

Ilmo Jokelainen

Enhancement of the recruitment process

Recruitment in ProMesta

Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences

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<p>This thesis was made for ProMesta Henkilöstöpalvelut Oy, to analyze and evaluate the recruitment process. The aim was to discover the possible strengths and weaknesses of the process and find solutions to make it more efficient. ProMesta was restarted with new leadership in 2017 and hired me as Head of Recruitment. The need for this thesis presented itself when talking about our recruitment strategies. ProMesta wanted to analyze the recruitment methods usually used in recruitment companies and to find ways for ProMesta to improve in this area. The goal was to identify how to gain a competitive advantage compared to the competitors, therefore attracting the best applicants.</p> <p>A questionnaire was used to determine what demographics ProMesta was reaching, what channels generated the most applications and what applicants were looking for in a job advertisement. 61 applicants answered the questionnaire.</p> <p>This study strives to compare the current recruitment process and infuse it with theory and the results of the questionnaire to build a more complete recruitment strategy. Theory and the questionnaire help to identify the ways in which the process can be modified to better suit ProMesta's needs as a company.</p> <p>There were changes made to ProMesta's recruitment strategy due to this study. ProMesta gained important information about the channels they should focus on and how to use these channels most effectively. A simplification was made to the application process so that it would ease the application process and generate more applicants. The study revealed that there is real value in analyzing the recruitment process regularly. Companies should not feel complaisant, but rather be due diligent enough to analyze to process and keep up with the changing landscape of recruitment.</p>	
Keywords	Recruitment, Recruitment channels, Construction, Staffing Service, ProMesta Henkilöstöpalvelut Oy



Table of Contents

1	INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1	PREMISES	1
1.2	OBJECTIVE OF THE THESIS	2
1.3	THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK	2
2	COMPANY & INDUSTRY	3
2.1	PROMESTA.....	3
2.2	STAFFING SERVICE	4
3	RECRUITMENT	5
3.1	EFFECTIVE RECRUITMENT CHANNELS	6
3.2	THE INTERNET AND SOCIAL MEDIA IN RECRUITMENT	8
3.2.1	<i>Facebook</i>	9
3.2.2	<i>Twitter</i>	10
3.2.3	<i>LinkedIn</i>	11
3.3	THE INTERVIEW	11
3.4	SELECTION	13
4	PROMESTA TODAY	15
4.1	RECRUITMENT TODAY	15
4.2	CHANNELS USED-PROMESTA.....	15
4.3	SELECTION PROMESTA.....	17
4.4	INTERVIEW AT PROMESTA.....	17
5	RESEARCH METHODS	18
5.1	QUESTIONNAIRE	18
5.2	RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRE	19
6	CONCLUSION	25
6.1	CHANGES IN RECRUITMENT METHODS	27
6.2	IMPACTS OF THESIS	28
7	REFERENCES.....	30
7.1	QUESTIONNAIRE FORM	32



1 Introduction

1.1 Premises

I was hired to be the head of recruitment is ProMesta in November of 2017. I decide to use this thesis as a tool for analyzing the recruitment process of ProMesta and hopefully find ways to improve it. Having prior experience from the business I knew the basic operating models and wanted to challenge the norms. With my daily work evolving around recruitment in a daily basis, I have intimate knowledge of the ways ProMesta operates and therefore provides me with a great perspective on the current status and on the changes that this study has resulted in.

Efficient recruitment is a competitive advantage to a company in a field where attracting and reaching talent is crucial. This thesis will study the present recruitment methods in use in ProMesta and see if there is something that could be done more efficiently. Companies are trying to gain an advantage to competitors in different ways, and there could be room for improvement in the field of recruitment. What are the ways to attract talent, and what are the best channels to reach the talent you are looking for. With many of the companies in the same field, using the same method of recruiting I wanted to examine if there is a more efficient way of recruiting than the typical norm.

Efficient recruitment is important for a company. The more you reach potential recruits the more option you will have to choose from. The chances are you will find the right fit when there is a bigger pool to choose from. Effective recruitment is not easy, and it has a lot of variables. Finding the right approach can vary and depends on the situation. The goal is to find the right methods for different situations. (Dessler 2013, p. 74).

For a young company like ProMesta effective recruitment is essential. Especially in staffing service recruitment is one of the most important aspects of their operations. Having experience with two different companies from the industry has shown me the ways that recruitment is conducted. Both operate in a similar fashion, and this leads me to examine if there could be a more efficient way of conducting ProMesta's recruitment. It is important to find a balance between theory and practice and being able to stand out from the crowd of job applications.

1.2 Objective of the thesis

The aim of this thesis is to analyze and examine the recruitment process in ProMesta and identify possible areas of improvement. The thesis will combine theory and practice in order to reach the most accurate and usable information for ProMesta to use in order to possibly alter their process. A questionnaire was conducted to help understanding job applicants better, how to reach them, conducting more efficient interviews and have more accurate selections. The topic was chosen because of the importance it has to ProMesta and because I will be able to apply it in my daily work.

The objective is to find the areas in which ProMesta can improve recruitment and also identifying aspects that might have a negative effect on the process.

By identifying the strong and weak aspects of our recruitment ProMesta can develop and make adjustments to better cater their audience, thereby improving this aspect of their operation, which will project positively on to all aspects down the line.

As a new company, ProMesta is keen to find ways to stand out and differentiate themselves from the crowd. Examining and improving recruitment is something that can lead to huge benefits both in the short and long-term success.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

In this thesis, the theoretical framework will examine recruitment as a whole and the basic steps companies take in the recruitment process. This thesis will concentrate on examining recruitment channels such as the Internet, the interview process and selection since they are the most concrete steps in the recruitment process. They also tend to be the most important phases of recruitment. These steps also reflect most accurately the recruitment process of ProMesta. The thesis also contains a lot of I first-hand knowledge and information that I have gained while working in the recruitment industry. Currently, I work as the Head of Recruitment at ProMesta and recruitment is a big part of my daily work. Developing the process will contribute to and effect my average day at work. The thesis, therefore, is also a tool for me to take a closer look into our operations.



2 Company & Industry

2.1 ProMesta

ProMesta is a staffing agency that operates in southern Finland and is specialized in the construction industry. ProMesta was restarted in September 2017 in Helsinki Finland. The aim of the company is to differentiate from the competition by providing a service others do not. Focusing on quality rather than quantity as many of the competitors do, ProMesta has identified a niche and tries to utilize this. The aim is to build a better brand image than the competitors, both in the eyes of the clients and the workers. We want to recruit and provide our clients with the best talent.

ProMesta employs five full-time office workers, three salesmen, a recruiter and a financial specialist. ProMesta has one silent owner that is not involved in the daily operations. Specific financial numbers have not yet been released, because last years financial statement has not yet been completed.

ProMesta employees have previous experience of the staffing industry, and all share the same vision of branding ProMesta as a unique service provider in the industry. Today ProMesta employs over 100 construction workers, in the capital region of Finland. ProMesta wants to create an image, where it is clear that they value their employees. The staffing industry has a reputation as seeing workers as numbers rather than their most important asset. The thought of giving workers the bare minimum to succeed in their daily work is the norm. ProMesta wants to ensure that workers are given the right circumstances to succeed. This might add costs to the process, but creates positive outcomes in the employee and customer. This adds value in a human productivity aspect. Human productivity recognizes workers as value and not just a flock of labor that are a mean to an end (Kesti, 2010 p. 20-23).

A large number of companies in the staffing industry are known to be very narrow-minded or one-sided in their pursuit of productivity. Workers are seen as a necessary cost rather than an asset. Workers tend to feel that they give more to the company than what the company provides for them (Kesti, 2010 p. 23).

ProMesta wants to change that perception and sees value in workers. ProMesta believes this will attract the best workers and serve as a competitive advantage.



