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THE CONNECTION BETWEEN WELL-BEING OF THE EMPLOYEES AND JOB SATISFACTION AND THE EMPLOYER BRAND AND EMPLOYER BRANDING

– Case Easybank Oy



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THE CONNECTION BETWEEN WELL-BEING OF THE EMPLOYEES AND JOB SATISFACTION AND EMPLOYER BRAND AND EMPLOYER BRANDING

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The thesis was conducted as a case study for the client company, who wanted to acquire more knowledge about job satisfaction and well-being at work. The earlier surveys had failed to give an explanation why there is employee turnover in the company and why it has been difficult to attract talents. Also, the recruitment processes have taken time. The client also wanted to develop their employer brand and wanted to know how the employees currently see the organization.

To study this matter more deeply, a series of interviews were conducted in the client organization. 10 % of the client organization's employees were interviewed. The interview questions had three themes: Employer branding, Well-being at work and Job satisfaction. Based on the results of the interviews, a development plan was formed for the client company. In the development plan matters that needed care were portrayed and the urgency levels were suggested.

In the development plan, six main factors for improvement were identified with a high urgency level. The factors that were identified as demanding care were: resources, communication, organizational clarity, structure and processes, feedback and career coaching, and finally, creating employer brand and employer branding strategy. The suggested steps for employer branding were first including employer branding to the organization's strategy, establishing a team that will be responsible for employer branding and guaranteeing its resources for the task, study the aspects that are valued in the business and inside the organization, gathering and analyzing the valued aspects to be highlighted in the strategy, present the strategy to the organization, include the employer brand message in many platforms and follow up.

KEYWORDS:

Employer branding, Employee retention, Employee turnover, Human resources, Job Satisfaction, Organization culture, Resource-based theory, Well-being at work, Well-being

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TYÖTYTYVÄISYYDEN JA TYÖHYVINVOINNIN YHTEYS YRITYKSEN TYÖNANTAJAMIELIKUVAAN

- Case Easybank Oy

Tämä opinnäytetyö toteutettiin asiakasyritykselle, joka halusi saavuttaa lisää kokonaisvaltaista tietoa työtyytyväisyydestä ja työhyvinvoinnista. Asiakasyrityksen edelliset tutkimukset aiheesta eivät olleet onnistuneet vastamaan ongelmaan, miksi työntekijöiden vaihtuvuus on tiheää ja uusien työntekijöiden rekrytoiminen on ollut vaikeaa ja rekrytointiprosessiin on jouduttu käyttämään paljon aikaa. Asiakasyritys halusi myös kehittää työnantajamielikuvaansa ja selvittää, miten yrityksen työntekijät näkevät organisaation sillä hetkellä.

Jotta näkökulmaa oli mahdollista tutkia enemmän, toteutettiin sarja haastatteluja. 10 % asiakasyrityksen työntekijöistä haastateltiin. Haastatteluissa oli kolme teemaa: työnantajamielikuva, työhyvinvointi ja työtyytyväisyys. Haastattelujen perusteella asiakasyritykselle luotiin kehittämissuunnitelma. Kehityssuunnitelmassa asiat, jotka tarvitsivat välitöntä huomiota oltiin esitelty, sekä ehdotettiin järjestystä asioiden käsittelemisen tärkeys- ja kiireysasteittain.

Kehityssuunnitelmassa tunnistettiin ja esiteltiin kuusi pääosa-alueita, joita yrityksen tulisi kehittää sekä se, millä aikajänteellä. Kuusi pääosa-alueita olivat: resurssit, kommunikaatio, organisaation selkeys, rakenne ja prosessit, työnantajamielikuvan (ja strategian) luominen sekä palaute ja uravalmennus. Ehdotetut toimenpiteet työnantajamielikuvan kehittämiseen olivat sen ottaminen osaksi yrityksen strategiaa, asiasta vastaavan työryhmän tai tiimin kokoaminen sekä tiimin resurssien takaaminen niin, että tehtävä on mahdollista hoitaa. Tiimin tulisi tutkia mitä asioista alalla arvostetaan ja mitä yrityksen työntekijät arvostavat. Kun kyseiset näkökulmat on selvitetty, tulisi teemat sisällyttää strategiaan. Strategia tulisi esitellä yritykselle, työnantajamielikuvan viestiminen otettaisiin aktiivisesti mukaan niin, että se olisi näkyvillä eri kanavilla ja lopulta toimien vaikutusta tulisi seurata.

ASIASANAT:

Työnantajamielikuva, Työtyytyväisyys, Työhyvinvointi, Hyvinvointi, Yrityskulttuuri, Työntekijöiden vaihtuvuus, Työntekijöiden pysyminen yrityksessä, Henkilöstöhallinto, Resurssipohjainen näkemys

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EB	Employer branding
HRM	Human resources management
HR	Human resources
RBT	Resource-based theory

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Several studies suggest that people are the biggest asset of a company. Without good employees, the company cannot be successful. Studies also indicate that it is cheaper to retain employees than recruit new ones (Ambler & Barrow, 1996, 185). The question is, how the company could attract the best talents but also retain the talents in its service. Theurer, Tumasjan, Welpe and Lievens (2018) suggest that the employer brand has an increasingly significant role in retaining and attracting the best talents. Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) add that it does not only have a significant role, but companies should use employer branding “to attract recruits and assure that current employees are engaged in the culture and the strategy of the firm”. In the current decade, the increasing global talent shortage has also been recognized as a threat that organizations need to consider when planning their strategies. Especially in the IT-field this problem is increasing consistently (Oliveira, Moro & Torres 2019). Employer branding and enhancing the employer brand of the organization offers new possibilities for the organization to secure the talent for its services and increasing its competitive advantage (Tanwar & Prasad 2016; Theurer et al. 2018).

Despite the dominant thought, the recruiting process doesn't start when an open job position has been published. The process starts much earlier, and deep from the organization's culture. For the organization, it is crucial to outline the job specifications and match the employee's skills with the job (Tanwar & Prasad 2016, 857). Organizations may consider that a great amount of applications is sufficient measurement when estimating the desirableness of the organization, but this is not the case. The real measurement should instead be what is the amount of real talent that applied for the job? It is vital for the organization's survival to obtain the best talents that guarantee success in the future (Ambler & Barrow, 1996). Vinayak et al. (2017) and Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) suggest that by including employer branding in the organization's strategy, the organization might obtain a competitive advantage.

For a firm to attract talented and skilled employees, the organization's reputational effect plays a big role. Most organizations are known through their well-established cultures. This is the same culture that informs behavior and other activities within the organization

(Backhaus & Tikoo 2004). Theurer, Tumasjan, Welpé and Lievens (2018) describe, that employer branding has a great connection in promoting a particular point of view about the organization internally and externally, which makes the organization “different and desirable employer”. The importance of the employer brand should already be emphasized in the organization’s strategy, internal marketing and securing the satisfaction of the current employees. When choosing the organization where the talent wants to work, the culture of the organization communicates whether or not an organization is a desirable workplace. This can be the single biggest theme when choosing a workplace in the future: the talents, specialists and experts will be able to choose where they want to work (Mosley 2014, ii). Theurer, Tumasjan, Welpé and Lievens (2018) summarize, that “employer branding is seen as a prime approach for responding to recruitment and retention challenges”.

The thesis attempts to discuss if well-being and job satisfaction have a connection on the employer brand and employer branding. From the employee’s perspective, it is understandable that the well-being and job satisfaction are an important part of working life. Work is embedded into people’s identities: most adults spend most of their time at work (Judge & Klinger 2008). There is an important aspect on the employer’s side also: When the employees are satisfied and healthy, they will be more productive and also, as Theurer, Tumasjan, Welpé and Lievens (2018) suggest, more loyal and more unlikely to change job. Pietilä, Lahdensaari-Nätt and Tuure (2011) add, that investing in employee well-being has both direct and indirect impacts on the organization’s economy. Many studies suggest that satisfied and motivated employees will affect the organization’s culture and thus, it might have a connection with the employer brand. (Pietilä, Lahdensaari-Nätt & Tuure 2011; Theurer et al. 2018).

As different individual studies suggest before, both well-being and job satisfaction of the employees, as well as employer branding can create a competitive advantage for the organization, it is relevant to study these themes together (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004; Pietilä, Lahdensaari-Nätt & Tuure 2011; Vinayak 2017). It is important to understand the connection between well-being at work and job satisfaction and the employer brand. Can an organization affect the employer brand through investing in well-being and job satisfaction and the multiple aspects that are bound to these themes, and also gain competitive advantage?

In this thesis well-being, job satisfaction and employer branding are studied via literature but also with interviews. The scope of the thesis will focus on the aforementioned, but

the study will also research organizational culture because it has a great impact on the employer branding, and well-being and job satisfaction have an impact on the culture, or vice versa, the culture has an impact on the well-being (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004, 508; Tanwar & Prasad 2016, 854). To illuminate the study, the resource-based theory is introduced to support the assumption that with exceptional employer brand, the organization can gain competitive advantage, as resource-based theory is founded on the idea that the organization's unique resources and capabilities can offer better performance and competitive advantage (Grant 1991, 114).

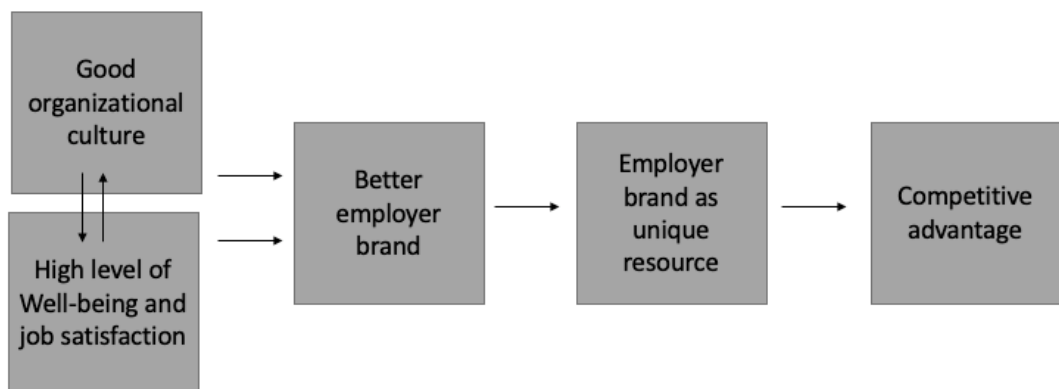


Figure 1. The Hypothesis of the study

1.2 Objectives

The objective of the thesis is to discuss the possible relationship and connection of job satisfaction and well-being of the employees on the employer brand. It is assumed, that when the organization exceeds in these areas it can provide unique resources for the company and hence, competitive advantage (see Figure 1.). The topic is studied via literature, studying the earlier surveys at the company, and also with an interviewing process. The information and knowledge gathered in this thesis will be used as a part of the client company's Employer Branding project and in developing the client's HR-functions.

The main purpose of the client's perspective is to provide information with deep insight about client's employees concerning the well-being and job satisfaction and its relation to client's employer brand. The researcher also wants to explore the topic more widely

and summarize the aspects that have a possible correlation with each other regarding employer branding, job satisfaction and well-being and competitive advantage.

The product of the study is a development plan for the client. The development plan includes actual improvement ideas and suggestions to the client on how they could improve their employer brand and employer branding through job satisfaction and well-being at work – and also this way, gain competitive advantage. There should be concrete suggestions on how the client could improve this, for example, teams focused on this subject.

1.3 Research questions

The thesis aims to answer three research questions:

RQ1: What is the current status of Easybank's employer brand?

RQ2: How should Easybank improve their employer brand through job satisfaction and well-being?

RQ3: What Methods are needed to Improve Easybank's Employer brand concerning Well-being and Job satisfaction?

1.4 Structure of the thesis

The first chapter provides an introduction and background of the study and the current developments in the field are presented. The objectives and research questions are presented. Also, the client company is presented briefly.

The second chapter is the literature review chapter: what is already known about the topic, what the previous studies or researches have shown and the theory which the thesis is based on is introduced. The framework is divided into employer branding, job satisfaction and well-being at work, and organizational culture. Also, the key concepts of the theory which is used in this thesis, the resource-based theory, are presented.

In the third chapter, the background study for the research is presented. The background study will help the reader to understand why the research is needed and why the research is conducted in the chosen matter. Using the previous studies as a background

for the interview questions is important, since this way it is easy to follow up on improvements or declines in certain areas.

The fourth chapter focuses on research methods and research methodology. The research method used in this research is a structured interview. The interviews were executed as face to face interviews. The qualitative interviews were executed in September 2018.

In the fifth chapter, the empirical findings are presented. The data is merely presented as it is collected, but no conclusions are presented in this chapter.

The sixth chapter presents the development plan for the client organization. The development plan is derived from the empirical data and the findings in the previous chapter. This chapter is the product of this thesis and research. The development plan presented to the client organization can be seen in appendix 3.

The conclusions of the study, recommendations, and future research are presented in chapter seven.

After the seventh chapter, the references and appendices are presented. This thesis contains confidential information and therefore some appendices are not public.

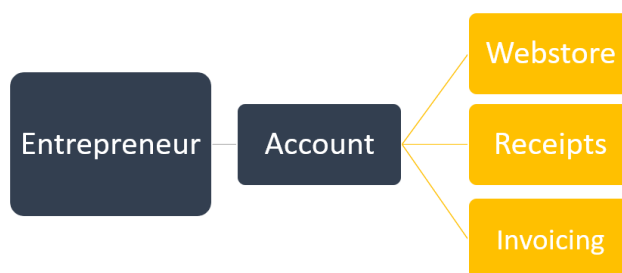
1.5 Case Company Easybank Oy

The thesis is conducted as a case study. The Case company, Easybank Oy (later referred as “Easybank”) wants to acquire knowledge on how they could improve retention and make Easybank a more desirable place to work and come work to. The information and knowledge gathered in this thesis will be used to develop Easybank’s HR-functions.

Easybank is a Finnish company established in Helsinki 2011. Easybank is a payment service that also offers banking services. It is supervised by the Finnish Financial Supervisory Authority. Easybank has operations across all the EEA and licensed to operate in all EEA member states. The new offices of Easybank are situated in Hakaniemi Helsinki but Easybank has business also in Germany, Spain, France, Ireland, Belgium Netherlands, and Austria. The organization also has agreement to do business in Estonia and is a part of Spanish BBVA-bank group. BBVA finances Easybank, and provides strategic support and ensures access to resources and networks with their

partner organizations. The organization has had strong growth and at this moment the organization has over 100 employees (2018 about 80 employees).

Easybank offers modern digital banking solutions for entrepreneurs. With the Easybank account it is possible for the entrepreneur to handle the whole business: Account, invoicing, webstore, salary payments and real-time management of finance and receipts. The organization's goal is to be a credible voice of the entrepreneur by providing the entrepreneurs with tips and advice on running a business through Easybank's content, products and services, partners, and the Easybank community. The organization aims for making it easier for entrepreneurs to start their business because the entrepreneurs will have everything that is needed from one place. It is easy to follow from the account the income and expenditures, invoicing, and follow electronic receipts. There is also a possibility to follow-up accounting as the posting is done also at the account, this minimizes the work that an entrepreneur has to do with accounting. Easybank account is a good choice for consultants, freelancers, associations and other entrepreneurs. The account is easy to make and will be ready in 1-3 days (Koskenvaara 2019).



Picture 1. Easybank's business

The motivation for Easybank's emergence was due to the absence of services to make entrepreneurship easier: there were no payment services like Easybank available in the markets so the founders decided to create one themselves. There is a social aspect in Easybank's work since they want to make it easier for the people to try to do what they love: sometimes it can feel overwhelming to start an own company. Easybank wants to help its customers to save money and time so they could focus on what they love to do.

The organization's values are stated to be; genuine, humane, being experts on what Easybank does and fanatic quality. Easybank is a multicultural organization and the organization's working language is English. The different departments/teams working at

Easybank that are Finfra, IT, Control, Management, Marketing, Customer Success, Product, and Human Resources and Business Development. All these departments do a different kind of work and have their roles in the organization. The Client is interested to know how these different teams feel about their work and how Easybank could enhance their employer brand and employer branding process by affecting job satisfaction and well-being in everyday work. The client is interested to know why turnover rate in some of the departments is bigger than the others and how they could be more tempting employers in their area of business, so more specialists would apply to work for Easybank.

Easybank is described to be an organization that aims to grow quickly. According to the article, where the CEO of Easybank was interviewed, the biggest obstacles limiting Easybank's growth are not attracting enough value-adding software developers and not being able to hire other experts to the organization. For Easybank to stand by the values it states, it is essential that the employee turnover is minimal and also that they can attract the best talents to continue to be the experts on what they do (Koskenvaara 2019).

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Employer branding and the Employer brand

2.1.1 Previous studies and current knowledge

Employer brand and employer branding have been recognized by various studies to be a very important aspect and theme for the employer to study and develop (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004; Theurer et al. 2018). One of the first researchers to recognize the importance of the employer brand were Ambler and Barrow, who in 1996 studied the topic with their article "The employer brand". This article has set the base for the future studies and is still considered relevant by many researchers over 20 years later. Google scholar database finds over 50.000 articles for the term "employer branding". Backhaus (2016) mentioned that 24.000 articles were found in 2016, which proves the interest in the topic. Already, in the ¼ into 2019, there have been almost 1.500 articles published under the term.

Even though this subject has received more attention only in the previous years, the research has not been as up to date, as it could have been expected (Backhaus 2016). Theurer et al. (2018) recognize also few problems in the previous research on the field: the research about the employer brand and employer branding has developed into "a fragmented field" with different definitions of employer branding, it's scope and concept. The terms employer brand and employer branding are used interchangeably and umbrella terms such as "employer brand equity, employer image and employee branding" have been mixed and used inconsistently. This has presented a problem where according to Theurer et al. (2018) "further theoretical and empirical" studies have not moved forward.

It could be roughly argued that the topic has been studied for twenty years, but the interest towards the topic has only started to gain more attention in recent years. This can be seen in the number of studies and researches that have been made in recent years. This is natural because the overall interest in the topic has risen. As mentioned, many studies and a great amount of literature can be found regarding Employer branding. Acknowledged researchers such as Ambler, Barrow and Mosley and their literature, as other peer-reviewed articles were used in this study to gain knowledge

about the employer brand and employer branding. The older articles about employer branding have held up well against time and are still relevant today.

There is an increasing amount of studies and theses that have addressed employer branding, but not many that have discussed the job satisfaction and well-being at work perspective in connection with employer brand, employer branding and gaining competitive advantage. The literature and researches regarding employer brand and employer branding are quite new, but as mentioned above, some older literature is still valid today.

2.1.2 Defining employer brand and employer branding

In 1996 Ambler and Barrow used marketing techniques to explain and define the employer brand. Using this framework, Ambler and Barrow (1996) define employer brand as “the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company”. Backhaus and Tikoo (2004), Backhaus (2016) and Theurer et al. (2018) agree with the definition made by Ambler and Barrow. However, Tikoo and Backhaus (2004, 502) add that “the employment brand highlights the unique aspects of the firm’s employment offerings or environment” and that employer brand is “a concept of the firm that differentiates it from its competitors”.

Employer branding can be defined as a process where the employer brand is built (Theurer et al. 2018). Ambler and Barrow (1996) explained that employer branding can be compared to the consumer – product/brand relationship. The benefits that individuals can gain from employer branding are similar to what consumers gain from the product: functional, financial and psychological benefits align in similar way (Ambler & Barrow 1996). Theurer et al. (2018) agree with Tikoo’s and Backhaus’ (2004, 502) definition that employer branding is the “promotion of a unique and attractive image” inside and outside the organization, and it is also “a process of building identifiable and unique employer identity”. By this definition, the framework where employer branding is divided into internal and external employer branding and where the objectives are to attract potential employees and also have more productive employees was established (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004; Backhaus 2016).

Theurer et al. (2018) clarify that the uniqueness can be achieved by offering to the employees “a package of reward features or employment advantages and benefits”.

Barrow and Mosley (2005) and Tikoo and Backhaus (2004, 502) agree that “value proposition” is a term that covers the above-mentioned features that can make the organization unique. Backhaus (2016) states that it is important to remember cultural differences when thinking of the benefits: what is considered the biggest benefit in the Nordic countries, might be different in India.

In recent years new definitions of both the employer brand and employer branding have surfaced. In this thesis the displayed definitions are used. This is justified by the wide recognition which the previous definitions have gained in the following researches.

2.1.3 Relevance of employer branding

When the employer brand has been defined, it is important to understand who could benefit from enhancing the organization’s employer brand and developing employer branding processes. According to Ambler and Barrow (1996) the organizations that operate in the “high value-added service business” where the talent is rare and the experts are paid more, every employee is important for the company.

Barrow and Mosley (2005, 69) agree with various studies that most important benefits from well-executed employer branding and good employer brand are: better recruitment possibilities, small employee turnover rate and better commitment of the existing and current employees. A considerable amount of money is spent on recruitment. On the other hand, less amount of money is spent on employer branding (LinkedIn Global Recruiting trends 2017). The LinkedIn survey suggests that the Human resources budget is often limited, and if the resources would be better, the employer branding would have gained more attention. The survey presents a contradiction between convention and theory: in the survey, it was stated, that 80 % of the best talents come through employee referrals and that the referrals are important (LinkedIn Global Recruiting trends 2017). If the company’s culture and reputation are not desirable, there is not likely to be referrals. Would anyone recommend an employer where the person himself/herself doesn’t want to stay (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004, 513; Backhaus 2016; LinkedIn Global Recruiting trends 2017)? This can lead to a significant disadvantage in the business when the referrals that are likely to increase from good employer brand and employer branding are not happening.

Direct financial benefits are easy to measure for example in recruiting. Replacing an employee that has chosen to leave the company brings heavy costs to the employer. Barrow & Mosley (2005, 70) present that organizations with very high employee turnover are clearly at a financial disadvantage in relation to its competitors that have very low turnover. Good employer brand and employer branding have been recognized as a factor that affects employee retention in a positive matter. Even though employer branding has been focusing a lot in talent attraction, it is also important to aim the focus on the current employees like suggested above. Employees that are engaged to the organization tend to be, according to Tanwar and Prasad (2016, 854), more productive on daily-basis but valuable also because they will stay longer in the service of the organization. Tanwar and Prasad (2016, 854) connect this aspect very closely on job satisfaction of the current employees, and note, that recruitment shouldn't be the biggest focus in employer branding, but the focus should be divided evenly between recruiting and retention aspects. Various studies have also agreed that employer brand and customer satisfaction are linked together: The more committed the employees are to the organization, the better customer satisfaction percentage the organization scored in the surveys (Barrow & Mosley 2005, 72). Backhaus (2016) summarizes that the connection of employer branding to gaining competitive advantage cannot be disputed.

With the proven financial benefits that a strong employer brand can have in the organization, it is important to study how organizations can utilize employer branding in their own business. Organizations need to study what would work in their business and also increase the organization's competitive advantage. It should be noted that the portrayed financial benefits are only one component of the benefits that employer brand and employer branding can have in an organization.

How it is possible to make the organization unique in comparison to its competitors? Tikoo and Backhaus (2004) present that "attracting, motivating, and retaining the firm's current employees" are in key roles when trying to differentiate from competitors with the employer brand. The next subchapters present how organizations can utilize employer brand and employer branding in both of the possible target groups: internal audience and external audience (Theurer et al 2018).

