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The Impact of a Resume on a Job Interview and First Impression

International Business Management
2018

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Kansainvälinen Liiketoiminta

TIIVISTELMÄ

Tekijä	Matiss Uskaurs
Opinnäytetyön nimi	Ansioluettelon vaikutus työhaastattelussa
Vuosi	2018
Kieli	englanti
Sivumäärä	66 + 4 liitettä
Ohjaaja	Thomas Sabel

Tämän opinnäytetyön tarkoitus on laajentaa näkemystä siitä on kuinka yritykset käsittelevät rekrytointiprosessia. Opinnäytetyön päätavoite katsoa kuinka iso vaikutus työnhakijan ansioluettelolla on työhaastatteluun pääsemisessä, työhaastattelussa itsessään ja millaisia ensivaikutelmia se työnantajassa herättää.

Tämä opinnäytetyö koostuu kahdesta osiosta: teoriasta ja tutkimuksesta. Teoria on jaettu kahteen osioon. Ensimmäinen osio sisältää henkilöstöhallinnon historiaa ja perusperiaatteita. Toinen osio sisältää henkilöstöhallinnon erilaisia menetelmiä, jotka ovat nykypäivänä iso osa rekrytointiprosessia. Toinen teorian osuus keskittyy enemmän ansioluettelon formaatteihin, joita työnhakijat käyttävät ja siihen miten ne eroavat toisistaan.

Opinnäytetyön tutkimusosiossa käytettiin kvalitatiivista tutkimusmenetelmää. Kvalitatiivinen tutkimusmenetelmä antoi tarkemman kuvan rekrytointiprosessista henkilöiltä, jotka ovat tekemisissä henkilöstöhallinnon kanssa päivittäin. Opinnäytetyön viimeisessä osiossa vertaillaan teoriaa ja tutkimustuloksia. Tutkimuksessa käy ilmi, että ansioluettelo vaikuttaa paljon työpaikanhaussa, mutta prosessiin kuitenkin vaikuttavat myös monet muut tekijät.

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ABSTRACT

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Title	The Impact of a Resume on a Job Interview and First Impression
Year	2018
Language	English
Pages	66 + 4 Appendices
Name of Supervisor	Thomas Sabel

This thesis aimed to give a better perspective on how companies approach the recruitment process. The aim was to see how big of an impact people's resumes have on getting to job interview, the interview itself and the first impressions from an employers point of view.

The thesis consists of two sections: a theoretical framework and an empirical research study. The theory is split into two areas. The first section gives a brief history of Human Resource Management (HRM) to understand the basic principles of the recruitment process. This followed by a theory related to various HRM processes that are part of the modern day recruitment. The second section of the theory focuses on resume formats that are used and the differences between them. For the empirical study, qualitative research method was used in order to gain more personal and detailed information from people who are involved in recruitment activities on a daily basis.

The final section of the thesis focused on comparing the theory of HRM and how it correlates with the research results. Ultimately, the research revealed resumes being a crucial factor in the recruitment process. The resumes directly affected the recruitment results, however, the system is much more complicated and there are multiple variables.

Keywords   resume, recruitment, HRM, human resource management, selection process, video resume

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Research

This thesis deals with the one of the most common issue people have in working life and how it is resolved in different organizations and by different people. The objective of this research is to find out how much person's resume will affect the chances of getting a position applied for and what is taken into consideration when choices are made.

Resumes have been made somewhat of a go-to resource when it comes to looking for position in a company, however over the years the trend has been slowly moving in different direction making resumes less interesting for employers and other methods of presenting yourself have become possible.

The need for workforce is present everywhere around the world, finding the right person for the job is not easy, neither is finding a perfect job for your own (day to day) life. For this reason, company management has to make serious decisions in order to hire the right people as anything that does not work is waste of money. Going through thousands of resumes might not be the best way to find right person for the job, meaning companies have to filter resumes drastically to achieve the best results possible.

1.2 Research Problems and Objectives

Currently it is not very easy to get permanent position or even an entry level job as employers are constantly looking for something they cannot possibly find in people, i.e. a person with superpowers. For this reason, someone who is looking for work needs to know how to present himself in the best way possible while still being himself. By knowing how the average recruitment process works and who is responsible for, what can give the applicant a slight advantage over someone who is not aware of this information.

The objective of this research is to help understand how a resume of a person impacts his chance of getting to a job interview, the job itself and what things are being taken into account when considering applicants.

This can give insight in the changes that have happened within human resources recruitment in the past years and how to possibly adapt to them. By doing so, organizations could possibly find someone who they might have overlooked in the past and vice versa, possible future employees might find new and creative ways to present themselves the best way possible and so increasing the chances of getting the wanted position.

1.3   Structure of Thesis

The structure of thesis is based on basic concepts of human resources and basic knowledge of resumes. In a way they both go, hand in hand. The human resource theory focuses on short history of the field and expansions over the years followed by the current models and systems that most companies employ. This is done to get a better understanding of how quickly human resource management has developed.

A brief overview of various resume formats is taken into consideration, picking out the most used ones and explaining short details about them together with the pros and cons. Not all the old techniques are seen as bad, but more of something good that works well.

This thesis also describes the basic methods of research that are used in this work. This is done in order for the reader to get a better picture and understanding of the objectives in the empirical study and its outcome.

By conducting several face-to-face interviews where questions taken from HRM theory are asked, it is possible to gain slightly more insight into the recruitment processes and how they are handled within various companies. This in return can answer various questions related to technology and how it affects recruiters and applicants alike.

The conclusion strives to give insight into how basic HRM processes are handled within companies. By comparing theory and reality give advice is given for applicants on how to approach the job application process better.

2   HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

2.1   History of HRM

In ancient history, growth and evolution relied on a strong army force. Having a weak army would result in neighbors taking over and because of this reason, successful and strong army required their commanders to be smart individuals; people who would share their vision of victory with others. In order to achieve the goals various procedures were created similarly to creating jobs, organizing and hiring people. Picking right person for the job was essential for a leader position. This could be considered as successful Human Resource Practice.

The modern history of Human Resource Management dates back to 18th century, it is said that during the British Industrial Revolution factories had significant need for workforce due to a tremendous increase in production. People were working up to 16 hours every day. The goal was to produce faster and as much as possible while keeping the costs low. Employers started to realize that quality and efficiency at which employees could produce the goods depended on their satisfaction level and so they had to find ways to improve this. For starters, companies introduced voluntary programs for their employees to increase their satisfaction and improve their working capabilities. This did not stop there as, in addition to organizations, governments also started employing basic human rights as well as work safety legislations. (Creative HRM 2015)

The next big push for change happened in mid-20th century when Personnel Management was starting out. It was the direct predecessor to what we know today as Human Resource Management. Starting out in early 20th century companies would create departments that would be in charge of various activities in which employees would partake. These included tasks such as hiring of personnel and letting staff go, taking care of job related complaints from employees, educating supervisors about the newest laws and practices that would be related to personnel. It was important for companies to know that once an employee is hired, he needs to be introduced to the surrounding things within company in addition to making him feel welcome and making sure he finds his way around. Such actions would further boost employee's

motivation and ability to work much more effectively. The key goal in keeping organizations competitive within their respective market was to design and create cost effective processes from within. Shortly after World War 2, this became an important issue as the growth in the numbers of employees stopped and in order to get the edge in the market organizations had to act in regard to personnel management. Complete overhaul of how employees were managed was not the primary goal of personnel management, however it was a positive side-effect. By introducing centralized recruitment processes, companies reduced the amount of applicants that were compatible with corporate values, this in end presented managers with fewer candidates for the positions which in turn saved time and money for the organization. In addition to that, organizations focused on training people, this showed discipline and improved employee morale overall. (Sage handbook 2010; Stredwik 2014; Creative HRM 2015)

At this point organizations still did not fully understand the importance of employees and their needs. Companies were managing effectiveness of processes that managed paperwork and the basic things in regards to staffing. (Sage handbook 2010)

During the 1970's various employment legislations were created and enforced, which lead to personnel management functions having specialist positions ensuring that managers would not violate laws in any way. (VinayKumar S. 2015)

Getting closer to the internet and various on-line tools, in the early 1990s employees were looking for more flexible work times as more and more contracts were part-time or temporary due to technological advancements and ability to work out of office. (VinayKumar S. 2015)

The growth of the internet skyrocketed development of sophisticated analytical tools. More and more people could be available 24 hours on every day of the week. This leads us to present time, where most of the interactions is carried out via some sort of technological tool and many more are used in our daily lives to make things easier and more accessible. (VinayKumar S. 2015)

2.1.1 Timeline

Various sources claim different historic dates for HRM development and so it is hard to narrow it down to certain date, however it is possible to look at milestones HRM has taken in its lifetime. These milestones can be seen in Figure 1. It describes the basic concerns from companies point of view and actions taken to improve the level of satisfaction within company in order to boost work effectiveness over time.

Timeline and milestones

First milestone (18th century) – right staffing, educating new workforce

Second milestone (early 20th) – Hiring the right workforce, hiring process meant that finding right person for the job was crucial and VERY beneficial to the overall success of the company.

Third milestone (mid/late 20th) – increase performance and productivity for employees as the company grows internationally, higher productivity only means more profits and better position in overall markets which further leads to more stability in the company.

Fourth milestone (21th century) – employee engagement, it is not company who chooses workers, but it is other way around, workers choose company, if people can't or do not feel part of the company, if work lacks engagement, they will change jobs and do it more and more until they find suitable workplace. This is bad for the company as they can lose their most valuable assets, employees in blink of an eye.

Figure 1: HRM development timeline and main milestones

2.1.2 Current theoretical HRM concepts

In current organization lifecycle it is important that it can acquire people who give a certain benefit to company. This can be some quality that an individual possesses or a certain group of skills that could work well within team. When attracting talent, it is important to know how it might fit in the organization, as this could have an immediate effect or delayed effect where it builds up slowly by achieving high performance at work place over the course of a certain period. (Stredwik 2014)

Most important for organizations is to create some sort of a system on how they attract, recruit, identify, retain and develop these individuals, because an employer can never know when one particular person can prove valuable in a specific position, task or project in the future. (CIPD 2017)

For companies to gain a competitive advantage they need to build a system that encourages systematic talent management, to maximize potential of all the employees. (CIPD 2017)

Talent management in companies focuses mainly on the following areas:

Attracting talent – this area of management makes sure best of the best people are applying for positions and that these people have high quality of qualification and experience. In cases where positions are open within company, promotion is a preferable option. (Stredwik 2014)

Retaining talent – once a person has been recruited, it needs to be made sure they are interested in their work, it is engaging in the long run. It also need to be made sure they have everything they need and they are satisfied with it. (Stredwik 2014)

Developing and managing – In order to avoid hiring new personnel due to lack of competency, it is important to train people and motivate them to develop skills and competencies within company, field of work. This becomes apperant when talking about promotions within company. (Stredwik 2014)

Rewarding talent – it is important to reward persons for good performance and keep them in check about possible rewards for future where they push themselves more to achieve new goals. (Stredwik 2014)

In this thesis, the focus is on attracting the talent aspect of HRM in order to understand the general mind-set of companies towards people looking for entry level positions in companies.