2.2 Staffing service

Staffing services have been present in the field of business since 1873. Mr. Gabbittas and Mr. Thring formed the first recruitment company. Recruitment industry acts as a middleman to connect the diverse parties. Help is needed on both sides to maximize the possibilities and opportunities. (Newell Brown& Swain 2009, p.8-9)

The staffing industry employs workers through them to their customers. In 2016 there were 38 000 people working through a staffing service company in Finland. That accounts for two percent of the Finnish workforce. (<http://www.stat.fi>)

Temporary work and staffing agencies are becoming a common staple in today's labor markets. The idea of flexibility and efficiency has grown the popularity and demand for temporary workers. ProMesta operates in Finland where the rate of temporary workers has raised nationwide for three decades. Reasons for the steady rise in numbers are financial growth and the wide range of service providers in the market. Finnish labor laws are also quite protective towards the employees; therefore hiring workers via agencies is safer. Employers do not have to commit right away, therefore lowering the chance for mistakes in hires. (Mikko Luoma, Riitta Viitala 2017 p. 51-52).

A staffing agency is the third party in an agreement that has originally had only two parties. The three parties have each had their own role in the agreement. The company that uses the staffing services of the agency acts as a customer. They order workers to match their current labor needs. The agency acts as an employer to the employee and rents the worker to the company for an agreed-upon fee. (Mikko Luoma, Riitta Viitala 2017 p. 51-52).

The fee will cover the worker's salary and employment fees but will have margin leftover for the agency. The agency takes the risk of covering for sick days and other unexpected costs and therefore cutting the customers' of risk. For this risk-free labor, companies are willing to pay a couple of percentages extra. They also are void of the trouble of keeping part-time workers at hand because they can rely on the expertise of staffing agencies.

Cooperation with a staffing agency can lower the staff and recruitment costs of a company. The need for recruitment services is often tied to unpredictable situations that do not present themselves daily nor can they be predicted. It offers companies the flexibility to deal with unexpected labor needs.



Using a staffing agency lowers the cost amount of workforce needed in an HR-department. A staffing agency can be utilized when the need for recruitment specialists is present and they tend to have a better feel for the market. (Mikko Luoma, Riitta Viitala 2017 p. 53).

Like any other trade, there are mutual benefits for both. The buyer is trying to find the best price and quality ratio and the seller is offering the best service for the price they see fit. There is also a trust factor involved and relationships. (Bas A.S. Koene, Nathalie Galais, Christina Garsten 2014 p. 59)

Some are willing to pay a higher price because of the comfort level or familiarity towards the seller. Like any other trade, there is competition between sellers to attract the best clients available. The level of service can also vary between providers. The industries or the competence level of the employees might differ. Companies have found their own niche in the industry and cater to their customers, similar to other industries. The staffing industry provides customers with human resources that are often mistakenly viewed as goods, rather than services. When talking about the workforce, the thing that you are providing is services and not goods. You have to take into consideration the needs of the customer and realize that not all workers are alike and interchangeable. Not every employee from ProMesta is the same as a power tool from Bosch is.

3 Recruitment

Recruitment is a key part of a company, and in a knowledge-based economy, it is extremely important to focus on attracting the right talent. It is said that recruitment starts the moment you post the job ad and ends when an applicant signs the dotted line. (Juholin 2009, 237)

This might be accurate to the average person on the street, however, recruitment is more complex and never stops. It just takes other forms of operating.

Every company that does not invest time and effort into recruitment is hindering their chances at building a more functioning and sustainable company. Still, recruitment is often seen as a necessary evil that has little thought put into it. Ensuring that there is



more emphasis on recruitment can be an important part of the reason behind a competitive advantage. (Newell Brown & Swain 2009, p.1-2)

Companies should have a recruitment-marketing plan in place. Effective recruitment has similar aspects to marketing in the sense that being noticed is important. A recruitment-marketing plan entails a planned approach to recruitment content, cooperation with schools and businesses and all public activity. The public perception of recruitment is often overlooked and undervalued. (Paananen 2009, p. 179-180)

The simplified way to explain what the basis of recruitment is, that the goal is to attract qualified candidates. The great challenge that recruiters face is that attracting only qualified candidates is extremely challenging. Attracting unqualified candidates hinders the recruiting process and causes added work. This is why effective and properly targeted recruitment is important for a company. (Gomez-Mejia 2001, p.167).

3.1 Effective recruitment channels

Companies are available to use numerous channels when recruiting. Companies determine what they feel are the best ways to reach their candidates. In today's business environment the Internet has taken over as the most popular channel, but this does not mean all companies find this to be the most efficient way. The challenge is to identify the most efficient channels for each company.

Internal job postings are used to recruit from inside the company and give current employees the possibility to rise in the company hierarchy or change their job description. The positives are that the applicant is familiar and you have knowledge of their personality and work ethic. The unfavorable side of a successful hire via internal recruitment is the fact that another opening then has to be filled.

Using print advertisement is deemed as an effective way to reach large amounts of people or a specific segment of candidates. Print publications can have a large number of subscriptions or they might specialize in a certain field of business or age group. The negative aspect of print advertisement is the fact that it is relatively expensive.

The Internet is a crucial recruitment channel. The Internet has the largest audience and is the most used channel when recruiting. Applicants can have automatic alerts when a job with specific criteria opens or an interesting company is hiring. It is also still very cost efficient compared to the print media for example. The Internet has a huge number



of job ads, but there are easy filters to cut out the irrelevant ads. It makes job seeking convenient for applicants. Some job-sites also advertise your ads on websites that are not specific to job hunting. This also attracts applicants that would have been otherwise ignored. The downside to using the Internet as a recruiting channel is the fact it could diminish other channels and make recruiting very one dimensional and lackadaisical.

Some companies also use referrals from within the company. Current employees have relationships within their respective businesses and can have great links to qualified professionals. The fact that a current employee is willing to link their name to a possible hiring, this usually gives a recruiter some indication that the person is trustworthy. The problem with this manner of recruitment is that the applicants tend to be similar to those you already work for the company and therefore can create equal opportunity problems. (Gomez-Mejia 2001, p.168-169)

Previous employees can also be recruited. Workers that have been seasonal, temporary or even laid off previous employees have already shown their capabilities. They are known commodities and usually safe hires. (Gomez-Mejia 2001, p.168-169)

Some companies have also set up alumni-functions to keep in touch with past employees and possibly re-hiring them if needed (Paananen 2009, p. 180).

Recruitment channels are changing as the landscape of recruiting is experiencing a significant transformation due to social media and the access and availability it offers. The basic principle will likely be similar, but the channels and use of the ads are going to change. A larger portion of the job ads will be published in social media where the target groups are easier to identify and focus on. (Korpi, Laine & Soljasalo 2012, p.14)

Social media channels will also give the recruiter, information that traditional job advertisement sites do not always offer. The number of clicks and views can help determine if the campaign is successful or maybe that this specific ad is not reaching the target group as expected. Or perhaps there are a lot of views but no applications, which would indicate that there might be something unattractive in the text. The opposite could also happen that the views and clicks are low therefore the attention turns to the title. It might be unappealing or just misleading. This gives companies the opportunity to assess their advertisements and makes corrections and try different styles to reach their full potential. (Korpi, Laine & Soljasalo 2012, p.16-17)



3.2 The Internet and social media in recruitment

Recruitment is in some ways similar to marketing. There is always competition to find and attract the best candidates. The need to differentiate and get noticed is similar to marketing. Especially in an industry like construction that is lacking the proper amount of professionals, it is crucial to stick out from the crowd. Of course, quantity is not always to aim, but rather quality. A recruiter must always analyze what is the best channel for reaching the best candidates. (Markkanen 2005 p.87). The Internet has a vast reach and is more likely to target the preferred group of applicants. Today job ads are primarily on the Internet, unlike 20 years ago when printed media ruled to advertisement space. The reason the Internet has surpassed printed media is the reach, convenience, and price.

