

SAIMAA UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES
Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality, Imatra
Degree Program in Tourism and Hospitality Management

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**The Testing System for Long-Term Recruitment
in Tour Agency. Case: Easy Travel Ltd**

Thesis 2019

Abstract

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The purpose of this study was creating a manual testing system for the recruitment process in a tour agency. The research was focused on analyzing the current staff members' personal characteristics, skills and work experiences, used as the aggregate example of the ideal employee profile. The work was conducted by the third-year student of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Polina Aleksanian, in cooperation with Finnish destination management company.

The information for theoretical background was collected from various literature sources, articles and the Internet webpages. The quantitative web-survey was also conducted among the Sales Department of the case company. Overall, nine sales people took part in the survey.

As the result of this thesis, current organizational behavior of the employees in the tour agency was analyzed and the testing system for the future employment was created. The research conducted is expected to develop the recruitment process and the employee-employer relationships in the company.

Keywords: guidelines, employment, recruitment of employees, human resource management

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1 Introduction

This work is to be focused on creating the Easy Travel Ltd.'s own testing system and the guideline for the Human Resource management of Easy Travel Ltd to recruit new staff to the sales department. The purpose of the thesis work is to find out the ideal profile of one and his / her personal skills and qualities in tourism sector and particularly in the sales department of Easy Travel Ltd.

The guideline for long-term employment has the potential to strengthen the competitive advantage of the company on the market by decreasing the current stress level of staff members and, therefore, allowing the new people to be involved in the process. Due to the comprehensive and cohering work specialty, it is essential to find those personalities, whose psychological picture and knowledge perfectly fit the peculiarity of work. By increasing the headquarter of sales people involved, the company could benefit on the market by taking the niche of the most popular tour operator in Finland and Scandinavia.

The thesis work combines both the research type work and project-based style of thesis. Firstly, the theoretical framework will be represented in the report, followed by the research work focusing on the current sales department employees' qualifications, skills and their own perceptions towards the Human Resource policies currently applied in the company. The results of the research work will be considered as the base for creating the guideline (project) for employing the new people.

The guideline consists of company's own list of questions and practical tasks to be conducted during the job interview in order to find out which participants are most suitable for the job. The guideline is expected to be used regularly and is currently actual for the company to be written since the company is developing fast. The results of the interview would be used as the ideal employees' profile and would act as the tool for employer's convenience for clear evaluation of candidates and making the decisions regarding the suitability of the candidates' qualities.

The guideline is the confidential part of thesis work and will only be used by the company, therefore, will not be presented in the report published to Theseus data base.

1.1 Justification for researching the topic

The reason for researching the topic is based on the current situation of Easy Travel Ltd as one of the fastest growing tour agencies in Finland. Due to the author's previous and current work experience in the company, it has been understood that the sharp need in higher number of sales people in the company exists. Since the company is growing fast, there are not enough human resources for proper organizational atmosphere, even though the management and the relationships in the team are on a sufficient level. The current stress level of the employees as well as the work download are high, therefore, the pre-decided strategy of hiring the personnel is needed in order to shorten the time and money allocated into the interview process.

Moreover, having the structural guideline as well as Easy Travel Ltd.'s own test system, in this case, is seen as a positive sign for sustainable development of the enterprise and maintaining the proper organizational behavior inside of it.

Finally, more precise understanding and analysis of current and potential employees' skills and qualities might be a key for a future development and attractiveness of the company for longer presence of the staff members. The personnel is tend to change in average each year, which brings the drawbacks of the resources used for teaching the new staff members from the very beginning. To increase the presence, the guideline might be the assistant key in finding the proper sales people, who are experienced enough in the sphere of tourism to resist the stress and stay longer in the company.

1.2 Aims and delimitations of research

There are several main interconnected aims for researching the topic chosen during the thesis report writing process. The primary aim is to create the strategy and the guideline of recruiting long-term sales department employees and organize the test system for hiring the personnel for longer term purposes. Secondly,

the author aims at finding out the ideal profile of the employee in tourism sector and his / her personal qualities and skills needed for the potential long-term employment by evaluating the skills and knowledge of one, already on the interview stage. As for the delimitation, the main difficulty is to get the fair assessment of the employees' personal qualities and its' correlations to their KPI at the work place. According to Boddy (2008, p. 363), *good performers at the job might have different personalities*, which might result in low reliability of the results received out of the questionnaire.

1.3 Research methods

The research method chosen is quantitative approach in order to examine the frequency of the attitudes, feelings and intentions of working in the company. Even though the sample group is small for conducting the statistical research, the frequency of the answers has to be analyzed by the author in order to find out the ideal profile of the employee. The quantitative research method, in this case, would allow the author to make critical decisions regarding the qualifications existing and needed by examining the statistical results. The questionnaires provided to the employees have open ended questions in order to get acquainted with a more precise and detailed picture in a nutshell. There are also close ended and multiple questions in the research. The results analyzed are represented by the statistical values, pie and bar charts.

2 Theoretical framework

2.1 Human Resource Management

2.1.1 Human Resource Management Definition

Human Resource (HR) management is the essential complex of managerial decisions undertaken within a business for the effective working procedure. HR management is also known as the usage of human resources available in the company for the successful goals achievement and strategic results of the company acquirement (Boddy 2008, p. 354). The phenomenon of the Human Resource management is crucial for any kind of business being not dependent on

its size, specialization or purpose. According to Fisher, Schoenfeld & Shaw (2006, p. 7), the properly planned and implemented HR strategies contribute to the successful organizational achievements as well as the effective corporate culture management.

2.1.2 The purpose of HR management

The main goal of HR management is to maintain the organizational atmosphere within the business as well as to create the potential competitive advantage towards the other businesses on the market. The main potential of the competitive advantage gained via the proper HR management is the result of providing the staff members with the propitious working conditions, which consequently leads to the increased work performance of the work place. (Fisher et al. 2006, p. 7.)

HR management is always considered as an intangible and crucial factor that affects the organizational competitive advantage since all the tangible aspects of the company (e.g. products, technology or finances) might be copied, while the strategy of human relationships within the organization is hard to be acquired. The proper HR management, in this case, provides the intangible base for strategic plans of the company and builds worker – to – worker, worker – to – manager and worker – to – organization relationships. HR management is aiming to achieve a win – win situation for both employee and employer: while the company reaches the desired profitability, the employee is not only entitled to an economic stability but also to a job satisfaction and further willingness to be involved in the process. The stronger the connection between all the dimensions is, the more successful performance is most likely to be demonstrated on the market. HR management covers four main areas of company's operations (Boddy 2008, p. 354):

- Employees' involvement (the degree to which the employees take part in decision making process)
- Operational system (the work structure, e.g. supervisory style)
- Staffing and staff flow (recruitment, training, development, layoffs)
- Rewarding (reward system and benefits). (Boddy 2008, p. 354.)

2.1.3 The process of HR management

The process of HR management starts with the proper selection of individuals who best fit the work practice and are potentially able to demonstrate the effective work performance, defined by the company. According to the performance showed after a certain period of time, the HR manager is able to evaluate whether the individual is eligible for a reward / benefit or his / her current performance is poor, additional development to enhance the current results to maintain the goals in the future is required. (Bloisi 2007, pp. 24-25.) In Figure 1, it can be seen how the stages of proper HR management steps affect the lifecycle of the employees within the organization.

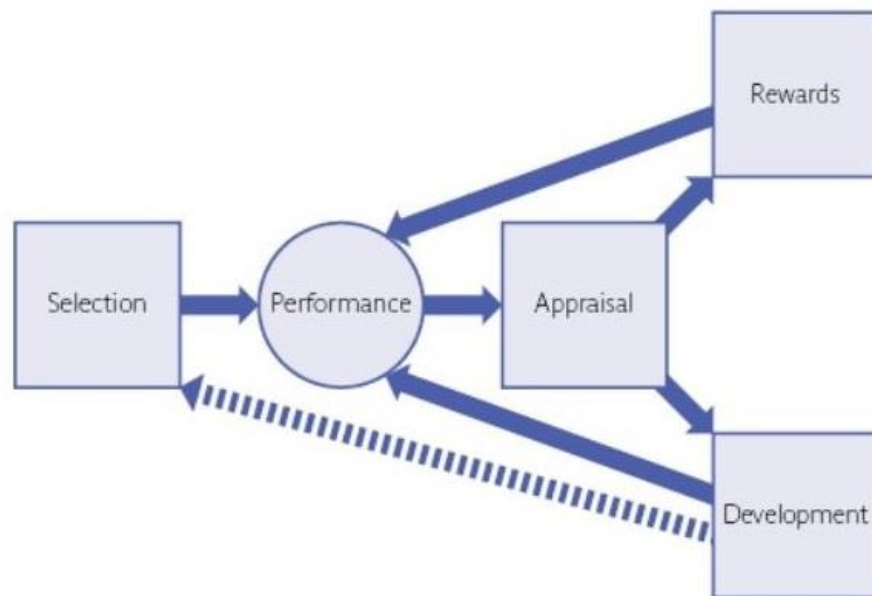


Figure 1. The human resource cycle (Bloisi 2007, p. 25).

The concept of HR management cannot be seen as an isolated phenomenon. Instead, it should be considered as the integration of both internal and external environments that enable PESTEL (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Environmental, Legal) factors influence an organization. (Bloisi 2007, p. 26.) Figure 2 shows the detailed and interconnected influence of different environments on the HR management.



Figure 2. The context of HR management (Bloisi 2007, p. 26).

The nature of HR management is, therefore, variable and includes all the decisions and operations undertaken on the different structural levels of an organization. To organize and coordinate all the sectors of a company, HR manager should strategically plan and centralize the activities operating in the company. Fair to mention, that there is no strictly pre-decided strategy of HR department each company should follow, however, it always involves the interconnected and integrated series of actions that creates the potential competitive advantage and promotes the sustainable development of each individual within a team. This peculiarity of management is also often recognized as heterogeneous nature of management, that occurs on different levels of an organization involving the human resources available in it, which can be seen in the Figure 3. (Mullins 2007, pp. 414-415.)

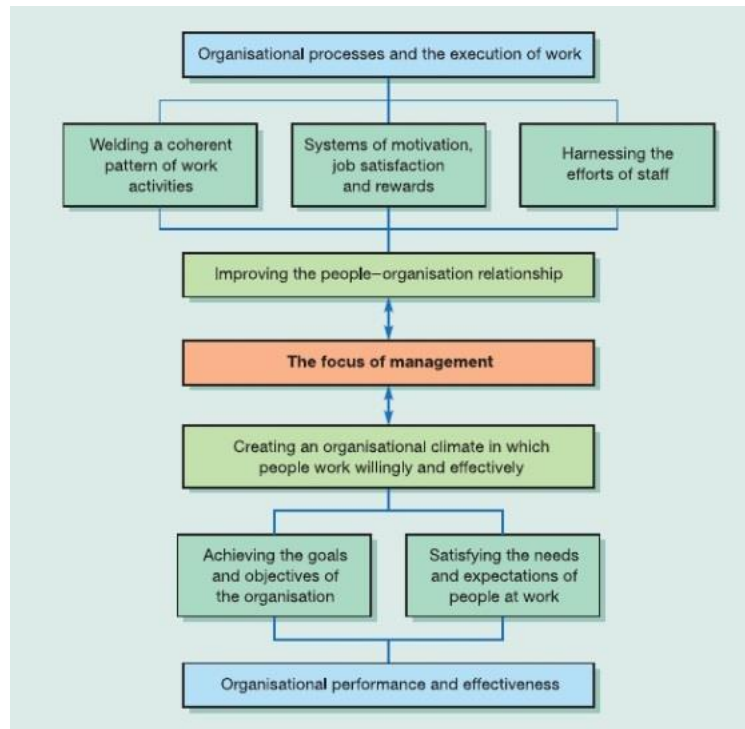


Figure 3. The central focus of management (Mullins 2007, p. 414).

