

## » The 10 Golden Rules of Employee Advocacy

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Our 2017 study, [La Guerra por el Talento](#), showed 92 percent of participants believe employee advocacy is one of the major challenges companies face when attracting and retaining talent.

Employee advocacy (in other words, employee ambassadors on social and other types of media) is a trend that will drive the future. Why? Because it is a powerful method for building an employer brand, attracting the best talent and fostering consumer trust. In a world where the corporate voice, especially on social media, is “commoditized,” the authenticity provided by employee spokespeople seems obvious.

So, sure, employee advocacy is a great opportunity, but how should companies take on this challenge?

### The 10 Golden Rules of Employee Advocacy.



**1 Drivers. Think long-term.** Do not take on an employee advocacy initiative solely to earn short-term results, such as increased hits, likes or comments. Instead, focus on growing your employees’ reputations and, in turn, they will help you grow. The overall goal must center around enhancing the overall reputation of your company, as well as its products, services and employer brand.

**2 Storytelling. Strengthen employees’ personal brands and the rest will follow.** Explain to your colleagues that employee advocacy is a win-win situation. Make them feel like the “owners” of the company, the masters of its destiny. Help them understand that helping the company build its reputation is not only good for the company but beneficial to them and their personal brand.

**3 Challenges. Prioritize quality and user experience.** An employee advocacy initiative presents three major challenges:

- Keeping it up and running over time.
- Generating relevant content professionals want to share and their respective contacts want to consume.
- Creating a fun and dynamic experience for professionals with appropriate incentive measures.

**4 Culture. All companies can take on an employee advocacy initiative, but first, there must be a certain level of maturity.** Not all companies are at the right point in time to undertake an employee advocacy initiative. Your company must have a strong digital culture, conscientious management, social media policies that encourage social media usage and, of course, skilled employees.

**5 Look for allies to manage complexities.** Advocacy has always and will always exist. However, specific strategies, contents and tools are necessary to properly deal with the modern complexities brought on by social media. Despite the wide range of options available on the market, the key is to find a solution that allows your company to overcome employee advocacy challenges such as monitoring, participation and incentivization.

**6 Gamification. It's about having fun!** An employee advocacy initiative should be fun: a breath of fresh air that motivates and, through appropriate gameplay, instills healthy competition between participants as they aim to be the best ambassadors.

It is also important to keep incentives in mind, a topic that has been widely discussed as far as gamifications are concerned. There are usually two opposing groups of people who view incentives differently: those who go for the raffle approach (iPads for everyone!) and those who feel that merely being part of their organization should be reason enough to want to win.

The solution may be somewhere in the middle: use incentives that empower participants and simultaneously support the development of the organization's internal culture.

**7 Content. Good content helps you achieve your goals.** The content, fueled by employee activity, should strengthen your company's reputation.

- **"A day in the life of your employees."** This type of content will help your company build an employer brand by showing your company is a great place to grow professionally and personally.
- **Products and services.** Use employees' expertise on the products and services they sell or provide to boost your company's reputation.
- **Corporate themes.** Share corporate content (relevant news, recognitions, office openings, hires, etc.) that raises awareness and helps others form a positive opinion of your company.

"An employee advocacy initiative must generate content involving the employees themselves. This will encourage engagement and help you identify those experts who otherwise keep a low profile in the company"

As previously stated, participants' personal brands stand to gain a lot and it is why an employee advocacy initiative must generate content involving (or even created by) the employees themselves. This will encourage engagement and help you identify those experts who otherwise keep a low profile in the company.

Obviously, this does not mean "one-size-fits-all." An advocacy strategy's success also depends on a strong selection of territories and communities—so define them well. Identify the employees who can create and share relevant content

within a territory, as well as offer each community interesting content.

**8 Channels. Fish where your fish are.** Focus on the social media platforms which best serve your goals. For example, to attract talent, channel employee advocacy content through LinkedIn and Instagram. To discuss products and services, perhaps use Instagram, LinkedIn, Facebook and Twitter.

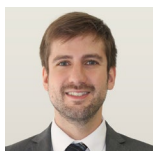
**9 Governance. Human Resources and Communications: a beautiful (and necessary) story about understanding.** Since your Communications and Human Resources departments deal with reputation and talent, they must work hand-in-hand in an employee advocacy initiative. Otherwise, your company is putting spokes in its own wheels!

- 10 Quality. Do less but do it well and at a reasonable pace.** The three vital tips to achieve a high-quality employee advocacy initiative are:
- Form a strategy: set your goals and make a plan to meet them.
  - The best ambassador is not necessarily the one who shares the most. Help your employees adopt a good attitude and increase their influence.
  - Measure, fix and move forward. These kinds of initiatives render results right from the start, but their real value is long-term.



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