

## **Study of Online Marketing Communications and Orientation Practices in Finnish Foreign Missions**

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Bachelor's thesis Human Resources  
Bachelor's thesis Marketing  
Degree Programme for  
Multilingual Management Assistants  
26.3.2015



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<b>The title of thesis</b> Study of Online Marketing Communications and Orientation Practices in Finnish Foreign Missions	<b>Number of report pages and attachment pages</b> 77 + 4
<b>Advisor</b> Olli Laintila	
<p>The purpose of this study was to investigate how and via which online channels Finnish missions market their open positions to foreign job seekers and what kind of an image these job seekers have of Finnish missions as employers. By doing this research, we wanted to know which media are used the most in the recruitment processes of these missions. We also wanted to find out whether Finnish missions are considered attractive employers in the eyes of the foreign candidates and what made the respondents of the survey interested in applying for work to a Finnish mission.</p> <p>In addition, the study investigated how locally engaged personnel in Finnish missions are oriented and integrated into their duties and the overall Finnish work culture, which might be in many cases very different from the host country. In addition, the purpose of the thesis was to identify what Finnish work culture is from foreigners' point of view and how it appears to them.</p> <p>The theoretical part of the thesis first examined the different online marketing channels and their utilization in employer branding and recruitment. Secondly, the orientation of foreign employees, orientation in multicultural environments and the dimensions of national cultures were examined.</p> <p>The empirical part of this thesis was a qualitative research conducted as a Webropol survey in fall 2014. The target group of the survey was the locally hired personnel of Finnish foreign missions. There was a total of 30 respondents.</p> <p>The findings of this research revealed that the employer image of these missions is, overall, very positive. The results showed that Finnish missions are considered reliable employers providing good working conditions. Also, as most of the open positions were filled by word-of-mouth, development proposals – such as employer branding strategy and active online presence – were suggested to help the missions in promoting their open positions and their image as employers.</p> <p>The findings also revealed that there is some variation regarding the orientation of foreign employees in Finnish missions. In general, the orientation was considered to be good. However, there was some room for improvement, e.g. in the content of the orientation process. Additionally, the findings revealed that taking culture into consideration in orientation is important so that foreign employees learn the Finnish work culture, which from foreign employees' point of view was usually seen to embody equality, responsibility and punctuality. Development proposals, such as creating precise orientation plans and including culture in the orientation process, were suggested.</p>	
<b>Key words</b> online marketing, employer branding, social media, foreign employee orientation, multicultural orientation, cultural dimensions	

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# 1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the study of online marketing communications and orientation practices of foreign employees in the Finnish missions. Firstly, the background and the objectives of the study are discussed, and lastly, the structure of the report is presented.

## 1.1 Background

The topic for the thesis was given by the Personnel Unit of Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs together with diplomatic missions and consular mission create the Finnish Foreign Services. Finland has 92 missions all over the world and approximately 1700 employees, 1100 of which are either Finnish citizens or foreigners hired from the host country. The missions around the world are the eyes and the ears of Finland. They have an important role in the network of Finnish people and business in the host country. In addition, these different missions provide services to Finnish nationals. (Ulkoasiainministeriö 2013a; Ulkoasiainministeriö 2014.)

The commissioning party suggested the topic since they would like to know more on the recruitment process performed by the Finnish missions abroad. They wish to find out how the missions have succeeded in marketing themselves as interesting employers and through which online tools they advertise their open positions. In other words, the commissioning party wants to gain a more comprehensive idea of the online marketing communications in the process of employer branding and in recruiting new employees for the Finnish missions.

The second part of the thesis concentrates on investigating how the locally engaged personnel is oriented and integrated to their duties and Finnish work culture and how the employees are adapting to it. The thesis also investigates what is the Finnish work culture from foreigners' point of view. How is it shown during workday? Does the culture have affect when the job was applied for?

By suggesting this research topic, the commissioning party wishes to gain further information on the employer image of the missions and the online marketing communications practiced in recruitment, as well as on the orientation of the foreign employees into working in a Finnish culture. There are for example country- and culture-related issues affecting the recruitment and orientation practices of the Finnish foreign missions, therefore with the results gained through this research, the commissioning party wants to get a deeper understanding on the aspects, as well as to see whether the current practices are well-functioning or not. The results will help the ministry to further develop their practices and to handle any possible problem areas or issues.

## **1.2 Thesis objectives**

As already stated above, the purpose of this study is to investigate how and via which online channels the Finnish missions market their open positions to foreign job seekers and what kind of an image the job seekers have of the Finnish missions as employers. In other words, how effective their online marketing strategy really is. By doing this research, we wish to see which media are most used in the recruitment processes. We also wish to know how attractive image the foreign employees have of the Finnish mission as employers and what made them interested in applying to work in a Finnish mission.

In addition, the study investigates how the locally engaged personnel in the Finnish missions is oriented and integrated to their duties and the Finnish work culture, which might be in many cases the opposite of the host country. In addition, the purpose of the thesis is to identify what is Finnish work culture from the foreigners' point of view and how does it appear.

## **1.3 Structure of the report**

The report is structured as follows: the first chapter introduces the background of the research as well as the objectives. This is followed by closer introduction of the commissioning party in the second chapter. In addition, the chapter provides information on the Finnish foreign missions and the locally engaged personnel.

In the third chapter the main literature for the online marketing communications part of the thesis is presented. It elaborates the different forms of online marketing communications and their utilization in recruitment and in employer branding, as well as online marketing's threats and benefits and lastly, its future trends.

The second theory part of this thesis is presented in the fourth chapter. It presents the orientation of foreign employees and discusses orientation in multicultural environments. Furthermore, it presents different dimension of national cultures in order to make cultural differences more understandable.

The research methods used in this thesis are presented in the fifth chapter of this report. The chapter introduces the methods of data collection and data analysis as well as presents the background of the respondents of the survey.

The sixth chapter discusses the results and the key findings of the survey. This chapter is further divided into the results for the online marketing communications and the part of orientation of foreign employees.

The conclusions of this research are stated in the seventh chapter, and it is also divided into the separate sections of online marketing communications and orientation of foreign employees. This chapter also includes the development suggestions provided for the both parts of the thesis, which is followed by the evaluation of the reliability and validity of the thesis and the survey. Lastly, the thesis process and learning outcomes are evaluated.

Finally, in the end of the thesis the glossary including the main terms used in this research, the cover letter for the survey and the survey questions are attached.

## **2 Ministry for Foreign Affairs**

This chapter provides information on the functions of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs itself, followed by two chapters defining what the foreign missions and locally engaged staff mean concerning this report.

The ministry works as a link between Finland and the rest of the world. It concentrates on international relations concerning Finland, such as foreign policy, security policy and trade policy. In addition, the ministry assists other branches of government in the coordination of international affairs. (Ulkoasiainministeriö 2013a.)

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs together with diplomatic missions and consular mission create the Finnish Foreign Services. Finland has 92 missions worldwide with approximately 1700 employees, 1100 of which are either Finnish citizens or foreigners hired from the host country. The missions play an important role in the network of Finnish people and business in the host countries and they also provide services to Finnish nationals. (Ulkoasiainministeriö 2013a; Ulkoasiainministeriö 2014.)

### **2.1 Foreign missions**

The representation of Finland abroad consists of diplomatic missions and consular missions. Diplomatic missions include embassies and their separate offices in different states as well as the permanent and special missions to different international organizations. Consular missions refer to consulates general, consulates, and offices under the administration of a consulate general. (Ulkoasiainministeriö 2014.)

The Finnish missions abroad operate under the administration of the Foreign Service and serve the Finns and the Finnish society in various ways around the world. The missions are responsible for Finland's representation in other countries and in international organizations. The missions deal with a range of different functions that include for example foreign policy, trade policy, public diplomacy and consular services. (Ulkoasiainministeriö 2013b.)

All the missions have the same basic responsibilities but tasks are prioritized depending on the needs of the host countries. In some countries foreign and security policies are stressed more, whereas as in other countries the brand image of Finland and export promotion are considered to be the main concern. The countries that have a large number of Finns living there or as tourists concentrate more on serving and assisting the Finnish citizens. (Ulkoasiainministeriö 2013b.)

## **2.2 Locally engaged staff**

According to the latest Human resource accounting report of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland, there were 1150 locally engaged employees in the Finnish missions in 2013 (Lappeteläinen 20 October 2014). The locally engaged personnel are Finnish citizens or citizens of the host country. In addition, there are cases where the employees have changed their Finnish nationality to that of the host country or the employees represent a third nationality and live permanently in the country the Finnish mission is. (Aarnisalo 2012, 32.) Approximately 400 locally engaged employees are not Finnish citizens. (Aarnisalo 21 October 2014; Lappeteläinen 20 October 2014.) This study focuses on the non-Finnish speaking locally engaged personnel of the Finnish missions.

The locally engaged personnel are in a contractual employment relationship with the Finnish mission and are recruited locally (Aarnisalo 2012, 32). The locally employed personnel is divided into six categories based on performance requirements. The first two categories are higher and lower non-office or support personnel and include such job as chauffeurs, cooks and receptionists. The second two categories include e.g. assistants and employees working in general administration. These categories are called higher and lower administrative or support personnel. The last two categories are higher and lower executive personnel which include for employees working for example as advisors or specialists. (Aarnisalo 20 October 2014; Lappeteläinen 20 October 2014.) Mostly the locally engaged personnel work in supporting administrative tasks as specialists, visa officers, assistants, drivers, cooks and cleaners (Aarnisalo 2012, 32).

### **3 Online marketing communications**

As stated earlier in this report, the commissioning party wishes to find out how the Finnish missions have succeeded in marketing themselves as interesting employers and through which online tools they advertise their open positions. In other words, the commissioning party wants to gain a more comprehensive idea of the online marketing communications in the process of employer branding and in recruiting new employees for the Finnish missions.

Therefore, this chapter comprises the theory of the online marketing communications. First, the background and the necessary definitions, which are followed by an introduction to online marketing; this is further divided into five subchapters providing information on the different channels. The last paragraphs discuss employer branding, the benefits and threats of online marketing, as well as its future trends.

#### **3.1 Background and definitions**

Marketing communications has many definitions, but it can simply be defined as all the messages and media a company utilizes to communicate with the market. Marketing communications include, among all, direct marketing, branding, packaging, online presence and PR activities. (Mars 2010.) Kotler and Keller (2009, 470) define marketing communications the following way:

“The means by which firms attempt to inform, persuade, and remind customers—directly or indirectly—about the products and brands they sell. In a sense, marketing communications represent the ‘voice’ of the company and its brands and are a means by which it can establish a dialogue and build relationships with consumers”.

The marketing communications in 1999 mainly focused on direct mail campaigns, which by 2004 switched into email campaigning, and by 2011, there were over 500 million users in Facebook (Newlands 2011, 3). The technological improvements experienced during the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century has made vast changes in the marketing efforts, as websites have replaced billboards, direct mail has been replaced by online newsletters and focus groups by social networks. It is the rise of the Internet as a marketing tool that has launched the power shift from the company to the consumer. (VanRysdam 2010, 17-18.) The real time communication has given the companies new and more effective opportunities to build stronger brand presence and brand awareness (Amerland 2011, 15).

There is a lot of resemblance between the terms digital, Internet and e-marketing. Digital marketing is a broad field comprising all the digital channels used for promotional

purposes, such as websites, social media, banners, mobile marketing, Web TV and search engine optimization (SEO) via electronic devices. However, Internet marketing or online marketing, is a subset of digital marketing and therefore a somewhat narrower field. Most of the digital marketing activities go under the same roof with online marketing, but what makes them different is that online marketing does not include e.g. mobile or video-based marketing, podcasting or broadcasts. (Cam Foundation 2014; Chaffey, Ellis-Chadwick, Mayer & Johnston 2009, 9-10; Reliablysoft.net 2014; Ereachconsulting 2014.) E-marketing on the other hand, resembles digital marketing very much and these two terms are in most cases considered similar to each other. However, e-marketing has a broader scope than Internet marketing, as it also refers to digital customer data and digital customer data relationship management. (Chaffey 2013.) In this report, the term online marketing is being utilized, as it is the best applicable terms for the purpose of the research.

The Business Dictionary (2015) briefly defines online marketing as: “Marketing efforts done solely over the Internet”. Real time web allows users to get information as soon as it is published by the author. This makes it possible to have an immediate marketing impact, as well as to receive messages with immediate marketing value. (Amerland 2011, 3-4.) Online marketing is a vast field, which utilizes multiple channels for communication purposes; among all, it includes social media marketing, search engine marketing and email marketing. Being such an extensive field, the channels of online marketing communications are divided in this report into five main specialization areas:

- website marketing
- search engine marketing (SEM)
- social media marketing (SMM)
- email marketing
- online advertising

### **3.2 Website marketing**

“Whilst there are other essential elements to Internet marketing, it is an inescapable fact that all online marketing – be it strategic or operational – revolves around the web presence” (Charlesworth 2009, 72). Since business operations are increasingly happening online, the company website is critical as it represents the company’s brand entity online, through night and day, 365 days a year. The website’s visibility on the Internet is merely not enough, as users today expect activity through news, real-time feeds, videos or newsletters. (Newlands 2011, 4, 74-75; Qori 2014.)

First step in creating a website is choosing a descriptive domain name, or in other words, the company’s address on the Internet. Every site on the Internet consists of a series of

numbers, which is called an IP address and each IP number has a word allocated in it. Therefore, all domain names are unique. The most crucial aspect in name composition is to connect the online and offline names, as people will find the website more easily if the domain name matches the company name. Secondly, it is important to choose the suffix. The most general domain name suffix is the .com; it is the USA suffix and since it has no country identification, it is considered the global name. However, there are over 250 country-specific domains, such as .fi for Finland or .fr for France. When choosing the suffix for the domain name, it is important to consider the target market and the location; .com would be good for global markets, and .fi would be good for a company that is merely doing business in Finland. (Charlesworth 2009, 36-44; Newlands 2011, 76.)

The key elements in website presentation, such as fast download, simple and uniform looks, good page width and fonts, all aim at making it easy for the visitors to find what they are looking for. Visitors who consider the site useful might return, which is a good start in building a long-term customer-relationship. (Charlesworth 2009, 77-81.) Today's society is fast-paced, which means that people want to be able to find everything fast and easy; the customer will not return to the site if his/her first appearance of it is that it is time-consuming and difficult to use. Therefore, the website needs to be clearly structured. The content of the site is crucial, since unlike in social media sites, the company is in charge of the content in it. In addition, a good website includes a navigation panel, in-site search, social media links and the ability to subscribe for a newsletter, but it should also ensure trustworthiness by adding contact information and staff details, visible company name and FAQ-section. Also, if a company works with global audiences, it is good to have multiple language choices. (Barr & Weiss 2012; Charlesworth 2009, 81, 91; Newlands 2011, 77-79.)

To ensure that the potential customers find the company website, it should be promoted offline as well, for example by adding the domain name in all the stationery, business cards, invoices, receipts, all company literature, videos, product wrapping and made visible e.g. in the company employees' clothing and vehicles. This is a subtle way of making the customers aware of the website. Also, as the usage of smartphones and tablets today has significantly increased, the websites should be made usable via these devices. (Charlesworth 2009, 66-67; Newlands 2011, 79-80, 83; The marketing donut 2015.)

### **3.3 Search engine marketing**

Word Stream (2014b) defines search engine marketing (SEM), as follows: "Marketing to internet users through natural search engine result page listings and paid advertising placement". SEM is led by search engines, such as Google, Bing and Yahoo and the

searches are usually divided into two components: organic and inorganic. Inorganic refers to paid search (search engine advertising) and includes pay per click (PPC) and organic refers to free search, or in other words, search engine optimization (SEO). (Word Stream 2014b.) The following paragraphs cover the SEO and PPC in more detail, as well as the utilization of RSS feeds to get the website noticed by the search engines.

