effective onboarding process a factor in the development of a positive talent brand?
 - Does an organization's positive talent brand image become reality during times of professional and personal transitions for the average worker?
 - What are some of the critical factors in talent management that create a positive talent brand?

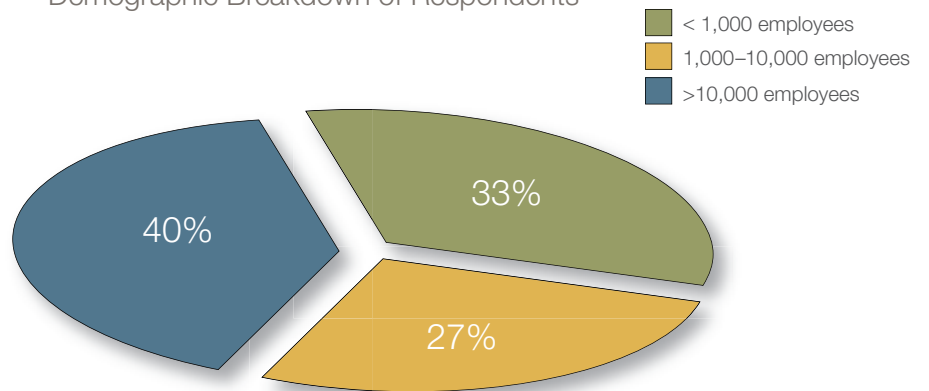
Respondent Demographics

The main purpose of this research was to determine the views of the average worker and not the senior leader or executive responsible for determining and developing the talent brand. In other words, we wanted to know what the reality of the talent brand is to those people it is designed to influence—the workers who may, in part, decide to join or remain at an organization's *because* of the talent brand. Therefore, our survey targeted people identified as part of the “general workforce,” and not the decision makers who are more likely to plan and implement a talent branding strategy.

Appendix Figure 1 shows the breakdown of the major demographic factors that distinguish respondents. All but six of the respondents were from the United States—meaning that these results can be applied to U.S. organizations only. Large, medium and small organizations were all well-represented in the study, as was the particular industry and functional area of the respondents.

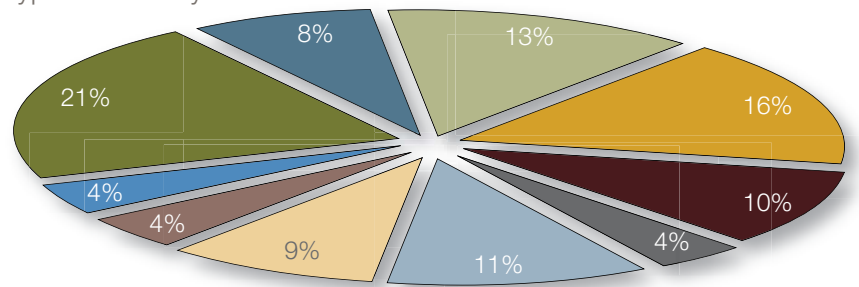
The Branding Imperative in Talent Management

Appendix Figure 1
Demographic Breakdown of Respondents



Size of Organization (by number of employees)

Type of Industry



- Industrial Production
- Education
- Government
- Consumer Retail
- Technology
- Healthcare
- Financial Services
- Utilities & Transportation
- Services
- Utilities & Other

SilkRoad technology

SilkRoad technology, inc. specializes in talent management solutions that offer a unique blend of systems and services that enable companies to gain competitive advantage through optimum alignment of employee performance with organizational goals.

SilkRoad technology is a privately held company based in Winston-Salem, N.C. with offices around the globe.

We believe that talented employees provide a key competitive advantage. Skillful talent management enables an organization to use its employee talent to fully implement business strategies and increase shareholder value.

Our goal at SilkRoad technology is to deliver a solution that enables you to manage the entire career cycle of your employees with a suite of best-of-breed applications including recruiting management, onboarding, performance management, compensation management and self-service intranets and portals. The result is a seamless process enabling you to effectively and efficiently maximize the talent of your workforce to meet aggressive business goals, and in the process, satisfy employees.



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The Human Capital Institute (HCI) is a global network of more than 115,000 members in 40 countries committed to shaping the world's new talent economy. Leaders, executives, and practitioners in HCI's network represent organizations of all sizes across public, charitable and government sectors, and collaborate on the next practices in strategic talent management. Through communities, education, events and research, HCI provides actionable, results-driven solutions to help members foster talent advantages to ensure organizational change for competitive results. In tandem with HCI's training, peer-to-peer learning, and public and private research on talent management best practices, the HCI Human Capital Strategist designation sets the bar for expertise in talent strategy, acquisition, development and new economy leadership.

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