

# EVP CHEAT CODES

HOW TO BUILD AN EVP



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How to boost your employer brand  
and attract top talent

Post-pandemic social and economic trends have given rise to increased competition for top talent.

In addition to a well-documented skills shortage, the relationship between people and work has fundamentally changed. Now, more than ever, employers need to examine their value proposition as workers seek out better job opportunities that align with their evolving expectations.

The cheat codes in this guide will help take your brand to new heights with four low-cost strategies to creating an impactful employer value proposition. These techniques can help you reach a greater number of candidates, and give you a meaningful cut-through when it comes to hiring and retaining top talent.

## The EVP playbook: Why large companies are attracting top performers (and how you can compete)

As the employment landscape becomes more competitive, and the fight to attract and retain workers is subject to a range of post-pandemic economic pressures, companies need to seriously consider what matters most to their candidates.

One way to achieve this is the use of an Employee Value Proposition (EVP). An EVP is the unique set of benefits and rewards that a company offers to its employees in exchange for their skills, knowledge and experience.

Companies with a strong EVP seek to identify and align with their employees' needs and values. EVP investments can include flexible work arrangements, professional development opportunities, competitive salaries, and expanded benefits packages with things like mobile phones or gym memberships.

Overall, companies are recognising that employees want more than just a paycheck. Many people are reevaluating their work-life balance to prioritise their physical and mental health, and looking at the businesses they work for in the context of social and environmental impact.

### Why emerging and mid-sized companies are struggling to compete on an EVP

According to Gartner, organisations today invest an average amount of \$2,500 per person on employee experiences each year, making it increasingly difficult for emerging businesses to keep up with larger companies when it comes to EVP investments.

This is because onsite wellness centres and free meals are expensive. Raising salaries across the board is near impossible. And flexible work arrangements require a level of digital transformation that many are still developing.

What you can do to stand out is create an impactful EVP that doesn't break the bank.

Easier said than done? Luckily we've put together a number of low-cost methods – “cheat codes”, if you will – to bolster your brand power, put you in front of a greater number of candidates, and give you a meaningful cut-through when it comes to hiring and retaining top talent.

### Key insights

- Large companies boast greater financial resources, infrastructure and organisational capabilities when it comes to EVP. They have more capital to allocate towards attractive salary packages, perks, and training and development programs for their employees.
- Large companies also benefit from brand recognition, which gives them greater visibility in the job market.
- While this may be true, there are many cost-effective strategies you can implement to compete with larger companies and develop a meaningful EVP.
- Mastering job ads and syndicated content can increase brand awareness and attract talent.

- Novated leases, FBT-exempt mobile phones, employee discounts at local stores and other packages are excellent ways to offer rewards at no cost to your business.

## The employee of the future

The future is here, and social and technological shifts have already shaped employees in ways companies could not predict even five years ago.

Current trends in business and technology – where, how, when and how much people work – have been brought forward thanks to the Covid-19 pandemic, which saw many employees reassess their personal wellbeing and social impact in the context of work.

Many of us are no longer content to wait until retirement to focus on personal happiness or “giving back”. Now, employees are looking for ways to tie their work in with their mission, purpose and passions. We want to feel like we’re contributing to innovation and social causes, all while maintaining a degree of balance at every stage of life.

This can be seen in a push to maintain hybrid work environments and flexible schedules, increased awareness of company culture and whether this aligns with personal values, and a general move towards transparency and corporate empathy.

More and more, attracting and retaining employees will come down to whether a company can demonstrate that they understand and can support these challenges.

Although personal needs differ between individuals and demographic groups, every industry and job type will experience this shift in some way or another.

### Alex, 35, Accountant for a small practice.

- Has spent time reflecting on his values, purpose and what work means to him.
- Wants to focus on personal wellbeing and social impact earlier, rather than waiting until retirement.
- Understands how valuable freedom and flexibility are, and wants to have a say in how and where he works.
- Is focused on work-life balance in a way that he wasn't before the pandemic.
- Is focused on his environmental and social impact.

## Why an EVP is important for emerging and mid-sized companies

When it comes to attracting top talent, emerging companies often have to compete with larger businesses. And, in the absence of a dedicated message room and personal development budget, these smaller players can use their unique EVP to stand out in a crowded market.