With the help of SEO, companies are able to increase their website's visibility among the search engine users. The more frequently the website appears on the search results, the more visitors will find it. However, SEO is a complex system and for it to succeed, it needs more than just the right keywords; also the website contents carries significance, as the search engines also need to understand the structure of the website. The process of SEO consists of e.g. research keywords, creating content, building links and ensuring that the website is visible in search engines. SEO may also target different kinds of searches, such as image, video or academic search. Therefore, SEO makes it easier for the customer to find the company they are looking for. (Cam Foundation 2014; Moz 2014; Wikipedia 2014c.)

What makes SEO complex is that there are approximately 200 different factors affecting how high the websites rank in the results. SEO works by using algorithms and then presenting the results in search engine results page (SERP). These algorithms evaluate how feasible the result sites are with the search criteria. The main search engines divide their SERPs in two columns: organic SEO results (on the left side) and paid advertisements (PPC) either on the right side or on top of the organic results, depending on the search engine. The search engines use spiders or bots for searching and compiling information from all around the Internet into indexes, from which the search results are then compiled for the users. (Charlesworth 2009, 181-183; VanRysdam 2010, 85-86.)

“Paid Search, PPC or pay-per-click is the management of paid adverts in the search results” (Cam Foundation 2014). In other words, it is a tool of online marketing used to buy visits to sites and once an ad gets a click, the advertiser pays for it. Therefore, if there are no clicks, there are no fees. Search engine advertising is one of its most utilized aspects, since it gives advertisers the possibility to pay for the privilege of having their ads placed whenever a search engine user types any keyword associated to what their business is providing. What it means is that the search engine collects a small fee each time somebody clicks the ad that sends the visitor to a website. The most popular PPC advertising platform is Google AdWord, in which advertisers can improve their visibility by creating ads into Google. (Charlesworth 2009, 215; Word Stream 2014a; Word Stream 2014c.)

Unlike in PPC, each time a search engine user clicks a link from the organic results, the click is free of charge. According to a research conducted by MarketingSherpa and Enquiro (Halligan & Shah 2010, 57-58), only 25 per cent of search engine users actually click on the paid results. Therefore, it is more favorable for a website to be found from the organic results rather than through the paid results. And since the SEPRs only show ten results per page, it is important that the website should be found among the first ten results, since studies show that over 89 per cent of the traffic occurs on Google's first page. This is why the higher a website ranks on the SERP, the more traffic the site will get. (Halligan & Shah 2010, 57-58; VanRysdam 2010, 86.)

The basis of SEO consists of these two categories: on-site and off-site optimization. In on-site optimization, the keywords can be inserted either straight on the contents or on the source code of the site. Contents are visible for the visitor and therefore easily combined with the keywords, but adding keywords to the source code is only visible for search engines. This means adding meta tags describing what is included in the site. Off-site optimization in its turn is divided into website history and inbound links. If a site has existed for a long time, but also constantly renews its contents, it is considered reliable by the search engine, thus it will be ranked higher. Inbound links refer to the links of other sites that lead into the site the user was looking for. The more links leading to the website, the more valuable the search engines rank it. (Charlesworth 2009, 191-193, 198-201.)

In order to understand the complex structure of SEO, there is an 8-step framework for SEO created by the Bruce Clay Global Internet Marketing Solutions (Bruce Clay 2014): selection of keywords, identifying competitors' keywords, combining keywords, adding keywords to the content, submitting to search engines, considering the community, intentions and blended searches, checking the rankings and finally, link building. The selection of the right keywords is crucial since the company should be recognizable from them, meaning that the keywords should match with the words that the search engine users will most probably use when looking for the company in question. After including the top keywords into the contents, the company will receive a higher ranking in search engines, which results in more visitors and more income. (Bruce Clay 2014.)

Charlesworth (2009, 187) highlights the importance of keywords the following way: "Simply put, keywords are the core of all search engine marketing". It is the duty of search engines to match the keywords typed by the search engine user with the matching results. Since most of the searches are informational (approximately 80 %), the website contents should be full of keywords that lead the customers to find the site they were looking for. However, there are problems with words that are spelled the same way, but mean different and also, e.g. some place names are translated differently into different

languages, such as Firenze and Florence. These might bring up some mistakes in the search engine utilization process. In conclusion, the best keywords not only have a relevant link with the site and the service or product being offered, but also bring a great volume of searches. (Bruce Clay 2014; Charlesworth 2009, 187-188, 190; VanRysdam 2010, 86-89.)

The technology of SEO has experienced some changes in the past few years, which means that nowadays also the behavioral-, intent-based and blended searches need to be considered. Search engines tailor the search results of each user according to the previous search history, the IP location of the user and also the ability of the website to engage the visitors. This means that if a user living in Finland types e.g. “prisma” into the search engine, it can either bring up the location and website of the nearest Prisma - shopping mall (using intent-based search) or e.g. bring up information on geometry or on a TV-documentary show, depending on the previous searches done by the user (using behavioral-based search). (Bruce Clay 2014; Charlesworth 2009, 187.)

RSS Feeds is a good way to make the website and networks more popular. “RSS (Rich Site Summary or, more commonly, Really Simple Syndication) is technology that allows the owner of content to share it with other Web sites” (Roberts 2008, 57). In other words, RSS is a so called vehicle that delivers content, which can be available e.g. on other sites or blogs; and whenever some content is spread, it is called a feed. Then syndicators are used for publishing the content in several platforms to reach a bigger audience. In practice it means that the company creates content into their website, which is then syndicated with RSS feeds e.g. onto other sites with similar type of contents. The sites with constantly updated and fresh contents are also ranked higher on search engines and therefore, are easily found by people. This is a method of spreading information on new content available on the company website. (Charlesworth 2009, 273; FullFeeds.com 2014; PRESSFeed 2014; Roberts 2008, 64.) Additionally, the social networks become more easily popular, because these feeds will automatically post all of the blog entries into the user’s other statuses e.g. on Facebook or LinkedIn. In Twitter, this is called TwitterFeed. (VanRysdam 2010, 177.)

### **3.3.1 Social media optimization**

Social media optimization (SMO) was first brought up by the founder of the Influential Marketing Group, Mr. Rohit Bhargava. He introduced the idea of SMO in his blog post “5 Rules of Social Media Optimization (SMO)”. (Bhargava 10 August 2006.) According to him, the companies have started to include SMO actions in their marketing plans, not of course forgetting the inputs on SEO. To summon up these rules, he suggested that companies should increase their linkability by e.g. adding blogs into their sites, facilitating

tagging and bookmarking, rewarding inbound links to encourage visitors to engage, letting the contents travel via media files (which will end up bringing the visitor back to the first site) and finally, encouraging to mashup, or in other words, mixing the site contents. (Bhargava 10 August 2006.)

After this, the idea of SMO became universal and also recognized in Wikipedia (2014d) with the following definition: "SMO is similar to search engine optimization in that the goal is to generate traffic and awareness for a website. In general, social media optimization refers to optimizing a website and its content in terms of sharing across social media and networking sites". Four years after the first blog post, Mr. Bhargava renewed the 5 rules into the following: create shareable content, make sharing easy, reward engagement, share content proactively and encourage the mashup. He highlights the fact that SMO should focus more on making visitors share the contents. (Bhargava 10 August 2010.)

Since social networks are constantly changing and search engines use social signals to give ranking for the contents in increasing amounts, there has been an ongoing growth towards using SMO to help SEO. SMO is more concentrated on the content quality and delivering user experience, while SEO merely focuses on the website's technical structure. Therefore, they complement each other by providing more comprehensive results for the search engine users. (Rayson 2013.)

### **3.4 Social media marketing**

According to VanRysdam (2010, 27) social media is "a broad term that describes websites or tools primarily made up of user-generated content that foster interaction among users". Social media is all about making conversations and relationships online (Newlands 2011, 10). In recent years, there has been a huge increase in the usage of social media websites; therefore it has not only become a very common, but also an essential method of managing the company image and conveying it into the customer. (Boundless 2014; Cam Foundation 2014.)

"In the 21st century social media marketing is about engaging in relationships with your customers and making your message and brand part of their online experience" (Newlands 2011, 10). This is why social media websites wish to attract the attention of users by encouraging interaction and making it easier for the customers to participate in communication with the company and evaluate on e.g. the service they received or on a product they purchased, which results in strengthening of the brand loyalty among consumers. Charlesworth (2009, 292-294) defines this as "consumer generated content (CGC)", which refers to the fact that the general public is able to comment freely on their personal experiences concerning certain products or services via social networks and

online communities. This might result in giving either a negative or positive impact on companies, since the reviews are open to national or global crowds, and also, marketers have no control over the contents. (Boundless 2014; Cam Foundation 2014; Charlesworth 2009, 292-294, 300-305.)

In addition, social media has a huge impact on the marketing communication strategies of companies, since it is a cost-effective way to communicate that raises brand recognition around the world and helps to upgrade customer service. With the help of social media, companies can also find new and prospective customers, as new semantic analysis technologies help companies to see who has showed interest by sharing or posting their contents. (Boundless 2014; Cam Foundation 2014; Charlesworth 2009, 292-294, 300-305.) Furthermore, the transition into interactive marketing has also had an impact on the core principles of each company's marketing actions and instead of the classic four P's of marketing (product, price, place and promotion), many marketing experts nowadays agree on adding a fifth P on the list; people (VanRysdam 2010, 22).

There are various platforms used in social media marketing (SMM) with mutual goals like: networking, socializing, entertainment and influencing. However, the different social media sites have different purposes for the users. For example, LinkedIn is more professional, while Facebook concentrates more on socializing, and Flickr is used for sharing pictures. (Charlesworth 2009, 301-303.) The most common social media tools in the corporate use (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube) are briefly presented in the next paragraph.

Twitter is widely spread with more than 50 million status updates from its users each day. Twitter is often referred as "micro-blogging" as the posts are limited to 140 characters each. (Newlands 2011, 10, 19-21; VanRysdam 2010, 141.) Facebook instead, has more than 500 million registered profiles and more than 60 million status updates every day. Through Facebook, it is easy to find out growing trends among people by following the "likes" of users, it is also easy to promote events and advertise pages via Facebook Ads in order to get more fans. (Halligan & Shah 2010, 88-91; Newlands 2011, 10, 30-35.) In YouTube, people can add their own videos for everyone to see and share. It is the most popular video site on the Internet, with more than 100 million videos viewed every day (Halligan & Shah 2010, 116). Newlands (2011, 37-39) suggests that there are four ways to expand the ability to reach the target market with YouTube: viral video, vlogs, interviews and personalization. Viral video means that the popular videos are being spread around really fast from one person to its networks and so forth. Vlog refers to video blogging, which has become very popular during the last few years. Companies also use videos for interviewing purposes and they are also a great way to personalize a company and its business, because a visual medium is more effective than the traditional.

(Newlands 2011, 38-39.) Finally, there is LinkedIn, which is a social media platform launched in 2003. It is targeted for more professional and business-related purposes and as the place for job seekers and employers to meet. (Newlands 2011, 44-45; VanRysdam 2010, 139.)

### **3.4.1 Video marketing and blogging**

During the past few years, it has been proven that adding a video to a social media website increases the number of visitors significantly. The posts on social media that contain a video clip have increased user engagement a lot, as more users tend to prefer liking and sharing posts with video. Video marketing has also proven to raise brand awareness more effectively due to the fact that it combines audio, image and text, which brings a more of a “human” touch into it. Search engines also prefer videos and since they usually receive more clicks, people find the videos used for marketing purposes very easily. (Distilled 2014.) In order to make a video receive higher search engine rankings, it is important to include plenty of keywords into the video title, description or tags.

Thumbnails are also essential to consider in detail, since the videos with attention-grabbing thumbnails are more likely to get more views. Furthermore, videos should be easily shared by the viewers via different social platforms. (Amerland 2011, 131-134.)

A blog is a channel, where bloggers can add e.g. videos, podcasts, news articles or own ideas, however managing the content is a critical skill, as it requires constant scheduling, tagging and it needs to be well-categorized in order to become successful (Walker 2010). In corporate world, blogs are normally used as the voice of the company or as channel of self-promotion (Charlesworth 2009, 315). Blogging is a great way to combine SEO, PR and social media tools together. A successful blog receives organic results and social interaction in search engines. (Cam Foundation 2014.) The perks of a corporate blog, are that it is easier for people to approach and communicate with a company in an informal manner through blogging, managing them costs little and with the help of the information received from its followers, companies can find new ideas concerning customer wants and needs. (Alexander 2007.)

### **3.4.2 Social media in recruitment**

During the past few years, the use of social media as a recruitment channel has increased significantly. For example, LinkedIn is well-known for its professional purposes and it has become a popular platform for companies to notify open positions, mainly because it is free and efficient, but also because the networks make it is easy for recruiters to find the applicants' CVs and recommendations on their professional skills and expertise. (Heinilä 6 February 2012.) Facebook is also used by employers a lot, mainly due to its vast amount

of users. Though, Facebook is not considered as professional as e.g. LinkedIn. (Narkiniemi 2014.) Also, today more and more companies use the services of headhunters to recruit new employees. This means that the company does not perform any search for new employees, nor posts a job ad anywhere, but instead the headhunter does all the work by using the different online platforms to find the suitable candidates. (Laitinen 2014.) Social media is the way for companies to find their employees in the future and experts say that this is why companies won't need to publish their ads for open positions anymore (Salminen 2014).

### **3.5 Email marketing**

Email marketing is one of the first marketing tools used to convey messages for commercial purposes and direct marketing emails are still a big part of companies' online marketing strategies. Emails can be either sent for advertising or business purposes or just to keep in touch with the target markets. The main purpose is to increase customer database and relationship continuity by raising awareness and building customer loyalty. Database marketing is extremely important, since databases are used to determine customers' buying patterns, which, in turn, are used for sending personalized and targeted messages for the customers. (Cam Foundation 2014; Charlesworth 2009, 255; Wikipedia 2014a.)

There are several types of email communications directed for the customer databases. A newsletter is one of the most common ways of spreading the brand awareness by announcing e.g. upcoming sales promotion or news about the company. A digest is a similar, but somewhat simpler and a more customer-friendly tool of communicating the current highlights, because normally it includes merely links and lists. Another way is to send a dedicated or stand-alone email, which provides information on a new product or an upcoming event. As opposed to this, a lead nurturing is a way of email communication that is concentrated on sending a unified set of emails, rather than just an individual message. Lead nurturing is normally used in the beginning of a customer relationship due to the fact that customer participation tends to decline with time. The use of sponsorship emails is yet another way of raising the awareness. This means that the company pays to be included in the email communications of another merchant. Lastly, there are the transactional emails that include e.g. the welcoming email the customer receives after using the company's services for the first time or the email confirmations or shipment details after making an order. (Georgieva 2 February 2012.)

Despite the current changes in the online marketing strategies, email newsletters still remain as an effective way of keeping in touch with the target markets. Basic newsletters are sent e.g. once a week or once a month and usually contain announcements or news,

information on events or sales related with the company or its services. The more advanced newsletters, such as automatic reminders of past purchases done in a company's e-commerce site or suggestions on new purchases related to the products the client has shown interest in in the past, are good for targeted advertising. The newsletters are similar as traditional print newsletters, however, their advantage is the hyperlink, through which the recipient can be directed e.g. onto the company website or any of the social media platforms for further information. (Charlesworth 2009, 222, 272-273; VanRysdam 2010, 68-69.)