2.1.4 The role of HR manager

The manager of human resource department (HR manager) is always responsible for the decisions making process within the human resources department. The scope of his / her responsibilities is mainly based on implementing the main aims of organization when it comes to dealing with human resources power as well as supervise the degree to which the common understanding of goals is shared between the employee and employer. The managerial activity includes the obstacle of five elements of management with separate accent towards the staff members (Mullins 2007, p. 415):

- Planning: the HR manager is eligible for forecasting and foreseeing the future plans within the human resource department to be coordinated with the changing and impermanent nature of short-term goals of the organization in common
- Organizing: preparing and implementing the suitable strategies to carry out the activities of the organization

- Enjoining: maintaining the continuous development of prosperity of the team in a needed way to follow the interests of all the parties involved in the process of making business
- Coordination: ensuring the harmonious behaviors and attitudes within a team to facilitate the involvement and satisfaction of each individual
- Control: the permanent supervision towards the degree to which the undertaken decisions assist in moving towards the successful implementation of company's goals. (Mullins 2007, p. 415).

Mullins (2007, p. 424), moreover, states that managers are often associated with the formal authority power over the employees in a department, which often *leads to a special position of status in the organization*. As a result, the main managerial responsibilities might be classified into three different subcategories of roles, presented in Figure 4.

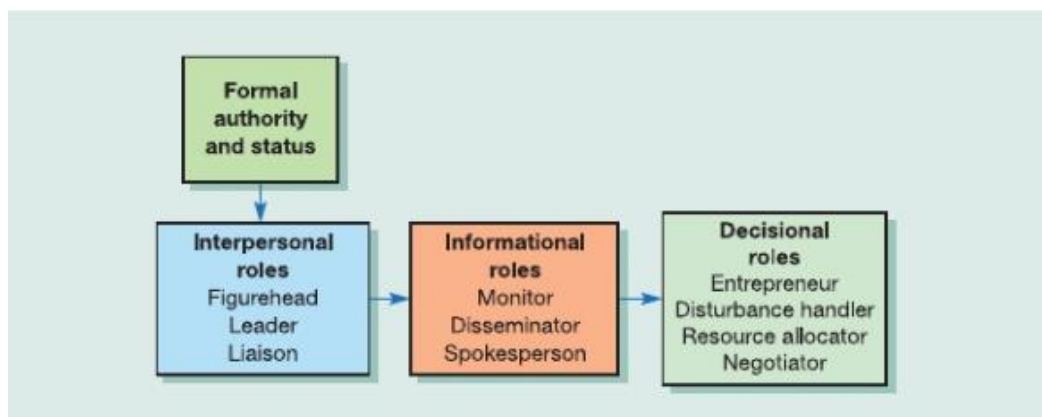


Figure 4. The manager's roles (Mullins 2007, p. 424).

2.1.4.1 Interpersonal role of an HR manager

Interpersonal roles of the HR manager are covering the aspects of relationship buildings under the manager's control and authority. One of the sub-categories related to interpersonal role of a manager also known as figurehead role is the positioning of the manager within the group of staff members, who is assigned for the formal procedures as documentation and reaching the top manager. However, when it comes to HR manager being a formal manager is not enough, since the high level of motivation towards the staff members is expected, therefore, leadership is a second sub-category always included into the context of

interpersonal roles of HR manager. Leadership is identified as a process where one individual is able to influence the subordinates with no threatening or violence, however, by creating the motivation towards the common organizational behavior and responsibilities (Buchanan & Huczynski 1997, p. 606). In this case, leader aspect of the HR manager is essential for providing the efficient guiding of the staff members as well as creating the benevolent organizational atmosphere and supply the subordinates with the justified reasoning to move forwards the common goal of a company. In order to receive the mental “feedback” and reaction as well as to reach the values proclaimed by the leader role, he / she needs to pay a separate attention to a relationship building, which logically leads to a third sub-category of a manager’s role: liaison’s role. In fact, this category is all horizontal positioning of the manager towards the employees of a company as well as linking the company with the micro- and macro-environments. (Mullins 2007, p. 424.)

2.1.4.2 Informational roles of an HR manager

The informational roles of an HR manager are always related to the sources of communication as well as collecting and delivering the information to the subordinates in a particular approach, established in a company. The main aspect of this role of a manager is the sufficient and effective usage of his / her interpersonal skills in order to ensure that all of the staff members to whom it may concern have received the same information with no significant difference. The first sub-category of a role in question is related to proper monitoring and understanding the organizational environment as well as the external sources of the information to succeed in properly delivering and distributing it to the staff members. Notable, that the information that is needed to be delivered might be both formal and informal, however, the degree of acknowledgement by the employees should corresponded to a degree of distribution involved. Assuming that HR manager is unable to distribute the information in a way that all representatives of the staff members would understand and accept it, might cause further issues in the developing and operating processes. It is also essential for the HR manager to be able to be involved in the reverse process: the actions undertaken within the staff members group should be reported clearly to the people outside of a unit. The

board of directors and, in some cases, various stakeholders and suppliers of a company should have a distinct picture of the details related to an operation level of a company. (Mullins 2007, p. 424.)

2.1.4.3 Decisional roles of an HR manager

The decisional dimension of an HR manager's role in a company is referred to strategic decisions undertaken, which are based on manager's authority, status and permission to access the certain information. The major part of the aspect covers the issue of problem-solving and action-taking sub-category, which is also known as entrepreneurial role of an HR manager. Since a manager in question is responsible for providing the friendly atmosphere and the highest possible flow of development, it is necessary for one to play a major role in improvement seeking in a critical situation related to a disturbance of staff not to cause unexpected turbulence in a team. HR manager's participation is required to improve the situation happened. HR manager is also eligible to a certain resource distribution, for instance, when it comes to the recruiting and layoff processes - HR manager along with the top management can make the decisions related to the currently needed human resource power. Furthermore, the manager makes the decisions concerning the working schedules and tasks and keeps on controlling its effective implementation, which is differentiated as the resource allocation role of HR manager. The negotiator role, devoted to the HR manager, creates the communication connections between the representatives of a company and the outsiders, which can directly influence the organizational behavior of the staff members, for example, the trades unions. (Mullins 2007, p. 425.)

2.1.5 Outcomes of HR management

The intangible results of properly planned and implemented HR strategies are measured in the organizational behavior of the employees and their perception towards the organization in general. The main value of the policies applied in the company result in the increased motivation of the staff members. Motivational behavior is the leading factor for the prosperous effectiveness of work. This factor is strongly connected to the increased work interest and the longer presence in the company in question due to the psychological factors, based on the feeling of

one's necessity within the company's structure. It is essential for the HR manager to create the organizational atmosphere shared by all the employees in order to increase their satisfaction. The employee's satisfaction directly affects the willingness of one to participate in the working process with the decreasing frequency of the staff absenteeism as well as creates friendly and non-competitive climate between the co-workers. Being involved in the working process mentally but not only physically builds the employees' loyalty, which, therefore, results in company's reliability. (Fisher et al. 2006, p. 84.)

2.2 Performance management

The key to creating the sustainable organizational atmosphere within the working collective, such phenomenon as performance management should be applied. Wendy Bloisi (2007, p. 253) identifies performance management as the process of managing the employee's performance and its effectiveness by the index of employees' correspondence to the company's goals. The process of performance management is integrated with the organizational goal, aims and purposes, therefore, influences the development, *which in turn will enable performance to be improved*. Performance management is often considered as the set of results expectations, measurements, reviews and reward, however, it is a complex phenomenon which maximizes three main functions:

- Strategic function
- Administrative function
- Development function.

2.2.1 Strategic function

The main purpose of the strategic performance management is firstly to create the organizational structure within the human resources used for current, future and potential reaching the corporate needs and goals proclaimed by a company. In this regard, recruitment process plays an essential role due to the increased demand in those candidates, whose own abilities, expectations and desires correspond to corporate set of aims and have the potential to effectively influence the performance of a department and company in general. Strategic performance management allows to plan the training, motivation and reward systems in a

tailored way, suitable for one particular individual, team or company for the productive results. Following the strategic function of the performance management and the information received out of it, the HR manager is capable of fairly evaluating and estimating whether the company is moving towards the initially proclaimed goals. The main aspects and purposes within the organizational framework followed by the strategic performance management are:

- Setting the objectives and following the pre-established goals of a company
 - Identifying the need of personal training
 - Planning and implementing of the team development strategies
 - Providing and receiving valid feedback to and from the current employees
 - Identifying the strengths and weaknesses of each individual and team in general
 - Planning the recruitment process based on the current human resources
 - Reinforcing the organizational needs in terms of human resource power.
- (Fisher et al. 2006, pp. 426-427.)

The features of the strategic management mentioned above provide the successful solution for the such problems of any company on a market as organizational cost reduction and flexibility growth (Fisher et al. 2006, pp. 426-427).

2.2.2 Administrative function

Administrative function of performance management is used for the financial and administrative decisions made within company's personnel. The function of administrative development undermines salaries and wages, promotions, rewards (bonuses), redundancy, retentions and individual recognition issues within the certain department. (Bloisi 2007, p. 255.) Administrative performance function should necessarily be correspondent to the strategic performance analysis in order to provide fair working conditions for each individual involved in the working process equal to one's own determination, motivation and work progress. The phenomenon of administrative function related to performance management is also closely connected to the legal aspect of doing business. The policies applied in a company as well as the approaches used for the performance evaluation

need to follow regulations and legislation of a state. Legal conditions existing in a company provide more sustainable relationships within a working collective and strengthen the positioning of an individual in a firm towards the employer and a labor union. (Mullins 2007, p. 505.)

2.2.3 Development function

Main purpose of the development function in terms of performance management is considering whether the department is working effectively in order to achieve the common goals proclaimed by the company. Development of the individual, department or staff members is normally conducted through the identification of the poor performance and the potential way to improve the current situation. According to Bloisi (2007, p. 255), it is also essential for HR managers to focus on the positive performance index to follow the progress index and either maintain it on a high level or apply towards those, whose performance is not so successful. Development procedure not only links employees' perception with company's strategic aims but also determines the training needs and provides the basis for the clearer statement and positioning of the goals. (Fisher et al. 2006, p. 426.)

2.3 Human Resource Management in tourism sector

With the development of the international trade and globalization, the importance of the proper management and staffing has been recognized as the key importance in all sectors of business. Tourism industry, in this case, had experienced the largest effect since the staff members are considered as a part of the core product / service. It is also known that in order to improve the quality of the product / service in tourism industry, it is essential to analyze multiple factors such as, for example, the environment, market, competitors and potential clients, however, the main emphasis is paid towards employees in a company. The staff members in a tourism and hospitality industry make up the most important and crucial constituent for the final product, as well as the main competitive advantage a company can use. The reason behind the statement mentioned above is the strong connection between a person's competency and his / her ability to deliver the value of a product / service to a potential client. Clients' satisfaction is partly reached by the employee's formal and polite behavior as well as his / her

tenderness, therefore, the more effective HR management is, the better the competitive advantage and reliability of the company is. (Jukova 2006.)

