



Developing International Services

Case: Tampere Chamber of Commerce

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis was conducted as a case study for Tampere Chamber of Commerce. Tampere Chamber of Commerce is one of the leading business organizations in the Tampere region. The case study aimed to develop international services of Tampere Chamber of Commerce to offer better services for the internationals living in the Tampere region.

The study was carried out by completing various interviews that included local international talents, representatives from the city of Tampere and Tampere Chamber of Commerce as well as a business executive. The interview questions were qualitative and included follow-up questions depending on the answers. The interview aimed to gain an image of the services internationals receive in Tampere region and to answer to the question of what could be done differently. The theoretical section was implemented by using secondary data that was collected from various databases, business publications, and pieces of literature review existing, factual data to support the discussed topics.

The findings indicate that the Tampere Chamber of Commerce should start steering towards more international events. Free to attend events in English targeted to internationals in the area should be on demand. Paid trainings at this moment should be kept the same but preparation for them to become more international should be considered.

Key words: event, training, internationalization, chamber of commerce, pirkanmaa

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1 INTRODUCTION

Since being established 1918 Tampere Chamber of Commerce has been one of the leading factors of developing the city of Tampere. It has over 2000 companies and members from the private sector to represent. The goal of Tampere Chamber of Commerce is to further and promote the overall business interests of the community, provide networking opportunities, create a strong local economy and to promote Tampere as a city and as a region. (Tampere Chamber of Commerce)

The ways to help community today is very different compared to the past. Helping the local companies and businesses and developing the economy are crucial acts to help the city to grow and maintain its place. Events and trainings as well as assistance on foreign trade documents such as ATA Carnet and Certificate of Origin are just couple examples of how Tampere Chamber of Commerce helps local businesses. The majority of customers who apply the applications for foreign trade documents are Finnish, but there are few internationals as well as the application process has been made very easy. (Keskinen 2020.)

Most of the trainings and events offered by Tampere Chamber of Commerce cost, but there are free of charge events as well. The majority of these events are in Finnish, but in some occasions, there can be an English-speaking presenting. Tampere Chamber of Commerce plans to internationalize its services including the events and trainings. At this moment only a handful of events include English speaking attendants. (Keskinen 2020.)

According to the strategy of the city of Tampere, it aims to become more international and has numerous projects planned moving forward. Tampere Chamber of Commerce is part of some these projects for example International Talent Hub. The goal of the project is to encourage local companies to hire more foreign employees and help companies to evolve to more international. Tampere Chamber of Commerce is known for its actions. The lack of international services has not necessarily affected the present. Offering international services could be the key to attract more international skilled workers to come to Finland and to develop the local businesses.

The boundaries between countries have faded. This has created more opportunities for people to make a career in a foreign country. This has made a positive impact to a city such as Tampere. Tampere is a growing country and a big part of the new residents have international background. This makes it necessary for the city to start offering more services for people in need. This also creates an opportunity for business organizations such as Tampere Chamber of Commerce to be there and offer help in various ways.

Tampere Chamber of Commerce has commissioned this thesis, with the purpose of researching the current need of international services for internationals within the region. Tampere Chamber of Commerce have stated to aim to become more international and hope to be able to offer better services for the internationals.

The research on international services is conducted through interviews, that will seek answers to these research questions: How Tampere Chamber of Commerce could offer a better information infrastructure for international talents within the region? How to optimize events and trainings to be more suitable for internationals?

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework discusses the overall concept of internationalization and the impact events have on it. It will offer explanation to the core terminology, key factors, issues and organizations that provide trainings.

2.1 Trainings and Events

Employees who are on the same page and well trained are more likely to stay positive and engaged towards their job. Training of the staff is a path towards more efficient work hours, loyal customer base and, naturally, better cash flow. The goal of trainings is often to secure the skill level and to create change starting from the company's core. The world changes as well as competitors in the business. Trainings should be continuous to create separation to the competitors. (Tenhunen 2016.)

Competence is a strategic power for companies. When employees can solve problems individually, the results can be seen in the production figures. It is an advantage for company as the learned skills are utilized concretely in work. A training for one employee improves company as a whole. (Santala 2017.)

Businesses in today's world need more different talents than before, and this demands employees to update and upgrade their skills continuously. This forces businesses as well to recognize the need for a new training and to react fast. In addition to help employees stay energetic the continuous learning keeps the job meaningful. Continuous learning is really important for employers as well to remain labour market potential in the future. (Huotari 2018.)

In the eyes of society, the lifelong process of learning is as important for them as it is for businesses. If the training duties are neglected, the skilled personnel of the company are at risk. The level of work is affected to the society's economy, which should encourage companies to hold on to wide variety of trainings to keep up the high level of talents. (Huotari 2018.)

According to McNamara, there are nine typical topics of employee training. These following topics are the majority of trainings offered globally: Communications, Computer Skills, Customer Service, Diversity, Ethics, Human Relations, Quality Initiatives, Safety and Sexual Harassment.