2.1.3 Employer Branding

Attracting more and more people to work for an organization is turning out to be simple way for the organizations to present themselves in a good way by creating the image that people respect, look up to and wish to work for them, making recruitment much more easy for companies.

This is something that has emerged in the last decade as companies try to engage their employees with their product in addition to presenting the company to the general public, making it a desirable workplace. The trick lies in combining good quality of values, work ethics and reward system. (Stredwik 2014)

Table 1 highlights different types of employers. In the model you can see that employer who does not have a high level of reward and organization culture is faced with "employee of churn", which in turn means that employer goes through a lot of employees and has hard time keeping them. This directly relates to employee retention mentioned earlier in talent management. An employer that has a high level of reward and organization culture is deemed as a quality employer brand that people would love to work for. At the end of the day a well organized company that pays well still has one missing variable and it is "fun", which describes how enjoyable and fulfilling work is for employee. Once a highly looked after company brand gains leverage it can compete in the job market and retain employees rather easily by adjusting its policies towards recruitment and retention engagement. This can also include development of the said employees and rewarding them appropriately. (Higgs 2004; Stredwik 2014)

High Level of reward Low	Employer of cash	Employer of choice (quality employer brand)
	Employer of churn	Employer of values
	Low　　　　Importance of culture　　　　High	

Table 1: Employer branding

The offer given out by the brand must look appealing to the employee. The more areas a brand can cover, the more valuable it becomes for the employees. It can be so simple that a company name carries that prestige with it, such as Microsoft, Apple, etc. Having such items on your resume could help greatly in the future bolster-

ing career development and gaining the desired position. (Stredwik 2014) Fun factor most definitely plays part in branding and how interesting work is. "Cool" can also be big factor for the younger generations; the wish to take part in companies that are doing new and innovative things such as Virgin. (Stredwik 2014)

It is possible that a big company is not something a person is looking for and instead a smaller scale business that works much more in close quarters is regarded as a valuable and more suitable option. (Sage handbook 2010)

These benefits can also be simple things such as flexible working hours, where person can work within a certain period of time during the day and leave in similar fashion. Similarly, various possibilities to travel the world could be very engaging for certain individuals.

Company values also play a big part in this, if values are described in detail and narrowed to certain few. It can be a tricky thing to achieve balance in if an employee does not feel that these values live up to their word within company. On opposing side if the given values are very general for company it can prove difficult to make them believable, as an example "emphasis on team work". (Sundberg 2017; CIPD 2017)

Lastly it is important that company brand is clear and closely connected to the employer brand. A great way to think about it is that an employee of the company has to have in their mind an idea of how his actions interact with the end customer even if he has nothing to do with them. Understanding the connection between the organization and the customer and how to best deliver products or services to end user. (Sundberg 2017; CIPD 2017)

An example of this would be Adidas "Mind, Body, Soul" slogan. Mind stands for development and innovation for employees. Body is all about how the company provides its employees with a healthy workplace and well-being options. Lastly Soul includes in itself things such as being environmentally responsible and working honestly as well as ethically. (Stredwik 2014)

2.2 HRM processes for identifying talent

People are more connected to each other via internet than they have ever been and this leads to more information being available to a broader audience which therefore informs people about, for example, positions in companies. Looking for people is much more about finding the right fit rather than finding person for the job. As HRM has grown throughout the years managing people is one of the most important of its tasks as the pool of available people is increasingly substantial. A correct fit could boost workflow within team, it can have an effect on how work is done between various parts of the company as well as be working towards supporting wider culture within a company and culling ego within company.

In order to find the right fit, an organization has to undergo basic recruitment steps such as understanding what is needed, creating the description of an open job position, figuring out what sort of a person would be prefered for the job, what sort of methods will be used to find the right person and where to look, advertise the position and possibly seek help from a third party to help with search. (Sage handbook 2010; Stredwik 2014)

2.2.1 Recruitment Policy

Every company has its own recruitment policy and what is should contain or should not in certain cases. However, most of the times this is closely connected to code of conduct within the company in order to be ethical.

This includes things such as development possibilities for current employees in order to be considered for a position without recruiting anyone from outside organization. Handling the application process quickly in a civil manner is crucial for finding good and qualified applicants. Ignoring factors not related to work or the applicant's ability to do work such as sex, race, age, disability, marital status or religion in addition to excluding any exaggerated or false requirements. (Stredwik 2014)

2.2.2   Detailed position description

When an organization has decided that a position needs to be created instead of dividing responsibilities of a job among current staff members, there are several steps that follow before the position can be filled. The company now has to investigate and describe the open position, the key features of the job and most often this is done by using job analysis. Followed up by research, a company should create an employee package, this includes things such as a description of a preferred person for the job, what qualities this person should have and what education or competencies would be required. Furthermore, the description includes possible working hours, salary range and other benefits that can be given to the candidate. (Thomason 1990; Stredwik 2014).

At times these job descriptions can also be rather specific, mentioning main duties, key responsibilities, exact work times and such. The description also serves as a form of performance management, where a worker can be evaluated against the required duties for the position he is in. (Stredwik 2014).

2.2.3   Job Sculpting

In the past years there has been a trend among global giants such as Google, Deloitte, where employees are the ones that are delegated to draw up their job description to the organization. This concept is called "job sculpting". The reason for a such different way of doing work is due to an idea that jobs are designed around individuals and companies should be flexible enough to accommodate them in order to great talents. It is a rather difficult concept as companies have to play a detective role and get to know the person better in order to understand what the person's true interests and things that drive him are. These interests, when accommodated, will make a person happy and this further will keep them from quitting. Being flexible and creativities are two main qualities that are needed in such big companies, i.e. having people who are confident and know how to use their skills to the organization's advantage as well as curiosity to learn more ways to do things is something these giants look for. (Butler & Waldroop 1999; Stredwik 2014)

Google's policy for flexibility is much emphasized. The "70-20-10" policy by which engineers go by, splits work in three distinctive parts. Firstly, 70 per cent of working time is main duties, further 20 per cent is allocated towards learning or developing skills that would help to the core work which is the first 70 per cent. Lastly, 10 per cent of the work time is left over for so called "blue-sky" thinking, where the employee is free to explore what he wants. (Brockett 2008)

2.2.4 Attracting applicants

Organizations can take this upon themselves. They can create forms and fill out all the data for a given position and manage their own application system. This takes substantial amount of effort and monetary funds and at times might not be as good as taking a ready system and looking for people there.

However, in addition to using an application system, there are several different types of third party recruitment options available to companies. Recruitment agencies are the most common used ones as they can handle everything by advertising, short listing candidates and providing list of possible choices of employees from their database. (Thomason 1990; Stredwik 2014). There has been significant shift in last decade from traditional mediums such as newspapers and fliers to more technical surroundings involving computers and various software.

Advertising agencies mainly handle advertisement placement (Thomason 1990) and in some cases they can assist with choosing the right medium for the advertisements.

Head-hunters is another option for organizations, however this is more often than not used for fulfilling executive positions within companies. Headhunters can approach candidates directly and without the general public knowing about it, if that is required. (Sage handbook 2010; Stredwik 2014)

Additionally, educational establishments, schools and colleges or universities serve as good places to look for inexpensive, inexperienced, but highly motivated pool of applicants. (Stredwik 2014) This is where most of the entry level applicants come

from. However, research published in 2017 by CIPD has shown that 32% of organizations that were involved are of a mindset that universities and colleges are not preparing young people well enough for what is required of them in an entry level position. (CIPD 2017)

Furthermore, word of mouth can be a very cheap and effective way of getting new applicants for various positions. Benefits would include not needing to go through huge majority of applications and person applying might already know a thing or two about the organization. On the other hand, word of mouth should not be used often as people who come out of it will be from a rather small group. (Stredwik 2014)

Approaching previous applicants is also viable option as individuals might have already been interviewed so the process can be quick. However, it can be so that the applicants are no longer interested in the position or they have found a new work place and are not available. (Sage handbook 2010; Stredwik 2014)

2.2.5 Selection Process

Selection is the most important element in hiring new staff members for an organization (Sage handbook 2010), this part of the process mainly focuses on eliminating as many people as possible through various activities and tools in order to narrow down the sample size to one candidate that is fit for the job. (Thomason 1990; Stredwik 2014) There have been cases where this process ends up leaving no one viable after all the selections have been made. In this case the company either has to start over and re-think it's needs and wants for the applicant, the second alternative is to take the closest match they got to the ideal person for the job. (Stredwik 2014) There is no go-to solution in this process that would yield a 100% effective result, because it is always case by case basis, each company is different. There are methods that are more reliable than others. (Sage handbook 2010)

Figure 2. shows the basic steps that most organizations will take on once they are ready to narrow down the number of applications to the bare minimum and make the final decision on who to recruit.
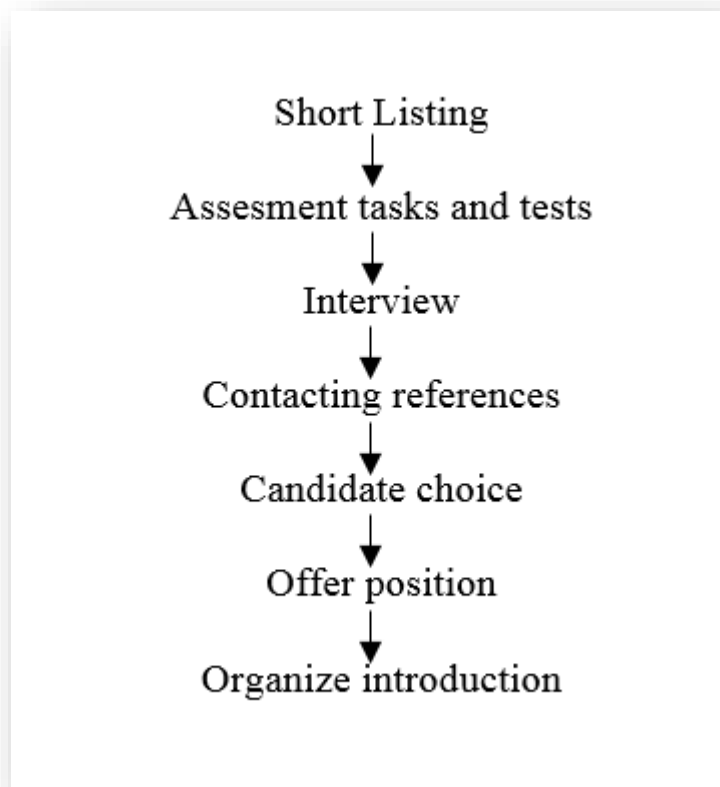
Figure 2: Selection process steps

2.3   Selection process

2.3.1   Short List

It is common practice to short list people in order to be able to find more suitable candidates that could be considered for the position. This is a highly variable process and is specific from position to position. (Thomason 1990) At times there can be more than 300 applicants for a single or several openings which would call for such actions from the human resources in order to produce several candidates that would be fit for the open position. In other cases, there might be only 3-5 people applying for the same position and this does not call for short-listing as all the applicants can be viewed much more easily. However, organizations might take another look at the job advertisement if a suitable person is not found. There are several ways to short-list applications.

