

## EMPLOYER BRANDING TRAINING DEVELOPMENT FOR PUBLIC ORGANISATIONS

OLGA STARIŅECA<sup>1</sup>, INESA VORONCHUK<sup>2</sup>

University of Latvia (Latvia)

### ABSTRACT

In the condition of demographic issues in Europe and competition for specialist between public and private sector on the labour market public organisations' as employers' image is an important aspect of development. The research aim is to identify principles of Employer Branding (EB) and ways public organisations can organize and develop employees' education on this topic. There are EB activities examined in ten socially responsible (SR) organisations from public sector in Latvia. Authors prepare theoretical bases for the research analysing scientific literature to explain the main point of the approaches framework and define the main terms in depth implementing qualitative and quantitative research methods. In the result proposals for the EB training development for public organisations were developed. Training programs on EB for the public sector organisations should consist of blocks connected to marketing and HRM. Managers should decide whom to train and why and develop different training tracks for each employees level. Training should be implemented periodically reflecting on the changes in external and internal organisational environment.

KEY WORDS: *employer branding, training, public administration.*

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### Introduction

Current research is an advanced continues research that is based on the results presented on the 22<sup>nd</sup> Annual The Network of Institutes and Schools of Public Administration in Central and Eastern Europe (NISPAcee) conference in Budapest, Hungary in May 2014 (Voronchuk, Stariņeca, 2014: 1–15). Based also on other previous authors' researches, they can conclude that there is an issue on attraction of young specialist for administrative work in the public sector organisations. Young generation of specialists are more attracted by dynamical work for private sector organisations rather than conservative and non-creative job in public sector organisations (Stariņeca, 2014: 1).

Problem. Unemployment among young people is a challenge in many European countries. Attraction and recruitment of new employees for the public sector organisations has several difficulties. Young specialists that are mainly Generation Y representatives have special requirement to the potential employers. One of

<sup>1</sup> Olga Stariņeca – PhD student, University of Latvia, Department of Public Administration. Scientific interests: Demography and Socio-Economic Statistics, Public Administration, Human Resource Management, Social Responsibility, Youth Policy, Creating Shared value, Teaching Adults  
E-mail: [olga.starineca@lu.lv](mailto:olga.starineca@lu.lv)  
Tel.: +371 259 849 05

<sup>2</sup> Inesa Voronchuk – doctor of economic science, professor, University of Latvia, Department of Public Administration. Scientific interests: Demography and Socio-Economic Statistics, Public Administration and Human Resource Management, Finance, Higher Public Education  
E-mail: [inesa.voroncuka@lu.lv](mailto:inesa.voroncuka@lu.lv)  
Tel.: +371 670 347 27

the important for young specialists criteria choosing a potential employer is a possibility for further professional development provided by the employer (Stariņeca, 2014: 1).

Public sector employees, managers, executives should be educated on Employer Branding (EB), however, education programmes for the public sector specialists and employers sometimes are not developed good enough. Informal education opportunities are not so popular in Latvia in public sector (Vorončuka, Stariņeca, 2014: 1).

**Purpose.** The research aims to identify principles of EB and ways how public organisations can organize and develop employees' education on the topic.

**Object.** Public sector organisations included in Sustainability Index (SI) in Latvia in 2014.

**Tasks:**

- make theoretical research outlining the meaning and essence of the terms EB, SI, etc.;
- review possible approaches of EB;
- examine few examples of public organisations EB in Latvia;
- observe learning concepts and some human peculiarities on learning process;
- propose the possible scheme of the main EB training program development steps and content of such training.

**Methods.** The research is mainly based on qualitative research methods, synthesis, comparison, monographic research, literature overview.

The main terms and practices discussed in the article are compared based on different sources. SR public organisations were chosen based on Sustainability Index (SI) results for the year 2014.

## 1. Employer Branding principles

A term Corporate Brand is clear enough for organisation managers and executives, however such a term as Employer Brand has appeared not so long time ago among practitioners in Latvia. Private sector, especially middle and large international companies on Latvian market implement the EB practices, however, in terms of retention and new employees attraction EB is an important strategic activity. Authors analysed some literature sources to identify the term Employer Brand and outline known Employer Branding practices defined by theoreticians to compare them with that implemented by practitioners in public sector organisations in Latvia (Voronchuk, Stariņeca, 2014: 3).