### **3.6 Online advertising**

Online advertising's main purpose is to deliver a promotional message by using other tools than the traditional text-based advertising. It has three benefits compared with other forms of media: targeting, analytics and interactivity. Targeting means for example, that visitors can find a certain website via SERP, which is a result of targeted search as they already showed interest on the site since they used search engine to find it. Analytics refer to the fact that traditional media can't ensure that the promotional message has been seen by the customer, but websites can register if an ad has been recognized whenever a visitor clicks it. Also, online advertising gives the customer the possibility to interact, not like with traditional media. In addition to SERP, the customers can find the ads e.g. via portals, community websites, chat forums, blogs or newsletters. (Charlesworth 2009, 212-213, 221-222.) The following paragraphs include a brief introduction on display advertising and affiliate marketing.

Display advertising is advertising conducted online, usually as banner ads, such as logos or pictures, or as rich media, which refers to interactive multimedia (e.g. text, audio, video and animations combined). (Marketing Land 2014; Yahoo Search Marketing 2014.) It is difficult to calculate the return on investment from online advertising, since different advertising tools work differently. Display advertising is clearly visible, but usually receives fewer direct clicks than e.g. search ads. (Blanding 2013.) Online advertisers use cookies to provide targeted display advertising. Ad servers can use cookies to identify computers and give targeted advertising with the data received from them, this is called behavioral targeting. The collected data includes e.g. information on what the user bought online or what he or she was searching for. Also contextual and semantic advertising are utilized to present ads that are similar with the visited website. In addition to banner ads, display advertising also comprises e.g. frame ads, pop-ups, floating ads and expanding ads. (Drell 2011; Wikipedia 2014b.)

"Affiliate marketing is the process of earning a commission by promoting other people's (or company's) products" (The Smart Passive Income Blog 2014). Once a sale via an

affiliate link is completed, it is then compensated. Affiliate marketing can be done with banners, links or through emails. With successful affiliate marketing company can save costs, get new customers and grow sales, but there is a risk that the affiliates start doing a better job than the company's marketing team, which might even lead to competition between the advertising company and the affiliates. This is possible if the affiliates manage to rank higher in search engine results than the company itself. (Cam Foundation 2014; Charlesworth 2009, 244-245.)

### **3.7 Employer branding**

The significance of the term "brand" has changed throughout the years; until the end of the twentieth century brands were merely connected with consumer goods and services, however, today the term can be utilized with almost anything with an identity and a reputation linked with it (Barrow & Mosley 2005, 57). Amara (2014) defines employer branding the following way: "Just like a brand of a product expresses certain qualities, an employer brand represents the corporate identity - to its current employees, prospective employees, stake holders".

Today, instead of placing a job ad in the local newspaper, the recruiters seek for potential employees online, via social media websites and other online platforms. Also the potential employees use all the online tools available to see what kind of an image the potential employer portrays. Therefore, online marketing and brand management today walk in hand in hand in regards to employers' branding strategies. (Ciphr 2015; Sarkodee 2015.)

Digital branding is utilized to create a brand meaning through a process, which is interactive and relationship-based. The brand perceptions are created by the continuous and constantly changing discussion among the customers on their experiences of different brands. Since strong employer brand is vital for the companies, the company needs to participate in the interaction and conversation to determine the ongoing direction of its branding. (Amara 2014; Newlands 2011, 52-53.)

Strong brand brings value to the employer's job offers. The branding process is closely related with candidate and client attraction and retaining. Since brands are defined by how the current, former or the potential employees, customers and others associated with the employer, perceive the ability of the employer to create desirable jobs, it is important to remember that brand is not merely about the created image, but it consists of the entire experience of the practices of the employees and the management. (Recruiter 2014.)

There are two main types of employer branding: internal and external. The internal aspect includes the employees' personal experiences and knowledge of the company: unhappy

employees become unhappy customers, thus start spreading bad news of not only on the brand image, but also on the employer image. External aspect of employer branding consists of the image the prospective employees and the existing customers have of the company. Therefore, the negative comments from the internal channel might result in driving away the external masses. (Amara 2014; Van Mossevelde 5 January 2012.)

Strong employer brands can benefit of their position in a multiple ways, but the main advantages are the savings in money and time. If there are talented candidates that contact the company in hopes of a job, the recruiter does not have to work as hard to find the potential candidates. The costs of hiring process are diminished as the recruitment process is short and performed mostly online. Effective employer branding has the opportunity to increase employee commitment, customer loyalty and to decrease employee turnover. Also, the transparent communication of the company culture through online tools is a good way to further promote what kind of a work environment the employer offers. This will create a better understanding among the candidates. Revenues grow, as customers tend to prefer the strong employer brands and the quality of the employees increases. (Amara 2014; Webster 2014.)

Effective employer branding is the combination of market research, communications and marketing, and the goal is to reach a brand position, which is both believable and desirable. The aim is to find out the qualities that make them unique as employers. If the brand image is not being maintained, the result might be that nobody notices it and it will not become interesting for the potential candidates. (Van Mossevelde 14 March 2014.) But the interest will also cease if the image portrayed by the company does not match with the reality. Therefore, empty promises of the work environment just results in negative consequences. (Mauno 2013.)

The online marketing communications (SEM, the tools of SMM, email marketing and online advertising) all carry a big significance in building an employer brand. With the help of the different online platforms, companies are able to have a great impact on how their brand is perceived and make their brand well-known among the potential candidates. This is why brand building is an important matter that all companies should pay careful consideration to. Active online presence brings up higher rankings on search engines, which results in more traffic. This results in raising awareness, which raises interest and reliability towards the brand.

### **3.7.1 Employer of choice**

“If employer branding is the process, the employer brand is the identity of a company as an employer of choice” (Van Mossevelde 14 March 2014). Employers of choice offer a

work culture and environment that is attractive towards superior candidates and able to retain the talent. The employers of choice favor the well-being of their customers and employees. (Heathfield 2015.) The employers of choice are the employers who are successful in branding their image and are considered as very attractive employers. The position of being considered an employer of choice is very desirable for companies, since talented people are naturally drawn to the employers of choice, and the employer of choice is naturally drawn to the talent.

So, what makes employer an employer of choice? Baber Ghaznavi (16 October 2014) suggests that the employers of choice represent the five following characteristics: good leadership, positive and inspiring work environment, core principles, clear expectations and encouragement. The characteristics defined by the Maranello Executive Search & Selection (2014) include, among all, the following: stimulating work, good rewards, training and development, corporate social responsibility and ethics, progress opportunities, encouragement to collaborate, commitment to the employer, empowerment and authority.

The employee motivation is the core principle to achieve. Both the inspirational work environment and community, as well the actions of the employer to encourage and provide the possibilities to further develop one's career, increase the employee motivation. Motivated employees are pleased with their jobs and are more likely to continue to work for the employer in the future.

### **3.8 Main threats and benefits of online marketing**

Companies can benefit from the usage of online marketing in several manners, but for most importantly, it is cost-effective since all the advertising and communication can be conducted online and it reaches global audiences fast. Online advertisers benefit from it by being able to find out how efficient the ads were by receiving information on how the audiences found the ad and whether it made a sale at all. Thus, they can focus more on using the platforms that seem to work the best. The Internet also gives advertisers more ways to present the ads (e.g. video, audio or picture) and they can easily be targeted to reach the right target markets by using the previous search results or geographical location of the users. Marketing on the Internet is convenient, as there the business is open around the clock. Long-lasting customer relationships are easily built with follow-ups or personalized emails. In addition, social networking has proven to positively improve growth in revenues, as customer-orientation in business life has shown to bring success. (Chron 2014; Wikipedia 2014b.)

The companies that use the social media channels creatively and utilize the information received from interaction with their clientele to improve their strategies, have been able to

grow their businesses and brand image with great success. Also, the social media sites provide a more informal way for the customers to approach the company, which increases interaction and loyalty towards the brand, through word-of-mouth recommendations. Through interaction the companies are able to find out about the current wants and needs of the clients as well as to predict the upcoming trends and to be the first to bring out new ideas that answer these needs. (Chron 2014; Idm 2010.)

The main threat of social media marketing is that it might start to build up negative brand image, which might result from an unhappy client whose comment becomes vastly shared or from a campaign video that resulted in a negative acceptance. The negative effect might either be temporary or in worst cases, it might even break company's image, and also the employer image, for good. The challenge for the company receiving negative comments is to find a way to turn them positive, since the companies cannot control the messages on social media. Also, it is hard to measure the ROI (return on investment), as well as to justify efforts and resources while investing in social media. (Idm 2010.)

Also, the consumers today have become more careful with online reviews, as everyone is able to publish their personal opinions on products or services online. There are many cases, in which some companies had paid a lot of money for others to post fake positive online reviews or even false advertising of their products or services. If this becomes more common, it will be difficult for the consumers to differentiate the real from the fake reviews. In worst case scenario, this could make the customers skeptical towards all online reviews and this would negatively impact the companies' marketing communications, as their investments on social media and online marketing would not deliver the desirable results. (Whitney 2013.)

The main threats for online advertisers are banner blindness, technological improvements and privacy issues. Banner blindness refers to people becoming so used to seeing online ads that they start ignoring them, or even become blind to see them anymore. Then there are the problems advertisers face due to technological issues; nowadays Internet users can download an ad-block program that filters and blocks all the ads, so that they will not be visible to the user at all. Also, there is a program that blocks web browsers from collecting information on their Internet usage and thus prevents advertisers from operating behavioral targeting; this improves users' privacy. (Hill 2013; Wikipedia 2014b.)

### **3.9 The future trends of online marketing**

The current economic situation has significantly changed the companies' marketing strategies, as the aim is to do successful marketing online with minimal costs. In the field of online marketing it is predicted that small businesses will rise, customer-orientation

continues to grow and video marketing, as well as the usage of mobile devices increases and social media and blogs will become more important as well. (Optimus01 2014.) According to Cisco (Trimble 2014): “Online video is the future of content marketing”, and by 2017 approximately 69 % of consumer Internet traffic will be obtained from videos. Also, Business Insider’s research states, that by 2018, mobile ad spending in US will top nearly \$ 42 billion, which is increasing by a five-year compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 43% from 2013 (Hoelzel 2015).

Kurio (2014) conducted a research on the upcoming trends of social media marketing in 2015. The results showed that the biggest change in the business world is the transition towards a social business, which means that social media grows as a part of the business and brand communication, instead of being merely a one way of communication. Also, the concept of employee advocacy becomes a key tool in brand and network building and real time marketing turns into a more important part of marketing communications. Multi-channel mentality transforms into a seamless channel and the marketing efforts will be measured according to the interaction that customers initiate. (Kurio 2014.)

To be able to pick up the growing trends there are plenty of platforms on the Internet that companies can use to identify the current wants, as well as to pick the upcoming interests, these are for example OneRiot (web search engine that scans social networking sites), Scoopler (search engine that finds the most popular new content people are currently sharing on social networks) or Google Fast Flip (platform that shows if your business ideas or investment plans are in the right direction or not, according to the latest trends). (Amerland 2011, 42-47.)

## 4 Orientation of foreign employees

This chapter discusses the definition of orientation and the benefits and responsibility for orientation. Furthermore, the chapter discusses about orientation in multicultural environment and the possible challenges faced in multicultural environment. Additionally, the role of the culture in orientation situations is covered and lastly, the dimensions of national cultural are explained in order to understand the reasons of cultural differences.

### 4.1 Definition of orientation

Orientation means the introduction to one's work and duties at a workplace. It is a process where the employee is familiarized not only with one's own job but additionally with the organization, its practices and the other employees. (Työterveyslaitos 2014; Työturvallisuuskeskus TTK 2009.) During the orientation period the employee learns the habits and objectives of a unit and the organization and is familiarized with the members of the work community and possible clients as well. Employee orientation and all the actions it includes aim to give a good start for the employee in his or her work and in the work community. (Kupias & Peltola 2014; Yli-Kaitala, Toivanen, Bergbom, Airila & Väänänen 2013, 25.)

Orientation is often used as a synonym of induction though there are differences in the two terms. Induction usually refers to a process where the new employee is introduced with one's employer and work environment during the first day, whereas orientation is conducted during several days and includes introduction to one's work and job role as well as work culture. (HRdictionary 2013.)

Orientation includes all the parts that are somehow connected to one's work and managing it, such as the phases of the work and the knowledge and skills needed to perform it. Safety and health risks are important part of the orientation process as well. The goal of the orientation is that afterwards the employee is capable of independent work. On top of one's duties and tasks, the employee is familiar with the expectations of the work and responsibilities in the work community. (Työturvallisuuskeskus TTK 2009; Yli-Kaitala et al. 2013, 27.)

Regardless of one's own experience on the industry, every employee needs a faculty-specific orientation in order to get familiar with organization's policies and procedures (Gilster & Dalessandro 2009). Orientation is needed when a new employee arrives but also when the current employees receive new tasks or new equipment. Furthermore, orientation needs to be included to all the situations where work or work environment changes significantly and requires time for learning. (Kupias & Peltola 2014.)

The need for orientation is the same regardless of the size of the workplace and the industry. All the personnel from supervisors to trainees should be included to continuous orientation. In addition to the tasks performed at the workplace, the orientation needs to cover the task performed for example at customers' premises. Orientation is not only targeted for new employees but for employees with new tasks or returning to the organization after a longer break as well. At a workplace, orientation is a continuous process, and an important part of improvement of personnel. (Työterveyslaitos 2011; Työturvallisuuskeskus TTK 2009.)

#### **4.1.1 Benefits of orientation**

Orientation can be seen as an investment; when it is performed correctly, it improves the knowledge of the personnel, supports job welfare and reduces the amount of occupational accidents and sick leaves. When the orientation is clearly planned and implemented and the organization puts effort in it, the employees are likely to give their effort too and plan a longer career in the company and stay loyal. Good orientation benefits the employee as well as the whole work community and the organization. (Kupias & Peltola 2014; Työterveyslaitos 2011; Työturvallisuuskeskus TTK 2009.)

It has been proven that well-organized and conducted orientation increases the feeling of belonging to the organization and thus increases the work satisfaction. Good orientation makes the employee feel being part of the work community and welcomed to it. In addition, the employee is more likely to adapt to the tasks fast and become effective when he or she has a clear picture of everything. (Kupias & Peltola 2014; Yli-Kaitala et al. 2013, 27.)

The benefits of well-organized orientation can be seen as employees' excitement and interest towards the job as well as the organization. In addition, good orientation makes the employees more committed to the job. Furthermore, good orientation ensures that the employee has enough time to learn the tasks and see the work and organization as entity which decreases mistakes and misunderstandings. If the employees are left alone to figure out all that the orientation should include, they will most probably fail or leave (Gilster & Dalessandro 2009; Kupias & Peltola 2014; Työterveyslaitos 2011.)

#### **4.1.2 Responsibility for orientation**

The responsibility for the orientation at a workplace is with the employer. However, superior may delegate the different parts of the orientation to other employees but in the end the responsibility for the orientation remains with the superior. Employer must ensure

that orientation is organized, planned and implemented so that it creates the best possible learning environment. When planning the orientation the previous knowledge and experience of an employee should be taken into consideration and create an individual orientation plan based on the information. (Kupias & Peltola 2014; Työturvallisuuskeskus TTK 2009.)

Before the orientation itself can begin there are tasks that need to be taken into consideration. The instructors should be trained, orientation material should be collected, there should be a plan and the work community should be aware of the orientation in hand so they know their tasks in it. (Työturvallisuuskeskus TTK 2009.)

The implementation of orientation should be agreed among the representatives of the employer. In some cases it is recommended to delegate the orientation to the people that work closely with the new employee in the future as well. If the orientation is delegated to one or more people it is important to plan who is responsible for what, as well as assure that all the people taking part into the orientation process know their roles and tasks. (Kupias & Peltola 2014; Työturvallisuuskeskus TTK 2009; Yli-Kaitala et al. 2013, 28.)

