

## Employee manual for Helkama Rent Oy

Anna Laitio

Thesis  
Hotel, Restaurant and  
Tourism Management  
2017



<b>Author(s)</b> Anna Laitio	
<b>Degree programme</b> Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism Management	
<b>Report/thesis title</b> Employee manual for Helkama Rent Oy	<b>Number of pages and appendix pages</b> 13 + 22
<p>The purpose of this project type thesis is to collate a practical employee manual for the employees of the commissioning company Helkama Rent Oy. The business of the company is car rental and it is a subsidiary of Helkama Auto Oy.</p> <p>The aim was to update and gather the existing guides into one document. The idea of the thesis came from the commissioning company which is the writer's employer. The thesis is written in close co-operation with the managers of the company.</p> <p>The manual will provide practical advice for daily duties. It will support personnel's routines, establish homogenous initiation policies and develop employee's professional skills.</p> <p>The managers of each department were consulted and the sections were written based on their perception. The manual consists of four five sections which are sales, fleet maintenance, operations, HR and back office operations.</p> <p>It will be one tool for efficient orientation but it's written for the entire personnel to support the daily operations.</p> <p>The project with the manual started in May 2017. Because of the high season of the business the work continued full time after the summer in September when most of the writing was done. The manual was sent to the managers for feedback in the beginning of November and it was finalized by the end of the month. Older guidance material was used and new material was created. The manual will be taken into active use in the commissioning company in January 2018.</p> <p>Theory for this thesis was written during study leave of one month in October to November 2017. The theory is focusing on the execution of the project and the benefits of the manual for Helkama Rent Oy and its employees.</p> <p>This work could be developed by studying the benefits and opportunities of the work more. Helkama Rent oy is growing constantly and the manual could be developed to more comprehensive direction by adding system guidance and deeper instructions for basic daily duties. Theory could be studied from this perspective as well.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b> employee manual, work guidance, orientation, training	

## Table of contents

1	Introduction .....	1
1.1	Commissioning company .....	1
1.2	Thesis process .....	2
2	Purpose of the work .....	3
2.1	Content of the manual .....	3
2.2	Structure .....	4
3	Benefits of the personnel manual .....	4
3.1	For employee .....	5
3.1.1	Well-being .....	5
3.1.2	Communication .....	6
3.2	For employer .....	6
3.2.1	Quality .....	7
4	Conclusion .....	8
4.1	Execution of the project and feedback .....	8
4.2	Development ideas for the future .....	8
4.3	Learning outcome .....	9
	References .....	10
	Appendices .....	12
	Appendix 1. Table of content of the employee manual for Helkama Rent Oy .....	12
	Appendix 2. Project timetable .....	13

# 1 Introduction

The objective of this work is to make a versatile and compact manual for the personnel of the commissioning company. The work was ordered from the Operations director of Helkama Rent Oy Mikko Ahonen.

The book will provide practical advice for basic daily duties. It will support employee's routines, establish coherent initiation policies and develop professional skills. It will be relevant for orientation and for all employees during their career.

This is relevant for me because I am one of the trainers and for my employer, the commissioner because currently there is no manual available. There are company policies which are not written and the word of mouth determines the action.

The manual will include information for all functions and offer operating models for basic daily duties. Each section will include key facts that are relevant for the entire organization. The manual is built and structured so that it is easy to read and search for information. It includes only the necessary knowledge to avoid too detailed and precise content. It is meant for active use of the entire personnel.

## 1.1 Commissioning company

Helkama Rent Oy is a subsidiary of Helkama Auto Oy which is one of the eldest Finnish family companies. Helkama has practiced car rental business in Finland with AVIS brand since 1986. (Helkama 2017) Subsidiary Helkama Rent Oy was established in 2010, right after Budget car rental operations were taken over in 2009. Payless is a new brand which will be started soon in Helsinki-Vantaa airport.

Helkama Rent Oy operates with three different brands and three different target groups. AVIS is a big international brand that operates in 165 countries. AVIS is mostly a business brand but serves leisure travelers as well. Target customers are enthusiastic car renters who are seeking for experiences and premium service. Budget is focused in domestic and international leisure travelers and longer holiday rentals. Budget competes with affordability that attracts the savvy shoppers whose interest is to get four wheels with a great rate.

Helkama Rent Oy operates in all regions except Turku, Kainuu, Järvenpää and Kuusamo are ran by sub-licenses. Within two years the company has expanded from Helsinki metropolitan area and Tampere to the rest of the country and this is one of the reasons the

manual is needed. Helkama Rent Oy has 71 employees and 16 working with sub-licenses.