The first method is to look over all the candidates at a glance, rejecting as many as possible until suitable amount that could be interviewed is left. (Thomason 1990) In such cases people can get rejected due to various reasons such as lack of experience, lack of skill set, resume style, photo, possible discrimination due to ethnicity, age or marital status can also occur. It is illegal and ethically unfair, however there are cases every year where this happens. (Stredwik 2014)

The second method involves organizations using set scores for each section of the resume, for instance a scale from 1 to 10 for education, work experience, interests, skills and such. Entry level requirements are created, the resumes are screened in order eliminating all that do not score enough and proceed with top scoring ones for interviews. It is recommended that managers and human resource persons do this separately and compare results at the end. Having two people doing this, is much more fair to the applicants and can help avoid possible discrimination issues, however doing so short listing might take significantly more time and resources. (Thomason 1990; Stredwik 2014)

An interesting discovery is short-listing is using phone calls to applicants. These can also be fixed into two categories, similar to ones mentioned previously. Having a person call a specific number and talk with a company representative, answering pre-set questions that are given to all the applicants and scoring points depending on his answers. By this method employer can possibly agree on an interview if a certain amount of points is reached depending on the answers. There can also be a slightly different method where an applicant would call the number and choose from preset answers by inputting a number on keypad. This way the system would automatically calculate points and advise on best candidates. By using this type of short-listing the applicant's way of communicating via phone and their ability to answer rather quickly can be observed. (Stredwik 2014)

A modern method that has been seen as most popular one out of all in recent years due to technological advancements is OCR, Optical Character Recognition, which if explained in short, read applicants' resumes with computer software. This artificial intelligence software is developed to scan texts and look for keywords, search terms and other criteria input by organization. After scanning a resume is saved

with a certain score and the resume a given ranking depending on the items found for easier overview in case this applicant seems to be interesting for the recruiter. Using this method frequently, speeds up the recruitment process significantly if compared to manually checking, however, it will most likely miss things due to poor resume design, font choice or even handwriting. It is possible that a person who is a perfect fit for the job, the software could not find enough key-words to rank his resume high enough and this leads to a good talent being overlooked. (Stredwik 2014) However, Eric Lochner, who is executive at Kenexa, one of the biggest employment companies worldwide, disagrees with last statement. He mentions that it is an applicant's fault that good talent is being overlooked and that they should instead of trying to create one resume for everyone, consider each and every opportunity as a whole separate venture and tailor their approach towards each job application specifically. (Bradford 2012)

BioData is a way for companies to break down candidates by using a point system, similar to the previously mentioned phone calls, based on the current employee's competencies. This form usually involves a multiple choice questionnaire, making it easier to analyze the results with computer software which is tailored specifically for each open position. Questions can include things about previous job experience, skills, problem solving tasks, interests and other choices. This form of short-listing only comes in practice if there are large numbers of new applicants for positions within a company that already has a substantial amount of employees from whom they can gather these biodata criteria. (Sage handbook 2010; Stredwik 2014)

2.3.2   Selection testing

Selection testing can be done as part of a selection process, however most often than not, it is done after initial selection has been done. Additional tests are made to check if the person chosen in the earlier step is the right person for the job, this can also serve as good selection step between shortlisting. In order to do that companies will provide people with various tests, these can be specifically crafted for the position or they can be as basic as simple personality tests, ability tests, etc. Employee compatibility can further be tested in an interview, however, recent studies have shown that organizations also like to use various tests to see if a person is

fit the position or if there are several candidates, finding the best fit among them. This is highlighted in Table 2, which shows the percentage of companies that are using tests as part of their selection process and how has this number increased over the last 45 years. (Thomason 1990; Stredwik 2014)

Year	Percentage use by large employers
1973	7
1986	21
1989	37
1991	50
1997	75
2004	82
2010	87

Table 2: Use of selection tests

There are hundreds of various tests organizations can use in order to test their future employees. These can include basic literacy or numerical tests, various ability or performance tests, personality tests and aptitude tests that measures person's ability to learn and acquire skills.

2.4   Who takes care of selection process within organization

The topic of who takes care of selection process within the organization has been discussed over the years by many professionals and companies alike. Some say human resources should be the ones taking care of the hiring and managing staff whilst others think that person taking care of the job knows more of what is required for the positon and what is needed for the company area in the particular job. At the end of the day the manager that is in charge has to create friendly, bonding relationship with the team. (Stredwik 2014) Healthy partnership between human resources and line manager is an essential part for the whole recruitment process. (Sage handbook 2010) This can be understood in the simple way of manager who needs someone to fill out a position, he knows what needs to be done, what is required and what is the open job position in the company. All this information can be further passed down to human resources who can then take care of their part in the equa-

tion, which is creating actual advertisements, agreeing upon pricing for various recruitment expenses, taking care of the needed training and arranging courses needed for newcomers. HR can also be responsible for various tests or practices used by organization, inform the line manager of the hiring process and assist with interviews and other administrative tasks. (Stredwik 2014)

Recruiters are the ones that decide who will be rejected and who will proceed to next step of the selection process. The selection process is important because it eliminates unqualified applicants from further selection process. Ugbah and Majors believe that most important items on entry level position college graduate student are work experience, level of education, followed by behavior during interview, motivation and their personality. (Ugbah & Majors (1992)

2.5 Technology in recruitment

According to Chubb, National Health Service has saved over 100 million pounds between the years 2005 and 2008 and this is due to the usage of technology. NHS received 95 per cent of applications on-line and 99 per cent of short listings were done online (Chubb 2008)

Almost any company you encounter in modern times has its own website and practically every one of those organizations are using part of it for recruitment purposes. Company websites were regarded as the most effective recruitment tool in a 2017 CIPD survey. (CIPD 2017)

Furthermore, the online job boards, places where you can post your recruitment offers, were regarded as second and third most used method by hiring organizations. (CIPD 2017) There are two different types of online job boards, ones that are general and combine every area these were ranked 3rd, the other being the type that is area or field specific professional networking sites, these could be medical or construction related, for example. (CIPD 2017)

Technology has not only advanced in the terms of internet connectivity but also in ability to scan documents, for example scanning CVs and determining if various

characteristics of a person such as education, qualifications and experience match to that of the open position.

Application tracking software are intricate systems that offer complete management and an overview of recruitment process as a whole. The main purpose is to draw information from applicants and insert it in the database from which you can later find suitable applicants for all the positions filtered by criteria. It is possible to know where applicants came from, how they found out about the job opening, in order to increase effort in advertising in a specific area and decrease costs. This sort of system allows company recruiters to give out tests to people who they have filtered out of all the applicants by selecting for example, education, experience, skills or other information. Such systems also allow to send e-mails either rejecting or accepting applicants. (Doyle 2018)

As the software market develops, bigger companies can develop creative application solutions for attracting applicants and directing them to their open positions.

Another outlet that is more and more commonly used is social media web sites for recruiting people. These usually have some information that a person has not disclosed on their resume or cover letter. It can work both ways, to a person's advantage or disadvantage (Stredwik 2014). While this can be used to gain more insight about a person it is technically unethical and slightly illegal to use this newly gained information from social media, if not given by a person himself, against a person, typically recruiters are only allowed to go on from what a person has given to them, if that is not enough information to make a decision, they can move to the next applicant. (MEAE 2018) However, an example of allowed practices is showed by is CERN, the world's largest particle physics laboratory, who hold weekly Q&A on Facebook with one of the recruiters as a host. CERN also uses LinkedIn forums for various discussions and occasionally Twitter answers. (Stredwik 2014)

CERN has increased the number of applications from 7,000 to 24,000 in just three years by using social media platforms to connect with people. (cook 2012)

2.6 Issues with technology

There is some stigma about online applications among professionals who think the new recruitment methods are not entirely covered when it comes to new age technological tools. One of the bigger issues such as the fact that each and every applicant that wants to have a chance at a position has to fill out a long online application that is very time consuming and after the form has been completed it is answered mechanically. Quite many people still would like to not be judged mechanically and filtered out quickly by the system because the right key words were not applied. People prefer companies with human face and human interaction. (Bradford 2012; Stredwik 2014) Another important factor is that online media, research by Microsoft in 2010, showed that 40 per cent out of 1000 employers have chosen not to hire employee due to negative results encountered online while the remaining 60 per cent found no moral hazard checking online profiles before making final decision on hiring person. (Stredwik 2014)

Online psychometric tests, which are used as a part of application process, tend to short list over 90 per cent of applicants. (Dulewicz 2004)

Phone applications as a tool do not seem to work very well due to main issue being the loss of a face-to-face connection and a relationship that is created when meeting someone in person. This is followed by the fact that during a normal interview process questions can be repeated or explained in a different manner, whilst on the phone it is a one-way ticket.

A study done by "The Driver Is" conducted that only nine out of 33 job seeking agencies that offered emails whenever a new job is posted sent out emails to their clients informing them of the opportunities, while others simply collected information. (Welch 2003)

3   RESUMES

3.1   What is resume?

A resume is a formal document, usually one to three pages long, that lists a person's education and work history in addition to skills and interests. These areas can further be emphasized by achievements and goals that have been reached in the previous positions. Resumes are used when applying for almost any white or blue collar job.

