The experience of the candidate in the recruitment process: a case study of Finnish P&C Insurance

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This project was implemented for Finnish P&C Insurance Ltd, during fall 2017. Finnish P&C Insurance Ltd is a modern insurance company that produces tailor-made insurance services to its partners. The company is fast growing and thus it is actively recruiting more employees.

The purpose of the thesis was to examine the candidate's experiences during the recruitment process to evaluate whether different-aged applicants perceive the process differently. In addition the aim was to examine whether there was any connection between the applicants perception of the recruitment process and the company image. The aim was to clarify the current situation of how candidates experience the different parts of the recruitment process and to see whether some areas should be improved.

The knowledge base of the report introduces different factors in the candidate experience during the recruitment process and also discusses how these factors affect the formation of the candidate experience. These factors included the job announcement, application phase, scheduling and communication. The knowledge base also discusses the possible connection between the candidate experience and the company image.

The empirical study was carried out by using a quantitative research method. The chosen method was the online survey. This method was used since the purpose was to study the applicant experience of large sample. By the results it was sought to make generalizations about the experience of jobseekers seeking to work for the company. The results help to develop and create a more positive candidate experiences in the future if there are correspondences in the responses. A questionnaire survey was used as the data collection method, which is the most commonly used method in a quantitative study. By using the survey, it was possible to carry out the research with a considerably larger sample. The study material was collected during October and November 2017 and responses were collected from 28 jobseekers.

Based on the research, it can be concluded that overall the applicants were quite satisfied with the recruitment process but still some areas would need small adjustments. Based on these results some suggestions were made that the company could use in the future in order to create even better candidate experiences. According to the study there was not a clear connection between the age and the candidate experience. However there was a noticeable connection between the candidate experience and how the candidate felt about the company after the process.

Keywords: recruitment process, recruitment quality, candidate experience, candidate satisfaction, company image
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1 Intro

A prerequisite for successful recruitment is a positive candidate experience. Candidate experience consists of the series of interactions the candidate has with a company during the recruitment process. Whether the applicant is being selected or not, the employer has the power to influence how they experience the process. Rejection is never pleasant, but despite this, the applicant experience can be positive.

Recruiting is marketing. A satisfied applicant may apply again, posts a positive update on social media or share a positive thought of the company with their friends or even be a future customer. Unsatisfied candidate might do the same. In fact, it has been studied that negative experience is more easily distributed than positive (figure 4); therefore it is especially important to invest in a candidate experience.

The candidate experience starts when publishing the job announcement and continues all the way until the employer announces that the process has come to an end. The recruitment process involves different factors and phases that will affect the candidate experience and satisfaction which this study will examine.

This thesis project was implemented for Finnish P&C Insurance Ltd. During this project, the student worked as a HR assistant in this company and participated in the recruitment processes. Following the discussions on the recruitment field, it appeared that applicant experience is a hot topic in recruiting field and especially for a growing company it is essential way to create a positive company image.

1.1 The purpose of thesis and research questions

The purpose of the thesis was to examine the candidate experience during the recruitment process and whether the different age applicants perceive the process differently. In addition the aim was to examine whether there was connection between the applicants perception of the recruitment process and the company image. The researched questions were “Does the different age applicants’ perceive the process differently?” and “Does the recruitment process affect how the applicant feels about the company after the process (whether the feeling is positive or negative)?”.

The research focused on examining the different stages of the process that every applicant pursues. Thus, for example, the interview phase was not included in the study, although it has a major impact on the applicant's experience, but since this applies to only a fraction of the applicants, the study did not focus on that.

1.2 Structure of the work

This thesis consists of both knowledge base and empirical sections. The structure and progress of the work are presented in the figure.
The project starts with an introduction part which introduces the subject of the research and presented the research problems and methods. The knowledge base part deals with the candidate experience and goes through the matters that are particularly affecting the formation of a candidate experience. In addition, the connection between the recruitment process and company image will be discussed.

After the knowledge base, the empirical part of the thesis will be presented. It describes the implementation of the research and the target group and assesses the overall reliability of the research. In addition, the empirical part of the work contains the results of the study, which also outlines the main conclusions and aims to answer the research questions. The last part of the project brings together the different stages of the work and reflects on the success of the study as a whole.

2 Knowledge base

The candidate experience in recruitment process is almost directly proportional to customer satisfaction. The customer satisfaction is formed based on how the company is able to meet the customer’s expectations, which also applies to the candidate experience. Just like the candidate experience, customer satisfaction consists of different interactions the customer has with the company. The applicant can be thus considered as a recruiter’s customer.

Customer satisfaction is crucial for the company. It can for example lead the customer to repurchase and it also increases the customer’s loyalty towards the company. Satisfied customer will less likely talk negatively about the company. Word to mouth is one of the most effective ways to improve the company’s reputation and it has a great impact on the company image and thus to the whole business. Customer satisfaction is also one way for the company to differentiate itself from the competitors and it is cheaper for the company to keep the current customers than to lure new ones. All these mentioned matters also apply to the candidate experience. (Beard, 2014)

The next chapter will introduce the definition of candidate experience and discuss the different matters affecting its formation.
2.1 Definition of the candidate experience

According to Laaksonen (2017), ideally an applicant’s experience is a journey that begins when a person becomes a job seeker, and terminates when the applicant is hired as a new employee. The journey may also end in two other ways; a disappointed non-selected candidate or a satisfied non-selected candidate. The end result is particularly influenced by the applicant’s experience which on the other hand is influenced by the progress of the process, the communication and the overall image how appreciated the applicant feels after the process. (Laaksonen, 2017)

“If you applied for a job in your company and would not be selected, what kind of an image would you remain of the company after the recruitment process ended?” The applicant experience - its importance to the job seeker and to the company - has been a hot topic especially in recent years. The importance of the applicant experience has increased with digitalization, as it has brought new dimensions to communication. Various recruitment tools have provided ease of processing applications, but above all - these tools have enabled effective candidate communication. (Ruokonen, 2017)

The applicant experience should be taken into account in every recruitment process, but unfortunately often recruiters fail here. At worst, a negative candidate experience may exclude highly skilled candidates in the future. A candidate with a positive experience, on the other hand, more likely applies again in the future - even if the decision is negative. (Barbedette, P)

According to Onishuk (2017) the candidate experience consists of the series of interactions the candidate has with a company during the recruitment process. The experience mainly consists of four different factors; job announcement - which ideally, is clear, includes essential information about the job and communicates truthfully what the task is about, application phase - which should not be too time consuming or complicating for the candidate, scheduling - the process should be scheduled so that the job seeker knows when the process should proceed, communication - the applicant wants information about the process, and finally the closure - even if the result is negative, the applicant wants to know that and possibly get some feedback. (Onishuk, 2017)
The following sections will examine how these factors affect the candidate's experience.

2.1.1 Job announcement as part of the applicant's experience

A job posting may be the applicant's first contact with the company if it is unknown to the jobseeker and therefore it plays a major role in the applicant's experience. The aim is to attract just the right job seekers, and save both recruiter’s and job seeker’s time. (Salonen, 2016)

There are several ways the company can raise the applicant's interest. First of all the announcement should have clear heading. This is an easy way to increase the number of readers when the announcement can be easily found from different job announcement channels. If the title is too complicated, no one knows to type that in the search box to find the open position. The announcement should start with a short but explicit presentation to attract the applicant's interest. This will help the job seeker quickly assess whether the job is suitable for them. Short and concise starting also acts as a trigger for interest and lures the applicant to read the entire announcement. After this the announcement should clearly highlight the key tasks. If the applicant will not get a clear picture of what the task is about, they probably will not apply. (Monster, 2017)

If the company offers any employee benefits, these should also be mentioned in the announcement in order to lure more applicants. The company may offer something that a competing company does not offer. Rewarding does not always have to involve money, but also various benefits such as car parking, car access, sports opportunities, etc. will raise the interest of the job seekers. According to Monster website (2017) also mentioning the wage gap the company can significantly increase the number of readings and thus increase the number of applicants.

