

Towards employment: promoting, evaluating, and developing Monik NGO's Urax career coaching project

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<p>The aim of this commissioned thesis is to promote, evaluate, and develop Monik NGO's Urax career coaching project. It is a project that seeks to assist young adults with an immigrant background in their job search. Monik NGO seeks to further the integration of immigrants into Finnish society. The main body of the thesis is comprised of three articles, published in the Six Degrees magazine.</p> <p>Youth unemployment has been a great challenge within the entire EU ever since the latest global economic crisis. Young adults with an immigrant background face more challenges than their native counterparts. The Finnish government has introduced an intermediary labor market, which is a subsidized form of employment. In addition, the Finnish government grants employment policy support to various actors in order to improve the employment situation of unemployed jobseekers.</p> <p>Monik NGO administers the Urax project for which it has been granted employment policy support. The target group of the project is immigrant young adults, or clients, between the ages of 18 and 29 living in Helsinki, Finland. The numerical target of the project in the years 2014 and 2015 has been to assist a minimum of 15 young adults to find employment annually.</p> <p>The operational model of the Urax project has been designed based on the perceived challenges faced by young immigrant jobseekers. It consists of four steps: mapping, supporting, prepping, and post-employment services. The first article explains the operational model in addition to the topic background.</p> <p>The second article evaluates the results of the project between August 2014 and July 2015. The project target was exceeded during this period. A total of 19 clients were assisted to employment. The second article also presents three client case studies as well as the project's best practices.</p> <p>The third article presents the corporate cooperation model. The corporate cooperation model offers a free-of-charge recruitment channel and other services to companies. The goal of the model is to create more direct paths to employment for Urax's clients, and thus solve the problem of insufficient networks. A case study is used to describe how the model works in practice.</p> <p>The thesis highlights the importance of the Urax career coaching project. It proves the effectiveness of the project's operational model by showing its impressive results. It further presents best practices and real life case studies. There is a lack of academic literature about the type of career coaching offered in the Urax project and projects similar to it, due to which areas of further study are suggested in the conclusion of the thesis.</p>	
Keywords Career coaching, job search coaching, open labor market, intermediate labor market, corporate cooperation, Monik ry	

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1 Introduction

This thesis consists of a series of three articles written about Monik NGO's Urax career coaching project (Finn. *Urax-työhönvalmennushanke*). The author has been working in the organization since June 2014 as the project coordinator of the aforementioned project. Monik has commissioned the author to write this thesis. The thesis' objective is to promote, evaluate, and develop the project.

This chapter introduces the commissioning company and the topic of the thesis. The thesis objective, tasks and subtasks as well as the demarcation are laid out. Finally, the international aspect of the topic in addition to its benefits and key concepts are explained.

1.1 Background to the project and the commissioning company

Monik is a fairly young NGO. It was founded in Helsinki in the year 2011 by young adults with an immigrant background. The two main objectives of the organization are to improve integration of immigrants as well as communication between different members of Finnish society. The organization offers services and activities that seek to increase employment such as career coaching and counselling, trainings such as language and IT courses, and leisure time activities such as sports. The aim of these activities is to clarify and improve immigrants' access to public services as well as to prevent marginalization. Monik offers employees, who encounter immigrant customers in their work, trainings that seek to decrease the chance of misunderstandings and conflicts during the encounters. The organization also disseminates good practices, ideas, and suggestions on the basis of its work. (Monik 2015a.)

The first and currently largest project undertaken by Monik is the Urax career coaching project. It has been operational since June 2014, and its objective is to improve the employment situation of immigrant youth in Helsinki. Immigrants are defined according to their mother tongue in the context of the project, meaning that it includes all those who have a mother tongue other than Finnish, Swedish, or Sami. The project is targeted towards young adults between the ages of 18 and 29. Currently, the project operates in Helsinki, but the plan is to expand its scope to Espoo in the beginning of 2016. The project receives funding from the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (CEDTE). The funding has been granted in the form of employment policy support (Finn. *työllisyyspoliittinen avustus*), which is a form of funding granted to organizations, foundations, municipalities or a federation of municipalities in order to improve the employment situation of unemployed jobseekers. As of June 2015, the administration of the support has been transferred from the CEDTE to Public Employment and Business Ser-

vices, which is another governmental agency. (Ely-keskus 2015; Monik ry 2015b; TE-palvelut 2015.)

The need for a project such as Urax arose from observations made by founder and current Director of Monik, Mr. Mohamed Adan. He has worked in other NGOs in the Helsinki region, such as Non Fighting Generation NGO (NFG) and R3 NGO. Both organizations have operated their own employment projects for the youth.

NFG's project "Work and meaning to life" (Finn. *Työtä ja merkitystä elämään –hanke*) provided labor market training and wage subsidy positions within the organization for youth in Helsinki, Finland. The length of the working period in these positions varied from 2 to 6 months, and the goal at the end of the training or subsidized work was to become employed in the open labor market. The project ran from August 2008 until the end of 2012. (Non Fighting Generation ry 2015.)

From 2013 to 2015, R3 administered a project named "R3 Info!" in Vantaa, Finland, which provided information services for immigrant youth who needed assistance with finding places of study or work. The project provided young adults with individual counselling and a plan for finding employment or a place of education. Both R3's and NFG's projects were funded by the CEDTE via employment policy support. (R3 2015.)

While working at both NFG and R3, Monik NGO's Director Mr. Adan got first-hand experience about working in projects that sought to improve the employment of youth. In July 2013, Mr. Adan saw that there was a need for a project in Helsinki that would specifically target youth with an immigrant background. This is when the initial planning of the Urax project began. (Adan 11 November 2015.)

I was contacted by Mr. Adan at the start of the spring in 2014. We were colleagues through previous non-profit work. He knew that I had studied HRM and had a long-term experience in the field of youth work, and thus asked me to coordinate and further plan the Urax project at Monik. At this phase the project had not yet received funding, so I was also present at negotiations with officers from the CEDTE. Once the funding for the project was secured, I started to work as the project coordinator and only full-time employee of the project beginning from June 2014. The initial funding for the project lasted until the end of 2014, but promising results secured funding for another year until the end of 2015.

1.2 Thesis objective and tasks

The objective of this thesis is to promote, evaluate, and develop Monik NGO's Urax career coaching project. This is done through a series of three articles. Each article forms a task, and the tasks are further divided into subtasks. In addition, the final chapter of the thesis presents key outcomes and findings, suggests areas of further study, presents feedback from the commissioning organization and offers personal reflection. The tasks and subtasks are as follows:

Task 1. Promote Monik NGO's Urax career coaching project (Article 1)

Subtask 1. Present an overview of youth unemployment in the EU and Finland (chapter 2.1)

Subtask 2. Introduce Monik NGO and the Urax project (chapters 1.1 & 2.2)

Subtask 3. Show the need for a project such as Urax (chapter 2.3)

Subtask 4. Show the difference between traditional career coaching and Urax (chapter 2.4)

Subtask 5. Explain Urax's operational model (chapter 2.5)

Task 2. Present and evaluate Urax career coaching project's results (Article 2)

Subtask 1. Present the results of Urax between August 2014 and July 2015 (chapter 3.1)

Subtask 2. Describe three client case studies (chapter 3.2)

Subtask 3. Present the best practices of the project (chapter 3.3)

Task 3. Develop the efficiency of Urax through corporate cooperation

Subtask 1. Introduce corporate cooperation and highlight its importance in relation to the project (chapter 4.1)

Subtask. 2. Present the current corporate cooperation model (chapter 4.2)

Subtask 3. Explain how the corporate cooperation model is used in practice (4.3)

Task 4. Offer reflections and feedback

Subtask 1. Present key outcomes and findings (chapter 5.1)

Subtask 2. Suggest areas of further study (chapter 5.2)