The main purpose for a resume is to summarize a person's qualifications and skills in order to create a positive image in the employer's eyes. A good resume can give an employer all the information needed before an interview to understand if this person could be suitable for the position. In addition to a resume it is advised to also submit a cover letter that can possibly describe an applicant's skills in more detail related to open position. (Sage handbook 2010; Stredwik 2014; Investopedia 2018)

3.2   Basic Resume Formats

There is a limitless amount of combinations for resumes in current times, however some formats are still more popular than others. Most notably a resume format that has been used most commonly throughout the 20th century is black text on white background describing your education, job experiences and few little details about yourself. It is still a very popular way to do a resume, however a resume is made electronically more often than not today.

3.2.1   A Chronological Resume Format

A chronological resume consists of a candidate's experiences from the past listed in a chronological order starting from the most recent to the earliest one following up with education in reverse chronological order as well. This can be further expanded with extra information about other activities a person is partaking in addition to interests and further life goals. This is the most common resume type. The main reason for choosing this format would be motivated by a person's career steps,

to see how the career has developed over the years and what the strong and impact-ful choices have been. (Ryland & Rosen 1987; Doyle 2017)

3.2.2 A Functional Resume Format

The functional resume format similarly as the previous one puts a lot of effort into making certain sections of the resume stand out. In this case, instead of having described dates and growth of the person over time, the focus is put on what skills, characteristics the person has developed over the years. This, again can be further used to justify application for a possible position, or modified towards it. It can at times leave out employment history completely. This type of a resume format rather easily masks poor work history, due to strong focus on skills gained and impact of these said skills on work life performance and therefore is suggested for people with wide range of job history (Ryland & Rosen 1987; Doyle 2017) or someone who has gaps in between jobs.

3.2.3 A Combination Resume Format

A combination resume format is combination of chronological and functional resume. The top section of the resume is used for a person's skills and qualifications while below you can find work history in a chronological order. The main focus for this type of a resume is to highlight skills that you have and think are relevant for the position followed by a brief chronological history of your work experience. A combination resume helps you show the best qualities you have for the job and how they relate to the job, while still outlining the basic work history for the employer. (Doyle 2016)

3.2.4 An Infographic Resume Format

Design elements are rather new to resumes and tricky to pull-off if you are not an experienced designer. In addition, they might work against you even if designed by a professional due to companies using various ways to short-list resumes; having infographics, information might be missed when a system is processing these resumes. Particularly when organizations are looking for specific keywords within a

resume, they might not be able to recognize text within design. This type of a resume might hurt your application if executed poorly and in most cases it is not recommended. Keeping it simple and readable and following the basic design guidelines in addition to including your name, academic background and work history should do the trick. (Doyle 2017)

3.2.5 A Profile Resume Format

At the very top of the resume page is short overview of an applicant's qualifications which the employer can read and see if there is something that is desired for the positon. This is followed by simple listing of educations, related experiences with task descriptions in chronological form. (Doyle 2018)

3.2.6 A Psychological Resume Format

This type of a resume format would be found very rarely and mostly non-existent in 21st century, but it's worth mentioning nonetheless. It is based on research and theory in psychological science. The main focus was not to create mind-boggling resume, on the contrary it was simple and by using impression formation principles of priming together with information about a person's work experience and education levels included in the resume. The trick lies in preparing the interviewer for future items within this resume. This way a person who reads the resume will get general idea of the applicant and builds an image in his mind differently than previous methods. (Aamodt, 1991)

Phillips and Dipboye (1989) have done research that shows an interesting correlation between how people react when they read resumes and when decisions are made. It turns out that the better image a person has created in their readers mind before the interview the more favorable the outcome for the employee will be. To further solidify effectiveness of this Tucker and Rowe (1979) found that choosing an applicant is closely connected to the earlier impressions made by the employer towards the person. (Tucker and Rowe 1979; Ryland & Rosen 1987; Dipboye 1989; Aamodt 1991; Toth 1993)

3.3 Digital systems

As the internet became more popular and technologies advanced, video resumes became a thing for people to create and showcase themselves in front of the camera. This way future employers would not only be able to see a person's qualifications on a blank application form but see them show their skills and knowledge in front of the camera and possibly other characteristics that are hard to write down on a piece of paper, communication skills for one. However, this can also be harmful to the applicants due to racial or sex discrimination. Within the past few years, creative online resumes on various social media sites are also considered good alternative for the applications.

3.3.1 A Video resume

Formats for video resumes can vary significantly, the length, format, style and location are all dependent on the person and job applied for. Often video resumes can also include graphical items such as animations, texts and examples of work or skills.

Queensland tourist board created a project for recruitment where they asked people to market themselves in a 30 to 60 second video showcasing their creative thinking and why they should be chosen. A total of 34 000 video applications were submitted. (Queensland Tourist Board Australia, 2009)

A search conducted by Gissel in 2011 found that sites such as Youtube.com would yield a total of 10 900 hits with keywords "video resume" while searching google.com would have 49,300,000 results. (Gissel, Thompson, Pond, Meade, 2011).

Today, in 2017, this number is significantly higher, averaging about 6,620,000 hits, that is roughly 600 times more videos in just six years. Similar growth, while not as significant is searching google.com, six years later it only yields about 113 000 000 hits. This, however, can be easily explained by the fact that there are limitless resources on guidance on how to create such resumes while people are actively creating video resumes more and more every year.

3.3.2 Employment forms

Employment forms are considered an important tool in the recruitment process by bigger companies. Generally, due to the nature of employment forms, an organization can set up certain fields of interest, basic data of education, work experiences, interests, skills and comments which can further describe all of the above. This allows companies to avoid various discrimination factors that normal or even digital or video resumes can offer. These forms are accurate and easy to use, filter and find what you are looking for, however, they only offer a base for the applicants. For this reason, most often there is chance to add your own personal resumes to the employment form.

These forms tend to be regarded as tedious and repetitive work, due to information correlation between the forms and the resume. (Udechukwu & Manyak 2009)

Research has also concluded that resumes provide a means for an applicant to market himself / herself the ways he wants to his / her possible future employers. This in combination with consistency from employment forms, where all the applicants are compared in a similar fashion by making sure all local regulatory norms are taken into consideration and complement each other. (Udechukwu & Manyak 2009)

3.3.3 Media websites

More and more people are using the internet world wide. As shown in Figure 3, Finnish people are using the internet very actively. Especially older people have gotten more involved with the new media. (Official Statistics of Finland, 2016)
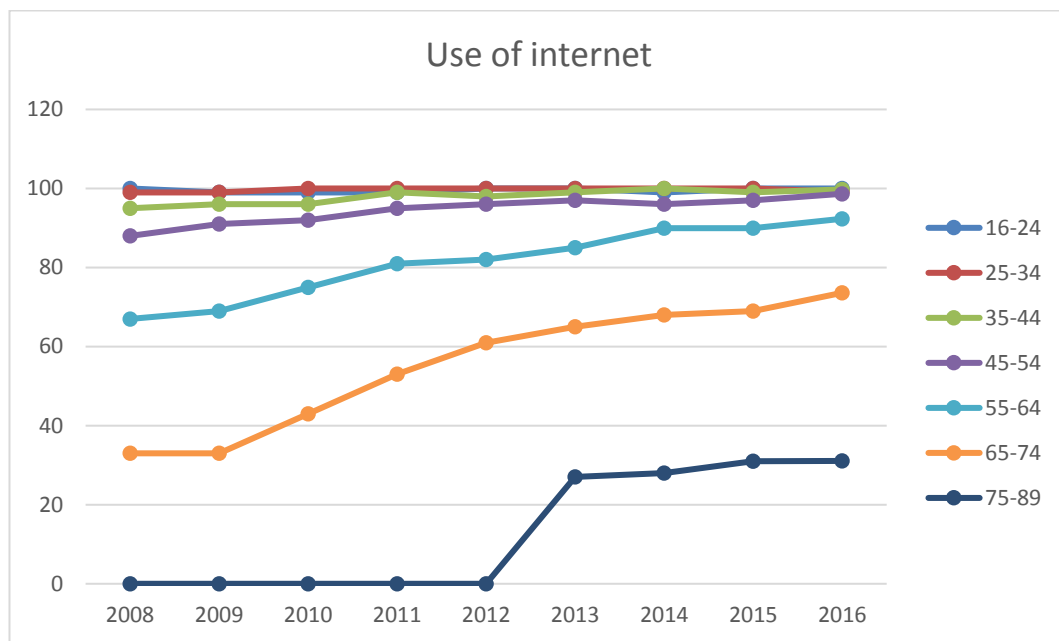
Figure 3: Use of internet in Finland

This extensive usage of the internet is exactly the reason why companies are trying to become more involved with different media websites such as Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. These resources help greatly not only to advertise and show off a brand, but also to gain possible new candidates. Figure 4. highlights the significant growth over the years not only on on-line social media resources, but the number of people who use these resources in Finland on daily basis. (Official Statistics of Finland, 2016)
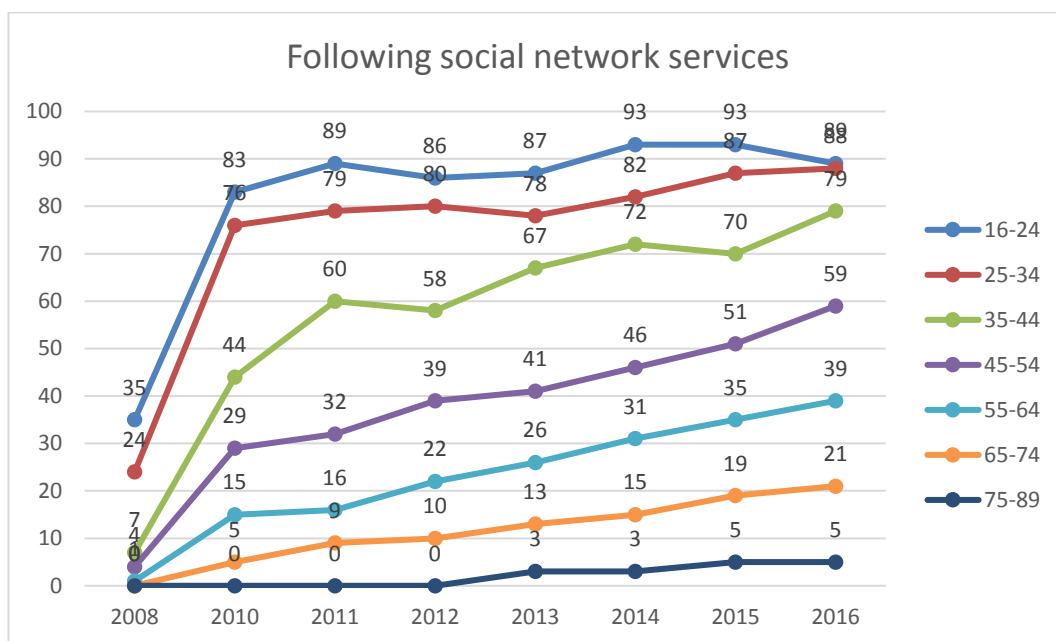
Figure 4: Following social network services in Finland

4 RESEARCH METHODS

This section of the thesis will describe the different research methods available and which of the data collection methods are used in this study.