2.1.1 Availability of Trainings and Events

In addition to the Finland Chamber of Commerce, there are 19 Chambers of Commerce throughout Finland. Each Chamber organizes events on topical issues in their own regions. (Keskuskauppakamari 2020.)

Chambers do co-operate with each other by organizing events and trainings together. This often helps the planning process to be shaped as the customers wish. For instance, Ostrobothnia Chamber of Commerce offers some trainings in Swedish language because of the high demand in the area. If a customer in Tampere region asks for trainings in Swedish language, Tampere Chamber of Commerce helps to contact another Chamber of Commerce that has trainings in Swedish language. (Keskinen 2020.)

The Chambers of Commerce are not the only organizations offering trainings and events. For instance, Finnish Tax administration and Finnish Customs offer trainings and events. These agencies usually offer services of their specialities, for example the Finnish Tax Administration is specialized on taxation.

2.2 Trainings and Events offered by Tampere Chamber of Commerce

Throughout the years Tampere Chamber of Commerce has been offering trainings on many different topics. The topic selection is done by the Training Manager of Tampere Chamber of Commerce, Susanna Keskinen. In an interview that was held on Microsoft Teams, Keskinen mentions the themes of trainings to consist mainly of marketing, sales, human resource management, internationalization, communication, financial management and leadership. (Keskinen 2020.)

The themes for trainings are planned to reflect the current trends. The needs and desires of member companies as well as external participants are listened and taken account in the planning process. Feedback is gathered from every training and analysed closely. Member companies as well as external participants are given a training need survey regularly for closer analysis. (Keskinen 2020.)

During the pandemic Tampere Chamber of Commerce has kept the trainings going. At this time the trainings are organized in “hybrid-technic”, meaning that the attendees are given an opportunity to choose between participating at the given location or taking part online on a chosen communication platform from a location chosen themselves. Keskinen admits that organizing an event with an option to attend from multiple locations is challenging, as you need to take into account multiple factors starting from connections. In addition, not seeing your complete crowd can be challenging for the educator. (Keskinen 2020.)

Exhibit 1. Training calendar of Fall 2020

ELOKUU 2020	
Sosiaalisen median onnistumisen mittaaminen	19.8.
HHJ-kurssi alkaa (TÄYNNÄ)	19.8.
Webinaari: Kv-kaupan ja kuljetusten riskit koronakaudella	20.8.
Sisältömarkkinoinnin tehopäivä	27.8.
HHJ-puheenjohtajakurssi alkaa	27.8.
SYYSKUU 2020	
Kirjanpitäjän ajankohtaispäivä	3.9.
Webinaari: Yritystoiminta ilman toimistoa	8.9.
Yrityksen maine hallituksen ja ylimmän johdon agendalla	15.9.
HHJ-perheyrityskurssi alkaa (TÄYNNÄ)	21.9.
Webinaari: Remburssi maksuehtona ja myyjän työkaluna nyt ja tulevaisuudessa ...	22.9.
Videomarkkinoinnin työpaja	22.9.
HHJ-kurssi alkaa (TÄYNNÄ)	24.9.
LOKAKUU 2020	
Parempia kuvia puhelimella – valokuvauksen perustaidot	1.10.
Työnantajan keinot reagoida työn vähentymiseen	8.10.
Työsuhteen ehdot ja niiden muuttaminen ...	8.10.
Anna Perhon Antisäättäjä™-ajankäyttö-klinikka	9.10.
Pirkanmaan vientipäivä 2020	20.10.
HHJ-puheenjohtajakurssi alkaa	21.10.
Striimi: HR-vuosikello	22.10.
Webinaari: Videomarkkinoinnin työpaja	26.10.
Yrityskauppojen taktiikka ja tekniikka	27.10.
Hyvin suunniteltu budjetti	29.10.
MARRASKUU 2020	
HHJ hallitus ja talous	3.11.
HHJ-kurssi alkaa	4.11.
Etätö ja verotus	5.11.
Tiedolla johtaminen	10.11.
Työaika- ja vuosilomalain muutokset palkkahallinnossa	12.11.
Osa-aikatyön erityistilanteet palkkahallinnossa	12.11.
Kauppakamarin veropäivä 2020	16.11.
Webinaari: Myynti kasvuun Facebook- ja Instagram-markkinoinnilla ja mainonnalla	23.11.
Striimi: Brexit-info yrityksille	24.11.
Suhdannevaihtelut ja taloudellisten riskien hallinta epävarmoina aikoina	24.11.
HHJ strategian toteuttaminen	25.11.
Ennakkoperintä 2021	30.11.
JOULUKUU 2020	
Osakeyhtiön tilinpäätös	3.12.
TAMMIKUU 2021	
Webinaari: Opi mittaamaan sosiaalisen median tulokset	18.1.

(Tampere Chamber of Commerce 2020)

Illustration 1 presents the complete training calendar of fall 2020 in chronological order. More trainings can be added along the way in case of demand on a certain topic.