Subtask 3. Receive feedback from the commissioning organization and offer personal reflections (chapters 5.3 and 5.4)

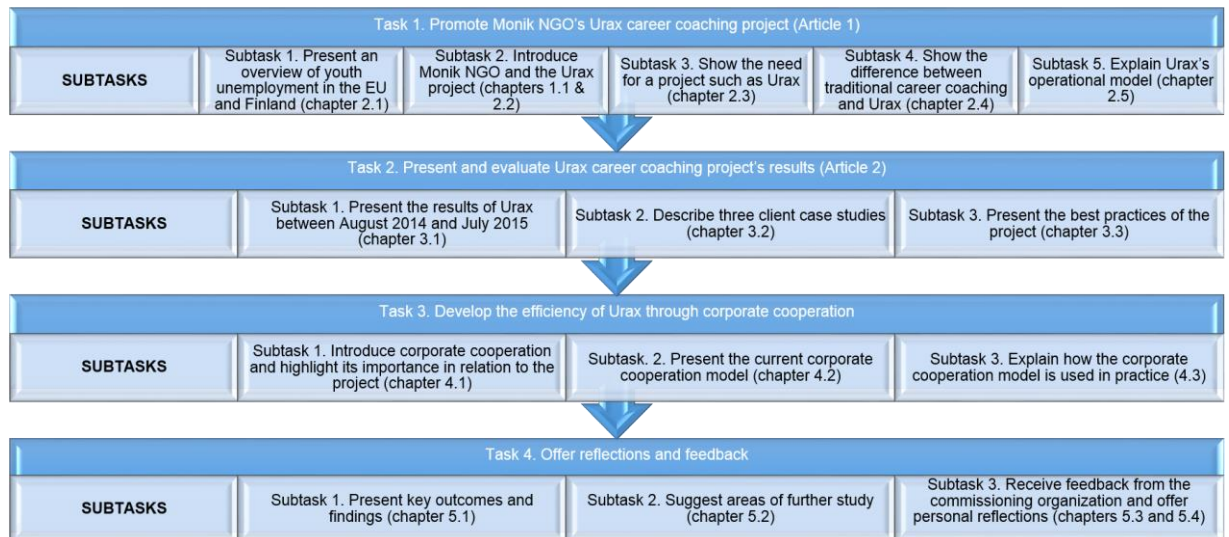


Figure 1. Thesis structure with tasks and subtasks

1.3 Demarcation and benefits

This thesis is carefully demarcated. It promotes, evaluates, and develops a specific project, namely Monik NGO's Urax career coaching project. The target group of the project is young adults with an immigrant background between the ages of 18 and 29. The evaluation of the project is based on project results between August 2014 and July 2015. The project has been operating in Helsinki, Finland during the evaluation period.

Writing this thesis provides multiple benefits. It allows Monik to promote itself as an organization; it also enables it to promote its largest project to date. The articles, which are the main body of this thesis, will be published in Six Degrees, a web-based English language magazine based in Finland. They will also be published in Monik's website. In this way, information about the project and its results are disseminated in an effective manner. Furthermore, unemployment in the immigrant community is a problem, which needs to be highlighted and alleviated. Immigrants and their international knowhow, language skills and globalized worldview present an opportunity. However, immigrants also face huge challenges in successfully finding employment. This thesis aims to provide practical tools that can be used to improve the employment situation of immigrant youth.

Writing this thesis is also beneficial to me, because I am able to display and demonstrate the models and work that I have developed and done during the coordination of the Urax project. This is beneficial for me in my career development.

The fact that this project focuses on improving the employment situation of young adults with an immigrant background signifies the international aspect of the project.

The thesis is HRM related, as the specific goal of the Urax project is to assist clients to get successfully recruited. The project consists of aiding clients in the preparation of job application documents, such as CVs and cover letters. In addition, clients are prepared for job interviews. They are also assisted in the induction phase of employment. These are all HR related concepts and processes.

1.4 Key concepts

The key concepts of this thesis are strongly related to components and elements of the Urax project itself, in addition to Finnish legislation related to employment policies. The theory of career counselling is only marginally referred to in the thesis. This is due to the fact that the objectives of and theory behind career counselling are not directly related to the Urax project, as will be shown in the first article.

The open labor market is the traditional form of becoming employed without subsidies such as a work try-out or a wage subsidy. (Ministry of Employment and the Economy 2010.)

The intermediate labor market is a subsidized alternative to the open labor market. The intermediate labor market offers people who, for different reasons, experience difficulties in finding employment in the open labor market the opportunity to find subsidized work. This may be in the form of a work try-out or a wage subsidy. These two forms of subsidized work are the most relevant to the Urax project. (Ministry of Employment and the Economy 2010.)

A work try-out is a form of subsidized work within the intermediate labor market scheme. It is a work period completed at a work place or an educational institution in order for the jobseeker to explore career and vocational choice options or to support the jobseeker's return to the labor market. The maximum length of a work try-out with the same employer is six months. A jobseeker participating in a work try-out is not paid a salary, but rather he/she is given an expense allowance in addition to the unemployment benefit. (Chapter 4, Sections 5 & 6, and Chapter 9, Section 1 of the Act on public employment and business service 916/2012.)

Wage subsidy is another form of subsidized work within the intermediate labor scheme. It is a subsidy that is given to employers for covering the salary costs of an employed jobseeker, in the case of the employer hiring that jobseeker. (Chapter 7, Section 1 of the Act on public employment and business service.)

Employment policy support is a grant allocated by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy for improvement of the employment situation of unemployed jobseekers. The support may be granted to organizations such as Monik NGO. (Sections 39 & 40 of the Government's decree on public employment and business service 28.12.2012/1073.)

The Urax operational model is the model that is used when assisting clients of the project to find employment. It consists of four stages: mapping, supporting, prepping, and post-employment services. The operational model has been specifically developed by the Urax project coordinator (author) and other staff of Monik for the purposes of the project.

Best practices are those means or methods that have been found to be effective in achieving a desired goal (Community Tool Box 2015). In the context of the Urax-project, best practices are those methods that have been found to most effectively aid a client of the project to find employment.

The corporate cooperation model is a tool used in Monik NGO's Urax project to improve and enhance the possibilities of the project's clients to become employed. It is used to develop cooperation with companies by offering them free-of-charge recruitment and consulting services, thus creating more direct avenues to employment for the target group of the project. The model has been specifically developed by the Urax project coordinator and other staff of Monik for the purposes of the project. The model also includes a written contract between Monik and the cooperating company. A brochure of the cooperation model as well as the contract template are both attached at the end of this thesis.

2 Article 1: Towards employment: Monik NGO's Urax career coaching project

This article is the first in a series of three articles that aim to promote, evaluate, and develop Monik NGO's Urax career coaching project. The Urax career coaching project aims to improve the employment situation of young adults with an immigrant background between the ages of 18 and 29. The first article is more of an introductory article. In it, the issue of youth unemployment and measures taken to tackle it are discussed. Furthermore, Monik, the NGO which administers the Urax project, is introduced. Finally, the background of the project and its operational model are explained. It is hoped that this article would set the stage for the latter two articles, which provide more in-depth analysis about the results and development of the project.

2.1 The challenge of youth unemployment, and legislative and regulatory measures taken to tackle it

Young people have suffered the most during the latest global economic crisis that hit in 2007. In the European Union, youth unemployment levels have increased exponentially in many member states. For example, youth unemployment in Italy (under 25 year-olds) increased from approximately 20% in 2007 to above 40% in 2014. Finland has also witnessed an increase in its youth unemployment (under 25 year-olds), which increased from 16.5% in 2007 to 20.5% in 2014. (Eurostat 2015; Pastore 2015, 2.)

In order to tackle youth unemployment, the European Union has introduced a new approach, the Youth Guarantee, which seeks to ensure all young people under the age of 25 either employment, apprenticeship, traineeship, work try-out, or continued education within 4 months of graduation or unemployment. (European Commission 2015.)