2.1.4 Internal employer branding

The internal employer branding has often been left for smaller attention than external employer branding. As this thesis concentrates studying the company from inside, we lay a bit more emphasis on the internal employer branding, but not forgetting the external employer branding. Even though these audiences are divided in the literature review, the researcher emphasizes that both aspects should be studied as an entity and not forgetting the one or the other when planning the employer brand and employer branding strategies. When employer branding is executed successfully, it can lead to better organizational culture, employee loyalty, higher productivity and reputational capital (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004; Theurer 2018).

Many studies have recognized that employer branding has a connection to career management. Employer branding can affect on how long the employee sees himself or herself at the company. The organization should find ways to combine the future career needs of the employee and the needs of the organization in a way that the employee would stay in the organization and hence the talent would be kept in the company. Many studies suggest that employees value organizational career management efforts, and it has a direct link to employee branding and how employees see the organization (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). Backhaus & Tikoo (2004) note that while employer branding has not been intended as a tool for career management, it is clear that employer branding has a strong connection with it. The highly valued attributes such as possibilities to advance in the career, the diversity of work and working community are all linked with both views (Theurer 2018, Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). In addition, it plays a role in the recruiting process: LinkedIn study (2017) claimed that when the job offer has been made, the recruits will evaluate how the career-decision will affect their career advancement in the future. If the individuals – either future or current employees – see that there is no possibilities for self-development and career advancement, they will most likely not take the job at the organization, or in case they already work in the company, they will not develop and cannot provide more competitive advantage to the company. This supports the previous studies on the fact that career management should be recognized as an important part of the employer brand and employer branding processes (LinkedIn Global Recruiting trends 2017).

2.1.5 External employer branding

External employer branding is targeted to groups that are not employed by the organization but could one day be, or are potential job seekers for the organization. As stated before, most research has indeed focused on creating employer brand to attract talent to the organization (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004; Theurer 2018).

One of the most often addressed topics, when talked about external employer branding is, that the messages that are made to target external groups should be accurate and reflect the reality and the actual culture in the organization. The organization will face various problems if the message they are promoting to external audiences differentiates from the truth. First, there will be a problem if the current employees of the organization see the conflict between the message communicated by the organization and the actual culture of the organization. Second, there will be issues if the potential recruits are hired to the company and they later perceive that the message that attracted them into the company was completely inaccurate. The organization should ensure, that the message they decide to communicate is aligned with the beliefs of the current employees and also with the future strategies of the organization. When the portrayed positive employer brand message is cherished by the whole organization it will most likely affect on the organization's employer brand (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004; Backhaus 2016; Theurer 2018).

Social media will have a bigger role in the external employer branding in the future. The social media channels are an excellent platform for communicating about the employer brand to potential job applicants (Backhaus 2016). Phillips-Wren, Doran and Merrill (2016) point out that as the millennials have entered into, and Generation Z will enter the labor markets, the organizations should understand that this group will look for jobs from different channels than the generations before it. It is suggested that social media will be the primary platform for job seeking. Also, as the talent shortage increases and the new generations value different aspects, the employer needs to take more action in recruiting: Employer branding is one way of taking action in this changing situation where the efficient workforce is not guaranteed anymore.

Mosley (2015, 80) suggests that external employer branding will eventually be mostly a task for the marketing department when the competition of the employees accelerates and there is a need for more actions. Other studies have suggested that internal

employer branding should be a mix of HR, Marketing and communications (Mosley 2015, 80).

2.1.6 Including the employer brand and employer branding to strategy

Like many studies have agreed, if the company wants to gain competitive advantage using employer branding, the elements of employer branding should be included in the organization's strategy (Backhaus and Tikoo 2004; Murphy 2016; Vinayak et al. 2017). Also, Skarp, Varis and Kettunen (2017, 761) have noted that when the business environment is changing at a rapid pace, it is needed for the organizations to change their strategies.

If the organization has never done anything to create an employer brand or employer branding process, it might be difficult to start the process. As many researches have concluded, the employer brand message should be aligned with the images and perceptions that the current employees have of the organization. For this reason, it would be wise to ask the employees how they see the organization's employer brand and do they feel anything is done to emphasize the matter (employer branding). By analyzing the answers, the organization will have a big picture of how the organization is seen by its employees (Cascio 2014). If nothing has ever been done for the organization's employer brand, the answers will most likely focus on portraying the organizational culture. Starting to plan the employer brand and employer branding process based on organizational culture is a good starting point, since then the employer brand message should be aligned with the common beliefs of the current company employees.

According to Theurer, Tumasjan, Welppe and Lievens (2018) Human resources management (HRM) has a significant role in employer branding. However, to mistake employer branding to be a mission for only one department in the company is a misconception. The employer brand consists of many aspects and is an entity, that derives from various departments (Amber & Barrow 1996, 198; Mosley 2014, ii; Backhaus 2016; Murphy 2016). Other studies suggest that it is difficult to decide, who should be in charge of the employer branding. Some of the organizations outsource the marketing and social media since it has not been pointed to anyone's sole task. In year 2017 most of the employer branding tasks were done in collaboration with recruiting and marketing departments while 1/10 organizations did not have anyone taking care of the

employer branding. Usually, the amount of people working with employer branding is 1-5 which is a vague range. (LinkedIn Global Recruiting trends 2017.)

As discussed earlier in the thesis, employer brand and employer branding have a great effect in attracting talent to the organization and retaining the existing talents. Creating an employer branding strategy has not been studied enough to see a pattern on how to develop a working strategy, but some suggestions have surfaced in the studies (Mölk 2018, 326). For the organization to develop an employer branding strategy, the company should study, what aspects are valued in the field of business they are in. To find out the most important attributes, it is possible to conduct a survey or interview the current personnel, to find out exactly what attributes are appreciated. These attributes can vary highly depending on the field of business: females and males can appreciate different aspects, as well as the younger workforce can have different expectations than the more experienced workforce. Also, there can be differences between, for example, IT-business and healthcare business. The employer should thus know, what aspects are valued in their area of business, and develop a strategy that is accurate but also appealing for the potential recruits (Alniacik et al., 2014). According to Mölk (2018, 326) creating an employer branding strategy is usually seen as a task for HR, Marketing and the executive board members, but sometimes when resources are rare even consultants are used in creating the strategy. Mölk (2018, 326) suggests that all departments should work together if the organization wants to create a viable employer branding strategy. According to Backhaus and Tikoo (2004), it is important that once the employer branding strategy has been developed and implemented, it must be managed. This means for example, measuring the outcomes of the strategy that will be discussed in the next chapter.

When a strategy has been developed it is good to take advantage of the channels that are used widely today in creating an employer brand, employer image and recruiting. The channels that are commonly used to build the employer brand are, according to LinkedIn Global recruiting trends (2017), organization's career site, LinkedIn, Third-party website, Facebook or student recruiting. According to the LinkedIn study, the organization and possible recruits both appreciate the organization's culture to the highest when considering possible aspects that attract to the job.

Even though creating consistent employer brand will require a lot of effort from at least the HR and marketing department, some of the social media channels can provide a "free" platform for communicating the employer brand. This free marketing is provided

by the current employees of the company. This can be negative or positive. In a professional social media such as LinkedIn, the people sharing positive articles or results of the company are communicating that they align with the organization's strategy and culture and are proud of sharing the news about the organization. On the other hand, on a professional social media, it is not common to badmouth the current employer. Channels like Glassdoor (one of the world's largest job and recruiting sites) give a more unbiased view since the comments and rating can be done anonymously (Cascio 2014).

Of course, the organization can create marketing efforts itself in these channels, but usually the word-of-mouth message is more convincing. Even though the effects are not as strong as coming from individuals, the organization should communicate its employer brand in social media channels truthfully and professionally. Everything matters, when the talent is looking for new places to work. The organization should keep an eye for the channels people can leave anonymous feedback, like Glassdoor and take action if the messages portrayed there are not aligned with the employer brand message. After all, this means that something is not working as it should be.

2.1.7 Advantages of employer brand and employer branding

This chapter summarizes the possible positive advantages of employer branding and employer brand. According to Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) if the organization can create a strong or even superior employer brand, that will lead the organization to become a very strong choice for the talents, when they choose their next working place. In a homogeneous business environment, employer brand can also be the factor that separates the organization from its competitors. If the company can build a strong employer brand, it will most likely have a better reputation than the competitors, hence it will seem like a desirable organization for potential employees, current employees and customers (Brönmark Riex & Karsslon 2014).

As suggested earlier in the text, employer branding and having a strong employer brand can have many advantages. Barrow and Mosley (2005) suggest that with the help of employer branding, it is possible to decrease costs that are related to human resources. As proven, having a strong employer brand can reduce the recruiting time and it will also reduce the need for new recruiting processes as the turnover will diminish. Barrow and Mosley (2005) continue that employer branding can lead to more devoted employees which will lead to better financial outcomes as the employees are committed to their work

and the organization's strategy, and also they are more committed to customer service – these factors will lead to more satisfied customers. Backhaus & Tikoo (2004) also add that employer branding has a big role in strengthening the organizational culture.

2.1.8 Measuring employer branding

Once the employer branding process and employer brand have been taken a part of the organization's strategy, there is a need to measure if it has made an impact. Many surveys and studies suggest that the following portrayed measures have a correlation to employer branding but might not solely consist of impacts of employer branding.

Retention rate has been suggested by many studies to be quite good measurement for the success of the employer brand. This means comparing the turnover rates prior to the new strategy and after the strategy has had impacts. **Employee opinions** have also been studied to be a reliable measurement tool. This measurement is easy to conduct with employee surveys that should be repeated at least annually. Organizations can also measure the **amount of (quality) applications** and applicants that have applied to the open positions. This aspect is linked to the amount of **quality hires** that organizations are able to do (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004). **Cost per hire** can also be used as a measurement. If the employer branding has worked, the cost should decrease when the amount of time and outsourced channels are not needed anymore as much in recruiting. Also, the recruiters should follow, if the number of employee referrals increases: like stated before, word-of-mouth and employee referrals are an important aspect when considering the current employer brand and the improvement of it (Turner, 2010; Murphy 2016).

Other propositions for measuring employer brand and employer branding have been suggested to be brand awareness, following the ratings in recruitment social media, such as Glassdoor etc. and following the engagement in social media and traffic in the organization's possible career pages (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004; Turner 2010; LinkedIn Global Recruiting trends 2017).

2.2 Job satisfaction and well-being at work

2.2.1 Previous studies

Job satisfaction has been studied since the 1930's and the studies of the topic have continuously been very popular among the researchers (Weiss & Merlo 2015). When studying well-being at work and job satisfaction, it must be understood, that the work and working life has gone through major changes since the 20th century: the amount of women in the working life has increased, new technology has emerged and globalization have been some of the forces to change the attitudes towards the work (Sparks, Faragher & Cooper 2001, 489). In the latest years lay-offs, part-time work, short job contracts and mergers have highlighted the working life. The work has also shifted from the offices to open spaces and remote work has been introduced as a more normal way of working. As the work has changed, the studies concerning job satisfaction and well-being at work have reformed. According to Sparks, Faragher and Cooper (2001, 490) the current studies should reflect the changes in the working life and focus the studies, for example, job insecurity, work hours, control at work and management style. Judge and Klinger (2008, 395) add pay, promotions and recognition to be important aspects to study.

Job satisfaction is one of the most studied themes considering Human Resources (Judge & Klinger 2008, 393; Tanwar & Prasad 2016, 855). It can be stated that job satisfaction and well-being of the employees have been studied much more than employer branding and the employer brand. According to Tanwar & Prasad (2016, 855) organizations are more interested in this topic than before, hence, many organizations study this for themselves and for their own purposes. Harter, Schmidt and Hayes (2002) note, that the focus of studying job satisfaction has been on the individual companies and organizations rather than researching a collective framework. According to Judge & Klinger (2008, 393) job satisfaction has had a great impact on many theories concerning behaviors and attitudes of the individuals and research concerning it still affects greatly for the models that focus on enhancing organization effectiveness and individual lives.

The studies concerning employer branding and job satisfaction have mainly comprised of studying the western countries and aspects such as benefits and organizational culture. The studies have also received critique since research about job satisfaction and

employer branding have sometimes focused on the potential employees, not the existing ones (Tanwar & Prasad 2016, 855).

Like mentioned above, organizations are eager to study the organization's job satisfaction and well-being levels by themselves. There is also a lot of literature about how the well-being of the employees can influence how the business succeeds. Many studies and theses have also studied job satisfaction and job motivation, but the perspectives and objectives have been slightly different.

2.2.2 Defining job satisfaction and well-being at work

When talking about job satisfaction and well-being at work, it is possible to find many different viewpoints and definitions. According to Vasantha (2018), job and employee satisfaction refer to the "overall satisfaction of employees towards their organization and its measure by satisfaction with job and life as a whole". According to Rollero, Fedi and De Piccoli (2016) well-being at work consists of "job satisfaction, work alienation, work-family conflict and the perception of decision making". Well-being at work can also be understood as only a part of the individual's whole well-being and can be defined as a "positive, fulfilling, affective-emotional state referred to the workplace experience" (Rollero et al. 2016). On the other hand, it must be noted that in many studies the terms job satisfaction and well-being at work are used interchangeably and well-being at work is sometimes defined as job satisfaction (Diener 2000). Wright & Cropanzano (2000) remind that well-being at work can be greatly affected by overall psychological well-being and thus sometimes this can affect the research results greatly. The writer has acknowledged this, and it should be kept in mind that this aspect can also affect job satisfaction and be remembered when conducting researches.

Judge and Klinger (2008) point out that job satisfaction has been defined in many ways. They recognize the definition by Locke (1976) that describes job satisfaction as "a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences". They point out that in 2002 Weiss described job satisfaction as "an attitude that include affect (emotion), beliefs and behaviors". Wright and Cropanzano (2000) state that when defining job satisfaction it should be taken into consideration what the individual feels and also how the individual thinks. Hence, job satisfaction could also be defined according to Brief (1998) as they quote "an internal state that is expressed by affectively and/or cognitively evaluating an experienced job with some degree of favor or

disfavor". The definition by Hulin and Judge (2003) where "job satisfaction includes multidimensional psychological responses to one's job, and that such responses have cognitive (evaluative), affective (or emotional) and behavioral components" has also been widely recognized amongst the researchers (Judge & Klinger 2008, 394). As job satisfaction studies focus on how an individual employee feels about his/her work, it must be noted that there are many different attempts to define job satisfaction and well-being at work.

According to the Job characteristics Model (JCI) it can be proved that if the work contains certain motivating characters it will result in higher job satisfaction. Judge and Klinger (2008) define these motivating factors to be: "task identity (degree to which one can see one's work from beginning to end), task significance (degree to which one's work is seen as important and significant), skill variety (extent to which job allows one to do different tasks), autonomy (degree to which one has control and discretion over how to conduct one's job) and feedback (degree to which the work itself provides feedback for how one is performing at job". If the employer manages to include all these factors to employer's work, it will make the work more satisfying thus leading to higher job satisfaction (Judge & Klinger 2008, 399). It has been recognized that amongst other factors that affect on job satisfaction like pay, promotion, opportunities, coworkers and management, it is the work itself that has the strongest impact on the job satisfaction and it also affects on lower employee turnover rates (Judge & Klinger 2008, 399). In the research part of this thesis the before-mentioned have been recognized as important aspects when trying to find out about the job satisfaction of the client organization's employees'.

It has been widely concluded that satisfied employees perform better at work than the unsatisfied employees and that the higher the job satisfaction levels are the better the employees will perform (Wright & Cropanzano 2000). Judge and Klinger (2008) add that according to their study, the job satisfaction and work performance are on a higher level when the work is more complex and when the employee has a possibility to affect on the work and make decisions independently. Judge and Klinger (2008) summarize that job satisfaction is coherent with subjective well-being – as well as overall well-being effects on job satisfaction. It is natural that both aspects mutually affect on each other. Judge and Klinger (2008) emphasize the importance of job satisfaction and well-being at work in the organization and that it should be considered as an important part of everyday strategy and values.

2.2.3 Relevance in connection to employer branding and the employer brand

Tanwar and Prasad (2016) have recognized the connection between job satisfaction and employer branding. This conclusion is drawn from the fact that job satisfaction affects the retention of the employees. Oliveira et al. (2019) add that the more effort is put in internal employer branding, the more retention will occur in the organization.

Backhaus and Tikoo (2004, 510) have also noted that employer branding has a connection to employee productivity, when satisfied employees perform better for example, regarding customer service and the employees tend to be overall more productive. Focusing on developing the employer brand can enhance the employee's job satisfaction which has a direct impact on monetary profits. On the contrary, if the organization is not interested on putting effort into its employees, it will lead to weak internal employer branding (Vasantha 2018; Oliveira et al. 2019).

Harter, Schmidt and Hayes (2002) have also come to a conclusion that there is a connection between "general workplace attitudes and individual performance outcomes" and also "relation between individual job satisfaction and individual performance". The studies also show that positive attitudes at the employee level affect customer satisfaction and negative attitudes have a direct impact on employee turnover. Many other studies agree with this proposition and note that "employee satisfaction is one of the outcomes of employer branding, which in turn helps in generating employee commitment, customer satisfaction and finally organizational profitability" (Tanwar & Prasad 2015, 855; Vasantha 2018).

Harter, Schmidt and Hayes (2002) state that employee satisfaction is essential when considering successful business outcomes. The company must consider the aspects that are important to the individual employee and on what the HR or management can have an affect to. Truss, Schantz, Soane, Alfes and Delbridge (2013) also conclude that engaged employees lead to better results and to enhanced well-being.

According to Barrow and Mosley (2005), the employer brand plays a key role in not only attracting the talent but it can be used as a tool to inspire and motivate the employees. Barrow and Mosley (2005) state that the relationship between the employer and the employee should be highly appreciated. If the organization succeeds in creating a good employer brand whilst increasing employee satisfaction this will lead to more committed employees (Vasantha 2018).

Studies also suggest different perspectives on well-being of the employees and job satisfaction: Whether it is pay, promotions, work itself, working conditions, management, work atmosphere or possibility to influence, it must be considered as an entity, because if some of the aspects are lacking, there cannot be comprehensive employee satisfaction. The factors that decrease job satisfaction and well-being need to be erased, and this way effective working days will increase. The studies also suggest, that in order to gain competitive advantage through well-being and job satisfaction, these aspects should also be included into the organization's strategy (Pietilä, Lahdensaari-Nätt & Tuure 2011). Judge and Klinger (2008) continue, that as job satisfaction has proven effects on performance, and as above proven, also having an impact on employer branding, it should also be incorporated into organization's key values and core competencies. It is clear, that more emphasis should be put on well-being at work and job satisfaction in order for the organization to gain a competitive advantage.

2.3 Organizational culture

2.3.1 Previous studies and definition

In the thesis there is also a short introduction to organizational culture since it has a huge relation to all the above-mentioned perspectives – also some of the interview questions touched upon that area. Organizational culture is a widely studied topic and there is a lot of literature, researches, and articles concerning the topic. In the thesis classic literature but also newer articles are used to define and explain organizational culture.

One of the most often cited literature regarding organizational culture is the work of E.H. Schein, who used decades to study organizational culture and leadership. Schein (2004, 17) defined culture as a "pattern of shared basic assumptions that was learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems." Schein (2004, 26) also divides culture into three levels that are "artifacts (visible organizational structures), espoused beliefs and values (strategies and goals) and underlying assumptions (unconscious, perceptions, feelings)".

More recent literature continues the definitions by adding that organizational culture gives the organization its characteristics. In the background of defining the culture are the organization's visions, values, beliefs, goals, stories, line of action, language and the culture of the country where the organization is situated or where it is from (Jaruzelski et al. 2011, 2). Usually, beliefs, assumptions and values are the foundation where the culture is based on. Organizational culture is also related to people and groups or teams that work in the organization, and patterns of how they behave. How these people understand and communicate the organization's culture is very important (Kaplan & Norton 2009, 170). Of course, these values, visions, assumptions etc. should be common with the organization's message and strategy. If the company has different ideas about their goals than the employees, it is usually the employees that set the image outside the company (Wilenius 2004, 178; Jaruzelski et al. 2011, 2). It should be added that organizational culture is expansive, deep and continuing. It evolves as time goes by, and as new cultural aspects are joint together. However, it takes time to change the organization's culture. Radical attempts to change culture don't usually succeed and changing or strengthening the culture can take many years (Wilenius 2001, 179; Skarp et al. 2017, 760).

To understand the organization's culture there is a need to understand how organizations interpret and understand different culture's manners, symbols, traditions and codes. The organizational culture has a major impact on employee behavior. It is important for the company to create an organizational culture that provides a setting where people are in control of what they do: this way the employees will perform better (Wilenius 2004, 59; Barrow & Mosley 2005, 17). The organizational culture also significantly affects the company's ability to change its strategic direction. Like mentioned above, this can take a long time and establishes a problem with a strong organizational culture: the goals, strategy or processes in the change mission cannot succeed if they are in conflict with a commonly accepted organizational culture. An optimal culture is one that supports the company's mission and strategy. Unless the strategy is fully matched with the culture, any major change in strategy should follow the modification of organizational culture. When changing strategy, the management needs to evaluate what the change in strategy means to the organization's culture, to assess the need for cultural change and the need to decide whether a change in corporate culture is worth the effort (Wheelen & Hunger 2006, 248-249).

To summarize, the organization's culture is an organization's way of living. Living habits consist of management and operating practices that make the company behave in relation to its environment and itself. Many raise corporate culture as the most important factor of success in the business (Kamensky 2015, 132).

2.3.2 Relevance in connection to employer branding and job satisfaction

The organizational culture needs to be considered when talking about the employer brand and employer branding. According to Neeti and Sharma (2014) it can be stated that "employer branding starts with the analysis of the organization's values and culture". By highlighting (or altering) the culture, the organization may communicate an appealing employer brand to attract the talent.

Also, Job satisfaction and well-being at work both affect culture and culture affects job satisfaction and well-being at work. Creating a strong employer brand helps shaping the organizational culture in a positive way. This has been studied to affect directly on increasing job satisfaction (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004; Tanwar & Prasad 2016, 854).

Organizational culture has a strong impact when someone is considering a job at the organization. The organizational culture provides additional information and can affect on the final decision of the job applicant. What the applicants know or hear about the organization also has an effect on how they enjoy and perform at work. This again communicates that it is important that the messages communicated are accurate, since it is possible that when the person has worked in the organization for a while, he or she might be disappointed in the culture and this might lead them to not perform well or even leave the organization (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004).

Researchers and studies have come to the conclusion that one big resource for inventing and exploring something new, like employer branding, comes from the organization's culture, and it can determine if the company is going to succeed in the future (Jaruzelski, Loeher & Holman 2011, 2). When trying to create an employer brand, the organization needs to consider signals coming from inside the company. This way, it is more likely to create functional employer branding processes (Skarp et al. 2017).

The organizational culture can be naturally attractive, or it might need some work to become attractive. To maintain a positive organizational culture, it needs to be appointed as a task to teams or managers. The efforts to maintain good organizational culture can

be used to strengthen hoped work behaviors by enhancing internal marketing efforts. Internal marketing efforts should promote the existing, positive values of the organization or alter them if needed. Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) state that “the more the organizational culture supports quality of work-life, the more likely the culture will increase the organizational commitment” and hence “Employer branding reinforces and changes organizational culture” and “Organization culture mediates the relationship between employer branding and employer loyalty” (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004).

Understanding the importance of the organization’s culture and knowing how to utilize it in the business, companies can obtain significant competitive advantage. It is important to create a culture in the organization that supports the employees to express themselves openly (Barrow & Mosley, 2005, 17). For the organization wanting to utilize the culture in the business the work is to develop a strong employer brand that is based on the culture. By using this strategy, the organization needs to clarify, what in its culture is special and superior to the competitors (Sehgal & Malati 2013).