The premise of job ads has not changed. The primary function is to find the right candidates in order to fill the position and the secondary function is to build and promote your company brand. The first impression of a company can be determined by a job ad and potential applicant reads. Being original and catchy is not always easy in a crowd of ads, but should be kept in mind. A job advertisement is a tool for promotion and should be taken advantage for. (Markkanen 2005 p.104-106)

When the tone of the ad is decided the next step is to figure out how to reach the right people. The first objective is to get the message out for everyone to notice. The goal cannot be that everybody needs to see the ad, but rather to give everybody to the opportunity to see it. (Sterne 2010 p.15-16)

What differentiates the Internet as a channel of information related to job ads, is that it is more personalized. The Internet usually has filters you can choose from so that you only find or see the ads that interest you. Therefore making it more targeted and easier to find the right information. This is, of course, useful but also necessary because of the volume of information that is posted online. Still, this makes it convenient compared to older media outlets. This is why the Internet is so popular among recruiters as well as job seekers.

The Internet has a lot of different outlets that are used for job hunting. Companies tend to have different strategies when it comes to the outlets that are used to promote vacancies.

Commercial websites such as Monster and Indeed post job ads and charge companies for the visibility they provide for advertisements. Websites might have slightly different



functions, but the basic idea is the same. They offer a large number of vacancies on one website, with filters and added functions to help you find your dream job. They might also allow you to insert your CV into their database and form connections with companies based on your attributes. When websites can draw large crowds of applicants, companies obviously are offered the chance to get more visibility and access to applicants. Companies purchase packages that lift their ads to the top of the list and therefore get more hits. They can also access the database and look for fitting candidates. Visibility is something companies are willing to pay for. These service providers might also utilize Google ads and banner advertisements on highly visited websites. Reaching passive applicants is also common since they are seen as attractive candidates. Passive candidates are people not actively searching for a job, which means they are not visiting websites that offer vacancies. Therefore banner ads on popular websites are used to add visibility.

The Internet can be used in a variety of ways to recruit. Websites that contain CV banks from people are becoming more prevalent. YouTube also has ads that run before videos and are meant to reach a certain amount of people in a specific age group for example. The possibilities are endless and companies are finding more creative ways to make themselves visible and relevant.

Social media is linked to the Internet and although it operates in the same realm, social media is often thought as a separate channel because they are seen as applications that have their own way of communicating. Social media channels are used as marketing channels. Facebook is an important channel for advertising and job ads are one element of these ads.

3.2.1 Facebook

Facebook will offer marketers opportunities that are extremely valuable. Advertisement can be placed conveniently into Facebook without them interrupting the user experience. This is something previous marketing tools did not offer. Interruption marketing has been used for ages and a good example are advertisements on TV. (Holzner, 2009: 6) Facebook gives advertisers and recruiters the possibility to reach targeted audiences in creative ways. With at least 80 million users companies can reach almost anyone. (Holzner, 2009: 7).

Finding a needle in the haystack becomes easier if there are metrics that can help to locate the right audience. With Facebook, it is possible to reach desired demographics



accurately. (Holzner, 2009: 129). The power of Facebook lies in the masses and connections. A massive pool of people linked with each other generates a great environment for getting noticed. The extremely high popularity also guarantees that people will collide with your message. Of course, the message has to be effective in order to gain notoriety, but this gives smaller companies the chance to get creative and succeed in their marketing without spending huge amounts of money.

Job ads have to market to be noticed, and they can be targeted to reach the right audience. The other aspect that Facebook is great for, is building brand awareness. Facebook allows every company to get noticed and create a following. In order to create a brand, you must have followers. A brand can be created with the help of social media. Creative media content will draw interest and followers and there to make your brand more recognizable (Juti 2016; 159-160). Building recognition and familiarity is important in recruitment because creating a positive brand will assist recruitment. Apple and Google are desired companies of employment because of the brand. A company could offer similar opportunities or even better, but because of the image and familiarity with the company, applicants will choose the known commodity.

3.2.2 Twitter

Twitter is widely used in PR-circles for announcing and sharing information. It is a channel used for interaction between users. Twitter also used in promoting vacancies to followers and by using hashtags. Once you have generated a brand or interest that creates followers. It is used as a channel to spread information to people that are already interested in your actions is a good way of communicating with the right audience. Twitter also allows your follower to be in direct contact with you if needed. They can reply and have conversations, if necessary. Advertising is also possible on Twitter. Companies integrate links and blogs into the advertisements so that they can direct traffic to their websites or other useful outlets. (Meyerson 2010; 203)

In a fast pace world being present on social media will give you the chance to get recognized. Capturing users attention for even 30 seconds is valuable. Twitter gives the opportunity to pop up on cell phone screen and being informative efficiently (Meyerson 2010; 202).



3.2.3 LinkedIn

LinkedIn is primarily used as a more formal platform to search and attract talent. LinkedIn tends to have a more business-like approach and atmosphere. It is about creating contacts in business. It is a community where companies can connect with people from various aspects of business.

Companies also have a presence on LinkedIn. Company pages are important for your brand and notoriety. People will search companies and make first impressions that might impact the brand. Potential applicants or investors might take notice of the image on LinkedIn is especially negative or unwelcoming. Smaller companies might also gain credibility because the profile is well maintained. (Meyerson 2010; 220). Having a presenting homepage has a similar effect.

LinkedIn is widely used by head-hunters trying to find applicants from the active and passive pool of potential hires. For recruiters, this is a great channel because people submit their information willingly and have public CV's. Targeting the right people is easier. Recruiters can also be more informed about a candidate because of the information that is available on LinkedIn. Especially difficult executive-level hires are made easier because of the connections. Desired candidates are usually employed and are not actively looking for a new employee. LinkedIn makes it possible to approach these candidates and measure their interest.

3.3 The Interview

An interview is a traditional part of the recruitment process. It has been deemed as an effective method to assess an applicant. The method has gained a permanent place in the recruitment process, because of its effectiveness. (Koivisto 2004 p. 55-56) Interaction with another human being is usually a great tool for interviewers. In an interview, a candidate is being interrogated for information that might not be evident from the CV but is also used as a tool to get a sense of their personality. (Dessler 2013, p. 111)

The interview has to also be used as a tool to gather information so that the recruiter can form a complete picture of the candidate and have the needed information to make an informed decision. (Markkanen 2009 p. 22)



Every interviewer has their own way of conducting a job interview, so there are a vast amount of different styles to conduct one. Still, some generalizations can be made. For instance, there can be a structured or unstructured interview style. The structured style is more about getting answers to specific questions that can then be analyzed and compared to others. It is also usually more predetermined and follows a pattern.

With an unstructured interview style, there is a lot more room for improvisation. There can still be specific details that need to be covered, but the interview is conducted more in a conversational fashion and allows the interviewer to perhaps dig deeper and get more candid answers. As mentioned there are a vast amount of different structures used in interviews, and in practice, all of them are some kind of hybrid between the two methods. (Dessler 2013, p. 111), (Koivisto 2004 p. 57-59)

There are also differences in the type of questions asked. Some ask situational questions, for example how one would behave in a specific event, and draw conclusions from the answer. Some might use the behavioral method, as to how have you behaved in a similar event in your past. This is a good indication that the candidate has some experience in how to deal with issues that may arise while working. (Dessler 2013, p. 111)

The most glaring difference in the interview processes is the way they are administered. The way an interview is set up can be a result of the position at hand or the company's operation methods.

The most common one is the one-on-one interview where one person who makes the initial or final selection interviews the candidate. This can be followed by a sequential interview where a person in a higher ranking might conduct the next interview. This method is used so that the higher ranking people use their time efficiently. (Dessler 2013, p. 111), (Koivisto 2004 p. 64)

A panel interview is where a panel of people interviews the applicant. This method is used so that the interviewers all have the same experience, and can share thoughts and exchange ideas without there being variables, which would be present in the other methods. (Koivisto 2004 p. 64), (Yeung 2008 p. 26)



A sequential interview is conducted by several members of the company and has several interviews in a row. Interviewers will gather information from their respective area of expertizes and the information is combined and decisions made based on the combined information. This is a slow and difficult process to organize but it will eliminate the biases that may influence decision-making. (Koivisto 2004 p. 64), (Yeung 2008 p. 26)

Other forms of interview do exist, such as phone interviews, online computerized interviews or even a speed dating approach, but these are all a form of some kind of interviews that were mentioned ahead. They just have a different setup, or location.