Nationally, the Finnish government also emphasizes improving the labor market status of young adults. The Finnish Ministry of Employment and the Economy (MEE) has put in place an intermediate labor market (Finn. *Välityömarkkinat*) in order to offer subsidized job opportunities for people who, for different reasons, have a difficulty in finding a work place in the open labor market. (Ministry of Employment and the Economy 2010.)

Two common forms of subsidized work are work try-outs (Finn. *Työkokeilu*) and wage subsidies (Finn. *Palkkatuki*). These mechanisms are often used to improve the employment of young adults.

In a work try-out, jobseekers are given the opportunity to examine vocational choices and career options at an educational institution or a workplace. The work try-out is also a support mechanism for jobseekers to enter the labor market. The maximum length of a continuous work try-out at a single workplace or institution is six months. The work try-out agreement is not an actual employment contract, and thus a jobseeker participating in a work try-out does not receive a salary, but is rather given an expense allowance in addition to the unemployment benefit. The unemployment and economic development office (TE-office) is the deciding body that accepts or declines work try-out applications. Accordingly, work try-out agreements and applications are sent to officers at the TE-office. (Chapter 4, Sections 5 & 6, and Chapter 9, Section 1, of the Act on public employment and business service 916/2012.)

A wage subsidy is given to employers to help cover a certain percentage of the pay costs of an unemployed jobseeker. It is an incentive for employers that encourages them to employ unemployed jobseekers, because the actual employment costs incurred by the employer are lower. A jobseeker for which an employer receives wage subsidy enters into an employment contract with the employer, and receives a salary for his/her work. The amount of wage subsidy is generally determined by the length of the unemployment of the jobseeker. Similar to the work try-out, wage subsidy decisions are made by TE-office officers. (Chapter 7, Sections 1 and 9 of the Act on public employment and business service.)

The Finnish government also supports organizations, foundations, municipalities, and joint municipality boards that provide employment services to jobseekers. Employment policy support (Finn. *Työllisyyspoliittinen avustus*) is an assistance previously administered by the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (CEDTE, Finn. *Ely-keskus*) and currently by the TE-offices. Monik NGO's Urax career coaching project receives its funding via this assistance.

2.2 Monik NGO and Urax in a nutshell

Monik NGO (Finn. *Monik ry*) is a Finnish multicultural non-governmental organization. It was founded in 2011, and its goals are to further the integration of immigrants into the Finnish society and to improve dialogue between various groups and members within the society. The focus of Monik's integration efforts is on improving employment. In order to further and improve employment, Monik NGO started the Urax career coaching project in the June of 2014. (Monik ry 2015a.)

The Urax career coaching project is targeted towards unemployed jobseekers with an immigrant background living in Helsinki between the ages of 18 and 29. Immigrants are defined according to their mother tongue in the context of the project, meaning that it includes all those who have a mother tongue other than Finnish, Swedish, or Sami. The goal of the project is to provide the target group with tools that are needed to find employment. Primarily, the goal is to find employment in the open labor market. If that is not possible, the secondary option is to find employment through means of the intermediate labor market. During years 2014 and 2015, the project has employed one full-time employee, and its target has been to assist at least 15 young adults in finding employment.

2.3 Why is there a need for Urax?

The reasons for Monik NGO developing the Urax career coaching project are manifold. Firstly, as has been previously discussed, youth unemployment is substantially higher when compared to the rest of the labor force. In addition to this, immigrant youth suffer from even greater levels of unemployment. In 2013, the percentage of unemployed 18 to 29-year-old immigrant youth in Helsinki out of the total labor force was 17,9%, whereas the corresponding percentage for indigenous Finns was 6,7% (Pasila 10 September 2015).

There is growing evidence pointing to the fact that youth lack the necessary job seeking skills that are required to find employment. Employers have lately complained about not being able to reach young jobseekers when they have tried to call them for an interview. There are reports also of incomplete or poorly filled out CVs, which all point to significant inadequacies in the job seeking skills of youth. Not only have employers reportedly commented about poor job seeking skills, but there have also been reports about youth not having the necessary tools to actually cope at work after finding employment. (Taloussanomat 31 July 2015a; Länsiväylä 2015.)

While working with immigrant youth, I and other members at Monik have come to realize that these aforementioned challenges are even more prevalent amongst immigrant youth. Immigrant youth often speak Finnish as a second language and therefore experience more difficulties in the job seeking process. Even those who have lived in Finland since their childhood or who were even born in Finland face greater challenges than indigenous youth, because they are often brought up between cultures.

Perhaps the greatest challenge faced by immigrant youth, which serves as an impediment to finding employment, is the lack of networks. Few immigrant young adults, or immigrants in general, are well networked. They lack the necessary contacts to secure that first sum-

mer job or professional workplace, which will open up future employment opportunities. The problem of inadequate networks is a problem shared by most jobseekers, so one can only imagine what kind of a problem this poses for those with an immigrant background.

2.4 Career coaching or job search coaching?

Career coaching or career counselling as a discipline generally focuses on different aspects of career development when compared to the Urax model. The main goals of career coaching or career counselling are to aid clients in finding a suitable occupation and to get them adjusted to a new line of work (Sharf 2010, 16). Career coaches adopt different forms of styles and approaches when helping clients to achieve these goals (Yates 2013, 83). In addition, the field of career coaching deals with factors relating to how people make career decisions (Yates 2013, 26), and this in turn is a clear sign of how related the discipline of career coaching is to psychology.

To my surprise, career counselling theory does not put as much emphasis on the latter phase of the counselling, which is the phase in which a client starts the practical job search, as it does on the approaches of counselling and the psychology behind decision-making. Yates (2013, 171) describes effective job search strategies in her work, but even then she does not describe them in the context of job search coaching.

The Urax career coaching project is more focused on actually helping clients find employment. Whereas career coaching is traditionally seen to be a process in which a coach helps his/her client in the career decision-making process, it was clear from the project's initial phase that the overwhelming majority of clients did not need this type of coaching. Rather, they already knew what kind of work they want to apply for and do, but they lacked the means of actually applying and finding the job. Thus, it may be argued that a more suitable term for the kind of work done at Urax is job search coaching rather than career coaching.

2.5 The operational model of Urax

When developing the Urax project, it was important to create a distinct operational model that would be used during the coaching. This model could be used to guide the project worker. As existing theories and models related to the specific type of coaching done at Urax are scarcely available, I as the project coordinator, together with other staff at Monik, proceeded to create a unique operational model. The model is based on the observations made about the target group and their perceived needs. It is best visualized when dividing it into four different stages: mapping, supporting, prepping, and post-employment services.

Mapping is the first stage of the coaching phase. Clients often find their way to the project via Monik's website (www.monik.fi), the project's own website (www.urax.fi), friends, social media, the TE-office, or other partner NGO's and projects. When a client comes to his/her first session, the time is used for mapping the current situation. The most common place to start is from educational and work history, as well as the type of work that the client is interested in. This then gives an idea of whether finding employment is a viable option. If in the mapping phase a client is found to be lacking adequate education and know-how or Finnish language skills, it may be concluded that he/she would benefit more from another project, course, or service. Sometimes a suitable course can be found within Monik's own offering, whereas at other times partner organizations and projects are utilized to find the best possible solution. If, on the other hand, finding employment is a viable possibility, the client is processed into the project database, and he/she becomes a client. At this point, a personalized plan for the job search is made. This includes agreeing on future appointments and what strategies will be used to find a workplace.