If a particular skill is required in the task, this should be also clearly indicated. The applicant does not want to waste their time for application to hear later that they do not have the required skill. However, the employer should be careful when presenting the requirements;
sometimes, even a simple task has been described to be so demanding that even potential applicants feel that they are inadequate to apply. Naturally, other applicants are more qualified than others, but on the other hand some skill may compensate for the lack of another skill. They may not be selected this time but they will present themselves to a company which may in future have a more suitable job for them. (Launonen, 2017)

The announcement should also contain the contact details of the contact person. Many job seekers may want to contact the company before submitting an application. It may be that the applicant is in need for some additional information related to the job, or they just want to know what kind of company they might be coming to work. It is important for the employer to be reachable during the recruitment process, so the applicant remains the picture that the company is interested in their applicants. (Villa, 2016)

2.1.2 Application phase

As the applicant becomes interested in the job and decides to apply, they hope the applying system is as simple as possible. If the applicant finds the application phase too burdensome, there is a chance that they will not complete the applying. The announcement should also have clear instructions on how to apply for the job. As mentioned, the applying should not be too time consuming or difficult, and the better range of application methods the company offers, the more applicants they will get. It is always pleasant for the applicant if they can utilize existing documents or channels in the process. Some applicants may have invested time and effort on their LinkedIn profile, and hence would like to be able to utilize it in the search process as well. Some applicants may be able to express themselves better in the video form than by cover letter and thus would rather introduce themselves by using video. (Salonen, 2016)

Job search on mobile has also increased popularity in recent years. According to the article written by Hytönen (2016), over 40% of online visitors, on the job search page Monster.fi, use mobile phones for browsing the jobs. Mobile is the most widely used tool, so the content of the recruitment pages should be considered according to this. A special feature is if a job seeker is able to apply for a job via mobile. (Hytönen, 2016)

2.1.3 The importance of scheduling in the candidate's experience

Quoting to Mäentaus (2017) “Well planned is half done” also applies to scheduling. There are often many people involved in recruiting, so it is important that the tasks are clearly divided and the schedules are planned. Delayed recruitment always has negative effects on the applicant's experience. According to Vilja (2017) there is also a lot of competition between companies of applicants' skills today, thus the speed of recruiting can be a decisive factor. If the process is remarkably delayed, it might be that another company hires the applicant while the other company stumbles with the scheduling.

The job seeker is impatient to get more information about the recruitment process. That is why it is especially important to set dates when the process should proceed and these dates should also remain. If there are delays, the applicant should be informed. Sometimes recruits are delayed for one reason or another, and there may be even acceptable reasons for it, but it is entirely the recruiter's responsibility to report these changes to the applicants. In the worst case, the applicant may lose interest if the company does not, despite the promises, keep them posted. It is suggested to at least announce the deadline for the applications, and
also an estimation of when the applicants will be informed of the final results. Well organized promotes a positive applicant experience. (Määntaus, 2017)

2.1.4 Communication at various stages of the recruitment process

Good applicant communication is active and interactive in which job seekers are not left alone in the recruitment phase. Monster café (2017) column emphasizes that the recruitment process focuses on good communication from start to finish. Mutual respect is essential in recruiting. The job seeker may use even several hours on application, so they will want information about the process. Well-managed applicant communications have a positive impact on the applicants' view of the company and thus improve the company's company image.

When starting a new recruitment, it is good at first to determine who is in responsible for the applicant communications and to schedule the key steps - during which applicants will be notified of the progress of the process. For example, these may be information when receiving an application, possible intermission information, additional information about the job, thank you messages with feedback after the recruitment is completed, and so on. (Kansonen, 2016)

According to Kansonen (2016), when a candidate experience is divided in pieces, one of the most important factors of a positive experience is applicant communication. In practice, applicant communication means; when and how to communicate to applicants at various stages of recruitment. However, applicant communication is not a synonym for information, as it is commonly thought. Kansonen (2016) emphasizes that successful applicant experience is formed when it comes to active interaction with applicants.

Also Vilja (2017) emphasizes the importance of communication in recruiting process. In “Kun aika on -HR leirinuotiolla” -Webinar she mentions that active communication with the applicant during the process keeps the applicant interested. She also mentions the meaning of the feedback which in her opinion might have the most crucial effect on the applicant experience. However, she brings out the difficulty of giving feedback to each applicant, but underlines that the recruiter should give the applicant the opportunity to ask for the feedback. Providing feedback is solely the responsibility of the recruiter, but the applicant's activity is also required in obtaining it.

A quick questionnaire was implemented in “Kun aika on -HR leirinuotiolla” -Webinar by Oikotie regarding the applicant's experience. The survey was conducted in conjunction with the webinar and was sent to all participants. The questionnaire was answered by 135 participants, which was about 70% of all participants. The questionnaire asked, "What do you think is the most important factor affecting a positive candidate experience?" The options were: Comprehensive and interesting job announcements, Communication in different phases of the recruitment process, Website - where the workplace culture and people are presented, An appreciative atmosphere in an interview, Feedback received on applicants’ application or interview.

2% of the respondents chose the first option related to the job announcement. Up to 73% of respondents answered that the most important factor affecting a positive candidate experience is communication at various stages of the recruitment process. Only 1% chose the website, 19% respondent chose the atmosphere in interview situation and 4% of the respondents chose feedback from the application or interview. According to this research
communication is one of the most significant factors affecting the applicant’s experience, possibly even the most significant.

Figure 3: Factors affecting the candidate experience (Oikotie, 2017)

2.2 Company image

The company image is a self-given image for outsiders of the organization, for example what are its values and specific key features as a company. The image varies individually depending for example on a person’s values, attitudes and experiences of the company. The company image is part of the company brand which refers to the way the company strives to create for its products or activities to be distinguished from other similar companies. Reputation and employer image are also related to concept of the company image. Reputation refers to how people generally speak about the company and employer image refers to what kind of an idea people have on the company as an employer. Basically the company image refers to a holistic assessment of which company raises in people’s mind. (Kalb, 2016)

2.2.1 The impact of the candidate experience on the company image

When a person is not familiar with a company, they create their image of the business on the basis of what they see, experience and hear. According to Leinonen (2017) the applicant experience has a major impact on the company image, and also for the whole business. She justifies that the applicant is not just an applicant, but often at the same time also the current or potential customer of the company. She continues that by treating jobseekers well and delivering positive experiences, the company can get new customers. Applicants can even become business advocates. (Leinonen, 2017)

The opinions and recommendations of others significantly affect many decisions especially when making brand choices or buying decisions. These opinions are also reflected in recruiting. If a job seeker has heard negative comments about the company or their recruitment process, it is quite unlike that they will apply to work in that particular company. However, if the company has managed to keep both customers and applicants happy, the positive word will be spread quickly (Leinonen, 2017). Monster conducted a study to find out
how job seekers experience job search processes and recruitment practices. The survey was carried out in December 2014. 415 respondents, aged between 18 and 55 years, participated in the survey. According to this study up to 83% of job seekers share their experience with friends and acquaintances. (Monster Café, 2014)

Negative experience will more likely be shared than a positive. The Career Builder conducted a study called “Candidate behavior study” which examined the different stages of job search, as well as the applicant experience and its impact on the corporate image. 85% of the respondents said that they shared negative experience at least with one person and up to 20% of the respondents said that they shared bad experience with more than 10 people. 90% of the respondents said they shared positive experience at least with one (1) person but only 12% shared it with more than 10 people when the corresponding percentage of the negative experience was 20%.