4.1 Methods

There are several ways of collecting data. Two of the most used ones are qualitative and quantitative research methods.

Qualitative research method means that the responses are given in words and cannot be analyzed in numbers. In other words, qualitative research does not provide statistical data but focuses more on different perceptions and opinions. This method gives very rich and detailed results; it can show how people feel or what do they think of a topic. (Macdonald & Headlam 2009) In qualitative research interviews are used quite commonly and there may not be structured questionnaires. Common ways to conduct this type data collection is small group discussions, personal interviews, participation and observation of it.

The quantitative research method is more focused on generating numbers or any other type of data that can be transformed into statistics. This means that the data is less personal, which further leads to less bias being present in responses, however surveys might have poor performance when it comes to validity and or reliability.

Each of the research methods has its positives and negatives, Table 3 highlights the key features between both of the research methods.

Type of method	Quantitative	Qualitative
Aim	The aim is to count things in an attempt to explain what is observed	The aim is a complete, detailed description of what is observed.
Purpose	Generalizability, prediction, causal explanations	Contextualization, interpretation, understanding perspectives
Tools	Researcher uses tools, such as surveys, to collect numerical data	Researcher is the data gathering instrument.
Data Collection	Structured	Unstructured
Output	Data is in the form of numbers and statistics	Data is in the form of words, picture or objects.
Sample	Usually a large number of cases representing the population of interest. Randomly selected respondents	Usually a small number of nonrepresentative cases. Respondents selected on their experience.
Objective/Subjective	Objective - seeks precise measurement & analysis	Subjective - individuals' interpretation of events is important
Researcher role	Researcher tends to remain objectively separated from the subject matter.	Researcher tends to become subjectively immersed in the subject matter
Analysis	Statistical	Interpretive

Table 3: McDonald & Headlam – Quantitative vs. Qualitative

4.2   Data collection

In this study personal interviews are used as a method of collecting data, because it is a good way of acquiring deeper knowledge about the subject and getting more in-depth results that can be further compared against theory and other interviews alike. The interviews were conducted mostly face to face by using different kinds of questions that were designed beforehand. If it was not possible to make face to

face interviews in every case, on-line interviews were used as an alternative. Each interview length was approximately 30 minutes.

The sample of this research consists of four people from three different companies in Vaasa area. The specialists participating in the study were not chosen based on company size, instead they were randomly selected and interviewed. This was done in order to get a better understanding of recruitment as well as selection processes as whole. Random factor was the main goal in understanding this field of work more in-depth. Sample size consisted of two HR specialists and two hiring managers, further on one of the HR specialists worked for the same company as the hiring manager, which allowed for comparison between a situation where both are present compared to having only one of the parties involved.

4.3 Interview Questions

The interview questions were created before each interview process and used as a backbone and main guideline during discussion expanding on each separately as the conversation went on. This template was modified after each meeting to accommodate new things that might have come up within previous discussions. Such modifications were done to keep questions similar for all the interviews and to get as much information as possible from various points of view on exactly the same issues.

Each interview consisted of 20 to 25 generalized questions, which were further explored depending on the person. Most of the questions are based on the theory gathered in the first part of the thesis.

4.4 Validity and Reliability

Whenever research is conducted there are two key components that need to be measured; these are validity and reliability. Both of the things ensure the credibility of the research.

Validity stands for quality of research. This means that research findings represent exactly what the researcher claims to be measuring. (Reliability and Validity 2018)

Furthermore, there are two types of validity; Internal validity is making sure that tools used in research are measuring what needs to be measured and external validity assesses if the research results can be generalized in similar setting.

Reliability is a level of consistency among results over course of certain period, meaning that no matter how many times measured, every time research would yield same or very similar results. (Reliability and Validity 2018)

5 RESEARCH RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter will present the empirical research results. The finding will be compared to each other as well as the general theory from this paper. The interview questions were split into two sections. The first section focuses on the theoretical framework from thesis, the goal is to take one chapter at a time and compare it against real time examples from several sources. The second section focuses on visualizing these aspects in form of four premade example resumes, where the key factor is not text but visual representation. This is to see if different types of resume formats actually exist and how they stand against each other if the text is not a factor in the decision. The varying amount of text on each of the resumes due to design differences could lead to interesting results.

5.1 Section one - Recruitment process

5.1.1 Do you enjoy the recruitment process? What are the parts you do not like or would like to avoid doing?

To my surprise almost everyone answered positively, saying that there was nothing unlikable about the job, in fact the job itself was actually fun and entertaining, which was further argumented by the fact that you get to meet a lot of interesting and smart people throughout the process. Everyone who was interviewed had several years of experience in the field and, of course, education in the particular area of expertise. However, the first and most important dislike was waste of time as a resource due to high volumes and / or inadequate candidates applying for the position. Secondly, a technical factor within company, more specifically communication technology between hiring managers and HR personnel was cumbersome and not very liked due to various forms and fields that needed to be kept up to date. This points directly at the technology being an issue and not a very though out system.

5.1.2 What is the hardest / most challenging thing you run into on daily basis?

A quick and simple answer given by everyone was, communication is solely the biggest challenge. Understanding what is needed within the company and communicating that properly to possible applicants as well as colleagues within company was not the easiest task.

5.1.3 Does your company have specific systems in place to help with recruitment?

Persons A, C and D all have been using systems that their respective companies have acquired and shaped over the course of several years, cutting out things that are not working very well or are not often used. All the procedures within application systems are being tracked. By monitoring these systems, companies can adjust which fields people can fill out. This way they can get a better overview on personal information.

As a matter of fact, person A was saying similarly to what Bradford and Stredwik emphasize in regard to technology in recruitment, that filling out long forms is a tedious process and people are less and less motivated to complete them the more they do them. Further A continued saying that their company has drastically reduced the amount of fields applicants have to fill out, this correlates very much with the fact that people tend to get discouraged more often than not when they are asked to fill out dozens of fields just to get a rejection letter at the end of the day. Person A also mentioned that possibly due to this limitations, they have experienced increase in applications.

Not all companies are using their own electronically managed application system, Person B stated that there was no need for such a system within the given company due to its size and the number of open positions that are available at any given time.

Person A mentioned that company is also working daily with their own artificial intelligence, teaching it new things every day. This system should eventually be more or less able to absorb quite a few common daily tasks and let the recruiters

focus their efforts on other recruitment related activities and spend less time sorting through a large number of resumes in search for few good candidates to approach and interview.

5.1.4   How does your company advertise job postings?

The theory mentions that more and more companies are using new media sources and even posting job openings on social media.

The results slightly contradict this statement as shown in Figure 5. Persons A, C and D used other applications, sources such as recruitment companies, their own website and on-line media, most notably LinkedIn and Twitter. However, all of the mentioned sources would still redirect people to the application system of the company which would result in the person filling in the same application as others. LinkedIn was left out as a special case scenario, where people would sometimes send information directly, which then would void the application system step.
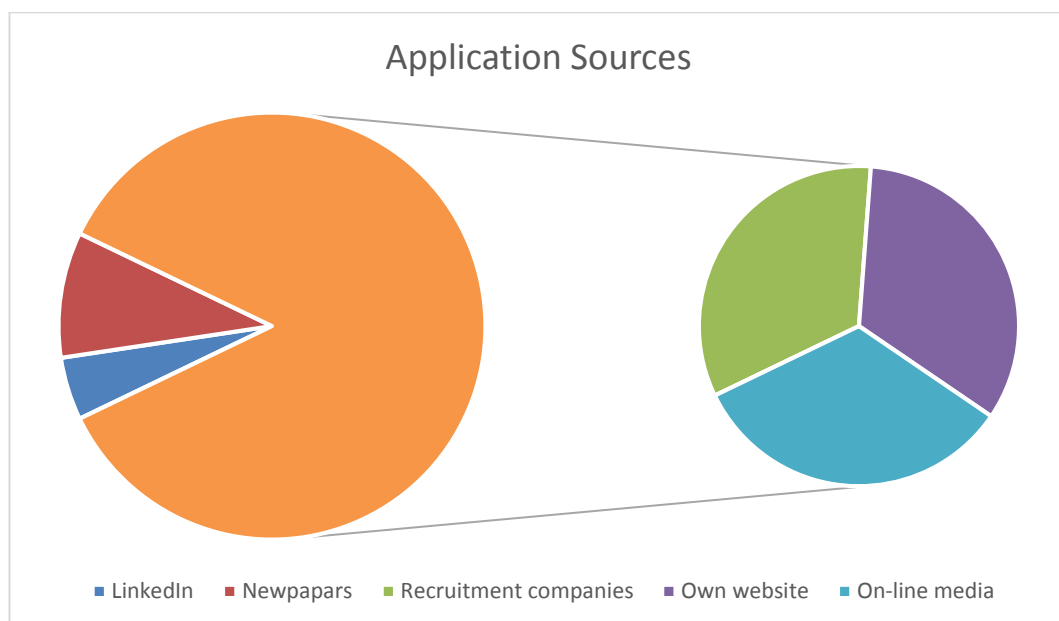

Figure 5: Application sources

Persons B's company on other hand, has tried using various recruitment companies with no success. They achieve great success for the application handling process fully themselves without any specific technical systems in place, but with simple email where persons describe their motivation similarly to motivation letters and

adds their resume along with other necessary attachments. Surprisingly the company is using media channels such as newspapers and radio to their advantage, person B also noted that they take advantage of LinkedIn and Twitter occasionally.

An interesting insight as to how long companies hold their job postings open. Person A mentioned that they do have closed term and open term openings, shortly it means that closed term have specific opening time frame in which an applicant needs to be found, while open term is open all year long to substitute people getting sick or not being able to work on certain days or quitting the company. Open term is for tasks where previous knowledge is not so much required, for example cleaning or storage work.

Person B said that job postings are created and re-posted until suitable applicants are found and the position has been filled. There is no time frame limit for that.

Persons C and D mentioned a limit of two weeks per job posting, before it is taken down and re-done in case there was no suitable applicant found. However, they also mentioned that the company holds within their application system a list of people who might be interested in various positions noted by themselves, if the criteria match, they contact these people before publishing the job posting. This way they can avoid extra work with agencies and possibly hundreds of inquiries.