Shortly after mapping starts what is termed the **supporting** phase. In this phase, the client is given concrete assistance in the job search. This includes creating a CV and cover letter, searching for vacancies, helping fill out job applications, as well as contacting employers. In cases where the client and his/her knowhow is known to the project worker, he/she may be recommended to companies. The supporting phase may even start during the first meeting almost simultaneously with the mapping phase. In certain examples, Monik has had a corporate partner that needs exactly the kind of knowhow possessed by a client. In these kinds of cases the project worker has contacted the company, and in best case scenarios job interviews have been agreed upon after the very first session with the client.

The **Prepping** phase is important especially for those clients who do not have a lot of experience from job interview situations. In this phase, clients are prepared for interviews with the use of interview simulation techniques as well as by going through important steps to take into consideration before, during, and after the interview. The prepping phase also includes giving advice to the client after the interview, such as when to contact the prospective employer or whether to contact at all. The Urax website includes aiding material related to job interview preparation that can be accessed by clients and others as well.

In the case of successfully obtaining a workplace, the client-coach relationship does not immediately cease to exist. Rather, throughout the project we have come to see the importance of **Post-employment services**. Clients often feel overwhelmed by the change

that takes place after employment. A new work environment with new guidelines and people is a lot to handle at times. This is why the post-employment phase has been put in place to support the client even after employment. Support is given in the form of advice and help. In certain cases, the work might even abruptly end, and the client returns back to the project. The post-employment service allows the project worker to anticipate all of these events and respond to them accordingly. This is even more important, if the client is employed via the intermediate labor market, because in such cases the employment will more likely terminate in the near future.

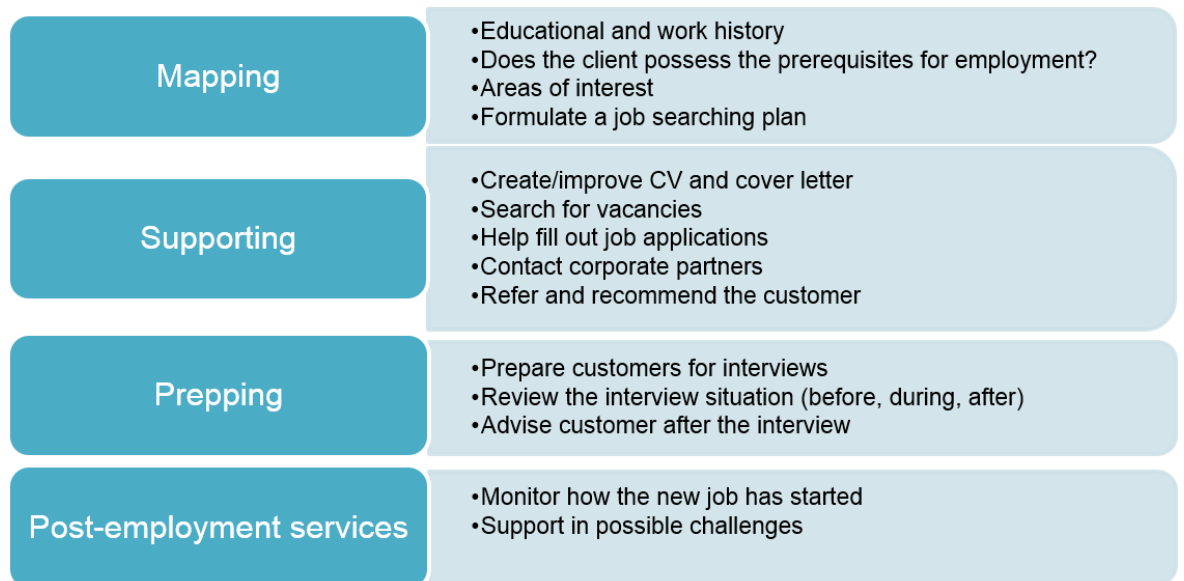


Figure 2. The operational model of the Urax career coaching project

In addition to the core job search coaching, clients are offered support and advice related to lifestyle. Matters such as time management, healthy lifestyle and personal finance management can all be factors that make it easier or more difficult for a person to get employed. If need be, clients are referred, with their permission, to professionals of various fields that can offer their expertise.

Overall, the operational model of the project offers a structured guideline, which the coach can use as an aid during the client-coach relationship. Although the model has been described in a sequential manner, it is very well possible that some of the stages are executed simultaneously. The coach needs to be able to identify the needs of the client and offer the right combination of services at the right time.

In the upcoming article, the actual results of the project are examined. In addition, three client case studies are looked at to show the journey towards employment of young adults with an immigrant background. Finally, the project's best practices are discussed.

3 Towards employment: Urax-career coaching project's impressive results

This is the second article in a series of three articles which aim to promote, evaluate, and develop Monik NGO's Urax career coaching project. The first article was an introductory article, which had the aim of giving background to the topic and describing the operational model of the project. This article describes the results of the project between August 2014 and July 2015. It also describes the road to employment of three clients of the project. Finally, it suggests best practices that have been found to most effectively increase the chances of clients finding employment.

3.1 Promising results for a young and small project

In order to present the results of the Urax project, it is first necessary to recapitulate the goals and targets of the project as well as what constitutes a successful or positive result.

The main target of the Urax career coaching project is to aid young adults from Helsinki with an immigrant background in finding employment. The project is targeted towards young adults between the ages of 18 and 29. Individuals that receive coaching are called clients. The numerical annual target during the years 2014 and 2015 has been to assist at least 15 clients to successfully find employment. The primary target is to help clients find employment from the open labor market and secondarily from the intermediate labor market.

The results that are described in this article are based on those successful cases of employment that took place between August 2014 and July 2015. The project began in the beginning of June 2014. The first two months of the project were intentionally omitted when looking at the project results, mainly for two reasons. Firstly, the project started during the summer time, which is a time when many companies as well as potential clients are harder to reach due to the vacation season. Secondly, it is common for a project to take at least two or even up to four months to be fully operational. In the case of Urax, which has employed only one full man-year during the years 2014 and 2015, it was appropriate to omit the first two months.

Between August 2014 and July 2015, a total of 27 clients participated in the career coaching project, out of which 19 clients were successfully assisted towards employment. Thus, the rate of success amongst the clients was 70%. These 19 clients were assisted 23 times, which means that in four of the successful assists a client had returned back to the project after a previous contract had terminated. All of the clients who returned due to the

termination of a previous contract found employment afterwards. In 10 cases employment was found from the open labor market, whereas in 13 cases employment was found from the intermediate labor market (10 work try-outs and 3 wage subsidies). The mean age of the clients when finding employment was 24. The mean period of time it took for a client to find employment after coming into the project was 36 days.

Table 1. Numerical results of the Urax career coaching project (August 2014-July 2015)

No. of clients	Found employment	Returning clients that found employment	Open labor market	Work try-out	Wage subsidy	Mean age of clients when employed	Mean period of time to find employment
27	19	4	10	10	3	24 years	36 days

Clients found employment in companies and NGOs that operate in various fields, such as health care, vehicle maintenance, administration, social work, education, mail delivery, cleaning and maintenance, sales, and warehouse and construction.

Out of the 23 times that clients were assisted in finding employment, 10 were work try-outs. As was mentioned before, the goal is to find employment from the open labor market primarily, and only secondarily from the intermediate labor market. Out of the two prevalent forms of subsidized employment, work try-outs are the more unfavorable, due to the fact that the employee completing the work try-out does not receive an actual salary, but rather an increased unemployment benefit. The fact that the number of work try-outs was high is a clear indication of the difficult condition of the labor market as well as the challenges faced by the target group of the project. However, a work try-out's benefits cannot be denied, as it offers the unemployed person valuable work experience and also a possibility to continue at the workplace in which he/she is completing the try-out. It is also worthwhile to mention that five out of the ten work try-outs were completed at Monik NGO. Two of these were the position of project assistant in the Urax project itself.

Finally, it can be said that the results of the project have been very good. The numerical targets set for the project have been successfully reached. However, it is also beneficial to look beyond the numbers in order to see how exactly clients have been coached and assisted on their journey towards employment.