![Number of People Told After Application Process](image)

Figure 4: Sharing the experience (Career builder, 2015)

According to study, 32% of the respondents who felt that they were aware of the recruitment process said that they would probably buy the company’s products in the future as well. 38% of respondents said that it is unlikely that they would buy the company’s products because they did not hear about the company after submitting their application. The applicant’s experience can thus be seen as an opportunity to promote positive company image and thus grow the business. (Career builder, 2015)
2.3 Conclusion of the knowledge base

When gathering together the knowledge base, a lot of electronic sources were being utilized. The reason for this was to get opinions from people - jobseekers - of what they thought the candidate experience is about. The subject is not new, but has attracted much discussion lately. The aim was to go through different blog posts and companies’ - who are mainly focusing on recruitment - articles and opinions on this matter. Based on these blog posts and articles, it was possible to notice some convergences and the knowledge base was gathered together based on these convergences.

Each applicant finds the application process different, but the purpose was to find out the factors that were mentioned in several different sources. Candidate experience is the job seekers experience of the recruitment process, so the aim was to find out what was their opinion on of what factors affects the formation of candidate experience. Since large number of sources was utilized in the knowledge base and these sources were gathered into one entity, it can be said that it is reliable.

Knowledge base concentrated on the different factors that affect the formation of candidate experience. It also discussed the connection between the candidate experience during the recruiting process and the company image. Based on the observation made in the knowledge base it can be concluded that every one of the mentioned factors plays a role in formatting the candidate experience, but the communication still has the biggest impact on the experience. Based on the studies presented in knowledge base it can also be concluded that there is a clear connection between the candidate experience and the company image.
3  Research method

This chapter presents the different research methods and then introduces the implementation of the survey, the target group and data collection. It also discusses the reliability of the survey.

3.1  Different research methods

Researches can be divided into two groups; theoretical and empirical researches. In a theoretical study, research is based on assumptions and arguments. Empirical research, on the other hand, seeks to find consistency on the basis of individual cases. Empirical research can be divided into either quantitative or qualitative research. (Valli, 2015)

Quantifying research helps to quantify questions related to numbers and percentages and therefore it requires a sufficiently large sample. In quantitative research, typical material collection methods include for example different kind of surveys, telephone interviews, systematic observation, and experimental studies and the results are described numerically. The aim of the study is to find out the interdependencies. The research often reveals the current situation but cannot explain the causes of the issues. (Heikkilä, 2014)

A qualitative research, on the other hand, helps to understand the causes of the behavior and decisions of a research subject. The research extract is often significantly smaller than in the quantitative study. The aim of the study is therefore to understand rather than to quantify the quantities. Research is often suitable for developing operations or looking for alternatives. Typical material collecting methods in a qualitative survey are personal interviews, group interviews, participatory observation, and documents. In quantitative research, the sample is often quantitatively considerably higher than the qualitative one. (Heikkilä, 2014)

In this thesis the quantitative research method was used because the purpose was to study the applicant experience of a large sample. By the results it was sought to make generalizations about the experience of jobseekers seeking to work for the company. The results will help to develop and create more positive candidate experiences in the future if there are correspondences in responses. The questionnaire survey was used as data collection method, which is the most commonly used method in a quantitative study. By using the survey, it was possible to carry out the research with a considerably larger sample. In this study, the survey was conducted with internet query which enabled the data to be collected quickly and it also enabled the respondents to remain anonymous which was significant for the reliability of the results.

Since the questionnaire also had open questions, it can be mentioned that in addition to quantitative research the qualitative research features were also being utilized. The open questions sought to get more specific information on why the respondent had answered the questions the way they had. This gave the applicants the opportunity to state in words why they were either satisfied or dissatisfied with the process. These answers were valuable information especially for the future development of the process. However, the research focused on a quantitative method as the open questions were not mandatory for the respondents. Each applicant was sent a link to an online questionnaire once the recruiting process had been completed.

The steps of the quantitative research process
3.2 Implementing the survey

The questionnaire was planned during September and October 2017 and implemented in October and November 2017. The purpose of the survey was to find out the current situation regarding the candidate experience and receive feedback from the target group. The questions were planned to cover all the areas which were planned to be studied. The survey included nine (9) questions about the recruitment process, which five (5) of them included an open answer option. In addition the respondents were asked to submit their email addresses if they wanted to take part of the lottery, which was performed between the respondents.

In the survey, the following areas were taken into account; the job announcement, application methods, scheduling and communication. In addition the respondent’s age was being asked, how positive or negative they felt about the process overall and how positive or negative image they got from the company overall. The survey also had an open question were the respondent could write down thoughts or feedback for the company.

3.2.1 Target group of research and collection of data

The survey was implemented as an online questionnaire by using the online survey tool called SurveyMonkey. First it was being tested to see how it worked on computer but also how it worked on mobile. It was also necessary to see how the tool collected the responses in order those to be analyzed later on.

The survey was sent to each applicant after the recruitment process had been completed. In total the questionnaire was sent to 96 applicants from six (6) different recruitment processes such as marketing and communications specialist, mathematician, salespeople, trainees for various tasks such as marketing and customer service and testing specialist. The questionnaire was conducted in Finnish, because supposedly majority of the applicants knew
Finnish, since all the tasks required fluency in Finnish language. The questions were in the form of multiple choice of which some could be chosen from more than one option, and open answers.

3.2.2 Reliability assessment of the survey

In this chapter the reliability of the survey will be pondered. The reliability will be discussed in order to get a better overall picture of how reliable the research is.

The survey was created based on the knowledge base. The aim was to emphasize the matters that came up in the knowledge base. The survey was deliberately kept short, so that as many people as possible would respond to it. However, this limited the scope of the study. One or two questions were asked from each part. Mostly multiple choices were being used in the questionnaire, instead of open questions so that the respondent would not find it too burdensome and leave the questionnaire unanswered.

As respondents responded to the questionnaire as anonymous, it can be assumed that they were being honest with their answers. Since a small reward was promised to be raffled between the respondents in order to boost the response rate, it can be possible that some of the respondents just filled up the survey to take part of the lottery, and thus did not answer the questions truthfully. Because of this concern, eight out of ten questions were made mandatory to answer before submitting.

At the beginning of the study, it was considered at which point it would be most sensible to send the questionnaire to the applicant, either during the process or just after the process. If the questionnaire had been sent in the middle of the process, applicants would have remembered the steps of the process better. At this stage, however, they would not have had an overall picture of the process. If the questionnaire would be send at the end of the process, it could be that the applicants who just received the negative decision were not interested in taking part on the research. Nevertheless, it was decided that the most relevant information would only be obtained after the application process ended.

The questionnaire was sought to be sent as soon as possible after the recruitment was completed so that the respondents had a fresh memory of how the process had progressed. However, some of the recruiting processes were quite long so it has to be taken into account, that when the questionnaire was asking for example about the job announcement, it is possible that they did not remember it clearly anymore, especially if they had applied for several jobs at the same time. This was already discussed when planning of the questionnaire, but it was still included in the questionnaire since it was relevant for the research.

The questions were sought to phrase the way that each respondent understood what was asked in the question so that the lack of understanding would not affect the outcome of the research. For this reason, the questionnaire was read by several people and some improvements were made before it was sent to the respondents.

If more respondents were involved and the material to be analyzed would have been wider, the results would have been more reliable. However, it can be stated that the number of responses was sufficient to be analyzed and it was possible to make some conclusions based on the results.
4 Empirical part

The following chapter will first introduce the case company and after this the results of the research survey will be gone through. The chapters examines five (5) different sections; background, job announcement, application phase, scheduling and communication. In addition it examines whether the candidate experience has any influence on how the applicant experiences the company after the process and whether different age applicants experience the process differently. These sections will be reviewed first individually and in the last section conclusions are made based on the analyzing.