Employer Brand is a specific term that has been created in 1990s (Ambler, Barrow, 1996: 185). Minchington and Thorne (2007: 15) outlined that 'every organisation has an employer brand. Whether you own it or not, your organisation is influencing its employer brand 24 x 7 x 365'. Pahor and Franca (2012: 94–95) describe their developed in 2007 the conceptual model of the EB pyramid. It consists of three parts. Recognition of the employer lays at the basis of the pyramid. Consideration is the middle part of the pyramid. The higher point of EB meaning is the idea that employer become an 'employer of choice'.

According to the quantitative analysis the most frequently used words in the definitions analysed are 'employment' (at 3 % of cases), 'employer', 'identity', 'directed', 'external' and 'employees' (by 2 % each word). Summing them up and reflecting the content of the sorted definitions it is possible to consider that generally Employer Brand is an identity of employer that is directed to the external and internal stakeholders and speaks about employment image by several criteria provided by this employer.

Creation and development of the EB usually is called 'Employer Branding' as it reflects the process. Employer Branding (further EB) is one of the Human Resource Management (HRM) activities (Backhaus, Tikoo, 2004: 501). Backhaus and Tikoo (2004: 502, 506) describe it as the process of developing and communicating organizational information that is 'specific and enduring for a firm as an employer and differentiates it from its competitors'. According to Edwards (2010: 5) employer branding, 'in its full scope, cuts across many traditional HR specialisms and becomes an umbrella programme that provides structure to previously separate policies and practices'. Aggerholm et al. (2011: 113) made the more specific definition

that states that employer branding is ‘a strategic branding process which creates, negotiates and enacts sustainable relationships between an organisation and its potential and existing employees under the influence of the varying corporate contexts with the purpose of co-creating sustainable values for the individual, the organisation and society as a whole’. Some authors see the EB through HRM and marketing (Ambler, Barrow, 1996: 186; Lievens et al., 2007: 52; Bondarouk et al., 2012: 10, 16), however, authors of this paper assume that Employer Branding is mostly concentrated on Public Relations activities, i.e., relationship establishment and maintenance with the organisations’ stakeholders – ‘external stakeholder groups’ and ‘internal stakeholder groups’ (Bondarouk et al., 2012: 17). Supporting this, Aggerholm et al. (2011: 106) state that ‘there is a need to apply more stakeholder and relationship thinking to employer branding in support of the paradigmatic understanding of the concept within a social constructivist tradition’. So, it could be considered that EB is a process of relationships creation with stakeholders (current and past and potential employees) through some specific HRM activities (Voronchuk, Stariņeca, 2014: 3–4).

To highlight that it is beneficial for an organisation to work on EB authors list Jain’s and Pal’s (2012: 70) identified EB benefits:

- increase in productivity and profitability; employee retention; and employer attractiveness;
- decrease in recruitment costs; and period of time when new employed specialist give real benefits to the organisation;
- minimize of loss of talented employees;
- employees committed to organizational goals;
- improvement in employee relations.

The next question is how to reach these benefits. There are several approaches that describe EB process by steps, components, elements, dimensions and disciplines (Table 1) that help to understand what should be done to implement EB activities in the organisation daily life. EB framework (Backhaus, Tikoo, 2004: 504–511) consists of two main tracks. The first track essence: employer branding affects EB associations that creates employer image and its attraction. The second track reflects the employer branding interaction with organisational culture. EB outcome is organisational identity. Organisational identity and organisational culture affect EB loyalty that’s outcome is employee productivity (Backhaus, Tikoo, 2004: 505).

EB is a mix of disciplines, i.e., interaction of organisational culture, marketing, the psychological contract and employer branding (Barrow, Mosley, 2005: 9; Edwards, 2010: 5; Aggerholm et al., 2011: 113–115). Kudret (2014: 13–17) describes the EB mix that consists of three main dimensions that supports Backhaus’s and Tikoo’s (2004: 505) framework and a mix of disciplines of employer branding. Backhaus and Tikoo (2004: 503) state that ‘employer branding is based on the assumption that human capital brings value to the organization’. Lievens’ (2007: 51–52) three sequent steps (1, 2, 3.1., and 3.2.) are related to the others above mentioned authors’ components, elements dimensions that are reflected in Table 1.