3.2 Client case studies

The purpose of looking at specific client cases is to give a better understanding of the process that takes place after a client comes into the project. Illustrative case studies describe what a situation is like in order to familiarize the reader with a given topic. In this

manner, the phenomenon becomes more vivid to the reader. (Colorado State University 2015; Thomas 2011, 118.)

Three different cases are illustrated. Focus is put on describing how the operational model of the project was utilized to assist the clients, and on the various mechanisms that were used to assist them.

3.2.1 “Fadumo” the catering professional

“Fadumo” (name has been changed), a young woman of Somali background, but who grew up in Finland, was directed to the Urax project in November 2014 via a TE-office employee. The employee called me and said that a young woman in her early twenties could potentially benefit from the project. I asked the TE-office employee to send me her contact details. It took me approximately a week to reach her, but after I finally got a hold of her, we were able to set up a meeting at Monik’s offices in Malmi, Helsinki. During our first session, we discussed about Fadumo’s current situation. She had recently arrived from her land of origin, after staying there for some months. She had previously completed her vocational training in the field of catering, and wanted to find employment in that field. Ideally, she would like to work at for example a kindergarten kitchen or similar other institution.

During the first session, we proceeded to work on Fadumo’s CV. She did not have a CV from before, and for this purpose I had asked her to bring all of her school, job, and other related certificates. Once we were finished with the CV, I immediately started thinking of possible avenues of employment for her. A corporate partner, who owns the Subway restaurant in Itäkeskus, Helsinki, came to my mind. I called the owner of the restaurant during the session, telling him of a potential employee. I was able to secure an interview for Fadumo for that same day. Prior to our session ending, I shortly prepared for the interview with Fadumo, and also called her prior to the interview to make sure if she had any queries. The entire session at the office took approximately 90 minutes.

After the interview, the owner of the restaurant informed of his willingness to take Fadumo for a work try-out. Fadumo agreed to this, and only 11 days after coming to the first session Fadumo was able to start working at the restaurant. Throughout the work try-out, I kept in touch with both Fadumo and her employer and asked how the work had fared.

Fadumo’s initial work try-out lasted for two months, and it finished in January 2015. After the end of the work try-out, Fadumo returned to the project. She wanted to find employment in the open labor market, or at least a wage subsidy position. I assisted her in

searching and applying for jobs. However, she did not find anything for some months. In May 2015, the owner of the same Subway agreed to employ Fadumo a second time, this time using a wage subsidy. This wage subsidy period started in June 2015, and lasted until the end of 2015.

As can be seen from Fadumo's case, the mapping, assisting, and prepping phases all took place during the same session, due to the fact that an interview was secured in such a short notice. It is extremely important to recognize the need for incorporating all of these phases in such a situation even if it is during the same session. This allows for the best possible service. If prepping for the interview was not provided, the client might have lacked the confidence to perform well during the interview.

3.2.2 "Mahmoud" the ICT professional

"Mahmoud" (name changed) graduated as an ICT technician in April 2014. He is of Somali background, but was born in Finland. After graduation he wanted to find employment in his own field, but he had been unable to do so. He found his way to the project in August 2014. He had heard about it from friends, and he also knew Monik employees from before.

The mapping phase with Mahmoud was rather standard. His already existing CV was checked and modified after which he was assisted in applying for relevant open positions online. No suitable corporate partners were found, but I contacted those recruiters who were responsible for the openings to which Mahmoud applied. I sent an e-mail in which I mentioned Mahmoud's competences as well as commented on his character. I attached his CV to the e-mail and recommended him for the jobs.

The very next day after the first session, Mahmoud was called for an interview at a company to which I had sent a recommendation e-mail. The interview was to take place the next day, and Mahmoud called me during the evening in order to ask me for advice concerning the interview. We agreed to meet during the same evening at approximately 20:00. The evening session consisted of going through the interview situation and what to take into consideration before, during, and after it. Although Mahmoud's interview went well, he did not end up getting the position. In the upcoming months we were able to secure two additional interviews for Mahmoud using the same technique of me contacting the recruiter after Mahmoud had sent the job application. All of the jobs he applied for were technical jobs relating to his vocational profession. During this time, Mahmoud was also assisted in creating a personal cover letter template that could be modified depending on the job he was applying for.

Despite Mahmoud's hard work and efforts in finding a workplace in his own field, he was not able to find employment. In November 2014, however, Mahmoud got a job offer from an elementary school in Helsinki that was looking for a classroom assistant. This position lasted until the end of the school year. Because of his good work, Mahmoud was able to continue to work for various elementary schools in Helsinki as a classroom assistant until the end of May 2015. Simultaneously, he occasionally worked for the Helsinki City youth department at youth halls. As of December 2015, he has found a permanent full-time job working as an airport security officer.

3.2.3 "Harun" the mechanic

Out of all of the three chosen cases, Harun's (name changed) perhaps best illustrates the effectiveness of the Urax model. Harun arrived to Finland approximately four years ago. He has over 10 years of experience as a mechanic from his home country Syria. After arriving to Finland, he was able to obtain a vocational certificate in the field of vehicle maintenance. However, after graduating he was not able to get even a single interview opportunity, despite having applied for positions at numerous repair shops.

Harun found out about Urax through Monik's partner NGO Suomen Setlementtiliitto. A project coordinator from the Setlementtiliitto contacted me in March 2015 and told me of Harun's case. I immediately contacted Harun, and we agreed to meet. As I ran Harun through the mapping and assisting phases, I went to consult my colleague at Monik in order to ask him whether he had any contacts to repair shops. He replied in the negative, but he mentioned a repair shop to which he had taken his car for maintenance during the previous week. He said that the owner of the repair shop seemed like a nice man, and so we decided to contact him. We explained the nature of the project to him, and told him of Harun's case. He immediately agreed to take him in for an interview. This all took place during the first session.

I accompanied Harun to his interview. Even though his maintenance skills and competencies are on a very high level, his Finnish language skills are still not fluent. Due to my proficiency in the Arabic language, which Harun speaks fluently, I was able to support him in case there were any matters that were too difficult for him to understand. The interview went well, and the owner of the repair shop offered Harun a work try-out position. Harun agreed to sign a six-month try-out contract. This all took place only ten days after initially contacting the repair shop. Harun's try-out was so successful and the owner was so pleased with him that he has now employed Harun as a regular employee through the open labor market.

3.3 Urax's best practices

Certain best practices, or methods that have been deemed to be effective in assisting clients to find employment, have been identified throughout the course of the project. These can all be identified in the three case studies, but they are not limited to them. Rather, these three cases are depictive of other client cases, and one or more of these best practices have been utilized with all of the project's clients. They are as follows:

- **Focus on the client:** What is meant by client focus is that clients are given personalized and distinct services. Each client and his/her case is looked at as an individual and particular case that requires specific measures. In addition, clients are provided flexible services. For example, when Mahmoud called me to inform that he has an interview the next day and requested assistance, we met after office hours to simulate the interview situation. These types of services have received a lot of positive feedback from the clients.
- **Cultural awareness and peer support:** Since the project is targeted towards young adults with an immigrant background, it has been crucially important for the overall functionality of the project that the project coordinator himself is of an immigrant background. This has allowed the clients to conduct themselves in a much more comfortable manner. The project coordinator also understands the situations that the clients are going through and is able to support the clients as a peer. This is potentially motivating, especially when clients see a successful project coordinator with a similar background to theirs.
- **Contacting the employer after the client's job application:** As was seen from Mahmoud's case, he was able to secure himself three job interviews after the project coordinator contacted the companies and those workers in charge of the recruitment. This practice clearly increases the chances of a client receiving an invitation for an interview. However, one has to be wary of using this method in all situations, as knowledge of the client's skills and competencies is a prerequisite. Otherwise there is the danger of losing the project's and organization's reputation amongst employers.
- **Corporate cooperation:** Direct contact with companies resulted in successful employment in two of the three case studies. This shows the importance of corporate cooperation. The example of Harun, who had not been able to get invited to a single interview, was very telling. With the help of a corporate contact – one that was developed using very innovative ways at that – he was able to get the chance to prove his skills.

