# Human Resources Internship Report Thesis

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| **Degree programme** | |
| International Business | |
| **Report/thesis title** | **Number of pages and reference pages** |
| Human Resources Internship Report Thesis Internship Company: InterNations GmbH | **68 + 3** |

This is a Bachelor's thesis written as a report-based paper or diary-based thesis. It describes my internship activities and key reflections on what I learned during a three-month internship (18 February 2019 – 17 May 2019) at InterNations GmbH in Munich, Germany. I worked at InterNations GmbH as a Human Resources intern. My responsibilities ranged from attracting candidates to onboarding/off-boarding interns. Apart from interns' recruitment and selection, I helped with preparation of on-site workshops, and participated in interview round for full-time candidates.

This paper consists of four chapters. In the introduction chapter, I familiarize readers with the diary-based thesis concept, explain why I chose this type of thesis and introduce the company and internship descriptions. The second chapter is theory on recruitment and selection. In this section, I explain the importance of recruitment, selection and induction theories before going into the details of recruitment and selection methods. To attract right candidates to apply, the company needs to have suitable methods for recruitment and selection. Then key activities will be discussed on a weekly basis through 13 weeks of internship in chapter three. Based on internship task report, I give my reflections upon my tasks and give suggestions for development. I conclude my personal insights of my learning and suggestions for company improvement in the last chapter.

During my internship, I learnt about recruitment and selection procedures, as well as onboarding and off-boarding employees. I had a chance to take part in interview rounds and coordinate interviews with candidates. InterNations has been doing recruitment procedures transparently and smoothly. They apply suitable recruitment and selection methods for the company. An improvement would be proper induction plan for new employees, with a view to better integrating them into company's culture.

| Keywords |
|---|
| Recruitment, Selection, Hiring, Interns, Internship |

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# 1 Introduction

In this chapter, thesis objectives and company introduction will be discussed to give readers an understanding of diary-based thesis concept, reasons why I chose to write my thesis with this type. Moreover, the company introduction and internship description will be demonstrated.

## 1.1 Thesis Objectives

The paper is written as a diary-based thesis, reflecting on my three-month internship at InterNations GmbH in Munich, Germany. It describes my weekly tasks and responsibilities. My tasks mainly included recruitment and selection for interns to make sure InterNations have a smooth circulation of interns every half a year. Based on given task report, I give my personal feedback and suggest changes to improve InterNations' recruitment and selection process.

Diary-based thesis is a report to display progress of a task. It solely reports activities to readers from an unbiased viewpoint. Based on the report of tasks, the writer analyses key points and suggests improvements.

I chose diary-based thesis because it gives me freedom to speak out personal thoughts and feedback, while other traditional research methods tend to seek for facts and focus more on theories. Diary based thesis requires me to observe and analyse to improve every activity during my internship. It also allows me to concentrate on fulfilling internship tasks at work, without worrying to carry out interviews and analyse data. Thanks to diary-based thesis type, I could finish my internship with flying colours and learnt to the full.

The thesis includes four chapters as followed:
- Introduction: this chapter includes introduction of diary-based thesis, the company, and internship tasks
- Recruitment and Selection Theory: in this theory chapter, definitions of recruitment and selection will be explained. After understanding the concepts and the importance of theory from business viewpoint, recruitment and selection methods are analyzed
- Reflections and Developments Through Diary: Key activities will be discussed on weekly basis. Then, based on internship tasks, I give my reflections upon my tasks and give suggestions for development.
- Conclusion: through 13-week report, I summarize my personal developments and developments for InterNations.

## 1.2 Company Introduction

InterNations is the biggest community founded in 2007 by Malte Zeeck, Philipp von Plato, and Christian Leifeld for expats all around the world to connect and exchange information. InterNations spreads its community in 420 countries with 3,2 million members. People moving to foreign countries to live, study or work certainly face difficulties in getting accustomed to new culture, new life and new environment. To this end, InterNations was founded to become a trusted platform where people from all walks of life can meet up and share experiences, thus making lives in foreign countries much easier.

> As the largest international community for people who live and work abroad, InterNations offers global networking opportunities, local events and expat-relevant information. At around 3,500 monthly events and activities, expats get to meet fellow internationals in their city, while forums and destination guides provide valuable tips and information. (InterNations 2018.)

In 2016, InterNations launched a mobile app for members to keep in touch and register for upcoming events. At the end of the year 2016, InterNations employed 110 employees with 2,4 million registered members, along with 1 500 000 attendees at official events and activities. (InterNations 2018.) Expats from different communities on the flatform can connect with one another in events and share expat-related information.