Exhibit 2. Training calendar of Fall 2020 (only internationalization trainings)

KANSAIN- VÄLISTYMINEN

Webinaari:

Kansainvälisen kaupan ja kuljetusten riskit koronakaudella

To 20.8. klo 9–11

Asiantuntijoina asianajaja
Lauri Railas, Railas Oy, riskien-
hallintapäällikkö **Jan Virtavuori**,

Wärtsilä Oyj, liikenne- ja
elinkeinopolitiikan johtava
asiantuntija **Päivi Wood**,
Keskuskauppakamari sekä
maajohtaja **Timo Vuori**,
Kansainvälinen kauppakamari
*Huom. jäsenetuhinta 195€ (+alv),
hintaa 250€ (+alv)*

Webinaari: Remburssi maksuehtona ja myyjän työkaluna nyt ja tulevaisuudessa

Ti 22.9. klo 9–12

Asiantuntijana rahoituspäällikkö
Leila Heikkinen, OP Yritys-
pankki Oyj, Trade Finance
*Huom. jäsenetuhinta 240€ (+alv),
hintaa 340€ (+alv)*

Striimi: Pirkanmaan vientipäivä 2020

Ti 20.10.

Lisätietoja esitteen takasivulla

Striimi: Brexit-info yrityksille

Ti 24.11. klo 9–11.50

Asiantuntijoina tulliyli tarkastaja
Marjo Saastamoinen, Tulli,
Counsel **Kristiina Hirva**,
Asianajotoimisto DLA Piper
Finland Oy sekä johtaja
Marko Silen, veroasiantuntija
Mika Olli ja lakimies
Joanna Ahokanto, Helsingin
seudun kauppakamari
*Huom. jäsenetuhinta 320€ (+alv),
hintaa 420€ (+alv)*

(Tampere Chamber of Commerce 2020.)

Looking closer to the internationalization trainings, illustration 2 indicates that the fall 2020 training calendar includes four topics on internationalization. The risks of international trade and logistics during pandemic and letter of credit as a term of payment and as a tool for sales representative now and in the future were both webinars. The two others were presented as streams with topics of Brexit-info for companies and Pirkanmaan vientipäivä 2020, which is an event organized annually since 2017 that offers information on the current hot topics of the export market. It is one of the rare events that is partly in English, as some of the guest speakers present their parts in English.

In addition to the events shown in the training calendar, there were other events organized as well. Few of these events outside the training calendar were

organized in English. These events were Business Opportunities in Serbia, Romania and Hungary, FinEstLat (Finland, Estonia & Latvia) Industry Mingle, Stream Investor Pre-Event and internationalization lunch event offered topics of Strategies for US Markets and Immigration and Cross-Border HR. These events had attendants from of various nationalities. (Sjölund 2020.)

Events for networking are available as well. Tampere Chamber of Commerce has not offered networking events in a bigger scale during fall. Although, alumni of Hyväksytty Hallituksen Jäsen – chairperson course are offered with a seminar that is organized online. This seminar includes in addition to speakers an opportunity to network with others who have completed the course. Monthly Chamber of Commerce breakfast meetings that are networking events targeted for the member companies are being held at the moment of writing despite the covid restrictions.

2.2.1 Tampere Chamber of Commerce Strategy 2020-2022

The Strategy of Tampere Chamber of Commerce 2020-2022



(Tampere Chamber of Commerce 2020.)

Tampere Chamber of Commerce aims to update its strategy every three years. The goal is to offer wealthy, open and competitive Tampere region for its residents. To achieve this goal, one of the steps forward is to develop the trainings and to make the future networking opportunities more comprehensive. This current strategy is planned to remain until 2022. The strategy is monitored constantly, and it is updated in case there is a need for a change. (Keskinen 2020.)

Feedback is collected after every event and training. The information collected is used to analyse the organized event and to improve for the future events and trainings. The new strategy aims to take a step forward on breaking down the feedback for better customer results. To achieve more comprehensive networking opportunities the strategy is to increase the quantity of networking events and to improve the quality of individual events. (Tampere Chamber of Commerce 2020.)

2.3 Other Agencies Offering Trainings and Events

2.3.1 Team Finland

Team Finland is a network that provides businesses a chain of services ranging from advice services to funding. The tailor-made service packages offer companies an opportunity to take their internationalization to the next level. Internationalization services include analyzation of companies' internationalization potential in addition to advice services. (Team Finland)

Some of the training services are mentioned to be free of charge, while some are subject to a fee. Team Finland has a large number of network organizations including several Chambers of Commerce. (Team Finland)

Team Finland assembles services funded by government. The services are divided into different aggregates for example public relations and financing that are available for customers. (Team Finland)

2.3.2 Business Finland

Business Finland's mission is to encourage companies to find partners, experts and networks all over the globe. It helps businesses along their whole journey towards international market. Businesses need to analyse the target market and customers, logistics, marketing et cetera. Business Finland has over 100 experts in over 30 different countries who help businesses in topics related on different markets. (Business Finland)

Business Finland offers multiple events every week. During the pandemic most of the events are webinars and online meetings. The topics vary depending on the current trends. (Business Finland)

2.3.3 Finnish Customs

Finnish customs dispense advice on topics of their specialities such as importing, exporting and warehousing. The webinars are easily accessible but only available in Finnish. All previous webinars are recorded for later use. Trainings offered are also organized on topics specialized by Customs. (Tulli)

Tulli+ -customers are offered specialized co-operation with the Customs. Tulli+ -membership is a service that can be bought by an organization. Members receive priority management consultancy free of charge. Management consultancy offered is targeted for individual sectors to ensure the right information for the customers in need. (Tulli)

2.3.4 Center for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment

As part of the Team Finland -network Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment offers internationalization services such as

importing and exporting consultancy, financial advice and internationalization events for small and medium sized businesses.