Moreover, the main difference between the hospitality product / service and the industrial products is the people's wide involvement in the productization and product development process. Human factor, in this case, plays the foremost role in creating the competitive and value-proved product for a client. For maintaining the quality and increase the feeling of reliability for the customers, many businesses dealing with direct clients acquire the proper certification for a company. (Jukova 2006.) For example, AAA certification for a business covers a few points, showing the company's successful and reliable activity not only for clients but also to the potential partners and stakeholders:

- The company is clear from debts and is not exposed to a bankruptcy
- There are no present liabilities within more than a 30 days period
- The company is legal and is entitled for paying VAT
- The financial statements of a company are published
- The profit of a company is 20-25 % and guarantee capital ranges from 3 to 5 % of profit
- A company has operated for more than 10 years with at least 4 years with the minimum registered capital. (Bisnode n.d.)

The sample of AAA certification is shown in Figure 5.



Figure 5. AAA certification of a company (Bisnode n.d).

Standards proclaimed by any certification gained by a business are never a guarantee for the quality of the customers' perception received since the quality of the touristic product / service is the phenomenon destined for forming the customer satisfaction. It is peculiar for the hospitality company to serve numerous numbers of clients, with no identical psychological picture and expectations from the services, therefore, the process of service cannot be described as the separate algorithm. In this case, standards cannot be fully reliable and provide a sufficient base for a judgment. The fulfilment might be reached by combining the standardized procedures with the appropriate and suitable approach to an HR management. (Jukova 2006.)

HR manager's main interest is concentrated on providing effective and stronger working environment, which, afterwards, should be integrated into the core product / service of a business. In order to create tailored experiences and fit the requests of each individual client (previous, current or the potential), there are several purposes of the HR management that have to be implemented in a hospitality company. First of all, the employees of the tour industry have to recognize not only the current needs of clients, however, they have to think in advance and evaluate the potential or hidden needs of a client. The clients always have the picture of a core service or product they want to receive, however, if the sales person can recognize the clients' needs before he / she actually gets the idea about it, it is most likely that the customer satisfaction will be reached. Moreover, it is crucial for the representative of a tour industry to evaluate the quality of the potential product to be purchased as well as the clients' perception of the services / products provided. The detailed understanding of the services provided and the impression a client receives from it provides a further base for product / service development and customatisation. Furthermore, the main skills which are essential for any tourism related industry are the ability to operatively react and adjust the process of service (if it is needed) in order to receive the positive perception and attitude towards the business in question. (Jukova 2006.)

Thus, in order to produce the qualified service in tourism industry, technological and standardized accompaniment as well as the basic knowledge how to make the business is not enough; the appropriate psychological picture, intercultural

and communicational skills of each individual are seen as one of the leading points for successful task completion and goals achievement in a hospitality industry. The personal characteristics in tourism business normally play the primary and foremost role. The personal qualities of each individual intending to work in tourism industry, his / her experience, intuition, ability and competency to evaluate the situation from the different perspectives as well as take the customers' point of view, are very essential to be discovered by the employer while recruiting the new staff members. (Jukova 2006.)

2.4 Recruitment

Recruitment process is one of the most important stages to be conducted by the HR manager due to the high attention needed to pay to the selection of those candidates who have the potential to influence the business operations. The main idea and, simultaneously, challenge of this stage is to correctly discover and estimate the suitability of personal qualities of each potential applicant in terms of company's goal. According to Tesone (2008, p. 50), the skills of the candidates should not be considered as the leading point while recruitment since it is the ability of one to be *taught, learned, and comprehended* – *not inborn as personality characteristic*, therefore, the personal qualities play the most significant role. The actual validity of the results generated from the recruitment is dependent on the special ability of HR manager to penetrate into the candidate's inner personality, which sometimes might not be clear during the interview process. (Rashmi 2010, p. 11.)

2.4.1 Human resource planning

As a part of the recruitment process, the proper HR planning strategies should be worked out and implemented by the representative of the department. The process of resource planning is simply defined as the calculating of the needed number of staff in each department and their responsibilities to be present in a company for successfully carrying out the organizational plans and reaching the goal of a business. The benefits of proper HR planning for a company are seen as the potential for foreseeing the potential company's development, adjustment of the core products / services as well as building a stronger and optimal

organizational atmosphere within the team. When it comes to the main objectives of HR planning, Pavuluri (2008, p. 78) describes them as the following:

- Matching the quality and the quantity of the man power to the organizational goals
- Prediction of the turnover of the employees in order to minimize the time and money allocated in to the process of recruitment and downsizing
- Meeting the requirements for executing the short-term goals and plans of a company
- Increase and improve the quality of the services provided and products declared for sale
- Maintenance of the sustainable development and organizational behavior within the group of the staff members
- Balancing the task distribution between the employees
- Cost reduction for the company's operations. (Pavuluri 2008, p. 78.)

In other words, the productivity of each employee separately, as well as the group's performance have to be understood by the HR manager in order to have a clear picture of how effective the work performance is and which contribution to the company's operations it brings.

Due to the nature of HR management, the process of human resource planning is not a distinct and outsourced strategy, however, it is a continuous phenomenon which relates the stages of the past as well as current and future performance during the whole circle of planning. In this case, the performance is totally dependent on both internal and external environmental changes in the market and customers' behavior, therefore, the planning process could also be evaluated from the PESTEL point of view. (Bloisi 2007, p. 45.)

2.4.2 Methods of recruitment

Nowadays, there are different methods of the recruitment process, which are known as external and internal recruitment. External recruitment, in its turn, is divided into several sub categories: campus recruitment, private recruitment consultants, casual applicants, similar organizations, cyber agencies and trade unions. (Bloisi 2007 pp. 119-131; Pavuluri 2008, pp. 43-48.)

2.4.2.1 Internal recruitment

Internal recruitment is often referred to as employment within the organization's own resources or current employees. According to Bloisi (2007, p. 120), there are both advantages and disadvantages in this method. To start with advantages, internal recruitment potentially eliminates the extra costs and saves time if compared with external method of recruitment. Moreover, it is possible to evaluate the employee's suitability to a particular vacancy due to the increased familiarity with one's qualities which provides the base for more sustainable development in the future from the company's perspective. The employees are expected to be already familiar with the organizational goals, visions, principles of work as well as with the top management which is also applied vice versa. Following this fact, it is also essential to notice the employee's own development and increased motivation due to the promotion on the working place.

When it comes to disadvantages, the main argument is always concerning the fact that internal recruitment eliminates the potential new approaches to problem-solving by the new personalities in a company. Internal recruitment also restricts the potential development for the competitive advantage since it assumes that the best people to perform are already existent in the company. From the diversity's point of view, the internal recruitment also does not provide a proper base for widening the targeted diversity and might also cause ethics-related issues. Finally, by recruiting the already existing employee, a company is most likely to face the need of further staff turnover in the future by the vacant places available. (Bloisi 2007, p. 120.)

2.4.2.2 External recruitment

External recruitment is the method involving the external sources of the company in question, identifying and involving the candidates from the outside (Pavuluri 2008, p. 46). External recruitment allows a company to search for the skilled and knowledgeable people with the orientation towards the new, potentially valuable approaches to a decision-making and problem-solving processes. It is also possible to evaluate experiences of each candidate and diversify, mix and balance

the experiential and personal background in a team. There are different subcategories of external method of employment:

- **Campus recruitment** or method also known as **educational recruitment**, which allows different organizations to employ the unexperienced staff from different educational institutions, i.e. colleges and universities with the degree in arts, engineering, medicine, social sciences, religion and sports. Normally, the candidates are seen as the sources for bringing fresh ideas due to the well-developed project management and problem-solving skills.
- **Employment agencies**, also referred to as executive search agencies, that apply the employment consultancies and recruitment services on behalf of the company by the administrative fees. The main benefit of this method is the concentration on the concrete skills, experiences and personalities requested by a company, however, very often it leads to high cost of the services and ineffective performance of the individuals due to the lack of the internal operations knowledge of the external executors;
- **Casual applicants** are the direct applicants that do not use the third-party services and apply directly by contacting a company and handing the CV to an HR department (if available in a company);
- **Similar organizations** with the same specialty of products / services often possess the more skilled and experiences workers, which might be a contribution to the company in question;
- **Cyber agencies** operate according to the same scheme as the employment agencies (taking part in the employment process on behalf of the employer for the fee), however, the main purpose of the cyber agencies is to provide the advertisement of a job vacancy instead of simply finding the employee. The cyber agencies allow to diversify and adjust the nature of the industry in terms of employment type (fixed or part-time), range occupations, areas of operations, company size and business strategies;
- **Trade unions** provide the staff members that are currently seeking for the employment or want to change the job due to certain circumstances. Trade unions normally possess the full information regarding the candidates'

skills, previous work experience and the availability of ones. (Pavuluri 2008, p. 47.)

2.4.3 Selection process

Selection process is an essential part of the whole recruitment process, which combines the following stages: application, interview and employment. During this stage, the HR manager gets to know the candidates' backgrounds, skills, knowledge and experiences, while the candidate familiarizes **him / herself** with the company and its goals and principles from the "inside". (Bloisi 2007, p. 142.) The selection methods are different from company to company, however, the general concepts are common between the HR managers. The typical order of selection includes the stages, shown in Figure 6:

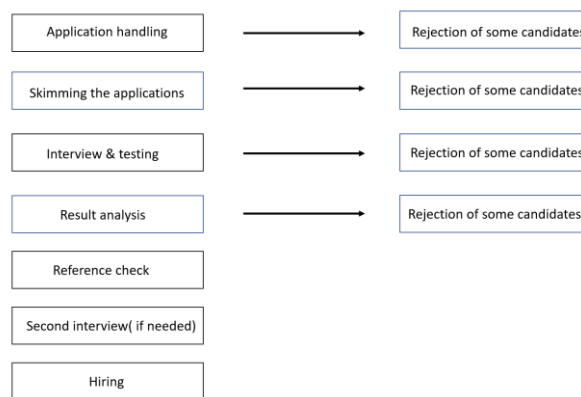


Figure 6. Stages of selection (Fisher et al. 2006, p. 321).

There are, however, different approaches for the application handling, also presented on Figure 7:

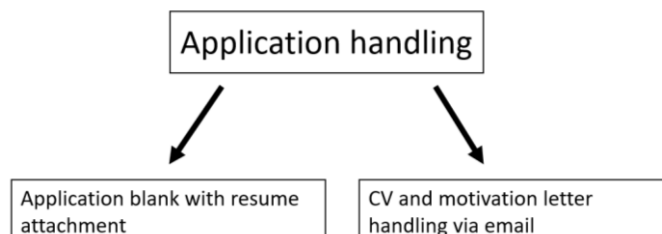


Figure 7. Application handling (Fisher et al. 2006, p. 321).

Applications submitted via the electronic systems using the structured blank are commonly used by big companies and enterprises for more convenient sorting, while the smaller-scaled companies use the CV handling via direct contact (either the general email address and HR department email if available). Application blank must contain the question to give a short description of the candidates' background, skills and previous work experience, while the resume attached describes the stated points in more details. It is fair to mention that the motivation letter might not be compulsory for a direct application handling, however, it might also be requested by the systematic handling since it is essential to check the applicant's motivation and interest in one particular company. After the applications are submitted, the HR manager (or, in some cases, the top manager) starts the skimming process in order to eliminate those candidates, whose skills or knowledge are either not seen as sufficient or not related to a specific vacancy offered. Personal qualities, in this regard, are difficult to be fairly evaluated and often considered as biased dimension (which might also be an issue during the interview process). After some of the candidates have been eliminated, the suitable ones are invited for the interview and / or test (might be combined and conducted at the same time). Interview is known as a low-cost assessment tool for getting to know the candidate's personality and his / her suitability for a job. (Boddy 2008, p. 362.) There are, however, some difficulties faced by the managers and candidates:

- Decisions might be made too quickly with poor inner analysis;
- The interview is usually seen as prejudiced and might not be the best tool for fair judgment;
- Interviews are usually judged by the ideological and ideal stereotypes, which make it difficult to evaluate the internal intentions of one;
- Behavior, voice, gestures and appearance in general might have the psychological behavior and strongly act as the shar decision-making tool. (Boddy 2008, p. 362.)