5.1.5   Do you get any kind of training related to recruitment? And does your company have internal policies for recruitment?

Everyone answered affirmatively regarding company policies involving recruitment, there were comments regarding these being just guidelines and not a step by step guide.

As for training, Persons B, C and D said they do not have any training on recruitment and how it should be done when further inquiring about the application systems made by person-s C and D. In fact, there was no actual training, just a brief rundown from the supervisor about what system is being used and how to do basic functions, the rest was to be figured out on your own as you go. Thankfully the

systems were not very complex in both cases. This corporate decision was motivated by the fact that the persons have already acquired education in the particular area and the application system was not very hard to grasp. Person C mentioned possible extra courses as a way of learning more, however, there was no need for it in the particular case.

Person A's case was slightly different, in this situation the employer also assumed the fact that education was present, however special courses were given on the process and how to go about it. Additionally, applicant cases were discussed closely the employees to learn and practice the type of work that will have to be done. This combined with extra course possibilities if a person was interested, seems as a good way to introduce someone to the position.

5.1.6 How many people are handling the recruitment process and interview?

The results on the number of people handling the recruitment process and interview was surprisingly different. As theory indicates, most of the companies try to avoid having face-to-face interviews where only two people are present, this is due to various reasons related to evaluating applicants and having more than one opinion of a person without personal biases.

In spite of this person A mentioned that there is only one person present in job interviews. This was justified with getting as similar as possible reactions by asking exactly the same questions for all the applicants in an interview, by doing this you could easily separate people of your choice. The whole recruitment process usually involved three people, a manager, a recruiter and a psychologist, the last one mainly focused on creating tests for positions and understanding what person is needed for the job from personal interaction point of view.

Person B and D said that interviews and the process usually only involves at most two people, the recruiter and someone from the department who would be working with the person on a daily basis and could ask more specific questions related to the job.

Person C noted that the process in itself can involve up to 5 people. This is surprisingly high number of personnel used to pick one candidate as interviews would be held with the help of three or in rare cases four people.

5.1.7 Is there any extra research done in the background for resumes / people?

Everyone answered no in a similar fashion, due to discrimination Act that permits employers from using information not provided by person against them when hiring.

This was explicitly mentioned by persons A and C, who said that you can look at, for example at Facebook information or a twitter feed, but you cannot use it when making a judgement call.

Everyone was professional about not using extra research information against applicants and the interviewees mentioned that it would take a drastic amount of time to actually check every single person thoroughly by using media sites, instead they rely on the information the applicant has given to them and if that is not sufficient they simply short-list the person. This leads us to the next question.

5.1.8 How often do you contact references?

Every interviewee said that they call at least 1 reference, even if the job is as simple as mopping the floor.

Person B said that references are usually used in the later stages of recruitment process to confirm the person once, for example, five applicants have been chosen.

Person C pointed out that it depends on the position, there can be two random calls if three references are given.

Person D noted that references might in rare cases also say negative things about an applicant. If this is the case, then other references are usually contacted.

5.1.9 Do interests play a role in recruitment?

No one said that interests do not matter, so we can only assume they do to some extent. For example, person B stated that it can give an angle on the applicant and a little bit of an insight about the person, however, at the end it is other things that the company is looking for, actual experiences or skills. Person D was of a strong opinion that if interests are mentioned they should be more than simple one word on the paper for each item, rather have short explanation about the interests, something that describes you more as a person. This was further expanded on by Person A and D, who mentioned that interests could possibly play a crucial role in recruitment, mainly because people who recruit can relate to different interests themselves. There are many skills that people acquire without actually realizing it. A good practice would be to describe in short little about hobbies and interests within the resume as more and more companies tend to look for personalities rather than applicants that look good on paper. This can be seen in Figure 6, which showcases how much more information short description can give about person.

Option 1 Leave blank, no interests or hobbies

Option 2 Simple text, not very informative
- Photography

Option 3 Short description of interest of hobby
- I like photography, this means I know when to zoom in and focus on something specific and when to zoom out and see the bigger picture.

Figure 6: Describing interests or hobby

5.1.10 Does amount of previous positions affect applicant?

The question was created to see if having ten positions over the course of 5-10 years is positive or negative for applicant when applying.

Having as many as ten different positions over the course of 5-10 years can be seen as disadvantage, if it is related to jumping between jobs, however, if this is more or less because jobs was not available for longer periods it could be justifiable when explained accordingly. Person B mentioned that they pay close attention to timeframe, how well it is filled out, this mainly points that the person is interested and motivated to work in one place and not skipping jobs or being away for long periods of time. Person C further mentions that if there are in fact gaps, it would be good to explain why they are there, for example if the person works for some years and then decides to travel around the world for a few years, comes back and tries to get a new job. By explaining this gap when person was traveling the world it would be preferable to argument what was learned or experienced that might help in future. That way the employer would not form his own ideas about the situation, for example, have you been in jail? Person A and D were of the same mindset adding that two to three latest positions, if available, should be described in little more detail than any other job beforehand on the timeline. Simple tasks, skills and knowledge gained would be enough.

Person A added that removing items from the timeline is not a negative thing, if the person wants to target a specific job and filter out un-related items from the resume, however, as person C said, you have to keep in mind that the employer does not know what you have done in between jobs and it would be good to describe it. Additionally, it can be seen similarly to what Person D stated in regard to interests, the recruiter can relate to things you have done that might not be necessary for the position, if a short explanation of gained skills is presented.

5.1.11 Has your mood affected your decisions when recruiting?

Everyone unanimously agreed that their mood does not play a role in the recruitment or the selection process, it is their job and they take it seriously. However, that does not stop them from making some bad decisions.

5.1.12 What characteristics would you like to see on a winning resume?

*Timeline – try to include as much as possible leaving no gaps and if gaps exist, shortly explain them, preferably with some other activity.

*Interests & Hobbies – shortly explain in order for the recruiter to get an image of you and what skills and knowledge you have gained from your activities.

*Education (all degrees) – shortly describing what was learned and main subjects.

*Work Experience - two or three latest ones explained little more in detail, for the rest main tasks would be sufficient.

*Extra information – such as driver's license, first aid or similar courses, language skills, any attachments for extra activities or certificates.

5.1.13 Job sculpting, does that exists in Finland?

The answers were not very surprising, the general mindset was that people who are hired do jobs at 110% efficiency, it would be hard to imagine them working only 70% of the time, while spending 20% improving their knowledge and 10% of the time relaxing and thinking about new ideas.

Persons A, C and D mentioned training courses that are offered by companies which can be seen as something similar to the above mentioned work scheme, however, it is not as straightforward.

Everyone was of the same mindset that job sculpting sounds interesting, it would be plausibly beneficial for everyone, in theory at least.

Person A mentioned that every company is always looking for a 20 year old person who has 30 years of experience and ability to work 150% every day.

In addition to that persons A and D said that they do look for more than what the job requires if possible, this way you might get more flexible people with a wider range of interests or skills.

5.1.14 What are the sources of resumes and applicants?

As previously mentioned in regard to company advertisement generally companies receive applications in their own system or directly in their email. However, person C mentioned that more often in recent times resumes are also submitted via

LinkedIn. Similarly, person D pointed out that more and more people are using video hosting websites such as youtube.com or vimeo.com for uploading and show-casing their video resumes, opposed to Person C who added that video resumes are present, however, they are rather rare, but most of them are checked as they are still very unique. On other hand Person B mentioned that they have had great success with more traditional sources, such as newspaper advertisements.

5.1.15 Key steps in recruitment and selection process.

This question was focused towards getting to know the step by step process for hiring people and how well it correlates to theoretical framework shown in figure 2.
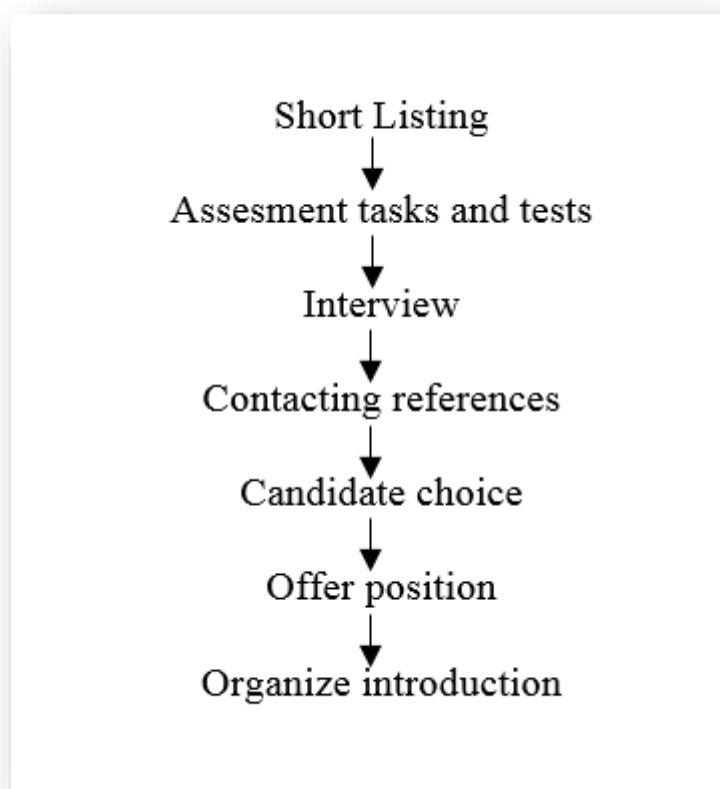

Figure 2: Selection process steps

Generally, the process was handled by following the steps shown in the Figure 2 in each company with a few exceptions. Person B said that tests are done before the final candidate choice instead as a part of short listing. Person D added that there were no tests conducted in the process chain for that particular area. It is safe to assume that theory is accurate on a general level in addition to companies not wanting to make drastic changes in this particular area as it works well and produces good results.

5.1.16 How do you short list people with what criteria?

Short listing seems to be rather different for each company and each person involved in the process. All the recruiters were of the same opinion that always keep in mind what is being looked for and pick out the criteria that is very broad but mandatory, such as language skills, possibly education backgrounds, age levels, previous job experiences, things that the person for the position should have according to job advertisement, and this can be more or less right fit, depending on the person. The same is true for interests.

Person B checks every single resume at first glance going over the main criteria in his mind for the position, so did person A noting that interests were a great insight into a person's personality. Person C was of a similar opinion, saying that applicants should understand that they need to create an image out of nothing for recruiters and more often than not, resumes and motivation letters are read.