4.1 Introduction of the recruiting company

Finnish P&C Insurance Ltd (private limited company) is a modern insurance company that produces tailor-made insurance services to its partners. The company was founded in 2012 hence it is still a fast growing company. Finnish P&C Insurance Ltd is owned by POP Bank Group and currently serves two major Finnish financial players: the mentioned POP Bank Group and the Savings Bank Group. Currently the company employs a little over 120 employees.

In 2017 the company has hired over 60 employees, trainees and seasonal workers, and processed over 500 applications. The recruitment happens mainly through the HR department, which consist of two personnel; a HR Manager and an assistant. The recruitment process also involves a recruiting supervisor who implements the recruitment process together with the HR department. The process begins when the recruiting supervisor detects the need for recruiting. This is approved by the company's management and HR Manager. After that, the supervisor and the HR manager together plan the job announcement, which is then published in various channels by the HR department. Depending on the task, the application period usually ranges from two (2) weeks to about three (3) months.

The company uses recruiting tool called Teamio, where all the applicants, their applications and CV’s are being collected in one digital environment. Applicant communications happens mainly through Teamio. When the applicant submits their application first they will be asked for permission to use their personal information during the process. The system retains the personal information for three (3) years but the applicants are able to inform the company at any stage that they want their personal information to be deleted.

After submitting the application and permission to use their personal information, they will receive an automatic message saying that the application has been received and they will be contacted after the process proceeds. The message also includes contact information if the applicant wants to contact the company. After the automatic message, the communication is on the recruiter’s responsibility, mainly on HR department. The goal is to inform people if the process is delayed as well as when the process is completed. Once the process is completed the applicants will be announced that the decision has been made and these applicants who received the message were not chosen. This message also includes contact information if the applicant has any further questions or wishes to receive some feedback. The interviewed applicants receive a phone call, regardless of the outcome.

4.2 Results of the study

4.2.1 Age
First intention was to find out the age of the applicants who were applying to work for the company. The response options were between 20 or under to 56 or more. Each option covered 5 years except the first and the last. The question was mandatory, so all the respondents had to answer the question.

![Respondents' age chart](chart.png)

**Figure 7: Background chart - total 28 responses**

The highest response categories were ages 26 - 30 years and 46 - 50 years from which both categories six (6) responses were received. These two (2) categories covered 21,43 % of all the responses each and total 42,86 % of all the responses. The second largest response class was candidates aged 21 -25 years from which five (5) responses were received i.e. 17,86 % of all the responses.

From the remaining categories - one to three answers were received from each. Two (2) responses from the category 20 or under which was 7,14 % of all the responses and also two (2) responses from the category 31-35 years which was also 7,14 % of all the responses. Three (3) responses from category 36-40 years was received which covered 10,71% of all the responses. Two (2) responses from category 41-45 years which was 7,14 % of all the responses. One (1) response from each categories 51-55 years and 56 or over which both covered 3,57 % of all the responses. Total 28 responses (100%).

### 4.2.2 Factors that made the candidates interested about the job

The next aim was to find out the factors that made the candidates interested about the job. Respondents were able to choose either one alternative or several alternatives from the options provided. The question was mandatory, so all the respondents had to answer the question. The purpose of the question was to find out what kind of things would be worth mentioning and underlining in the job announcement in the future.

The given options were; the job description, salary, employee benefits, the company, insurance field and company location but since there could be other reasons as well which
were not taken into account in the alternatives the last was an open answer “something else, what” where the candidate could write down the reason why they got interested.

Figure 8: Chart of factors that aroused the interest - total 28 responses

First of all 23 out of 28 i.e. 82.14% of the possible 100% respondents chose the alternative job description. Clearly the majority of the respondents got interested in the task precisely based on the job description.

Second most, the applicants were interested in the insurance field in general. 14 respondents which covered 50 % of the respondents mentioned insurance field being one of the reasons why they got interested in the job.

Third biggest factor why people got interested on the job was the company. 12 of the respondents which covered 42,86% of the respondents, chose this option as one of the factors that attracted them. This was positive to notice since the company is quite new on the field and is thus far less known than other companies competing in the insurance field. However, the business culture of the company differs slightly from the larger competitors, and for example the advanced digitalization of the company may attract the applicants.

Company location was also one of the reasons why candidates got interested in the job. Five (5) of the respondents which was 17,86 % out of possible 100% chose this as one of the factors they got interested in the job. The company is located in quite central area in Espoo with good connections.

Surprisingly, employee benefits did not attract any of the candidates. The company has the employee benefits listed in job announcement, so it was surprising that none of the respondents chose this option. In the knowledge base it was being studied that the employee benefits are one of the factors how the company can lure more applicants. However, based
on the survey, apparently these benefits do not have great importance to applicants at this stage.

One of the alternatives was salary, which was chosen by only one (1) person i.e. 3.75% of the respondents.

Four of the respondents i.e. 14.29% chose the option something else. This option included answers such as a job title, a former employee’s experiences of the company, the task meeting with the person’s education and the opportunity to work with professionals. An open option was therefore necessary in this question as some respondents got interested in the job because of something other than what was listed.

### 4.2.3 The job/placement announcement

The next question of the survey also focused on the job posting. The purpose of the question was to find out how the candidate experienced the structure, clarity and the stage of the relevant information of the job announcement. The question asked the respondent to think back the announcement and respond to the followed allegations by means of alternatives; yes, no or I cannot say. This question provided direct feedback on how successful the announcement was in communicating the job profile, the requirements of the job and the company’s culture. The purpose was also to find out how inspiring or tempting the applicant experienced the announcement and how clear the instructions on how to apply for the job were.

![Figure 9: Job announcement chart - total 28 responses](image)

The first allegation was “The key tasks were clearly presented”. 25 of the respondents, which covered 89.29% of the respondents, thought the key tasks were clearly presented. Two (2) of the respondents i.e. 7.14% thought the key tasks were not clearly presented and one (1) respondent i.e. 3.57% could not tell.
The next intention was to find out how the applicant felt the requirements of the task were presented. This was asked because some tasks require special skills. Therefore, it is desirable that if there are specific requirements in the task, they are clearly presented so that candidates, who are not in principle fit for the job, will not waste their time with an application. 26 respondents i.e. 92,86% thought the requirements were clearly presented. One (1) of the respondents i.e. 3,57% thought the requirements were not clearly presented and one (1) respondent i.e. 3,57% said they could not tell.

Since the company is quite new, it is particularly important to present the business culture of the company also in the job announcement. This saves the applicants’ effort if they are not familiar with the company. The presentation should be brief but concise, highlighting the company’s main business. This allegation slightly dispersed the respondents’ opinions. 19 respondents which was 67,86 % of the respondents, thought the business culture was clearly presented. Four (4) respondents i.e. 14,29% thought the business culture was not clearly presented and six (6) i.e. 21,43% could not tell.

The next aim was to find out how inspiring the applicant experienced the announcement. This enabled to find out whether there was something to be fixed in formatting the announcement, communication part related to the announcement or in general how the things had been presented. 24 of the respondents i.e. 85,71% of the respondents, thought the announcement was inspiring. No one of the respondents thought straight away that the announcement was not inspiring or tempting but four (4) of the respondents i.e. 14,29% could not tell.

The last allegation was whether the announcement had clear instructions on how to apply for the job. Positively 27 out of 28 which was 96,43% of the respondents, thought the instructions were clear. Only one (1) respondent i.e. 3,57% could not tell whether the instructions were clear or not.