2.4 Resource-based theory

2.4.1 Previous studies and definition

The resource-based theory has become a very utilized theory in marketing research. The theory started to be widely used after 1991 and it has been studied and researched considerably since then. Many studies recognize the resource-based theory as a useful theory when trying to explain and predict organizational relationships (Barney, Ketchen & Wrigth 2011; Kozlenkova, Samaha & Palmatier 2014).

The resource-based theory aims to clarify, how the organization can achieve a competitive advantage with the resources it has. When some of the resources are rare, it is hard for the organization’s competitors to duplicate this resource. The theory assumes that the organizations have different and distinctive resources in relation to its competitors. The resources are divided into tangible and intangible. Tangible resources are resources that are possible to see and can be counted. These resources are, for example, the equipment, organization’s property, and cash. Intangible resources are harder to explain since these are resources that cannot be seen or be counted. To portray intangible resources, the employee skills and knowledge, organizational culture

and employer brand are often used as an example. The resources can also be explained by using the following definitions: Capital resources that are financial resources and equipment such as machinery; Organizational capital resources that are systems and processes for example in controlling and coordinating and of course the human capital which are the employees of the company (Barney, Ketchen & Wrigth 2011; Brönmark Riex & Karlsson 2014; Kozlenkova, Samaha & Palmatier 2014).

To understand resource-based theory, two companies working in the same business and having similar goals can be compared. Even though the organizations have same goals and seemingly similar business, the organizations have different employees working with them. There are different resources that organizations can utilize. The other organization might have gained more talent and experts, which means that they are more prone to achieve better results since possessing these “unique resources” (Peteraf & Barney 2003). The resources of this kind are hard to duplicate, especially when the competition in the branch is severe. The organization that possesses superior resources can achieve a competitive advantage. It has been argued that such superior competitive advantage can only be achieved if the resources are concurrently “valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable, and exploitable by the firm’s organization” and if the resources “enable the firm to develop and implement strategies that have the effect of lowering a firm’s net costs and/or increase a firm’s net revenues beyond what would have been the case without the resources” (Barney & Arikan 2001).

Barney and Arikan (2001) clarify that the resource can be used as a competitive advantage if it is “controlled by a small number of competing firms”. They also add that the resource should be such kind that it can’t be mimicked easily in order to gain a competitive advantage. If the resource can be duplicated, and other organizations get to exploit the resource after a while, the competitive advantage has only been temporary and other organizations will gain the same advantage too. It is also noted that even if all the above-mentioned criteria would be fulfilled but the organization is not able to “exploit the full competitive potential of its resources” the advantage will not be achieved. This can happen due to, for example, bad processes in the organization. To summarize, if all of the before-mentioned aspects do not realize, a strong competitive advantage is not achieved (Barney & Arikan 2001).

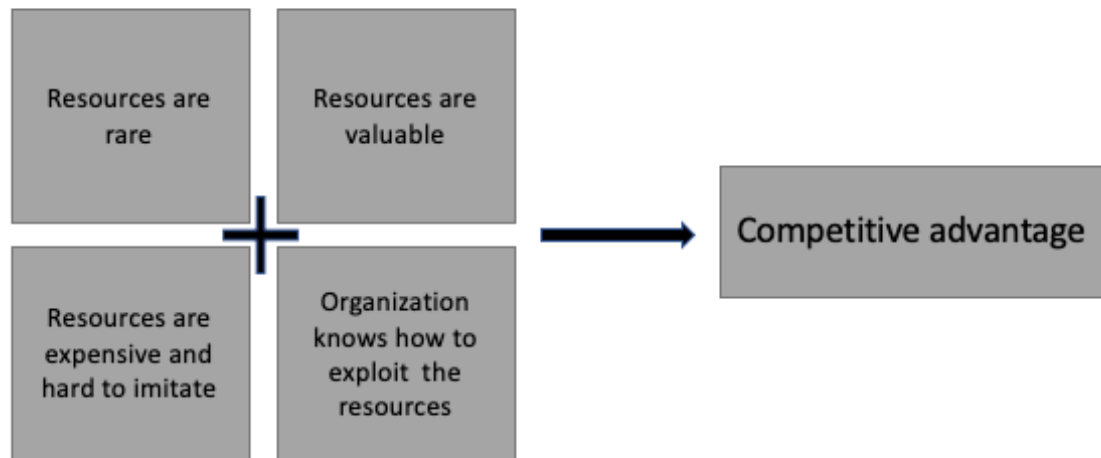


Figure 2. Resource-based theory. (Picture formulated according to Barney and Arikan 2001.)

Resource-based theory hints that most of the resources giving competitive advantage are intangible, mostly because physical resources are easier to duplicate: machinery or factory can be easily mimicked when trying to imitate the competitors. For this reason, it is vital for the organization to put more emphasis on the intangible resources and focus on developing them (Barney, Ketchen & Wriqth 2011; Kozlenkova, Samaha & Palmatier 2014).

One explanatory example of resource-based theory and resources and capabilities is the example of the Coca Cola company. According to Hamel and Prahalad (1990) Coca-Cola's superior competitive advantage derive from the unique brand strength, distribution network and geographic spread. Barney (1995) adds that even though Coca-Cola possesses these resources it has been fighting for market shares with Pepsi. Both brands have a great product, good marketing departments, and strong financial capabilities. This translates to the fact that either company can easily imitate the efforts of the other. When two companies with equal resources and capabilities fight for the same market share it can be claimed that the companies do not possess unique resources in comparison to each other, but if it were compared with smaller soft drink brands they possess superior resources. In the other example, Grant (1991) highlights McDonald's as a company that possesses capabilities that makes it superior in comparison to competition: Its product development, market research, human resource management, financial control and operations management have been reasons why the

company has been able to incorporate its business successfully around the globe. McDonalds' logo is recognized around the globe: this can be described as a distinct physical resource that cannot be easily mimicked. As the resources are put together successfully for example in a marketing campaign, it turns into capability. As noted before if the company cannot master the resources or unite them as a successful entirety, no competitive advantage is achieved (Grant 1991).

How to then determine if the company possesses rare and unique resources? In 1995 Barney developed a framework for analyzing and also determining if the resource can be used as a competitive advantage. Barney continued to develop the framework until the VRIO-framework was finalized. The VRIO framework has been recognized widely as a tool for resource-based view. The framework helps the organization to examine if the resource fulfills all the aspects needed for competitive advantage to realize. The organizations should consider if the resource or capability is valuable if it is rare, costly to imitate and if the organization can capture the value. If all of these aspects come to the realization, the company can sustain a competitive advantage. If only some of the aspects come to the realization, it can lead to temporary competitive advantage (Barney 1995). This framework is consistent with the model displayed by Barney and Arikan in 2001, that has most likely been influenced by Barney's original model.

Grant (1991, 133) summarizes that the resources and capabilities of the organization should be in the focus when developing a strategy. The organization should consider what are the most valuable resources or capabilities and on how utilizing these it could gain competitive advantage – and the best profitability. The strategies should be developed to be sustainable so the competitive advantage could withstand the time (Grant 1991, 133).

2.4.2 Relevance in connection to employer branding and the employer brand

Theurer et al. (2018) defined employer brand as “organization's bundle of employment attributes targeted at potential and current employees that are attractive from its labor market competitors”. This definition showcases a connection with the resource-based theory since the employer brand aims to be the aspect that attracts or retains unique resources in the company (Peteraf & Barney 2003; Backhaus & Tikoo 2004; Theurer 2018).

As in employer branding, the focus in resource-based theory is fixated on the aspects that can be derived inside the company. In all organizations, the strategy is implemented by people. Employees of the organization are therefore understandably in key role whenever strategy implementation is planned. Employees' skills, resources and especially motivation need to be taken care of in order to succeed in the strategy implementation (Lindroos & Lohivesi 2010, 166).

Grant (1991, 117) portrays a thought where the organization's resources are the foundation for the long-term strategy. It can occur if "internal resources and capabilities provide the basic direction for a firm's strategy" and if "resources and capabilities are the primary sources of profit for the firm." Assuming, that human capital is the organizations biggest resource, embedding employer branding as a part of the strategy would be valuable to the organization.

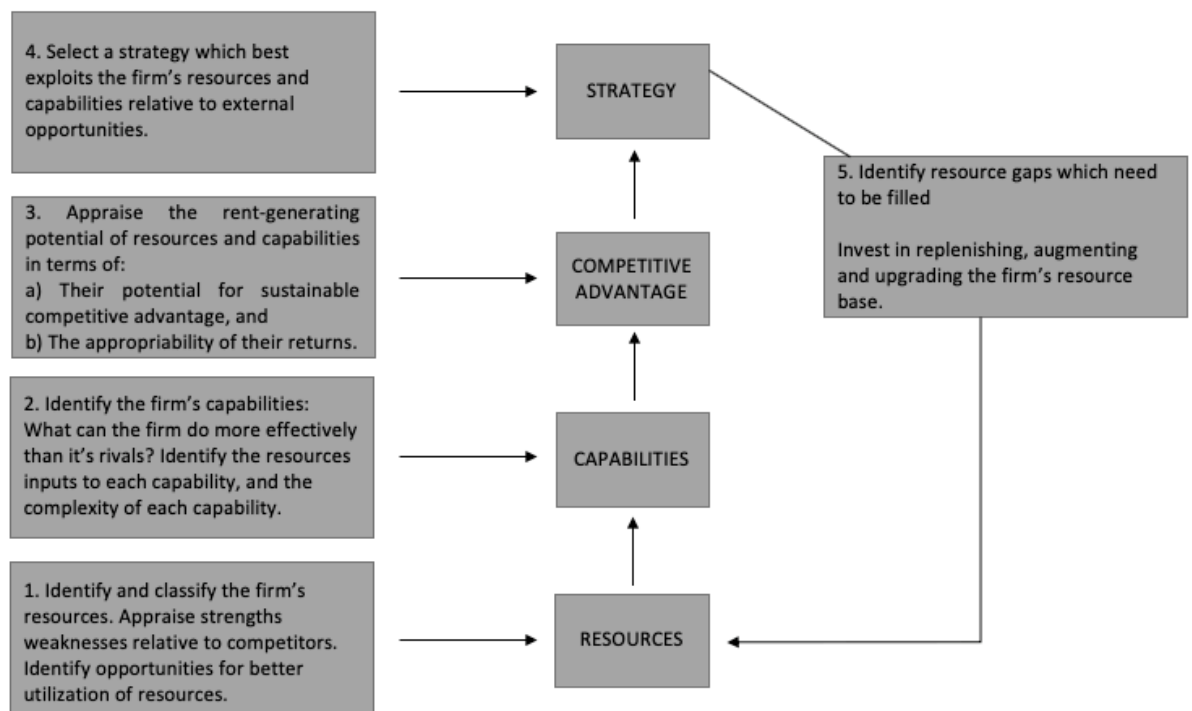


Figure 3. Resource-based approach to strategy analysis. (According to Grant 1991,115)

As the resource-based theory has had a big impact in the strategic human resource management, and as Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) argue the human capital is the key factor for competitive advantage, it is worth studying how the human capital can bring even more competitive advantage to the organization. Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) also note, that as other factors in business are getting easier and easier to mimic, it is indeed

the human capital that can make the difference between the resources of the organizations. In this light, many studies agree that good employer brand and employer branding are the way to attract the best talents in the world, where the competition of the talent is high, and also retain the already hired and valuable employees.

In order for organizations to gain this advantage, it is advisable that the organizations work hard to develop a good employer brand. This can be done by developing better HR processes and embedding employer branding to the strategy (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004). Barrow (2007) notes that employer branding should be considered as a strategy of its own and organizations should put more emphasis on it because it will be the key factor to separate the organization from its competitors. In this strategy the focus would be recognizing the employees that bring the most value to the company, motivating them, developing their skills and talent attraction for the best-fitted candidates to fill the needs of the organization. If this can be done and managed successfully, it will provide a distinct competitive advantage (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004).

In their research, Brönmark Riex and Karlsson (2014) have also noted that the “companies who have found competitive advantage -- seem to have understood the relevance of having motivated employees” as a great amount of these companies have been recognized as “best employers”. Brönmark Riex and Karlsson (2014) refer to Love and & Singhs research in 2011, where they propose that “best employers are companies who, based on surveys been proved to provide the very best working environments for their employees”. It has been suggested by studies that these organizations that are considered as “best employers” have some common nominators, such as stability and they are difficult to imitate. This should, according to the resource-based theory view lead to sustainable competitive advantage in relation to the organization’s competitors.

As many studies have concluded, having a strong employer brand and employer branding can be an important source of value for the organization, who are investing in human resources. Because of the above suggested the resource-based theory was seen to be a theory that could be utilized in this thesis, since retaining and attracting the best human capital is highly connected to employer branding and this, on the other hand, leads to competitive advantage. It should also be noted, that many studies believe that employer branding will be very significant in the future, and organizations will focus more on developing employer branding strategies to gain competitive advantage (Grant 1991; Bachaus & Tikoo 2004).

3 BACKGROUND STUDY FOR THE RESEARCH

3.1 Trends and comparison in between years 2017-2018 at Easybank

The background for the research is the well-being of the employees at Easybank surveys that have been conducted in 2017 and 2018. Therefore, the interview questions were developed based on the analysis of the survey results.

The first survey was conducted in the year 2017 and followed by another in 2018. The surveys were not identical since the first survey was created by the client company itself and the other one was conducted by Elo (pension security company) as customized service.

3.1.1 The 2018 Survey

In May 2018 well-being of the employees-survey ("Työhyvinvointikysely 2018") was conducted at Easybank Oy. The survey was conducted by Elo which is a Pension insurance company in Finland and the survey's purpose was to clarify how employees at Easybank feel about their work and well-being at work.

The overall results were good: the overall average score was 4,07 (best possible score being 5,00). This indicates that Easybank, in sight of the results should be a good place to work. The results are reliable since the response rate was 86 %, as only 11 people from 78 did not answer the survey. Only team or department that was excluded from the comparison was management since there were not enough answers.

The most content departments or teams were IT Ops, HR and business development and Marketing. Also, in these departments, the results portrayed that there was less need for development and the stress levels were the lowest. IT Ops and HR and Business Development were also rated highest in working ability. According to the results, the customer success department had the need for improvement, even though the department's average score was 3.79.

Työyhteisökysely 2018 - organisation report

Team or department I belong to

Name	Answerers	Overall average	Need for development	Work ability	Stress level
Finfra	12	4.14	25%	8.08	2.83
IT Ops	5	4.41	6%	8.80	2.20
Control	6	4.18	23%	8.67	2.67
Management	3	<i>not enough answers</i>			
Marketing	10	4.26	15%	8.40	2.40
Customer Success	11	3.79	32%	8.64	2.91
Product	14	3.85	36%	7.79	2.71
HR and Business Development	6	4.39	12%	8.83	2.00

Picture 2. Organisation report summary. (Työyhteisökysely 2018.)

The 2018 survey consisted of 25 questions where the answering scale was from 1 to 5 and the questions were divided into clusters regarding “My own work, My work community, My immediate supervisor, Expertise and development and Functioning capacity and resources”. There were also 2 additional questions about working ability and stress-level, and two open questions titled “What kind of recent success have you had in your work” and “How do you think things should be developed at your workplace”.

3.1.2 The 2017 Survey

In the 2017 survey, there was a total of 34 responses, but the overall answering percent data was not available. It should be noted that Easybank was a much smaller company in 2017. The scale of the questions was from 1 to 4. The 2017 survey consisted of 31 questions, and the questions were divided into clusters regarding “engagement, teamwork, leadership and my work”. There was also one open question titled “Feedback to the Easybank Senior Management”.

The survey concluded that “co-operation with different teams” and “clear and agreed ways of working” were aspects that needed to be improved. The biggest incline in scores was about culture alignment with ethics.

3.1.3 Analyzing the results

Understanding bottlenecks of 2017 and 2018

The difficulties in the comparison between the years 2017 and 2018 became a result of the fact that different questions and different scales had been used. Using a different scale will most likely affect the interchangeability of the comparison. In the 2017 questionnaire, the scale was 1-4 whereas the scale in 2018 was 1-5. In 2017 the scale was from 1 “fully disagree” to 4 “fully agree”. In order to establish a comparison, the researcher has assumed that 2 stood for “somewhat disagree” and 4 “somewhat agree”. In 2018; 1 has indicated “completely disagree”, 2 “somewhat disagree”, 3 “don’t agree or disagree”, 4 “somewhat agree” and 5 “completely agree”. The option (3 “don’t agree or disagree”) was not included in the 2017 survey, so there is a research problem in comparing the results. In this comparison, the researcher has assumed that if there had been one more option in 2017 survey, the scores would be +one point.

It must be recognized that to conduct this survey more reliably, the scale should be the same every year. Also, the questions should be the same even though it is the company’s decision to decide, what is essential to find out for their business. It should also be taken into consideration that in the year 2017 there were 34 respondents and in the year 2018, there were 67 respondents.

Comparison between the years

To establish some kind of comparison between the years of 2017-2018 a comparison table with the scores was established. The table below portrays the questions that are the same or comparable. The questions are listed alongside the scores. The 2017 questions are portrayed first. The number in the brackets is the assumed comparable number if the same scale had been used. One 2018 answer was used two times since it fitted more than one question from the year 2017. The colors have been added as indicators: decrease from the year 2017 to 2018 before (red), no change or small change (orange) and increase/enhancement (green) from the year 2017 to 2018.

Question	2017 score	2018 score	notes
At Easybank, we have clear and agreed ways of working / At Easybank we share sense of collaboration and achievement	2,85 (3,85)	4,07	Increase from year 2017
I'm excited about what I do / I feel enthusiastic about my work	3,41 (4,41)	4,16	decrease from 2017
I feel appreciated at Easybank / I feel valued	3,09 (4,09)	4,07	probably no significant increase/decrease
I trust Easybank's senior management / My immediate supervisor (overall result)	3,06 (4,06)	4,28	Increase from 2017
I am happy with the team spirit in my own team / My work community (overall result)	3,44 (4,44)	4,07	decrease from 2017
Within my own team, we listen to feedback and take it into account /Everyone's voice gets heard in my work community	3,44 (4,44)	4,03	decrease from 2017
Co-operation between different teams inside Easybank works well / We share a sense of collaboration and achievement	2,26 (3,26)	4,07	increase from 2017
My supervisor is fair and objective in his dealings with me/ My	3,67 (4,67)	4,55	probably no significant increase / decrease

supervisor treats everyone fairly			
I receive feedback on my work from my supervisor / My supervisor gives me enough feedback regarding my work	2,97 (3,97)	3,81	decrease from 2017
The goals and targets for my work are clear / I know what is expected of me	3,29 (4,29)	4,12	decrease from 2017
I can affect the content of my work / I have opportunities to influence my work	3,41 (4,41)	4,28	decrease from 2017
I have opportunities to develop my skills at work / I can develop my expertise at my workplace	3,12 (4,12)	4,10	probably no significant increase / decrease
I feel my workload is manageable / Functioning capacity and resources (overall)	2,85 (3,85)	3,90	Increase, since this cluster had questions about personal well-being

Figure 4. Comparison between years 2017 and 2018 and notes.

Open questions

When analyzing the survey the open questions needed also be taken into consideration, since many had filled this field. Communication, processes, HR resources and collaboration were the most popular topics to discuss in this section. In the following, the most popular themes are portrayed. The most commonly used words have been bolded to achieve clear perceptions of the issues.

2017 quotes:

*"I would be interested to receive more **feedback** on what to do better, e.g. after a project. That would help to focus on improving those areas, and also making sure that me and my supervisor are on the same page about my performance."*

"Easybank has a high potential but doesn't use the potential of its employees."

*"**Communication and co-operation** between teams still need work"*

*"Team **cooperation** is not good at all. Silos and communication bottlenecks exist. Having two segregated engineering teams makes no sense. Some people in management seem not to be able to draw the line between their expertise "*

*"Feels like top management does not **communicate** with each other in a way that it would come down to the teams as information. Or if we are wanted to work crossteams as squads that should be clear for the manager then and they should not need an extra report."*

2018 quotes:

*"more **team work**"*

*"A bit more **structure cross functional teams**"*

*"**Communication** could be improved with clear communication tool(s) and active usage of this"*

*"**Communication**; cross-team projects; project management; transparency in management's decisions"*

*"**fluent cross team communication**, finding time to help each other"*

*"**Keeping everyone on the loop about the company plans**, tracing strategies based on feedback from workers, think of a customer-first approach, instead of business-first."*

*"**clarity** on open to-do's and what is expected from each project team member"*

*"We shy away from real **collaboration**. We are organised in functional teams instead of around the job and value delivered to customer."*

*"**rally people more behind one direction**, instead of the vision and the direction remaining a bit of grey area."*

*"**Personal development plans**"*

*“While the amount of employees at Easybank has grown, the **organisational structures and processes have not been adapted to the new situation**. Consequently, there are organisational bottlenecks that slow down projects, which can be handled for now, but I would propose that this should be tackled by HR. “*

*“It is often **unclear who should be informed**, accountable and responsible for a task or specific key deliverable of a project”*

*“**Management should listen more** to its employees in order to build trust”.*

“More human resources”

Trends

As it was pointed out in the results of the 2017 survey, collaboration and teamwork were aspects that needed more attention in the company. The decrease and increase were not remarkable between these years. Analyzing the results, it could be concluded that co-operation had been taken into consideration after the survey in 2017 since there was a significant increase. It should be noted that even this aspect had an increase, it still was mentioned quite often in open answers.

Cross-functional teams: communication, teamwork, and collaboration

According to open answers, fluent cross-team communication and collaboration are important aspects that should be prioritized. The aspect came up in the questions concerning work community where there was a need for development in sharing responsibility (33 %) and in sharing a sense of collaboration and achievement (28%) and in the lowest score in “We work together to assess the impact of changes in our work” (3,69). This has a bit of conflict with the measurements since there was a high increase in “Co-operation between different teams inside Easybank works well / We share a sense of collaboration and achievement” (+0,81 percentage units).

Communication

There were only a few questions about communication and information sharing in the company. This had led to the subject surfacing often in the open questions. Communication is important and one of the key elements in a company that is growing at a rapid pace as Easybank is at the moment. There was also a decrease in aspect of “knowing the goals and targets and what is expected of me” and also, this aspect was founded to be the most need for development in “my own work” cluster.

Plans and Processes

The results of the surveys showcased that the employees would appreciate “more clear plans and processes”. This aspect would need a lot of attention since it also was an often-mentioned topic in the open questions, even though there was an increase in the results between years 2017-2018 (At Easybank, we have clear and agreed ways of working / At Easybank we share a sense of collaboration and achievement, increase 0,22 percentage units). It can be concluded that as the company is growing very fast, processes need to be kept updated and well known for everyone.

Other

Aspects such as feedback and personal development plans were mentioned often and it also showed in the data. The most important aspects that did not surface the open questions were the clear development needs in a healthy lifestyle and having energy at work. In order to avoid sick leaves and employee turnover, these aspects should be taken into consideration.

3.1.4 Conclusions

It can be concluded that the results Easybank had in the surveys between 2017 and 2018 were good. The employees had many positive development ideas which could indicate that the employees want to work for Easybank. The themes about engagement for the company showcased that the employees are engaged to the company since the

aspects scored high in both surveys. When it comes to comparison between the results, it has to be kept in mind that the results are not entirely comparable since the questions varied a lot, different point of views were emphasized in different years, and the scale was different. In the future, repeating similar surveys with the same scale might provide more insight into development needs and success.