An effective EVP can also improve engagement and productivity for existing employees, helping them feel seen and appreciated because they've got "a place on the team". They're working in a collaborative way and contributing to the company's success.

Overall, a robust EVP that clearly communicates your unique offering builds a positive employer brand. This doesn't just help to attract and retain employees, but also customers and partners who want to do business with a brand that boasts a strong team culture and reputation.

### Benefits of an EVP

- Communicates a brand's values around things like sustainability, diversity and success.
- Makes it easy for potential employees to align their personal values with business values and culture.
- Lists tangible employee benefits, including office perks, wellbeing initiatives and savings on things like cars, phones, childcare and healthcare.
- Demonstrates an understanding that the new era of employment is about relationships, not transactions.

### Barriers to creating an EVP and attracting top talent

#### 1. BRAND RECOGNITION

Large companies with well-known brands have an advantage when it comes to attracting talent. They have a wider reach and are often more visible in the market, which makes it easier for them to reach potential candidates.

#### 2. LACK OF RESOURCES

Emerging companies don't have the same resources to invest in their EVP. They may not have the budget to offer the same compensation and benefits packages, or to invest in employee development and training programs, which can affect their ability to attract top talent.

What's more, smaller companies lack dedicated HR roles, with these functions often performed by administrative or other managers who aren't always focused on bigger visions for an EVP.

### 3. LIMITED AWARENESS OF EVP

Mid-sized companies may not be as well-known as larger companies, so the market isn't aware of their EVP. This can make it harder for them to attract talent, since candidates may not know as much about the company's culture, values and benefits.

### 4. LACK OF DIFFERENTIATION

In a crowded market, it can be hard for smaller players to set themselves apart from their competitors. They may offer similar compensation and benefits packages, or have underdeveloped company cultures, which can make it hard to stand out and attract top talent.

### 5. LIMITED REACH

Mid-sized companies may not have the same reach as larger companies when it comes to recruitment. They may not have the same access to job boards or other employment channels, which can make it harder to attract top talent via organic search.

These barriers form real challenges for emerging businesses, with many having fewer options and less money to drive positive outcomes.

## EVP cheat codes to give businesses a boost in the job market

### 1. Using an EVP in job postings

At a time when digital portals are clogged with posts and offers, strategically including your EVP in your job ads can help you stand out from the competition.

Begin with language that talks about your company's unique culture, values, and benefits. This can help job seekers understand what makes the company different and why they should want to work there.

Things to keep in mind when adding your EVP to job ads:

- Use words that your target audience will understand and that highlight what makes you different from the competition.
- Show what makes your company a great place to work, such as its commitment to team building, personal development days or annual scavenger hunt.
- Use stories to help people imagine what it would be like to work for your company.
- Include employee testimonials in your job ads - take those from your website and repurpose them
- Be real and honest in what you say, and don't make promises you can't keep.
- Use metrics to show how your EVP affects employee engagement, retention, and happiness.

The following examples show how three Australian businesses have successfully used their EVP in job ads to stand out from the competition. For each example, the company has communicated its unique value proposition, particularly highlighting their commitment to employee development, engagement, wellness, and work-life balance.

### **CANVA**

Canva is a design platform that has built its EVP around a strong focus on employee wellbeing and growth. In their job ads, they often highlight the opportunities for professional development and learning that come with working for the company.

In a recent job ad for a senior data analyst, they began by stating that they “celebrate diversity” and emphasise “how you can enhance Canva and our culture”. This speaks to a greater goal of attracting candidates looking for a collaborative role in which their skills and abilities plug in to an overarching mission.

### **TIMEOUT SYDNEY**

Timeout Sydney is a small publication which operates as a licensee of the Global Timeout Group. Their job ads emphasise individual creativity and freedom of expression as central to any role within the business.

In a recent job ad for a branded content writer, they expressed a firm commitment to “an open culture where ideas are shared candidly and where there is no fear of failure, but rather an understanding that we must experiment and have the freedom to succeed.”

### **VINOMOFO**

Online wine retailer Vinomofa boasts a strong focus on inclusivity and celebrating experiences. In their job ads, they often highlight the company’s unique culture, which emphasises work-life integration, fun and a passion for wine.