In addition, the applicants were able to give feedback on the announcement in their own words. This was not mandatory. Written feedback was received from seven applicants. One of the respondents said that the notification form did not work and they finally sent the application directly to the contact person. This shows that it is extremely important to have the contact information in the announcement. One candidate said that the announcement was well and properly written - even the style of writing conveyed a picture of relaxed and more flexible work culture. The announcement revealed the key matters of the task and it was attractive. One of the respondents mentioned that they fill in about 20 applications per week so the announcement was not so memorable that they could remember it in detail.

Also the lack of salary information was brought out and one of the respondent said that it was a major minus. One of the respondents gave positive feedback on the fact that the announcement had clear instructions on how to apply and they were contacted quickly after submitting the application. One respondent said they were excited about the announcement as soon as they saw it and that it was definitely the most interesting job announcement. One of the respondents gave feedback about the trainees’ salary and mentioned that the announcement did not say that trainees are paid at a fairly low level of compensation compared to the fact that it is a full-time traineeship. Constructive criticism is always welcome as it helps to develop in the future.
4.2.4 The need of additional information

The contact person is mentioned in the notification if the applicant wishes to receive more information about the task or the company. However, the company seeks to make all relevant information available on the announcement at this stage. The study wanted to find out whether something in the announcement was unclear for the applicant at this stage and they wanted to contact the company either before submitting the application or during the process. They were asked to choose the option that best suited them. The options were: Yes, I reached the contact person mentioned in the announcement - Yes, but I could not reach the contact person - Yes, but I did not contact the contact person and I did not need more information.

Were you in need of additional information? Choose the option that best suits your situation.

![Figure 10: Require for additional information chart - total 28 responses](image)

Seven (7) i.e. 25% of the respondents thought they were in need more information and reached the contact person mentioned in the announcement. One (1) i.e. 3,57% of the respondents said they desired more information but could not reach the contact person. One (1) i.e. 3,57% of the respondents said they were in need for more information but decided not to contact the contact person. 19 respondents i.e. 67,86% of the respondents responded they did not need any additional information about the job or the company.

4.2.5 Application methods

In knowledge base it was mentioned that it is important that the applying is “user friendly” so it should not be too time consuming or difficult for the applicant. The company does not use any pre-information forms. First the applicant is asked to fill in some personal information and to include CV and cover letter on the application. Therefore in principal, the application phase is not very laborious or time consuming for the applicant. However, the study wanted to find out whether they would like to be able to utilize other application methods, such as a LinkedIn or an application video. They were asked to choose between answers no or yes and if they answered yes they were also asked to specify which methods.
23 of the respondents i.e. 82.14% of the respondents said they were satisfied with the given methods. Still five (5) of the respondent i.e. 17.86% out of the respondents responded that they would have liked to use other methods as well. Four (4) of these respondents said they would have liked to be able to utilize their LinkedIn's profile. One (1) responded mentioned that if someone is actively seeking a job, even writing the cover letter can be really time consuming and therefore it would be desirable if companies used the same application method, such as LinkedIn. One of the respondents said they would have liked to use video instead of cover letter. They thought that by using the video, the applicant would be able to give a wider picture of themselves than just by the cover letter.

4.2.6 State of awareness of the progress of the process

In the next section, the aim was to examine how the company succeeded in communication. In knowledge base it was mentioned that communication is possibly one of the most important factors when creating the candidate experience. In the company’s recruitment process, the applicant receives an automatic message when the company has received the application. Thus it was sought to examine how the company succeeded in communication after that, in other words how they kept the candidate posted of how the process was proceeding.

The aim of the company is to inform applicants if the process is delayed and also when the process is completed. The question sought to examine whether the respondents wanted more information of some stages of the process. This question also dealt with the scheduling part. If the process is well planned and scheduled, the applicants will be aware of its progress from the start. However, if there are changes in the schedule, applicants should also be informed about this.

The candidates were asked whether they were aware of the progress of the recruitment process and they were asked to choose the option that best suited their experience. The
options were “Yes, I was aware” and “I was not aware, you can specify which steps you would have particularly liked for more information”.

![Figure 12: Communication chart - total 28 responses](image)

22 i.e. 78,57% of the respondents thought they were aware of how the process was proceeding throughout the whole process. Six (6) i.e. 21,43% respondents thought they were not aware and specified their answer as follows; One of the respondents said they were not aware that the search for the possession will be published again after their interview. Another respondent said they did not have information of the progress of the process, one of the respondents wished to get more information of the final decision and especially of the criteria that affected the decision. They mentioned of being tired of the fact that the choices are made behind closed doors, without the information which criteria’s affect the choice and how. One of the respondents mentioned that getting the result of the recruitment took a long time. However, the result was finally announced and they were thankful for that. One of the respondents wanted information about how many different steps the process included and one said they were asked for an interview that they initially promised to come, but after the salary case came out they cancelled the interview. After that, they did not receive information about how the recruitment proceeded and whether someone was selected.

### 4.2.7 Satisfaction rate - The recruitment process

At the end of the survey, the total grade for the recruiting process was found out. It was possible that some things had gone wrong during the recruiting but generally they were happy of it or vice versa. Based on the research the average grade was 3,89. This grade messaged that the starting point is quite good but some improvements should be made. Three (3) i.e. 10,71% of the respondents gave the process grade two (2). Two (2) i.e. 7,14% of the respondents gave the process grade three (3). Positively 18 respondents i.e. 64,29% of possible 100% gave the process grade four (4) and the rest five(5) respondents i.e. 17,86% gave the process grade five (5).
4.2.8 Satisfaction rate - The Company

Since one of the purposes of this research was to find out whether the recruitment process affected how the applicants felt about the company after the process (whether the feeling is positive or negative) also this was examined. In knowledge base it was mentioned that if the candidate’s experience is positive they will more likely apply again, buy the company’s products in the future and/or spread a positive word about the company. If again the experience is bad, behavior is the opposite. Therefore, it would be desirable for the applicants to remain a positive image of the company after the recruitment process.

One (1) of the respondents i.e. 3.57% gave the company grade one (1). Two (2) of the respondents i.e. 7.14 % gave the company grade two (2). None of the respondents gave the grade three (3). 18 of the respondents i.e. 64.29% gave the company grade four (4) and the rest seven (7) respondents gave the company grade five (5).
4.2.9 Feedback from the respondents

Lastly, the respondents were given the opportunity to give verbal feedback from the recruitment process. This was optional. 14 respondents wanted to give feedback yet 14 respondents passed this step. Applicants were given this opportunity if they still wanted to point something out, which was not included in the questionnaire. As the study was conducted in Finnish, the answers have been translated into English. The feedback is presented next.

“Interest in the job decreased considerably when the interviewer told at the very beginning of the interview that the search for the position would be published again. I interpreted this implicitly claiming that there were no relevant candidates, including myself. It was a positive that the company did not use suitability tests. For a jobseeker that searches for many different places, it is time-consuming to constantly make different suitability tests.”

“I was glad I did not have to fill in a long background information form, my CV was enough”

“The search process was made easy, not 8 pages to fill. Thanks for that - the search experience was easy! Thanks also for the quick information after the application deadline, that you have made progress with the interviews. It is, in my opinion, a good job seeking experience, to tell right away what the situation is, and not to hang all the candidates along until the one person is selected. Well done, you are a few who do this. Big thumb!”

“It was nice that you informed that I was not chosen. vs. No message at all.”

“The recruitment process went well in my point of view. It was nice to note that the process was flexible and the job seeker’s wishes, such as schedules, were taken into account. I actually got the job, even though I did the first interviews from abroad. This was a very positive feeling! In my view, the progress of the process was sufficiently communicated. I could easily contact the company if I had questions, and the company also informed me enough about the progress of the process.
“I would be lying if I said that I am still interested in the company at this point. Weekly I’m sorry you have not been selected -letters begin to snoop on my soul and bitter me towards the world. I fill up this survey because I want to believe that I still have the goodness and I have not yet broken completely even if I end up, most likely to just compete against you in the labor market.”