Testing systems, in this case, might act as one of the potential solutions for the interview related issues. The tests that are used for the final evaluation and act as the main recruitment tool have a strong need for being created, interpreted

and evaluated by the experts; otherwise, they would make up another series of difficulties for the employer. First of all, candidates are most likely to choose the answers the potential employer is looking for instead of one's own opinion, which might be misleading afterwards. Secondly, following the fact that it is hard to evaluate the person's own qualities, the tests that also include the psychology-based questions, may not contain the valid results – the person's quality might be different depending on the circumstances. The tests are normally created being based on the general picture of the currently employed staff members, assuming they make up the ideal picture. However, it is also essential for the HR manager to understand that the best performers on the job might have absolutely different personalities with no qualities in common. (Boddy 2008, p. 363.)

After the series of tests and interviews have been conducted, the HR manager evaluates the results, again eliminating those candidates whose "answers" are not suitable for the organization in question. In big enterprises, it is very often that the second series of interviews with the chosen candidates is necessary. For small-scale businesses, the tests are most likely to find a couple of candidates out of whom the manager will make the final decision regarding the employment. Out of the results of the interview, the HR manager should find the answer to the question, whether the candidate fits the organization or not, considering all the factors received via the interview & test stage. (Fisher et al. 2006, pp. 321-322.)

2.5 Test as a tool for candidate evaluation

Testing system is relatively new approach towards the candidate evaluation. Depending on the organization, the tests are conducted separately or as a part of the interview process. The main benefit of the testing system is the absence of prejudice approach with the only concentration of the qualities and personalities of a candidate due to the standardized nature of the tests. Most of the tests do not imply the right or wrong answers, however, assist in creating the perception of the candidate for the HR manager / employer as well as allow to compare the candidates between each other based on their inner motivation and personal qualities. Tests, moreover, make it possible to determine the best skills of a potential employee and, consequently, correctly assign the tasks and responsibilities in the future depending on the test result showed. Currently, big enterprises

include tests into the recruitment process in order to shorten the time and money allocated into interviewing a big number of the candidates. However, for the middle- and small-scale business this approach might be beneficial for more precise estimation and evaluation of the interviewed. (Allin & Salnikova n.d.)

2.5.1 Projective tests

Projective testing applied by the enterprises is designed for the interpretation of person's reaction towards the daily or non-job-related situations. According to the results, the HR managers can estimate the inner or hidden attitudes and psychological peculiarities by analyzing the projective thinking and behavior of a candidate to the regular situations. Projective methods of testing allow to consider the level of stress and hesitation, detect the dominating sides of a person, tendency to conflict as well as other factors affecting the work performance, which might be successfully hidden during the standard interview process. Consequently, analyzing the results indicates the best personalities and candidates suitable for a position depending on their psychological picture. Projective testing as the tool for recruitment is recommended for both big enterprises and smaller-scaled companies since it increases the accuracy of choosing the right people for right positions by detecting the inner subconscious directives of one; however, there is a high risk of low validity as well. The projective method should not make up the whole recruitment process first of all, due to the fact that it requires a very high qualification of HR manager and secondly, due to the inner abruption of the human being to be tested without the sincere desire and consent. The best approach to use is to include only few of the projective questions into the questionnaire or test for the candidate to get the true validity of the results. Apart from the projective approach, the correctly implemented test for employment will include the combination of questions related to different types of pre-employment testing to evaluate different skills, personal qualities and knowledge. (Allin & Salnikova n.d.)

2.5.2 Personality tests

The personality test is designed for the detailed evaluation of the degree to which the candidates are exposed to accept certain circumstances during the work

process based on the personal characteristics of one as well as the expected engagement in the process. The personality tests are also meant to estimate the level of one's correspondence and fit towards the company's goals and aims. The main peculiarity of this method is the absence of the right or wrong answer, however, there is determination of self-descriptive aspects. The purpose of the personality testing is eliminating those candidates whose professional qualifications are seen as sufficient for employment, while the personal qualities do not fit the organization's principles. The assessment is normally meant to find out the answers to the following questions: how well the does the person interact with others? On which factors does one base his / her decisions? How does the person deal with stress? Which aspects take the lead in character? How passionate and motivated is the person? (Criteria n.d.)

It is essential for the personality testing to design the questions in correspondence to the ideal employee profile the company is looking for, which makes the recruitment process easier and more effective. The results presented in the personality test draws a perception of the employee in a job environment, where the HR manager or top management can estimate how well this approach is suitable, as well as make the decision whether and how the strengths and weaknesses of one would affect and contribute to a company in question. (Herbert n.d.) Figure 8 shows an example of personality testing question, which might appear at the interview.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Unsure	Agree	Strongly Agree
1 I enjoy meeting new people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2 I like helping people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3 I sometimes make mistakes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4 I'm easily disappointed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5 I enjoy repairing things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Figure 8. Personality test example (Assessment centre HQ n.d.).

2.5.3 Emotional intelligence tests

Emotional stability and diversity are an essential aspect in tourism sector, therefore, it is also crucial to measure the dimension during the recruitment process. For creating sustainable and leading business, those people who possess the healthy mental condition as well as deal well with the emotional flow, are the most suitable ones. The technical supplement and long work experience are no longer valid as the foremost quality of a candidate. (Higginbottom 2018.) The concept of emotional intelligence is referred to as *ability to recognize emotions in oneself and others, manage emotions in oneself and others, and use emotions appropriately in solving problems* (Fisher et al. 2006, p. 339).

The proper recognition of the emotional well-being assists in evaluating the potential inconveniences in a working environment for both employee and employer as well as choosing the right people for the right positions for more sustainable development of a company. In other words, the emotional intelligence is essential to be examined in order to understand how the team work or customer service would be conducted. However, the emotional intelligence should not also be considered as the leading factor of recruiting or rejecting a candidate. It is more essential to use this dimension as the base for comparing the candidates having the equal chances of being accepted. The only exception in this case is having the major divergences with the company's internal environment. While analyzing the emotional capabilities of one, it is also necessary for the HR manager to fairly judge if these features would affect the internal and external operations of a company or might be considered as the minor personal characters that do not have a negative influence in the future. The major inconvenience when it comes to the emotional testing is that the candidates are normally familiar with the qualities the employers are looking for and might easily give the wrong answers. In this case, the professional HR manager must be capable of analyzing the tendency of answers given as well as spotting the absolutely perfect candidates with no negative qualities as well as whose emotions (according to the test results) are always under the control. These candidates are most likely to be the wrong ones to involve into the working life due to the unrecognized emotional intelligence of one. (Gibbons n.d.) Figure 9 shows an example of emotional intelligence tests.

1. Two of your friends are fighting so you...

- Try to help them understand each other's point of view
- Pick a side and bad-mouth the other friend
- Avoid both of them until the fight is over
- Let them vent their emotions to you

Figure 9. Emotional intelligence test example (Matthew 2017).

2.5.4 Cognitive tests

Cognitive ability tests are designed for measuring the degree of candidate's intelligence capabilities such as IQ and general intelligence, abstract thinking and deductive reasoning, mathematical mindset deduction and logics. Cognitive tests are also known as the predictors of whether the candidate is expected to succeed in the job or not; however, normally the tests are applied to the job with more specific and complex jobs. Cognitive testing involves the employer deeper into the candidates understanding by finding out his / her strength and weaknesses as well as the speed of adoption into the working process. While creating the cognitive ability test for the recruiting process, it is essential to involve the characteristics related to a specific job, making the concrete focus on the tasks, responsibilities and abilities that make sense for a candidate. They also have to be reliable for the HR manager and the employer to draw a picture of individual's knowledge to make important decisions in the future. Moreover, some of the experts believe that the tests developed might have different nature and would have to be considered as either applied individually or for a group of candidates at a time. In the same regard, depending on a specific nature the HR manager is entitled to decide whether the interview is handled online or in a paper version, as well as how the results are measured (either it is the scoring system or the decision is based on comparison with other candidates). (Fisher et al. 2006, pp. 329-330.) Figures 10 and 11 show the examples of numerical and verbal dimensions respectively.



Figure 10. Cognitive test. Numerical dimension example (Wikijob a. n.d.).

Verbal Reasoning	Question 9 of 10			
<p>In December 2006, Mars were fined by the Environment Agency for breaches of European carbon trading rules. The agency failed to submit the correct permits for the carbon it emitted in 2005, the first year of the scheme. Mars were fined Euro 78,000 for failing to obtain allowances for almost 2,000 tonnes of carbon. Under the European Union (EU) system, firms are given allowances for the amount of carbon they can emit. If they exceed their allowance, they must buy additional permits from other companies to cover the shortfall. According to the Environment Agency, Mars produced 1,952 tonnes of carbon. It did not submit permits to cover these emissions until nearly eight months after the deadline. Mars said in their defence that they had "not been discharging excess greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, and in fact its emissions at the Peterborough facility have reduced."</p>	<p>The Environment Agency enforce European carbon trading rules.</p> <table border="1"> <tr><td>True</td></tr> <tr><td>False</td></tr> <tr><td>Cannot Tell</td></tr> </table>	True	False	Cannot Tell
True				
False				
Cannot Tell				

Figure 11. Cognitive test. Verbal dimension example (Wikijob b. n.d.).

2.5.5 Language proficiency tests

Language proficiency tests are commissioned by big enterprises or chain organizations, whose operations are based in different states / countries and imply different languages for either cooperating within team or dealing with the third-parties such as clients and suppliers. The tests might include several questions to check the grammar, listening and reading skills, however, the spoken language might also be checked by conducting the interview in a language requested. The language testing is not essential; however, it is determined by the job specialization. The tests are normally conducted for recruiting in the international or dealing with the international suppliers' companies for those candidates, whose native

language is different from the requested one. Conducting the language test for recruitment, the candidates are using the actual knowledge and involve the cognitive thinking, which “specializes” on solving those tasks, which imply only one correct answer. In general, the academic knowledge is not required, while the fluency of usage is essential. The candidate must be able to receive and give instructions in the language required, participate in meetings and solve the everyday questions properly. In this case, grammatically correct sentences might not be a key, while the ability to deliver and receive information with no consequences arisen is important. (Quiz CV n.d.) The key point for being evaluated is the vocabulary, which must be versatile to communicate with colleagues, clients and suppliers. Having the person with wide vocabulary increases the competitive advantage of a company by creating a positive experience in front of a client to be served in his / her native language. Moreover, the candidate must be able to apply the language in question to different kind of situations ranging from phone calls to direct communication with the clients. The communication profile the HR manager or employer are looking for in candidates shall be relevant to the exact position he / she is applying with the knowledge to be limited on the particular tasks. (Cook 2017.)