## **1.2 Thesis process**

Operations Director Mikko Ahonen had the idea of the personnel manual. He recognized the need for all instructions in one place, in one book. Currently Helkama Rent Oy has several information sources within the company and a lot of knowledge which isn't available for all employees. In February, we discussed about the ways to improve our quality during the rapid expansion. Mikko told me about this project and after a while I asked if I could take over and make my thesis about it. He was more than happy to give me this project and get it out of his table.

We started the process in fall by drafting the table of content. He had one version of it already which we started to work with. The main departments and key operations were defined. For each section I consulted the responsible managers and directors. At this point, there was no limit for the content, the aim was to get as much information to work with. By committing several professionals there is also the developmental aspect. The consulted people had to think about the process very thoroughly to be able to describe it for the manual. This caused a lot of discussion on the managerial level and resulted clear role descriptions and organizational structure and one even a new work position. The company has a lot of skills and knowledge and the manual is one way to implement it and add internal communication.

After receiving all the data, I started to gather and re-phrase it in to an instructive form. The manual is also a guide book so the form needs to be practical and educational. During the process, the table of content got a new form and some sections were added. We noticed that there is a lot of small details that affect the entire process which had to be described in the manual. Also, the organization is changing constantly so we decided to leave the names out of the body text and use only titles. Names are mentioned only once which makes updating easier and faster in the future. The company has job titles in Finnish and in English, while working with the manual all the titles were officially changed in English. The manual is written in Finnish but this is the reason the titles are in English also in the text.

Before finalizing the manual, it will be sent to all related managers and directors for comments. Updates are done based on the feedback and the CEO is consulted for the introduction of the personnel manual. Introduction will be the CEO's message and words for the current and new personnel.

This manual will be launched on January 2018. Platform is the intranet of Helkama Rent Oy. It will be published in PDF and the responsible person will have a version for the future updates. The manual will be introduced in a monthly info event hosted by the CEO. The event is available virtually via Skype so the entire organization can be reached.

## **2 Purpose of the work**

This work is done for quality improvement purposes and unanimous process models. The work also ensures that each employee has access to the relevant information. The company is expanding rapidly so there is urgent need for operative guidelines.

Aggressive expansion requires assistance, open and active guidance and close co-operation. This manual will be one tool to create coherent processes and setting the standards.

The manual is created in close co-operation with the company which makes it pragmatic and close to business. The aim was to write it so, that everyone working in the company benefits from it. It provides the general information about each department and every operation in the company without going in too much detail. The topics are narrowed down to the general level. The text is written as concise and informative as possible to keep the manual compact and short enough.

### **2.1 Content of the manual**

The business of Helkama Rent Oy is car rental and most of its staff is working in the operations. That's why the sections related to the daily business and fleet are the most extensive parts of the manual.

The manual is written in a normative form. The manual answers the question how things are done in this company. Each employee will find the instructions how to work with different departments and different operations and who to contact with certain issues. The manual includes also practical advice for the use of the rental system. the company is expanding rapidly and new employees are hired. Helkama Rent Oy can use this manual to make sure that each employee has the required level of knowledge in use to support their orientation and work in the company.

## **2.2 Structure**

The manual is structured by the operating sequence starting with sales, operations, HR and back office activities. It includes the names of the people working in managerial level or in other key roles. Key personnel is presented in right context.

The manual starts with a short introduction of executive team and updated organization chart. Sales and fleet are introduced first, because these departments create the main activities which is operations. Sales section includes a general introduction to B2B-sales and key positions. Sales department includes pricing, marketing and the operation of the customer service center.

Fleet is the biggest expense and the main instrument in car rental business. This section includes the instructions for maintenance and availability.

The key action is daily operations. Operations department has the biggest team of people located around the country. The department's main task is to make sure the daily business is running as efficient and productive way possible. Operations cover the B2C sales and is responsible for the customer experience. The company has its's own sales and service process which is described here. The manual provides standards for the appearance of each location and each employee. The global uniform regulations are provided by the HQ of AvisBudget Group in United Kingdom. Helkama Rent Oy has its own standards which are introduced in the manual.

Logistics is one of the key functions of efficient operations. The process is described and main instructions for daily practices are provided.

HR covers the process for personnel orientation and labor legislation. Main issues such as health care and benefits are also included.

The final section is for back office operations. This section provides the general information about the billing process and instructions for different billing methods. There are instructions for database operations and issues such as claims and refunds and fines.

