

A GUIDE TO EMPLOYER BRAND VIDEO PRODUCTION

The *Story-First* Framework

How to plan, produce and distribute employer brand video that solves real organisational problems , without actors, voiceover, or wasted budget.

Most employer brand video gets made *the wrong way round*

The brief comes in. The shoot gets booked. The agency turns up and films. The edit happens. Someone signs it off. The video goes live. Six months later, nobody's quite sure if it worked.

This is the default production model, and it's why so much employer brand video looks and feels the same. Polished. Inoffensive. Generic. Immediately forgettable.

The problem isn't production quality. Most agencies can produce something that looks decent. The problem is that the content was never built around a specific organisational problem, a specific audience, or a specific outcome. It was built around a brief.

At MHF Creative, we work the other way. Before we talk about cameras, crew, or concept, we start with the problem you're trying to solve, and build the story backwards from there. We call this the Story-First Framework.

THE CORE PRINCIPLE

A recruitment film isn't a product demo. A culture video isn't a brand ad. Employer brand content works when it's built around organisational truth, real people, real experiences, real stories, shaped to meet a specific audience at a specific moment in their decision-making journey.

Every production decision we make, who we film, what we ask, how we cut, what formats we deliver, flows from that principle.

Stage 01

Define the Problem

What are you actually trying to solve, and why does it matter right now?

Stage 02

Find the Real Voices

Real employees, real stories, built around the specific problem , no actors, no voiceover.

Stage 03

Align the Story

What does the audience need to believe or feel in order to change their behaviour?

Stage 04

Plan Distribution

Formats, ratios, hooks and cutdowns , decided before production begins.

Five mistakes that make employer brand video *expensive and ineffective*

After 13 years producing employer brand and recruitment content, these are the patterns we see most often, and the ones that are easiest to avoid when you start with the right questions.

× Starting with the brief, not the problem

"We need an employer brand video" is not a brief. It's a format. The brief should start with: what specific organisational challenge does this content need to solve? Hiring engineers? Making leadership feel accessible? Reducing time-to-offer by improving candidate quality? The format follows the problem, not the other way around.

× Using actors or stock footage

Candidates can spot it immediately, and it destroys credibility instantly. The entire purpose of employer brand video is to communicate what it genuinely feels like to work somewhere. An actor in your office communicates nothing real. Real employees, filmed well, are always more compelling than polished fiction.

× Voiceover instead of real employee voices

A professional voiceover artist reading your employer brand pillars over B-roll of your office is not storytelling. It's a corporate announcement. Real people speaking in their own words, lightly guided, never scripted, create the kind of authenticity that moves candidates from curious to interested.

× Generic "great place to work" content

If your employer brand video could belong to any of your competitors, it's not employer brand video, it's wallpaper. The story has to be specific to your organisation, your people, your culture, and your challenge. Specificity is what makes content credible.

× Deciding formats and ratios after the shoot

If you need a 16:9 careers page hero, a 1:1 LinkedIn cut, a 9:16 story version, and a 30-second paid ad with a hook , these need to be planned before a single shot is framed. Trying to recut a film designed for one format into another almost always produces something that looks compromised.

The four stages *in detail*

STAGE ONE

Define the Problem , and Why It Matters Now

01

Every employer brand video project we take on starts with the same question: what specific problem are you trying to solve, and why has it become urgent right now?

"Now" matters more than most clients expect. There is usually a trigger , a hiring crisis in a specific discipline, a culture shift following rapid growth, a leadership team that has become distant from the people they lead, a perception problem in a specific talent market. Understanding the urgency shapes everything about the content: tone, pace, who we film, and what the audience needs to walk away believing.

Without this clarity, content is made to fill a brief rather than solve a problem. It gets approved, it goes live, and it works about as well as you'd expect from something that was never built around a specific outcome.

QUESTIONS WE ASK AT THIS STAGE

- What specific hiring, retention or culture challenge is driving this project?
- Why has this become a priority right now , what has changed?
- Who is the primary audience , candidates, current employees, or both?
- What does success look like, and how will you know if the content has worked?
- What perception do you need to create, change or reinforce?

Find the Real Voices , People Who Are Closest to the Problem

Once we understand the problem, we identify the real people whose stories can solve it. Not the most senior people. Not the most polished speakers. The people whose lived experience is most directly relevant to what the audience needs to hear.

If the challenge is attracting engineers, we film the engineers , the projects they work on, the problems they solve, the environment they work in, and why they chose this organisation over others. If leadership feels inaccessible, we film the leaders as human beings rather than as executives , their thinking, their decisions, the moments that shaped them.

Real people, speaking in their own words, are always more compelling than polished production. This isn't a budget compromise , it's the strongest creative choice available to any employer brand team.

HOW WE IDENTIFY THE RIGHT CONTRIBUTORS

- Who has direct experience of the thing the audience most wants to understand?
- Who represents the culture authentically , not who looks good on camera?
- Which voices will be most credible to the specific audience we're trying to reach?
- What mix of seniority, role type and tenure gives the most rounded picture?

STAGE THREE

Align the Story to the Audience's Decision

03

Every piece of employer brand content is trying to move an audience from one belief to another. Candidates who don't know you need to be made curious. Candidates who are curious need to become confident. Employees who feel disconnected need to feel seen. Leaders who feel distant need to feel human.

Understanding this journey shapes the entire narrative, what questions we ask in interviews, which moments we capture in B-roll, how we structure the edit, what the film opens with and what it leaves the audience feeling. Production decisions that ignore this journey produce content that looks good but moves nobody.

The story is never about the organisation. It is always about what the audience needs to believe in order to make a different decision.

HOW WE SHAPE THE NARRATIVE

- What does the target audience currently believe about working here?
- What do they need to believe in order to apply, stay, or trust leadership?
- What is the single most important thing this film needs to communicate?
- What tone, aspirational, honest, human, bold, best serves the message?

Plan Distribution Before Production Begins

Where content lives determines how it needs to be made. A careers page hero film is a different creative challenge to a 15-second paid ad with a hook. A LinkedIn organic post behaves differently to a 9:16 Instagram story. Internal comms content for an all-hands presentation is filmed and cut differently to a public-facing recruitment campaign.

We map the full distribution landscape before the camera is ever turned on, which channels, which formats, which ratios, whether paid social requires hooked cuts, whether internal versions need different framing. Every decision made at this stage saves budget in post-production and ensures nothing ends up looking like an afterthought.

We deliver the files and hand over completely. Measurement, media buying, and distribution strategy sit with your internal team or media agency, but the content is built to perform wherever you choose to use it.

WHAT WE PLAN BEFORE PRODUCTION

- Where does the hero film live, careers page, LinkedIn, internal comms?
- Do we need paid ad versions with hooks? If so, what length, 15s, 30s, 60s?
- What ratios are needed, 16:9, 1:1, 9:16?
- Are social cutdowns needed, and should they have captions by default?
- Is there an internal version with different framing for existing employees?

WORK WITH MHF CREATIVE

Ready to build something that *actually works?*

We work with HR, Talent Acquisition and Employer Brand teams across the UK to produce content that solves real problems, not just fills briefs. If you have a hiring challenge, a culture gap, or a leadership story that isn't landing, let's talk.

Book a discovery call

Email: [\[email protected\]](#)

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