Interviewers can also have different methods and guidelines to give the interview structure and keep the conversation heading towards the main objective. Rob Yeung talks about the funneling and the STARS technique.

The funneling technique starts with a broad question about past experiences and lets the applicant decide which experience to share. While the conversation continues you can get a broader sense of the situation and collect information that is not directly related to the question. The aim of the interview is to narrow the conversation to the original basis of the question and figure out what happened and what was achieved. This is done so that the interviewer gets a more complete view of the candidate, who is forced to share information and personality traits, therefore making the evaluation easier. (Yeung 2008 p. 26)

The STARS technique follows the same protocol but is a bit more structured. The name of the technique comes from Situation, Task, Actions, results and Summarise. The most important of the five is the A for action. What were the actions that the applicant took in this specific situation and how much of a factor did it play in the result? It is also important to separate “I” from “we” when discussing a situation so that the profile of the candidate is not misleading. (Yeung 2008 p. 27-29, 32)

3.4 Selection

The selection process is crucial for many reasons. The selection will reflect onto the whole company and to the decision maker. A great hire can save you from a lot of trouble, but a bad one will create issues where there are none. In many situations, the people you hire are also the ones who represent the company and present the image



of the company to others. Hiring the wrong person will also cost money and resources. For example, the time used for training can limit the effort of the trainer and cause some inconvenience for the company. (Dessler 2013, p. 101). This is thought as a sacrifice that is made in order for the new member to thrive, but if this time goes to waste it can leave a mark on the companies success.

The most difficult aspect of hiring is to evaluate the character of the applicant with just a few meetings. Of course, there can be hiring processes that last longer and have intense psychological test and evaluations, but since this thesis is focused on the recruitment of ProMesta, the process described is the one used by the fore-mentioned company. The character of the hire will affect everything in our company, the work, the atmosphere, and the bottom line. A significant aspect of character is motivation. There is a link between poor performance and poor motivation. The results of a poorly motivated person are likely to be unflattering and leave room for improvement. On the other hand, employees with high motivation can overcome hurdles or limitations. Of course, this is not always the case, but making sure an applicant is motivated is important for the hiring process. The challenge is that measuring motivation is extremely difficult. Motivation can manifest in different ways and usually cannot be measured in a short period that is the recruitment process. (Gomez-Mejia 2001, p.165-166)

Selection is especially key, in service industries, because the hired person will become a representation of your company. The person will have an effect on the company brand and image when they interact with clients and people in their everyday work (Paananen 2009, p.118-119). This highlights the importance of selection because every encounter the hired employee has while representing the company can have an effect on the company's brand.

Keeping track and taking notes of interviews is important since research shows that we are flawed when making decisions. The most common ones are the primacy effect and the recency effect where the first and last interviewed candidates get an unfair advantage because the interviewer tends to remember in more detail. The ones left in the middle can be forgotten in the shuffle. Keeping a scorecard may work for someone, but decisions based purely on rating should also be avoided. Finding a middle ground is important; assessing the notes or scores combined with impressions and instinct is an



efficient way of analyzing the candidates and finding the best fit. (Yeung 2008 p. 135, 140, 147)

Although modern business culture has a fast tempo, selections should not be done hastily. Taking time and ensuring that you have done your due diligence is important. Keeping a realistic approach to the process is paramount. There cannot be a sense that a great hire happens in a week. This, of course, is possible, but not likely. A well-organized and executed process will ensure the best result. The process starts with an accurate assessment of the desired talent because this plays a role in the long chain of steps that are taken in the recruitment process. (Koivisto 2004 p. 41)

4 ProMesta today

4.1 Recruitment today

ProMesta values recruitment immensely and sees it as an opportunity to differentiate from the competitors. For a recruitment company to grow, there must be efficient recruitment that works closely with the sales team. An effective recruiter finds the talent that a specific client is looking for and talent that someone might be looking for. Job ads are also like mini advertisements for a company. They will appear in the information flow of potential clients and talent, so they can be used to present a positive image of the company. Leaving a positive mark can be beneficial in the future.

At ProMesta the recruitment is set up similarly as other competitors in the industry. The differing factor in the tone of the applications. They are made to stand out of the mass of applications by the information they include and the informal tone that they are written in. The key idea behind this is to know your audience and identify the details they are looking for. The focus is to think how to make applying as convenient as possible for the targeted applicants.

4.2 Channels used-ProMesta

The best channel in terms of quality is word of mouth. This is a slow way of reaching workers, but it is the most reliable in terms of quality. If a worker in our company is willing to recommend someone, the odds of them being a true professional is great. The



problem is, of course, the fact that it is rather inefficient in an industry where there needs to be a large number of applicants.

ProMesta's objective is to be present in various channels online. The channel that is relayed the most is the standard state-run website that lists all the open job ads. The website is "TE-palvelut.fi" and it is free of charge to companies. The aftermentioned website is used widely because of the notoriety and the volume of job ads.

The recruitment industry will continue to use this channel because of the notoriety and cheap price tag, but there is a reason why companies are trending towards using other channels as well.

Our secondary focus is on the visibility of our ads is Facebook. We feel like the amount of visibility we garner from Facebook is immense. At the moment we are close to having ten thousand followers on Facebook and by posting job ads we can generate additional visibility. Of course, the problem that we face in social media is that the job ads are not targeted. We might be able to reach ten thousand people but the majority of those views are not relevant to us at the moment. Visibility is never unnecessary, but the positive outcome might be a slower process. They are also not the typical job ads, as they do not have a direct link for leaving an application. Facebook posts are just a way to reach job seekers in a different forum.

With the expansion of social media in the everyday lives of job seekers, ProMesta also has posted on Instagram and Twitter. These are mainly advertisements and do not have the basic characteristics of a job ad, but serve as an "in your face" reminder of our job opportunities. The volume of applicant we get directly from social media is minimal, but where ProMesta sees the value is indirect notoriety it increases. The ads may plant an idea in the head of a relative, co-worker or a friend that will then remember the name, and pass it along.

We are also looking into commercial job ad websites, such as Duunitori and Jobilla. They promise more views on job ads and more targeted audiences. Websites like this have different packages that companies can choose to add visibility to specific groups of professionals. They also promise to help companies in marketing their brand. These service providers create job ads that highlight the company brand and videos that give job applicants a more visible and memorable image of the job provider. Of course, the



main issue is to determine if the money is best spent on their services. The problem is that we cannot determine if the services these companies provide is useful unless we try them. Of course, the companies have statistics on views and applications, but these can be misleading because we are not looking for volume, but quality instead. This far we feel we can find the best quality of candidates with the current channels used.

4.3 Selection ProMesta

In the staffing industry, the selection process is heavily influenced by client needs. This makes the process even more difficult to maintain honesty and without bias. This is common in other industries as well, but the way the staffing industry works, this happens more often. A client has expressed that they have a sudden need for a professional of some sort, and the temptation to produce this professional may cause bias and hasty decisions. The solution to this problem is to be aware of such pitfalls.

The selection of an applicant is based on prior work history. The construction industry is a profession one only learns by actually doing. With ProMesta focusing in on professionals, it is very important to gain knowledge of the prior working history from the applicants themselves and from a source that has witnessed them working. This is why contacting an old employer or a mutual associate is beneficial before making the decision. The information you gather from the applicant should match. The first thing you need to remember as a recruiter is that applicants can tell you anything while sitting in the office, but this does not mean it is true. This might sound foolish, but some people know exactly what you want to hear, and this is why contacting references is very important. When the stories match, you can be fairly certain of the character of the applicant.