The website of the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment presents events offered. There are events and trainings weekly on various topics. Since Covid-19, most of the events and trainings are online.

2.3.5 Finnish Tax Administration

Trainings and events that Finnish Tax Administration offers specializes on taxation. For instance, companies can receive information on taxation on different occasions. The online trainings are free of charge and audience can attend the trainings in real time or watch them later from a link found on the Tax Administrations website. (Vero)

2.4 Internationalization

Internationalization refers to the actions businesses follow when they intend to extend their businesses beyond their home country's borders. According to Schoorman internationalization can be also explained of being an ongoing, counterhegemonic educational process that only appears in an international context of knowledge and practice where societies are viewed as subsystems of a bigger, inclusive world. (Schoorman 2009, 5.)

There are many differences between international and domestic businesses. Every country has their own individual economic environment. Companies need to be able to operate in foreign environments to succeed in international markets. Other factors businesses need to notify in advance to making business are infrastructure and culture. Cultural differences affect the communication between the partners. Businesses must find a way to adapt to these mentioned factors to fit into the opposing country's environment. (Cavusgil, Knight & Riesenbergs 2017, 35-41.)

Internationalization is a process, meaning that it is an ongoing and continuing effort. Before the pandemic the world was more open than ever before. This borderless world, which emerged originally in the reports in the United Kingdom and Australia, has opened more opportunities as the geographical and physical borders are becoming increasingly blurred. This has eased communication over borders and opened opportunities in education. For instance, student exchanges have become relatively easy to do. On the business aspect, the value of international trade has increased and opened more possibilities for start-ups. (Knight 2015, 2-3.)

In an exporting country like Finland word international is very important and hot topic every year. New businesses that rise are often steering towards international market because of the high level of domestic competition. International trade is a term used to describe the action in which intangible goods and merchandise are sold from a country to another. International trade today is easier than it used to be centuries ago. European Union has opened doors to sell goods to other individuals who are members of European Union. Other major free trade areas include North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) and Asean Free Trade Area (AFTA). (EFTA)

Internationalization includes the hiring of international talents as well. It is easy for businesses to hire local people they know. However, the market of international talents offers a wide variation of people from different backgrounds and experience. Hiring of an international talent could be a better fit for the company with better qualifications than a local recruit.

The number of foreigners on the Finnish labour market is growing. The percentage of jobless foreigners in Finland is increasing as well. These statistics reflect more from the number of new refugees in Finland. Most job offers require Finnish skills. Intermediate language skills will not take job applicants too far. The international talents who manage to learn the Finnish language and climb over the communication barrier have a high chance of succeed in finding a job. (Haarmann 2016, 78-79.)

2.4.1 International HUB

Internationalization is stated on the strategy of the city of Tampere as they attempt to promote the attractive force. In addition, the city is applying to become the cultural capital of Europe in 2026. (Tampere)

International HUB Tampere is a part of the national Talent Boost – programme. It aims at making Finland an attractive country for international talents, facilitating employers in international recruitments and promoting the growth and internationalisation of the Finnish organisations through the diversity of their talents. Tampere Chamber of Commerce, the city of Tampere, Tampere University and Te-Office of Tampere region are the key organizations in the project. (Tampere)

The object of International HUB Tampere is to become a contact centre for companies and international experts by creating a service platform in Tampere region to support the companies in finding suitable talents and making international recruitments. (Tampere)

Study and Stay – programme aims to increase working life connections for international students and develop language and career services. The programme's objective is to offer a reason for the locally taught talents to rather stay in Tampere than move to elsewhere. (Taverne 2020.)

3 RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter discusses the research method. The qualitative research was conducted as interviews. The answers from interviews were edited to fit the purpose of this thesis, focusing on the different aspects of internationalizing the services of Tampere Chamber of Commerce.

3.1 Interview

The interviews are conducted online on Microsoft Teams. Tampere Chamber of Commerce offer suggestions for interviewees and they are contacted via email. The respondents are chosen from different backgrounds to gather as precise results as possible.

The invitation for interview is sent via email. Questions are not sent in advance for the interviewees. The invitation is sent from personal Tampere University of Applied Sciences and it includes basic information about the interviewer and short summary on the thesis itself. Every interviewee is aware of their position on the thesis. The international interviewees are interviewed first. The answers from these discussions with international talents are used to tailor the questions for the latter interviews.