EB also reflects such areas as employer knowledge, consideration, and employer of choice (Pahor and Franca, 2012: 94, 100). The main words connected to the EB practices or disciplines that are mentioned more frequently by several authors in mentioned above descriptions are: culture, employer, employees, job, employment, organisation/ organisational, marketing, environment, benefits, opportunities. All these words are mentioned for at least four times. They characterize the core meaning of the term, i.e., the description of Employer Branding could be summarized as *an activity that suppose employer interaction with their employees through marketing and some employment circumstances* (organisational environment and culture of the organisation, job opportunities, benefits, etc.). Employees here are mostly current employees. However, as it was defined before, within EB activities, employer force their activities on past, current and potential employees (i.e., current and future potential employees, where future potential employees are those, who are not labour market participants under some circumstances, e.g. people who are under the economically active age or underqualified yet – students, or people who have age of economically active people, but are not searching for the job now, etc.) (Voronchuk, Stariņeca, 2014: 5).

Table 1. EB characteristics

Lievens (2007 )	Jain and Pal (2012)	Bondarouk et al. (2012 )	Pahor and Franca (2012)	Kudret (2014)
Three-steps processes of EB	EB components	EB elements/EB mix dimensions	EB main characteristics	EB mix dimensions
3.2. EB transition to the organizational culture	1. Culture and Environment ('work practices, value system, behaviour and attitude of the people working in the organization')	1. People and culture (What kind of employees employed, What is expected of employees; Employment conditions and treatment of employees, Current culture and ethics in the organization)	1. Good leadership and job-life balance	1. Culture (Internal communication, Rewards and recognition, Learning and development, Service support, Measurement system)
1. The value proposition of an EB development 2. The EB external marketing	2. Employment Experience (Tangibles (salary and benefits), Intangibles (company's culture and values, opportunities for learning and career progression, reward and recognition and management style))	2. Organizational characteristics (What the organization is and what it offers, How organisation is offered, Organizational processes (vision, mission, future goals)) 3. Employer reputation (Past achievements, Social activities, sponsorship etc., Products and services ratings)	2. Reputation of company and its products and/or services	2. Purpose (Senior leadership, Values/ Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), External marketing)
3.1. The EB internal marketing	3. Integrity 4. Employment Package (Financial Compensation, Job Roles and Responsibilities, Work Environment, Career Development Plan)	4. Job characteristics (Job opportunities; Job learning opportunities, Key functions and specific characteristics, Introduction program) 5. Remuneration and advancement (Advancement opportunities, Career programs; Benefits and compensation system)	3. Possibilities for personal development 4. Security of employment	3. Employment (Working environment, Recruitment and induction, Team management, Performance appraisal)

Source: Lievens, 2007: 51–52; Jain, Pal, 2012: 70–72; Bondarouk et al., 2012: 41–43; Pahor, Franca, 2012: 100; Kudret, 2014: 13–17.

Under various authors' consideration the main areas to pay attention on creating or developing EB are: *culture and environment of the organisation, job content, features and benefits that employees can get working for the employer* (benefits, professional development opportunities etc.). Culture and environment of the organisation in external and internal organisation environment also influences employer image, therefore authors propose to pay attention on such activities implementing Employer Branding: manage, measure / evaluate EB, work on EB in internal and external environment (Voronchuk, StariŃeca, 2014: 5). EB has quite the same principles as usual corporate branding, e.g., there are three laws of branding: Neuroscientific foundations of effective brand building (Walvis, 2008: 186–188):

- the higher the distinctive relevance of branding efforts;
- the higher the coherence of branding efforts across time and space;

- the more engaging the branding environment that is created;
- the more likely the brand will be chosen.

When the action plan and rules for EB is set it should be reflected on the whole organisation management cultural and strategic principles. If EB activities are new for the organisation, employees, i.e., managers, need to be educated on this topic to provide better/ qualitative implementations (Voronchuk, Stariņeca, 2014: 6).

The research is based on public organisations experience of EB. The sample of the research consists of socially responsible (SR) public organisations in Latvia that are included into the SI in 2014. The next section provides the outcomes of the Latvian Sustainability Index initiative exploration.