As part of the orientation all the practical arrangements need to be taken care of. These include e.g. usernames, passwords, keys and uniforms. In addition, orientation materials such as different manuals and guides ought to be collected, since they are a good orientation tool which allows the employee to get familiar with the organization independently as well. (Kupias & Peltola 2014.)

Although there is usually a person assigned to be in charge of orientation, the whole work community should take part in it. This helps the work community to get to know the employee and vice versa. Additionally, it tells the employee that it is acceptable to ask help from the other members of the work community as well. (Kupias & Peltola 2014.)

#### **4.1.3 Monitoring the orientation**

The results of the orientation must be monitored in order to know whether or not the objectives of the orientation were met, was the orientation plan successful and what should be improved or done differently. The opinions of the people who were oriented are important part of developing the orientation process. Feedback session should be organized as part of the orientation process in order to receive feedback about the orientation and its efficiency. (Kupias & Peltola 2014; Työturvallisuuskeskus TTK 2009.)

When the employee is familiar with the work as an entity and knows the connections between different things and is able to adapt that into practice, the orientation has been successful (Työturvallisuuskeskus TTK 2009).

#### **4.2 Orientation in multicultural environment**

The awareness of diversity has inevitably resulted from the increased internationality and multiculturalism of the labor market that has been faced by organizations (Korhonen 2010, 351-352). Cultural diversity is not a phenomenon that will suddenly fade away allowing us to live with the assumption of mutual understanding (Lewis 2006, xvi). The increased number of employees from different cultural and language backgrounds has brought new challenges to orientation at a workplace. The people responsible for the orientation process need to take cultural differences into consideration and act as so called culture guides to the new employees. (Koulutuskeskus Salpaus 2007, 3-4.)

Most of the misunderstandings in multicultural work environments are linked to the cultural background of people and the ways of thinking and acting that come with it. The unwritten rules and habits of a workplace usually remain without attention in orientation since they seem too self-evident to the dominant culture. For example, for Finnish people certain things could be seen as self-evident and thus automatically assumed from the employees who come from different cultural backgrounds. These include time, punctuality of schedules, silence, gender equality, initiative, low hierarchy and broad personal space. (Korhonen & Puukari 2013, 337; Koulutuskeskus Salpaus 2007, 5.)

The time spent to the orientation of an employee from a different cultural background should be longer than with the employees of same cultural background. When the parties do not share same mother tongue and cultural backgrounds, allowing more time for the orientation process avoids misunderstandings. In orientation situation in multicultural environments it is good to step out of one's own culture and examine things as an outsider in order to recognize the everyday rules that might otherwise be too self-evident. In addition to the basic orientation skills, the person responsible for the orientation should have the knowledge of one's own values, culture and preconceptions. (Korhonen & Puukari 2013, 332, 334; SAK 2007, 60; Yli-Kaitala et al. 2013, 29.)

In multicultural environments the orientation process ought to be individualized for each new employee depending on the language skills and knowledge of the dominant culture at the workplace. The need for orientation, the situation in hand and the person needing the orientation should be taken into consideration when planning and implementing the orientation. It is important to have meticulous orientation to all new employees, and especially to the employees whose language and culture backgrounds differ from the

dominant culture at a workplace. Continuity of the orientation is important since learning new working culture is not simple. In intercultural orientation it is important that the orientation is kept work-based by explaining how and why certain tasks are performed, rather than comparing which habits, values and ways of working of employees' are the best. (Korhonen & Puukari 2013, 336; SAK 2007, 61, 65; Yli-Kaitala et al. 2013, 27-29.)

In multicultural workplaces two-way orientation is important. It is form of orientation that takes into consideration not only the new employee, but the whole work community as well thus, allowing the work community to prepare for the new multicultural environment. Two-way orientation includes breaking the preconceptions people have towards different cultures and familiarization to challenges of multicultural environment as well as coping with them. Two-way orientation allows both the outsider and the community to learn from each other, which creates new ways of working. Work community has a possibility to learn about itself and its ways of tolerating diverse interaction and various ways of working when an outside enters the work community. Well-managed multiculturalism at a workplace benefits the work community by enabling cross-cultural learning and broaden point of view when all self-evident parts of a certain culture are questioned. (Korhonen & Puukari 2013, 333; Yli-Kaitala et al. 2013, 13, 56.)

In orientation situation at multicultural workplaces mentoring can be used as helping tool. Mentoring is a traditional way of orientation where more experienced colleague guides a new or less experienced employee. Mentoring is based on the confidential interaction between the mentor and the mentee. Creating a multicultural mentoring programme could be helping with promotion of diversity and cross-cultural learning. Mentor gives support in the integration into work community and most importantly helps with the cultural understanding. (Korhonen 2010, 373-374; Kupias & Salo 2014, 11; Yli-Kaitala et al. 2013, 34.)

#### **4.2.1 Role of culture in orientation**

According to Hofstede et al. (2010, 6) culture is "the collective programming of the mind that distinguished the members of one group or category of people from others". The ways the differences between cultures emerge can be divided into symbols, heroes, rituals and values. Symbols, such as words, gestures and objectives with particular meaning, represent the most superficial occurrence of culture. Heroes are the people who have the characteristics appreciated by the members of the culture, whereas the rituals are the collective activities that are actually unnecessary to reach the goal but within a culture are considered essential, such as ways of greeting. The deepest occurrence of a culture, which unlike the others cannot be visible to outside observers, is values. Values

are usually unconscious tendencies to prefer certain things over others. (Hofstede 2010, 7-9.)

Understanding one's own culture and that of the others can be challenging since all the dimensions of a culture such as values and habits do not show outside similarly and as obviously as e.g. language and dressing. The biggest collisions between cultures are happening due to the invisible parts of different cultures. (SAK 2007, 11; Yli-Kaitala et al. 2013, 15.)

Orientation that takes multiculturalism into consideration brings along certain challenges. Firstly, the new employee needs to be familiarized with the dominant culture and its unwritten rules. The person responsible for the orientation needs to be trained for the orientation as well. Secondly, the language needs to be taken into consideration since using language other than one's mother tongue could be more time consuming. Lastly, the whole work community needs to be "trained" for the multicultural environment. (Korhonen & Puukari 2013, 339.)

#### **4.2.2 Challenges of multicultural environment**

In many cultures religion is an essential part of people's identity. Religious habits, in some religions more than in others, can appear as a way of dressing, way of speaking and in the daily routines of a person which can lead to preconceptions at a workplace. (Yli-Kaitala et al 2013, 19.)

At a work place different cultures can be seen in various ways. One of these is the attitude of an employee towards one's work, which can be driven by identity. In certain cultures employees feel that they are primarily responsible for themselves, whereas in other cultures being part of a group and success a group are considered more important. In cultures where community plays more important role, an employee can prioritize one's family before the work duties. Finland is considered to be part of western culture, which can also be seen as individualist culture. For Finns it is normal to act primarily as an individual at a workplace, therefore, work and matters of private life are kept separate from each other. (Koulutuskeskus Salpaus 2007, 8; Yli-Kaitala et al. 2013, 17.)

Other way that the cultural differences appear in work life situations, is relationship with time. Other cultures consider agreed schedules to be binding and being late might be considered as an offence. On the contrary, in certain cultures schedules and time are considered to be more directional than binding. In Finnish work culture schedules have an important role and punctuality is appreciated thus, it is important to keep to the things agreed upon. (Infopankki 2014; Yli-Kaitala et al. 2013, 17.)

The relationship between the employee and the employer can be seen differently as well. In other cultures superior and the subordinate are seen as equals whereas in other cultures the relationship is more hierarchical. In these more hierarchical cultures the employee expects instructions and management from the employer. Employees' initiative may differ in cultures, since in some cultures it is automatically expected from the employees whereas in others it is considered passing the superior and can be seen as rebellious. (Yli-Kaitala et al. 2013, 17-18.)

Finnish work culture can be seen as less hierarchical, since it is common that regardless of their position in the organization everyone is called by their first name. On top of that, it is common that the superiors do not monitor their subordinates constantly. The employees are expected to decide the details of their work themselves after the superior has given the task. (Infopankki 2014.) Additionally, it is easy for the subordinates and the superiors to approach each other and status is rarely shown at a workplace (Kazi 2014).

There are also variations on the impression of gender roles at a workplace and for example, a male working for a female superior might be new in certain cultures (Yli-Kaitala et al. 2013, 18). For Finnish work culture, the gender equality is self-evident and gender-based discrimination is prohibited by law. At a workplace it is common to see both male and female in management positions. (SAK 2007, 73.)

### **4.3 Dimensions of national cultures**

According to Hofstede et al. (2010, 29-31) in the first half of the twentieth century social anthropology created a conviction according to which all the human societies face the same basic problems. Only the answers to the problems differ. Based on this conviction and earlier studies on the topic, professor Geert Hofstede conducted a study of how culture influences the values in the workplace by analyzing a large database of employee value scores collected within IBM between 1967 and 1973. The data covered more than 70 countries. (The Hofstede Centre 2014a.) The basic problems of societies revealed by the study represent the dimensions of national cultures which can be divided into four main dimensions. These dimensions include:

- power distance (social inequality, authority)
- collectivism versus individualism (relationship between the group and the individual)
- femininity versus masculinity (the social and emotional implications)
- uncertainty avoidance (ways of dealing with uncertainty and ambiguity, control of aggression and expression of emotions)

A dimension is the point of view of one culture which can be measured relative to the view of the other cultures. These different dimensions form a four-dimensional model of differences among national cultures. In 2010, two new dimensions were defined based on a research by Michael Minkov. The fifth dimension is referred as pragmatic (long term) versus normative (short term) and the sixth dimension is called indulgence versus restraint. (The Hofstede Centre 2014a.)

Trompenaar and Hampden-Turner (1998, 8-10) examined cultural differences as well and defined three main categories: relationships with people (universalism versus particularism, individualism versus communitarianism, specific versus diffuse, neutral versus emotional and achievement versus ascription), attitudes to time (sequential time versus synchronous time) and attitudes to the environment (internal direction versus outer direction).

Additionally, Lewis (2006, 33-34, 42) studied the cultural differences from a different point of view and created the LMR method which divides cultures into three main categories: linear-active (punctuality, planning ahead, job-oriented), multi-active (people-oriented, not punctual, changing plans) and reactive cultures (flexible, people-oriented).

This study concentrates on Hofstede's theory on four-dimensional model since it is one of the most known and most cited studies of cultural dimensions. Furthermore, it fits to the purpose well since it is based on the examination of the results of a world-wide survey of employee values.

#### **4.3.1 Power distance**

Power distance answers the question on how different cultures handle the fact that people are unequal. Inequality can be seen in every society. Even in the simplest forms of societies there are the people who are stronger or more intelligent than the others. Furthermore, there are people with more wealth and power thus they have the ability to influence the behavior of others more than vice versa. The questions on expressing disagreement with superiors, perceptions of superior's actual decision-making style and preference for superior's decision-making style were used in order to gather information on the power distance dimension. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 54-56.)

In countries with low power distance, where the employees are usually not seen as very afraid of their superiors, there is less dependence on superiors and consultative decision-making style or employee consultation is preferred. On the contrary, in the large-power-distance countries employees are more afraid of disagreeing with their superior and the dependence of subordinates on superiors is significant. Thus power distance can be

defined as “the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally”. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 60-61.)

Based on observations, in large-power-distance countries superiors and subordinates consider each other unequal which at workplace can be seen as hierarchical systems where the power is centralized for few and subordinates expect to be told what to do. In countries in the opposite site of the power distance scale the hierarchical system does not play such an important role and the organizations are relatively decentralized and superior and subordinates consider each other more equal. Low and high power distance can be seen at workplace for instance in salaries and status symbols. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 73-74.)

Finland scores low in the power distance dimension which means equality between the subordinates and superiors. Independence of the employees is likely and the hierarchical system only exists for the convenience and the power in the organizations is decentralized. In Finland the relationship between the superior and the subordinate is informal and on first name basis. Superiors trust on their subordinates' experience and the subordinates expect to be consulted before any major decisions are made. (The Hofstede Centre 2014b.)

#### **4.3.2 Collectivism versus individualism**

Societies can be divided into collectivist and individualist societies. In collective societies the interest of the group prevails over the interest of the individual. On the contrary, in the individualist societies the interests of the individual prevail over the interests of the group. This dimension explains the cultural differences how people see themselves in the society and whether people's self-image is defined in terms of “I” or “We”. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 90-91.)

Majority of people live in collective societies where belonging into a group plays an important role. Family is the first so called in-group where people belong and in collectivist societies it is likely that one's family includes not only the parents and the other children, but grandparents, uncles and aunts as well. “Collectivism pertains to societies in which people from birth onward are intergraded into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty”. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 92.)

In work life in the collectivist societies the in-group may affect the choice of occupation and for instance the hiring process as well. It is more likely for the children to follow their

parents' footsteps in occupation and the employers prefer hiring people who they already know. People are not hired just as an individual but rather a person who is part of an in-group and is expected to act according to the interests of the group. When dealing with business relationships it is important to first create the trust before doing business with people outside the in-group. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 119.)

For people coming from collective societies having a job that allows training and improvement opportunities is commonly appreciated. In addition, the working condition, such as adequate lighting and working space, should be at a good level. People from collective societies also appreciate a job where their skills and abilities can be fully used. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 93.)

Contrariwise in individualist societies groups have not reached such an important role for instance families usually include only parents and the other children. In individual societies "the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after him- or herself and his or her immediate family" (Hofstede et al. 2010, 92). In work life, employees are anticipated to act according to their own interests rather than the interests of a group. Unlike in collectivist societies, family relationships in work place are not considered desirable as they might create conflict of interests (Hofstede et al. 2010, 120).

For people from individualist societies having a job, which allows a person to have sufficient time for one's personal life and family is appreciated. Additionally, the work needs to be challenging enough so the people can feel personal sense of accomplishment. The work ought to also have enough freedom in order to adapt one's personal approach to the job. (Hofstede et al 2010, 92.)

On Hofstede's scale of collectivism versus individualism Finland is considered to be an individualistic society and therefore individuals are only expected to take care of themselves and their immediate family. In work, the relationship between the employer and the employee is based on mutual advantage and possible promotions and bonuses are linked to an individual's performance. (The Hofstede Centre 2014b.)

#### **4.3.3 Femininity versus masculinity**

Hofstede's third dimension is called femininity versus masculinity and it reveals what are the dominant values that drive a society. The dimension reveals what motivates people, wanting to be the best or liking what you do. Masculine societies are driven by competition, achievement and success, being the best in the field, whereas in feminine societies dominant values include caring for other and quality of life. (The Hofstede Centre 2014b.)

Hofstede (2010, 140) defined masculinity as follows: “a society is called masculine when emotional gender role are clearly distinct: men are supposed to be assertive, tough and focused on material success where as women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life.” In masculine societies assertiveness is more likely whereas feminine societies are considered more modest. According to Hofstede “a society is called feminine when emotional gender roles overlap: both men and women are supposed to be modest, tender, and concerned with the quality of life” (Hofstede et al. 2010, 140).

The contradiction of masculinity and femininity can be seen also in work life; in masculine societies people live in order to work while in feminine societies people work in order to live. For people in feminine societies leisure time is preferred over money unlike in masculine societies. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 170.) Additionally masculinity and femininity can emerge at workplace at conflict situations. In masculine cultures the conflicts should be resolved by a good fight whereas in feminine cultures negotiations and compromising are preferred when dealing with conflicts. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 166.)

In this dimension Finland is considered a feminine society thus the focus of the Finnish society is on “work to live”. In work life, negotiations and compromises are used in order to resolve conflicts and leisure time and flexibility are favored over money. (The Hofstede Centre 2014b.)