Even though there were decreases and increases, none of them were so significant that they should be considered as threatening risks. Getting feedback from the supervisor has been in the lower-end of scores both years, so this aspect was considered in the interview questions. From each cluster in 2018 most need for development are in 1. My own work – I know what is expected of me, 2. My work community - We all share responsibility, 3. My immediate supervisor – Feedback, 4. Expertise and development – we develop new ways of working together and 5. Functioning capacity and resources – I lead a healthy lifestyle. The open question answers repeatedly emphasized communication and collaboration and it was also mentioned that a more structured human resources department is needed and plans and processes need to be developed. These aspects will also be emphasized in the interview questions.

When it comes to positive results, great results were achieved in the “My immediate supervisor” cluster. The average was the highest (4,28) and the need for development was the lowest (13%). The only area for development is giving feedback to the employees.

In the total top 5 in need for development were aspects concerning the employees' own capabilities. “Healthy lifestyle” and “I feel full of energy at work” were low but there was no clear comparison to the year 2017. Concerning the results, the employer should consider how it could help and enhance the well-being of the employees at Easybank.

It should be noted that the survey had only a few questions about engagement. Questions like “I feel that what I do is meaningful, I feel appreciated at Easybank, I feel proud working for Easybank, I don't want to change my employer in the near future, The Easybank working culture is aligned with my ethics and I'm happy to recommend Easybank as an employer” are essential for finding out how the employees see Easybank and employer branding by the Easybank employees. These aspects will be taken into consideration in the next part of the research.

4 RESEARCH DESIGN

4.1 Methodology

Conducting research that answers the research questions can be a complicated task. It is important to choose the right research methods, to get reliable answers (Saunders et al. 2009, 106).

Research methodology can be defined as a “general research strategy that outlines the way in which research is to be undertaken” (Howell 2013). The methodology also steers the way for choosing the right research method (Kumar 2011). As mentioned before, in this thesis the process started with meetings with the client and analyzing the previous job satisfaction surveys and (exit-)interviews. Later, the researcher familiarized herself with previous studies and other literature. After analyzing and familiarizing the literature and previous surveys, the data was collected.

According to Kumar (2011), the literature review helps the researcher to find “methodologies that have been used by others to find answers to research questions similar to the one you are investigating. -- by becoming aware of any problems and pitfalls, you will be better positioned to select a methodology that is capable of providing valid answers to your research question.” Since the literature has been focusing more on external employer branding, it is important, that the research is conducted together with the literature and empirical data to achieve reliable results. In this study the resource-based theory is used to prove the importance of nurturing the well-being of organization’s human capital and the significance of it, as it is believed, that employer branding and strong employer brand can add value to the organization when investing on the human capital and it can lead to strong competitive advantage. Important themes and scope have been identified in chapter 1.

4.2 Method

Interview as a research method provides deeper insight than what quantitative surveys can provide (Turner, 2010). According to Bryman & Bell (2007), the difference between quantitative and qualitative research and interviews is that it is harder to structure qualitative interviews than quantitative surveys. In qualitative interviews there is room for

discussion – open-ended questions can lead to longer answers and it might lead the interviewee to reflect earlier questions on a deeper level. Also, if there is room for discussion and the interviewer knows how to interpret situations, there can be more in-depth conversations about the topic: The goal is after all to find true and detailed answers to the problems. There should not be too tight of a schedule for the interviews, so there is a room for discussion and possibility to get into details. If the answers in an interview are only yes or no, the interviewer has failed: The same research could have been conducted as a quantitative survey (Turner, 2010).

There are different types of interviews that can be performed: Unstructured interviews and structured interviews. When the interview is structured, the themes and questions are prepared beforehand, and the questions should be gone through by the time the interview is over (Bryman & Bell, 2007). The difference between structured interviews and unstructured interviews is that an unstructured interview is more like a conversation. This might mean there aren't so many themes that can be covered if the conversation is vivid and also the consistency and reliability of the interviews may vary. On the other hand, this method is an excellent tool for a researcher who has particularly good social skills, good listening and conversation skills, and who is an expert on the topic discussed (Turner, 2010.) Structured interviews are more organized, and they do not leave space for follow-up or extra questions. The same questions are asked from the interviewees in the same order and no room for free conversation is left (Turner, 2010).

The method used in this research is a qualitative method as a structured interview. Well-being and job satisfaction can be studied via surveys, but in order to find more in-depth data, the interviews are proven to be efficient and reliable research method next to the literature review. The background study was conducted with quantitative methods since the analyzed materials were staff surveys. It has been recognized that it is useful to collect different kinds of data because that will provide more in-depth observations (Turner, 2010). It was also possible to target the interview questions more accurately when the researcher had first read and analyzed the quantitative surveys.

The structured interview was chosen to be the method used in this research because the researcher wanted to include all the important aspects and themes in the work. A structured interview also gives the opportunity to explore all the themes equally with all the interviewees. The discussion was expected to rise in some topics more than the others because of the results of the previous surveys: In both of the previous surveys it was remarkable, that open field /suggestions section had been answered by most of the

employees. This indicates that the surveys did not cover all the important aspects and there is a need to study the topic more closely.

It has been recognized that in interviews the discussion about other themes can lead to revelations in other questions (Turner, 2010). According to McNamara (2009) in a structured interview, it is essential that the interviewees are asked about the same themes and same questions - in this case with the slight difference in the pain point questions. Using this method gives assurance that important areas are covered, but it still leaves an opening for new revelations when the interviewer is able to adapt the follow-up questions on the basis of the answers.

When the research method has been chosen, there are other important aspects that need to be taken into consideration: preparing the interviews should be considered as an important part of the groundwork. In this case, the preparation started by analyzing the previous surveys and extracting problem areas. In the preparation stage, meetings were organized with the client, so it could be guaranteed that the most important aspects were included within the interview questions. In the preparation stage a test interview was conducted to find out, how much time approximately would one interview take. The test interview was conducted with a person not working in the client company. The test interview also helped to determine if there were questions overlapping each other. The last part of preparation was to choose the interviewees, which was a random sample on each team or department and the identity was only known by the interviewer.

Data was collected during three different days since there were many employees to interview. One interview per person was conducted. The interviewees were selected within the departments because it was crucial that there was research done in each department/team. The selection was random inside the different departments. The selected persons for the interview were 2-3 persons from each department excluding Management and HR/Business Development since these departments were the client and that could have affected the reliability and validity of the research. The interviews were recorded and transcribed and analyzed. It needs to be noted that even though the interviews were prepared and tested in before-hand, the time of the interview and the attitudes towards questions varied a lot from expected.

Turner (2010) presents some challenges in analyzing structured and semi-structured interviews: It might be hard to code and sort the answers because there might be totally unique and distinct answers for each question. Analyzing and coding these answers will

take up more time and the style of the coding can be decided often after the interviews have all been transcribed.

When there are a lot of long answers and discussion has risen, it is difficult to create a code for analyzing the interviews. It is important that all the answers are analyzed in the same way and organized in a similar way, so reliable conclusions and suggestions can be made. Usually, codes or themes are, according to Turner (2010), “consistent phrases, expressions, or ideas that were common among research participants”. The researcher must find the best solution for his or her research to conduct this coding. Sometimes it is possible to use another person, so it is guaranteed that the answers are interpreted unbiasedly. It is easier to analyze interviews if they have been, like in this case, transcribed into text (Kvale, 2007).

4.3 Data

4.3.1 Collection of the primary data

The data was collected by interviewing the employees at Easybank Oy. There was a need to find out detailed information from all the teams in Easybank, hence a couple of employees were interviewed from each team. At the start of the process the groups consisted of:

1. Customer Success
2. Finfra
3. IT Ops
4. Control
5. Marketing
6. Product

In the Autumn 2018 the Finfra and Product department were merged as one group: The software team. This was then the biggest team at Easybank. The merged teams shared similar pain points regarding job satisfaction and well-being of the employees, and thus this did not become an obstacle during the interview process.

After the Merger the teams were:

1. Customer Success
2. Software
3. IT Ops
4. Control
5. Marketing

4.3.2 Interview questions for different departments

The interview questions by departments are fully enclosed in the Appendix 1. The questions that differ were marked yellow and the most crucial questions that seemed to block the job satisfaction in the surveys for that particular team or department were colored as red (in appendix only one color). Like mentioned above, there were five (5) teams that were included in this research: Customer Success, Software, IT Ops, Control and Marketing. From the Customer Success team there were 2 people interviewed, from the Software there were 3 people interviewed, From the IT Ops there were 1 people interviewed, from the Control there were 4 people interviewed and from Marketing there were 2 people interviewed. The total amount of the interviews was 12, which at the time, was over 10 % of the Easybank employees.

As the teams work in very different ways, it was important for the client that the aspect of teams was taken into consideration. As we could see from the results before, some team's well-being and work satisfaction was under the company average, which means that different kind of questions needed to be conducted with them. For example, the Customer success team is the team that had been the most unsatisfied team and also the team that had the highest stress level. In the interview, the questions about work ability and stress level were emphasized.

4.3.3 Schedule of the interview process

Interviews require a significant amount of preparation from the researcher. The employees of Easybank were informed about the interviews that would be held in the company. It was told that the interviews are confidential and that the people that will be interviewed will be randomly invited to the interviews. The interviewer received a list of the employees (name, e-mail and department) and chose people randomly to participate

in the interview. The employees were contacted by e-mail with the formal invitation to the interview (Appendix 2).

After the first round, 7 interviews were scheduled, but some of the invited employees did not want to participate or did not reply to the invitation. The invitation was then sent to other employees and this was repeated until the interviewer got 12 interviews scheduled (about 10 % of the employees of the company).

4.3.4 Data analysis

The data was analyzed after transcribing the interviews. There were 112 pages of English text transcribed with Microsoft Word, the font being Verdana and the size of the font 8. The material was read through multiple times to get the researcher familiar with the data.

Because of the amount of data, the answers were only coded with post-it notes, to find out similar patterns and similarities between answers. After coding the answers it was possible to see if there were similarities between the departments and within the departments or teams. After that the data was coded, the departments/ teams were analyzed at the same time, question by question. For example, the first team to be analyzed was the Customer Success team. All answers to the first question were put next to each other and then possible similarities in answers were highlighted. Irrelevant content such as small talk were automatically eliminated and not taken into consideration. Other aspects that occurred in the answer were marked up in case these would pop up in the later answers. This would continue until all the Customer success team's answers were ready and after that, the researcher would move to the next team.

After analyzing all the teams and making a summary of the answers, there was an overview to see if the teams had answered similar ways in comparison to other teams. Also, this was analyzed in a way that similarities were highlighted and other aspects evaluated if they had come up more in other teams. After analyzing, the transcribed answers were gone through once more alongside the results make sure nothing had gone unnoticed. After the research was ready, the recordings and the transcribed files and printouts were destroyed.

4.4 Trustworthiness of the study

When considering interviews as a research method, there are not as strict rules about reliability as you would find in quantitative studies. The most common way to evaluate qualitative research is to study the validity and reliability. Like mentioned before it is harder to evaluate the qualitative studies, but it can be done by assessing how the data has been collected and analyzed and how the final product or the study is reported.

Like in any study it is important to make sure that errors will not happen. In this study, the “client departments” HR and management were excluded for the reason that having them answer this research could affect the validity and reliability of the research.

All the interviews were conducted in English, but as the company language is English, it was considered that the language barrier was not a problem. At the beginning of the Interviews, it was made clear that if some questions weren't understandable the interviewee could ask clarification and if they didn't know how to answer in English, they could answer in Finnish instead. This provided a small problem since some of the interviewees were not Finnish, so the same perk could not be given. On the other hand, nobody wanted to explore the option of having the interview in Finnish, so the interviews were conducted equally. None of the interviewees were native English speakers. To handle the possible problems that might have arisen from the language barrier, the interviews were recorded and transcribed from the recordings. This diminishes the possibility of misunderstandings because there is a possibility to hear the interview again (Turner 2010).

As the researcher was particularly interested in the problems that varied between the teams, there might have been more emphasis on these questions that were identified as pain points. According to Turner (2010) the answers can be affected by the enthusiasm (- or lack of it) of the interviewer if the interviewer emphasizes and is interested on other themes more than others. As the researcher wasn't familiar with working in the company the interviews are unbiased since there was no previous knowledge about the work community other than analyzing the survey results from the years 2017 and 2018.

5 EMPIRICAL DATA AND FINDINGS

5.1 Data gathered

As mentioned in the previous chapter, there was a significant amount of data to be analyzed. There were 14 hours of recorded interviews, and after transcribing the interviews, there were 112 pages of English text with Microsoft Word, the font being Verdana and the size of the font 8. In this chapter, the findings of the empirical data are presented. The findings have been portrayed by considering the research questions and the most often recurred aspects.

In this empirical analysis, the main goal is to find answers to the three main research questions: What is the current status of the Easybank's employer brand, how should Easybank improve their employer brand through job satisfaction and well-being and what methods are needed to Improve Easybank's employer brand concerning well-being and job satisfaction. The data was read through many times and the answers were coded with colors to find out similar themes. As a result, the most important aspects could be drawn from the data collected. In the following subchapters, the findings are introduced one theme at the time. The interviews were reported verbatim.

5.1.1 Employer branding

The questions were started by asking the employees questions related to employer branding. The first question asked the employees to describe the best aspects of working at Easybank.

Customer Success:

“People are most important. Also that we can work pretty independently however we like, of course there is always rules but I think especially in customer support. We are super humane, we don't have ready lines to say and we help anyways we can, we do not have a script.”

“I work with different teams and people, I find it interesting and not just working with purely one thing, like compliance, but I talk to developers, customers success team and management and external people so I think

that's quite interesting and the company as a whole, the culture, company that Easybank is at this point it makes things very interesting."

Software:

"Mutual trust."

"Atmosphere. When we were smaller company then of course, it felt that what you are doing might make a bigger difference. But I don't see that would have really changed much."

"We have breakfast – Easybank values well-being of the employees. Also compassion."

IT Ops:

"There is a lot of opportunities. Possibility to continue career path. -- people are the best. We have an international atmosphere and culture of helping"

Control:

"People, flexibility, remote work..."

"I get a lot of responsibility."

"Number one: The professionalism, in the sense that there's no micro-managing. There's no strict starting hours. You can start anytime you want and, delay anytime you want. I am astonished that the company is really international."

"--the feeling of, it's nice to come to the workplace."

Marketing:

"My team is the best, I feel like the company cares about its employees. And just the flexible hours and the possibility to remote work, I think those are pretty standard now. And lunch benefit... I love that we have resources and I can learn."

"The people are nice. The job flexibility. I live close now. That affects my workday a lot. People make it nicer for everyone."

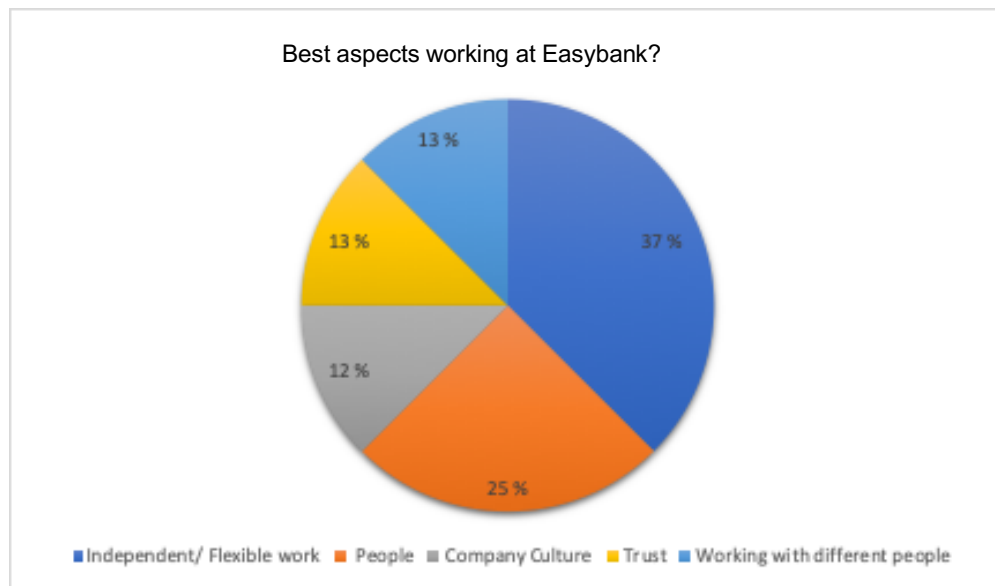


Figure 5. Summary: Best aspects working at Easybank.

When asked about what could make Easybank a better place to work, the answers were varied from concrete suggestions to smaller suggestions. A lot of valuable information for the company was gathered during this question.

Customer Success:

“It would be nicer to not be so stressed, I also stress myself because I like what I do and I wanna do good and I care. The resources. Very big problem. Basically need to hire more people. You can see that the satisfaction of the customers go down. Because they are used to really good support and now its only good but there is not extra information for them like tips we can give and stuff like that.”

“The HR department is quite undersized, it is 1,5 people. For 100 employees and we are growing as well, so there’s a lot of HR thing that seem to come as an afterthought. And sort of, oh well we have this thing we need to deal with, having a bit more structure and a bit more capacity in HR department would help, make Easybank a better working place, there would be more time, the HR would have more time to really look in depth what, how they could help the employees, I think there is interest but no resources. “

Software:

“...nurturing the internal culture a little bit. So, I’m not saying that there isn’t space for it, there definitely is the kind of like the mandate for it, but maybe doing it, somehow a bit more together in a structured way giving some more time and, in that sense kind of like, thought to it. We talk about career paths but now I feel that it is not realising at all. We don’t have concrete action plans.”

“There’s been some shuffling with the teams and also how, the processes how we are working so, as there have been some changes then it might make things little bit more complicated maybe in the beginning, until we learn how to work. It might be also little bit difficult when people are not that sure, how the work should be done.”

IT Ops:

“We should create more processes, we are doing a lot of stuff so that would help.”

Control:

“More training, better information sharing – we are growing so fast.”

“Well the communication... Maybe in a way to feel respected, so that other people know that you are the expert in your own area, that none of them”

“More freedom with the working hours.”

Marketing:

“More benefits like I want them to trust us more – you cannot take a vacation and then add couple of remote days. Which makes things tricky since it is lot of us foreigners. - - Like to go to our home country, but you cannot combine--”

“My favorite benefit from Supercell is that if people move from far, they have benefit to pay tickets to visit your family. Also, you could have extra free days to visit your family. My family does not live in Finland, so I would like to add remote workdays more after holiday so I could visit them. That is very important for me—Even because that I could consider some other work place. ”

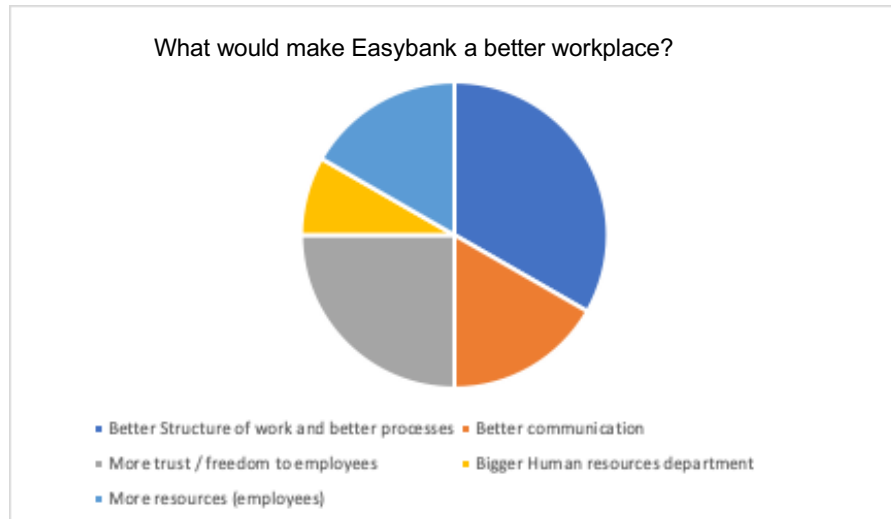


Figure 6. Summary: What would make Easybank a better workplace.

The questions about if the employees would recommend Easybank as a workplace, all of the interviewees would recommend Easybank. The reasons why they would recommend Easybank were “People”, “you can learn a lot”, “good benefits” and “open culture”. The employees would also recommend Easybank publicly as a workplace and most of them had already recommended Easybank to friends or promoted open positions in social media.

Customer Success:

“I would recommend Easybank and I actually have recommend Easybank.”

“Yea, I would say that definitely they should apply to Easybank if I know that they are culturally a good fit, then I would very much recommend Easybank.”

“Yes, I always share them (open job positions) and maybe not in my private FB page but that’s different, but yeah on LinkedIn, Twitter, I share.”

“Yes, I would and I have done it as well. Shared on my personal social media.”

Software:

“Well of course like the, my first thought would be that I would of course recommend Easybank, because I’m working here and I’m mostly happy working here.”

“I would of course recommend.”

“I would recommend Easybank publicly.”

“I recommend and share in my social media job openings.”

IT Ops:

“I would definitely recommend. I already have.”

“I recommended Easybank in one conference and in LinkedIn.”

Control:

“I would recommend.”

“I definitely would, and I have talked to some of my friends.”

“Yes, and I have.”

“That’s what we’re trying to do now. We’re offering people a sort of reward that if you refer someone, you get paid, when that people signs the contract.”

Marketing:

“I would recommend Easybank in appropriate networks”

“ I believe in the company so I feel that if I praise Easybank on like social media for example, I’m pretty confident that the company then can deliver those expectations.”



Figure 7. Summary: Would the employees recommend Easybank as a workplace.

Talking about Easybank's employer brand and what comes to mind of Easybank's employer brand, the answers were very wide, the researcher needed to explain the question and the answers varied between portraying values, organization culture or the valued aspects. Only 20% of the employees had known about Easybank before applying to a job and the rest of 80 % had not known anything about Easybank before applying to the job.

Customer Success:

"Fun place to work, amm, great people, open minded and you can be honest, you can tell your mind or talk to our CEO... I did not know about Easybank before I started working here."

"Yeah, I don't know, It is I think well, I don't know how the employer brand really is, because there is yeah, not that much effort put into it. I would guess that it is modern company, sort of different perhaps from other financial institutions and very multicultural, those are perhaps the principles. I had not too much information about Easybank before I started to work at Easybank "

Software:

“I did not know about Easybank before I started working here. Fintech company but that’s, I don’t know, it’s quite common to say that you are fintech so...We are young.”

“Definitely the makers and doers, comes to my mind. Trust, it is genuine but not so serious. Laid back.”

“I did not know anything about Easybank... I would say openness to employee ideas, We have high standards.”

IT Ops:

“I would say perfect values, genuine, fanatic quality, amazing specialists. Easybank cares about their employees.”

Control:

“Super cool, Positive.”

“I actually followed Easybank in Social Media so I knew about them. Maybe, good team spirit, freedom.”

“It’s really non-existent (employer branding). There’s very little of Easybank anywhere regarding... working here. I think we’ve put so much effort on, customer advertisements that we sort of forgot that, the PR people here.”

“It’s very humane. Why do I say that? Because it’s one of our qualities...-- You can learn from other people. I wanted to work especially for Easybank.”

Marketing:

“I know we’ve been talking about this too (employer branding) that we should address it. -- I don’t think Easybank had been very consciously building an employer brand -- it seemed pretty open and cool and young, but still with, money with resources. -- It is the individuals that make more the (employer brand), it seems more real it seems more personal, that some individual is writing it rather than the company is telling how cool they are. -- we should promote it more and, we should encourage our employees to talk more about Easybank. -- But people would just freely talk

about Easybank because if they're telling nice things to you I wish they told those things to their friends and, their networks."