## 2. Sustainability Index in Latvia

Social responsible behaviour of the organisations has definitely a positive effect on EB of the organisation. However, current and potential employees wish to know how good organisation is at SR. There are several ratings of employers by different criteria in Latvia, one of them are popular for last 5 years Sustainability Index (SI). SI initiative 'is a strategic management tool developed on the grounds of global methodology, in order to help Latvian enterprises to establish the level of sustainability and corporate responsibility. It also sets objective criteria for the community as well as public and non-governmental organisations. Another purpose of the initiative is to praise and support the enterprises contributing to the long-term sustainability of Latvian economy, environment, and society' (Sustainability Index, 2010–2014; Voronchuk, Stariņeca, 2014: 2).

When organisation has a status of SR organisation, it becomes more attractive for job seekers and current employees. It is important aspect, because it brings an additional meaning to the organisation, it speaks about organisation possible positive image and comfortable working environment, special, interesting and trendy culture (when employees have an opportunity to do sport during working day or proposed to eat ecological and healthy food in the organisation's restaurant, etc.) (Voronchuk, Stariņeca, 2014: 6).

SR principles are quite the same as values or principles of some European and American public sector institutions. They are (ISO 26000 2010):

- accountability;
- transparency;
- ethical behaviour;
- respect for stakeholder interests;
- respect for the rule of law;
- respect for international norms of behaviour;
- respect for human rights.

All mentioned principles are directly connected to the positive EB principles. For example, transparency essence: stakeholders as the direct or indirect collaborators or integrators with the organization may know about the main ideas and objectives of the directors, executives and managers. This will help to avoid the organisational anarchy and give an opportunity to control the impartiality, fairness and avoid corruption of the top managers. Transparency gives the feeling of trust, truth and responsibility, which is vital in order to the sustainable organisation establishment.

SR organisation is an organisation that implements SR as a tool for the contribution to sustainable development of the organisation. The top management should be accountable in their decisions in case to fulfil the sustainability of the organisation and help the organisation to succeed in the reaching the goals. Each decision has the influence on future of the company, on organisation image and strength of the relationships with the organisation stakeholder, on internal organisation environment. All these statements are important for reaching good financial, social and human results as well as organisation performance.

It is important to maintain good relationships with organisation stakeholders; therefore it is important to be fair to each shareholder – with small and big weight for the organisation. Responsibility in each action of the executives, board members and directors can also influence relationships maintenance with internal

as well as external stakeholders. The decision makers are responsible for the future of the organisation, its development and existence as well as *image*.

People should understand that their action has the results. Nowadays especially large organisations should recognize that right action can bring more benefits than that one which is spontaneous, emotional, selfish and sometimes immoral or illegal (Voronchuk, Stariņeca, 2014: 7–8).

To assess, how good the SR organisation has been contributed to the sustainable development, some specific tools were developed. For example, based on mentioned ISO 26000 standard, Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) guidelines, Dow Jones Sustainability Index and other the Sustainability Index in Latvia was developed. Since 2010 more and more organisations in Latvia participate in the competition competing on SR best practices to be included in the list of organisations with the higher score in contribution to the sustainable development. However, it is important to remark that in 2014 in SI were included less public sector organisations than previous years. ‘The index has been adapted to the local audience evaluating the local performance of enterprises as regards to economic, social and environmental issues’. The areas that are assessed in each organisation are (Sustainability Index, 2010–2014):

- strategy (15 % of the total score weight);
- society (15 %);
- work environment (25 %);
- market relations (20 %);
- environment (25 %).

To be included into the SI lowest (Bronze) group the organisation’s SI should be equal to at least 40 % (others groups are: Silver with total SI 60–79.9 %, Gold – 80–89.9 %, and Platinum – above 90 %). Comparing to the three main dimensions of Dow Jones SI – economic ( $\approx 33$  % of the total score weight), environmental ( $\approx 33$  %) and social ( $\approx 33$  %) (Sustainability Indexes, 2014), SI basic evaluation areas are more specific. Of course, all SR and SI has been developed focusing on private sector organisations, however, there are some public organisation in Latvia that take part in SI initiative and also are included into the SI (Sustainability Index, 2010–2014).

Dimensions and areas of assessment of the SI organisations contribution to the sustainable development corresponds to the SR core subjects (Human rights and Labour practices – Work environment; The environment – Environment; Fair operating practices – Strategy and Market relations; Consumer issues – Market relations; Community involvement and development – Society) (Voronchuk, Stariņeca, 2014: 8–9).

Next section is devoted to some Latvian public organisations examples of EB expression in public environment (in Internet).