In a recent ad for a wine buyer, the company referred to themselves as “a tribe of vino-loving mofos united by wine” and finished by claiming, “We’re flexy and we know it”.

## **2. Mastering job ads: Structure, placement and guidelines that work**

Job boards don’t just randomly post ads on their platform — they consider many different factors when deciding where (and how far up the page) to place them. And, although there may be some differences from site to site, the following elements constitute best practice.

### **KEYWORD ACCURACY**

Listings on job boards are sorted by relevance to the user’s search term. So, although creative job titles like “Beverage Dissemination Officer” and “Direct Mail Demigod” are cute, they ultimately won’t help you rank for commonly searched jobs.

### **TIME POSTED**

Ads for positions that have been placed during peak periods for site traffic are often displayed higher in search results when more job seekers are browsing the site. On the other hand, posting an ad during off-peak periods may lead to less competition for ad placement, increasing the visibility of your ad.

## QUALITY AND LENGTH OF AD COPY

Job boards often use algorithms to rank ads based on the level of detail in the job description and the use of relevant keywords throughout the copy.

## LONGER LEAD TIMES FOR APPLICANTS

Job boards sometimes prioritise posts with longer expiration dates because these show your commitment to hiring and reduces the need for frequent reposting.

### Common mistakes to avoid when crafting job ads

Sometimes a single mistake in your job ad can be enough to stand in the way of a top placement and cause qualified candidates to miss your ad.

1. Avoid **overly creative or obscure job titles** that aren't commonly searched by regular humans.
2. Make sure your job title **appropriately reflects the role** and is optimised for search engines.
3. Use **primary and long tail keywords** in the job title and description.
4. Craft **precise and detailed job descriptions** that highlight essential skills and qualifications.
5. Include a **strong call to action**, such as "Apply now" or "Attach your CV," to entice potential candidates.
6. Include a **logo or team pics** to paint a picture of what it's like to work at your company.

## A WORD ON KEYWORDS...

Long tail keywords, which often consist of three or more words, are less frequently searched for than broad keywords like "Copywriter" or "Manager", but have the ability to attract a more targeted audience because of their specificity and relevance.

For example, a long tail keyword for a job ad in the software development industry might be "Java engineer in Melbourne" instead of the more general "software engineer." Using the long tail keyword in the job ad can help it show up in search results for people who are specifically looking for a Java engineer role in Melbourne, which could in turn attract more qualified candidates.

But remember, avoid overwhelming the job post with irrelevant terms, and use long tail keywords sparingly and carefully. Include just one or two highly relevant long tail keywords and make sure your job ad appropriately portrays the role and its responsibilities.



### 3. Syndicated content

Digital content syndication is a powerful way to get brand cut-through with your EVP.

It involves distributing or republishing your own content like articles, blog posts, videos or infographics through third-party websites, social media platforms and other channels.

Digital content syndication can expand your reach and attract new audiences, all while showcasing your unique value proposition and building brand awareness.

Content syndication can also position your brand as a thought leader in your industry – something that can be leveraged for both sales and talent acquisition.

#### SO WHAT DOES THIS LOOK LIKE?

Outdoor clothing company Patagonia has dedicated its [Instagram account](#) to insightful and captivating videos on regenerative agriculture, conservation, and environmental activism. These videos have been liked and shared tens of thousands of times, creating a positive link between the brand and sustainability.

Bunnings, recognised as Australia's top most valuable brand, has utilised Outbrain to syndicate its how-tos and DIY-related content on high traffic websites like news.com.au and The Daily Telegraph. This positions them as trade experts and helps to attract team members interested in these same topics.

#### WHO PROVIDES SYNDICATED CONTENT IN AUSTRALIA?

So glad you asked! There are a range of publishers and platforms in Australia that provide both free and paid content syndication.

Free	Paid
LinkedIn Articles	LinkedIn Sponsored Content
Facebook Business (free via Groups)	Facebook Business (ads)
Medium	Taboola
Quora	Outbrain
Pinterest (free)	Pinterest (ads)
YouTube	
Reddit	



#### **4. Novated leasing as a pay boost**

Emerging businesses don't necessarily have the budget to spend on meal services and other costly benefits that have traditionally acted as drawcards for employees at larger companies.