4.4 Interview at ProMesta

The interview process at ProMesta is set up relatively simple. Interviews are held one-on-one in an unstructured style. The interview is more of a chat, and not an interrogation. This can vary a bit depending on the applicant and the position in question. As the discussion proceeds, the interviewer will write down the key points of the interview so that the important aspects of work experience and skills are marked down. It is im-



portant to keep the atmosphere loose and casual to get the most about the applicant. The atmosphere that is created has all to do with the amount of information you can derive. If the conversation is friendly and casual, people are more open and tend to share more about themselves. Additionally, anyone with even the smallest amount of knowledge about the construction industry can say and tell the interviewer things they want to hear. The real key is to find out what kind of employee they are. The real level of professionalism will be determined at the worksite. The personality and work ethic can be determined more accurately in the office. These qualities present themselves more likely if the mood is kept casual.

The questions used in an interview are behavioral. The facts that interest ProMesta is related to past work experience. This is why most of the questions focus on what applicants did in their previous jobs. The work is usually not new, so totally new situations are uncommon. Specific tasks and duties that they have encountered in the past will be waiting for them in their new work site and this is way ProMesta is more interested in what has taken place and how they handled it.

5 Research methods

5.1 Questionnaire

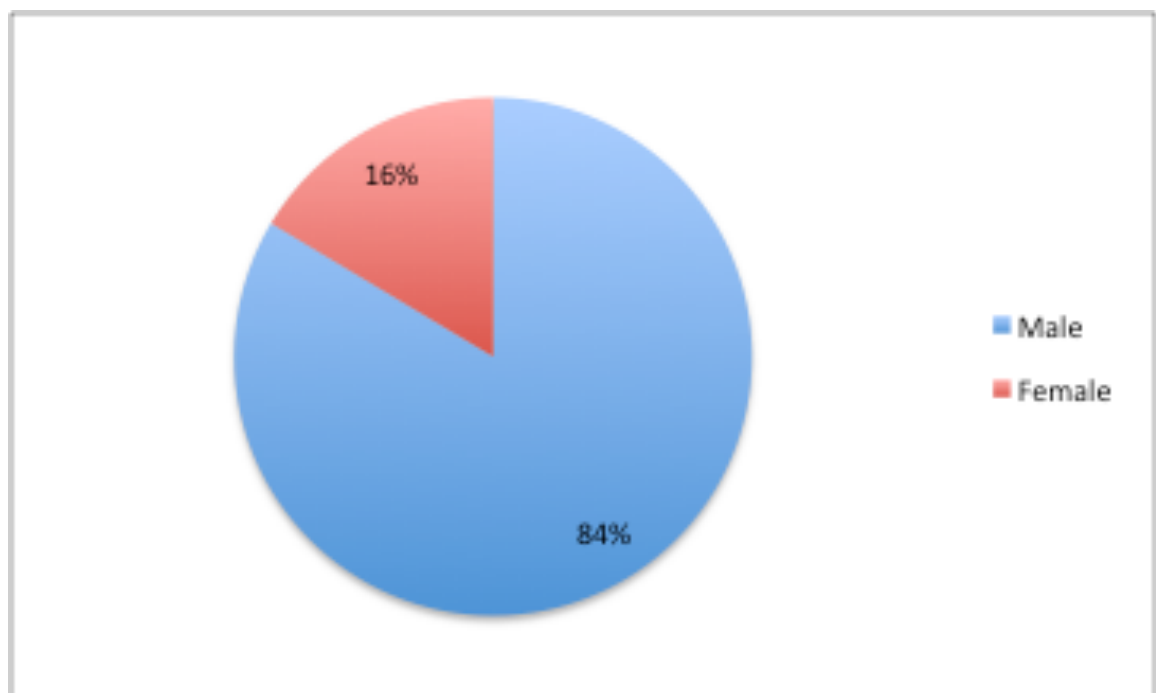
A questionnaire was used to gather data on the recruitment process of ProMesta. The questionnaire was presented in tow languages in order to maximize the amount of answers. A large number of applicants do not speak Finnish as their native tongue; therefore presenting the form in English was necessary. Job applicants were presented the questionnaire form before their scheduled interview.

Applicants ranged from construction workers, managerial positions in construction and youth looking for a summer job. The sample size consists of various types of applicants, although the vast majority applied for constructions vacancies. The selection of the applicants was random and mainly determined by the applicant willingness to fill the questionnaire. Not all applicant found it to be worth their time, or the situation did not present itself to fill out a form. The data collected has been gathered in March 2018, and resulted in 61 filled out questionnaires. The result s of the questionnaire can is presented in pie charts so that the percentages are visible. The questionnaire is

prone to tendencies due to the months it was conducted in. Still, the large sample size and by conducting it in multiple months reduces the variance. In the construction industry, some job descriptions are rarer since they are affected by weather conditions of example. Examples of these are women dominated jobs such as painters and gardeners that tend to increase in the summer months. The questionnaire also contained open questions, but they did not result in sufficient data due to the lack of answers. This also indicates that when respondents tend to see them as too complicating and not worth their time. The results clearly show the areas ProMesta needs to improve and the areas they have done well. Every result will be analyzed further below the graphic.

5.2 Results of Questionnaire

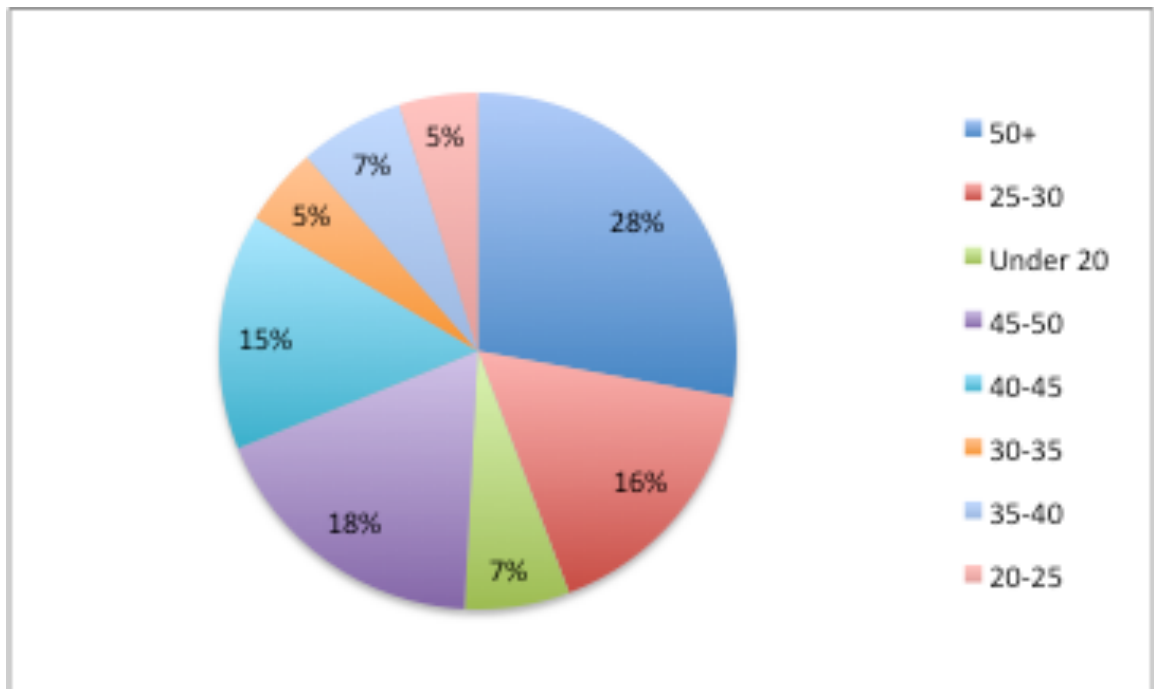
Gender



As predicted the majority of the applicant that we attract is male, simply because construction is a male-dominated industry. The number of women recruited will change over the summer, because of professions that become more prolific in the summer, such as painters and gardeners, which have more females in their ranks. This questionnaire result were predictable as the industry is heavily male-dominated. Women cannot be ignored, but this result can be used in advertisement since we can clearly see a target audience. When considering advertisement and other investment opportu-