“In my opinion, the application process was smooth and I was aware of the progress of the process.”

“It was easy to apply and the notification had clear requirements. I knew what position I was applying for.”

“The idea that two different tasks were put together in one notification was not good.”

“Thanks for the questionnaire”

“I was well received, but the job description was a bit different from what was described in the announcement.”

“Other companies should take example from this company’s job announcements. I was left with very positive picture.”

5 Analysis of the results

In this chapter the results from the survey will be analyzed. The results are analyzed in the same order as the results were presented; first the job announcement, second the application phase, third the scheduling and the communication, fourth the satisfaction rate of the recruitment process, fifth the satisfaction rate of the company after the recruitment process and finally whether the age matters on how the candidate experiences the process will be analyzed.

5.1 Background

First, some background information was examined. Surprisingly, the survey was answered by applicants from every age group. The largest age groups were respondents aged 26-30 years and 46-50 years. The results may be due to the fact that the company has recruited a lot of students for trainee programs, but also senior-level experts for various tasks lately. The purpose of asking applicant’s age was to get information on what age group applicants the company usually attracts. The background information was relevant for later analyze where the aim was to find out whether the age had any impact on the fact how applicant experiences the process.

5.2 Job announcement

The applicants were asked what factors got them interested about the job. The respondents were able to choose more than just a one option. As it can be seen from the results the majority of the respondents said it was the job description that made them interested. Consequently, it can be concluded that the company has succeeded in describing the task well and it is worth of investing in the future as well since it attracts the applicant. The applicants were also interested in the insurance field itself since half of the respondents said it was one of the reasons why they got interested about the job.
Almost half of the respondents thought it was the company itself that aroused their interest. The result refers to the fact that even though the company is a new player in the insurance field and still quite unknown, it has a good reputation among the jobseekers. 17.86% of the respondents thought it was the company location which made them interested. This supposedly divides the respondents’ opinions depending on where they live. However the company is located within easy reach; near the train station, along good bus links and the highway.

Based on the results, the applicant do not get interested on the job because of staff befits, since none of the respondents said it was one of the factors why they got interested in the job. Despite the observation made in the knowledge base, it can be concluded that the underweights of the personnel benefits do not have a great importance to the applicants.

The respondents were also given a response option: something else, what? and 14.29 % said it was something else than listed options. There was nothing significant about the answers that would be worth adding to the announcement. These were mainly the applicant’s personal reasons why they got interested. One of the respondents said it was the salary that aroused their interest. Retrospectively, the presence of this option was somehow questionable as the company does not generally publish salary information at this stage. However, if this had been a significant factor for the applicants, they could have compared the salary on the salaries paid in similar tasks in other companies or contacted the person mentioned in the announcement, and thus also chose this option as a significant factor. However, this would have required some effort from the applicant and therefore this option was not generally chosen. If the company's published the salary information in their job announcements, the result could be different.

Next, the respondents were asked to think back the job announcement and respond to the following allegations with yes, no or I cannot tell; the key tasks were clearly presented, the requirements of the task were clearly presented, the business culture of the company was clearly presented, the announcement was tempting and the announcement contained clear instructions on how to apply for the job. In addition they were given an opportunity to list their thoughts about the announcement. Majority of the respondents thought the tasks were clearly presented. The figure was good and revealed that most of the respondents thought that the tasks were clearly presented. However still some of the respondents thought the tasks were not clearly presented. If this figure had been considerably higher, it could have been said that the presentation of the tasks should be paid attention in the future. However, the figure does not refer to any alarming problem.

Almost all of the respondents thought the requirements of the task were clearly presented. Only 1 respondent thought these requirements were not clearly presented. Also this area has nothing alarming that should be paid particular attention to in the future. 67.86 % of the respondents thought the company culture was clearly presented. However 14.29% of the respondent thought the company was not clearly presented. The first figure may indicate that some of the applicants knew about the company before hand and the rest of the applicants did not know and thus did not get a clear picture of the company’s business culture from the announcement. However the purpose of the company introduction is to introduce the company shortly to those who are not familiar with it, so based on the results, there could be some improvements on this area.
Majority of the respondents thought the announcement was tempting, and up to 96.43% of the respondents thought the announcement contained clear instructions on how to apply for the job. None of the respondents chose the alternative “no” on these two allegations, which indicates that the company has succeeded both in creating an inspirational announcement and providing instructions to applicants on how to apply for the job.

Next the respondents were asked whether they were in need of additional information that was not mentioned in the job announcement. They were asked to choose the option that best suited them. 25% of the respondents said they were in need for some additional information and they reached the contact person mentioned in the notification. This percentage is quite high and from the point of view of the research, it would have been essential to find out what information they particularly missed. On the other hand, it is also possible that the applicants were in contact with the person to bring themselves up in the process.

One of the respondents said they were in need of some additional information, but could not reach the contact person. Ideally this figure should be 0, considering the communication side. However, the figure is fairly low, which indicates that the contact persons are generally well reachable. Also one of the respondents said they desired additional information but did not contact the contact person. Again for development it would have been essential to ask the respondent what was the matter they needed additional information of. However, positively majority of the respondents said they did not need any additional information, which indicates that the company has succeeded fairly well to provide all the necessary information in their job announcements.

5.3 Application phase

Next the applicants were asked whether they would like to use other application methods instead of cover letter and CV. Majority of the respondents, thought CV and Cover letter worked for them, but still some of the respondents wished they could have utilized other methods such as LinkedIn profile or application video. Applicants who have invested time and effort, for example, in their LinkedIn profiles, might like to use it for applying. Others may be good performers but not so good writers and hence would like to be able to introduce themselves as a video format. Based on the results the company could consider enabling the candidates to utilize also other methods.

5.4 Communication

After the job announcement and application phase the purpose was to find out how the respondents felt about the communication side. They were asked whether they were aware how the process was proceeding. As it can be noticed from the results, positively majority of the respondents, thought they were aware how the process was proceeding and thus did not need any additional information of the process. However, there were still some applicants who thought they were not kept posted about the progress. Because the communication plays big role on it was necessary to know which part of the process they would have liked to get more information of. These responses are crucial for the company to develop the communication.

In particular, one answer rose over others where the applicant said they were tired that decisions are made behind closed doors, the selection is not justified to other applicants and the applicants are not informed what criteria especially influenced the selection. As the company receives dozens of applications per recruitment, it is way too laborious and time-
consuming to give personal feedback to each applicant. However, it is possible to justify the choice; what kind of person the company was looking for, why this person was chosen and what features specifically influenced the selection. This also helps the applicant to evolve themselves in the future.

Based on the results, the company has been quite successful in communication. However, there is still need for some improvements and the responses make it easier for the company to pay attention to the problem areas in the future and develop the communication part. Since some of the respondents mentioned it took a long time to get the result and someone said they were not aware how the process was proceeding, it may indicate that either the process was poorly scheduled or there were changes that were not reported to the applicants.

It can be noticed from the results that the applicants who said they were aware of how the process was proceeding were also more satisfied with the whole process. The average grade from these respondents for the recruitment process was 4,18 while the average grade given to the recruitment process from the applicants who were not aware of the progress of the process was 3,3. Based on these results it can be concluded that the communication plays a major role on how the candidates experiences the process.

5.5 Feedback

Majority of the feedback was positive but also some constructive criticism was received. Feedback is always the best tool to develop and therefore it must be valued. The company was praised that it is easy to apply, and the company does not use suitability tests and long and time-consuming pre-information forms. In addition, the company received positive feedback on communication. The applicants were delighted that the result was quickly announced and not all the candidates were dragged through the whole process after it was decided they will not be chosen. The company also received positive feedback that the recruitment was flexible and the applicant's wishes were taken into account.