But novated leases, FBT-exempt mobile phones, employee discounts at local stores and other in-kind benefits can increase pay packages for your employees and potentially save you money on payroll tax.

These benefits are meaningful ways to reduce the out-of-pocket expenses of your employees, especially during times of inflation and financial stress.

Novated leasing in particular allows employees to lease a car for private use, with payments deducted from their pre-tax salary. This helps employees save money on their private vehicle expenses while supporting their work-life balance.

What's more, employers can benefit from novated leasing by claiming GST on most associated running costs.

#### **NOVATED LEASING FOR ELECTRIC VEHICLES (EV'S)**

Last year, the Federal Government introduced legislation exempting EV's and plug-in hybrid vehicles purchased after July, 2022 and priced under the luxury car limit of \$84,916 from the fringe benefits tax (FBT).

This tax exemption gives employees an opportunity to package an EV under \$84,916 from their employer completely tax free.

Before this amendment to the Fringe Benefits Tax Assessment Act was passed, employees would be expected to pay 20% of the base value of the vehicle as a post-tax deduction from their salary.

#### **HOW MUCH CAN EMPLOYEES SAVE ON A NOVATED LEASE FOR AN EV?**

In a move that supports both the environment and the budget of Australians, the federal government has recently introduced legislation that makes electric vehicles (EV's) priced under \$84,916 exempt from fringe benefits tax (FBT).

Before this bill was passed, you would have expected to pay 20% of the FBT base value of the vehicle as a post-tax deduction from your salary. Now, with this change, the total amount is calculated and deducted before-tax, so your employees are not paying any FBT or income tax on your new eligible EV or PHEV.

With the introduction of no FBT on eligible EVs and PHEV's, your employees could save on average \$9,000 per year, almost double the savings\* compared to a novated lease with an internal combustion engine vehicle.

\*Flare comparison data between ICE Mazda CX5 vs. EV Tesla Model 3 on a 50-month lease term, 15,000kms pa.



Pri earns \$95,000 a year and is looking for a Tesla to take her son to school every day and to visit family in the Blue Mountains. The car is valued at \$73,389, and she expects to travel 15,000km a year.



Vehicle driveaway price <sup>1</sup>	\$73,389	\$73,389	\$73,389
GST saving on purchase price	\$0	\$5,885	\$5,885
Monthly payment (incl' running costs <sup>2</sup> )	\$1,860	\$1,740	\$1,740
Monthly tax and GST savings	\$0	\$192	\$684
<b>Net cost per month</b>	<b>\$1,860</b>	<b>\$1,548</b>	<b>\$1,056</b>
<b>Total net cost over 48 months (excl' residual payment<sup>3</sup>)</b>	<b>\$89,280</b>	<b>\$74,304</b>	<b>\$50,688</b>
<b>Total savings over 48 months</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$14,976</b>	<b>\$38,592</b>

## SUSTAINABILITY AND NOVATED LEASING FOR EV'S

As more and more employees seek to connect their personal values with their work life, many are on the lookout for companies that prioritise sustainability and social responsibility.

A 2021 *Return on Action Report* published by Atlassian and PwC, showed that 74% of employees believe businesses should be just as concerned with their social impact as their financial results. What's more, 81% of respondents agree that businesses need to take full responsibility for their environmental impact.

This means employees are more likely to choose a company that has a robust sustainability plan and are increasingly keen to participate in initiatives that help a business become more sustainable.

## USING SUSTAINABILITY TO ENGAGE YOUNGER GENERATIONS

Commonly referred to as the "change generations", Gen Y and Gen Z workers have made one thing clear: they'll no longer accept a passive approach to environmental and social issues by their company. In fact, 55% of Gen Z are worried about future job prospects, yet **54% of those** would quit their jobs if the values of their employer did not align with their own.

<sup>1</sup> Pricing based on the drive-away cost of a Tesla Model Y in NSW.

<sup>2</sup> Monthly running costs include fuel, maintenance, insurance and servicing.