It is somewhat befitting that the last best practice mentioned is corporate cooperation. This is so, because the third and final article focuses on developing the Urax project with the help of a corporate cooperation model. Corporate cooperation is a crucial tool that creates more direct avenues to employment for jobseekers. This is even more so the case when it comes to the target group of the Urax project, as can be seen from the client case studies.

4 Towards employment effectively: Creating, developing, and operationalizing a corporate cooperation model for Monik NGO

This is the third and final article in a series of three articles that promote, evaluate, and develop Monik NGO's Urax career coaching project. In this final article, corporate cooperation and its importance are addressed. Monik's current corporate cooperation model, which is used in the Urax project, is described, and its use is demonstrated by using a concrete case study.

4.1 Corporate cooperation and its importance in the context of the Urax project

Corporate cooperation is a term often used by educational institutions and humanitarian organizations for specific purposes. For example, Finn Church Aid promotes corporate cooperation as a way for companies to carry out their corporate social responsibility by donating to the organization's humanitarian projects. Universities such as Aalto and Hanken both market their corporate cooperation activities as ways for companies to get involved in research and business projects, sponsor lecture halls or participate in the schools' career services and executive programs. Thus, corporate cooperation or collaboration can be defined as a partnership between one entity and a company in which activities that result in mutual benefit are engaged in. (Aalto University 2015; Finn Church Aid 2015; Hanken 2015.)

As was mentioned in the first article, one of the major challenges that young adults with an immigrant background face when trying to find employment is the lack of networks. They do not have links and contacts to companies or employees working at companies. From the initial stages of Urax, we at Monik realized that there needed to be a concrete plan in order to create contacts for our clients, and we realized that the most effective way to do this is to develop a corporate cooperation model. In this manner the project and Monik as an organization could act as a bridge between the client and the employer.

4.2 Monik's corporate cooperation model

Initially, when we tried to contact companies and offer them partnerships – this was prior to having any sort of coherent cooperation model – we contacted large multinational companies operating in Finland, thinking that since they have large recruitment needs, it would be most worthwhile contacting them. However, after discussing within the organization and consulting other partners, we came to the conclusion that targeting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) would be the best course of action. Over 60% of people working in Finland work in SMEs. In addition, it is said that a sizeable amount of the

360,000 hidden jobs (Finn. *Piilotyöpaikka*) that exist in Finland are within SMEs. This is because SMEs often lack the resources to handle a flood of job applications. Thus, owners of SMEs often employ people that are known to them through a personal contact. (Suomen Yrittäjät 2013, 4; Taloussanomat 8 December 2015b.)

The ultimate goal of Monik's corporate cooperation model (Finn. *Yritysyhteistyömalli*) is to create a more direct venue for jobseekers and especially Urax's clients to find employment. It also offers added value to companies, because the model in actual fact is a free-of-charge recruitment channel. The model itself offers companies the following:

- The possibility of employing international and high-skilled workers
- A completely free-of-charge recruitment service
- A list of potential candidates shortlisted from a pool of up to 3,000 jobseekers
- Jobseekers that have participated in career coaching, and thus have an understanding of work-life etiquette and related matters
- Support in applying for and administering wage subsidies and work try-outs
- Consulting services and support to the employee as well as the employer after the employment has started
- An opportunity to carry out corporate responsibility

One of the goals of the model is to endorse a culture in Finnish society, where employers do not hesitate to hire people coming from diverse ethnic backgrounds. Not only should this not be a problem, but companies should realize the potential gains that can be made when they employ people with international and innovative views.

A strength in the model is the fact that it is free-of-charge. Many companies cannot afford to pay high recruitment fees, and that is why the threshold of cooperating is not as high. On the other hand, some companies might doubt the quality of the service if it is free, and this is why it is important to prove that the service brings added value to the company.

The model boasts of being able to tap into a pool of 3,000 jobseekers. This can only be done through strong cooperation with partners and stakeholders, such as other NGOs and their projects; the City of Helsinki's projects, such as Respa, which is the city's own career coaching project for young adults of all backgrounds; and the TE-offices.

At the moment, Monik is in the process of planning a competency system together with municipalities within the Helsinki city region, which enables young adult jobseekers to prove their knowhow to companies. In concrete terms, this would be some sort of physical or electronic card, which would have information about skills obtained through courses or work experience. This would also include courses about working life. Monik as an organization participates in the delivery of such short courses to the target group of Urax. These are primarily delivered in the form of group training, but also during individual sessions.

Employers appreciate if a jobseeker has both the technical knowhow and the soft skills needed to succeed in the job.

Many employers are not even aware of the different options that are available via the intermediate labor market. Often, even if they are aware of this, they are too busy with their core business to find out about the intricacies of how to apply for a wage subsidy. Monik's corporate model supports companies in this. An example of this support is in the case of Fadumo, who I spoke of in one of the previous article's case studies. I personally go to the restaurant that Fadumo is working in, and fill in the application that is required to receive the wage subsidy. This is an added value that many employers cherish.

Conflicts in the workplace are commonplace. This can take place between supervisors and subordinates or between colleagues. The chances of misunderstandings taking place increase when employees are from various ethnic backgrounds. The corporate cooperation model offers consultation to both employers and employees in the case of such conflicts.

Monik and interested companies form an actual written corporate cooperation agreement. In it, Monik agrees to provide the company all of the above-mentioned services. The signing company agrees to use Monik and the Urax project as one of its channels of recruitment.

4.3 The corporate model in practice

Let us look at a practical corporate cooperation case in order to see how the model works in practice. Tulkikikeskus NOR Oy is a Helsinki-based company that offers interpretation and translation services in almost 50 languages. The company was founded in 2008 by two Somali-born immigrants. (Qasim 30 December 2015.)

In spring 2015, the company was looking for an office secretary to receive and coordinate orders as well as to take care of billing and calculation of the translators' and interpreters' working hours. NOR had signed a corporate cooperation contract with Monik. I was immediately contacted by NOR's leadership when their need for a secretary arose. I replied to their need by saying that we at Monik would do everything we could to find the most suitable candidate for the position.

Soon after, I had a discussion with NOR's leadership in order to find out all of the details pertaining to the vacant position. This included the kind of employee they were looking for, the nature of the job itself, and all other relevant information. At that point I found out that

the role was a wage subsidy position. This meant that only those jobseekers that had the right to receive a wage subsidy could apply.

After obtaining all of the necessary information about the position, I proceeded to notify Urax clients as well as jobseekers at partner organizations and projects about the vacancy. It would have also been possible to advertise the vacancy on Monik's social media pages and webpage in addition to the TE-office website (www.mol.fi), but the target was not to attract tens of applications. Rather, the goal was to attract 5-10 applicants, and then to shortlist the best candidates. All those interested in the position were asked to send an application letter and an attached CV to me. The position was to be filled as soon as a suitable candidate was found.

After receiving five applications, I proceeded to the shortlisting phase. I called all of the applicants and conducted a short telephone interview. Three best applicants were chosen based on the interviews, and they were all referred to NOR's leadership. NOR's leadership then proceeded to interview the shortlisted candidates. These interviews were conducted face-to-face. I was consulted throughout the entire process. After NOR's leadership made their final decision, the remaining candidates were notified of the recruitment decision.

I stayed in regular contact with both NOR's leadership as well as the hired office secretary throughout the entire wage subsidy period, which took six months. This was done in order to try to ensure that the employee was satisfied with the working environment, and that the employer was satisfied with the quality of the office secretary's work.