Constructive feedback was received from the fact the announcement did not include salary information. In addition, the company received feedback that the communication was not very personalized and the final decision was not justified. In addition, it was mentioned that the job description was slightly different from what it was described in the announcement.

The feedback will help the company to create even better candidate experiences in the future.

5.6 Connection between the candidate experience and the company image

One of the purposes of the research was to examine whether there was any connection between the applicants perception of the recruitment process and the company image.

In this figure the grades given to the recruitment process are compared with the grades given to the company after the process. As it can be seen from the figures below, the connection between these two factors is quite strong. Almost without exception, respondents who were satisfied with the recruitment process were also satisfied with the company. The line chart shows that there is no remarkable dispersion among the given grades. If the lines did not overlap one another, it could be concluded that there was no connection, but since they do, it shows a clear dependence.
5.7 Does the age matter in candidate experience?

One of the aims of the research was to examine whether the different age applicant experienced the company’s recruiting process differently. Answers from six (6) respondents aged 26-30 was compared with six (6) respondents’ answers aged 46 to 50. These age
categories were chosen because these were the biggest two, and far enough apart to be comparable.

5.7.1 Job announcement

The first allegation was “the key tasks were clearly presented”. As it can be seen from the figure below, there were no major differences between the answers. However, some of the younger respondents thought that the key tasks were not clearly presented where all the older respondents thought the tasks were clearly presented. Based on the results the older generation was more satisfied on how the key tasks were presented.

![Figure 17: Comparing the different age groups answers (respondents aged 26-30 and 46-50, total 12 responses) - presentation of the key tasks](image)

The second allegation was “the requirements of the task were clearly presented”. As it can be seen from the figure below there was more dispersion among young respondents where all the older respondents thought the requirements were clearly presented. Some younger respondents thought the requirements were not clearly presented and some could not tell. It can be concluded from the responses that younger applicants would like the requirements to be presented more clearly, while the older respondents do not require any improvements on this. Based on the results the older respondents were more satisfied with how the requirements were presented.
The third allegation was “the business culture of the company was clearly presented”. Among the older respondents, there was clearly more dispersion and almost half of them could not say whether the culture was clearly presented or not. Based on these results the younger generation was more satisfied on how the business culture of the company was presented.

The fourth allegation was “the announcement was tempting”. As it can be seen from the figure below, all the younger respondents thought the announcement was tempting. There is no significant difference between the two age groups opinion on this allegation, but some of the older respondents could not tell whether the announcement was tempting or not. It can be concluded that the younger respondents found the announcement more tempting than the older respondents.
The last allegation related to the job announcement was “the announcement included clear instructions of how to apply for the job”. All of the respondents from both groups thought the announcement included clear instructions on how to apply for the job, so there was no dispersion between these responses.

5.7.2 Need for additional information

Next the responses on the question “Were you in need for additional information? Choose the option that best suits your situation” were compared. As it can be noticed from the figure...
below there was significantly more dispersion among young respondents than the older respondents. The younger respondents were more in need of additional information than the older respondents. What comes to communication part, the older respondents reached the contact person, where some of the younger respondents did not even though they tried. Therefore it can be concluded that the older respondents were more satisfied both with the information presented in the job announcement and also with the communication.

![Figure 22: Comparing the different age groups’ answers (respondents aged 26-30 and 46-50 total 12 responses) - need for additional information](image)

5.7.3 Application methods

Next the responses on the question "Would you have wished you could have used other application methods instead of a CV and cover letter (such as LinkedIn profile, an application video)?" All of the younger respondents thought the CV and cover letter were fine, and they were not hoping to be able to utilize other methods as well. However, some of the older respondents hoped they could have utilized LinkedIn in the process. It can be concluded that the younger respondents were more satisfied with the offered methods than the older respondents.
5.7.4 Communication

Next the responses on question “Were you aware of the progress of the recruitment process? Choose the option that best suits your experience.” were compared. All of the younger respondents thought they were fully aware of how the process was proceeding. Some of the older respondents thought they were not aware of how the progress was proceeding. Based on the results it can be concluded that the younger respondents were more satisfied with the communication than the older respondents.
5.7.5 Grades for the process and the company after the recruitment process

First the responses are presented in a bar graph where individual responses are compared to each other. The blue columns demonstrate the given grades of the younger respondents’ and the red columns demonstrate the given grades of the older respondents’. The second figures compare these given grades in a line chart.

First the given grades for the recruitment process are compared.

![Bar graph comparing grades for recruitment process](image1)

Figure 25: Comparing the different age groups’ answers - grades given for the recruitment process, total 12 responses - bar graph

![Line chart comparing grades for recruitment process](image2)

Figure 26: Comparing the different age groups’ answers - grades given for the recruitment process, total 12 responses - line chart

Second, the given grades for the company after the recruitment process are being compared. First the bar graph and below it the line chart, where the dispersion among the younger respondents can be noticed.
As it can be seen from the figures, there was more dispersion among the younger respondents, but the averages of the responses were still the same in both age groups. Based on these charts it can be concluded the older age group is generally more satisfied with the process and the company after the recruitment process than the younger respondents.
5.7.6 Conclusion

As the answers from two different age groups were compared, some observations were made. There were no major differences between the answers so it was not possible to determine directly which age group was more satisfied with the process.

When the answers were examined individually it was discovered that the older age group were more satisfied on how the key tasks and requirements were presented in the job announcement. However the younger respondent group was more satisfied how the business culture was presented and they also found the announcement more tempting than the older respondents. Older respondents were clearly less in need of additional information than the younger respondents. What comes to application phase, the younger respondents were satisfied with the current methods (cover letter and CV) while the older respondents would have liked to be able to utilize other methods as well. Based on the results the younger respondents were also more satisfied with the communication but still the older respondents gave better overall grades for the process and the company after all.

Based on these observation it can be concluded that the applicants are individuals and experience the process differently and age does not play a major role on how the applicant experiences the process. Thus it can be stated that applicants of different ages do not require different things from the process.

6 Recommendations

Based on the results, some areas may require some minor improvements. Therefore some suggestions will be made in order to create even better candidate experiences in the future. The adjustments are small and can be utilized in each process.

The research showed that some of the applicants were missing the salary information in the job announcement. If it is not possible to publish the exact salary, it would be worthwhile to at least give the wage gap. It was mentioned in the knowledge base that this can be one of the ways to lure more applicants. Based on the study, some of the applicants would have not applied if they had the information about the salary. Thus, mentioning the salary could save both the applicant’s and the recruiter’s time in future.

The company could also lure more applicants by specifying the location of the company in the announcement. Since the district may be unknown to some of the applicants, it would also be worthwhile mentioning that the company is located near the train station, near good bus links and also along the motorway. Hence, also applicants living farther away could consider applying.

In addition, the results indicated that also presenting the company and its business culture in the announcement would need some improvements. A quite large number of applicants thought the company was one of the reasons they got interested in the job, so this number could be even greater if some of adjustments would be made. However, majority of the respondents thought the business culture was clearly presented meaning no major changes are necessary.

Since still some of the respondents thought they were missing information on the announcement, and therefore contacted the contact person it would be worthwhile to
interview the contact persons to find out what are the most frequently asked questions and take these into account in future when planning the announcement.

What comes to application, based on the research, the company should consider also other application methods since some of the respondents would have liked to be able to exploit either LinkedIn or application video. This could facilitate the application process for the applicant and would also allow the candidates to apply with a mobile phone.