#### **4.3.4 Uncertainty avoidance**

The dimension of uncertainty avoidance explains how different societies deal with uncertainty in everyday life and how technology, law and religion are used to avoid uncertainty. Uncertainty avoidance reveals whether the different societies choose to try to control the future or just let it happen. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 189.)

Hofstede (2010, 191) states that “uncertainty avoidance is the extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by ambiguous or unknown situations.” In societies with higher uncertainty avoidance it is common to have different laws, rules and regulations controlling people since they feel more comfortable in structured environments having lived in them since childhood. On the opposite side of the dimension, people in societies with weak uncertainty avoidance do not consider formal rules as a necessity rather a horror, and rules should only be established in case of absolute necessity. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 209-210.)

According to Hofstede's study, (The Hofstede Centre 2014b) Finland scores high on this dimension and thus prefers to avoid uncertainty. In the Finnish society punctuality is appreciated and expected from others and rules are obeyed. The idea "time is money" is common and people have the urge to work hard and be busy. In the Finnish society security is important element as well.

## **5 Research methods**

This chapter presents the research approach, the data collection methods, as well as the questionnaire that were utilized to find out answers to the questions presented by the commissioning party. The respondents' backgrounds are also discussed in the last subchapter.

### **5.1 Qualitative research**

Qualitative research is considered best for studying a specific subject in depth, therefore the concentration is on understanding the individual perceptions and seeking insights. Quantitative research, on the other hand, is best for sampling large results and making generalizations. In quantitative research, the collection of facts and the study of relationships between one set of facts and another, are important. These results are quantified. (Bell 2005, 7-8; Myers 2013, 8-9.)

The main reason for choosing qualitative research approach for this thesis is that the commissioning party wants to find out the opinions and experiences of the interviewees in depth. It would have been more difficult to create the questionnaire in a quantitative manner, since there are cultural differences that need to be considered. For example, interviewees might answer open questions more freely than multiple choice questions, since the options might be limited and not in perfect accordance with the interviewees' real perceptions or ideas. So, this might result in picking the answer closest to their viewpoints, instead of expressing one's genuine thoughts. Therefore, by picking the qualitative method, we wanted to avoid leading the mindsets of the respondents by allowing them to answer the questions freely and express their opinions with their own words. This would not have been possible with quantitative research.

### **5.2 Data collection and the questionnaire**

The collection of the empirical data was done with an electronic interview questionnaire in Webropol. The questionnaire was compiled in cooperation with the Personnel Unit of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and was based on the research questions and the theory part of the thesis, but also on the advice received from the thesis supervisor. The reason for choosing the electronic questionnaire was due to the geographical locations of the interviewees.

The questionnaire link was included in the cover letter, which was sent to the Finnish foreign missions by email in the beginning of November 2014. The email was asked to be forwarded directly into the attention of the target group, which was the locally engaged, non-Finnish speaking employees working in the Finnish missions. There are

approximately 400 people that belonged to the potential target group, therefore our initial sample was 10-15 %, or 40-60 answers. The recipients were given three weeks to fill the questionnaire and after the first two weeks, a reminder was sent by email to the missions. In total, the questionnaire was answered by thirty (30) recipients, which was not as much as expected, but enough to get an insight on the matter.

The questionnaire consisted of two parts: online marketing communications and orientation of foreign employees. The emphasis of the marketing part was the employer image of the Finnish mission and the job ad. There were four questions related to finding out information on the image of the Finnish missions as an employer; the recipients were asked on the employer image of Finnish missions, what made them apply to work in a Finnish mission and whether their initial expectations of working came true. Secondly, the interviewees were asked how and where they found the mission's job ad (if they applied for the work through a job ad) and how would they evaluate that ad (how interesting did they find it).

The orientation part of the questionnaire concentrated on the foreign employee orientation and the working culture in a Finnish mission. The recipients were asked to describe and evaluate the orientation they received when they started working in a Finnish mission. Lastly, questions were asked related to the working culture with Finnish people, as well as concerning the orientation of working with the Finns. The questionnaire together with the cover letter can be found as attachments of this thesis (appendices 2 & 3).

### **5.3 Background of the respondents**

In order to find out the cultural differences and similarities among the survey results, and to recognize how the geographical changes impact the way of thinking, we used the cultural clusters categorization defined by the GLOBE-project. This project identifies ten cultural clusters in the world: Southern Asia, Anglo cultures, Arab cultures, Germanic Europe, Latin Europe, Eastern Europe, Confucian Asia, Latin America, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Nordic Europe. (Wikipedia 2015.) In this report, this classification is utilized in the sixth and seventh chapter.

The locally hired employees who answered the survey represent the following cultural clusters: Anglo Cultures, Arab Cultures, Confucian Asia, Eastern Europe, Southern Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. As the questionnaire was forwarded to all the locally hired foreign employees, the respondents represent all the different employee categories thus, work in various duties such as assistants, drivers, housekeepers, project coordinators as well as special advisors. The age distribution of the survey respondents varied from 25 to 60

years old and 60 percent were females whereas 30 percent were males. 10 percent of the respondents left this question open.

The terms interviewee and respondent are utilized in this report to refer to the target group; the locally engaged employees working in the Finnish missions.

## 6 Findings

This chapter discusses the responses gained from the survey. The chapter is divided similarly as the survey questionnaire; the first two subchapters cover the results for the online marketing communications. The first subchapter discusses the findings of the Finnish missions' employer image and the second subchapter covers the job ad. The last three subchapters discuss the results for the foreign employee orientation; these chapters cover the expectation and content of foreign employee orientation in the missions as well as the Finnish work culture. Direct quotations from the interviewees are also included throughout the text.

### 6.1 Finnish missions' employer image

The respondents were first asked to explain why they chose to apply to work in the Finnish mission. The thirty (30) interviewees all had various reasons for initially applying to work in the missions; however, the results can be roughly divided under five main themes:

- the image of Finland
- previous link with Finland
- seeking new experiences
- interest in international relations
- other reasons

The interviewees consider that Finland has an overall good image as a country and the words democratic, peaceful and well-organized were repeatedly listed by many of the respondents. They trust that the Finnish missions also pursue these positive attributes as employers, and therefore, it was their main reason to apply to work in a Finnish environment. It was also stated that the Finnish are considered to be highly-educated and respectful towards human rights and gender equality, which reflect on good working conditions, competitive salary level and a reliable employer image.

*“Finnish mission is one of the well-recognized and respected missions; and is a valued donor in the development cooperation in the country”*

*“Many people think, as Finland is a welfare country, that the Finnish employer is reliable, reasonable and the work is well paid”*

Also, some of the interviewees applied for the job because they had a previous link with Finland that arouse interest towards applying to work in a Finnish mission. These interviewees mentioned e.g. having Finnish relatives or acquaintances, previous work experience with Finns or with other Nordics or that they merely had personal interest towards Finland or learning the Finnish language.

The third big theme the interviewees listed was the interest to get new experiences and to improve their skills, as any experience gained from embassy work is highly respected in all fields. Also, the interest towards learning the Finnish culture was mentioned. The respondents' previous interest in international relations and the wish to gain new experiences from working in an international atmosphere were other big reasons for wishing to work in a Finnish environment. Finally, there were also some interviewees who did not exactly choose to work in a Finnish mission, but applied after finding out that there was a vacancy that corresponded to their expertise or what they were looking for at that time.

When the interviewees were asked to describe the employer image of the Finnish missions, they repeated the fact that the good image of Finland, as well as the prestigious impression of the diplomatic work, both positively reflects the Finnish missions' employer image, which is also very positive. The interviewees described Finland as a law-abiding welfare country that is actively involved in humanitarian activities. This is why the general image of the Finnish missions was depicted being high-class, reliable, well-paid and equal employers, with good working conditions. Some also mentioned that the Finnish missions and the Finnish in general are very business-oriented, organized and disciplined, yet helpful, loyal, and interactive.

*"In general, it (Finnish mission) is considered a high-class employer; others see its employees as dignified members in the society"*

In addition, the respondents were asked to give words that, in their opinion, would best describe the employer image of the Finnish missions. The most utilized words were stable and reliable, but also flexible, motivating, supportive, accommodative, polite and open to suggestions were mentioned. Again, as Finland is perceived as a peaceful and stable country by the interviewees, it also reflects on the Finnish missions' very positive employer image. Interviewees respected the fact that they could enjoy creative freedom at their position; many mentioned that they can suggest new ideas and their suggestions are supported. This makes them feel respected and motivated at work.

*"Good working environment, which is very flexible and open to people's suggestions"*

However, there were few interviewees who pointed out that the missions follow rules and regulations too loosely. Either some necessary rules are missing, or they are not correctly obeyed. In addition, one mentioned the amount of bureaucracy and also, one respondent brought up the stubbornness and unfairness as negative aspects.

*“The relevant rules are not in place, and even if they are in place, they are not implemented properly”*

The respondents were also asked describe whether their initial expectations of working in the Finnish mission matches with the reality. According to the results, the job had mainly met their expectations. The main reasons provided by the interviewees were the good working conditions and fixed working hours, perks, equality at work and the variety of working tasks.

Few stated that each employee can participate in the decision-making and they also have the opportunity to develop one’s career and expertise, by taking part in different trainings and courses financed by the employer. In addition, the importance of good working environment and supportive colleagues has made a positive impact on how the interviewees had integrated into working in a Finnish mission. Some interviewees also mentioned that the employees are treated well, the salaries are paid on time and the terms agreed in the job contract are being respected. Furthermore, one mentioned that it is motivating to notice how the political and trade relations between Finland and the host country had strengthened significantly, as a result of their hard work.

*“Working in a Finnish mission meets my expectations to the full extend. The tasks are reasonable. Besides, I have freedom to participate in planning procedures etc.”*

*“In my opinion, it meets my expectations, because I am treated respectful, equal and friendly”*

Despite the mainly positive outcome, some of the interviewees commented that their initial expectations were merely somewhat fulfilled. Few mentioned that there is room for improvement, as the salary and compensations are not in accordance with the work load and the other missions’ level in the host country. Some said it is hard to be able to cover the costs of living with the salary. Also, the lack of hierarchy among the local staff was brought up by one of the respondents.

*“My job meets my expectations in the practice of equality, but the compensation is a bit low. It’s not conducive enough to sustain the standard of living”*

## **6.2 Job ad**

In terms of the job ad, the interviewees were asked where they found the job ad or from where did they hear about the open position. Since only a few of the interviewees had actually seen a job ad concerning the position they had applied for in the mission, the

amount of answers remained smaller than initially anticipated. A half of the interviewees informed having heard about the open position via an acquaintance or an ex-colleague. A few had also received a personal offer for the job via email or mail, as they had e.g. previously participated in projects with the mission, or had previous experience of diplomatic work.

However, there were four (4) interviewees who had applied for the open position after noticing an ad for the job. Two (2) had found the ad from the mission's website and two (2) from job posting websites. Among them, one even mentioned having followed the mission's site in hopes for finding an ad for open post. Newspaper was another channel through which a couple of the interviewees had found the ad and got interested in applying for work in a Finnish mission.

In one of the survey questions, the respondents compared the job ad of the mission (through which they had applied for the mission) with other job ads they had seen before. And, as mentioned before, most of the interviewees found out about the job through a friend and therefore, there were merely a few that actually had seen a job ad before applying. However, the interviewees who answered the question on "what word(s) would from your experience best describe the job ad compared to other job ads?", stated the following:

*"Demanding job; the salary and the job are not in balance"* (website ad)

*"This was very concise and brief, yet clear what it looks for and what sort of expertise does the applicant require for the job, which without any delay, one would explore more and do further research on the organization's priority and portfolio. I did the same. Whereas most of the ads I have seen so far include vague information, too many details and it is a bit complicated to understand"* (newspaper ad)

*"The job was posted on the website and it was a bit difficult to find it"* (informed by a friend)

*"Challenging"* (embassy announcement to other embassies)

*"To the point, it was normal and precise"* (local paper ad)

*"A good one, but with more tasks and responsibilities"* (job announcement website)

As a summary, the interviewees considered the job ads normal, however, one did mention that it was concise, but it is a good way to arouse the interest of the applicant. Also, one

said to have heard from a friend that the mission is looking for a candidate, but the interviewee found it difficult to locate the ad from the mission's website.

Next, the respondents stated the main factors that grabbed their attention in the job ad. The name and reputation of the potential employer, the good reputation of Finland, the ability to work in diplomatic environment, interesting job description and tasks, excellent compensation and also, their own interest towards embassy work or previous experience of it, were mentioned by the interviewees.

Lastly, according to the interviewees, a good job ad would most importantly include the precise details concerning the position, such as the title, sector, academic requirements, core competencies, supervisors and colleagues, but also information on the salary and benefits, expectations of the employer and the location of the workplace. The philosophy of the workplace, period of the post, due date for the application and development opportunities were also listed important for good job ads. One interviewee suggested that in addition to all the necessary information in the ad, it should be written in a more relaxed manner.

### **6.3 Expectations of orientation**

The questionnaire included three questions considering orientations of the locally hired employees. In the first question the respondents were asked to share their expectations on the orientation in the Finnish mission.

The responses revealed that in general people had either good or no specific expectations for the orientation in Finnish missions. Some of the expectations of the respondents were affected by their opinion and image of the employer. Few of the respondents stated that it did not matter so much if there was orientation or not since the mission was considered to be prestigious employer and the job was well paid. Additionally, the respondents were just eager to start working, thus the orientation did not play such an important role for them since they would start working either with or without it. According to some respondents, the reason why their expectations for orientation in the mission were good and rather high, was the fact that in their previous work places they had not received any kind of orientation to their tasks but started working, while gradually learning their duties on the way.

*“To my mind it does not really matter in case of work at diplomatic missions – it is well paid and prestigious job any way”*

*“No expectations just anxious to start working”*

*“Very professional”*

*“Much better than in my previous job”*

There were also respondents who had no specific expectations for the orientation. They merely expected to receive the basic orientation as in other work places. According to them, basic orientation would e.g. include introduction to new duties, skills needed for the duties, working premises, work equipment, working hours and colleagues.

*“Work in a friendly and professional environment”*

*“Well equipped working place, adequate premises and good friendly atmosphere”*

At the same time there were people who had higher expectations on the orientation, since the job in question was in a diplomatic mission. The respondents stated that before they started working, they expected to get a lot of information in a short period of time in order to learn their tasks in the mission. Furthermore, the respondents stated that expectations for orientation for security related issues were higher than in previous work places due to the fact that the employer was a diplomatic mission.

#### **6.4 Content of orientation**

In the second and third survey questions concerning orientation in the missions, the respondents were asked to describe the orientation they received compared to their previous jobs and their expectations. Additionally, the respondents were asked to share their opinion if there was something lacking in the orientation or if the respondents would improve something related to the orientation.

Some of the respondents stated that they did not actually receive any kind of orientation to their duties when they first started working in the mission. They were expecting to receive thorough orientation within the first week of arriving to the mission. Instead, the orientation was organized gradually after the employee started working in the mission, or in some cases the employees had to learn all their duties day by day on the job.

*“I was actually expecting to have in-depth induction within the first week of entering into the mission...Instead I had to explore and learn the things gradually. This was a bit challenging to catch up and get familiar with the new work environment and working modality though had enough familiarity of the sector”*

*“It was here on the job training, day by day you learn”*

One of the respondents wrote that the mission did not provide any induction package for the new employees neither they had any plan how to organize the induction process. The terms induction and orientation are often used as synonyms though, their meanings differ. The difference of the two terms is defined in chapter 4.1 Definition of orientation. Additionally, the new employee did not have a possibility to be trained by the predecessor or receive any notes from the predecessor which would have helped when commencing the new duties. According to few of the respondents, although they did not receive any specific orientation when they started working in the mission, it did not actually matter since they already had experience on similar duties from their previous jobs. In addition, there were respondents who stated that although they did not receive any orientation handouts or materials, they had the possibility learn with the assistance of the colleagues.