Research is conducted as qualitative method. Every interviewee will be interviewed personally. As Tampere Chamber of Commerce aims to develop their international services, the attempt is to have local international talents to share their views of current situation of international talents. Qualitative research method was chosen because in a personal interview it is easier to connect with the interviewee and proper conversation offers possibilities for targeted questions.

As in the individual interviews the respondents receive questions from their past and the answers are followed with questions that are tailored depending on the original answers. These kinds of unique conversations are impossible to receive from a survey. In a face-to-face meeting respondent feels more important as an

individual in a research and it helps to understand the views and perceptions of the respondent. Honest answers are easier to collect as the respondents are in interaction with the interviewer the whole period. The body language of the interviewees gives the interviewer an opportunity to analyse the answers and to offer follow up questions if needed. (Wertz, Charmaz, McMullen, Josselson, Anderson & McSpadden 2011, 79-84)

3.2 Questions

The questions in interviews are tailored depending on the respondent. The international talents from Tampere region will be interviewed first. The answers from the interviews will be used for the following interviews for the representatives from the city of Tampere and Tampere Chamber of Commerce. The number of questions in a single interview can vary depending on the discussion with every individual. The duration of an interview will be approximately 30 minutes.

The foreign interviewees receive questions concerning their daily lives in Tampere and their relationship to Tampere Chamber of Commerce. Their thoughts on events organized in the Tampere region especially the events organized by Tampere Chamber of Commerce will be on pinpoint.

The questions for representatives from the city of Tampere and Tampere Chamber of Commerce will focus on the administrative side of the international services in both Tampere Chamber of Commerce and the City of Tampere.

3.3 Respondents

The respondents were chosen from different backgrounds and fields. International interviewees are in positions where they know plenty of other international talents in Tampere region as well as nationwide. International interviewees include Vân Lê, as business coordinator from Business Tampere, Christian Kutschke, Deputy President of JCI United and Enrique Montano, Immediate Past President of JCI United.

Mari Taverne, Director of Talent, Attraction and Migration will be answering questions regarding the administrative side of the research as the representative from the city of Tampere. The representatives from Tampere Chamber of Commerce will be the Training Manager Susanna Keskinen as well as Markus Sjölund, Director, International and Foreign Contacts. Julius Haarla, the managing director of Haarla was interviewed about the company's international policy.

4 CONCLUSIONS

This chapter includes the research results that were gathered from the interviews. The results will be analysed in the same chapter thoroughly and the commissioner will be able to optimize their services from the view of results. Interviews with international talents shared similar thoughts of the current issues in the international community.

Education was the reason for every international interviewee to come to Finland. Enrique Montano and Christian Kutschke originally came for university exchange but ended up working in Finland. The practicality of education in Tampere University of Applied Sciences attracted Vãn Lê to do her whole degree in Finland. Starting from an empty table was difficult for each one in different ways. (Lê, Kutschke, Montano 2020.)

Networking is harder for an international talent than it is for a local talent. Locals have a wide network of people in their home area since they have grown into their network. International people moving to a new city need to start from an empty table. Students expand their network while studying as they meet new people during their studies. This could open doors for internationals who would come study to Finland for the whole degree. Kutschke himself was part of a group that created International Students Club of Tampere University of Technology. The club helps members to connect with new people and enable students to become more familiar with international minded people in Tampere. (Kutschke 2020.)

Kutschke received help from the university and student union. This helped him to have a good start, but stronger social network would have helped in the beginning even more. Kutschke stated that if he knew all the networking opportunities he could have had, he would have used them more. He mentions JCI United as one of the better organizations to get to know other similar-minded people in the area of Tampere region. (Kutschke 2020.)

JCI United, which is an internationally oriented junior chamber based in Tampere region, that aims to offer its members opportunities for interesting and versatile learning experiences has given a great possibility to network with other

international-oriented people. JCI United has been a great platform to learn to know new people in the area of Tampere region for many of its members. (JCI United)

Enrique Montano said there were forums, and such offered for fresh new residents in the area of Tampere region, and if you were not able to attend, all the given information could have been found online. Various international social media groups especially on Facebook offered possibilities to contact local international residents directly. These groups offered answers for questions as well as opportunities to network with others in similar situation. Montano also states that it is not difficult for international to network with other internationals in the area. The bigger issue is creating contacts with the local Finnish talents. As well as Kutschke, Montano mentioned JCI United as a springboard for professional networking. (Montano 2020.)

For Lê the cultural change was very different compared to Kutschke and Montano. Despite being able to prepare for a big change, coming from Vietnam to Finland can be a shock at the beginning. When she moved to a new city, she did not know about the opportunities of networking in such a scale she knows now after living in Tampere for four years. She received help from the international staff of TAMK as well as from the large Vietnamese community in Finland. (Lê 2020.)

Kutschke and Lê both mentioned that they were not aware of the networking opportunities at the start of their journey in Finland. This seems to indicate a common issue around the new international talents moving to the area of Tampere region. The help that was received during the settling process came from the locals not attached to organizations, except the Universities.