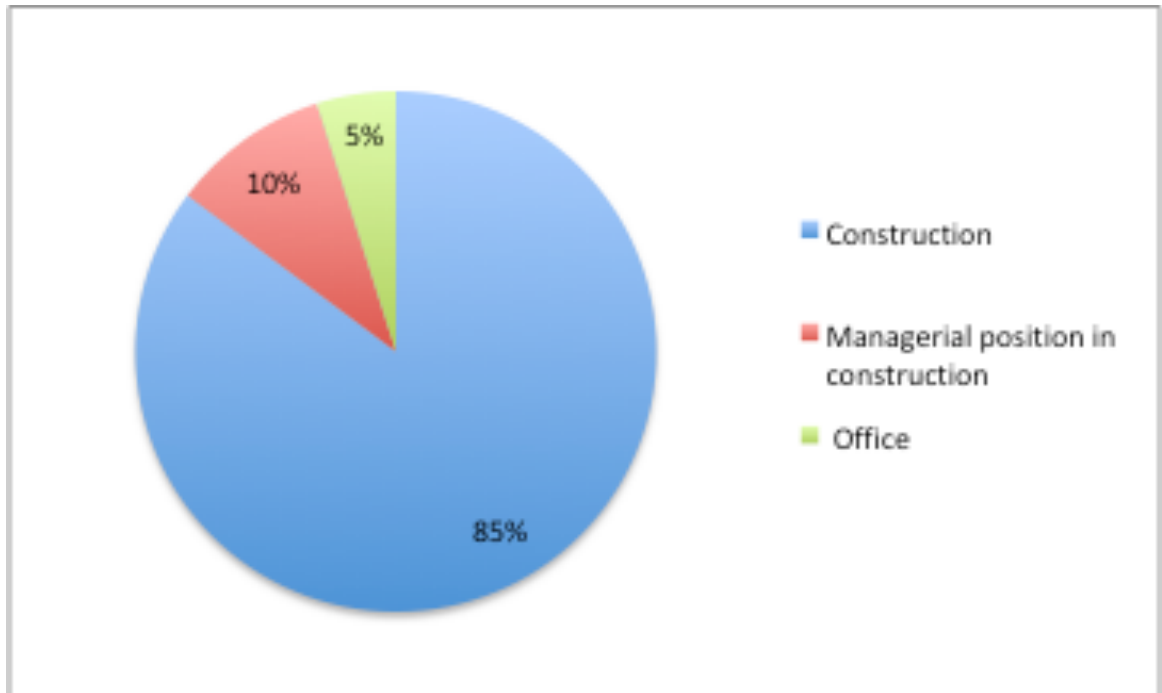
nities this finding should be taken into consideration. Realizing the fact that males are the target group we need to focus on because of the clear divide. Spending the marketing budget in the most efficient fashion is important, so ProMesta will reach the maximum amount of applicant per spent euro.

Age



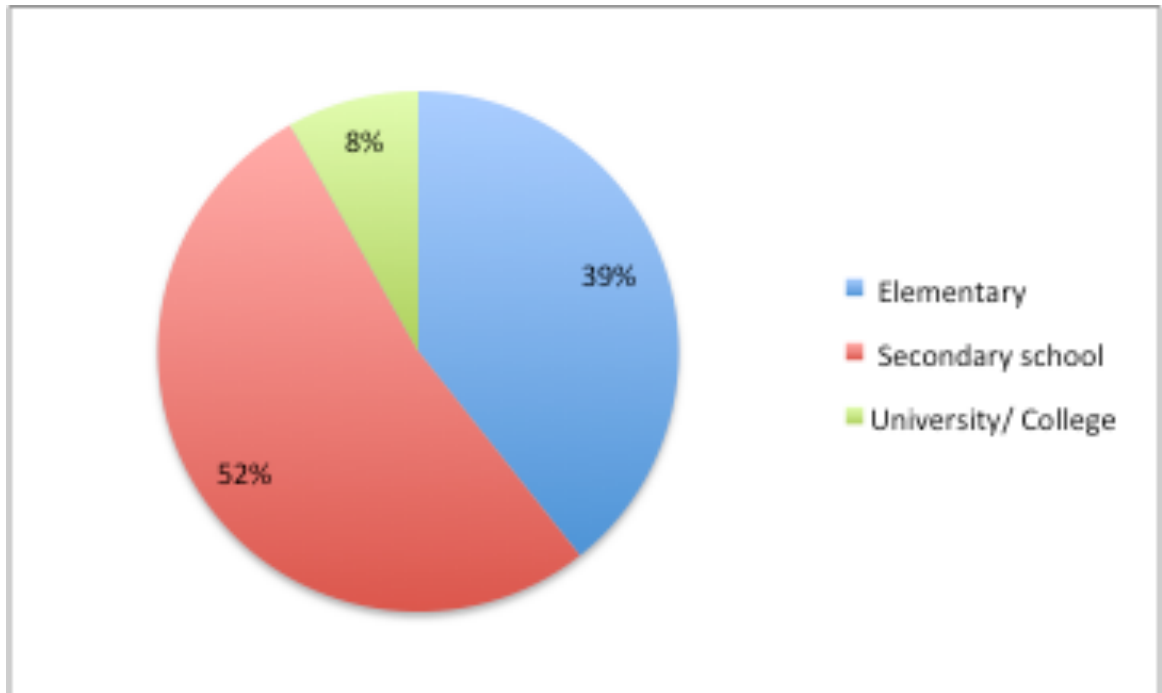
As seen in the chart the age of applicants is heavily tilted toward the latter part of the age scale. This is not surprising, because of the fact, that the main targets are professionals. The more experience, the more applicants see themselves as professionals. The other side of the coin is the young applicants that feel they are professionals because of their diplomas but still, have very little work experience. The information that is interesting is that workers in their professional prime 30-40 years have a low representation. This should be an emphasis in the future. How to attract workers in their prime? Of course, we have to remember that workers in their prime have to most demand in the industry, thus having more opportunities presenting themselves. The data shows that ProMesta needs to figure out how to increase visibility and attractiveness in the eyes of the 20-40-year-old region.

Applied position



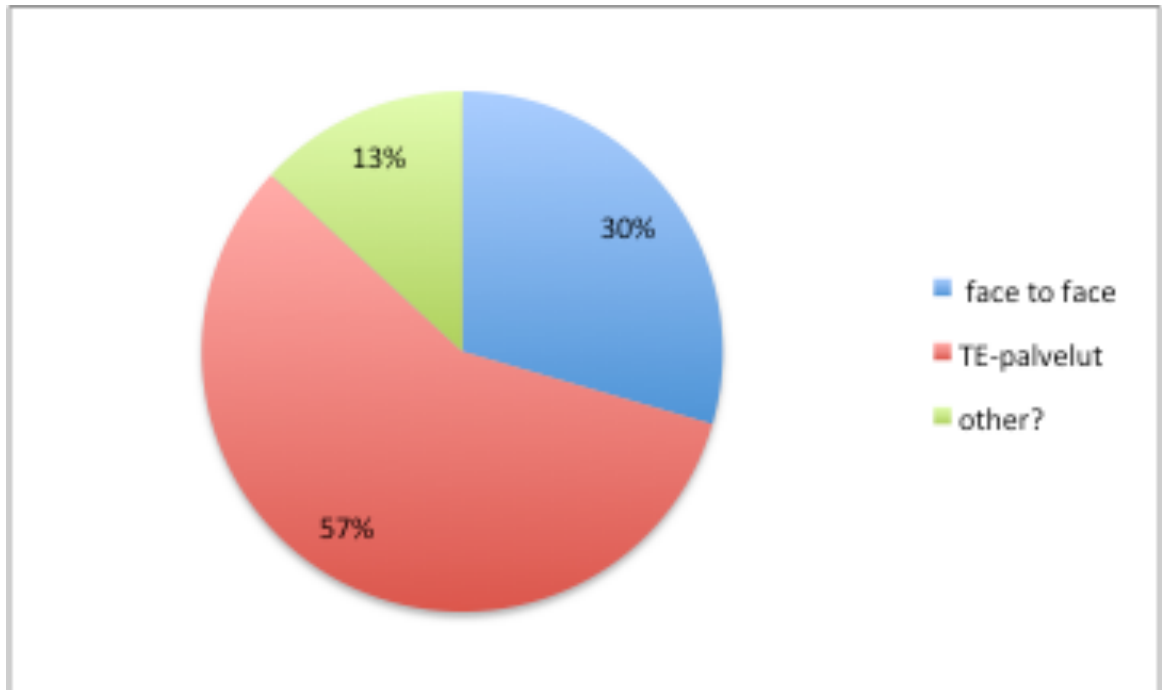
The vast majority of applicants are looking for construction work. This is our main target group and our primary workforce. The number of managerial positions is low, but can be explained with various reasons. The relatively new company does not have the reputation and there is a massive shortage of qualified engineers in the industry. Not many use agencies to find new vacancies. The interviewed office employees were primarily summer job applicants; therefore those results can be ignored to some degree because office workers are relatively seasonal in our companies' recruitment. The aspect that needs more attention is applicants for managerial positions. Managerial positions are the ones that will in return use our services and be the customers we serve by providing workforce. This is why we should attract more applicants to managerial positions and growing our client base simultaneously. The conclusion that can be drawn from this is that we do not reach enough applicants looking for managerial work or that we do not offer them a service they need. More emphasis needs to be given to the fact that we are visible in recruitment channels and on relevant platforms.