"I only see baby steps happening, I know we say we are genuine. I knew Easybank before because I was a customer, so I did not know them through their employer brand."

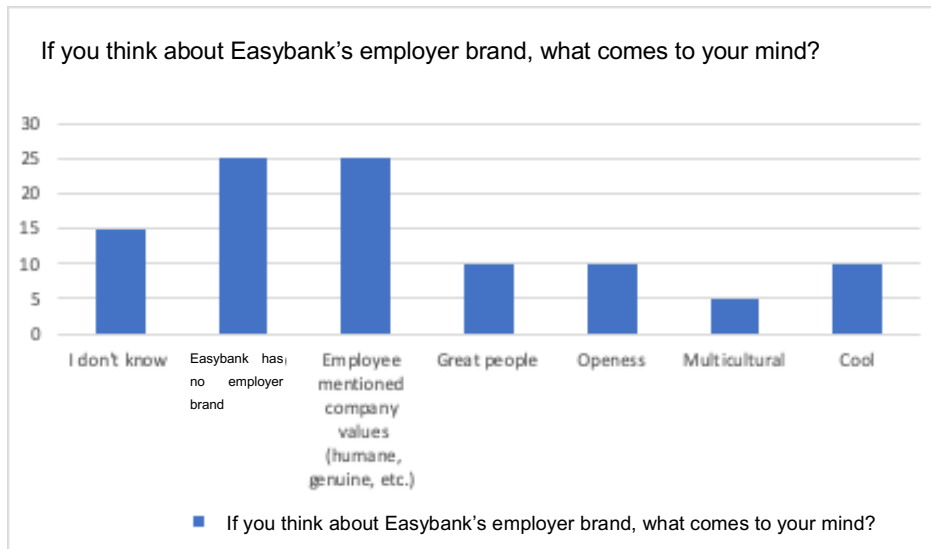


Figure 8. Summary: What comes to mind from Easybank's employer brand.

When discussed the organizational culture of Easybank, aspects such as “not hierarchical”, “open management”, “flat hierarchy” and “talking to CEO is easy” were the most often mentioned aspects through all the departments.

Question about Easybank's values that were stated in the web paged at the time rose some confusion and discussion about them. Many were not quite sure about the values and could only agree of hearing some of them more actively. The values they have heard they mostly agreed with.

Customer Success:

"I did not know those exact values, but collaboration and communication something, to make everyone's voice heard... I mean, there have been attempts on breaking down the silos between teams and perhaps it has not been thought through. "

Software:

“Yeah collaboration, humane ways of working -- Sometimes... Collaboration might be hindered, due to the fact that some people are, and this is in a sense like a negative thing or thing that we could improve on but, some people are part of many projects or things that are happening at the same time, so even though there is the belief and intent for collaboration, it doesn't get to bloom 'cause you just can't be everywhere at the same time.”

“Well I don't remember them all but at least some I do remember and, I see that they are happening. “

“Yes, I know about them.”

IT Ops:

“I know about the values and I hear them mentioned a lot. I like that it is good exit and enter processes, I appreciate that.”

Control:

“Yes I have heard about them and also I think we have high expertise, specialists... We are humane and flexible, honest and genuine.”

“Yes, genuine is shown even in the lack of hierarchy. We can be ourselves.”

“Yes. Collaborative, yes. But, the thing is, we have our own challenges that I don't deny. The fact is that we are growing too fast.”

“Some of them yes. We've got the humane and genuine still in our values, which is really nice. --we do strive towards too but, collaboration and having everyone's voice heard is, kind of forgotten.”

Marketing:

“It is weird that we have different values listed in different places. I cannot even remember them. Genuine... Humane... Fanatic quality... But I think we live up to them quite well especially to the humane and genuine and authentic that kind of things that, people aren't really faking here -- I think it's very, it is very genuine very humane. And expert and like, fanatic of

quality that are two of those values are more related to the what we are trying to deliver to the customers.”

“I think we succeed 70-80 percentage of the time to follow our values of fulfilling them or our actions are based on them.”

When trying to find out if the employees were aware of the company’s visions and goals and how open the company was about them the answers were quite homogeneous, with some of the employees agreeing but also noting, that the strategy changes too fast and the changes are not communicated properly.

Customer Success:

“Yea, we are aware, we have quarterly strategy meetings where everyone is involved its nice we all are included and not just get told what to do but we know long term goals and we are transparent with numbers. All can participate. It would be important that they listen also the customer success team a bit more, that’s lacking a bit.”

“Yes, I mean the strategy is changed quite regularly so it is hard to know what you should be focusing into. Information is not effectively laid to the employees.”

Software:

“Yes. They’re communicated and we have this, well, at least I feel that here’s like, here’s lots of open communication and things are said and then, we have this, weekly and I think monthly and quarterly meetings.”

“Yes, there is information to everyone”

“I get the feeling that they could be better communicated. And of course then one could always challenge is it about communicating or listening. Of course then we have a quarterly update when we talk about these things. But maybe it could be bit more often.”

IT Ops:

“I think I am aware but in my position I don’t think that so much”

Control:

“Yes, there are meetings for that.”

“Let’s say in finance you get to know more of those or you get to work towards those goals a little heavier than someone from another team maybe.”

“Yes, I do. At least in terms of performance. Because I work in that field.”

Marketing:

“Yes, I am aware. It is discussed where we want to go but then it is not discussed how we are going to get there.”

“Yeah, I am aware. It is openly communicated, we had a meeting and there we went through what is our strategy what are our goals, for I don’t remember was it the whole year or some quarterly goals too, but anyway it was presented to everyone, so the whole company knows kind of where we’re striving, what we’re striving to as a company. “

When discussed about describing freely what kind of workplace Easybank is, the answers touched upon the other themes discussed before talking about the negative and positive factors at Easybank.

Customer Success:

“Openminded, fun, yeah, good change to develop yourself.”

“Open, It is very in touch with people that work here, bring different voices to the same table -- and just quite busy which then sometimes negates some of the good things.”

Software:

“Easybank is a energetic, friendly, place where you can be part of a group of hard-working people.”

“Vibrant workplace where every persons input is valued, feedback is appreciated and you can voice your concerns openly.”

“What you are doing makes sense and is meaningful. So maybe those are the kind of the main points.”

IT Ops:

“Place where I want to come every morning. I want to see my co-workers, everybody helps everybody, appreciation, great workplace.”

Control:

“Low level of hierarchy, Open, warm, hipster, fast-paced, new place is nice!”

“Fast-growing, future of finance, technological, eager, nice people.”

“Agile company,”

“Really relaxed. Open. Supportive. Comfortable.”

Marketing:

“We are like family, We are passionate. We are Specialists. Good feeling to work here and good place to work in general.”

“We’re kind of like a start-up, but with better resources. We still have the cool sides of a start-up being that we are open there aren’t hierarchies, and we trust our employees. People are genuinely humane and, everybody’s nice. I think it has a huge impact on the culture. I’m almost afraid if we’re gonna grow like become a really big company are we gonna lose some of this spirit.”

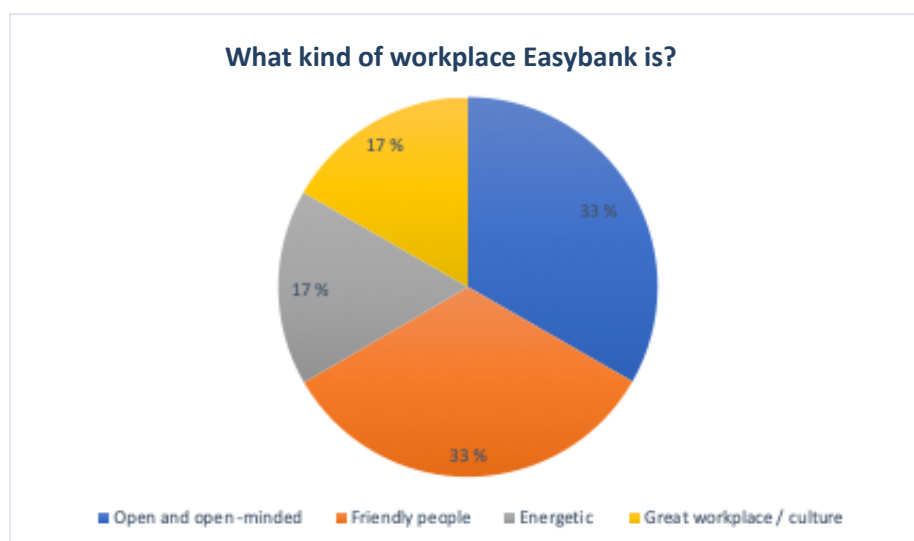


Figure 9. Summary: What kind of workplace Easybank is.

When talked about given free hands for changing something at Easybank the answers varied from small benefits to bigger changes. Many things had already come up earlier in the interview, which means that these are mutual and actual concerns of the employees and they should be considered.

Customer Success:

“I think the strategy could be changed a bit but that is my personal opinion of course, I don’t agree with it in the long run of the company is. Also for the customers to provide support in different way, maybe chat, kind of shorten the phone support time. They expect too much from us, they also have to behave in away, getting more thing done with support so we could reach the customers.”

“Having bit more clear structure on how do you choose projects and are run. When we introduce change to organization and processes, I would spend more time on the follow-ups of those changes that you don’t just throw change out there and hope it survives but you take care of it and monitor it and adjust it if there is a need to, ask for feedback. So change management in a sense could be emphasized more. Easybank has a bit of tendency to throw something out there and not follow up on it in any way.”

Software:

“I really do not know, changes I have suggested they have taken into consideration.”

“Some small things related to the, how you are able to focus on what you are doing and how much noise there is. Resourcing is also another question so, and that’s in line with the kind of, well not in line but, also touching topic related to like Easybank’s mission. So, if we have something that we want to do and it’s our like the, main thing, like the priority one, then we need to have enough resources for that. More resources.”

“I would improve our kind of, being proud of how good we are at doing things, and letting that show. So, we have really great engineers here, we have amazing designers. That people woul know that. I guess that’s kind of employer branding.”

IT Ops:

“More events so the teams would get to know each other. Better communication over the team borders. But that needs time and effort.”

Control:

“Better onboarding and more information. Sometimes things get lost in translation. Seeing the bigger picture and not assuming people automatically know these things.”

“To mention just one thing, we could improve the communication while improving, sort of... project management. Because we do tend to do a lot of projects, we do have projects ongoing all the time.”

Marketing:

“I would like to have different drinks. And better benefits. In general, I would restructure the teams. We need creative teams, now we are scattered in different teams and we need to work together better”.

“More freedom with the remote work. And like I’m saying I wouldn’t actually even use that option so much, I don’t work at home much, but I would like to use it to be able to travel a bit more. But otherwise I’m pretty content with everything.”

What the employees would change if they were given free hands?

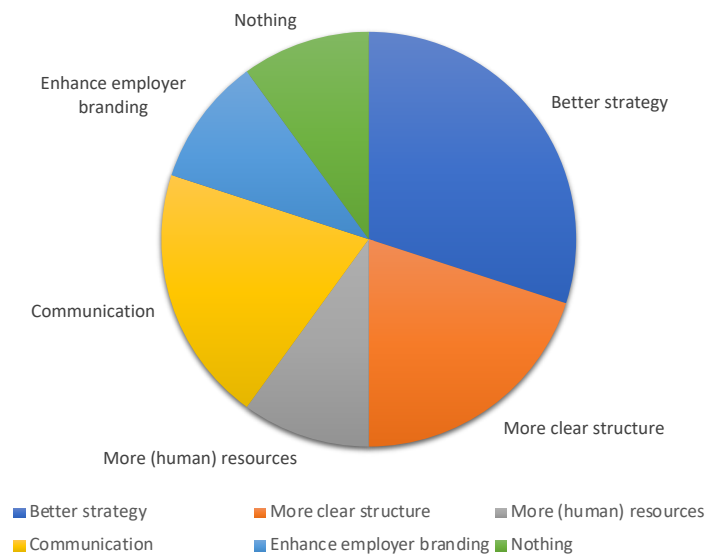


Figure 10. Summary: What the employees would change if they were given free hands.

5.1.2 Well-being at work

The questions about the well-being of the employees consisted of over 10 questions, depending on the department. The questions were formed on the basis of what had been risen to be important in this department according to the previous studies.

When asking the interviewees about the stressfulness of their work situation, the answers varied between the teams and within the teams. The team that seemed to be most stressed was the customer success team.

Customer Success:

"...at the moment it is more like 4/5 stress level, but only because we had some cut downs in or we had to take care that one person was leaving so we were heavily under-resourced under moment"

"It is somewhat stressful, due to the amount of work."

Software:

"Not that stressful."

IT Ops:

"I think I have somewhat stressful working situation."

Control:

"Not too stressful."

"Somewhat stressful."

"I'm fairly OK with it."

Marketing:

"I have some stress" and "I don't have too much stress. I'm pretty well organised of course there are ad hoc things but, I mean that's true in any job so, that's fine."

When asked about the stress level in the whole team and how their stress level relates to the others in the same team it was mostly agreed that the stress levels are fairly similar in the whole team. When interviewed a person with senior/team leader position were the stress-levels considered higher, which is normal. Also, the employees working with legal matters considered themselves to be more stressed than other employees. The customer success team overall felt that they have more stress than other teams.

The next question was about knowing the expectations towards the employee and if they get enough feedback. Only one interviewee felt that they got enough feedback. Also changing the organizational structure had left many employees in confusion on their assignments and it was stated that especially new projects confuse the employees.

Customer Success:

"Now that organizational structure has changed and also through that my own work shifted a little bit few things have formed that I was part in previously. At the moment it is a bit of a mix. But feedback I don't get that much feedback. I would love some more feedback."

"Yes, depends on what, sure, I think at the moment it is feedback wise, we get so many new projects in, sometimes it is a bit unclear but we all at Easybank know that we are sometimes a bit unorganized in these ways. It is just like hey it will be a new project and start and see how it goes later"

on and it is always a bit messy on the beginning and you are not sure but then usually after a few weeks you know your role...

Software:

“Quickly answered I would say yes, it’s pretty clear. I get enough feedback, I would say so.”

“I think feedback we could improve. At least in my team. Kind of like you need to, pick the feedback from different pieces. It might fit for some people, and some people might need more.”

IT Ops:

“I know what is expected of me. I would appreciate more feedback.”

Control:

“Yes I know what is expected of me. I do get feedback, but I do.. myself request feedback also.”

“Yes. Because, I work strictly with my manager, and sometime he’s really busy with things like, recruitment, and board members coming over, or trainings or planning and, basically manager stuff. And in those time I will be more autonomous, than actually getting feedbacks.”

“Feedback is important for me and I ask for it. I need more feedback.”

“It is easy to ask feedback.”

Marketing:

“I know pretty well what’s expected of me. I gotta say feedback, not so much. We don’t really have any kind of regular feedback sessions, we have this, well what is it called like performance review, kehityskeskustelu,-- But you don’t get a lot of feedback for example on your ways of working. It’s more like related to individual tasks.”

“I believe I know what is expected of me. I get like vague feedback. Mostly on closing a project. Feedback is more superficial”.

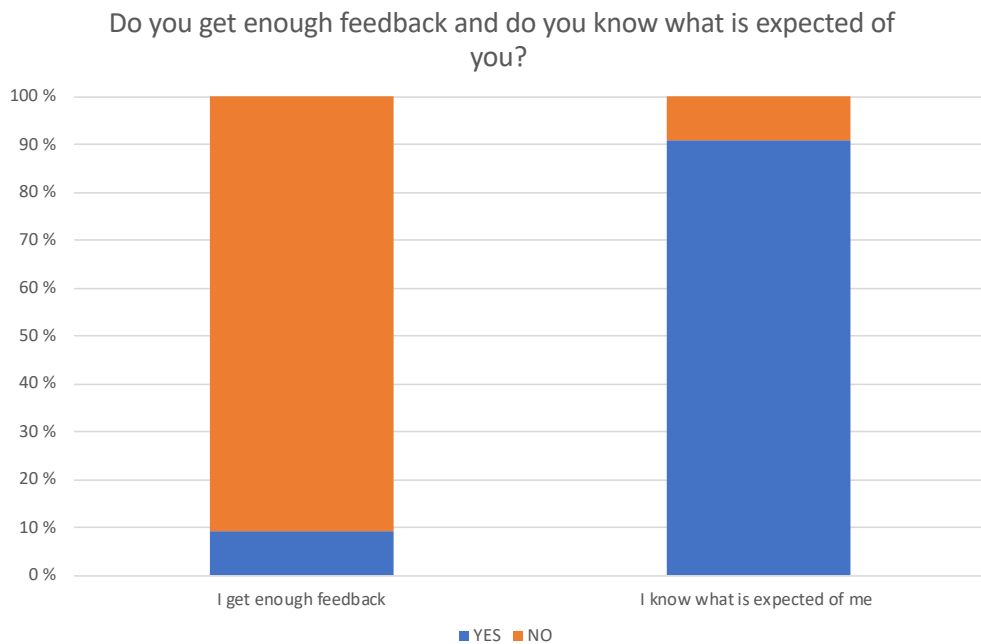


Figure 11. Summary: Do you get enough feedback and do you know what is expected of you?

The next question concerned the topics about the employee's fondness of their work and if they think they are good at their work. The interviewees agreed to like their work. The interviewees also thought that they are pretty good at their work.

After that, it was discussed if Easybank has open discussion at work and if there are problems or crisis, are the difficult topics discussed openly or if there is a need for improvement. The interviewees agreed that they have a somewhat open discussion with some exceptions.

Customer Success:

"Yes, definitely, yeah - and they also take seriously definitely."

"We have open discussion culture I would say here in Easybank, I am satisfied" with that."

Software:

"We are a very open company, and at least we continuously want to be, and stay that way."

“So I would say that, at least I personally feel that there is enough communication and information sharing if there’s something dramatic happening.”

IT Ops:

“I think situations have been handled well. You can make your ideas heard.”

Control:

“I feel like we can have good and open discussion.”

“There can be lot of misunderstandings sometimes...”

Marketing:

“I think things are discussed pretty openly, but of course there’s always room for improvement. -- some people are sort of closer to each other and talk more. -- So everything is not discussed, like, with the entire team. But in general I think it’s pretty open and you can bring up issues if you face them or, find that there’s something that you wanna go through with the whole team.”

“The discussion gets harder when the company is growing so fast. You cannot just Slack people. Would be important to know who is responsible and who to contact.”*

* Slack is the company’s internal quick messaging application.

For the Customer success team, IT Ops team, Software team and Control team the question about collaboration and team spirit was added, because these aspects had received significantly low scores in the previous surveys. The Customer Success team interviewees were asked to describe the collaboration and team spirit at Easybank. The discussion within this topic seemed to be necessary since most interviewees agreed that within their own team the collaboration is good, but when it came to collaboration and communication between different teams, it needed improvement.

“Overall Collaboration in a way that communication in general is lacking a bit. So sometimes we get the info last, they kind of forget about us, because it is day to day basis which sometimes it is a bit annoying because then

customers are coming back to us “hey this new thing” and we hear last about it, “oh really is this the new feature we have?!” The communication is sometimes cut off from us and that is annoying sometimes. It is embarrassing if customer knows things before customer service because they ask help from you. Then we say, “we have to check other colleagues first...”

“There are quite many teams and they differ from customer success, the collaboration can feel a bit that there are walls between some teams because they don’t naturally works that much together.”

“Team spirit is great. Team works well together.”

“Inside this smaller team, I think it works nicely. And then, this bigger team, which we are now, we are doing so different things that, I don’t know is there, that much collaboration.”

“I feel like we have a good atmosphere.”

“Good environment and we have the trust.”

The next topic was about responsibility in the company and if everyone takes equal responsibility in the team or the whole working community. This question was included only in the marketing department. Other teams that it had not been recognized as a problem.

Marketing:

“Sometimes maybe it’s not so easy to take responsibility or there are things that nobody maybe feels responsible for. -- I think people are pretty good, taking responsibility for their work and, know what is expected of them.”

“We have the same responsibilities in the team. But sometimes not everyone takes the same responsibility. “

The next discussion concerned the aspect if the employees feel that they can affect their work. It was also discussed if the employees feel that they can discuss the work with their team or their supervisors and implement changes or develop new practices. This question was excluded from some departments questions since that had not been recognized as a pain point.

Customer Success:

“Pretty much. We get usually projects and we can decide if we want to do them or not. If something is not working, I think there is open discussion and we can work freely and bring feedback in.”

IT Ops:

“I can influence on my work. I can always also ask help.”

Control:

“I would say, 60/40 or somewhere around that. 65/35. Two third and one third.”

“Depends on the week.”

“I can easily influence my work.”

“I can. Of course there are things that I would like to do, that I just don't have the time for.”

Marketing:

“I can affect my work most of the time. But of course we have stressful times and urgent times, but yeah, yea to the most part -- I think I can affect them. -- To some extent. Of course I can give my ideas and feedback but I think, like, decisions on a more strategic level of course are done above me in a way.”

“Yeah, I can discuss my work-- we have pretty open culture when it comes to discussion, and especially, well, our team is split between two different locations, Berlin and Helsinki. So, my managers are usually here, so I can, like it's easier for me to talk to them because I can see them face to face. This is of course a different challenge then like, I don't know if people in Berlin feel the same way. But for me it's easy to approach my managers.”

The next question tried to clarify how straining the work is and how the employees feel after the workday. Most employees felt good after the workday but some employees had some newly developed problems with their stamina. The problems that affected stamina and overall feeling the most were the lack of resources (people, co-workers).

Customer Success:

“This is the problem now because of the resources lacking, so I am quite exhausted. I am bit exhausted because it is so much to do.”

“I enjoy coming to work, but at least lately I have been feeling quite stressed because I have many things to do, but not enough resources to do all the things I would like to do, but yeah, but after work I mostly just feel really tired.”

Software:

“Most of the time I’m quite energetic and happy.”

“Sometimes I might feel like, very tired after work, but I think that’s uncommon. Depends on a day.”

IT Ops:

“It really depends on the day. Also depends on the attitude.”

Control:

“Mostly I feel happy and I have energy to do stuff.”

“I’m pretty excited to go to work every day, and I have energy after the workday.”

“The load of work that we need to do at the end of the month, is kind of... much... But in average I really, I don’t know, normal?”

Marketing:

“So I don’t feel like exhausted but of course you’re tired. But I think that’s true of any job, after being eight hours at an office you kind of feel like you need to disconnect.”

“I feel exhausted most of the times. I don’t do anything after work. I would sometimes need help with my workload.”

The next discussion aimed to find out if the employees are satisfied in the working environment. Easybank offices have recently relocated so it was important to find out

how the employees perceive the new working environment. Most of the employees were very happy with the new offices and some negative feedback that was mentioned was mostly due to the fact the offices were not ready and construction was still ongoing while people were working. Some employees mentioned that their work would be easier if they would have better software to work with. This topic was mentioned because as the new office spaces were obtained, they hoped for other improvements too.

Customer Success:

“Yes, I like my work desk, I think it a bit loud still. I don’t know how to change, but also I gave feedback to them. We are thinking different seating for everyone so we might have more peace we have to be on the phone, and it is loud if people are constantly walking there.”

“I am quite happy with them. I have now standing desk, that is a great addition. That is a new thing. We only had a couple non-permanent desks in the previous office that people could use. I am quite happy with ergonomics, we have physiotherapist coming every now and then.”