On the other hand, the troubles Montano faced were bureaucratic, for instance getting an official ID card and finding housing. He had no problem finding information on networking opportunities and getting started, other than the issues mentioned earlier. The information found was collected again partly from unofficial sources, for instance social media. Facebook as an example has endless number of groups for internationals in different cities. These groups are

an excellent way for freshly moved people to connect with the more experienced resident in the certain area.

23% of the people who move to Finland have foreign background. This number includes the ones moving also inside Finland from another city to Tampere. The main reasons for moving are work, family and education. In the near future the city of Tampere plans to add more work-based immigration. (Taverne 2020.)

Finding reasons to stay in the city of Tampere and to continue the career path here is the key to success with foreign residents. The city of Tampere has a number of projects leading towards to this goal. In the beginning of 2021 International House Tampere will open its doors. It offers services for local international individual as well as businesses. International House aims to be one clear place where internationals can find help for issues faced for example issues related to work, education or family. For businesses, International House is a place where their freshly recruited international talent can find answers for questions the business cannot answer. Lê, Kutschke and Montano all agreed that a concrete international house would have helped them in the beginning of their time in Tampere. (Taverne 2020.)

For students Study and Stay – programme aims to enhance the chances of employment for international students after graduation. The process includes materials, info, coaching, mentoring and different courses that lead the student for better success. Christian Kutschke has been a mentor for a few internationals and has even helped a student to receive a job in Tampere. (Taverne 2020.)

Hidden Gems – programme is targeted to international employees in Tampere area. The programme aims to ensure that the spouses of international talents in the area become actors of their own success. It helps to build stronger social network, improve language skills and establish a social identity in Finland. (Taverne 2020.)

In October 2020 Platform 6 opened its doors and is a home for 50 start-ups and a natural meeting place for the start-up community. The help is not just an office

place, as Platform 6 additionally offers mentoring, funding and connection to strategic partners. Platform 6 was set up by the city of Tampere is expected to bring even more international success from Tampere in the future. Kutschke believes that start-ups have realized the benefits of hiring international people and believes that the start-up scene is a great door for international talents to find work. Taverne also states that development of start-up community in Tampere is very crucial towards more success within international workforce. (Taverne 2020.)

The acts done by the city of Tampere along with other organizations are steering towards the right direction to help internationals in the region. Programmes are taking into account the whole family and issues that come to the internationals. As nearly every fourth person moving in Tampere is international, it indicates that something has been done right to attract so many internationals to move to the city. This does not mean that the job would be done, as Taverne says. The number is expected to increase, and services should increase along with it. As an active business organization Tampere Chamber of Commerce has a chance and is expected to be part of the thriving force moving forward.

Being a good person with good manners is what Haarla is seeking from new employees when hiring. The personality is the main decision maker during the hiring process. Resumes of the applicants are obviously looked closely, but it all comes to the personality. Haarla is an international company that is located in several different countries and has local workers in each location. Haarla's office in Tampere includes internationals who all have background from Finland even before working for Haarla. In a normal scenario the hiring is targeted to local talents. The company tends to use its contacts to find familiar people to work for them. It reduces the risk of a "miss-hire". Haarla does see lot of potential in international talents as workers. Julius Haarla mentions the cultural differences to be declined in recent years in western countries. (Haarla 2020.)

Julius Haarla admires the bravery of international workers. He states that it tells a lot about person who is brave enough to move to another country for work. International worker can bring valuable new views on different topics and this way make an immediate impact on a certain company. Haarla says that positive and

open work environment is a doorway to common success within a company. Trust that works both ways is crucial when working with internationals. Haarla has made decision within the company to use only English language at workplace. “Forgetting” Finnish language is believed to be the key moving forward towards becoming even more international company. (Haarla 2020.)

Haarla’s decision of using English only is a brave move. It is a great way to indicate for future hires as well as customers that the company aims to be very international. If there was a better way of finding international talents and knowing them, it would encourage Haarla and other companies to consider hiring internationals.

Julius Haarla and Christian Kutschke were the only interviewees who have personal experience from the events and trainings offered by Tampere Chamber of Commerce. Kutschke has had good experiences from the trainings and possesses really good Finnish language skills that has given him the chance to take part on the trainings. Haarla has attended trainings but been also active with the committees of Tampere Chamber of Commerce. Both Kutschke and Haarla see potential in trainings and events that would be offered in English. Kutschke himself has had a chance on taking part on trainings because of his language skills, but that is very rare case for international talents in Tampere region. Haarla’s decision of having only English language in company just encourages Finnish natives to use English more also outside of the company. (Haarla & Kutschke 2020.)

Enrique Montano had some doubts on events that would be in English but encourages to follow the strategy of becoming more international. He believes that as the majority of customers are Finnish, the customer base that would need English language might not be big enough. (Montano 2020.)