On top of the lack of induction materials, some of the respondents stated that there is not as much follow up for the orientation as there should be. According to one of the respondents, when there is no follow up, it takes time for the possible issues or improvement ideas for the orientation process to reach the employer, or they might even become forgotten over time. One respondent also mentioned that the employer should additionally make the expectations of the job clear for the employees in the orientation process and inform them how they will be assessed on their performance. Some of the respondents think that their workload might be too excessive for one person, at least compared to the compensation. Furthermore, there were suggestions to combine the Finnish culture more with the culture of the host country in the orientation process.

Though there were some respondents who did not receive any orientation, most of the respondents were satisfied with the orientation organized by the mission. There were many respondents who were happy to receive at least some orientation since their previous employer did not provide any. According to the respondents the orientation was very good, professional, positive and decisive. The orientation covered all the possible tasks the employee needed to know, as well as the new skills needed in the job. Additionally, few respondents mentioned colleagues, premises, equipment as part of good orientation. Few of the respondents stated that since the orientation was organized so well that it helped the new employees to adapt to the work environment easier than expected. In addition, the orientation was kept simple and straightforward.

*“Very professional and positive”*

*It (orientation) was pleasant, quick and decisive”*

*“Very good as I had no orientation at my previous job”*

## 6.5 Finnish work culture

One of the survey questions asked the respondents to describe the Finnish work culture compared to the one in their own countries. The results of the questionnaire revealed that amongst the respondents, the Finnish work culture was, in general, considered rather good. There were certain characters that many of the respondents mentioned as their opinion of Finnish culture.

According to some of the respondents, Finnish work culture is freer than the one they are used to and it allows the employees to have more responsibilities. For some of the respondents giving more responsibilities for the employees was considered good since they learn how to be more responsible and in addition, they adopt new ways of working. At the same time, according to other respondents giving too much responsibility is not necessarily the best way to work in their culture since the employees are not used to or do not want to take too much responsibility. One of the respondents also stated that with more responsibilities the Finns usually work or are expected to work more individually than in the local culture thus for the local employees it might seem as if the Finns are not taking others' work into consideration as much as they are expected.

*"The Finnish work culture is orientated to work independently – alone"*

*"I would appreciate if the Finns have more concerns with other's work"*

On top of responsibility, equality came across in many of the answers of the questionnaire. Respondents mention that the Finnish work culture does not have hierarchical characters, thus the work environment is more relaxed. The employees are able to talk freely with their superiors and they have the freedom to express their opinions and share their ideas. The employer treats the employees as equals by giving them more responsibilities and freedom as well. In addition, it was mentioned that there is not only equality in expressing opinions between the employee and the superior but amongst the locally hired and Finnish employees as well. According to a respondent, the opinions of the locally hired employees are also taken into consideration and they are equal to all the other opinions and ideas expressed in the mission.

*"Not much hierarchy"*

*"I don't have long distance with my boss, I can share my opinion, I can give my own ideas"*

*“Much more freedom to express your opinion, but on the other side much more responsibility and duties”*

Some respondents also mentioned that compared to their previous jobs, in Finnish work culture the employer cares a lot about the wellbeing of the employees. This is seen for example as enhanced cooperation between the teams and in ongoing training of the staff. Few of the respondents stated that they had the opportunity to participate in trainings in Finland as well not only in the host country which was seen as a huge advantage to the employees to learn more about Finnish work culture and local customs.

One of the characters of the Finnish work culture that was mentioned most time in the answers was punctuality. The responses reveal that Finns and Finnish work culture are considered to be very time conscious and always punctual which is considered to be very professional. In addition, many of the respondents stated that following rules and regulations precisely is one of the main character that Finnish work culture has.

*“They (Finns) manage their time very well”*

*“I so much appreciate the Finnish work culture – deadlines are met and colleagues are very much punctual”*

*“Planning things, following regulations matches Finnish work culture”*

Lastly, the word hardworking was used often by the respondents when asked to describe the Finnish work culture. Although the work environment is considered relaxed, people are still expected to meet their objectives as agreed and work hard.

*“The Finnish are hardworking people”*

*“The environment is very relaxed but one needs to meet their objectives and work hard”*

*“Finns are hardworking people and results can be seen immediately”*

*“One of the culture I like specially it is people and their devotion to their work”*

In conclusion, there are five different themes related to Finnish work culture which arise from the responses of the survey: equality, punctuality, responsibility, following rules and hardworking people. At least one of these characters was mentioned in almost all the responses. From the locally hired employees' point of view Finnish work culture is very

good and the above mentioned characters of the culture are valued amongst the respondents.

Last question of the survey asked the respondents if they received any orientation specifically to the Finnish work culture and what did it include or should have included in the respondents' opinion.

Almost half of the respondents had received some kind of orientation to Finnish work culture and its habits. Some stated that there was no separate orientation to the actual work culture itself but it was part of the whole orientation process. Additionally many of the respondents learnt the main characters of the Finnish work culture during their first weeks at the mission with the help of their colleagues and by working. Some of the respondents stated that the culture-related orientation was organized as a part of an event or training courses the mission organized for the employees. In addition, few of the respondents had the opportunity to learn about the Finnish work culture by attending training courses in Finland. According to the respondents during the orientation they learnt about characters of the Finnish work culture such as equality, punctuality, honesty and responsibility as well as working with the Finns in general.

As part of the question related to orientation of Finnish work culture, the respondents were asked to give suggestions what the culture-related orientation should include in their opinion. Some of the responses stated that they would have appreciated an orientation package about Finland which would e.g. include information about the country, population and nature of the country.

Half of the respondents said that they did not receive orientation related to culture. There were respondents who mentioned that despite the lack of culture related orientation they managed to learn about the Finnish work culture through their colleagues. Few of the respondents also mentioned that their own culture is very similar to the Finnish one so there was not that much to learn.

*"...there was no hand over to me which was a bit strange but assistance from colleagues and the fact that we do have an open door policy help a lot"*

*"I learned it (Finnish work culture) through gradually working together with Finns people over the last 2 years"*

In conclusion, approximately half of the respondents had received some sort of orientation related to Finnish culture, for example as a part of training course or during the orientation to their duties. The respondents found the culture related orientation very good and

instructive in general. Although, some of the missions did not organize culture-related orientation, the employees still had the opportunity to learn about the Finnish work culture with the assistance of their colleagues.

## **7 Discussion**

The seventh chapter of this research presents the conclusion of the survey results and discusses the possible development areas and proposals for the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland and the Finnish foreign missions. The chapters are divided similarly as earlier in the research into subchapters of online marketing communications and orientation of foreign employees. Furthermore, the validity and reliability of the research are presented. Lastly, the overall thesis process is evaluated.

### **7.1 Conclusions**

As stated in the objectives of the thesis, the commissioning party does not know much about the recruitment process performed by the Finnish missions abroad. This is why they wanted to get further information on the online marketing communications and orientation performed by the missions. With the help of this study, they wanted to find out what kind of an employer image the Finnish missions have and via which channels the Finnish missions market themselves as employers and their open positions to the potential candidates.

In addition, another objective of this study was to investigate how the locally engaged personnel in the Finnish missions is oriented and integrated to their duties and the Finnish work culture, which might be in many cases the opposite of the host country. Furthermore, the purpose of the thesis was to identify what is Finnish work culture from the foreigners' point of view and how does it appear.

The conclusions for the online marketing communications are divided into two sub-chapters as previously: the employer image and job ad. The conclusions for the orientation part are found from the subchapters of orientation of foreign employees and Finnish work culture.

#### **7.1.1 The employer image**

The general opinion of the locally engaged personnel on the Finnish missions' employer image is that it is very positive. They consider the image of Finland trustworthy, and they also feel a sense of stability while working in a Finnish mission. Many mentioned that their initial expectations of working in the mission were fulfilled, as they are feeling respected and trusted by their employer. The respondents can enjoy the freedom to be creative and to participate in decision-making, as well in suggesting new improvement ideas. Despite the mainly positive feedback, there were some issues the interviewees wanted to point

out: the rules and regulations are not obeyed as they should be and that the salary compared with the work load is not sufficient.

The survey results did not reveal anything very unexpected of the Finnish missions' employer image, therefore by categorizing the interviewees' answers e.g. according to age, sex and culture, I wanted to find out whether there are any distinctly repetitive similarities in the responses.

From the thirty (30) interviewees, eighteen (18) of them were women and nine (9) were men (three (3) respondents did not answer to this). Both men and women listed the Finland's good image and reputation and also, their wish to gain new experiences, as their reason to apply for the job in the Finnish mission. However, according to the results (the reason for applying for the mission), women seem to value the stability and peacefulness, good working environment and equality of the employer, more than the interviewed men. In terms of the job corresponding to their initial expectations of it, men and women did not show any significant differences. Both see their expectations pretty much fulfilled in terms of the job satisfaction: they are able to develop their career by participating in different courses and trainings; they trust their employer and thus, feel motivated. Men mostly commented on their comfort of the working environment itself and the how they get along in the work community, whereas women focused more on listing factors concerning their job description and how they were treated at work. As opposed to all the positive comments, among men and women, there were also few remarks concerning the salary level being too low to cover the costs of living.

The age distribution of the interviewees switched from 25 up until 60 years of age. In order to find out the potential differences between the different age groups, the respondents were divided into three age groups as depicted in the Table 1 below. The same table also shows the distribution of the different sexes among the age groups.

Table 1. Interviewee distribution among age and gender

Age group	Amount	Females (in the age group)	Males (in the age group)
20 – 29 (Group A)	1	1	-
30 – 39 (Group A)	11	8	2
40 – 49 (Group B)	8	7	-
50 – 59 (Group C)	10	2	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>9</b>

The image of Finland, throughout the different age groups and sexes, revealed to be quite the same, but there were noticeable differences in the job satisfaction of the different age groups. When the interviewees were asked how their expectations of the job came true, the respondents in the group A all said that their expectations of the job were fulfilled and that they were very satisfied with working for a Finnish employer. Among all, they mentioned that the work schedule and work conditions are comfortable and they feel respected. In the group B, the general opinion was divided fifty-fifty between respondents who were very satisfied and respondents who were somewhat satisfied. The general consensus in this group is that it is safe and equal to work in the Finnish mission, but the satisfaction on the salary level is lower than in the group A. The C group's opinions were also divided similarly; some said their expectations were fulfilled due to being able to develop their career and learn new things, but quite a few mentioned that the salary compared with the costs of living was lacking. These changes might result from the fact that the respondents representing the groups B and C have longer working experiences probably from various positions and with various employers, which gives them more knowledge towards identifying the drawbacks of the workplace or the employer.

The group A was seemingly more satisfied with the level of the salary than the groups B and C. The respondents of the group A seem to cherish more of stability and reliable schedules from the employer. Group B, on the other hand, respects equality and the good work conditions. C group expects to get new skills and new ways to improve their career. What all of the age groups had in common, was the search for a pleasant and reliable work environment and to be treated with respect by the work community and the employer.

In order to determine how cultural aspects might have influenced the results of this study, the respondents' were divided into cultural clusters defined by the GLOBE-project. There are ten different cultural clusters identified in this project, but in this research we are using the following six of them: Southern Asia, Anglo cultures, Arab cultures, Eastern Europe, Confucian Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. (Wikipedia 2015.) With the help of this classification, it becomes easier to find out whether the different cultures and backgrounds of the respondents have a certain impact on the results.

The interviewees representing the Southern Asia cluster define the Finnish missions as high-class employers. The missions are respected and influential in the development sector. They are also considered peaceful, well-organized and equal, but many did mention the low compensations, which was already presented before. The Anglo cultures, on the other hand, seem satisfied with their compensations, and they consider their expectations fulfilled as they are allowed to be creative. The interviewees from the Arab

cultures highlighted the good working environment, the value of human rights and high standard of living as their visions of Finland and working with the Finns. The expectations of this group were mainly achieved due to good work ethics, however, it was mentioned that in some cases foreign employees in the missions are not considered as big part of the work community as the Finnish.

The interviewees representing the cluster of Eastern Europe were all happy with the work. The convenient work schedules, the reliability and tranquility, as well as the ability to participate in free trainings were pointed out by many. The steady work schedules were also mentioned among the respondents of Confucian Asia. In this group, the respect on human rights, labor laws and gender equality were listed, and also one mentioned that it is good that women can still work after having children. As a negative aspect, it was mentioned that the missions do not seem to follow the regulations very strictly. Lastly, among the respondents from the Sub-Saharan Africa, the image of Finnish missions is that they are actively involved in humanitarian activities, and that the working environment is supportive and accommodative. Many mentioned, in regards to their expectations of the work, that they have good opportunities to further develop their career with trainings and free courses.

As a conclusion, there were five aspects repeatedly occurring in the results:

- the following of human rights and labor laws
- development cooperation and humanitarian actions
- equality
- reliability, peace and safety of the employer
- career development opportunities

The interviewees with the background from Southern Asia, Confucian Asia or from the Arab cultures, all tend to consider the following of the human rights and labor laws very important in terms of a good employer image. These three aforementioned clusters together with the Sub-Saharan Africa also value development cooperation and humanitarian actions from their employer. The importance of equality was mentioned by the two clusters of Asian backgrounds and the reliability of the employer was listed by the respondents from the Arab cultures, Southern Asia as well as Eastern Europe. The career development opportunities were, on the other hand, considered important among all the cultural clusters.

Cultural backgrounds, well-being, the level of education, women's rights, the gap between the rich and the poor; are just few examples of the factors affecting people's perceptions of employers. In Finnish working environment, the equality and the good work conditions are almost self-evident; however, people from entirely different cultures might consider

them extremely valuable. The employees' age differences also affect their perceptions: group A (ages 20-39) wishes stability and continuity from their employer, maybe due to having a family or small children to take care of. B group (ages 40-49) respects gender equality and good conditions to work, but is not satisfied with the salary level. C group (50-59) wishes to maintain their level of expertise through training and courses and seeks for a reliable employer. In addition, the differences in terms of the employer image desires among men and women, are that women want stability, peaceful work environment as well as equal and respectful treatment, whereas men seem to find it more important to focus on integrating into the work community first.

The aforementioned features concerning employer image of the Finnish missions can be supported with the characteristics of employers of choice listed by the Maranello Executive Search & Selection (2014), which were: stimulating work, good rewards, training and development, corporate social responsibility and ethics, progress opportunities, encouragement to collaborate, commitment to the employer, empowerment and authority. Most of these attributes were mentioned by the respondents, such as the development opportunities through trainings, work ethics and empowerment, but the low level in salary was one factor that seems to somewhat downgrade the image. However, not forgetting the fact that Finland's image, as well as the diplomatic missions' status in the corporate world, also contribute to the image of the Finnish missions.

As the interviewees' initial expectations of working in the Finnish mission were in accordance with the reality, it can be supported with Mauno (2013), who stated that the employer image portrayed by the company has to match with the reality, or else, the talent will seek work elsewhere. Thus, according to the interviewees, the missions have succeeded well in portraying a realistic idea of the work environment and community.

### **7.1.2 Job ad**

In regards to the job ad, the amount of answers unfortunately remained lower than anticipated. This was due to the fact that most of the interviewees had applied for the job after having heard about it through their friend, and therefore had not seen any job ad for the position. Some mentioned having been hired for the job in the early 90s and during that time it was not mainstream to advertise open positions online and also, few had seen the job ad in a local newspaper. Therefore, it was difficult to gain a comprehensive perspective on the matter of marketing open positions using online tools. However, according to the results attained, the Finnish missions are seen as good employers, and the name of the employer in the job ad was, in most cases, the main factor that caught the attention of interviewees and thus, made them interested in applying for the job in question.