Software:

“Now we are a bit scattered. But otherwise it is good.”

“So, compared to the old one, there are pros and cons. Like, personally I feel, that I probably have like, I’m very happy with the spot where I’m sitting. I’m happy with the office, and compared to the old one because we were really running out of space.”

IT Ops:

“Not everything is in place yet, but I have a strong belief that the problems will be solved.”

Control:

“Yes, the new offices are great.”

“Now it is too much noise. But the table, chairs, that’s nice.”

“For example, we use a lot of Excel, and -- so it would be nice to have an actual, actual system that is designed to do those things.”

Marketing:

“The new office is good. It is a big improvement comparing to the old one”

“I’m satisfied, I mean -- this is still like, work in progress the new office. -- now we have --- improvements compared to the old office, we have these electric desks, so we can stand up and, I don’t really have problem with the ergonomics. I’m pretty adaptable I think I just like put on my headphones and I can concentrate pretty easy.”

Then it was discussed if Easybank somehow encourages the employees to lead a healthy lifestyle or enables it in some way. Many mentioned the sports benefit (“virikeseteli”) as a standard way to encourage a healthy lifestyle. Easybank also sponsors sports club but these clubs and teams are usually employee-driven and not born on Easybank’s initiative.

Customer Success:

“I think Easybank is quite neutral on the topic there is the Yoga but its not really active advertised it is more that came from employee that idea. But yeah I would, there is the “virikeseteli”. Through that, but not sort of culture way.”

“Yes, they give the possibility... There is yoga, after work, etc. I am not really taking part to be honest because im so tired after work but at least they give the possibility.”

Software:

“I would say that, Easybank maybe doesn’t really care. So, like you said earlier that people can be what they are, so it’s not that, Easybank would be forcing and pushing you too much. We have some benefits.”

“We have lot team sports... I think Easybank promotes healthy lifestyle. They also say it is OK to be sick and not to come work sick.”

“...Enables definitely. So, through all these activities that the employer, Easybank is sponsoring in a sense it’s helping us do a weekly yoga.-- I mean it’s not.. opposing to that it’s not part of a like active culture that it’s discussed daily though.”

IT Ops:

“I guess we have yoga and some other stuff. Nothing if you are not into those things so it is not like actively encouraging.”

Control:

“Yeah, there is some yoga, more ergonomical office.”

“Yeah we have the “sports benefit.”

“We have many self-initiated clubs.”

“Yeah, yeah we’ve got the, I’ve no idea what it is in English but the virkistysetu “*

**earlier translated as “sports benefit”.*

Marketing:

“We have the sports benefit – but you can use it to go to the movies too. I don’t know about mental health. -- they are supportive in that way but I don’t know if there’s anything more. But do they promote a healthy lifestyle I don’t know, well we have the fruit here and that kind of stuff so yeah, maybe there are more things I just don’t see them.”

“There is the sports bonus... I never use it. I would like to something else than sodas to drink.”

“Our managers talk like, don’t work at nights and shut down your laptop you don’t have to be reachable during weekends. So, well yeah now that I think of it, maybe, they do encourage. Try to make sure that, we’re happy and healthy.”

The next discussion was concerning the topic if the employees believe they do well at their position and employees were asked for some examples of situations to learn more about the topic. All employees felt that they do well in their position. It was also interesting to see that the employees were able to pinpoint actual cases, where they have done extremely well and were proud of it.

Customer Success:

“Yes I do in my opinion, do well at my job. There have been some external audits from regulators or audits, compliance, legal related, where I had to give presentations on what I do and we have passed those audits”

“Yes I do well, and I made project recently that went really well.”

Software:

“Yeah I think I’m, doing decent job. I’m trying to say maybe is that, it feels good in the sense that people can approach you they know you and they come to you to ask things that feels in a sense, good that you, potentially can be helpful, for someone.”

“Nothing that I would say that I would have like, something that I have done would have been something like, in that sense exceptional that I would say that hey, this is what we did”

“Yes I have been helping to develop an internal tool and I got great feedback.”

IT Ops:

“I think I do pretty well. I was away and then I got feedback that good to have me back. I felt needed.”

Control:

“I did very well in one implementation project.”

“I think I mostly do well at my position.”

“I don’t really get feedback, but I think I am good at my work.”

“I think I did a pretty OK job. I mean that’s to be humble. The thing is, I get a lot of compliments, but I think that is in the company culture, is to be encouraging.”

Marketing:

“I got really good feedback in my performance review but individual project... Was there something specific. I can think of now lately we’ve been, like in general I think I’m really fast at my work, so that’s good.”

“Yes, I do well. I have done lot of projects and gotten some feedback. Most of things goes unnoticed. I feel a bit lacking feedback in big projects.”

The last question concerning well-being was how their expertise matches their current position and if there are development needs. This question was not asked from all the teams on the basis of that it did not need more coverage based on the earlier surveys. All the employees felt that their expertise matched the position they were in and also felt like they had been able to develop themselves at Easybank.

Customer Success:

“Yeah I would say so I developed quite a lot in the engagement part. I communicate with customers through campaigns and that’s pretty much what I want to do.”

“Yes.”

IT Ops:

“Yes, it matches my work experience. If I have issues, I can always ask help from my boss.”

Marketing:

“It’s pretty much like exactly, I think, what I’m educated for, and where my strongest expertise is. Which is of course great ‘cause then you can do well in your job, but what it kind of lacks is that then, it doesn’t really push you forward, because you’re sort of already good at what you do, so there’s not like that much challenge.”

“I think so, I think I know I have more expertise that I need in my positions. I also got a created a new position to me. I want to be responsible on more stuff. I feel very comfortable.”

5.1.3 Job satisfaction

The questions about job satisfaction were also aimed to clarify the pain points that had surfaced earlier. The first question addressed how the employee could be more content or happy with their job. The similar themes surfaced regarding this question, as had

surfaced in earlier questions, such as more resources, communication, organizational clarity etc.

Customer Success:

“Better organisation in the long run. We always just have this either really big visions or really short-term solutions like hey there is a project that has to be executed tomorrow, So a bit better planning for bigger projects would be nice. -- things are still quite unorganized unfortunately, would be a lot less stress if we would know our projects better and detailed on beforehand.”

“Bit more focused like working area. Perhaps the organizational clarity would help as well.”

Software:

“I think, a little bit more of this, coaching... I think this relates to development plan, that we touched on earlier so, we do a yearly development plan but I think it’s a little bit, or we move at a such fast pace, that it actually gets outdated.”

“--internally we are struggling resourcing-wise so, then it would make even more sense to have these projects and trying to push those if there would be internally more resources, but that’s a known issue...”

IT Ops:

“Well maybe I could have more salary. But mostly I am happy. This is the best company I have been to. We need more people though and need to hire quicker.”

Control:

“I would like to have more general training. More introduction in onboarding processes.”

“I’m happy with the freedom, with my own current salary. But like I said, more responsibility.”

“--if I would get to do, even a bit more of the projects that we do now. Of course I when we get more resources that will help a lot. But that is something that I’m quite looking forward to, to being able to do the things that actually I find interesting.”

Marketing:

“I think one thing is like, better communication, that’s true I think there is always room for improvement in communication, like I said also we’re split between two different cities, a lot of our communication is based on Slack, which is, well can be tricky sometimes when you don’t see people face to face. So communication.”

“I think it comes to the workload, I need smaller one. I would like to have a team member to work with me. Now I work by myself. Having someone to share the workload and bounce ideas would be beneficial for me. Now it is hard.”

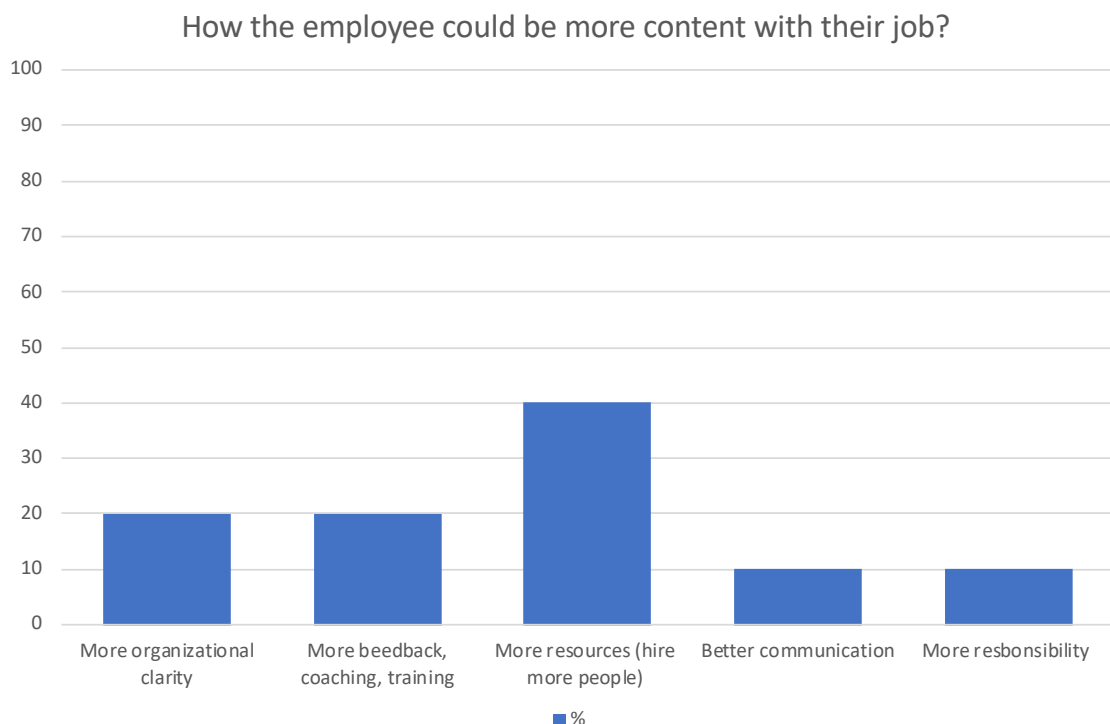


Figure 12. Summary: How the employee could be more content with their job?

The next topic wanted to discuss what the employee enjoy most in their work and what they enjoy the least. The most enjoyable aspects varied depending on the department

the employee worked, but freedom with their work surfaced a couple of times. When asked about the least enjoyable thing, many earlier pain points were highlighted but also themes such as too many meetings and when things they are doing are not clearly structured.

Customer Success:

“I like to work with different departments together and always learn something new. I have freedom that I want and it is not limited to somethings.”

“Working together with different teams. The fact that not many things that are necessarily written down anywhere that I have to come up solutions to problems myself and utilize my own input to solve things rather than just read from guidance elsewhere. It’s a blessing and a curse.”

“Least favorite... the unorganized... I don’t want to work in a enterprise where everything is “set on the stone” but bit more structure wise and would be also nice for the last 2 years, we are always lacking resources at least.”

“I can never really focus on one thing, its always like 5 things it is nice because it is never boring. But also, it is very stressful.”

“I don’t always have the possibility to impact on priorities and how different things are aligned to whole company and because of the workload I don’t have time to concentrate on some of the things I would want and I find it frustrating because whole company could benefit if I could do something with a bit more time and more thoroughly.”

Software:

“—actually, what you are doing, makes sense and, things are on your hands and it’s like meaningful. The atmosphere with team and colleagues because, even though if the work itself what you are doing makes sense but if the colleagues are not that nice to work with then, it doesn’t, well it’s not that fun anymore. So the culture here is, something that I like.”

“—I enjoy the most the challenge, and then the colleagues. “

“I enjoy that I can learn and I have a lot of control over what I do”.

“I enjoy the least, maybe the feedback actually. Or something to do with the feedback. Career-wise coaching I can’t get in-house. That is one, but then also feedback that how is, like small nudging and guiding like ‘hey maybe try to aim for this type of outcomes’.”

“I enjoy the least when things do not make any sense.”

“I don’t like it when the tasks grow too big. It changes processes and gives this “fuzziness” when the framework grows”.

IT Ops:

“I enjoy the most customer interaction. I love helping people and it motivates me. It makes me happy to think that I can save someone’s day. I get lot of appreciation from people.”

“Sometimes the days are too busy, there is too much to do. My colleagues are my customers so sometimes I don’t have enough time to help everyone.”

Control:

“I enjoy the most the versatility.”

“I like Problem solving, to actually get to create something that helps another person.”

“I enjoy that I can I learn a lot from my colleagues.”

“I hate when it is too much meetings.”

“Too much small talk at the office sometimes.”

“Routine tasks. Which we do realise that everybody needs to do. But, not my favourite.”

Marketing:

“What I enjoy. I think it is the freedom. Deciding times and how Easybank is going to look like. The freedom to do my work and that they trust me a lot. I like that the most”

“I really like my team. Well my tasks although I said like, they’re not always as challenging as they could be, I do like, this is why I applied for the job.”

“What I enjoy the least...I think the pay does not match the level of the same positions in Helsinki in general. That is really important for me. -- I mean the stress, it has been very stressful.”

“Sometimes these unnecessary meetings that you feel like OK, even if the topic is interesting and you’re expecting that okay after this meeting we will know what to do or we will make a decision and then after the meeting you realise, okay we didn’t really actually achieve anything. That’s frustrating. Also the communication like I said there’s room for improvement so something there.”

The next question aimed to clarify if the employees were happy with their current position. This is important information for the Human Resources department since if most of the people are unhappy, there is a possibility that they are looking for other jobs. Almost all the interviewees were happy but were also looking towards the future and growing in their career path.

Customer Success:

“Yes, I am. Of course yeah again, resource problem... I would like to focus more on engagement... I can be remote work and work from home but usually it depends... I can focus better home, it is more quiet...”

“Yes I am quite happy about position. Position has evolved during my period here so that’s has been good and helped with that.”

Software:

“Yes I am happy!”

“Mostly happy.”

IT Ops:

“I am but I have a goal to advance in the career path.”

Control:

“Yes”

“I will be (happy) when I get more resources.”

Marketing:

“Yeah I am, I am. I’m like, I’m still a young professional so I’m looking forward all the time. But at the moment I am. “

“I am happy with my position. And we are in a point if there is anything to grow after this position, I don’t know.”

The next question was concerning the workload the employees have, and if they concern the workload reasonable. Most of the interviewees thought that their workload was reasonable, but the Customer success team seemed to suffer from a higher workload than other teams.

Customer Success:

“I need more resources.”

“I have quite high workload now... Very much past my comfort point.”

Software:

“It is a lot. We try to automate.”

“How much I’m doing currently is, I can manage that. And I can control it.”

IT Ops:

“Most of the time it is OK.”

Control:

“Yes, sometimes more and sometimes less.”

“I do consider it reasonable, at times.”

“Yes.”

Marketing:

“Yeah. I think it’s pretty well balanced. It’s also there are like, lows and highs, I mean like the seasons change.”

“I feel like I have too much work and too big workload.”

The questions about the supervisor and if the supervisor is enabling or could enable the employee to work better or develop themselves gave the following results: Most employees felt that the supervisor was already too busy with their own tasks and they did not have so much time to help the employee. The employees would also appreciate a proactive supervisor who would give feedback and coach them.

Customer Success:

“I think Easybank gives a lot of trainings. You can always ask for online courses. Let’s say they (management) don’t come proactively to me but I can always ask if they have some tips or some insights.”

“In away yes, of course my manager has impact what thing we prioritize and through that he could help perhaps... But on the day to day things he doesn’t have that much helping I would say.”

Software:

“Yes 100%. I get books I also participate in events outside work.”

“I wish I could ask more... Now It feels hard”

“At least that’s something we have tried, several ways.”

IT Ops:

“I feel that my supervisor already does a lot. He is busy too, but tries to help.”

Control:

“He consistently comments on my works, in solidarity, so in private. So I really appreciate that. It’s constantly there.”

“The supervisor is too busy to help. He has too big workload.”

“I would like to have more feedback to develop myself.”

“My supervisor could have more time for me. Having more time with my boss would help me a lot. I do take it as a compliment in a way that he lets me work on my own and trusts that I can do my stuff, but he’s still my supervisor and I do, want that, co-working mentality at least.”

Marketing:

“Sometimes I get education benefits but I feel I would need more educational time or watch something on work time. More incentive to self-educating would be good.”

“Sometimes you feel like, you’re not maybe getting your message through or you’re not being, understood. – My supervisor becomes a bottleneck, but he/she probably has too big workload.”

Next it was discussed if the employees feel valued and appreciated at Easybank. Most of the employees felt valued but once again they were hoping for more feedback on their work. Most of the interviewees felt appreciated but many mentioned that they would feel more valued if they would get more feedback on their work. A couple of employees did not feel appreciated at all.

Customer Success:

“Yeah, sometimes it goes a bit under the carpet sometimes because everybody is so busy to say proper things but usually people know and they do say thanks afterwards. “

“Yes I do, I mean I do get some good feedback every now and then but having more feedback would help.”

Software:

“I would say so. I feel that I’m also, appreciating and looking up my colleagues that, what they are doing is important and, it’s nice to work with them.”

IT Ops:

“Yes.”

Control:

“I do. On, basic level I do. I do feel like my work is, valuable. But of course there are times when I ask myself that why do I do this.”

“Yes, people tell it to me.”

“Not really.”

“Of course, yes.”

Marketing:

“...Not much actually. I think I do good work but I think people think I am invisible and I do not feel appreciated. That is because people do not know who has done something. I felt more appreciated when we were more small company.”

“Yes, I do. I really do. Maybe back to the feedback, we could get more of that, so you could kind of also hear like if you’re doing a good job.”

Next aspect discussed if the employees see a career path inside the Easybank. This question is also an engagement question which tells, if the employees are thinking of staying employed at Easybank, or if they see that career growth would be possible. Most of the employees could see themselves growing inside Easybank and continuing their career path within the company.

Customer Success:

“Yeah, I think I already did quite a lot. Of course after being here X years, something has to come, otherwise people would switch off if there is no development. “

“I guess like doing what I do now, having more senior position there it is a bit tricky, but I would like to...”

Software:

“I have my internal motivation to develop my skills and how I do what I do, how do we do this what I do, it’s possible, and that’s great. That also kind of, motivates me a lot. But then sometimes the bad side of it is that there is no-one giving a straight guide, like direction.”

“At least I have been happy with my role... And there is lot to learn.”

IT Ops:

“I am new in the team so not right now, it is a possibility.”

Control:

“Yes, I would like to advance inside Easybank and improve my knowledge.”

“I think I could proceed inside Easybank.”

“The next step? Let’s see how this whole recruiting process goes. But we do have a career path talked over with my boss that I got to give my opinion on what I wanna do and how it may benefit Easybank and what he can do to enable me to grow in that path.”

“The thing is, you can grow with the company. There are thoughts of leaving for bigger banks and, bigger (-), or better data science company. But for me, it’s the same everywhere, but to have this kind of a social settings, it’s really hard to achieve, the best of both worlds in any other company. So in here, even though my role is junior, but as long as the company is growing, I believe I can achieve my own goals in here.”

Marketing:

“I think there could be possibilities inside company but I don’t see it happening in the near future.”

“...at the moment I’m happy but it’s not very clear for me what would be my next career step in this company. ‘Cause I sort of now where I wanna go, but at least at the moment we don’t have, well the position that I would be interested in, it doesn’t really exist.”

Then it was discussed if the employees see Easybank as a secure workplace. This question was a trust question trying to also find out if the employees believe in the company. The interviewees felt positive about Easybank’s future and see the company in function at least in the time period of one to five years.

Customer Success:

“I think there is a good future for Easybank, we are owned by a huge bank. I am not worried at all”.

“I mean its much more secure than a start up.”

Software:

“I feel like it stable.”

“Yeah. Trust is definitely there.”

IT Ops:

“Yes, I am not scared, we have had a lot of growth.”

Control:

“Yes. The company goes forward. Industry is good.”

“Yes.”

Marketing:

“I don’t know. Depends how far is future. 5 years I don’t know but near future yes. “

“I can say that I don’t see myself working in Easybank for the next ten years, so for the next I don’t know, couple of years I, I believe the company will be around.”

It was then discussed if the employee felt that they got enough introduction and guidance to their assignments when they started or when they changed a position. Most of the interviewees felt that they got good onboarding, but some of them felt like there was no guidance given and they had to learn a lot by themselves. There was no particular team that had a problem with guidance and onboarding processes.

Customer Success:

“Yes, definitely. Everybody’s there is a pretty nice onboarding and you get to know the departments, you get presentations from departments and training so you see overview on what everyone is doing and important regulations etc. Good knowledge what you get. Of course when

assignments change there is a much self-teaching but again our bosses offer free courses and books etc. It is just that you don't have time to participate."

"Yeah, there was a person doing this and what he is now doing as main focus, so he did help me in that aspect. Technology changes. You have to teach yourself. I myself provide introduction to team mates, I am part of the onboarding process. I would emphasize guidance and information sharing if I would have more time and it would save time in the long run and be more enjoyable as well to new employees. Everyone has quite high workload so in sense when new employee comes, it is just extra work on top of everything you already have, so finding time and resources to do introduction is a challenge, its quite commonly seen in many things at Easybank, because we don't have a proper HR department to say that would lead the onboarding or would be able to assist with that."

Software:

"I think we have quite some documents that, would make sense to a) provide during the onboarding, and b) to have a session that, you know like, hey all the new people and why not people who have just joined as well, or were just interested again, talk them through."

"I feel I got enough. I had a really good, supervisor when I joined."

"I would feel that, I was lucky. This was maybe like one of the best starts, of a new job, so yeah, I don't know how things are now, I have been talking with some and, at least they have said that, they've also been, kind of, accepted to the team, but maybe their onboarding was not as good."

IT Ops:

"Yes, I got so much guidance. Definitely."

Control:

"Yeah. I did. It was more in a way which I do appreciate is that I got to do it, and I was handed, bits and pieces that I was, not in a way that I sat with someone for two days and they onboarded me."

“I would like to have more onboarding, my manager was so busy. More introduction.”

“I think I got lot of support.”

Marketing:

“I had to definitely learn by myself... Now people ask me lot of advice.”

“Yeah, I did.”

Did the employee feel that they got enough introduction and guidance to their assignments?

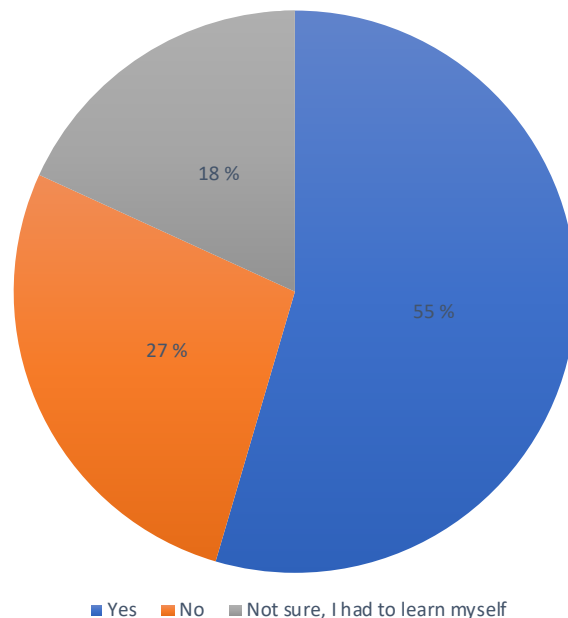


Figure 13. Summary: Did the employee feel that they got enough introduction and guidance to their assignments?