Vân Lê has similar goals in Business Tampere what Tampere Chamber of Commerce has. She does not have personal experience from Tampere Chamber of Commerce but is very excited for the plans of the business organization. She hoped to get a chance to co-operate more herself between Business Tampere

and Tampere Chamber of Commerce to develop events and trainings to help future internationals who decide to come to Finland. (Lê 2020.)

Simple and clear topics on different trainings and events were told to be the best fit for internationals to attend to. According to Lê, internationals are quite lost at the beginning when moving to Finland. Trainings on the topics of current economic situation in the region as well as networking skills would be a great start for international talents to understand more on the local culture. Christian Kutschke had similar thoughts on the topic and mentioned training on skill development to be another great topic for new residents in the area. (Lê 2020.)

International talents who were interviewed shared a similar thought on the biggest challenge for the internationals, which was language. Finland is not as international as its neighbour countries like Sweden and Denmark. Using English is easy in daily life and it has shaped into the cultures of the countries mentioned above during the years. In Tampere the language has been the main problem for the internationals trying to network with locals in the area. Lê also mentioned that international talents need to work harder for jobs and the skills of the applicant must be clearly better to stand a chance when competing against Finnish applicants. As the main language used around the country is Finnish, nearly every worker is expected to speak the language. Kutschke stated that wider network for internationals would give higher chance of success. (Montano, Lê & Kutschke 2020.)

Kutschke says, that as the jobs that are generally available for internationals are really restricted, there should be a possibility for re-education. By offering an easy and convenient way to re-educate for workers, there would be more personnel supply for jobs that require precise skills. (Kutschke 2020.)

To conclude, it could be stated that there was overall interest expressed towards international events. This gives chance for internationals to develop themselves and help businesses with the training process with their fresh recruit. Language barrier between the local and international talents is visible. This creates a gap between two job applicants and gives an edge for the local familiar with the culture. In addition, it was commonly stated by international talents that creating

bonds with local residents is harder than with other internationals. It generates discomfort around the locals to change the spoken language during their daily lives, which then disrupts the networking process around the group.

The city of Tampere has followed their strategy of internationalizing the city well. The city wants to give its residents a clear reason to stay, and they have numerous plans that are giving more opportunities for international talents in the city and the plans also attract new internationals to come. This is necessary and should be advanced to next level, as at the moment of writing nearly every fourth person moving to Tampere has international background. The internationalization has affected also companies in the area and Haarla is a good example. At Haarla, the employees are encouraged to use only English at the workplace. This kind of internal internationalization prepares the international company for future and offers open arms for future international recruits to join the company.

5 DISCUSSION

In this chapter suggestions for the commissioner are presented. Evaluation on the whole research process is made along with a self-reflection.

5.1 Suggestion: Internationalizing Service Infrastructure

This thesis set out to discover ways to develop international services provided by Tampere Chamber of Commerce. In light of the results gained from interviews, new ways of attracting internationals in the region are offered.

5.1.1 Trainings and Events in English

It was stated that trainings in their current form have too much demand to be changed. It was discovered, that trainings with topics targeted to international talents in the area, should have more demand. For instance, topic on the economic situation in Tampere region, would give a clear picture for the fresh new residents about the hot trends in the area. This would prepare the talented workers for the local culture and ease the training process for the employer.

Another well-fitting topic would be on self-development. Some skills that are not as needed in another place, could be crucial in another. When transitioning from another working culture to another, it is needed for a newly recruited talent to understand the skills that are needed and learn them. In addition to the trainings itself, the events could include networking in a bigger picture. As well as giving an opportunity to network during the training itself, some bigger possibilities on networking in the region could be shared with the internationals.

5.1.2 Connect with Universities in Tampere to Enrich Networking

To help international talents in Tampere region the University of Tampere has mentoring programme that aims to help these talents to start their career in

Tampere. The talents are mentored by an individual and being introduced to the local work culture. Tampere Chamber of Commerce could encourage companies as a whole to connect with international talents in the area to introduce them to the work culture in the city as well as in their own company. Every company has their own culture and by sharing their own with others enriches both parties. By connecting talents with multiple different companies their professional network expands to a bigger size to what an individual mentor could not provide.

5.1.3 Development of International Image of Tampere Chamber of Commerce

The Finnish website of Tampere Chamber of Commerce has much more information than the English version. There should be more information given on the recent actions of Tampere Chamber of Commerce. Even though the events are mostly in Finnish, the event calendar should be easily available. An offer to become a member of Tampere Chamber of Commerce should be on display to attract internationals to join the organization. Every employee should be presented on the contacts page. This would help the customers to find the right person for their issue quickly and also offer information about the personnel in the organization.

Tampere Chamber of Commerce is active on social media and shares posts on the current topics in Tampere region as well as in the organization itself. It should be considered, if the social media would be steered towards more international image and offer the posts in English in addition to Finnish.

5.2 The Validity and Ethicality of the Research

Interviews that were conducted make the research valid. Interviews included seven different interviewees from different backgrounds, which is an amount that can be used to draw conclusions. All respondents were aware of the topic they were interviewed for and agreed to take part on the research. Interviews were conducted separately so respondents were not aware of the answers each one

shared. The conclusions written on this thesis are based on the interviews are correct and not misleading or biased.