## **3 Benefits of the personnel manual**

Personnel manual provides the guidelines for each employee's daily actions. The manual will be used for presenting the company and it's way of doing during orientation. It can be

used during the career for educational and developmental purpose. The aim is to provide such tools that each employee can work as independently as possible.

Providing comprehensive guidance is also employers interest. This way the company can require certain level of performance and make sure each employee can succeed their tasks.

During the orientation, the manual provides the necessary information for new comers needs. The work at Helkama Rent is usually very independent and the manual supports the employee in daily duties. Currently the trainers are spending a lot of time to support and instruct the newcomers after orientation period. After launching the manual, the aim is to release the time for productive work.

### **3.1 For employee**

Personnel is the company´s biggest asset. Providing sufficient guidance is an investment for that asset. Supervisors support and clear instructions enhance the wellbeing and the efficiency of the work. To succeed in creation of working job community the company needs clear roles, goals and guidelines. Working community is on the same line when it comes to rules and regulations, which makes each member equal.

Knowledge and skills create employee engagement, improves the performance levels and increases productivity. The manual also allows employees a more independent working style which improves skills and capabilities.

#### **3.1.1 Well-being**

According to Finland´s Ministry of Social Affairs and Health well-being at work consist of employee´s physical health, ability, safety of the work place, control of the work, working environment, and management (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2017). The above mention issues are affected by organization, working community, work, management and the employee himself. (Finnish institute of Occupational health 2017)

Personnel manual is also a HR tool. To create organizational culture the company needs standardized procedures and behavior models (Viitala 2009, 18) which the manual is all about. Well-structured operating models provide clarity and reliability which are key elements for positive organizational climate, that affect motivation and the results of the work (Viitala 2009, 16). Organizational climate is affected by each member´s feelings. Feelings have huge impact on well-being at work because they affect in social relationships and atmosphere but also attitudes and perspectives. Helkama Rent Oy operates in service in-



dustry where customer service is crucial part of the daily operations. Well-being and attitudes affect the performance of employees and the level of customer service. That's why the goal for well-being at work is employee satisfaction. Satisfied employees believe that their work is meaningful and they feel valued doing it (Wolf 2017). Satisfaction creates commitment and commitment creates productivity. Employee satisfaction also builds and boosts positive organizational climate which affects the service quality and performance level. In service industry, these are key elements for positive customer experience and satisfaction.

### **3.1.2 Communication**

Internal communication is part of the organizational culture. Communication is about building social relationships that makes the company more coherent and active. Internal communication in Helkama Rent Oy is for example orientation, common instructions, weekly meetings and the interaction within the company. Communication is about creating, developing and sharing knowledge within the organization. Good internal communication can bring the employees together, clarify the aim of the work and make the practices more coherent. Lack in internal communication can cause a lack of motivation and poor quality. (Annaniemi 2014, 11).

Communication is a key factor for gaining commitment and trust in the working community. Helkama Rent Oy is middle-sized company and the approach with communication and methods should be chosen carefully. Provided information is accurate and relevant and chosen channels needs to reach the whole personnel. Possible methods for internal communication in Helkama Rent Oy are face-to-face meetings, events or private developmental discussions. Written information can be provided by email or in intranet. Specific information can be targeted not to burden irrelevant departments or people.

Personnel manual is an internal communication channel from employer to employees. Helkama Rent Oy operates around the country so part of the personnel does not have the opportunity to meet directors face-to-face too often. That's why the company is focusing on virtual meetings and written communication.

## **3.2 For employer**

The quality improvement is about developing service and products but also developing the process that delivers the service and makes the quality. This requires a clear business

strategy, managerial know-how, constant development process, proactivity, common goals and evaluation metrics (Vuori 2012, 1.)

Employer brand is an outsider's mental representation of attributes related to an organization as an employer. This means that an employer image is made up of specific attributes than an individual associate with the organization as a place to work (Lievens & Saughter 2016, 411). Employer brand is perceived by an outsider, for example a customer. Quality can be measured also from this point of view. When the company has positive and well-being personnel who is professional and provide good service it enhances the employer and company image.

### **3.2.1 Quality**

Quality is measured by different aspects. Internal quality can be measured by fluency, professionalism, coherency and responsibility.

The aspects for service quality evaluation is fluent service, professional personnel, coherent service and processes, better experience compared to the competitors and flawless service at once. (Tervonen 2001, 33)

By creating rules and operating model's employer sets the standard for the actions that are required from the employee. Standards are used for personnel's development and performance evaluation and measurement purposes. Employer is entitled to require certain level of performance and the level is clearly stated in the manual. This way also the employee knows what are they evaluated against.