### 3. Examples of EB expression in public SR organisations in Latvia

For the empirical analysis authors chose ten out of twelve public organisations included into Sustainability Index in 2014. Generally the number of public organisations included into SI in 2014 is low; however, they have quite high results. Chosen organisations are (Sustainability Index 2010–2014):

- platinum group representative State Joint Stock Company (SJSC) “Latvenergo”;
- golden group representative SJSC “Latvijas loto”;
- silver groups representatives:
  - Joint Stock Company “Rīgas siltums”;
  - Municipal Joint Stock Company “Daugavpils siltumtīkli”;
  - Municipal Limited Liability Company “Ventspils reiss”;
  - State High School “Riga Technical University”;
  - SJSC “Road Traffic Safety Directorate of the Republic of Latvia”;
  - SJSC “Riga International airport”;
  - SJSC “Latvijas dzelzceļš”; and
  - SJSC “Latvijas autoceļu uzturētājs”.

All ten organisations are examined by some elements of EB (organizational characteristics, culture, remuneration and advancement, employer reputation, employment, people and job characteristics). Organisations WEB pages and all provided there documents are used as a source of information (date of information collection is June 15, 2014); some internal factors are not evaluated, if the information on them is not published on the WEB pages. Some EB elements (characteristics groups) that are implemented by the organisations has been explored, however, some elements are not fully explored as organisations do not publish enough information on their WEB pages to explore these elements.

Characterising current employees almost all organisations mention only managers or executives' profiles, however they do not offer a description of their employees. Totally there is a weak public expression of EB activities on the SR public organisations in Latvia. Even they have high value of SI they do not express the results of their activities publicly much enough. Examined organisations mostly focus on their products description and their WEB pages are mostly a communication tool for their clients and partners not employees or potential employees. These aspects have not been changed comparing with the previous authors' results exploring seven SR public organisations included in SI in 2013 (Voronchuk, Stariņeca, 2014: 13). They write about their employer reputation and organisational characteristic rather than on remuneration and advancement for employees or culture of the organisation. They might have internal communication tools to spread information among their current employees, some organisations are city level small organisations (e.g. *Daugavpils siltumtīkli* (2013) employs only 20 people), therefore they do not use external environment to positioning them as employers.

There are a lot of terms, principles and practices connected to the SR. Tools that can be implemented require particular knowledge and skills. Taking into consideration a fact that SR organisational governance influence EB it should be assumed that organisation managers as well as employees should be educated on this, they need to realize the essence of the strategy, organisation culture, values and goals (Voronchuk, Stariņeca, 2014: 8–9). Therefore authors propose to examine several useful approaches to develop appropriate training on EB by the teaching technics and content for public sector employees. Therefore the next section is devoted to some education and learning peculiarities.

#### 4. Education and learning peculiarities

Those who develop training programs need to know human learning principles. Authors propose developed guidelines creating training in this section. Some important facts about learning process should be assumed educating employees.

Developing or choosing education program for employees it should be clear that employees and their learning abilities need to be examined. Each person has his/her own approach learning something. Thus, some core aspects should be taken into consideration: the type of new information, employees learning abilities (e.g., remembering this type of information), and appropriate teaching technics that can be used for the defined employees as learners and learning program content.

Most probably public sector administrative employees will need explicit knowledge. 'Explicit knowledge is academic knowledge or 'know-what' that is described in formal language, print or electronic media, often based on established work processes, use people-to-documents approach' (Smith, 2001: 314). Educating employees on EB, explicit knowledge is a basis. Employees need to be aware of some HR recruitment technics, some norms and labour legislative aspects, branding creation itself, etc.

In terms of employees' as learners' assessment it would be valuable to pay attention on two main aspects: group learning and individual learning. Most probably employees will be educated in groups especially in terms of getting tacit knowledge. In this case employees should be evaluated as group learners. Grasha-Reichmann Students Learning Styles shows different people learning preferences depending on their collaboration with other people. This is a cognitive approach to learning styles. These styles are split to (Grasha, 1996: 176–177):

- avoidant style – people prefer to learn alone that together with other learners or do not have any motivation for learning at all;
- collaborative style – it is essential to collaborate with other learners and teacher during learning process, be involved into the process directly;
- competitive style – learner prefer to learn through some competitions or games, to show that he/she have learned something better that others, it motivates them to learn things;
- dependent style – learner is dependent on teachers requirements and learning group leader, he/she learns only required information;
- independent style – learner prefer to work independently, deciding hem / herself what should be learned, prefer to work alone, not in groups;
- participative style – learner is opened to new information, active in class participation, try to do him/her best during the learning process.