5.3 Self-evaluation

When I started writing this thesis I had very little experience on writing an academic paper and doing a research-based study. The only experience received beforehand, was from few courses from the Tampere University of Applied Sciences.

The thesis process started during my practical training in Tampere Chamber of Commerce. I mentioned about my own interest of writing a thesis for the Chamber of Commerce and received interest from the other end. Coming with a topic was not the easiest, as the previous trainee had been working on one topic at the time. After a topic on the international services was decided I was excited for the thesis.

The majority of experience I had from Tampere Chamber of Commerce was from the international trade documents. When starting to work on the international services, I had to first try to understand the topic myself before feeling confident enough to start actually writing. Especially trainings and events were in interest of the commissioner, but I was given the liberty to use my own imagination during the process. I interviewed two employees of the commissioner and made couple panic calls, but on top of that the commissioner was relatively lightly involved in the process itself. Thinking back, I could have tried to use more the help the commissioner could have had on the topic.

The thesis instructor that was assigned for me was very helpful in terms of coaching and directing. I did not use his help outside of the meetings we scheduled, but I felt that he was available during the whole process. The instructor answered questions and directed towards the goal line while being extremely supportive.

During the research itself finding suitable material and sources was quite challenging. I tried to use books as much as possible but finding well-fitting literature for this certain topic was challenging. Finding online material was a bit easier. The topic had to be shredded into smaller parts to find suitable sources, but a good planning before the actual writing process made it a little easier.

The writing process was the one part that I was least excited about. Having not-so-good experiences previously on writing projects, affected the motivation especially in the beginning. After starting the process and understanding my own goals, the writing part was finished quite smoothly. The whole process took approximately three months after all.

Before I started the writing process friends of my told me to write something every day. Even just one word is a step closer to the finish line. That is something I found very valuable during the final days of writing the thesis. As I had started very early the process, I never faced a need of speeding up the writing. Writing everything that comes into mind and the afterwards edit the text to be clearer for the reader.

The main thing I learned from the process is that writing an academic paper is not as bad as it sounds. Learning to do interviews and having concrete experience as an interviewer, analysing the data received and finding credible material from various databases are something I have learned during the process and what I look happily back. Successful experience from my final thesis process has also taught me to understand myself during a process in which I work mostly with only myself. After this experience I see myself more prepared to write possible future academic texts.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Interviews with Vân Lê, Enrique Montano & Christian Kutschke

Vân Lê is a Business Coordinator of Business Tampere. She was interviewed on Microsoft Teams 30.9.2020.

Enrique Montano is a Startup Developer of Nordic Startup Ventures. He was interviewed on Microsoft Teams 1.10.2020.

Christian Kutschke is a Vice President Sales & Marketing of Cavitar. He was interviewed on Microsoft Teams 6.10.2020.

The interview questions were as follows:

1. What is your background and how was the settling process to Tampere?
2. Where do you see the internationalization of Tampere region to be standing at this moment and what are the challenges of it?
3. What kind of support network you received when you arrived in Tampere region?
4. What kind of networking opportunities you wish you would have received?
5. Are you familiar with events organized by Tampere Chamber of Commerce?
6. What events would you find being the most attractive?

Appendix 2. Interview with Julius Haarla

Julius Haarla is a Managing Director of Haarla. He was interviewed on phone 21.10.2020. The interview questions were as follows:

1. What are the challenges when hiring international talents?
2. What could be a motivating factor for companies to hire more international people?
3. What is your relationship with Tampere Chamber of Commerce?

Appendix 3. Interview with Mari Taverne

Mari Taverne is a Director of Talent, Attraction and Migration of the City of Tampere. She was interviewed on Microsoft Teams 21.10.2020. The interview questions were as follows:

1. What is the current standing of internationalization in the city of Tampere?
2. What is done to help new international talents to settle into the city?
3. How could the city of Tampere attract more international talents?
4. How is the relationship between the city of Tampere and Tampere Chamber of Commerce?
5. How can Tampere Chamber of Commerce help the City of Tampere to attract more international talents?
6. What are the challenges of internationalization in the city of Tampere?

Appendix 4. Interview with Susanna Keskinen

Susanna Keskinen is a Training Manager of Tampere Chamber of Commerce. She was interviewed on Microsoft Teams 22.10.2020. The interview questions were as follows:

1. Since when have you worked on the trainings and events?
2. Have you had events or trainings offered in another language than Finnish?
3. Could the events and trainings be transformed into another language than Finnish?

Appendix 5. Interview with Markus Sjölund

Markus Sjölund is a Director, International and Foreign Contacts of Tampere Chamber of Commerce. He was interviewed on a phone 22.10.2020. The interview questions were as follows:

1. What other international events and trainings were held in addition to the ones on the training calendar?
2. What is the number of foreign people that have attended these events?
3. Has there been requests for more international based events?