With the manual Helkama Rent Oy can affect the skills and abilities of the personnel and coherency in service. Skills and abilities are in a key role when creating positive customer experience. All these features rely on efficient orientation which is also one indicator for quality. Orientation creates the platform where the employee can build the professional knowledge and skills. The orientation period introduces the standards and expectations so the employee knows what is expected and how the expectations are met.

Helkama Rent Oy measures quality with net promoter score, NPS, which measures the customer experience, loyalty and the customer willingness for promoting the company.

## **4 Conclusion**

### **4.1 Execution of the project and feedback**

The process lasted 6 months and it was performed within the agreed timeframe. The project was started in May 2017 just before the high season. Summer caused a small delay to the plan but it was taken into consideration in advance. The manual was written mostly at work on the side of other tasks and responsibilities during September.

The feedback for the work was positive. It was executed within the agreed time and the process was ran smoothly and efficiently. It was sent to the managers of the commissioning company for feedback in mid-November and the final changes was done during the month. Employee manual will be launched in the commissioning company in the beginning of January 2018. After that the manual will be updated regularly to keep the content as up to date as possible. it will be published in electronically in intranet which makes the updating easier.

According to received feedback from Mikko Ahonen, the manual will affect positively to the quality of the daily operations and internal communications. The work is a practical employee manual which will provide the needed information in one document as planned. According to Ahonen the manual is what the commissioning party expected and they are very satisfied of the entire project and it's outcome.

### **4.2 Development ideas for the future**

The manual covers the key departments, key positions and main operations. The manual could be expanded to cover the company's rental system with step-by-step instructions for each phase of the process. Helkama Rent Oy has its own sales and service process which is introduced in this manual but it could be explained more thoroughly.

The theory is written about the actual process and implementation. The beneficial aspects of the work are discussed from different perspectives. From the developmental aspect, the theory could go deeper in to the mentioned topics. The benefits for the employer could be explained deeper and with more versatile perspective. The usage of the manual for orientation could be its own chapter with the basic theory of orientation itself and the benefits of structured guidebook during the process. Helkama Rent Oy is recruiting new personnel all the time so a study of the orientation process could be implemented in the future.

### **4.3 Learning outcome**

With this project, I learned more about project management and the importance of good planning. When considering the time frame the work was executed as well as possible. The thesis was written in very short time frame during the last months before the study time ends. By starting earlier, I would have had time to focus more on the quality and extent of the theory. The time for the final touch was also minimal which affects the reading experience. This was an important lesson for me about time management and the efficiency of my doing.

For the planning Gant chart was used as project management tool which worked very well for me and for this work. This became interesting project and thought me about the importance of efficient orientation and internal communication in terms of employee well-being and effectiveness. The manual itself is well formed, well narrowed and easy to read. I believe that there will be a great benefit for Helkama Rent Oy and its employees.

## References

Annaniemi. A. 2014. Esimies henkilöstön työhyvinvoinnin varmistajana. Thesis. Lahti University of applied sciences. URL [http://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/77645/Annaniemi\\_Annukka.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y](http://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/77645/Annaniemi_Annukka.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y) Read 31 Oct 2017

Blundel. R. & Ippolito. K. & Donnarumma. D. 2013. Effective organizational communication. Fourth edition. Pearson.

Dessler. G. 2009 A framework for human resource management. Fifth edition. Pearson/Prentice hall.

Finnish Institute for Occupational Health 2017. URL <https://www.ttl.fi/en/> Read 31 Oct 2017

Kjelin. E. & Kuusisto. P. 2003. Tulokkaasta tuloksentekijäksi. Talentum. Helsinki

Lievens. F. & Slaughter. J. 2016. Employer image and employer brand: What we know and what we need to know. University of Gent. URL <https://biblio.ugent.be/publication/8100868/file/8100876.pdf> Read 7 Nov 2017

Mackay. A. 2007. Motivation, ability and confidence building in people. Taylor & Francis.

Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2017. URL [http://stm.fi/tietoa-tyohyvinvoinnista?p\\_p\\_id=56\\_INSTANCE\\_7SjjYVdYeJHp&p\\_p\\_lifecycle=0&p\\_p\\_state=normal&p\\_p\\_mode=view&p\\_p\\_col\\_id=column-2&p\\_p\\_col\\_count=3&\\_56\\_INSTANCE\\_7SjjYVdYeJHp\\_languageId=en\\_US](http://stm.fi/tietoa-tyohyvinvoinnista?p_p_id=56_INSTANCE_7SjjYVdYeJHp&p_p_lifecycle=0&p_p_state=normal&p_p_mode=view&p_p_col_id=column-2&p_p_col_count=3&_56_INSTANCE_7SjjYVdYeJHp_languageId=en_US) Read 31 Oct 2017

Pitkämäki. P. 2007. Sisäinen viestintä työyhteisössä – Kohti parempaa viestintää. Thesis. URL <https://www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/9123/Pitk%C3%83%3Fm%C3%83%3Fki.P%C3%83%3Fivi.pdf?sequence=2> Read 7 nov 2017

Sorsa. A. 2012. Henkilöstökäsikirja perehdyttämisen välineenä. Thesis. Metropolia. URL <https://theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/44019/Opinnaytetyo-Antti-Sorsapdf.pdf?sequence=1>. Read 16 Oct 2017

Tervonen. A. 2001. Laadun kehittäminen suomalaisissa yrityksissä. Dissertation. Lappeenranta university of technology. URL <https://www.doria.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/31210/isbn%209789522148483.pdf> (yhteenveto s. 32) Read 26 Oct 2017

Viitala. R. 2009. Henkilöstöjohtaminen, strateginen kilpailutekijä. 1-2 edition. Edita. Helsinki.

Vuori. M. 2002. Laadun kehittäminen. URL <https://www.mattivuori.net/kehittaminen/laatu-pahkinankuoressa/index6.htm> Read 27 Oct 2017

Wolf. F. 2017. Why an internal communications strategy is important for companies. URL <https://insights.staffbase.com/blog/why-an-internal-communications-strategy-is-important-for-companies> Read 27 Oct 2017

# Appendices

## Appendix 1. Table of content of the employee manual for Helkama Rent Oy

### TABLE OF CONTENT

1	INTRODUCTION.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
2	ORGANISATION.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
2.1	EXECUTIVE TEAM.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
3	SALES.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
3.1	B2B SALES.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
3.2	PRICING.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
3.2.1	DISCOUNT POLICY.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
3.3	MARKETING.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
3.4	CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTER.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
4	FLEET.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
4.1	INITIALIZATION AND TURN BACK.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
4.2	MAINTENANCE.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
4.2.1	SERVICE AND DAMAGES.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
4.2.2	TIRES.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
4.2.3	INVENTORY.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
4.2.4	AVAILABILITY.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
5	OPERATIONS.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
5.1	CUSTOMER SERVICE.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
5.1.1	CONDITION OF THE CAR.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
5.2	STATIONS AND OFFICES.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
5.3	EMPLOYEES.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
5.4	LOGISTICS.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
5.4.1	VEHICLE TRANSFER AND TRANSFER CONTRACT.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
5.5	ON CALL DUTY.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
6	HR.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
6.1	ORIENTATION.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
6.2	WORKING HOURS.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
6.3	ABSENCE AND LEAVES.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
6.4	HEALTH CARE.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
6.5	EMPLOYEE BENEFITS.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
6.6	SALARY PERIOD.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
6.7	PROFESSIONAL CONFIDENTIALITY.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
7	BACK OFFICE.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
7.1	WIZARD BILLING GUIDE.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
7.2	CASH REGISTER.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
7.3	RECLAMATIONS AND REFUNDS.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.
7.4	FINES.....	Virhe. Kirjanmerkkiä ei ole määritetty.

## Appendix 2. Project timetable

October		MON/42	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
		16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	Morning	W.PLM report	library sources	sources		sales essay		
	Afternoon	outline	outline	Haaga campus	pre-test done	DONE		
		library sources	sales essay	outline done	sales essay			
MON/43		TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	
		23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	Working	Manual	manual meeting		Theory	Theory	Theory	
			Thesis info 13-14					
		writing	Taina 14.30-					
November		MON/44	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
		30	31	1	2	3	4	5
	Morning	Writing the theory in the library and Porvoo Campus						
	Afternoon							
MON/45		TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	
		6	7	8	9	10	11	12
		Writing the theory in the library			Info to Taina	theory		
					Theory			
						Studyleave is over		
MON/46		TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	
		13	14	15	16	17	18	19
		Working						Final adds
		Write the final changes and adds						
MON/47		TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN	
		20	21	22	23	24	25	26
		Working						Final
		Write the final changes and adds						Deadline
MON	TUE	WED						
27	28	29						
		Presentation						