It would be valuable to explore employees during learning process to evaluate what kind of learning style they use, or give a test to find it out. Splitting people into learning groups or choosing some learning technics, it could be valuable to consider employees as learners from the ‘world’ perception view. Fleming’s VARK model proposes to split learning styles based on senses (Fleming 2001: 70):

- auditory – learner better remember information that he/she has listened to;
- kinesthetic – learner better learn things through touching, smells, movements and taste;
- reading-writing preference – learner better remember characterized in written form information, when he/she is offered a logical explanation and via language expresses information;
- visual – learner better remember and learn things by seeing them.

Learners with auditory learning style get better explicit knowledge through listening to the information. Merging learning styles and knowledge that is needed to get authors created a Table 2 that shows which learning style could be more appropriate to get explicit knowledge.

Table 2. Learning styles and explicit knowledge

Learning style/Knowledge type	Explicit knowledge
Avoidant	Type of thinking: Primarily convergent thinking
Participative	Learning: Trial-and-error approach
Competitive	Work process: Assumes a predictable environment
Collaborative	–
Dependent	Learning: Meet work goals and objectives set by trainer
Independent	Learning: Self-directed in areas of greatest expertise
Auditory	Sharing knowledge: Extract knowledge from person
Kinesthetic	–
Reading-writing preference	Sharing knowledge: E-mail Electronic discussions Forums
Visual	Learning: On the job

Source: Grasha, 1996: 176–177; Fleming, 2001: 70; Smith, 2001: 314–315.



It should be outlined that a person has rarely the representative only of one learning style implementer. Therefore the group of employees most probably will be miscellaneous.

Considering the appropriate training technic Benjamin Bloom's thinking behaviours domains should be outlined (Anderson, Krathwohl, 2001: 54):

- cognitive (based on knowledge);
- affective (based on attitude);
- psychomotor (based on skills).

Cognitive is a knowledge based domain, consisting of six levels. These six levels of thinking skills according to the revised Bloom's Taxonomy are (Anderson, Krathwohl, 2001: 58):

- remembering (Can the learner recall or remember the information?);
- understanding (Can the learner explain ideas or concepts?);
- applying (Can the learner use the information in a new way?);
- analysing (Can the learner distinguish between the different parts?);
- evaluating (Can the learner justify a stand or decision?);
- creating (Can the learner create new product or point of view?).

Revised Bloom's Taxonomy helps to construct the training activities in the logical way to persuade the learning process of the employees. This also illustrates the process of EB itself. First people remember it, then understand the essence of the employer getting more information on it, then use the EB (e.g. current employees), analyse it, evaluate finding out possible disadvantages and advantages and become a part of it. Participating and identifying him/herself with the employer, employees consciously or unconsciously create the EB. Thus, it is so important to evaluate employees as learners before giving them training. Organisation needs to be aware of it as it brings the idea of further actions to apply the appropriate idea and create EB that is desired.

Organisation should create or find the appropriate employees to create and develop the desired EB. This could be fulfilled through giving employees the appropriate education on the topic (Voronchuk, Stariņeca, 2014: 9–11, 13–14). Some examples and possible content of training programmes are observed in the next section.

## 5. Training development on employer branding

One more activity that needs to be implemented would be a choice of the appropriate education technics. However, here this activity is overviewed in conceptual way. Choosing the right approach for the teaching on EB it should be considered that the programme should be adapted to the organisation needs and specifications. Thus, most probably it will be an internal training or set of training on specific topic. Training is 'a planned process to modify attitude, knowledge or skill behaviour through learning experience to achieve effective performance in an activity or range of activates. Its purpose, in the work situation, is to develop the abilities of the individual and to satisfy the current and future needs of the organisation' (Wilson, 1999: 4). Training could be considered as non-formal education (Zaki Dib, 1987: 2–6). It could be group, individual (e.g. coaching) training or mix of them (Wilson, 1999: 4–10). The design and type, form of training depends on the outcomes of the previous steps.