Out of thirty (30) respondents, fifteen (15) had heard about the open position from their acquaintances or previous colleagues, three (3) applied after seeing a newspaper ad, eight (8) through various sources, such as personalized emails or by starting at the mission as a volunteer. This leaves four (4) interviewees who were able to review the online job ads of the missions. Among them, two saw the job ad on the mission's website and two found the advertisement from a job posting website.

The interviewees were then asked to evaluate the ad for the job they had applied for, compared with other ads they had seen before. According to one of the interviewees, it was difficult to find the job ad from the mission's website. Someone mentioned that the best way to inform open positions is by sending direct emails. The newspaper ads were brief, which is a good way to make the potential candidates interested and seek further information on the job and the employer.

As for what caught the attention of the candidates in the job ad, was the interesting job description or title, Finland as an employer, the possibility to work in a mission, the diplomatic environment and excellent compensation. Lastly, the respondents were asked to give suggestions of a good job ad. Among all, the respondents mentioned that the ad should describe detailed information of the tasks and requirements, the salary and benefits and also, what the employer expects from the candidate.

As expressed in the thesis objectives, the commissioning party wanted to know through which online channels the missions advertise their open positions to the potential candidates. The findings to this question did not bring any conclusive answer, as only a few had seen the advertisement for the position they had applied for. However, the main channel of recruitment in the missions revealed to be through recommendations from the current or previous employees of the missions, or in other words, through word-of-mouth (WOM). The respondents recruited with this method, which were the vast majority, could not assess the job ads nor could offer any insights on the online job advertising performed by the Finnish missions. WOM as a marketing method is analyzed in the following paragraphs.

Word-of-mouth marketing (WOMM) has been distinguished as a functional marketing method for ages, as the study conducted by Nielsen (2012) indicates that 92 per cent trust the recommendations from friends, rather than other forms of marketing. Also, 77 per cent of consumers are more likely to buy a new product if they heard about it through their friends or family (Nielsen 2012). The Word of Mouth Marketing Association (Wommapedia 2015) defines WOMM the following way: "Put simply, it is "any business action that earns

a customer recommendation," but, in the big world of creative campaigns and engagement techniques, WOMM means much more. WOMM is about harnessing the power of people to build brand awareness." The personal relationship between the brand (or employee) advocate and the person receiving the referral is what counts. (Logan 10 October 2014; Lou 24 March 2014.)

Even though most of the recommendations are happening offline, the latest trend marketers use marketing through social media to get their customers to recommend their products or services. Therefore, -online WOM dominates most of the discussions. (Wommapedia 2015.)

Employee advocacy is being described as the new mega trend of social media. This is mainly because social media has given WOMM new communication channels. The companies encourage their employees to engage in social media and to share or produce professional contents with their social networks. With the help of this, companies can ensure that their brand reaches much wider audiences. Also, since networks are more likely to trust the information coming from their friends, instead of being directly communicated by the company itself, the content will more likely be considered reliable. The employee advocacy is built on trust; the employees trust their employers and their social networks trust them. These employer advocates are able to not only increase the position of the employers, but also strengthen their own image as employees. The concept of employee advocacy has brought the "ancient" WOMM into the digital age. (Fradin 17 March 2013; Lauharanta 28 May 2014.)

Employee advocacy has become a central marketing method of today mainly due to the success of the social media. Marketers are well aware of the fact that the mental images are created online, as well as the purchase decisions. And it is also recognized that the Internet is increasingly becoming more and more focused on the social aspects. (Lähdevuori 19 January 2015.) With the help of employee advocates and WOMM, the brand image strengthens, which also increases trust towards the company, which results in building interest and trust towards the company as an employer. If the advocates trust their employer and thus convey a positive image of the company to their social networks, also their friends unconsciously start considering the brand image, as well as the employer image more positive.

It seems that WOMM in the process of recruitment is becoming more and more important part of companies' marketing strategies today, and in the future it has been predicted to grow more with the help of social media and employee advocacy. Also, as the major part of the respondents of the survey were hired through this method, it would be good to

focus more on enhancing the benefits of having employee advocates who convey positive image of the missions as employers. This would enable the upkeep of the current good employer image. Also, the utilization of social media to enhance the image would also help in updating the power of the ancient WOMM into the current online era.

### **7.1.3 Orientation of foreign employees**

One of the objectives of this study was to investigate how the locally engaged personnel in the Finnish missions is oriented and integrated to their duties and the Finnish work culture.

Orientation means the introduction to one's work and duties at a workplace (Työterveyslaitos 2014). It includes all the parts that are somehow connected to one's work and managing it, such as the phases of the work and the knowledge and skills needed to perform it (Työturvallisuuskeskus TTK 2009). Työturvallisuuskeskus TTK also states, that the employer is always responsible for the orientation at a workplace. Employer must ensure that orientation is organized, planned and implemented so that it creates the best possible learning environment (Kupias & Peltola 2014).

According to the findings of the research, majority of the respondents were expecting either a good basic orientation to their tasks in the mission or a bit more specific orientation than usual since the work place in question was a diplomatic mission. However, the survey revealed that there were many employees who had not received any kind of orientation for their duties in the mission. The some of the employees stated that there was a lack of orientation materials and orientation plan as well. As Kupias and Peltola (2014) state, the employer ought to provide different manuals and guides for the new employees, since they are good orientation tools which allow the employees to familiarize themselves with the tasks and the organization independently as well.

Although Työturvallisuuskeskus TTK states that the employer is the one responsible for the orientation, it is still advisable to delegate the process of orientation to more than one person. Additionally Kupias and Peltola note that, although there is usually a person assigned to be in charge of orientation, the whole work community should take part in it. This helps the work community to get to know the employee and vice versa. Additionally it tells the employee that it is acceptable to ask help from the other members of the work community as well. The survey reveals that being able to ask assistance from the colleagues is highly appreciated and helps the employees to learn more about the Finnish work culture.

It is unfortunate that few of the employees have not received any orientation since orientation can be seen as the employer's investment to the workforce.

Työturvallisuuskeskus TTK (2009) and Työterveyslaitos (2011) state that when orientation is performed correctly it supports the welfare of the employees and decreases the amount of occupational accidents. Additionally, when the employer plans and implements the orientation process carefully the employees are more likely to give their full effort and plan a longer career in the organization. The survey revealed that for some of the employees, the orientation has been a big help when adapting to the new workplace. It has been proven that well-organized and conducted orientation increases the feeling of belonging to the organization and thus increases the work satisfaction (Yli-Kaitala et al. 2013, 27). In addition, Kupias and Peltoa (2014) note that good orientation makes the employee feel part of the work community and furthermore welcomed to it. In addition, the employee is more likely to adapt to the tasks fast and become effective when he or she has a clear picture of everything.

Though many of the respondents had received orientation to their duties at the missions, few of them note that there is still room for improvement. For instance, few of the employees wished there would be follow up after the orientation in order to improve the process. According to Kupias and Peltola (2014) a feedback session should be organized as part of the orientation process in order to receive feedback about the orientation and its efficiency. The results of the orientation must be monitored in order to know whether or not the objectives of the orientation were met, was the orientation plan successful and what should be improved or done differently. (Työturvallisuuskeskus TTK 2009, 7.) According to one of the respondents the employer should additionally make the expectations of the job clear for the employees in the orientation process and inform them how they will be assessed on their performance. Yli-Kaitala et al. (2013) state that familiarizing the employees with the expectations of the work, as well as the responsibilities is considered to be as important part of the orientation as one's duties.

Though there is some variation on the level of orientation in the Finnish missions this might be explained by the characteristics of the workplace in question, since in the missions there are usually employees who represent at least two different cultural backgrounds. According to Koulutuskeskus Salpaus (2007) the increased number of employees from different cultural and language backgrounds has brought new challenges to orientation at a workplace. Most of the misunderstandings in multicultural work environments are linked to the cultural background of people and the ways of thinking and acting that come with it. The unwritten rules and habits of a workplace usually remain without attention in orientation since they seem too self-evident to the dominant culture.

In order to make the orientation of the foreign employees even better, the missions ought to examine the orientation process from the cultural point of view as well. Yli-Kaitala et al. (2013) point out that when the parties do not share same mother tongue and cultural background, allowing more time for the orientation process avoids misunderstandings. It is important to have meticulous orientation to all new employees, especially the employees whose language and culture backgrounds differ from the dominant culture at a workplace. Additionally SAK (2007) reminds that continuity of the orientation is important since learning new culture to work in is not simple.

Half of the respondents of the survey had received orientation to the Finnish work culture either as part of the whole orientation process or as separate orientation e.g. in courses or events organized by the mission. The orientation had helped them to learn the characters of the Finnish work culture and adapt to them easier. Korhonen and Puukari (2013) note that orientation that takes multiculturalism into consideration brings along certain challenges thus, firstly, the new employee needs to be familiarized with the dominant culture and its unwritten rules.

#### **7.1.4 Finnish work culture**

Another objective of this thesis was to investigate the Finnish work culture from the foreign employees' point of view in order to recognize good characters of the Finnish work culture and use them as "bates" for new potential applicants.

Yli-Kaitala et al. (2013) state that understanding one's own culture and that of the others can be challenging since all the dimensions of a culture such a values and habits do not show outside similarly and as obviously as language and dressing e.g.

The results of the survey revealed that Finnish work culture has good reputation amongst the locally hired employees in the Finnish missions. Finnish work culture is seen as equality between the employer and the employees, as well as in tasks requiring responsibility and individual work. Furthermore the Finns come across as hardworking people who are goal-oriented and trustworthy according to the respondents. In addition, punctuality and following rules were characters that were mentioned repeatedly as part of the Finnish work culture.

A study conducted by Professor Geert Hofstede (The Hofstede Centre 2014a) investigated how culture influences the values at the workplace. The study was conducted by analyzing a large database of employee value scores collected within IBM between 1967 and 1973. The basic problems of societies revealed by the study represent the dimensions of national cultures which Hofstede has divided into four main dimensions.

- power distance
- collectivism versus individualism
- femininity versus masculinity
- uncertainty avoidance

Power distance dimension reveals how different cultures handle inequality and how hierarchical the culture is e.g. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 54-56). Finland scores low in the power distance dimension thus equality between the subordinates and superiors is considered normal. The employees are likely to work more independently and the hierarchical system only exists for the convenience if at all. It is common for Finnish work culture that the relationship between the superior and the subordinate is informal and on first name basis. (The Hofstede Centre 2014b.)

The respondents of the survey represent different cultural clusters that are grouped based on the cultural similarities. In this research the respondents can be divided into the following cultural clusters: Anglo Cultures, Arab Cultures, Confucian Asia, Eastern Europe, Southern Asia and Sub-Sahara Africa. These cultural clusters represent countries that score higher on the power distance dimension compared to Finland. In large-power-distance countries superiors and subordinates consider each other unequal which at workplace can be seen as hierarchical systems where the power is centralized for few and subordinates expect to be told what to do. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 73-74.)

Since the majority of the respondents come from a cultural background where hierarchy at a workplace is common, it is easy to see why equality is seen as one of the main characters on the Finnish work culture. The results of the survey reveal that equality is appreciated at the missions and it is one of the first things the employees have learnt about the Finnish work culture. However, there are few respondents who stated that too much equality between the employer and employee might not be a good thing in their culture because it makes management difficult since people are used to higher hierarchy. In more hierarchical cultures the employee expects instructions and management from the employer. Employees' initiative may differ in cultures, since in some cultures it is automatically expected from the employees whereas in others it is considered passing the superior and can be seen as rebellious. (Yli-Kaitala et al. 2013, 17-18.)

The results also reveal that Finnish work culture allows the employees to have more responsibility at their work and that the employer is likely to include the employees as part of the decision making process. This can be explained by the power distance dimension but additionally by second dimension called collectivism vs. individualism. This dimension

explains the cultural differences how people see themselves in the society and whether people's self-image is defined in terms of "I" or "We" (Hofstede et al. 2010, 90-91).

Finland is considered to be an individualistic country thus at work place tasks need to be challenging enough so the people can feel personal sense of accomplishment (Hofstede et al 2010, 92). Due to this, it is more common for people to work more independently and have more responsibilities than in collectivist cultures which prefer the effort of the group. In individualistic societies at work the relationship between the employer and the employee is based on mutual advantage and possible promotions and bonuses are linked to an individual's performance (The Hofstede Centre 2014b). The fact that individuals' performance is the key factor in promotions and bonuses might be the reason why Finnish people are seen as hardworking and work oriented.

Most of the respondents, who mentioned that in Finnish work culture people are working hard and more individually, represent cultures that are collectivist, whereas Finland is more individualistic. Thus, it is understandable that the characters of individualism are more visible for them than for people from similar cultures to Finnish one. The respondents appreciate the work ethics of the Finns however some respondents representing collectivist societies stated that paying attention to others' work as well might be something the Finnish work culture is lacking.

Hofstede's third dimension is called femininity versus masculinity and it reveals what are the dominant values that drive a society. The dimension reveals what motivates people, wanting to be the best or liking what you do. Masculine societies are driven by competition, achievement and success, being the best in the field whereas in feminine societies dominant values include caring for other and quality of life. (The Hofstede Centre 2014b.) Finland is considered to be a feminine country on this dimension which might explain why some of the respondents stated that compared to their own culture, Finnish work culture cares more about the wellbeing of the employees by e.g. offering trainings and events for staff.

Lastly the survey revealed that from the foreign employees' point of view Finnish work culture is very punctual and rules are followed. Other cultures consider agreed schedules to be binding and being late might be considered as an offence. On the contrary, in certain cultures schedules and time are considered to be more directional than binding. (Yli-Kaitala et al. 2013, 17.) The dimension of uncertainty avoidance explains how different societies deal with uncertainty in everyday life and how technology, law and religion are used to avoid uncertainty. Uncertainty avoidance reveals whether the different societies choose to try to control the future or just let it happen. (Hofstede et al. 2010, 189.) Finland

scores rather high on uncertainty avoidance dimension and thus it is common to have rules and regulations and follow them in order to control the future if possible (The Hofstede Centre 2014b). When talking about the punctuality of the Finns the respondents divided into groups. Most of the respondents appreciate the punctuality and obeying rules since they come from a similar culture. However, some respondents stated that the mission should obey and follow the rules even more in detail since the work place in question is a diplomatic mission.

## **7.2 Development areas**

This subchapter discusses the development areas for online marketing communications and orientation of foreign employees.

### **7.2.1 Online marketing communications**

Here are the development proposals after having consulted the survey results and the suggestions and comments of the interviewed locally engaged personnel:

- increase online activity
- utilize multiple social media channels
- social media strategy & employee advocacy
- employer branding strategy
- surveys on employee satisfaction & wants/needs
- develop the job ads

Out of the 92 Finnish missions, 86 of them have a website (note that some missions share websites). Also, 76 of them have a site on Facebook, 37 are in Twitter and 14 maintain a blog. (Ulkoasiainministeriö 2014; Ulkoasiainministeriö 2015.) The current online presence is promising, but it would be good to for every mission to have a website, but also, the social media presence should be increased. Facebook is used by most of the missions, but Twitter and blogging are still not very common among the missions. As stated by Charlesworth (2009, 198-199), search engines consider the websites that constantly renew their contents and have existed for a long time, more reliable. These sites rank higher on the SERPs. Also, activity in social media is favored by the search engines, so the more active the company is in the utilization of the various social media tools, the higher it will rank in the search engines and the more people will find it. According to Rayson (2013), these days the search engines increasingly use social signals to rank the contents. This statement also supports social media activity.