2.5.6 Work sample test

Work sample tests are conducted in order to check the skills and knowledge of an individual with the work experience or to determine whether the skills possessed would be enough for successfully conducting the job in the future. The main concentration of the test is conducting the sample task the candidate is most likely to meet at the working environment, which is also predetermined by the work specialization. According to the results of the interview, the HR manager or the employer are capable of evaluating whether the skills are found sufficient or the steps followed in a sample task are suitable for reaching the success in the future. Since some of the candidates have related, however, not the exactly required work experience from the previous job, the sample tasking would act as the introduction to his / her potential duties, which is also the base for the employer to see if the one could contribute in the future while acquiring the needed knowledge. The sample work tests normally include the performance simulations

to meet up the actual expectations, introduce the job in a vacancy as well as increase the reliability of the interview. However, it is essential for the HR manager not only to evaluate the steps followed and the actual results of the candidate but the knowledge of a specific business, market as well as possible competitors of a company (existing or future). The sample work tests show how much time, money and other resources would be needed for one new employee to be trained towards the successful job performance. (Fisher et al. 2006, pp. 332-333.)

3 Empirical study

3.1 Case company: Easy Travel Ltd

3.1.1 Introduction of the company

Easy Travel Ltd is a DMC (Destination Management Company) based in Nordic (Denmark, Sweden, Norway) and Baltic (Latvia, Estonia) countries with the head office in Helsinki, Finland. The company was founded in 2005 as a tour operator in Scandinavian countries. As the main concept of the company, the B-2-B approach is applied by which the number of partners has reached 1,000 throughout the years. As the B-2-B establishment, the company builds strong connections to the partners from all over the world providing the best quality to the customers arriving. Easy Travel Ltd has participated in many international travel fairs (including the Matkamessut in 2018 / Easy Travel Ltd. 6b48) as well as was *awarded with the AAA certificate which confirms the highest extent of credibility to the enterprise.* (Easy Travel n.d.)

The main responsibilities of the company are excursions, transfers, accommodation bookings, tour packages and VIP tailored services. While these services are applicable for all the targeted countries during the summer period, the main attention during the winter season is paid to the Finnish Lapland, where the charter flights are organized by main Russian / Ukrainian tour agencies. (Aleksanian 2018.)

There are fifteen full-time employees in all the departments of the company. Apart from that, there is a huge group of employees who work in cooperation with the

company on a daily basis (tour guides, drivers, assistants). The main language for communication within the employees is Russian, while English is main language for work due to the high range of activities and services provided by the suppliers from all over the world. The management style chosen in the company must respect the interests and feelings of all the employees, therefore, there is no high distance index while all the issues are very easy to be discussed with the main manager. All the employees have the right to make independent decisions unless it breaks the rules of the customer service and brings the best experiences for clients. In order to make the services as personalized and tailored as it is possible, the group collective discussions are in a very high usage allowing each employee to receive the necessary advice. In this aspect, each new employee gets enough guidance and help from co-workers and the main manager. (Aleksanian 2018.)

The highest need of employees is spotted in Sales Department of the company, having 10 (including the researcher) full-time sales people dealing with the requests. Since the main target group of the company is Russian, American, Canadian, Indian and Arabian tourists, the native language of the employees is expected to be Russian with fluent knowledge of English. Finnish is not seen as a necessity; however, it is considered as a high-valued benefit in a company, currently having only one full-time employee and the top manager possessing the Finnish language skills. Most of the suppliers of the company are tourism and hospitality related organizations, therefore, English is enough for sufficient communication.

3.1.2 Justifications for the inner HR manager absence

In the company there is no HR manager present on a regular basis. Instead, the company might use outsourcing recruiting companies for finding the suitable candidates. For the recruiting and maintaining the organizational behavior purposes, the top-level manager is responsible, which is justified by the following reasons, stated by the CEO of Easy Travel.

1. The HR manager is most likely to have a blurred view on the current issues within the company. The HR manager is relatively fast and dynamically

gets him / herself involved in the operational process and starts to understand the organizational decisions and, therefore increases the risk of internal mistakes. The organizational system swallows up the HR manager and after a period of approximately six-seven months, the manager cannot fully and fairly judge the environment within the organization and spot the possible negative behaviors of the employees.

2. The presence of HR manager leads the absence of the competition and, therefore, the responsibility. The internal HR manager is not aiming to the external market (e.g. is not looking for the job due to the already being employed), therefore, has no competitors in a company. In this case, the result of his / her actions regarding the staff training and recruitment does not have such a convincing influence as for an external specialists.
3. The HR manager does not have a convincing influence on a situation. Often, the key to the success of HR manager is seen as the trustfulness of the employees towards the HR manager. As a result, employees begin to consider the manager as the person to deal with their own problems, deliver their tasks and get offended by the tasks given by the manager. On the other hand, employees do not show enough respect to the HR manager and neglect the tasks given being convinced that the top manager is the only person to deliver the tasks. Overall, the HR manager does not have the power to rule the overall process of managing the company. Also, the HR manager is often considered as the person who is trying to acquire the top-management position, which leads to the internal conflicts in the company.
4. There is also the risk of overestimated level of influence. Sometimes, HR manager might receive the employees' respect and trust too fast, which leads to divergence of the company's goals and achieving own aims of the HR manager. The HR manager is most likely to leave those people within the company, who show the most respect towards HR manager. As a result, there are only those people in the company, who the HR manager feels comfortable to work with instead of those, whose personalities differ from the HR manager's. HR manager makes the decision based on his / her own preferences and conveniences, which often leads to the point of

HR manager being the one to manage the company instead of the top-manager.

Since Easy Travel does not use the services of an internal and permanent HR manager, the company must allocate money for external HR managing companies. Also, the time resources might be allocated by the top-manager to conduct the series of interview and the control the organizational behavior of all the employees by himself. The guideline created is seen by CEO of the company as a tool for shortening the resources allocated into the process of recruitment and managing the Human resources.

3.2 Research description

The following research study is conducted as a type of a self-administrated survey with the structured questionnaire, delivered to the sampled group. The quantitative research methods are used for conducting the research work. The main reason for conducting the quantitative research instead of qualitative one is the nature of the research, which aims at evaluating the frequency of the answers related to employees' attitudes, feelings and behaviors within a case company framework. By conducting the quantitative research, the author is capable of answering such questions as *What? Where? How much? How often?* (Mirola 2018, p. 3.) The limited size of the population surveyed does not interrupt the process of data analysis conducted using the statistical method due to the nature of results needed to be estimated. The data needed to be received is subjective and interpretive and is based on the psychological and sociological dimensions with the main purpose of measuring the insights instead of understanding. Since the aim of the research is to come up with the employment guideline discovering the individuals whose internal perceptions are close to the ideal employee's profile, the internal characteristics of the currently employed people are essential to be statistically measured being based on the frequency of the answers given. The research is using the primary data evaluating the most frequent answers received from the sample group.

3.3 Population and sampling

The target group of the research was defined as the people currently employed by Easy Travel Ltd. To drive a sample group out of the population (=universe), the non-probability sampling method is used. Non-probability sampling method is usually referred to as the method, where the participants of the research are chosen on purpose (Mirola 2018, p. 29). In this case, the judgmental form of non-probability sample is used: the representatives of the particular department of the company (i.e. Sales Department of Easy Travel Ltd). The judgmental sampling allows the researcher to choose the concrete participants on purpose being dependent only on one's own knowledge. The margin of error in case of the judgmental sampling is known to be low since the researcher chooses the participants carefully and allows each individual to be a part of a chosen sample. (Bhat n.d.) The number of the full-time employees in the company is limited, therefore, the judgmental decision is made concerning the particular department to be sampled. Since the Sales Department employs most of the individuals in the company and has an urgent need to increase efficiency of the operations, the representatives of the department are considered sample group. The final sample consists of nine representatives of the Sales Department and does not include the researcher as a part of the sample group.

3.4 Data collection process

The questionnaire was created using the web-based form Google Forms and delivered to the Sales Department representatives via the Skype. The language of instructions is English. The delivered version consists of the cover letter, explaining the purpose of the research, researcher's background, the reasons for targeting the particular group of individuals, the estimated length of the survey, the desired date of result submission as well as the date of final results publishing. The cover letter also states that the survey is anonymous, and the results will only be used for the research purposes. Secondly, the body of content, represented as the questionnaire is followed by the researcher's gratitude for the participation. The strength of the research work is seen by the author as a time-effective and convenient form of analyzing the current organizational behavior within a company in question.

3.5 Research questions

The research questions were created with the purpose of finding out the ideal profile of the individual in tourism sector, namely, the employee in the tour agency, assuming the currently employed staff members as the aggregate complex of the characteristics. Since the purpose of the research is to create a guideline for employment to Easy Travel Ltd., the potential candidates will be evaluated in accordance with the current staff members' characteristics, personal interests, skills and work experience. Hence, the main question of the questionnaire is: what is the ideal profile of the employee for Easy Travel Ltd.? The questions, presented in the questionnaire, observe the following information:

- Age
- Education
- Personal interests
- Computer literacy skills
- Language competencies
- Personal teamwork evaluation
- Relationships within the department
- Relationships with the top-management
- Business – to – business and business – to – consumer relationships

The questionnaire includes both close-ended and open-ended questions, rating questions (Likert Attitude scales) and multiple-choice questions.

4 Research results

The following chapter provides the survey results analysis and the description model of the ideal employee in Sales Department of Easy Travel Ltd. The sub-chapters provide the data analysis and referred to as the separate questions delivered to the employees. The general tendencies are described in accordance to the information collected from the answers submitted. The graphs introduced in the chapter were created either by Google Forms or by Excel usage. All the compulsory questions are answered by all the representatives of the sample group (namely, nine people have answered the compulsory questions). The data is

analyzed in the percentage review in order to examine the tendency of the answers with the most frequent answers to be referred to as the “ideal profile” of the employee in the tour agency.

4.1 Data analysis

4.1.1 Age

The age difference of the employees of the Sales Department is noted, ranging from twenty-four to forty-one. The highest dimension is the employees being twenty-nine years old (three representatives – 33.3%), while the other ages are divided as 11.1% (one representative respectively). The average age in Sales Department is thirty-two years, with the youngest employee being twenty-four years old and oldest forty-one years old. Figure 12 shows the percentage division of the ages of the participants.

Age:

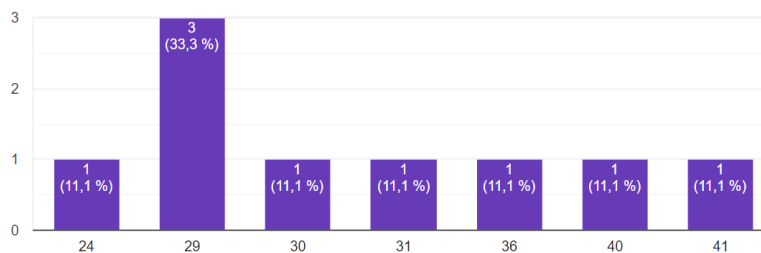


Figure 12. Age.

4.1.2 Education

The data collected from this question does not provide an efficient base for the percentage comparison due to the low reliability of the answers. Some of the participants have not followed the instructions stated in the question, therefore, the answers do not contain the equal informational background. According to the results from Figure 13, all the employees have a University qualification with at least one employee possessing the master’s degree. At least three employees have stated an international degree, five employees having a degree in social sciences (referred to as public relations, applied linguistics, tourism, international

communications and HR management) and four employees possessing an economics related degree (economics, business administration and finance management). The tendency shows that at least two employees have two degrees and specializations as well only one has a degree in tourism business.

Education (please, mention the following: degree, university, specialization):

University of Westminster, London, PR specialist
M.Sc. in Economics
Bachelor of Business Administration/Kajaani UAS
Bachelor, Herzen State Pedagogical University, Applied Linguistics
high, University of culture and arts, tourism
Bachelor, Tver State University, International Communication
Finance management
Moscow State University of Management - Human Resources Manager, Riga Aeronautical University - management of an international transport company
Economics, Far Eastern Federal University

Figure 13. Education.