Education



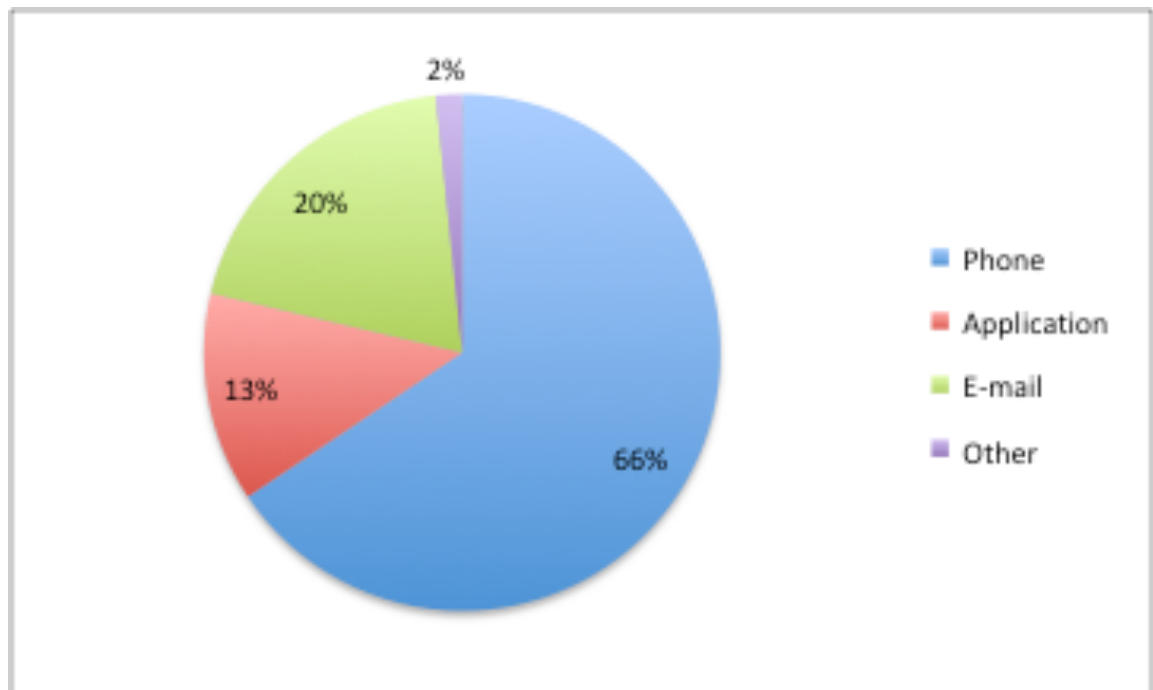
ProMesta is focused on professional construction workers and this can be clearly seen from the pie chart. Basic construction worker's graduate from middle school and enter work life. A university or college degree is only needed when working as a supervisor. The construction profession is learned on the job, and this is why candidates might just have an elementary school education. Many learn the trade simply by working. Adding visibility in secondary schools and adult education centers would target the audience ProMesta employees most likely are.

Where did you find us?



Recruitment channels are important information for ProMesta and they can draw from this questionnaire. The most common channel where ProMesta ads were found was TE-palvelut. This is the recruitment website we are most active in. Clearly, this website is also still in use within the applicants. This questionnaire shows that a third of the applicants heard from us from someone face to face. This is an important observation and is noteworthy. The surprise of the results is that there are no mentions of social media, Facebook, LinkedIn or Twitter in the answers. This does not mean that there is no effect from these channels because Facebook, for example, can generate face-to-face conversations. This chart might have a different result in years to come when more emphasis and effort is put into new recruitment websites and service providers. For now, the majority of the energy has to be aimed towards TE-palvelut. This is where ProMesta gets the most attention and reaches to most applicants.

The preferred method for contacting us?



This highlights the culture of the construction industry. The applying process should be simple. 66% of the answers suggest that this is the most convenient way to operate. The construction industry has a straightforward way of operating, and CV's are not held to the same importance than they might be in another field of business. A person's qualification is not presented with a piece of paper, but rather interviewing them about their prior work experience. Titles in construction can be very misleading and this is why interviewing is extremely important. The lack of CV's is also due to the age structure of our applicants. If a large number of them were 20-25, CV's would be more common. The old generation is to handling inquiries via phone or face to face. ProMesta also tried the most basic approach. For an extended period, every job advertisement had a mention that you could just walk in the office for a cup of coffee. This did not result in a significant rise in the number of applicants. As seen in the chart above, walk-in meetings are a part of the "other" category. Availability is important since the construction industry is lacking sufficient workers and the competition between companies for quality workers is stiff. This is the we try to make the applying process as convenient as possible so that there would be minimal reasons to feel that contacting us is too rigorous. ProMesta must also present themselves as a place worth contacting and in-

quiring about. The aim is to be seen as a company, workers strive to work for. This requires accessibility and a positive reputation in the business.

6 Conclusion

The recruitment process of ProMesta is straightforward and simple. It has the specific characteristics common for the industry. The basic premise of recruitment is kept relatively simple without major guidelines and protocols. The process is well catered to the targeted applicants. The culture of the industry is, to be honest and straightforward. There is also a fast tempo in turn over and recruitment has to keep up and make plenty of quick decisions in order to keep up and keep up. The process cannot be stiff and sluggish and succeed. This is something that ProMesta has been able to execute. The interview process is as lean as it can be in order to gather the needed information. The relaxed atmosphere also helps to differentiate from competitors and makes applicants more honest and trusting. Selection is also quick and decisive and does go hand in hand with demand. Sometimes too much if analyzed in a vacuum, but taking into account the industry, it is considered ordinary. The moment an applicant walks into the office is when ProMesta as the advantage compared to the completion. The latter part of the recruitment process is the strength of ProMesta and is where the atmosphere really sells the company. Once the applicant hears the company's story and ways to operate, they can see that ProMesta can offer unique opportunities. Minimizing bureaucracy and unnecessary guidelines are surprising and seen as a positive. Applicants have preconceived notions considering the companies in the industry and breaking those preconceptions help bring out the positives in the company.

The part of the process that needs to improve is the start. Building visibility and awareness of the company should help the company in attracting the best applicants. To combine with better recognisability ProMesta needs to make sure that the ones that find the ads will give the time and effort to apply for the vacancy. Widespread visibility does not mean anything if the applicant does not feel that contacting us is worth their while. Contacting us is easy, but when taking a closer look, it could be made even more convenient. The application should be made even easier, especially via phone. A large amount if all web browsing is done with a smartphone and companies like ProMesta that want to convey convenience have to really think about how their ads appear on a phone screen. Something that might appear great on a computer screen



might look totally different and behave differently. Behavior online is extremely fast-paced, with short attention spans. This is why everything has to be fast and easy. Filling out an application can be interrupted or come across as too much trouble. This leads to applicants, that otherwise would have been interested, going unnoticed. This might sound too generous and easy, but ProMesta would like to increase the number of applications and thus increasing the number of applicants from whom to choose. Having options in the staffing industry is never a problem.