NOR's leadership was extremely satisfied with the services that they received when using the corporate cooperation model. In fact, they were so happy and satisfied that one of the company owners Khadra Qasim held a speech about the company's experiences at Monik's employment related seminar in October 2015.

4.4 Employment is the best form of integration

We at Monik strongly believe that employment is the best form of integration. This is not to say that an immigrant who is employed is somehow better than an unemployed immigrant. It simply means that when a person of immigrant background has found employment, it can often be inferred that he/she has been able to get settled into the society, learn the language of the country, and/or get an education or skill that is valued in the job market. This naturally has a positive impact in the person's overall well-being and state.

This is why Monik has made improving employment in the immigrant community its top priority.

This article series has attempted to show how Monik tries to do its share in aiding young adults with an immigrant background, a subgroup that often faces the hardest challenges when finding employment. Much more has to be done, but hopefully the models and practices portrayed herein offer both practitioners as well as laymen more insight into the topic.

5 Conclusions

The conclusion chapter of this thesis discusses key outcomes and findings related to the topic. It also suggests areas of further study. Feedback from the commissioning organization is presented. Finally, I reflect on my personal learning and give a personal assessment of the thesis process.

5.1 Key outcomes and findings

In this subchapter, it is most befitting to look at the key outcomes and findings of the Urax career coaching project itself. They are also the most important elements that formed the article series. This is why I have divided the key outcomes and findings into three sections, with each section dealing with one of the articles.

5.1.1 Key outcomes and findings of the 1st article

It was necessary to present a background to the topic in the first article. This included information about the problem of youth unemployment as well as Finnish legislation and other measures taken to tackle the problem. Aside from the background information, however, some very important findings were made. Firstly, the difficulties and challenges that are faced by young adults – especially young adults with an immigrant background – when it comes to job search and getting employed were addressed. Problems such as lacking job search skills, limited language skills, and the lack of networks were discussed. These are also the issues that the Urax project seeks to address through its operational model.

The operational model was really the pinnacle of the first article, as the main objective was to present it and its various components. I think that the steps of the model, namely mapping, supporting, prepping, and post-employment services, can all be justified based on the challenges that were previously mentioned in the article. That is why it can be said that a scientific approach has been used in the formulation of the model, although it is not based on a previous or existing model.

Finally, it is worthwhile to note the lack of existing academic literature about job search coaching. Career coaching, as was shown, is rather different and focuses on different issues altogether.

5.1.2 Key outcomes and findings of the 2nd article

Once the background and the operational model of the project were presented in the first article, it was appropriate to assess the project's results in the second article. The yearly goal of the project in the years 2014 and 2015 has been to assist 15 young adults in obtaining employment via the open labor market or the intermediary labor market. As was shown, this target was exceeded during the assessment period, which was from August 2014 to July 2015. The number of clients that found employment during this period was 19. In actual fact, since four clients were successfully assisted in finding employment a second time after their first contract ended, the total number of assists was 23. Using this calculation method, it means that the original target was exceeded by above 50%.

The second article also presented three real life case studies pertaining to three different clients within the Urax project. I believe that it is important for readers to understand how clients are assisted. In this manner, the reader is also able to see how the operational model is used in practice. An important observation to be made here is that the operational model, although comprising of four steps which can be thought of as being chronological, is really comprised of steps that interact with each other and can be utilized simultaneously. For example, a client can be referred or recommended to an employer already during the first coaching session, which is normally reserved for mapping. This is where the abilities of the coach really play a big role, as he/she needs to be able to realize which components of the model need to be utilized at a specific time.

The second article also presented best practices that have been identified during the execution of the project. These best practices interact with the case studies. For example, one of the best practices is the use of the corporate cooperation model, which was utilized in the cases of Fadumo and Harun. In Mahmoud's case, the practice of focusing on the client, when the project coordinator went out of his way to meet him at 20:00 in the evening to help him prepare for a job interview, was utilized.

The best practices of the project are tangible benefits that have been identified since the inception of Urax. I have personally presented these best practices to high ranking officers within the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, and as such, they have been very beneficial for Monik as an organization and Urax as a project.

5.1.3 Key outcomes and findings of the 3rd article

As was mentioned in the first article, a major obstacle faced by immigrant youth when searching for employment is the lack of networks. While coordinating the project, I have realized that creating these networks for the youth is an effective, if not the most effective,

way to assist them in their job search. The corporate cooperation model was mentioned in the second article as one of the project's best practices, and I saw it most befitting to dedicate the third article for its exposition.

The exposition of the corporate cooperation model followed a similar pattern when compared to the presentation of the project's operational model and client case studies in the first and second articles. First, the services that companies are offered in the model were presented, after which the model's usage was shown through using a case. I think that this way of writing the articles was successful in both allowing the reader to enjoy the flow of the articles and maintaining an academic approach to the topic.

At the time of writing this thesis, Monik has received a decision from the Public Employment and Business Services concerning the funding of the Urax career coaching project. For the year 2016, Monik has been granted a sum which is three times larger than that of the sum in 2015. This means that the project will employ a total of three employees; it will also operate in not only Helsinki, but neighboring city Espoo as well. In addition, the target of the project will be to assist a minimum of 75 young adults in finding employment during the year. All of this means that the role of corporate cooperation will become even more important. The model has to be offered to companies even more effectively.

One advantage that Monik has in 2016, is that it has formed a strategic partnership with both Helsinki's and Espoo's municipalities. This will give Monik and the Urax project more credibility in the eyes of companies. It also means that although the corporate cooperation model targets SMEs primarily, as was mentioned in the third article, there is a chance to target larger companies due to the increase in volume and credibility. Even if only one or two larger companies agree to cooperate, this could result in tens of clients finding employment.

5.2 Areas of further study

When conducting a desktop study about theories and models related to the kind of career coaching or job search coaching done in the Urax project, I was not able to find much literature at all. At the same time, I strongly believe that the topic area itself is an extremely interesting and important one, which deserves to be studied more extensively. In this subchapter, I hope to suggest some areas of further study, which I believe would be of benefit to the topic area in general and Monik/Urax in specific. They are listed below:

Developing the project through client interviews

This research would consist of in-depth client interviews. Areas of interest would be the clients' expectations prior to becoming a client in project, their experiences during the project, as well as their assessment of how the project could be improved. This type of a user-experience research method can be utilized to especially improve client experience.

Validation of the operational model

In the first article, I mentioned that there is existing literature about effective job search strategies which a jobseeker can adopt in his/her job search. One way of validating or testing the effectiveness of Urax's operational model would be to research if existing empirical research on effective strategies correlate with those measures and tools that are used in the Urax model. This research can also be used to see if there are differences between the effective job search strategies that are mentioned in previous studies and the Urax model, as well as why these possible differences exist.

Research on how the project could be duplicated in other countries

As was discussed in the first article, youth unemployment is rampant in the EU. A research into the viability of conducting a project with a similar operational model as Urax in other EU member states – of course taking into consideration each country's differences and individual features – could potentially be of high practical benefit. In actual fact, during a business visit to Brussels, Belgium, I preliminarily spoke with an officer working at the International Organization for Migration (IOM) about looking into the possibility of spreading Urax's model.

The role of discrimination in the job search process and its relation to coaching

Perhaps one major limitation of this thesis is that I did not discuss the role of discrimination in the job search process and especially how it relates to coaching. One of the reasons I did not do this, is that I feel it to be a very wide topic that deserves a separate study altogether. Perhaps interviews of the target group could be utilized in this type of research as well.

The above-mentioned suggestions are just a few specific researches that I find interesting and beneficial for the development of the topic area and the project. Many more interesting areas of further study may be suggested.

5.3 Feedback from the commissioning organization

The following is a letter of feedback written about my work by Monik NGO's Director Mr. Mohamed Adan. It addresses both my work as coordinator of the Urax project as well as the importance of the article thesis.