4.1.3 Work experience

The tendency of the answers makes up the half of the participants having previously related work experience in tourism industry. Figure 14 shows the percentage division of the answers: 66.7 % of respondents (six individuals) do have previous work experience in tourism, while 33.3% (three individuals) have not had work experience related to the sphere of tourism before.

Have you had any work experience in the sphere of tourism before the employment in Easy Travel Ltd.?

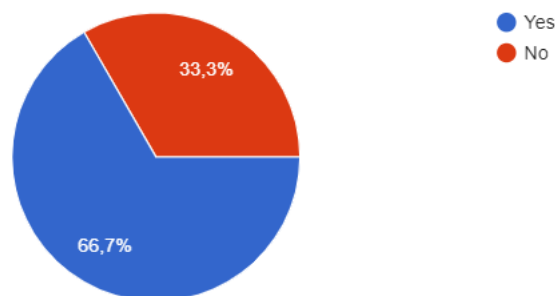


Figure 14. Work experience in tourism industry.

For those respondents, who have mentioned the previously related work experience, the company (companies) of the previous employment had to be stated. The reviewed data from Figure 15 shows that all the employees have work experience in tour agencies and destination management companies.

If the answer to the previous question is YES, please, specify, which particular work experience you had? (Mention the organization)

Pac Group, leader of animation cinema-club for kids
 Emerging Travel Group, Different DMC's, Aspire Lifestyles Concierge
 manager, head of dpt in travel companies (Neva, Versa)
 Neva travel (Russia), Good time travel (Russia)
 Pac Group - manager of the Baltic and Scandinavian countries
 Tariffication manager, Ambotris Holidays Greece

Figure 15. Work experience in tour agencies and destination management companies.

Despite the fact that six individuals have stated previous work experience in the sphere of tourism, seven individuals (77.8 %) have mentioned previous work experience as a sales person in some other industry. Thus, Figure 16 shows that only two individuals (22.2 %) have not had the experience of being the sales person.

Do you have previous work experience as a sales person?

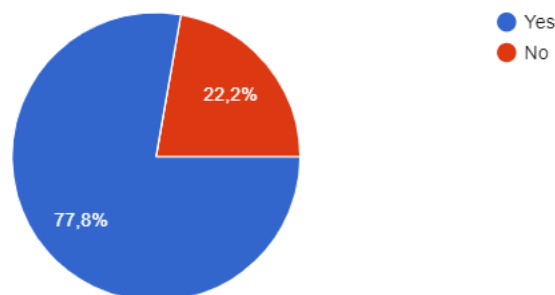


Figure 16. Experience in sales.

For those participants, who have mentioned the sales experience, the duration of the sales experience was asked to be stated. The answers given state that the shortest work experience is six month and the longest is approximately twenty-one years. The average work experience makes up nine years of experience as a sales person. Figure 17 shows the duration of sales experience.

If the answer to the previous question is YES, please, specify, how long you have been working as a sales person?



Figure 17. Duration of sales experience.

4.1.4 Personal qualities

According to the survey results, the currently employed staff members of Easy Travel Ltd. mostly mention such important personal qualities when it comes to work as: communication, accuracy, responsibility, stress management and knowledge. The numbers of the individuals stating the following qualities are seen in Figure 18.

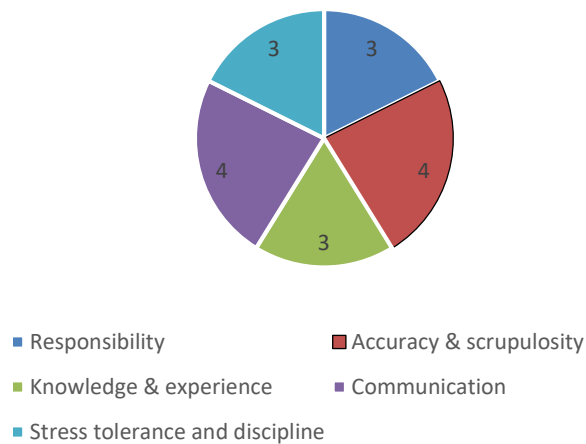


Figure 18. The most common personal qualities graph.

Apart from the most common characteristics, the employees have also mentioned such essential qualities as analytical mindset, honesty, sense of humor and independence.

4.1.5 Language proficiency and language usage

The survey results state Russian is the language each surveyed individual is fluent in. English language is the second fluent language with eight individuals mentioning it. Two employees are fluent in any other language, while Finnish language skills are not possessed by anyone in the company. The results are presented by Figure 19.



Figure 19. Language fluency graph.

The most common language of communication in the working place is English with five individuals mentioning it as the main language to be used. Three individuals have stated that Russian and English are applied equally, while one individual considers Russian as the most frequent used language. The results are mentioned in a form of a diagram in Figure 20.

The language most frequently used at work

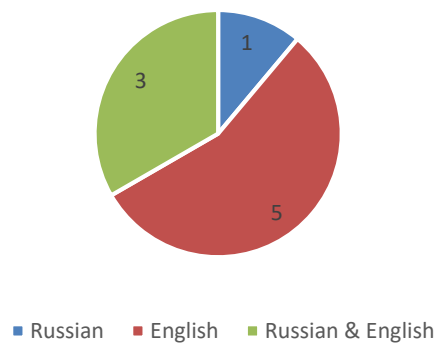


Figure 20. Language usage graph.

4.1.6 Computer literacy

For evaluation of the computer literacy, the participants of the survey were asked to mention the most frequently used computer software and programs. According to the results, presented in Figure 21, Microsoft Office is the most commonly mentioned dimension with seven individuals mentioning such programs as Word and Excel. Internet and Web service (e.g. Google, Mozilla Firefox, Trello) were mentioned by five employees, followed by the Adobe Acrobat and SAMO (Customer relationship management program, used by Easy Travel Ltd. inside and outside operations within a company) both being mentioned by three staff members. Skype is found as the least mentioned service, referred to by two people.

Software and programs

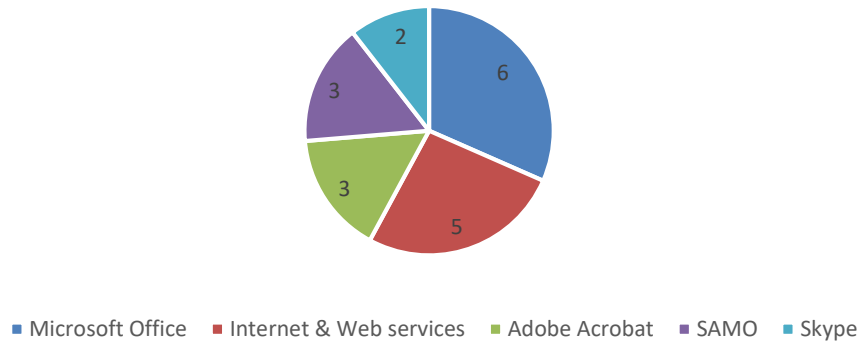


Figure 21. Software and programs usage graph.

The employees of Easy Travel Ltd. were also asked to evaluate the satisfaction of the Web services. The satisfaction is estimated by the scale method:

- 1 – the participant disagrees with the statement given,
- 2 – the participant partly agrees,
- 3 – the participant totally agrees.

Only two individuals find the Web services completely satisfying and completely dissatisfying respectively (both summing up in 22.2%), while seven other employees (77.8 %) are partly satisfied / dissatisfied with the services used. Figure 22 presents the data collected from the employees of Easy Travel Ltd.

You are satisfied with the web services used in your company (e.g. Gmail, Google Drive, SAMO).

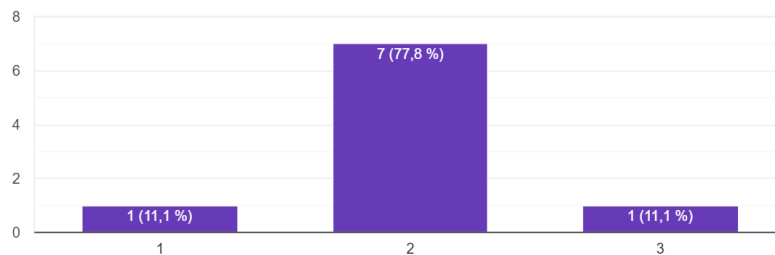


Figure 22. Web services satisfaction.

4.1.7 Work motivation

The most important motivation for working in the company was mentioned as career opportunities & money along with clients & team members. Both dimensions have received five references each. Opportunities for professional self-development and realization were mentioned four times, while particular interest in tourism and company's mission & General Director twice. The correlation can be seen in Figure 23.

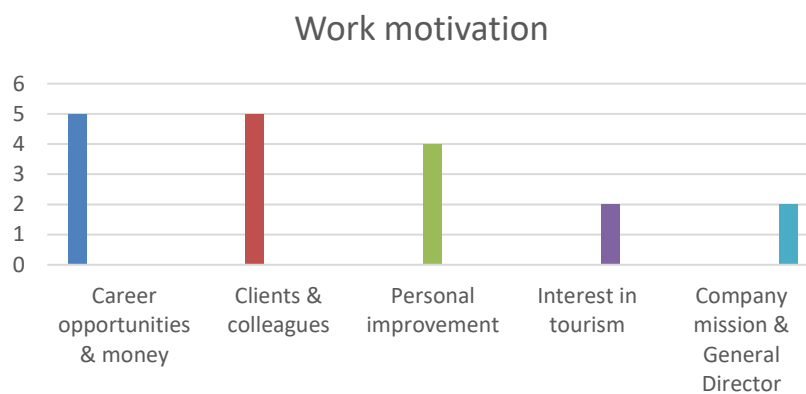


Figure 23. Work motivation graph.

4.1.8 Hobbies and interests

As for the hobbies and interests' dimensions, sport activities (e.g. dancing, snowboarding, tennis) and art & self-development (reading, guitar playing, movies, techno music) seem important for the majority of the employees. Both dimensions have received the biggest numbers of references (seven individuals for each hobby). Gastronomy and travelling are mentioned by three and two employees respectively. Figure 24 shows the statistical correlation between the dimensions.

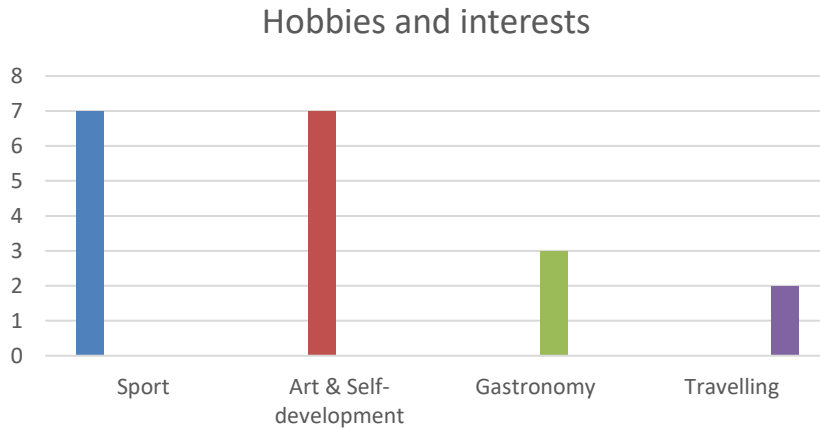


Figure 24. Personal hobbies and interests' graph.

4.1.9 Working process and approaches applied

As to the most common approach applied in case of customer dissatisfaction employees have mentioned as their ability to use the professional skills as the tool for protecting the quality of the services provided by the company. The approach was chosen by 88.9% of survey participants (eight individuals). The usage of the professional skills in order to prevent the customer dissatisfaction was selected by 11.1% (one individual). The results are presented in Figure 25.