The next question was concerning communication and how that succeeds at Easybank. The problem within the communication had already been mentioned before, and it had surfaced in the earlier surveys, which communicated that it was important to clarify this problem more. The interviewees were asked if they want to answer in team or company level, or both. The communication is, in the light of results, a significant problem. The positive result is that within the team the communication is succeeding better than on the company level. The reasons why there are problems with communication are: remote teams and split teams in different countries and the communication does not stay in sync with the company's rapid growth.

Customer Success:

“I think within our team is good. Out of the team. Yeah... The information is a bit lost on the way.”

“...it is I think the main challenge, it works within the teams quite well but company level that is quite, there are big challenges sometimes. Partly due to the fact that we have grown so much in two years. Having to learn new ways to communicate all the time is a bit tricky.”

Software:

“Information is definitely shared and then, it’s up to you what you want to listen and read. But, yeah, I would say it’s communicated. Of course if there’s too much communication then it might be just noise and things are missed but, I do feel that there’s enough communication.”

“I think we are doing an okay job in this. Some things, and I haven’t figured out what type of things it is usually but some things don’t... move as well, or don’t get shared or, so the synergy is not there in some things.”

IT Ops:

“I think that it succeeds pretty well. But we are a big company. We have some channels like Slack, but of course face-to-face is always best...”

Control:

“Big changes are communicated well. Tasks of other teams and people are not communicated.”

“I like product demos and all hands. Good announcements. But otherwise, maybe not so well.”

“It doesn’t work. We, well it’s getting better now but we still have very... Narrow idea of what other people are doing. We have no idea about other people’s workloads, like said before. I may come to your table and ask for you, for you to do stuff for me not knowing that you already have your workload more than you can handle. We don’t really know which projects

are going on, not that we shouldn't, not that everybody needs to know everything."

"It can be better. Especially about leaving. It's really sometime really short notice and it comes with, and without, publishing the reasoning."

Marketing:

"I think in my team it goes in two ways. Half of my team is in Berlin. It is different. Hard to communicate sometimes. We miscommunicate a lot."

"I'm thinking about the company level. I think there's, they're trying to maintain the culture of openness in that everything is shared pretty openly. I can talk about my own team, where... Well we have become kind of siloed in a way that, we have like, for example paid marketing acquisition and then we have content marketing and maybe the information doesn't really always flow between us. And once again I'm mentioning that we're between two locations... That makes it hard."

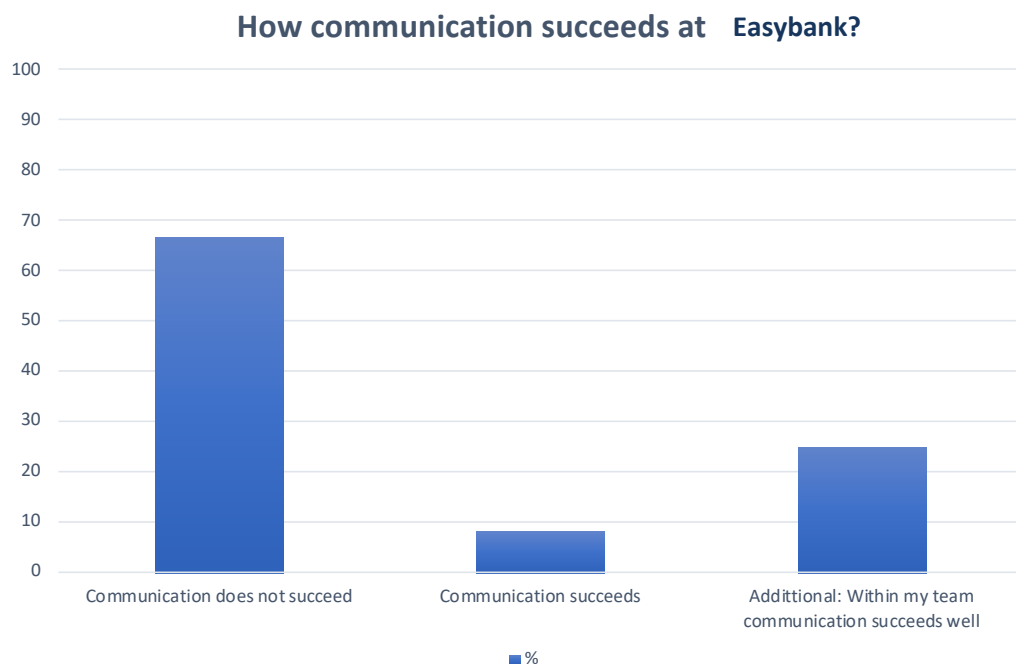


Figure 14. Summary: How the communication succeeds at Easybank?

The next topic wanted to clarify if the employees are looking for positions inside Easybank or looking positions outside Easybank. This also clarifies how engaged they are to the company and do they see a future at Easybank. The people working at

Easybank are engaged to work there and were not actively looking for other positions to work elsewhere.

Customer Success:

“I think that would be interesting as well (to look inside Easybank), there is now it is starting to be a size of company that there is possibilities to do that. There would be interesting aspects in project management.”

“I would like to work at Easybank.”

Software:

“I am so new so I cannot even think inside the company.”

IT Ops:

“I am not really looking, but it is safe to say that in my field it is an employees market. “

Control:

“No, I am happy now.”

“I’m really really happy with my own right now knowing that there is a path that I can take.”

Marketing:

“Yes definitely, I would like to work here but don’t know how I can proceed.”

The last question was a value question which wanted to clarify if the employees value well-being and job satisfaction when considering a workplace. The following hypothesis was given to clarify the question: “Let’s assume that you would have to look for a new workplace, and there would be possibilities that one company has a really bad reputation but you get a really high salary, and the other company is, not so good salary but it’s really nice culture, it has a really good reputation it knows it values its employees, it has really good health benefits and such. What do you value more?” All interviewees valued a good organizational culture, well-being and job satisfaction more than a workplace with material benefits.

Customer Success:

“Yeah, the most important things. Usually the job sucks at some point anyways, some parts, not all the time hopefully, but colleagues and surroundings is the most important thing. “

“Of course there needs to be a balance, but I would take a workplace with lower salary and amazing culture and reputation. Salary helps for a while, but I think in a long run that would be a thing that would be the main motivation to me, good well-being and satisfaction.”

Software:

“...if the employees are not satisfied and happy, then they don't like to work there, and then I don't feel that I would enjoy working with colleagues that don't want to work. So the employee happiness is important. And of course, from the company point of view then it has, at least I would assume that it has a huge impact to the productivity.”

“Of course, they are the most important things.”

“Yes. I would even like to go back when we were smaller and emphasize that more.”

IT Ops:

“Yes, Well-being and job satisfaction are so important for me. More important than salary. Money does not matter if the atmosphere is bad.”

Control:

“I definitely appreciate job satisfaction and well-being more.”

“I have the best of both worlds. So I'm get paid relatively good, and I get enjoying a decent, and very positive atmosphere. So I'm very happy in that sense.”

“I would do a work that I love in an environment where I'm happy for less money, for sure. “

Marketing:

“Yes, completely I value Well-being at work and hob satisfaction. . It is hard to know before you enter to company if company says other and does other. I try to search real reviews.”

“Yeah I think it is, really important. Like I said before, yeah salary money matters, but if you have to sort of sacrifice your well-being at work for it, no it’s not worth it. When I came to Easybank and when I applied to Easybank, I wanted to go to Easybank. It wasn’t that I just saw the job announcement and thought well this job sounds interesting. I had been looking for jobs at Easybank, because I already knew the company.”

Additions made by the interviewees

The open question was added to end the interview, in case something the interviewees would only remember later or for some reason something important had been forgotten to ask.

“I just want to say that generally, we have lost good people recently. Like in 6 months 3-4 good people. We need to pay attention to that.”

“I see that there is a good heart in things we do but it doesn’t really help alone if there is no actual concrete things that aren’t done, that is quite problematic with HR at Easybank. I hope there will be.... That they are able to convince to get more resources. I guess I see a lot of good heart and ideas but in terms of HR and company culture, but I hope some continuity also, consistent. Consistency is something I hope to see.”

“Easybank should be marketed as a good employer more! We need more talented people and the job market is highly competitive. We should build up the employer reputation... Give the people more information about us.”

“...now that we have grown, there are or there can be more challenges with this communication that we have been discussing, and also how some things are working so.. I do feel that it’s a very different company than it was two years ago. Some things are better, some things are worse.”

“We need to focus on employer branding. I think the retention is, now the people are leaving again from one of the teams, well I think the retention is actually, it feels at least I haven’t checked the numbers but it feels pretty decent. But then,

we are not getting so many of these great talents, excited about it so improving that. 'Cause I think our marketing has been focused on acquiring new customers like the, sales and acquisition, which makes total sense, but they haven't, even though they like this topic, they haven't had the bandwidth to deal with it."

"We are not satisfied in our current staff survey."

6 FINDINGS - DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR EASYBANK

For the Start-up companies that are new in the business – or at least companies that have started as a startup – it is vital to have a very distinct employer brand. When they might be unknown at the start, employer brand and employer branding can offer quite the advantage when trying to recruit the right employees. As Easybank has been in the business for under ten years and has ambitious growth plans, the organization would benefit from an employer branding process that would enhance Easybank's Employer brand hence making Easybank a desirable employer.

As Easybank is continuously recruiting (Amount of open positions 6.4.2019, 15, Amount of open positions 20.10.2019, 9, Careers, 2019) while expanding to other countries in Europe it is hard to find the right talent for the position when the competition in the business area is severe. As Easybank HR functions are small (2 persons, which one has another role inside the company) recruiting and searching talents takes a lot of energy from HR. At the moment the CEO of Easybank recognizes the main challenges preventing their growth as "attracting better software developers into the company" and obstacles in hiring new people in order to be able to grow the pace as it is demanded (Koskenvaara 2019). When Easybank's employer brand would be stronger, the talent could be easier to attract without time-consuming headhunting. This would also benefit the whole organization, as the resources would be sufficient and the company could grow in a pace it is required to (Barrow & Mosley 2005, 74-75).

Sometimes, in the popular branches of business, the employer brand can grow without huge effort into it. It is, however, a mistake to assume that this will happen to every company without any effort. Without including a clear framework about employer branding to the organization's strategy, it is not promised that anything will happen. Barrow and Mosley (2005, 75) suggest that companies like Easybank could benefit from clarifying its ambition, the type of people Easybank is looking for, and why Easybank would be a good match as a workplace for the possible recruit. Even though Easybank's values are well-known and recognized by the employees, Easybank should gain influences about the organization's culture and use that in their employer branding. As seen in the previous chapter, Easybank has a positive organizational culture, that most of the employees value highly. This is an aspect that should be used in Easybank's

employer branding and which would benefit the organization and make them gain a competitive advantage in the area of business.

As portrayed above, a great amount of data was gathered from the interviews. The main points have been highlighted in this chapter, and many similarities and important aspects are recognized that surfaced during these interviews.

6.1 Summary of the findings

6.1.1 Employer branding

Analyzing the questions about employer branding showcased many good aspects about Easybank that should be highlighted in the organization's future strategies. The best aspects about working at Easybank were found out to be people working at Easybank, company culture, flexible work and trust that Easybank shows towards their employees. The younger interviewees appreciated possibilities to do remote work since that means their employer trusts them. They would also appreciate a little more freedom in their work.

Regarding the question of what would make Easybank a better workplace the answers varied from better organizational structure, better communication, more resources within the teams, more freedom and bigger human resource department. The company had undergone restructuring within the teams and the rapid growth meant that the recruitment needs did not correlate to the actual recruiting pace. The communicational issues seemed also be due to the rapid growth as the communication ways and channels had not yet adapted to the increasing amount of employees. Some interviewees linked this to the problem of the Easybank HR department of being quite small, at the time 1,5 people. Considering the recent move and re-structuring it could be gathered that the HR department has not had enough resources to focus on all these tasks.

Great results were achieved in the recommendation section where it was found that every interviewee would recommend Easybank, or they already had recommended Easybank. According to the LinkedIn Global Recruiting trends (2017), 80 % of the best talents come through employee referrals, and that the referrals are important. This should be considered taken a part of the strategy, and according to the interviews,

Easybank was already utilizing this by giving a “finder’s fee” when an employee recommended someone and if this recommendation led to a hire.

When discussed about Easybank employer brand and what ideas it brings to people’s minds, it was quite clear that Easybank does not have a significant employer brand. Most of the interviewees answered that Easybank does not have an employer brand or that they don’t know about it. The thoughts that surfaced when talked about Easybank’s employer brand were: great people, openness, multicultural and cool. As these are all positive attributes, these could – and should - be considered when starting to build Easybank’s employer brand.

When discussed about organization’s values, the most commonly recognized and agreed values were Humane, Genuine and fanatic quality. Almost all employees remembered these company values and said that they feel that these values realize at Easybank. When it came to collaboration and communication the employees felt that these values do not show in every day working life. When the organization has a great set of values that the employees believe in, and agree with are these excellent examples that should be highlighted in the employer branding strategy: as noted earlier in this paper, employer branding and internal marketing efforts should promote the existing and positive values (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004).

The next question where the employees were asked to describe Easybank freely was also an important question when thinking about what elements to base Easybank’s employer brand on. The aspects that rose from this question were familiar answers such as open and open-minded organization, friendly people, great culture and great workplace and energetic.

Then it was discussed what the employees would change at Easybank. As many elements re-occurred, it is clear that these aspects need to be taken seriously and the management should develop a solution to these problems. Better and clear structure and strategy were mentioned often, as well as the lacking resources problem. Many employees wished more swift recruiting processes that would help with their workload as well as resources to the HR as this would reciprocally help with the problem. The communication was again something that the employees would like to change as well. Regarding the question also opinions about developing Easybank’s employer brand was stated by many employees. This topic seems to be important for the employees as they explained that they think that if Easybank would have a stronger employer brand, the

talents would want to come to work at Easybank instead of having long recruiting processes.

6.1.2 Well-being

The question cluster about well-being at work started with the question about stress level. It could be concluded that the Customer Success team had the highest stress level which was due to lack of resources as there were too less people working in the team. The researcher comprehended that this team had had some turnover lately.

The feedback is something that Easybank should include in their strategy. Almost all interviewees stated that they do not get enough feedback or that they have to ask for it. They mentioned that the only feedback they might get is the feedback in the yearly conversation. As feedback was recognized as a significant element that affects job satisfaction, and taking this into consideration and including feedback to the organization's culture it would affect on the overall job satisfaction (Judge & Klinger 2008, 399).

When talked about communication and collaboration, almost all the interviewees agreed that inside their own team the collaboration and communication work well. The teams that were located in different countries seemed to have more communication and collaboration issues than the teams working in the same space. This is understandable since it has been studied that communication breakdowns are more common in global and virtual teams. Communication breakdowns delay projects and increase misunderstandings as the team is not able to communicate and collaborate in the best possible way (Daim, Ha, Reutiman, Hughes, Pathak, Bynum & Bhatla 2012). It was also gathered that at the company level there is a need for improvement for both. However, there were no clear development ideas from the employees. Problems with communication surfaced in many parts of the survey, so this issue should not be neglected.

When talked about how exhausted the employees felt after the workday the results were mostly normal, meaning that that the exhaustion level varies depending on the day or it was typical tiredness after a workday. However, the teams that were lacking resources (marketing and customer success) were found to be more exhausted than the other

interviewees. The resource problem also surfaced often, so this aspect is something Easybank needs to treat with care and urgency.

The new office spaces and opportunities following it got a lot of praise from the employees. The problems that emerged in this question were mostly due to the renovation that was still under construction. As the new office spaces are now ready, Easybank should revise how the employees feel about spaces. The new office spaces should also be used as an attracting matter when trying to recruit new employees.

Most of the employees saw themselves growing inside Easybank and continuing their career path in the company. As mentioned before, career development is an important aspect when considering the workplace and also a possible tool to create or enhance employer branding. It has been suggested that employer branding and career development have a connection, and employees appreciate when the employer provides clear possibilities and plans for career development. Employees have been studied to appreciate the possibility to advance in the career and develop themselves which leaves them more satisfied with their job (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004).

6.1.3 Job satisfaction

The questions concerning job satisfaction gave a clear overview of problems and positive aspects at Easybank. When asked how the employee could be more content with their job, the often-mentioned aspects (more resources, more organizational clarity, more feedback, coaching, training, better communication and more responsibility) emerged again as development aspects.

Following views occurred when asked what would make Easybank a better workplace: Developing better communication, having better structure and better processes, a bigger human resource department, more resources (employees) and more trust towards the employees were the most popular aspects to improve in.

The similar pattern repeated itself when asked about what the employee would change at Easybank. Better strategy, more clear structure, more human resources, communication and enhancing employer branding were the most often referenced aspects.

When adding the aspects of what the people enjoy the least in their job (too less coaching, better structure and lack of feedback) and enjoy the most in their job (freedom and people) it can be stated that the aspects that require development at Easybank are quite clear and unanimous. Even though about five significant problem aspects were recognized, it is good that the interviewees repeated and agreed with similar problems. This makes the results more trustworthy and it is possible to pinpoint and develop these problem areas. It is also worth mentioning that also positive aspects at Easybank are quite unanimous and agreed upon which makes it easier to develop employer brand and employer branding processes as there is clear positive research results on which Easybank exceeds and what the organization should highlight in their strategy.

When asked about coaching and training, the employees said that they would prefer more coaching and training from their supervisor than what they got at the time being. It was also notable that the employees pointed out that they don't think that their supervisor would not want to or could not coach them, but mainly the problem was that they were too busy to do that. The employees did not criticize their supervisors but rather sympathized with their current great workload.

The question about introduction when starting at the company or when changing tasks was more of a mix of answers. This depended on the time when the people had started to the company and in what team they worked in. About half felt that they got enough introduction. 27% thought they did not get enough introduction and 18 percent said that they felt like they had to learn a lot themselves. A couple of supervisors hoped help from the HR department in onboarding processes: clear instructions and onboarding in general matters such as communication channels and office customs. This would help the supervisor to focus more on the onboarding regarding the actual work. Supervisors thought that they don't have enough resources to give the best onboarding and guidance they would have wanted.

When talked about communication and how it succeeds at Easybank, even though already established as a development point, 70 % thought that it does not succeed well. Many added that it succeeds within their own team but not at the company level. Reasons, why there are problems with communication, are: remote teams in different countries and the communication does not stay in sync with the company's rapid growth.

The value question about job satisfaction and well-being showed that the people working at Easybank value job satisfaction and well-being more than more money, which means that employees share similar values and the organization should invest in this more.

6.1.4 Additions from the employees

The additions were a possibility for the employees to point out something that might have left unsaid earlier, or if they wanted to add something special. The ideas drawn from the additions mirrored, from the researcher's point of view, a good in-depth view from engaged employees who care about the company. One of the worries was that the company had lost too many good people recently and there were hopes to communicate this onwards to HR that something should be done about this. The employees also thought that there could be a need for bigger HR department since the company has grown so much. The consistency with HR projects was mentioned not to be good and also the pace of recruitments was not aligned with the need. The employees understand that when there is a very small team, it is harder to be effective.

The employees also mentioned that they would like to see more employer branding activities from Easybank. They said that Easybank is a good employer and the organization should market that more. The communication issue arose in this part also, but there were no new development ideas added. It was also mentioned that the staff survey is not good, as you can easily recognize who has given the answers, so it is not confidential. It also received some critic that the problem areas are not followed up and nothing has been done based on the results. The researcher hopes that this thesis can address this issue better.

6.1.5 Considerable deviations amongst the teams within the interviews

The Customer success team seemed to be, in the light of research, the most stressed, over-worked and unhappy team. They seemed to be lacking resources which was the main reason for the "below average" answers highlighted throughout the whole survey by this team.

Otherwise, the teams were quite unanimous about the development points, problems, positive factors and other teams. It is important to compare similar answers throughout

teams since sometimes certain problems only surface in some teams. In some teams, the supervisor can also be a problem, but in light of the research, the problems do not focus on certain people, but the problems are due to fast growth that lead to recruitment problems, communication issues and isolated teams that do not collaborate well together.

6.2 Development plan

A visual development plan for Easybank can be found in Appendix 3. The development plan consists of suggestions on how could Easybank improve their job satisfaction and well-being and hence create a base for employer branding. Also, suggested methods and steps for the aspects that needed improvement and suggested steps for employer branding are portrayed. The visual plan also showcases what aspects Easybank should take into consideration and the level of urgency. The following is a written summary of the development plan.

Suggestions for Easybank: Aspects that need to be considered regarding EB, Job satisfaction and well-being.

1. More resources: effective recruiting and listening the employees
2. Communication
3. Organizational clarity
4. Better structure and better processes
5. Feedback and coaching/training
6. Creating an employer brand and employer branding strategy

Suggested methods and steps for the improvement needed aspects regarding EB, Job satisfaction and well-being – urgency level 1.

The following steps should be considered urgent. By treating these issues promptly, it is possible to reach a higher level of well-being and job satisfaction which will, in turn also affect on the internal employer branding.

1. More resources
 - a. Effective recruiting and listening to the employees, hopefully when employer branding and employer brand is developed the recruiting process will be faster and people will want to work at Easybank.

- b. Consider a bigger HR team. A bigger team should be more efficient to handle recruiting, developing EB and taking care of well-being and job satisfaction matters. For example, an HR-Assistant or coordinator could release the HR manager to the most important tasks.
 - i. Having more resources is vital for the organization's future: it could grow in the anticipated pace, people will feel better and there will likely be fewer sick leaves and less turnover.
2. Communication
- a. Develop on the company level. Evaluate the channels used now and surveying what channels work the best. Consider new methods and changing channels
 - b. Communication plan for distant/virtual teams.
3. Organizational clarity
- a. Review organization and teams. Are the teams divided in the best possible way?
 - b. Review short-term and long-term goals – are they clear to everyone and are the goals clear to everyone.
4. Better structure and better processes
- a. Review the process, for example, starting a project. Is there a clear structure of how a project is carried out?
 - b. Does Easybank have a project plan template or guidelines? If not, create them.
 - c. Is there enough time to plan the projects?
 - d. Do all the teams have the same kind of rules and knowledge about projects?
 - e. HR should review onboarding process and see if there are brochures or other information that requires updating. How HR could help more in onboarding to release supervisors to focus on the actual work onboarding.
5. Feedback and coaching / training
- a. In the next meeting with team leaders / supervisors, highlight the importance of the feedback. The supervisor should try to give more feedback to their team.
 - b. Evaluate why the team leaders / supervisors are too busy to coach and give feedback. Is this a problem of resources, bad structure or bad processes?

- c. Create a Easybank career development plan and execute it with the employees. Easybank is a big company with a lot of opportunities to grow. Take advantage of the possibilities. With a clear career development plan you will see where the employee is growing and if you can train him/her to be the best possible employee at Easybank. When there is a career path planned for the individual, the employee will be more engaged in the company.
 - d. Having a career development plans established in the organization, this can positively affect the employer branding.
6. Creating an employer brand and employer branding strategy
- a. See the next section “Suggested steps for employer branding”.

Suggested steps for employer branding – urgency level 2

In the light of the interview results, it was noted that Easybank has many great qualities as an employer. The good qualities that the employees appreciate should be emphasized in the employer branding strategy. Easybank should include employer branding in their strategy since many studies already presented in this thesis agree on the various positive effects of the employer branding for the organization. In this chapter suggestions of the measures needed to develop the employer branding process and the employer brand are presented. It is recommended that the main issues portrayed above are considered, solved and managed before starting the employer branding process at full. As highlighted before, Easybank should also focus on retaining the existing talents in the company alongside with recruiting new employees.