Summing up all possible activities that are purposed above is possible to split them into three main steps (Figure 1): identify type of information that is planned to give as a training material; assess employees; learning abilities (e.g. by learning types and way of thinking); and finally choose appropriate teaching/ training technic(s) based on collected information. Authors leave training technics step unpractised as it depends on previously collected information and can be various. This scheme is one of the possible various approaches for training creation (Voronchuk, Stariņeca, 2014: 11).

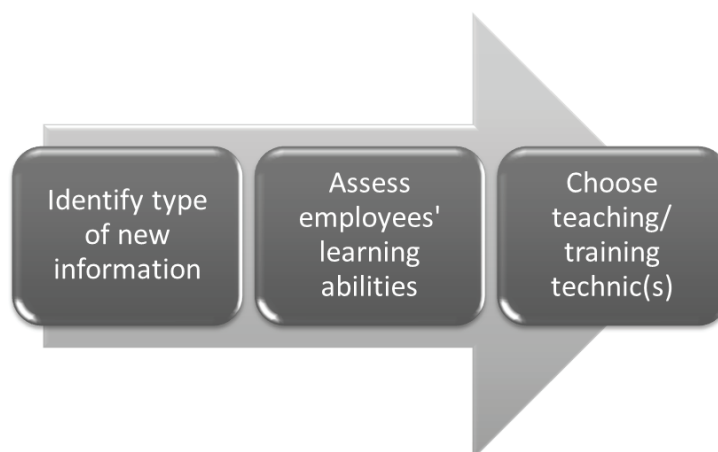


Figure 1. Proposed training development framework

Source: Voronchuk, Stariņeca, 2014: 11.

As the result authors also would like to summarize the possible content of the training programmes. In general we could consider that the idea of the SR organisation ‘in the context of employer branding reconceptualises the employee towards a morally acting and responsible human being’ (Andersen et al., 2013: 30). Aggerholm et al. (2011: 116) defined the third wave of employer branding framed by a holistic and sustainable perspective on branding. This means that organisation:

- have obligations and responsibilities towards all stakeholders;
- is striving to generate sustainable relations with all stakeholders;
- is striving to create and balance organizational, stakeholders and societal values.

Thus, EB is connected to branding as well as HRM and SR (and CSR). Sustainable organisations are those that reach the sustainable development, e.g., throw SR approach or SR organisations. SR organisations’ culture, vision, mission and strategic goals influence EB process, when EB process merge such areas as branding itself as field of marketing, HRM and SR (and CSR mostly in case of private sector organisations) (Aggerholm et al., 2011: 114). Based on information on EB theory and employer branding approaches that are connected to the SR theory as well as information from the practical examples overview authors could propose the following content of the training program(s) on EB for the public sector organisations in Latvia. It should consist of blocks connected to marketing, SR and HRM (Table 3). Public organisations should pay more attention on HRM topics. Executives should have the overview of the strategic place and importance of EB and EB as a process.

Table 3. Proposed list of topics for public organisations’ training program(s) on EB

SR related topics	Marketing related topics	HRM related topics
Accountability, Transparency and Integrity Environmental issues (specific for the industry and region) Introduction to sociology Organisation strategic development (mission, vision, values, goals) Organization theory Professional ethics (maybe training may devote time for organisation’s ethical code or code of conduct development, improvement or overview) Social activities, sponsorship etc. Stakeholder theory	Branding and reputation External communication Market relations	Benefits and compensation system Career Development Plan Employees learning and development Internal communication Job Roles and Responsibilities Job-life balance Labour law Leadership Performance appraisal Recruitment and induction Rewards and recognition system Safety and health of employee Team management Working environment

Source: Voronchuk, Stariņeca, 2014: 13.

Training should be supported by relevant case studies and organisation case study analysis to have an opportunity to use knowledge in practice and combine learning and working process. Involvement into the EB at least planning process during training might motivate employees to work further on this topic, feel inspired being a part of the organisation and as a result bring EB to the masses spreading the idea among other current, new and potential employees (Voronchuk, Stariņeca, 2014: 14).

EB training for each organisation should be adaptive. For SR organisation the proposed list of topics is the most complete and suitable; however, even other organisations should pay attention on SR related topics developing training program on EB.

## Conclusion

Making theoretical research based on newest journal articles and some scientific books authors outlined that EB is the reflection of the organisation by several criteria and one of the most important is what kind of employees are working for this employer. Organisation should develop or find the most suitable employees to create and develop the desired Employer Brand. Develop employees is possible not only through the cultural aspects, but also proposing professional development for employees particularly educating them on EB.