Which approach are you most likely to apply to your working process?

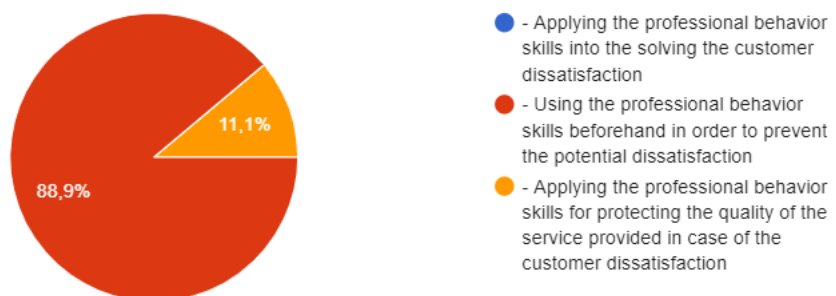


Figure 25. Approaches to working process.

Most of the employees (seven individuals making up 77.8%) state that they build their working process on the interest of the whole company, while 22.2% (two individuals) consider customers' interests as the leading dimension for their work. The results' correlation is presented in Figure 26.

You build your working process basing on:

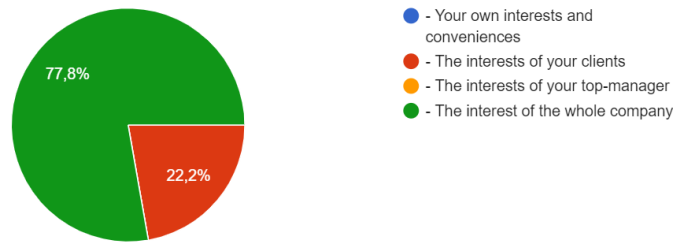


Figure 26. The base for building the working process.

Moreover, the strict rules following during the work was stated by 11.1% of staff members (one individual). Oppositely, one individual has also stated the negligence of all the rules presented in the company and building the working process in a personally convenient way. The most significant part of surveyed (seven individuals making up 77.8%) confess that various circumstances might interrupt from following each particular rule. The results are shown in Figure 27.

Your attitude towards the rules inside the company:

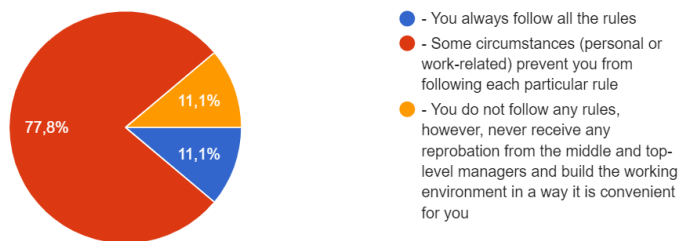


Figure 27. Attitude towards rules completion.

The work contribution of the employees, presented in the Figure 28, tends to be totally or partly dependent on the salary and personal work responsibilities (44.4% for each dimension respectively), while one individual does not find this approach suitable in the working environment.

The level of willingness and diligence you allocate to working process should be strictly correspondent to your salary and should be equal to your personal work responsibilities.

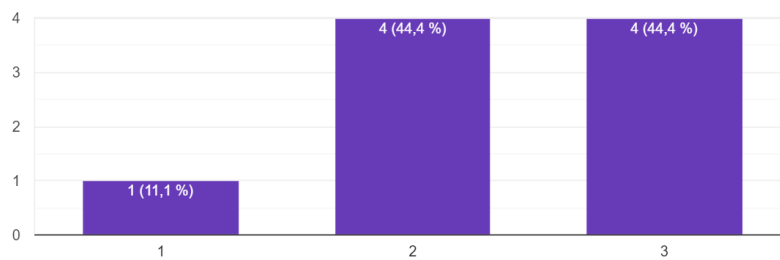


Figure 28. Work contribution.

The relatively high level of stress during the work process was stated by three individual employees of Sales Department of the company. The biggest percentage of the employees (66.7% - six sales people) has partly confirmed the presence of the stress dimension at the working place. None of the employees stated the absence of the stress at work. The results might be seen in Figure 29.

Sometimes you get anxious due to the high tense at the working place.

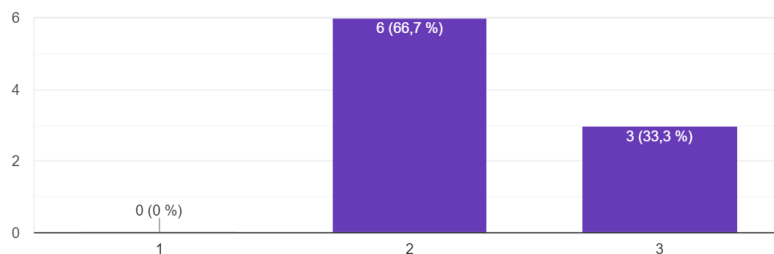


Figure 29. Stress at the working place.

4.1.10 Relationships between employees and employer

The results of the survey show that most of the employees (88.9% presented by eight individual workers) apply the negotiation of the orders given by the middle and top-level managers. This group of employees feels comfortable to criticize the order given as long as they do find it inefficient for the working process. One individual worker does not consider the managerial tasks essential for execution with the high concentration on the personal point of view and interest. Figure 29

shows that none of the survey participants implements each managerial tasks neither creates the semblance of the task implementation.

You believe that the orders given by the middle and top-level managers:

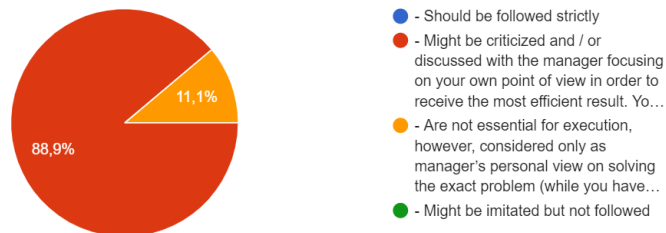


Figure 30. Order implementation.

In case of managerial forcing to implement the task, 77.8% of surveyed (seven individuals) would request for the efficient justification of the action with no execution before, while two individuals would behave in a personally suitable manner. Figure 30 shows the correlation between the dimensions.

If the manager forces you to act in a way you do not find efficient / not willing to implement, you:

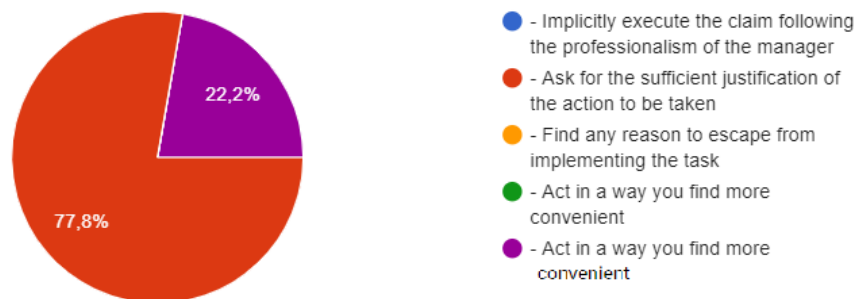


Figure 31. Forced implementation behavior.

Due to the high level of communication showed in the company, most of the employees participating in the survey also find themselves as heavy team players. The data, presented in Figure 31, shows that five employees would contact the colleagues first in order to receive the advice, relying on their experience. Four representatives are most likely to contact the supplier in order to receive the certifies information.

If the agent is asking for the details regarding the service you purchase from the third parties and are not sure at, you:

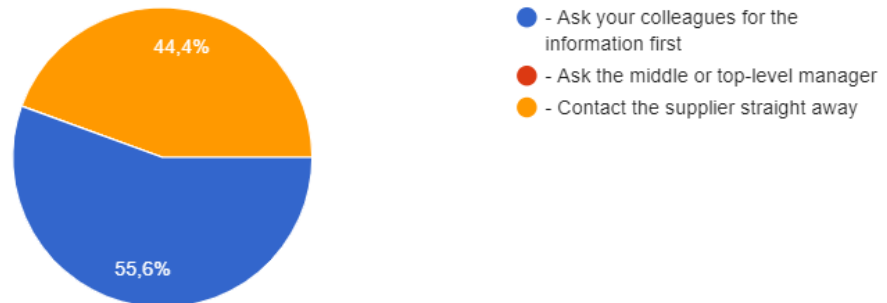


Figure 32. Actions in case of nescience.

Thus, Figure 32 confirms that all the employees of Sales Department of Easy travel Ltd. are totally satisfied with the organizational environment within the department.

Working atmosphere within the sales department (both formal and informal cooperation is taken into consideration) suits you perfectly.

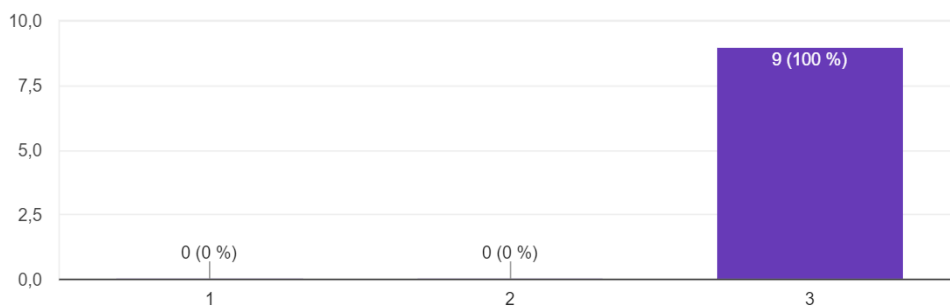


Figure 33. Working environment in the department.

However, one individual has disagreed with the fact he / she receives enough guidance and support from the middle and top managers. Oppositely, 44.4% of surveyed (four people) have confirmed they find the level of help received sufficient and suitable. The same number of employees has partly disagreed with the statement; therefore, they would wish to have more assistance received from the managers. The data can be observed in Figure 31.

You receive enough guidance and support from the middle- and top-level managers of the company.

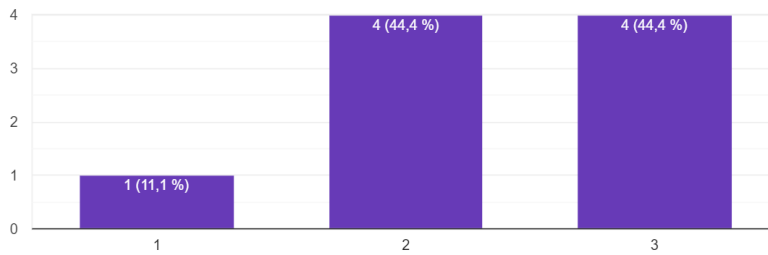


Figure 34. The level of guidance and support received.

4.1.11 B-2-B and B-2-C behavior

The biggest percentage of the surveyed employees has mentioned that they find the work in the tour agency as the a for developing the customer need and, therefore, increasing the profit of the company. The results, presented in Figure 33, show the percentage component to be 77.8% of surveyed (seven individual workers). While one employee finds the work in tour agency strictly correspondent to the services requested, another employee expresses the willingness to serve all the customers' wishes and whims in order to reach the complete satisfaction.

For you, working in the tour / service providing company is seen as:

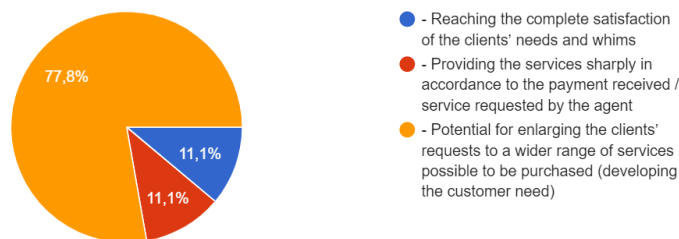


Figure 35. Attitude towards working in the tour agency.