1. Include employer branding into the organization’s strategy.
2. Establish a team that will be mainly responsible for the employer branding project. preferably from employees from different teams to gain insight and wide perspectives.
3. Make sure that the team has enough resources and support to succeed in the mission, in other words, make sure they have time to engage in the project.
 - a. It is essential that the people have resources to fully participate in this project. As said, it should be part of the organization’s strategy: there is a budget for this task and deadlines. In the past there were attempts to form employer branding team, but the meetings got canceled and the resources for this team to work efficiently were not existing.

4. The next step would be to study, what aspects are valued in the field of business they are in. The framework for this has been given as the form of this study and the team should consider the aspects discovered in this research. These aspects should be utilized in forming the employer brand and be used as a base of forming it rather than creating the strategy with no real foundation. Additional studies can be carried out, like surveys inside the company or among recruits. The themes that this thesis suggests the client organization to emphasize are:
 - a. People at Easybank.
 - b. Organization culture is open and friendly, and it has a low level of hierarchy.
 - c. The trust between the employer and employees.
 - d. Easybank is a flexible employer and at Easybank the employee will have flexible working opportunities (remote work, flexible working hours).
 - e. Multicultural (this is a very important aspect when trying to tempt employees with foreign backgrounds and people that do not necessarily speak Finnish but are experts in their field – company language as English should be highlighted).
 - f. Energetic and great place to work.
 - g. From the organization's values Easybank should highlight Humane, Genuine and Fanatic quality.
5. The team should gather and analyze the positive aspects and what is valued and choose what to highlight in the strategy.
6. Present and launch the strategy for the whole organization. If the employer branding has been designed on the bases of their opinions and ideas, the employees should agree with the strategy.
 - a. Encourage employees to talk about the EB aspects that are highlighted in the strategy.
 - b. Create an elevator speech that the employee can talk about the relevant events where there are possible future employees.
 - c. Hear feedback on the strategy. It can only succeed if the employees agree with it.
7. Include the employer branding message everywhere.
 - a. Easybank Career pages. Create a page where not only the open positions are portrayed but the recruit will get a feeling of the team or the job. This

- could also be a blog. At this time Easybank pages are aimed for the customers and stakeholders, not much to possible future employees.
- b. Easybank social media. Highlight employer brand on Instagram and possible other channels. Now active campaigns remotely connected to employer branding are #meetEasybank posts, but the organization should promote all the positive aspects that have surfaced in this thesis such as new office, great culture and community. Develop a suitable strategy for all channels. What works on Instagram might not work on LinkedIn.
 - c. Open position. Include Easybank Eb message in these ads.
8. Follow up on how the strategy is perceived and measure the results. Review and alter if necessary.

6.3 Follow-up and considerations

After Easybank has implemented the suggested changes in this research, it is recommended that exactly similar survey than in previous years (2018-) would be held. This way it could be possible to see if the taken actions have affected positively in the well-being and job satisfaction. Also, this can be seen from the employee turnover rate – if it will slow down with respect to the precentral number of employees employed.

Regards measuring employer branding, it is a harder task. It can be suggested to compare the turnover figures on yearly basis. This should be measured only within the employees who resign themselves. Also, it could be measured by comparing how many actual beneficial job applications will be received for the open positions. As mentioned before, one of the big issues was, that not enough desirable candidates were attracted in years 2017-2019 to open positions and recruiting processes took a long time, and eventually, the HR-manager needed to do more headhunting in order to achieve desirable candidates to fill the open positions. This meant that the recruiting processes took a long time and also required much effort from the HR-department.

The Development Plan is targeted to the Easybank main Office in Finland since no interviews were conducted with the personnel living for example in Germany. This has to be kept in mind, since as mentioned before, the benefits that the employees consider important, can vary depending on the country the employee lives in.

7 CONCLUSIONS

The research title introduces a question about the possible connection between the well-being of the employees and job satisfaction and the employer brand and employer branding. Employer branding and employer brand can draw a great amount of information from the aforementioned aspects as well as these aspects can and should be utilized in employer branding. By investing in well-being and job satisfaction, the employees of the organization will be more engaged, more prone to recommend talents to the open positions and the employees will be more productive. A genuine employer brand begins within the company rather than artificially created messages that have been introduced to the employees by the company.

Concerning employer branding, the literature review set a good foundation for the development plan. The problem in reflecting the earlier studies about employer branding to the thesis' findings was that there was studied to be no significant existing employer branding and employer brand at the case company. However, it was often expressed that it would be useful for the organization to develop its employer brand and create an employer branding strategy. The topic is considered very important in the organization and the employees also recognize the importance of it. There were no significant conflicts between the findings and the theory. The theory framework supported the findings and based on that, the suggestions for the development plan are believed to be useful for the company and it could make a significant difference and positive change in the client organization.

The earlier studies concerning well-being and job satisfaction and the connection to employer branding seemed to be consistent with the findings of the research: By focusing on the job satisfaction and well-being and improving the recognized problem aspects the internal employer branding would develop to the better. This would also have a positive effect on the employee turnover rate and having more productive employees. Employees would also be more likely to communicate Easybank's employer brand outside the company and attract more people to the company. It should be kept in mind that for this to be realized, the strategy that will be developed should be accurate but also appealing for the potential recruits (Alniacik et al., 2014).

Easybank's organizational culture was found to be viewed positively by the employees, and it had a low level of hierarchy. This provides a productive base for developing

employee well-being. Researchers agree that organizational culture has a major impact on employee behavior and it is vital for the company to create an organizational culture that provides a conducive environment where people are in control of what they do: this way the employees will perform better. Easybank has no reported issues with the employee performing rates which could imply that the culture is positive and a lot of aspects can be drawn from it regarding the employer branding. Easybank should focus on highlighting its culture which can lead to it being more attractive and appealing to potential job seekers (Neeti & Sharma 2014). Earlier studies agreed, that creating a strong employer brand can also help shaping the organizational culture positively. This will then, in turn, affect directly on increasing job satisfaction (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004; Tanwar & Prasad 2016, 854).

The resource-based theory was used in the thesis to illuminate the study. The theory was introduced to support the assumption that with exceptional employer brand the organization can gain competitive advantage, as resource-based theory is founded on the idea that the organization's unique resources and capabilities can offer better performance and competitive advantage. To utilize this theory in practice the earlier suggested measures should be executed in the organization. Easybank has the potential to achieve unique resources through employer branding as the employees were highly engaged to the company and great ideas and suggestions for employer branding strategy were introduced in the interviews.

Easybank should invest and focus first on the well-being and job satisfaction of the existing employees so employee turnover rates would not increase. The companies that invest in employee well-being and job satisfaction are considered as best employers. After that, it is possible to start creating an employer branding strategy and consider if the employer branding could support achieving competitive advantage. The researcher highlights that employer branding and strong employer brand will have a significant role in the future when the competition in the employee markets will increase and organizations will look for competitive advantage through human resources. The ones with the strongest employer brand will most likely attract the best talents and achieve a superior amount on professionals in the business and hence, gain competitive advantage (Brönmark Riex & Karlsson 2014).

It can be concluded that the aforementioned aspects, job satisfaction, well-being at work and organizational culture hold strong importance in employer branding and employer brand. The aspects should be considered as an entirety that draws from one another

and are interdependent. It is suggested that when creating an employer branding strategy, the process should always start within the company and any outsourced and purely promotional campaigns will usually lead to less successful outcomes. This kind of campaigns may steer attention towards the company, but will most likely not lead to sustainable results as the people within the company might not agree with the message. Also, possible recruits might soon notice that the message portrayed was false. When all the aspects are treated with care and the attention they deserve, and the employer branding process is started within the company, it will most likely lead to employees being a unique resource that will lead to competitive advantage for the organization.

7.1 Answering research questions

The research aimed to answer the three research questions and it should be clarified if the research succeeded in answering the questions. Also, the thesis hypothesis and its accuracy should be examined.

The first research question “What is the current status of Easybank’s employer brand?”

The findings chapter explains quite informatively, that Easybank’s employer brand was at the time of the interviews quite non-existent. Most of the interviewees clearly stated that Easybank does not have an employer brand or they did not know anything about it. The problem was recognized throughout the employees and many noted that Easybank should emphasize this matter and take it into consideration when planning future strategies.

The second research question “How should Easybank improve their employer brand through job satisfaction and well-being?”

According to the literature review, well-being and job satisfaction have a connection to employer branding: High job satisfaction affects employee retention and the turnover rates stay low, satisfied employees are more productive and they perform better. All in all, if the organization invests in employer branding more employee retention will be sustained in the organization. Also, employer branding affects positively job satisfaction (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2440; Tanwar & Prasad, 2016; Vasantha 2018; Oliveira et al. 2019).

In this light, Easybank should focus on the often recognized pain points in the job satisfaction and well-being areas: Communication, clear structures and better recruiting, or better-structured HR department. These all are fields that can, by including them in the organization's strategy, be improved and hence this can lead to strengthening the employer brand.

The third research question “What Methods are needed to Improve Easybank’s Employer brand concerning Well-being and Job satisfaction?”

One of the most important benefits that occur from employer branding and employer brand are better recruitment possibilities, small employee turnover rate and better commitment of the existing and current employees (Barrow & Mosley 2005, 69). While Easybank does not have significant problems with employee engagement, the need for quick and high-quality recruitments is substantive as well as the negative aspect of losing the talents to other organizations.

It can be argued that as Easybank does not yet have a remarkable employer brand or employer branding strategy, the improving methods are not the question here rather than developing an employer brand and employer branding strategy. Taking this into account it is advised that Easybank should create a clear strategy to develop the employer brand. This should be assigned as a task to a certain team and make sure that the team would have resources to develop the employer branding strategy. In the development plan it has been summarized as following:

1. Include employer branding into the organization's strategy
2. Establish a team who will be mainly responsible in the employer branding
3. Make sure that the team has enough resources and support to succeed in the mission, in other words, make sure they have time to engage in the project.
4. Study what aspects are valued in the field of business they are in. The framework for this has been given as the form of this study. Additional studies can be carried out, like surveys inside the company or among recruits. The themes that this thesis suggests the client organization to emphasize are:
 - a. The team should gather and analyze the positive aspects and what is valued and choose what to highlight in the strategy.
 - b. Present and launch the strategy for the whole company. If the employer branding has been designed on the bases of their opinions and ideas, the employees should agree with the strategy.

- c. Include the employer branding message everywhere.
- d. Follow up on how the strategy is perceived. Review and alter if necessary.

Hypothesis

The hypothesis at the beginning of the study was, that positive organizational culture and high level of well-being and job satisfaction affect on each other which can lead to a better employer brand. This would, in turn, lead to employer brand becoming a unique resource for the organization and hence gaining competitive advantage.

In the light of all the literature, the hypothesis seems quite accurate, but it cannot be proven with the qualitative study of this thesis. In the future, when the development plan has been introduced, it is possible to measure if this hypothesis is true in the case organization's situation. However, the literature review strongly supports this hypothesis and as noted in the interviews, the people seemed to be one of the best aspects of working at Easybank, and the organizational culture was approved and highlighted as a positive aspect in the answers. This indicates that well-being and job satisfaction are in connection with good organization culture and that the aspects affect each other reciprocally in the case company. The rest of the hypothesis might be possible to prove when the development plan has been taken into use and the effects of it can be studied.

7.2 Limitations of the study

There are some limitations to this study that should be considered while reading. First, the study was a case study and it was conducted to a particular company. This means that the findings might not be as valid in an organization that works in a different branch of business.

Second, the theoretical knowledge concerning this topic is extensive and different point of views can be emphasized, which could lead to different conclusions, for example, organizational culture was acknowledged in this study but it was not the main focus of this study.

7.3 Suggestions for future research

As the thesis was a case study, it would be important to broaden the studies regarding the connection between job satisfaction and well-being in relation to the employer brand and employer branding. What is the value that these aspects can add to organization's employer brand and employer branding? Is it also possible to make the employees more loyal to the organization by increasing the efforts invested in well-being and job satisfaction? Ideally, a scale could be created where the strongness or weakness of the employer brand could be measured. When the scale would be ready, it would be easier to see, which organizations have a stronger employer brand than the others, and if continuous efforts in developing the employer brand will lift the organization in the employer branding scale. Creating this kind of scale, a new kind of framework should be created and that would need a significant amount of research and various studies.

Also, a matter of resource-based theory, competitive advantage, and employer branding could be studied more. In this thesis, the fundamentals were presented but there is a possibility to continue the research in this aspect.

For future research, it could be useful to narrow the topic quite much: employer brand and employer branding are very interesting topics to study, and there will be more and more studies and information about the matter. Future research must focus on a particular theme in order to produce new information.

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APPENDIX 1 - INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Customer success

The start of the interview – background information

Q1: In what department you work at Easybank (*Open question*)

Q2: How long have you worked at Easybank (*Open question*)

Questions about Employer branding

Q3: What is the best aspect considering working at Easybank (*Open question*)

Q4: Are there aspects that would make Easybank a better workplace (*Open question*)

Q5: Let's imagine that there is a job opening at Easybank and your friend asks if she/he should apply. What would you say? (*Open question*) → (Why?)

Q6: Would you recommend Easybank as a workplace publicly? (*Open question*) (Why)

Q7: If you think about Easybank's employer brand, what words / adjectives come into your mind? (name at least three things) (*Open question*) Why did you choose these? (*Open question*)

Q8: Did you know anything about Easybank before you started to work here? (open question)

Q9: How would you describe Easybank's organisation culture? (*Open question*) Why?

Q10: Easybank's values are said to be collaboration, to make everyone's voice heard, respect and humane and genuine ways of working. Have you heard about these values, do you agree with the values and in your opinion, do you see these values come true in every day work? (*Open question*) How?

Q11: Are you aware of the company's visions, goals and strategies? (if no why not) (*Open question*)

Q12: Describe Easybank in your own words as a workplace. (*Open question*)

Q13: Imagine given free hands of changing things at Easybank. You could change three things. What would these changes be?

Questions about well-being at work

Q14: How stressful is your current work-situation? (*Open question*) → Why do you think it is so high / low

Q15: Would you consider the stress-level same at your whole department? (*Open question*)

Q16A: Do you know what is expected of you at work and do you get enough feedback? (if not, how employer could make that better) (*Open question*)

Q16B: Would you say that you like your work and feel appreciated at work? (open question) (yes-> how its shows, no-> why?)

Q17A: In your opinion, do you have an open discussion at work, for example if there is a problem or a crisis? (*Open question*) (Why, Examples)

Q17B: Do you feel all the opinions and ideas are treated as equal in your work community? (open question)

Q18A: How you would describe the collaboration and team spirit at Easybank? (*Open question*)

Q18B: Can you influence on your work? (Open Question) (no -> why, yes-> Can you discuss your work with your team or supervisor and implement changes?)

Q19: How do you feel at work after workday? (energetic, exhausted, happy, sad, depressed?) What causes that in your opinion? (*Open question*) How that could improve (*Open question*)

Q20: Are you satisfied with the working environment (For example Your work desk, noise, ergonomics?) (Open question)

Q21: In your opinion does Easybank encourage lead a healthy lifestyle or enables it? (*Open question*)

Q22A: In your opinion, do you do well at your position? (*Open question*) Can you give me an example when you did very well in you tasks (finishing big project, landing a new customer etc.)

Q22B: Does your expertise match your position? (*Open question*) (If not, why and how it could be improved, How would you develop your position?)

Questions about job satisfaction

Q23: How you could be more content and happier with your job? (salary, free-time, communication, better tasks etc) (*Open question*)

Q24: What do you enjoy the most at work? (*Open question*)

Q25: What do you enjoy the least at work? (*Open question*)

Q26: Are you happy at your current position at Easybank? (yes, no -> what you would like to do) (*Open question*)

Q27: Do you have reasonable workload? (If no, why? (*Open question*))

Q28: Could your supervisor enable you to work better? How?

Q29: Do you feel valued and appreciated at Easybank? (If no, Why?)

Q30: If you wanted, could you continue to develop yourself at Easybank (Continue your career path at Easybank)? (*Open question*) (if no, WHY?)

Q31: Do you consider Easybank as a secure workplace? (if no Why not?)

Q32: When you came to Easybank or your assignments changed, did you get enough introduction and guidance to your assignments?

Q33: In your opinion, how communication succeeds at Easybank? (between management, teams etc)

Q34: Are you actively looking for other positions / vacancies outside Easybank? (if yes → WHY) (*Open question*)

Q35: Do you think that job-satisfaction and well-being at work are very important for you when considering a work-place, or are there other aspects you value more (salary, free-time)? (*Open question*)

Q36: Do you want to add something / final words? (*Open question*)

Software (Old Finfra and Product)

The start of the interview – background information

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Q2: How long have you worked at Easybank (*Open question*)

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Q3: What is the best aspect considering working at Easybank (*Open question*)

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Q21: In your opinion does Easybank encourage lead a healthy lifestyle or enables it? (*Open question*)

Q22: In your opinion, do you do well at your position? (*Open question*) Can you give me an example when you did very well in you tasks (finishing big project, landing a new customer etc.)

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Q23: How you could be more content and happier with your job? (salary, free-time, communication, better tasks etc) (*Open question*)

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Q33: In your opinion, how communication succeeds at Easybank? (between management, teams etc)

Q34: Are you actively looking for other positions / vacancies outside Easybank? (if yes → WHY) (*Open question*)

Q35: Do you think that job-satisfaction and well-being at work are very important for you when considering a work-place, or are there other aspects you value more (salary, free-time)? (*Open question*)

Q36: Do you want to add something / final words? (*Open question*)

IT-ops

The start of the interview – background information

Q1: In what department you work at Easybank (*Open question*)

Q2: How long have you worked at Easybank (*Open question*)

Questions about Employer branding

Q3: What is the best aspect considering working at Easybank (*Open question*)

Q4: Are there aspects that would make Easybank a better workplace (*Open question*)

Q5: Let's imagine that there is a job opening at Easybank and your friend asks if she/he should apply. What would you say? (*Open question*) → (Why?)

Q6: Would you recommend Easybank as a workplace publicly? (*Open question*) (Why)

Q7: If you think about Easybank's employer brand, what words / adjectives come into your mind? (name at least three things) (*Open question*) Why did you choose these? (*Open question*)

Q8: Did you know anything about Easybank before you started to work here? (open question)

Q9: How would you describe Easybank's organisation culture? (*Open question*) Why?

Q10: Easybank's values are said to be collaboration, to make everyone's voice heard, respect and humane and genuine ways of working. Have you heard about these values, do you agree with the values and in your opinion, do you see these values come true in every day work? (*Open question*) How?

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Q13: Imagine given free hands of changing things at Easybank. You could change three things. What would these changes be?

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Q16B: Would you say that you like your work and feel appreciated at work? (no-> why, yes-> how)

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Q17B: Do you feel all the opinions and ideas are treated as equal in your work community? (Open question) (no-> why not, examples)

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Q18B: Can you influence your work? (Open Question) Can you discuss your work with your team or supervisor and implement changes?

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Q36: Do you want to add something / final words? (*Open question*)

Control

The start of the interview – background information

Q1: In What department You work at Easybank (*Open question*)

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Q13: Imagine given free hands of changing things at Easybank. You could change three things. What would these changes be? (*Open question*) -> why?

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Q36: Do you want to add something / final words? (*Open question*)

Marketing

The start of the interview – background information

Q1: In what department you work at Easybank (*Open question*)

Q2: How long have you worked at Easybank (*Open question*)

Questions about Employer branding

Q3: What is the best aspect considering working at Easybank (*Open question*)

Q4: Are there aspects that would make Easybank a better workplace (*Open question*)

Q5: Let's imagine that there is a job opening at Easybank and your friend asks if she/he should apply. What would you say? (*Open question*) → (Why?)

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Questions about well-being at work

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Q16A: Do you know what is expected of you at work and do you get enough feedback? (if not, how employer could make that better) (*Open question*)

Q16B: Would you say that you like your work and you are good at your work? (open question)

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Q17B: How you would describe the collaboration and team spirit at Easybank? (*Open question*)

Q18a: Does everyone take responsibility in your team / in the whole working community? (Open question)?

Q18b: Can you influence your work? (Open Question) Can you discuss your work with your team or supervisor and implement changes or develop new practices? (no -> why not, yes-> how? (open question)

Q19: How do you feel at work after workday? (energetic, exhausted, happy, sad, depressed?) What causes that in your opinion? (*Open question*) How that could improve (*Open question*)

Q20: Are you satisfied with the working environment (For example Your work desk, noise, ergonomics?) (Open question)

Q21: In your opinion does Easybank encourage lead a healthy lifestyle or enables it? (*Open question*)

Q22A: In your opinion, do you do well at your position? (*Open question*) Can you give me an example when you did very well in you tasks (finishing big project, landing a new customer etc.)

Q22B: Does your expertise match your position? (Open question) (If not, why and how it could be improved, How would you develop your position?)

Questions about job satisfaction

Q23: How you could be more content and happier with your job? (salary, free-time, communication, better tasks etc) (*Open question*)

Q24: What do you enjoy the most at work? (*Open question*)

Q25: What do you enjoy the least at work? (*Open question*)

Q26: Are you happy at your current position at Easybank? (yes, no -> what you would like to do) (*Open question*)

Q27: Do you have reasonable workload? (If no, why? (*Open question*))

Q28: Could your supervisor enable you to work better? (Yes->How?) (open question)

Q29: Do you feel valued and appreciated at Easybank? (If no, Why?)

Q30: If you wanted, could you continue to develop yourself at Easybank (Continue your career path at Easybank)? (*Open question*) (if no, WHY?)

Q31: Do you consider Easybank as a secure workplace? (if no Why not?)

Q32: When you came to Easybank or your assignments changed, did you get enough introduction and guidance to your assignments?

Q33: In your opinion, how communication succeeds at Easybank? (between management, teams etc)

Q34: Are you actively looking for other positions / vacancies outside Easybank? (if yes → WHY) (*Open question*)

Q35: Do you think that job-satisfaction and well-being at work are very important for you when considering a work-place, or are there other aspects you value more (salary, free-time)? (*Open question*)

Q36: Do you want to add something / final words? (*Open question*)

APPENDIX 2 - INVITATION TO THE INTERVIEW

Lähettäjä: Setälä Tiina

Lähetetty: keskiviikko 5. syyskuuta 2018 18.54

Aihe: INVITATION TO INTERVIEW

Dear recipient,

You have been selected to participate in an interview process considering Easybank's employer brand. The interview is part of a research that studies how the job satisfaction and well-being of the employees influence on Easybank's internal employer brand.

This interview will be a part of my thesis that I will conduct as a part of my Master of Business and administration -studies at Turku University of applied sciences. The purpose of these interviews is to understand how The Easybank people are thinking and feeling about their Employer, but the focus is on the job satisfaction and well-being of the employees.

All the data collected will be treated with high confidentiality and cannot be identified to a certain person. The interview will be conducted in English, but Finnish is also an option if the interviewee prefers Finnish as an interview language. The interview will be recorded and then transcribed. Only parts of the transcribed interview will be provided to the employer and cannot be linked to a certain person.

If you wish not to participate, please contact me. The interview will take approximately one hour of your time.

I will be at Easybank accordingly:

6.9., times 10.30-14 "Candy" and 14-17 "Tea" (max. 5 persons this day)

7.9., times 10-17 "Candy" (max. 5 persons this day)

Another date will be confirmed later.

Please contact me with suitable times. I know some of you are not in Finland and we will arrange web-meeting, but please contact me with times that will suit you.

Looking forward to the interview!

Best Regards

Tiina Setälä

e-mail: tiina.setala@edu.turkuamk.fi

phone: XXX XXX XXXX

APPENDIX 3 - DEVELOPMENT PLAN (CONFIDENTIAL)