Hunderra Assefa as project coordinator of the Urax career coaching project has been working with a professional attitude. He has in a very short time also learned new skills that are necessary for coordinating the project. It's been very interesting to follow his work and development as project coordinator. I have also been very surprised at how well he is able to use the skills and techniques learned at school and apply them to practical work in a smooth manner.

The articles that are part of Hunderra's thesis are very important for the Urax career coaching project, and they were also drafted in a clear and consistent manner. Through them it is easy to explore the project's background as well as to evaluate the project's added value and successes in the short term. I see it as extremely important that the articles were written in English, because we are a multi-cultural organization, and we need multi-lingual information about our activities and services. Overall, I'm very happy and satisfied with the articles and also with the work that Mr. Hunderra Assefa has done so far.

Adan Mohamed
Executive Director
Monik NGO

5.4 Personal learning

Coordinating the Urax career coaching project has been an extremely beneficial experience for me from a professional perspective. I have had the great opportunity of starting in the project since its inception. I have personally been instrumental in the development of the project's operational model. I have also taken responsibility, together with Monik NGO's Director Mr. Mohamed Adan, over the administration of the project.

Even though I studied international business, I have always been more interested in working in the field of communal and societal development than in the corporate world. I have wanted to combine my expertise and knowledge of the business field with community work. This goal of mine has been achieved in my work at Monik. Professionally, I have been able to use the expertise gained at HAAGA-HELIA. Especially those topics covered in the HR specialization studies, which are closely related to the work I do in the Urax project, have enabled me to perform at a high level. I have also been able to network with high ranking officials on a municipal and national level in the public sector, entrepreneurs

and business people, as well as with employees and leaders of other NGOs. This especially has prepared me for future challenges. As a conclusion, I can say that working at Monik has so far been a dream come true.

One of the most challenging aspects of writing this particular thesis was the fact that there is a lack of academic sources available on the topic. This is a problem that we faced at Monik during the planning phase of the Urax project, when we were creating the operational model. This meant that it was most suitable to create the operational model based on observations made about the target group. Even though this posed to be more challenging, I believe that the outcome of the operational model is better, mainly due to the fact that it addresses specific observed challenges and problems. However, as I mention in the subchapter on areas of further study (5.2), it is important to validate the existing Urax model by researching the topic more and developing the model further.

In terms of publishing the articles and writing an article thesis in the first place, I can say that it has also been challenging. I have had to edit the articles so that they would be suitable for publishing in Six Degrees. This meant removing in-text references, revising the language style, and making the text easier to read for a larger audience. Although Six Degrees is not an academic journal, I value the experience of writing the articles as well as having the opportunity of getting the articles published.

I have to admit that this thesis process has been extremely difficult for me. I was supposed to already graduate during the end of the academic year in 2014. However, a hectic lifestyle, which was caused by a combination of family responsibilities and a busy work schedule, prevented me from graduating on time. During the beginning of 2015, I changed my thesis topic. Around the same time, I also came to the conclusion that I cannot wait until my schedule gets less hectic, because that might not happen at all. I thus exerted all of my energy to planning and writing my thesis, and it has finally taken me to this stage. I am grateful to my family and friends for supporting me in this process, as well as my thesis advisor Elizabeth San Miguel, without whom it would have been extremely difficult to achieve this; most of all, I thank God Almighty for allowing me to succeed in my endeavor.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Corporate cooperation model brochure (in Finnish)



Monik ry YY-malli

ILMAINEN REKRYTOINTIPALVELU

Monik ry on rekisteröity yhdistys, joka edistää kotoutumista ja kansalaisryhmien välistä vuorovaikutusta Suomessa. Monik ry keskittyy etenkin työllisyyden edistämiseen, ja se toteuttaa muun muassa pääkaupunkiseudulla asuville maahanmuuttajataustaisille nuorille kohdennettua Urax-työhönvalmennushanketta. Tällä hetkellä yhdistys on myös aloittamassa kohdennettujen rekrytointipalveluiden tarjoamisen yrityksille YY-mallillaan. Lue lisää ja ota yhteyttä!

YY-malli (Yritysyhteistyömalli) on Monik ry:n kehittämä malli yrityksille, joka helpottaa sekä selkeyttää yritysten ja Monik ry:n välistä yhteistyötä. Sen puitteissa yrityksille tarjotaan ilmaisia ja korkealaatuisia rekrytointipalveluja. Tässä muutamia mallin hyötyjä:

- **Osaava ja kansainvälinen työvoima**
- **Sopiva työntekijä yli 3000 hakijan joukosta**
- **Hakijoiden huolellinen shortlistaus**
- **Työhönvalmennettuja hakijoita**
- **Tuki työllistämiseen liittyvässä byrokratiassa (mm. palkkatuki ja työkokeilu)**
- **Konsultointipalvelut ja tuki sekä työntekijälle että työnantajalle rekrytoinnin jälkeen**
- **Mahdollisuus kantaa yritys vastuuta**

YY-mallin käyttäminen ei edellytä sitä, että yritysten pitäisi aina rekrytoida hakijoita Monikin kautta. Sen sijaan malli tarjoaa tehokkaan rekrytointikanavan sekä oivan mahdollisuuden yrityksille löytää tehokasta työvoimaa. Mallia voi muokata siten, että se palvelee yrityksen tarpeita parhaalla mahdollisella tavalla.

Kiinnostuessanne YY-mallista, ottakaa yhteys Urax-työhönvalmennushankkeen projektikoordinaattori Hundera Assefaan puhelimitse tai sähköpostitse.

Hundera Assefa
Monik ry
044 306 1046
hundera.assefa@monik.fi



Monik ry



Appendice 2. Corporate cooperation contract template (in Finnish)

Yritysyhteistyösopimus

Tässä yhteistyösopimuksessa sovitaan sopijaosapuolten osallistumisesta yhteistyöhön rekrytointiin liittyvissä asioissa.

1. SOPIJAOSAPUOLET

Monik ry
K.H. Wiikin Katu 4 B
00700 Helsinki
2497947-9

ja

Yritys A
Yritystie 1 A
00100 Helsinki
Y-tunnus

2. SOPIJAOSAPUOLTEN KESKEISET TEHTÄVÄT

Monik ry:

- Lupautuu tarjoamaan **Yritys A:lle** hanketyöntekijöiden sopiviksi katsomia hakijoita **Yritys A:n** avoimiin työpaikkoihin.
- Lupautuu tarjoamaan **Yritys A:lle** konsultointia ja tukea sekä hankkeen kautta työllistyneelle työntekijälle että työnantajalle myös rekrytoinnin jälkeen.
- **Monik ry:n** tarjoamat palvelut ovat täysin ilmaisia **Yritys A:lle**.

Yritys A:

- Suostuu osallistamaan **Monik ry:n** yrityksen rekrytointiprosessiin ilmoittamalla hankkeelle avoimista työpaikoista yrityksessä.
- Sitoutuu ottamaan **Monik ry:n** ehdottamat hakijat huomioon rekrytoinnissa. Tämä ei pakota **Yritys A:ta** palkkaamaan hankkeen ehdottamia hakijoita.

3. MUUTA:

- Sopimus on voimassa siitä päivästä, kun kummatkin osapuolet ovat sen allekirjoittaneet, ja se on toistaiseksi voimassa.
- Kumpi tahansa osapuoli voi milloin tahansa irtisanoa sopimuksen kirjallisesti.

4. SOPIMUKSEN ALLEKIRJOITUKSET

Monik ry

Mohamed Adan
Toiminnanjohtaja
Paikka ja aika

Hunderra Assefa
Projektikoordinaattori
Paikka ja aika

Yritys A

”Allekirjoitusoikeuden
omaavan henkilön nimi”

”Titteli”
Paikka ja aika