As stated in Figure 35, none of the employees would either neglect the customers' dissatisfaction or consider it as a leading interest with company's own interests neglection. All the employees have confirmed that they are most likely to receive sufficient justification for the refund granting.

If the client makes a complaint about the quality of the tour and wants to get the full refund, you:



Figure 36. Complaint management.

In the same regard, 100% of the employees in the Sales Department have agreed on developed request structure in order to reach win-win situation for both client and the company. Figure 36 confirms the percentage division.

If you can spot an incompetence in the agent's request / clients' wishes, you:

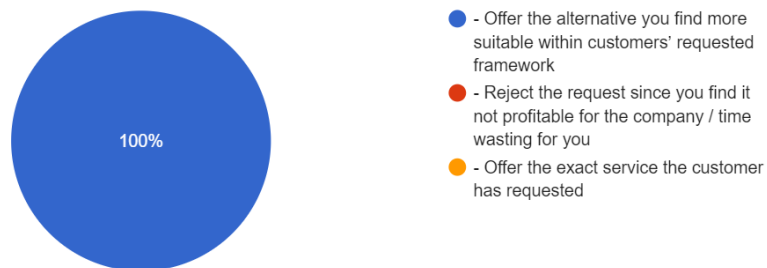


Figure 37. Business – to – business cooperation.

Moreover, five employees of the Sales Department (making up 55.6%) have confirmed that the personal time allocation is dependent on the circumstances while three people (33.3 %) allow the working responsibilities to be completed outside the working hours to reach the complete customer satisfaction. One person (11.1%) does not find the approach of personal time donation sufficient / reasonable to be completed. The data is presented in Figure 37.

In order to create the best experience for the clients, you should also donate your personal time outside the working hours to serve the clients in the best manner.

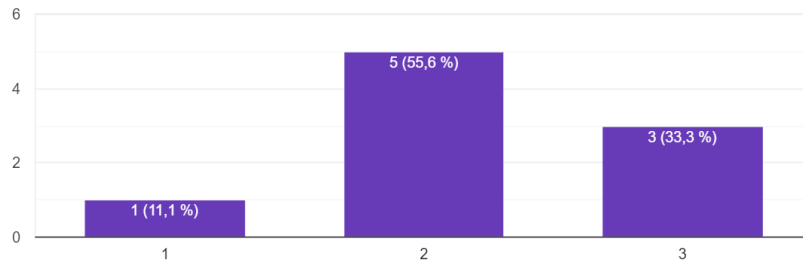


Figure 38. Personal time allocation.

Moreover, the customers' inner wishes and needs are considered to be essential for understanding by the representatives of the Sales Department in order to tailor the offer (two employees, marked as 22,2 % of the department). Six employees (66.7%) find the need of customer understanding as the dimension, dependent on circumstances, while one does not consider it as a lead for providing the quality-based service. Figure 38 represents the data collected.

While working with one particular request it is essential to understand the customers' "soul" instead of following the service tailoring requested.

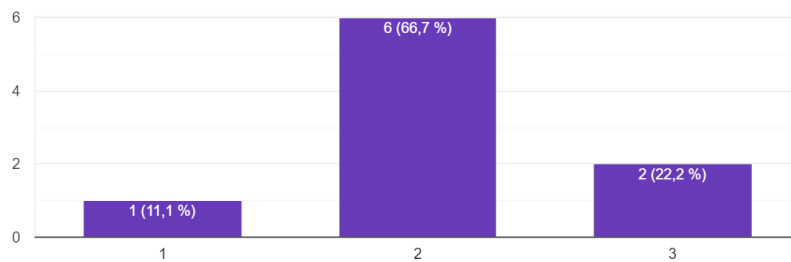


Figure 39. Customer understanding.

Finally, two representatives of the Sales Department stated that the customer is always right, while one sales person completely disagrees with the statement. Six employees, making up 66.7% of all the Sales Department representatives, allow different circumstances to affect the statement. The data is represented in Figure 40.

The client is always right.

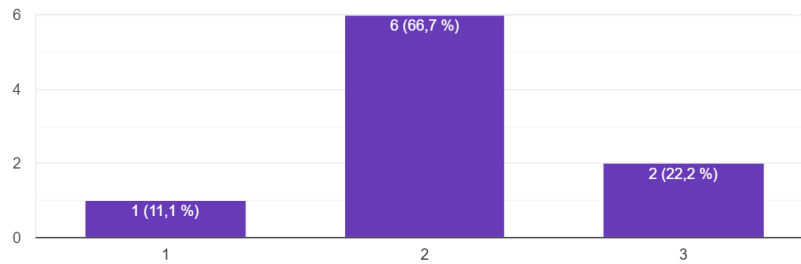


Figure 40. The client is always right.

4.2 Ideal employee's profile description

The testing system for employment describes the interview and testing stages allowing the executor to evaluate the suitability of the candidates to the company's environment. The purpose of the testing system is to select those candidates whose results of the interview would be seen as the most closely referable to the statistically ideal employee's profile found out during the research. The description of the ideal employee's profile is described in the subchapter.

The preferable age of the employee ranges between twenty-eight and thirty-four years. Employee must possess higher education, not lower than bachelor's level with the specialization related to Social Sciences or Economics. Previous work experience in hospitality organizations (preferably, tour agencies & destination management companies) is necessary, with at least five years of the working experience as the sales person. The employee must describe him / herself as a communicative, accurate & attentive, responsible and stress-resistant person. The employee should be active and enthusiastic, often being involved in the sport activities, art and self-development. The employee must be fluent in Russian and English, while Finnish is seen as an advantage. Microsoft Office proficiency is required.

Work motivation of the employee is expected to be determined by career opportunities, reaching the customer satisfaction, belonging to a team, self-development and realization. The process of working in Easy Travel Ltd. implies professional behavior of an employee to be applied beforehand to prevent the customers' dissatisfaction and protect the interest of the whole company. The employee

should also be able to protect him / herself and to give the justification for the personal opinion. The person is expected to act correspondently to his / her job responsibilities and position and be prepared to donate some personal time to reach the customer satisfaction. Moreover, the employee should deal properly with the stress of the working process.

The orders of the middle and top management of the company must be followed by the employee, however, one's personal attitude towards the issue is also expected to be shown in order to reach the maximum efficiency of the service. Team working skills are requested from the employee with the developed social behavior to proceed with the reliable information.

The employee should actively participate in developing the customer needs and be able to implement the upselling process. In the same regard, both customers' and company's interests shall be protected by the employee. The proper attitude towards the objective service implementation is a must. The employee is expected to be experienced and knowledgeable enough to tailor the services and step forward the customers' soul understanding.

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Dear colleagues,

I am a third-year student of Tourism and Hospitality Management in Saimaa University of Applied Sciences. I am conducting my thesis as a project- and research-based work analyzing the organizational behavior of Easy Travel Ltd. and creating a manual guideline for the long-term employment.

By responding to the attached questionnaire, you can develop the process of employment to Easy Travel Ltd. and contribute to creating the competitive advantage on the market by attracting the best candidates. The results will be delivered by 23 March 2019.

Survey has been sent to everyone working in Sales Department of Easy Travel Ltd. The responses will be processed anonymously and confidentially. Individual employees cannot be recognized from the published results. The results will be used for the research purposes only.

Please, submit the filled-in questionnaires by 15 March 2019.

For further questions regarding the research, please, do not hesitate to contact me directly via phone +358451415717 or email polina.aleksanian@student.saimia.fi.

Thank you for participation!

Kind regards,

Polina Aleksanian

Survey of organizational behavior within Sales Department of Easy Travel Ltd.

Age:

Education (please, mention the following: degree, university, specialization):

Have you had any work experience in the sphere of tourism before the employment in Easy Travel Ltd.?

- Yes
- No

If the answer to the previous question is YES, please, specify, which particular work experience you had? (Mention the organization).

Do you have previous work experience as a sales person?

- Yes
- No

If the answer to the previous question is YES, please, specify, how long you have been working as the sales person?

List 3 most important qualities of yourself you find the most suitable for your current position.

List the languages you are fluent in.

The language, you mostly use at work, is:

Which computer programs do you find the most useful at work? (Please, list 3).

What motivates you to work in the company most?

Which are your personal hobbies and interests? (Please, list 3)

Which approach are you most likely to apply to your working process?

- Applying the professional behavior skills into the solving the customer dissatisfaction.
- Applying the professional behavior skills beforehand in order to prevent the potential dissatisfaction.
- Applying the professional behavior skills for protecting the quality of the service provided in case of customer dissatisfaction.

You build your working process basing on:

- - Your own interests and conveniences
- - The interests of your clients
- - The interests of your top-manager
- - The interest of the whole company

For you, working in the tour / service providing company is seen as:

- Reaching the complete satisfaction of the clients' needs and whims
- Providing the services sharply in accordance to the payment received / service requested by the agent
- Potential for enlarging the clients' requests to a wider range of services possible to be purchased (developing the customer need)

Your attitude towards the rules inside the company:

- You always follow all the rules
- Some circumstances (personal or work-related) prevent you from following each particular rule
- You do not follow any rules, but never receive any reprobation from the middle and top-level managers and build the working environment in a way convenient for you

You believe that the orders given by the middle and top-level managers:

- Should be followed strictly
- Might be criticized and / or discussed with the manager focusing on your own point of view in order to receive the most efficient result. You do believe the managers might also be affected by "human factor" and loose the track at some particular stage.
- Are not essential for execution, however, considered only as manager's personal view on solving the exact problem (while you have your own, which you are most likely to follow)
- Might be imitated but not followed

If the manager forces you to act in a way you do not find efficient / not willing to implement, you:

- Implicitly execute the claim following the professionalism of the manager
- Ask for a sufficient justification of the action to be taken
- Find any reason to escape from implementing the task
- Act in a way you find more convenient

If the agent is asking for the details regarding the service you purchase from the third parties and are not sure at, you:

- Ask your colleagues for the information first
- Ask the middle or top-level manager
- Contact the supplier straight away

If the client makes a complaint about the quality of the tour and wants to get the full refund, you:

- Grant the refund straight away to minimize the customer dissatisfaction and the negative effect of word of mouth
- Do not grant the refund unless you make sure the complaint is justified
- Do not grant the refund since the service was anyways conducted

If you can spot an incompetence in the agent's request / clients' wishes, you:

- Offer the alternative you find more suitable within customers' requested framework
- Reject the request since you find it not profitable for the company / time wasting for you
- Offer the exact service the customer has requested

For the following questions, please grade how much the statement matches your attitude towards work.

1 - completely disagree

2 - agree partly

3 - totally agree

- 1) In order to create the best experience for the clients, you should also donate your personal time outside the working hours to serve the clients in the best manner.
- 2) The level of willingness and diligence you allocate to working process should be strictly correspondent to your salary and should be equal to your personal work responsibilities.
- 3) While working with one particular request it is essential to understand the customers' "soul" instead of following the service tailoring requested.
- 4) Working atmosphere within the sales department (both formal and informal cooperation is taken into consideration) suits you perfectly.
- 5) You receive enough guidance and support from the middle- and top-level managers of the company.
- 6) You are satisfied with the web services used in your company (e.g. Gmail, Google Drive, SAMO).
- 7) The client is always right.
- 8) Sometimes you get anxious due to the high tense at the working place.

Thank you for your participation!