Can small traditional businesses build strong employer brands? A means-ends analysis on talent attraction

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Abstract

The present study provides employer brand solutions regarding how small businesses in traditional industries can become as attractive organizations for millennial first-job applicants as emerging technology-based start-ups. By using a means-ends approach to unveil the hidden value structures of ethical, self-fulfillment and experiential value, this study disentangles the hierarchical relationships among employer attributes, employee benefits and perceived value. The results show that, by understanding the motivational structures behind the employment decision-making process, small businesses can customize their employment offerings and meet the value forms sought by the millennial cohort, opening a new range of possibilities for small traditional firms to attract new talent.