By having no particular guidelines and protocols in the recruitment process ProMesta will be able to morph their recruitment process with little issues. It is important to see the different possibilities and being willing to adapt and change. The problems usually present themselves when the process is out-dated or uncared for. Especially when communication and advertisement are changing as rapidly as they are now with the Internet and applications that change peoples behavior. Companies that do not recognize the need to stay relevant will realize that they are competing in an unfair playing field. Remembering to think outside the box and investigating new possibilities never hurt. Realizing the present is also important. As the questionnaire shows ProMesta is reaching applicants 50-years and older. The chart also tells us that they need to figure out how to reach applicants that are between 30 and 40 years old. This probably tells us that we need to be present in channels that they use daily, If the channels that we use today are not optimal, then change is needed. Sticking to what you know for too long hurts the process. This is probably true in any industry.

This thesis has given ProMesta better insight into the theory of recruitment and the different styles that can be used. Knowledge about theory will help ProMesta avoid the basic pitfalls and mistakes that can be made in recruitment. Gomez-Meija is keen to point out that motivation should not be overlooked in the selection process. This is useful to acknowledge as a recruiter. Having knowledge of theory can help you make tough decisions in practice. This also gives the company a chance to implement theory into practice and possibly modify it in order to suit the company better. As Yeung said finding a middle ground in the process is important. Relying sole on one way does not lead to optimal results. Incorporating parts of theory will make the recruiters more aware of there own prejudice and help them avoid mistakes.



As a small company, ProMesta cannot be afraid to think outside the box. Being creative and taking chances will benefit them in the long run. Learning from mistakes and analyzing the resources used towards different styles of recruitment is important. Relying on the basic methods will not have to result that is required. The channels used by the masses will not further the visibility and recognisability effectively enough. Like Markkanen said being catchy and original is not always easy. Still being original is even tougher in a crowd. Using the right channels of communication is important in order to reach the right demographic.

6.1 Changes in recruitment methods

Analyzing and assessing a company's recruitment is important and should be done at regular intervals. The importance of correct channels and methods are key. As Korpi, Laine & Soljasalo mentioned the landscape of recruitment is changing due to the Internet and social media. The methods are constantly being evaluated and optimized for more efficient use. The challenge is finding the correct channel for the company.

This thesis and the questionnaire have provided ProMesta with great insight and knowledge of the company's hiring process and has highlighted the positives and brought out the negatives. Identifying the positives has given ProMesta a chance to implement them in a larger scale and has given us data in order to set up the recruitment with great guidelines. ProMesta has been able to generate a recruitment strategy and have a clear view of the basic principals that generate the outcome desired.

The changes that have been implemented are not drastic or groundbreaking, but have made the difficult task of reaching professionals more efficient. The biggest change has been focusing on a handful of methods that have generated good results in the past. The strategy has been formed on the idea that we would rather use a couple of channels extremely effectively than multiple channels with average results. The questionnaire told that the two most effective ways to reach applicants and gain notoriety are via the website TE-palvelut and face to face communication. These results made ProMesta add additional effort in making these channels work as efficiently as possible. There was a clear effort made to modify ProMesta's Internet application form so that it would be optimal for mobile phones and that it would not require too much effort to fill out. The previous application had far more information boxes to fill and mandatory boxes to check. The intention behind simplifying the application was that it would decrease



the number of applicants that gave up on filling the forms because it was complicated. The simplicity would hopefully generate more applications and therefore give us a chance to find the best quality workers. This, of course, adds the workload of the interviewer and relays even more on the expertise and professionalism.

The questionnaire result showed that 30% of the applicants had heard of ProMesta face to face. This means that workers talk and spread the awareness of ProMesta in the process. When trying to attract professionals, the construction sites and the personal circles of workers are great avenues to reach talent. In order to give their workers the extra incentive to promote us to other professionals, ProMesta added a rewarding system to their existing workers. Adding a recruitment bonus to workers has been instrumental in attracting more qualified professionals. Adding a 200-euro bonus has really motivated certain individuals to recommend ProMesta to their peers. The worker will receive the bonus if the acquired worker is hired and works for a minimum of 30 days for ProMesta. The great aspect of using current workers is that they recognize professionals, they see them up close and they attach their names to these newcomers. This creates a level of trust and limits the number of bad hires. The combination of the worker's recommendation and the 30 day trial period, limit the risks and makes it worthwhile for ProMesta. As mentioned this has been very successful and resulted in excellent hires and created a unique detail into the ProMesta brand.

6.2 Impacts of thesis

When starting a thesis the results of the study can lead to findings that may not have seemed relevant to the company's success in the slightest. Details that were not deemed important were viewed more meticulously and created brand new ideas. This thesis introduced a questionnaire into the recruitment process. Some data from the questionnaire was less surprising, for example, the high number of male applicants, but there were unexpected advantages that rose from the questionnaire. The results of the questionnaire led ProMesta to focus extra attention on the most efficient channels. It also gave ProMesta a great tool to incorporate into their standard recruitment process. With the constant monitoring of the efficiency of the channels, the budget for recruitment efforts can be easily monitored. By implementing a tab onto the basic interview sheet, ProMesta has accurate information about the efficiency of their current re-



recruitment channels. This thesis highlighted the advantages of having accurate knowledge of the efficiency of the channels. This really was evident in calculating the cost of recruitment channels. Many companies do not have the data to assist them in determining the efficiency of their investment. Using a simple multiple choice questionnaire gives you the numbers to analyze the amount of money the company has used for one successful recruitment. This helps to determine the best choice for the company. Companies differ from one another and this is why recognizing the correct model is important.

Recruitment is part of the big picture for success. Companies have to acknowledge that successful recruitment is more than just great hires. Recruitment serves as an advertisement for your brand and image. Recruitment campaigns are visible to the public, not just the applicants. Interviews will leave an impression, not only on the one hired, and first impressions are made within seconds of the first encounter. Great recruitment can generate a positive result for longer periods than just the two weeks the ads are visible. With high-quality recruitment, you give the whole company lift, not just with successful hires but also with recognisability and positive reinforcement of the company brand. Recruitment is constantly evolving with new channels and new ways to operate. Companies have to keep an open mind when discussing recruitment methods and try to find the right avenues to enhance their business as a whole.



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7.1 Questionnaire Form

ProMesta recruitment/rekrytointi

Lomakkeen kuvaus

Gender/sukupuoli

☐ Female/Nainen

☐ Male/Mies

Age/Ikä

☐ Under /Alle 20

☐ 20-25

☐ 25-30

☐ 30-35

☐ 35-40

☐ 40-45

☐ 45-50

☐ 50+

Applied job/Haettu työ

- ☐ Construction/Rakennusala
- ☐ Office/Toimisto
- ☐ Managerial position in construction/Rakennusalan toimihenkilö

Education/Koulutus

- ☐ Elementary/Peruskoulu
- ☐ Secondary school/Toisen asteen koulutus
- ☐ University/ College/AMK tai Yliopisto

Where did you find us/Mistä löysit ilmoituksemme?

- ☐ TE-palvelut.fi
- ☐ Facebook
- ☐ Twitter
- ☐ LinkedIn
- ☐ face to face/tutulta
- ☐ other?/muu

,

Mikä hakemuksessa kiinnitti huomiosi? / What drew your interest in our job ad?

Pitkä vastausteksti

Puuttuiko hakemuksesta jotain? / Is something missing?

Pitkä vastausteksti

Sinulle sopivin tapa ottaa yhteyttä meihin / How would you rather contact us?

- ☐ Phone/Puhelin
- ☐ E-mail/Sähköposti
- ☐ Application/Hakemus
- ☐ Other?/Muu