Some improvements could also be done in communication field since some of the respondents thought they were not aware of how the process was proceeding. Some of the respondents were also missing the information of who was finally chosen for the job and with what criteria. Thus especially the progress of the process and the outcome of the recruitment, could be communicated better to the applicants. The recruiting supervisor and the HR department could work more closely and actively together.

The feedback did not reveal anything significant that was not already discussed in the previous results. However, it was a pleasure to note that the respondents wanted to justify their responses and all the feedback should be taken into account when making improvements.

It can be assumed that if the issues raised in the research are paid attention to in the future, the overall grade for the recruitment process will increase.

7 Conclusions

The purpose of this research was to examine the candidate's experience on a general level by paying attention on job announcement, application, scheduling and communication. This raised additional questions to explore "Does the recruitment process affect how the applicant feels about the company after the process (whether the feeling is positive or negative)" and whether different age applicants perceive the process differently.

Overall the candidates were quite satisfied with the company’s recruitment process. However, the research brought out that some of the areas that still need small improvements. The research was executed to find out these specific issues and it was quite successful in that. The best way to develop is to receive feedback from the candidates themselves.

There was still room for improvement in every area so it was important that these grievances came up in the study. According the result some of the necessary information was lacking from the job announcement and especially the lack of salary information came out. Therefore this was discussed in the suggestion part. In addition, the applicants hoped some improvements on communication. The average grade given for the recruitment process was bit better than mid-level, and can be expected to improve after some of the adjustments have been put into practice.

The study found that age does not have a great impact on how the applicant experiences the process. However, there was more dispersion between the young respondents than between the older respondents. This however, did not reveal any crucial information on whether the target group’s age should be taken into account in the future when running recruitment.
Based on the result it can be noticed that the experience from recruitment process influenced on how the candidate felt about the company afterwards. Therefore, considering the company image, it is very important that time and effort will be invested in the candidate experience.

Surveys are very effective way to gather information and thus develop the existing ways. The results were carefully analyzed and based on these analyses some suggestions were made that the company could utilize in the future. Based on the answers and the results, the company will be able to create even better candidate experiences in the future. The company will also utilize the survey to get feedback from the candidates also after this project.
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Other

Figures

Figure 1: Structure of the thesis
Figure 2: Candidate experience
Figure 3: Factors affecting the candidate experience
Figure 4: Sharing the experience (Career builder, 2015)
Figure 5: Impact on consumer behavior (Career Builder, 2015)
Figure 6: Quantitative research process (Heikkilä: Edita 2014)
Figure 7: Background chart - total 28 responses
Figure 8: Chart of factors that aroused the interest - total 28 responses
Figure 9: Job announcement chart - total 28 responses
Figure 10: Require for additional information chart - total 28 responses
Figure 11: Utilizing different methods in applying - total 28 responses
Figure 12: Communication chart - total 28 responses
Figure 13: Recruitment process satisfaction rate chart (on a scale 1-5) - total 28 responses
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Figure 17: Comparing the different age groups answers (respondents aged 26-30 and 46-50, total 12 responses) - presentation of the key tasks
Figure 18: Comparing the different age groups answers (respondents aged 26-30 and 46-50, total 12 responses) - presentation of the requirements
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Figure 25: Comparing the different age groups’ answers - grades given for the recruitment process, total 12 responses - bar graph
Figure 26: Comparing the different age groups’ answers - grades given for the recruitment process, total 12 responses - line chart
Figure 27: Comparing the different age groups’ answers - grades given for the company after the recruitment process, total 12 responses - bar graph
Figure 28: Comparing the different age groups’ answers - grades given for the company after the recruitment process, total 12 responses - line chart
Appendices

Translated questionnaire

1. Age

- 20 or under
- 21 - 25 years
- 26 - 30 years
- 31 - 35 years
- 36 - 40 years
- 41 - 45 vuotta
- 46 - 50 vuotta
- 51 - 55 vuotta
- 56 tai yli

2. What made you interested in this job?

You can choose more than one option.

- The job description
- Salary
- Employee benefits
- The company
- Insurance field
- Company location
- Something else, what?


3. Think back about the job placement / placement announcement and respond to the following allegations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>I cannot tell</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="47" alt="Image of a table with options for key tasks, requirements, business culture, and announcement clarity." /></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You can write your thoughts here about the announcement.

4. Were you in need of additional information? Choose the option that best suits your situation.

- Yes, I reached the contact person mentioned in the announcement.
- Yes, but I couldn't reach the contact person.
- Yes, but I did not contact the contact person.
- I did not need more information.

5. Would you have wished to be able to utilize other applying methods instead of a CV or an application letter (such as a LinkedIn profile or application video)?

- No
- Yes, which methods?
6. Were you aware of the progress of the recruitment process? Choose the option that best suits your experience.

☐ Yes, I was aware
☐ I was not aware, you can specify which step you would particularly like for more information (such as the progress of recruiting, the outcome).

7. On a scale of 1-5 how satisfied were you with our recruitment process?
1 Not satisfied at all - 5 Very satisfied

8. On a scale 1-5 what kind of image did you endure of the company after the recruitment process? 1 not positive at all - 5 very positive

9. Free word

10. Email address for the lottery
**1. Ikäsi**

- 20 tai alle
- 21 - 25 vuotta
- 26 - 30 vuotta
- 31 - 35 vuotta
- 36 - 40 vuotta
- 41 - 45 vuotta
- 46 - 50 vuotta
- 51 - 55 vuotta
- 56 tai yli

**2. Mikä sai sinut kiinnostumaan kyseisestä tehtävästä?**

*Voit valita useamman kuin yhden vaihtoehdon.*

- Työntekuva
- Palkkaus
- Henkilöstöedut
- Yritys
- Vakuutusala
- Yrityksen sijainti
- Jokin muu, mikä?

 Rectangle area: 491x1027
3. Muistele tehtävän työ-/harjoittelupaikkailmoitusta ja vastaa seuraaviin väitteisiin.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kyllä</th>
<th>Ei</th>
<th>En osaa sanoa</th>
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<td>Keskeiset tehtävät ollut selkeästi esitellyt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tehtävän vaatimukset ollut selkeästi esitellyt</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yrityksen toimintakulttuuri ollut selkeästi esitellyt</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilmoitus ollut houkutteleva</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilmoituksessa ollut selkeät ohjeet ainta, kuninka tehtävää haetaan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Voit kirjata ajatuksiasi ilmoituksesta tähän:


- Kyllä ja tavoitlkin ilmoituksessa mainitun yhteyshenkilön.
- Kyllä. Yritän tavoittaa yhteyshenkilöä siinä onnistumatta.
- Kyllä, mutta en ollut yhteydessä yhteyshenkilöön.
- En kaivannut lisätietoa.

5. Olisitko toivonut pystyväsi hyödyntämään muita hakumenetelmiä CV:n ja hakemuskirjeen sijaan (kuten LinkedIn-profiili, hakemusvideo)?

- Ei
- Kyllä, mitä menetelmiä?

- Olin tietoinen.
- En ollut tietoinen, voit tarkentaa, mistä vaiheesta olisit erityisesti toivonut lisätietoa (kuten rekrytoinnin etenemisesta, loppurutiinista).

7. Asteikolla 1-5 kuinka tytyväinen olit rekrytointiprosessimme?
   1 En lainkaan tytyväinen - 5 Erittäin tytyväinen
   
   1 2 3 4 5

8. Asteikolla 1-5 millainen mielikuva yrityksestä jää rekrytointiprosessin jälkeen?
   1 Ei lainkaan positiivinen - 5 Erittäin positiivinen
   
   1 2 3 4 5

9. Vapaa sana
   
   [Vapaa tekstityöskentely]

10. Sähköpostiosoitteesi arvontaa varten
    
    [Vapaa tekstityöskentely]
Grades for the figure 15

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