Person A, B, D said that they rarely read motivation letters in the first go, however Person C was of the opposing opinion saying that a motivation letter has more information, if written well than a resume as it shows why the person thinks he is right for the job and why he should be picked.

Additionally, Person B was very specific about keeping your history up to date, meaning not leaving empty spots in the resume. Person C saw having empty spots as good way for the applicant to tell more about himself, leaving things that are not related to the position and possibly describe empty spaces in a motivation letter, letting the recruiter know what was the reason and what was learned possibly or just giving insight into a person's life, as after all they might be future colleagues.

5.1.17 Do you use any tests for applicants?

Not only tests are rather common, but companies also employ psychologists to help them with recruitment and creating job postings. To start off, every recruiter said that they use tests when recruiting people, however the tests are not applicable for positions such as trainees, interns or some starter jobs for example cleaning, basic assembly work etc.

Person B noted that tests are given only to a final group of selected applicants to help decide which one would be the best choice, finalize their decision on one or more applicants. These tests are crafted specifically for this position by an external company that is specialized in doing this.

Person C applies similar strategies for tests, which are given to applicants after the first interview round has been done in case there is need for round two. These can be made in form of a normal questionnaire consisting of dozen of questions related to personality or work tasks, test can also be done in video form or possibly as a video call where a person answers some questions, extra to what has been discussed in an interview. These usually are set before the testing phase, so that everyone would have exactly the same framework. Tests are created specifically for each position by HR specialists within the company in cooperation with hiring managers to get the best results with what is needed.

Persons A's perspective on tests was slightly different than the two above mentioned. These can be simple basic questionnaires made by psychologists who work out an intricate question design with clever choices that showcase certain aspects of personalities. Additionally, that company also creates various simulation environments where persons can work for a day in company, see if they like it and how the atmosphere, tasks and co-workers are. This can be followed by a trial period if the given applicant has been chosen. Interestingly enough Person A mentioned that people often quit during trial period because they do not like job, rather than get fired for not doing the job properly. The above method is not applied to all the positions.

Person D has not applied any tests to the jobs as positions do not require such extensive checkup of personnel.

5.1.18 Do you have any issues with technology when recruiting?

Communication aspects were mentioned by Person C to be present when using recruitment software, especially when many people are involved.

Person A gave an example of a recently updated recruitment system, not only did it become easier to use, but it had many more options in the ways you can search people and select applicants based on multitude of criteria. Very notable was also the change in amount of applicants, it had increased significantly due to ease of use on their part, not too much initial information was required to be filled out, it was rather scanned from resumes, if further questions needed to be known, the person was contacted. The old system also had major flaw was if people failed to fill out certain fields they would quite often be taken out of the equation, however, the new search functions allow taking them into consideration as well.

5.1.19 Have you had situations where you invite a person to job interview and you have created an image in your mind of him, but the person is completely different when you meet?

Persons A, B, D all agreed that they have had such encounters several times, they would read a person's resume and motivation letter and by doing so an image of person would be created and compared to other applicants. When later invited to an interview, the person could possibly surprise them and be even better than imagined in the application process, however there have also been countless times when the created image has far exceeded what the person would actually bring to the table. This seems to be something that is very hard to measure and put in perspective when handling applications.

Person B mentioned time when an applicant was invited to an interview, a resume and application were fine for the job, however, when the said person arrived, the first few moments gave a negative impression to the recruiter and the interview was held only because it was scheduled and not for the reason that this person seemed

like a good candidate. This again quickly changed over the course of the interview as applicant not only showed a different side of his / her personality but also exceeded the recruiter's expectations, which lead to hiring the person.

Person D talked about video resumes and how quite often a person is completely opposite of what was presented in a video. This is one of the reasons that video resumes are treated with care and quite often not considered during a recruitment process, instead they are looked at after an interview to gain possibly different view on a person or simply more insight into a person. The main problem is that people can rehearse and do dozens of takes before submitting the video. Person A agreed with the above saying that their system allows for multiple tries recording or even your own video link, however, there are also systems that only allow for one recording to avoid people practicing. Figure 7, highlights difference between reality and theory against information gained in research interviews.

Figure 7: Video resumes; Reality & theory against interview results

5.2   Section two – Resume formats

The second section of the interview questions focused on four example resumes, attached: appendix 1-4.

For an easy overview appendix 1 will be called as number 1 resume, appendix 2 will be called as number 2 resume, appendix 3 will be called as number 3 resume and finally appendix 4 will be called resume number 4.

All four resumes were created according to the earlier mentioned, but not exclusively one or another resume formats. It was said that finding a good mix between style and text is the key depending on the position which the person is applying for. This will be explained below.

5.2.1 Which one out of the given four resumes you would consider as the most favorable one in your opinion?

Interviewees said that resume number one is a clear winner. This was mainly due to the amount of information on the page, short and informative explanations for each previous job experience, a slightly longer description of the latest job as well as information given related to interests and hobbies and given extra information about skills and knowledge, language section and achievements gained in a short time span of the applicant's time studying and working. The resume was well set up when it came to design and placement of items, interests were less important and this were on a side, together with languages, the latest job experiences were on the very top while education was on the very bottom next to references. One page was the perfect summary for such an entry level resume, mentioned Person C.

Similarly, Person B said that it looks good if we follow the person's timeline, things look clear and informative, however, more text on each position would have been better, while Person A would have wanted more information about interests.

Person D mentioned that it was a good mix between text and visual placement, it was easy to read through and left some room for interview questions.

With the other three resumes, there was no clear second place, however, resume 2 gained some attention due to being very innovative and bright, but the drawback was lack of information. Everyone agreed that this could be a great resume when applying for a media or marketing position as a person who wants that sort of a job needs to show in some way his creative thinking. A visual resume gives a very

intricate look on a person said C if, for example, there would be three similar choices and everyone would have a basic resume except the one person who would use resume 2 as an example, it would most likely be picked over the other two or at least considered as a more interesting option.

Finally, resumes 3 and 4 were both said to have the basic information and were by no means bad, but it would be a good idea to add more information to make them stand out as a standard form. Lack of text makes it look rather lazy said Persons B and C. Person D mentioned that these resumes were rather old school and adding more information would not hurt.

The missing interests and hobbies were also a negative sign as getting to know people plays big role in recruitment said persons A and D.

Additionally, missing references was not very appealing either.

5.2.2 How would you rank these resumes? Only taking into consideration graphical pieces, layout and style.

Person A – 1/2, 3/4

Person B – 1, 2/3/4

Person C – 1, 2, 4, 3

Person D – 1, 2, 3, 4

5.3 Reliability and Validity

As mentioned in an earlier chapter, reliability and validity are important for credibility of the research.

The reliability of the research could be questioned, because people interviewed were picked on the base of availability and willingness to share information. However, reliability was increased by approaching companies that had significant influence and impact in the local area. Additionally, people chosen for the interviews were involved with the HRM systems on daily basis. Increasing interview count

could further increase the reliability of the research data and possibly reveal new aspects for study to explore.

The validity of the research was at risk due to few variables such as interviewees' personal bias, interview questions, openness towards the topic and, how the interviews were handled. However, even though interview questions were created based on personal findings, questions were generalized in order to receive as much information as possible about the topic while not pushing too many sensitive areas of the research. Interviewees' personal bias will be present in any interview, meaning that in order to understand the reality better and increase or reaffirming validity A wider range of interviews could have been conducted. Lastly, during the interview process questions were asked cautiously in order to not guide the interviewees through questions and rather have them explain the required things and how they perceive question relating to the aspects of the HRM.

5.4 Conclusions

It would seem that modern day technologies have not changed much in the way people apply for jobs. Having said that, however, more and more people have been seen using newly available resources to their advantage or disadvantage.

Research showed that every company had some guidelines for their recruitment steps, however, only one out of four respondents said that they have attended learning course at the beginning of their work to prepare them for recruitment activities. These courses are further supplemented later with even more training courses organized or paid by the employer. Further, two out of four have optional courses offered by the company. The remaining one has not attended any such courses to prepare for recruitment, but experience and knowledge is the deciding factor. This seems like a healthy correlation between companies that train their staff significantly and those that do not do it at all, while having majority somewhere in-between.

Surprisingly interviewees liked their job and had no complaints regarding tasks themselves. This could be easily explained by companies putting a lot of effort on reducing unnecessary work people have to do, such as automation and generally

removing things that do not seem to work. This was further emphasized in research part by one of the persons who mentioned that the company has changed their recruitment system and it is a much newer version, more sophisticated and it requires less work from the applicants as well as the staff to find the right person a given position. Not surprising was the number one most challenging aspect of recruitment, which was communication between the company personnel and applicants alike. This is especially noticeable in the Ostrobothnia region as main languages of communication are Finnish, Swedish and in some companies English. In addition, the fact that there are several universities with students from all over the world and companies that are international, having very versatile staff when it comes to nationalities and spoken languages, this easily complicates communication.

Most of the companies have been trying to adapt to new technologies in recruitment over past the decade, three out of four respondents stated that their company is in fact using their own application system in order to alleviate some work from the recruiters by eliminating unfit candidates. The remaining one out of four did not find the need for the implementation of the said technology. Something that was not very popular was artificial intelligence development an only one out of four respondents mentioned it and showed some actual interest in the system, explaining the benefits of it. It is possible that the remaining ones did not have anything similar in place or did not want to disclose it.

Interesting was the fact that one out of four of the interviewed people mentioned using various tools for recruitment, however, due to poor quality and communication, the company went back to basics, newspapers and local adds for job postings. This probably has direct correlation with company size, but this was not taken into consideration during the research.

Theory explained five ways on how companies short-list possible candidates. Reality shows that only two of them are actively used. First and most popular is OCR, Optical Character Recognition, in addition to a company recruitment system which collects information from the applicants, scans resumes and filters out people who do not match criteria set by the recruiter. This was further complemented by second step, arguably one of the best ways to check a resume. A recruiter at a glance looks

over it to get a general picture of the person and leaves a note if this applicant could be taken further. Having such steps adds subjectivity into the mix as well as stereotypes, which as the research showed are quite a common occurrence.

It does not stop there, however, having one person for interview process might be bad, but not necessarily. While three or four might introduce some aspects that are not related to job at all. A person who is recruiting should be the one to choose who they hire and who they think is the best for the job as well as the team. It should not matter if one person or four to decide if the applicant is good for the position.