Social media activity can be increased by engaging more, and the first step would be to increase the utilization of Twitter and blogging among the missions. According to Alexander (2007), corporate blogging encourages people to approach and communicate

with the company more actively. This is due to the fact that people consider blogs more informal, and therefore, easily approachable. The deploying of video marketing would be another suggestion, as according to Distilled (2014), videos have proven to raise brand awareness very effectively, since they bring more of a “human touch” into the marketing. This is also favored by the Cisco (Trimble 2014), that defines online video as the future of content marketing, as by 2017, about 69 % of consumer Internet traffic will be obtained from videos. Video marketing could be used e.g. for recruitment purposes or for marketing the missions as employers.

In addition, the deploying of new social media platforms, such as LinkedIn, YouTube or Storify, would improve the missions’ current level of social media presence, and it would also give people more platforms to engage with the missions. Also the use of RSS Feeds in promoting the social media updates would be good addition. VanRysdam (2010, 177) seconds this by stating that these feeds make social networks more popular, because they will automatically post all of the social media entries into the user’s other statuses and thus, spread the word faster.

In addition to increasing the social media presence, e.g. monthly email newsletters of the missions’ current events or actions would be another useful way to raise brand awareness and build relationship with the target markets. Furthermore, a mobile app designed by and for the missions would be an excellent way to keep up with the constantly changing and increasingly competitive business environment.

Since WOM was found to be the main recruitment method among the respondents of this research survey, a social media strategy would be a good way to start building up the social media activity of the missions. As described by Lauharanta (28 May 2014), employee advocacy is the new social media mega trend. Social media and WOMM walk hand in hand, therefore, encouraging employee advocacy through social media would not only continue to build the already positive image of the missions, but would also increase employee-employer commitment and thus, encourage the talents to approach the missions more easily. The research conducted by Kurio (2014) on the upcoming social media trends in 2015 also supports this, as the results showed that employer advocacy will become a key tool in brand and network building.

The building of strong employer brand and employer-customer relationship starts from the successful online presence, and as supported by the Recruiter (2014), one of the benefits of a strong brand is that brings value to the employer’s job offers. A solid employer branding strategy would be a good addition to the marketing communications practiced by the missions. The results from a survey conducted by the Employer Brand International

(2014) supports this suggestion, as five of the biggest ROI (return on investment) metrics of branding efforts are: employee engagement, retention rates, number of applicants, quality of hire and cost per hire. The branding strategy should define which online channels work the best for the mission, and what are its target groups and objectives. However, for the strategy to succeed, the brand image should be constantly maintained by e.g. defining a person who is in charge of social media presence. If the brand image is not being maintained, the brand might result in lack of interest and nobody noticing it. (Van Mossevelde 14 March 2014.)

As discovered from comparing the survey results between the different cultures, age groups and sexes, there are differences in what people expect and want from an employer. When building employer branding, also these differences should be taken into consideration. For example, if younger candidates are looked for, maybe the social platforms that mostly the young people utilize would be the best way to advertise the position.

According to the findings, the employer image of the Finnish missions is promising. They fulfill many of the attributes that define employers as employers of choice. However, in order to get a more comprehensive picture on whether the current employees are satisfied with the work, the employer or the working conditions in the missions and what are their needs and wants, further surveys should be conducted and with a larger scale. Also, to be able to retain the current employees, the potential faults should be fixed and work needs to be done to maintain the employee satisfaction. In addition, the missions should provide their employees with an easy and anonymous method of giving feedback or suggestions concerning the job, employer or the work environment.

It was mentioned by one of the interviewees that it was difficult to find a job advertisement from the mission's website. The ads should be made easily found by publishing it in other sources on top of the website and the social media platforms, such as job posting sites. This would help to reach more ample crowds. Also, these days the usage of recruitment videos is increasing. The employer makes a recruitment video, in which the candidates respond to by sending a short video CV. This makes it easy for the recruiter to pick the interesting applicants for further interviews. But the missions also need to keep in mind the host country and culture and therefore, social media recruitment in all the countries might not always be the most effective way of reaching the candidates, as opposed to e.g. a traditional newspaper ad.

### 7.2.2 Orientation of foreign employees

In order to provide the employees with a good start at a new workplace all the missions ought to create a plan for the orientation process as well as provide the employees with necessary orientation materials including information about the employer, the organizations but also materials from the predecessors. As one of the respondents of the survey stated, having notes from the predecessor could have been useful when starting new duties in the mission. Additionally, the orientation should include everything from employees' duties and tasks to organization and its practices. As stated before, well-organized orientation has an effect on employees' work satisfaction and wellbeing. When the orientation is well-organized and implemented the employees are more likely to learn their tasks faster and mistakes and misunderstanding are likely to be avoided. The missions ought to plan how the orientation is implemented and what are the roles of different employees in the orientation process.

On top of one's duties and tasks, the employees should be familiarized with the expectations of the work and their responsibilities in the work community in order to make sure the employee and the employer agree on those and work towards a common goal. Additionally, in order to reach the best results of the orientation it is important to evaluate how did the process succeed and whether or not improvement is found. The opinions of the people who were oriented are important part of developing the orientation process (Työturvallisuuskeskus TTK 2009, 7).

Furthermore, the missions ought to take culture into consideration when organizing orientation for foreign employees. For instance Korhonen and Puukari (2013) present a two-way orientation which allows both the outsider and the community to learn from each other which creates new ways of working. Two-way orientation could be useful in the Finnish missions since there are usually at least two different cultural backgrounds working together at the mission that is located in an environment unfamiliar for the Finnish employees. Two-way orientation could help the foreign employees to learn the ways of Finnish work culture but it also could allow the Finnish employees to learn the habits of the host country.

On top of two way orientation, mentoring can be used as help in orientation situation at multicultural workplaces. According to Kupias and Salo (2014) mentoring is a traditional way of orientation where more experienced colleague guides a new or less experienced employee. In addition Korhonen states that a mentor gives support in the integration into work community and most importantly helps with the cultural understanding.

One way the foreign employees could be oriented to the Finnish work culture is by organizing different events as according to the results, many missions already do. In addition, the missions could provide the foreign employees with orientation materials that focus on Finnish work culture. The results regarding the characters of the Finnish work culture from the foreign employees' point of view could be used in order to create a guide to Finnish work culture e.g. Different materials would help the foreign employees to familiarize themselves with the main characters and the events and cooperation with the current employees would help to learn the Finnish work culture in practice. The ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland is in the process of creating an electronic orientation program for the locally hired employees. The program goes over information related to the foreign services, leadership, work community as well as culture related things. (Aarnisalo 24 October 2014).

### **7.3 Reliability and validity of the research**

Although researchers make an effort to avoid mistakes in their researches, the soundness and validity of findings still vary. Due to these variations it is important to evaluate the reliability of all researches. (Hirsjärvi 2007, 226.) The reliability of a research refers to the degree of consistency and stability of the findings. This means that if the same research is conducted by a different observer the findings should be similar. Furthermore, if the original researcher conducts the same research on a different occasion the results still stay the same. (Silverman 2011, 360.) In addition, a research can be evaluated by its validity which means the ability of the research method to measure what it is meant to measure. In some cases research methods do not reflect the assumptions of the researcher. (Hirsjärvi 2007, 226.)

In qualitative research the researcher is considered to be a central research tool and main criteria for reliability of the research. Thus it is common that qualitative researches are often more personal and include a lot of the researcher's own speculations in comparison with quantitative research. (Eskola & Suoranta 2001, 210-211.)

In this research one issue that might affect the reliability of the findings is that the 30 people who answered the survey only represent around 7.5% of the target group. They only represent 19 different Finnish missions out of a possible 92. With a bigger amount of respondents representing more Finnish missions, the research findings could be different if a similar research is conducted in the future. However, with the help of this study, we were able to gain a sufficient picture of the current situation, which also provides a good foundation and gives direction to conduct further researches on the subject in the future.

One issue that might affect the validity of this research is that the data was collected using online questionnaire rather than face-to-face interviews. According to Hirsjärvi (2007, 190) questionnaires have advantages when trying to reach large target group. In addition, questionnaires are less time consuming and inexpensive way of data collection. However, it is difficult to control possible misunderstandings with the survey question. For this research the data was collected by Webropol survey. This allowed the survey to reach the whole target group though it was located around the world. Although arranging face-to-face interviews would have been out of the question it might have offered deeper answers for the survey. In interview situation there would have been a possibility to ask additional questions in order to get more precise information or correct possible misunderstandings.

Other issue concerning the questionnaire was the language. The questionnaire was written in English since it was considered to be the common language of the respondents and us thesis authors. However, since the mother tongue of the authors is not English and the level of English of respondents varies, there is a possibility for misunderstanding when responses of the questionnaire were analyzed. According to Hirsjärvi (2007, 226-227) it is common that the respondents understand the questions on the opposite way the researcher intended to. When the researcher analyses the results based on his or her own way of thinking it is difficult to avoid mistakes.

#### **7.4 Thesis process evaluation and learning**

Our thesis process began as we were both working in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland during the summer in 2014 and we contacted the ministry to ask whether they had an idea for research project in which we could combine marketing and HR. During the summer we had a meeting with the commissioning party and we discussed their idea through. We found the topic extremely interesting, since we had both completed our internship in Finnish foreign missions and we had personal experiences that were closely related with the topic. Overall, the process went well and throughout the project our time management skills improved a lot, as well as our skills in information retrieval and how to use and compile the information from multiple sources.

However the initial plan could not be followed, as the target group of the survey was changed a few times during the thesis process and therefore the sending of the questionnaire had to be postponed and the deadlines altered. Also, the amount of answers we received (30) from the survey remained lower than what we would have hoped for (at least 40-60). This was mainly due to the technical problems with the Webropol link, which the recipients were not able to open at first. Therefore we lost quite a lot of answers.

However, it was a bit risky to conduct the survey in a qualitative manner, since there were nearly 400 survey recipients. If we would have actually received more or less anything close to the 400 results, the processing of the answers would have been impossible. In addition, we would like to mention that the results gained through this survey did not provide as much information as we would have hoped for in the beginning.

In regards to the results of the survey a face-to-face interview would have provided more depth for the answers compared to an online survey. However, considering the location of the target group conducting face-to-face interviews would have been almost impossible. Furthermore, an interview situation would have allowed us to see the interviewees' body language as well as the tone of voice which are important part of communicating.

Additionally, one of the main issues with the online questionnaire was the language. Along with most of the respondents we are not native English speakers therefore there was a possibility for the respondents to misinterpret the questions of the survey. Also, when analyzing the results there were some difficulties in understanding some of the responses due to the language.

Unlike most Bachelor's Theses, this research was executed as cooperation of two students. This cooperation was successful since it made both of us more conscious of the deadlines. Additionally, during the process it was good to have a second opinion when making decisions. However, it was sometimes difficult to maintain the coherence as we had to combine two different specialization areas but had the same target group in the same thesis.

Overall, the research was very interesting and we hope that the commissioning party finds the results useful and the suggestions worthwhile.

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## Attachments

### Attachment 1. Glossary

Here are listed the most common terms used in this thesis.

CGC	Consumer-generated content
Locally engaged staff	Personnel that are in a contractual employment relationship with the Finnish mission and are recruited locally from the host country and can be either Finnish or other citizens
Missions	Finland's representation abroad, consists of diplomatic missions (embassies e.g.) and consular missions (consulate general e.g.) (Ulkoasiainministeriö 2014).
PPC	Pay per click
Search engine	Program that searches the Internet for matching keywords or characters typed by the user (Oxford Dictionaries 2014).The most common search engines are Google, Bing and Yahoo.
SEM	Search engine marketing.
SEO	Search engine optimization.
Social media	Websites/tools, whose main purpose is to enable the users to interact, create content and take part in social networking (Oxford Dictionaries 2014).
SMM	Social media marketing
SMO	Social media optimization
WOM	Word-of-mouth
WOMM	Word-of-mouth marketing

## Attachment 2. Cover letter

**Hyvät postilaatikonhoitajat, pyydämme välittämään viestin edustustoon palvelusuhteessa oleville ei-suomenkielisille työntekijöille.**

**Please forward this email to all non-Finnish speaking employees.** In English below.

Arvoisa vastaanottaja,

Suomen edustustoissa ympäri maailmaa toimii tällä hetkellä n. 400 ulkomaalaista työntekijää eri tehtävissä. Tutkimus suomalaisten edustustojen työnantajakuvasta sekä ulkomaalaisten työntekijöiden orientaatiosta suomalaiseen työympäristöön kartoittaa ulkomaalaisten työntekijöiden näkemyksiä edustustojen työnantajaimagosta ja rekrytointiväylien toimivuudesta sekä orientaatioprosessista ja työskentelystä suomalaisessa työympäristössä.

Opiskelemme HAAGA-HELIA ammattikorkeakoulussa, Multilingual Management Assistants – koulutusohjelmassa ja teemme tätä tutkimusta osana opinnäytetyötämme. Tutkimusta tehdään yhteistyössä Ulkoasiainministeriön henkilöstöpalvelu- ja työhyvinvointiyksikön kanssa.

Ystävällisin terveisin,

Johanna Sell & Oona Wahlström

HAAGA-HELIA ammattikorkeakoulu, Degree Programme for Multilingual Management Assistants

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**Please forward this email to all non-Finnish speaking employees.**

Dear recipient,

There are approximately 400 foreign employees working in the Finnish missions around the world. With the help of this survey, we wish to find out more about the missions' employer image and the functionality of the recruitment process, as well as the orientation and experiences of working in a Finnish environment.

We are two BBA students of HAAGA-HELIA University of Applied Sciences in the Degree Programme for Multilingual Management Assistants and this research is part of our thesis work. The research is done in cooperation with the Personnel Services Unit and the Occupational Wellbeing Unit of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. By answering this survey, you can help us to evaluate and develop the recruitment and orientation processes, therefore your answers are extremely valuable!

Answering the survey takes about 10 minutes. We kindly ask you to fill in your answers before 21<sup>st</sup> of November. All the answers will be handled anonymously and with discretion.

**Access the survey through this link:**

<https://www.webpolsurveys.com/S/452490EFDD002E6D.par>

Thank you for participating!

Best regards,  
Johanna Sell & Oona Wahlström  
HAAGA-HELIA University of Applied Sciences  
Degree Programme for Multilingual Management Assistants

### Attachment 3. Questionnaire

Nationality:

Finnish embassy or consulate:

Age:

Male/female:

Title/task:

1. The image of the Finnish mission
  - a. Why did you choose to apply to work in a Finnish mission?
  - b. What kind of an employer image do the Finnish missions have in general? Why?
  - c. What word(s) would from your experience best describe the Finnish mission as an employer?
  - d. Does working in a Finnish mission meet your expectations? Explain why it does/does not?
  
2. Job ad
  - a. Where did you find the job ad or heard about the open position?
  - b. What word(s) would from your experience best describe the job ad compared to other job ads you have seen?
  - c. What caught your attention in the job ad?
  - d. In your opinion, what would a good job ad include?
  
3. Employee orientation (f.ex. your tasks, your colleagues, premises, daily routine) in a Finnish mission
  - a. What were your expectations on the orientation in your Finnish mission?
  - b. How would you describe the orientation for example compared to your previous jobs or expectations?
  - c. What was lacking from the orientation or what would you improve?
  
4. Finnish work culture
  - a. How would you describe the Finnish work culture compared to the one in your own country?
  - b. Was there any orientation in the Finnish mission to Finnish work culture or working with the Finns?
    - i. If yes, what did it include?
    - ii. If not, what kind of orientation to Finnish work culture would you have appreciated?
  
5. Anything else you would like to share?