<sup>3</sup> The residual cost for this model comes to \$27,845, based on a balloon payment of 37.5%

## EV's versus other sustainability initiatives: What has the biggest impact?

Businesses are rapidly adopting eco-friendly practices like switching to renewable energy sources and cutting down on waste in an effort to become more sustainable.

But, as the table below shows, a novated leasing program that features EV's is the most efficient and cost effective way for businesses to reduce their carbon footprint.

Plus, who doesn't want to cruise around in the latest all-electric carriage?

Energy efficiency initiative	Impact	Unit of measurement	Emissions (Co2/kWh)	Reduction in energy consumption	CO2 savings (kg)	Business cost
Install energy efficient lighting (LED or other energy-saving light bulbs). Switch off lights when not in use, either manually or through automatic sensors.	1,471,680	kWh	0.475	90%	629,143	High
Purchase energy-saving models for all office equipment, including computers, LCD monitors, printers and photocopiers.	600	kWh	0.475	85%	242	Medium
Better insulate the physical workplace with energy efficient windows and doors. Seal gaps in floorboards and heat with natural gas.	1,440,000	kWh	0.185	20%	53,280	High
Encourage everyone to switch off their equipment at the end of the work day. Plug desk equipment into multi-socket extension leads, which makes it easier to turn off everything at once.	700,800	kWh	0.475	100%	700,800	Low
Manage heating and cooling systems intelligently. Turn air con up or down by one or two degrees depending on the season to reduce energy demand.	1,440,000	kWh	0.185	8%	21,312	Low
Pay for CO2 offset for business air travel.	274,560	kg CO2	183.04	100%	274560	Low
Introduce a recycling program for cans, plastic and glass.	1,500,000	kg	0.181	50%	135,750	Low
Novated Electric Vehicle Offering	1,809,086	kg CO2	2.32	86%	1,555,814	Free
Flare new car offset business benefit	4,221,202	kg CO2	2.32	100%	4,221,202	Free
<b>Total standard business initiatives</b>					<b>1,815,087</b>	
<b>Flare novated leasing &amp; green business offset</b>					<b>5,777,016</b>	

If a medium-sized business were to provide a novated leasing program for electric vehicles to 50 employees, the company could save 240 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions annually. This is the same amount of Co2 as would be produced by 51 passenger vehicles in a year, or the amount of carbon dioxide that would be sequestered by more than 290 acres of forest.

Energy efficient lighting is another example. Switching out 1,000 incandescent bulbs for LEDs can reduce annual electricity use by 14,400 kWh, or save 12.6 tonnes of carbon dioxide emissions. However, it would take replacing over 19,000 bulbs to achieve the same reduction in carbon dioxide emissions as implementing a novated leasing programme for electric vehicles for 50 employees.

## **BUT WHAT ABOUT THE EXTRA ADMIN THAT THESE INITIATIVES WOULD REQUIRE? I HAVE LIMITED RESOURCES, REMEMBER?**

Here's the thing, you shouldn't be expected to take on more administration in order to support the people in your business. Things are stretched, we get it.

Flare provides employee benefits at no cost to businesses, helping their people navigate the rising cost-of-living. Flare offers a digital-first experience for workers to easily access services like salary packaging.

With Flare, businesses can seamlessly access an out-of-the-box benefits solution to help their EVP which can be customised to reflect workforce needs.

### **Key takeaways**

It may feel like employees suddenly expect you to jump through hoops and provide daily onsite massages in order to retain their loyalty, but the truth is actually a lot less cynical.

In fact, data overwhelmingly shows that employees genuinely want to go back to work in a meaningful way after years of uncertainty and lockdowns.

At the end of the day, most of us want to collaborate with our companies to mitigate future risk and ensure mutual success. We're just looking for an approach to management that is more transparent and empathetic.

If you see HR as primarily focused on talent and culture, then you likely prioritise choices that benefit the people in your organisation. By doing so, you can make their work easier, create more balance in their lives, and ultimately attract and retain the best possible talent.

Developing a strong Employee Value Proposition shows that you recognise the needs of your team and aim to provide them with tangible and intangible benefits. These advantages don't necessarily need to be expensive – some can even be implemented at no cost to your business. What matters is that you consider the options that best reflect your company values, and offer these in a genuine way to ensure meaningful outcomes for all.



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