There was strong emphasis in theory on who takes care of the selection process as it is the most crucial out of all the steps. The research showed that three out of four interviewees agreed that recruiters should be responsible for the end results in selection while one person strictly stick to having human resources be the ones that picks out the final person. While it would be good idea for HR people to short list and select people, in cases where larger companies have a lot of positions open, I believe it should be left to line managers or those responsible for the area of expertise to decide who will become part of their team on a daily basis.

The results showed that none of the recruiters spent their time checking someone's on-line profiles, in fact, it was considered waste of time as usually you would not find anything relevant regarding the person. If, however, something would be found, it cannot be used in the final decision as the law against discrimination dictates, nonetheless it might affect a persons' image in some way. Additionally, research revealed that the recruiters calls for references even if the job that should be done is not very demanding.

Another discovery was that the applicant's interests play rather significant role in recruitment, it does depend on recruiter, but three out of four interviews showed that describing interests and hobbies gives an applicant an identity. This identity further can be complemented with work choices and motivation letter explaining who the person really is. Interests can be seen as direct evolution, in my opinion, of HRM over the years, where companies are trying to recruit people rather than specialists, meaning they are looking for individuals who are ready to explore things

and share with others in some way. I can only hope this evolves into something more, because different people bring various ideas to the workplace and these can be combined into something new whereas old ways of hiring only specialists would yield rather similar results.

It was noteworthy to hear that all the previous jobs matter as long as a person can explain the knowledge they received and what lessons they have learned from their experiences. Describing previous positions little more, positive and negative effects, could give a better image of what sort of things the applicant likes to do. However, resumes should still be kept short.

I have a hard time believing that no one interviewee has made rash decisions during their workday when they had a bad day, yet everyone said during the interviews that bad days do not affect their judgement.

Job sculpting could be seen as something that is already being used by companies with a little different approach, while no company is specificly dedicating time for relaxing and thinking about new ideas, people do take breaks at work and these could be considered as such. Additionally 20% of the time improving knowledge could be seen as people using company recources to gain some new insights in the various processes about the company or partaking in some courses. In a way I believe job sculpting is already in place, but it is not advertised so much and it is understood slightly differently.

When it comes to key recruitment steps, companies tend to stick with the suggested scheme from theory books, with small adjustments depending on the company, most notably regarding tests and interviews.

Returning to short listing people and tests, there does not seem to be a simple explanation on how short-listing is done other than depending on the position and the person in charge; criteria are set and the system pre-determines the set number of people who can further be investigated, have their resumes and other attachments read by an actual person. This, of course, is the first step in some cases. Motivation letters are usually requested and very welcomed with every resume and this, as previously mentioned, gives recruiters an idea about who is on the other side of the

application. Every time recruiters read a resume they build some sort of an image in their head about the person. These images and well described activities help to image the possible employee that will work with a 150% efficiency. It was heard that even when technology short-lists people, someone is there to check the resume and applications and has a final say in it. This directly goes back to Bradford and Stredwik who mentioned generally people much rather prefer human face to face interactions or a more human company. This is tricky to do as technology does a lot of things much faster and more effectively than a human could ever do. And as previously mentioned, I believe that company should have the right to choose who they hire and how they run the business best way they can.

Moving onto to resumes themselves, the recruiters make their decisions in favor of a certain resume very generally without reading the actual text. This speaks about painting an image of person in their head before they have even met the person. Regarding the formats, there was no clear winner, but it depends on personal preference more than anything else. This was especially noticeable with a very graphical resume, that's has various shapes and different alignments of items.

Contrary to what a lot of specialists say about video resumes being good, it might be the lack of creativity or difference in cultures, but in this thesis these were perceived with caution, because the idea was that applicant has had several tries in making the video in addition to masking the potential flaws and emphasizing good points.

To conclude, from the gathered information it appears that resumes have strong impact on the selection and interviews, this is due to recruiters making up an image of the applicant's resume and application in hopes that they won't be wrong. It is very dependent on the person who is recruiting as well as the applicant and the information provided to employer. Companies do use technology to sift through resumes, however, not everyone is using the newest and best systems. There is no winning resume format and neither is there any specific combination that would work all the time. Generally, always keep in mind when creating each part of the resume, to argument each step of the way why this approach is especially good and how it could be good in the given organization seems to be good way of looking at

it. Being creative is not negative, however, unless the goal is a media or artistically oriented organization the focus should be kept more on the skills and qualities. Companies are looking for people and individuals more and more often.

5.5   Further research ideas

This research has opened quite a few possibilities for further development of similar kind of research related to the recruitment process. I believe first and foremost this thesis topic could be expanded upon and have possibly larger sample size for testing. Doing so it would enable understanding the bigger picture better.

Another idea could be a similar research, but comparing local companies and international organizations and examining if they have any correlations or what can they learn from each other to improve their recruitment processes to work better.

This research mentioned that companies do not train their staff in most cases. There is a possibility for research within the training of staff and how significant of an impact it has on further company actions.

Slightly more extensive a topic and harder to research, is looking into recruitment process more psychological point of view. How much of an impact it has from a personal point of view, what are the biases and how valid the personal view is. By this I mean how much the recruiter's personality affects the reliability of picking the right set of candidates for interviews. It involves slightly more a psychological aspects of research. However, I think it would be a topic worth studying.

Companies are using artificial intelligence and they are using recruitment systems all the time. How often are they used, how reliable are these and do they actually help or is it double the work? Do recruitment systems help if it is a larger or a smaller company or possibly both? Have there been cases where a system has rejected person, but the recruiter decided to interview and hire him / her anyway.

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» JOB EXPERIENCE

2017 -

Wärtsilä, Vaasa, Finland, Accountant Trainee

Tasks: Payment proposals, executing payment runs, uploading of electronic bank statements, solving unclear customer payments, period end activities related to accounts receivable, providing reports to company controllers.

2012 - 2014 June

BalticPay Corporation, Riga, Latvia, Office Manager

Tasks: Responsible for managing work around office.
Records management in company, organazing events and meetings. Basic translation work.

2010 - 2012 June

CA Timbers, Riga, Latvia, Sales Manager

Tasks: Managing sales, communicating with clients, basic accounting tasks, compiling and analysing different market figures, keeping up to date with products and competitors.

» PROJECTS

2015 - 2016

Marketing Vaasa University of Applied Sciences (VAMK)

Making marketing plan and presentations. Marketing International Business degree to new, potential students in Finland.

2014 spring

Prototyping a company

During quality management course in Univeristy of Latvia I did a project in co-operating with Swedbank. Goal for the project was to prototype a business and present it to bank representatives.
They would decide whether or not they would invest in the idea.

» EDUCATION

2014 - 2017

Vaasa University of Applied Sciences (VAMK)

International Business Management

* Marketing

* Accounting

* Law

2011-2014

University of Latvia, Riga, Latvia

E-Business and Logistics

* Company management

* Marketing, Advertisement

* Basic Logistics

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Languages

» Latvian (mothertongue)

» English (fluent)

» Russian (fluent)

» Finnish (basics)

» French (basics)

Programs

» MS Office (excellent)

» NOVA accounting (good)

» Advanced MS Windows

» Prezi

» SAP

Other Skills

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» Creating databases

» Creating websites

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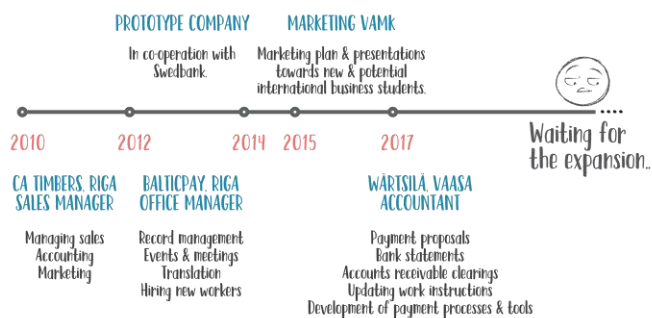
MATISS USKAURS

TITLE: JACK OF ALL TRADES

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🎓 Vaasa University of Applied Sciences, International Business, 2017
University of Latvia, E-Business, 2014

Quests

PROTOTYPE COMPANY
In co-operation with Swedbank.

MARKETING VAMK
Marketing plan & presentations towards new & potential international business students.

Waiting for the expansion..

2010   2012   2014   2015   2017

CA TIMBERS, RIGA SALES MANAGER
Managing sales
Accounting
Marketing

BALTICPAY, RIGA OFFICE MANAGER
Record management
Events & meetings
Translation
Hiring new workers

WÄRTSILÄ, VAASA ACCOUNTANT
Payment proposals
Bank statements
Accounts receivable clearings
Updating work instructions
Development of payment processes & tools

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stats

- strength
- intelligence
- charisma
- stamina
- luck

- MS Office
- Google apps
- Nova
- Sap

- English
- Latvian
- Russian
- Finnish

Abilities

DEDICATION COMMON SENSE MATH NERDING

QUICK LEARNING 110% INCREASED PROBLEM SOLVING HAPPINESS INCARNATED COMPETITIVENESS BOOSTER

Npcs

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Work experience

Dates	05/05/2017 -
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Name and address of Employer	Wartsila Runsor, 65350 Vaasa
Type of business or sector	Finance
Dates	01/06/2012 – 01/06/2014
Occupation or position held	Office manager
Main activities and responsibilities	Record management, organizing events, basic translations.
Name and address of Employer	BalticPay Corporation Dzirnavu str. 44, Riga LV – 1010
Type of business or sector	Finance
Dates	01/01/2010 – 31/05/2012
Occupation or position held	Sales Manager
Main activities and responsibilities	Sales, customer communication, basic accounting
Name and address of Employer	CA Timbers Agenskalna iela 4, Riga LV - 1050
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Level of qualification	210/210

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Nationality	Latvian
Date of birth	22-02-1990
Web:	www.matissuskaurs.com

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Dates (from – to)	September 2014 – December 2017
Name and type of organisation providing education and training	**Vaasa University of Applied Sciences**
Principal subjects covered	Learn how: * basic accounting tasks – how to use basic accounting theory in practice * marketing research – using marketing theory in research for company project, exporting abroad * project management- creating company, managing personel and costs, organizing events
Title of qualification awarded	**B.Sc in Business Administration**
Level in national classification	University Degree (3,5 years)
Dates (from – to)	September 2012 – June 2014
Name and type of organisation providing education and training	University of Latvia
Principal subjects covered	E-business, logistics, workshops, communication, web design, databases, practices in business, business administration, software programming

WORK EXPERIECE

Dates (from – to)	May 2017 – Present
Name and address of employer	Wartsila, Runsor, 65350 Vaasa
Type of business	Finance
Occupation	Accountant
Main activities and responsibilities	Payments, group work, accounting tasks, proposals, communication.