There are different and related approaches of EB, provided by different authors. Authors of this paper analysed five different approaches that were described in publications for last seven years to conclude this. The main scope of the approaches is related to some activities forced to create and maintain positive organisation image in internal and external environment through their organisational culture, attitude to their stakeholders, their values, social responsibility, positive and comfortable working environment, attractive jobs content, etc.

Examining examples of ten public organisations EB in Latvian socially responsible public organisations that were included in Latvian SI in 2014 authors one more time made sure that totally there is a weak public expression of EB activities on the SR public organisation in Latvia in spite of high value of SI of organisations examined. Authors checked information accessible on the organisations WEB pages that reflect the existence of the main seven EB components by several elements that were defined based on theoretical framework. There are could be several reasons for this such as absence of rational motivation to do it or low level of regional development where this organisation works. Sometimes it is impossible to consider definitely if e.g. an organisation do not have set organisational values just based on the information provided on the WEB page; however, it only shows that if even the organisation have defined its values, it does not share them with its stakeholders publicly.

Authors also analysed four concepts of learners. Observation of learning concepts and some human peculiarities on learning process authors found out that humans can be complex learners. Their learning peculiarities can depend on the characteristics of learning environment (is it independent, individual or in groups, formal on non-formal learning process, etc.). Developing training programs it should be taken into account that public administrative organisations administrative staff needs mainly explicit knowledge; however, afterwards in daily practices employees will use also their tacit knowledge as well.

Authors propose to follow the guidelines of EB training program development by steps. To develop this framework authors summarized all analysed materials on learning concepts, EB approaches and SI. First of all it is rational to evaluate what kind of information should be taught. Most probably for public sector organisations EB training will mainly bring explicit knowledge. Next step would be learners' evaluation. Employees as learners in different kind of circumstances can switch their learning preferences and a trainer need to be aware of them. Therefore the last step would be appropriate, relevant teaching technic(s) selection based on learners peculiarities and type of the material that need to be taught. The first step of the framework mainly assumes work with structure and content of training – topics covered. As EB is related to marketing, HRM and SR, topics covered in the training should be also related to these spheres.

One more things that should be highlighted that the training should planned as a constant and periodical / regular activity at organisation to maintain the positive effect of Employer Branding and support the desire of the organisation to strive for its sustainable existence.

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## DARBDAVIO, KAIP „PREKĒS ŽENKLO“, MOKYMAI VIEŠOJO SEKTORIAUS ORGANIZACIJOSE

OLGA STARIŅECA, INESA VORONCHUK  
Latvijos universitetas (Latvija)

### Santrauka

Šis straipsnis analizuoja darbdavių situaciją dabartinės demografinės Europos situacijos ir konkurencijos dėl specialistų tarp viešojo ir privataus sektoriaus organizacijų kontekste. Svarbu atkreipti dėmesį į viešojo sektoriaus organizacijų, kaip darbdavių, įvaizdį. Siekiama nustatyti darbdavio, kaip „prekės ženklo“ (PŽ), principus ir būdus, kaip viešosios organizacijos galėtų organizuoti savo darbuotojų mokymus šia tema. Ištirta PŽ veikla dešimtyje socialiai atsakingų Latvijos viešojo sektoriaus organizacijų. Teorinius tyrimo pagrindus autoriai parengė analizuodami mokslinę literatūrą. Tyrimas atliktas taikant kiekybinius ir kokybinius tyrimo metodus. Parengtos rekomendacijos, kaip vykdyti veiklos mokymus viešojo sektoriaus organizacijų darbuotojams. PŽ mokymų programas turėtų sudaryti blokai, susiję su rinkodara ir žmogiškųjų išteklių valdymu. Vadovai turėtų nuspręsti, kokius darbuotojus reikėtų apmokyti, ir nustatyti atitinkamą mokymosi procesą, atsižvelgiant į darbuotojo žinių ir kompetencijos lygį. Mokymai turėtų vykti periodiškai, atsižvelgiant į vidinės ir išorinės aplinkos pokyčius.

PAGRINDINIAI ŽODŽIAI: *darbdavio, kaip „prekės ženklo“, mokymai, viešasis administravimas.*

JEL KLASIFIKACIJA: H83, O15