InterNations has a flat hierarchy where managers and interns sit in the same room, which makes communication run smoothly and efficiently. The company has a clear organizational structure and divide responsibilities among employees. Therefore, I, as a HR intern, have specific tasks and particular expectations I need to pursue.

There are two offices: one in Munich, Germany and the other in Porto, Portugal. InterNations sets their head quarter in Munich, Germany. Munich office includes technical department, HR, Content and Communications, and Business Solutions department. In Porto office, staff deals with relocation services for expats.

Apart from full time workers in charge of manager positions, the company operates vastly on interns. InterNations offers a myriad of internship positions for students to experience hands-on work and fulfil work placement credits from their home university. This on one hand helps students gain hands-on experiences at an actual work place and at the same

time brings new cultures and nationalities for the company because InterNations takes pride in their vast diversity of nationalities in the company.

Internships are offered only for students who are required to complete mandatory internships within their curriculum for at least six months. Internations recruits interns in various departments such as Social Media, Public Relations, Business Solutions (Sales), Online Marketing and Community Support. Department description and number of interns in specific teams will be explained in-depth in the chapter three (Reflecting and Developing Work Through Diary Process). Interns play a crucial part in company success because they actually share tasks with full-time employees and take ownership of work quality. For example, Business Solutions (Sales) interns are responsible for contacting enterprises and persuading them into InterNations's customers. Moreover, Public Relations interns write the company's press releases and contact the press. Therefore, interns act as the company contact point with customers. Interns are the company's ambassadors who represent and sell the company.

Interns at InterNations get financial compensation monthly of 400 EUROS. It is believed that unpaid internships are "unbeneficial" and "exploitative" because students devote time and energy into the work without being compensated with anything (NACE 2016). Moreover, unpaid internships may send out misleading message that interns' jobs are not as important as others, thus not worth being rewarded (Workable 2017).

### 1.3 Internship Description

I worked at InterNations as a Human Resources intern for three months (18 February 2019 – 17 May 2019). Candidates applying for this Human Resources internship or any internship at InterNations should fulfil the following requirements:
- Are Bachelor's or master's students who are enrolled during the entire internship period
- Have to complete mandatory internships
- Have experience with MS-Office and Internet applications
- Are fascinate to learn Web 2.0 applications
- Have good social skills and reliability
- Possess good organization and calm traits

(InterNations 2018.)

Moreover, Human Resources intern specifically need to:
- sustain ongoing correspondence with applicants through all stages of the recruitment process

- schedule and coordinate interviews and calls
- create overviews of candidates for the purpose of recruitment planning
- maintain job portals for the purpose of intern recruiting
- post recruitment advertisements on various portals
- stay in continual contact with partners and universities
- prepare onboarding plans for new team members
- prepare off-boarding documents for leaving interns

(InterNations 2018.)

# 2  Recruitment, Selection and Induction

Recruitment and selection process flow will be presented in this chapter. Gómez-Mejía, Balkin & Cardi (2012, 200) suggested "getting and keeping the best not only makes sense in terms of treatment of employees as customers of the management process, but it also makes economic sense". Unmotivated, unqualified employees will lead to poor work performance, thus affecting the whole organization in the long term. That is to say, wise recruitment and selection decisions are of great necessities. (Gómez-Mejía, Balkin & Cardi, 2012, 200.)

Not only recruitment and selection are crucial for the company success, but induction phase also plays an essential role in associating new employees with new workplace. In induction, or so called socialization, newbies are shown where things are placed, who to ask when needed, how everything is processed in the company, so as to help them work more efficiently later on. Another purpose of induction is that new employees have a chance to learn more about companies' mission, vision, health and safety, and general matters. In the induction phase, companies and new hires have an opportunity to sit down exchanging expectations from both sides, for instance what companies expect them to do and what expectations new employees cherish to pursue while working at the firm. (Derek, Laura, Stephen & Carol 2011, 216.) Leaving new hires uncared after selection will result in them being discouraged and leaving the company. Socialization plays a necessary role in embracing company's culture in new comers and reducing "the risk of change" (Bernard & Stanley 2013, 273.)

## 2.1  Recruitment

Recruitment acts as a communicational bridge between companies and people. It involves finding consensus and generating trust and relationship between one another, which eventually results to selection. (Belton 2014, 12.)

The following list is an overview of included subchapters under recruitment:
- Definition of Recruitment: here I break down recruitment definition
- Recruitment Methods: this section will only include popular methods that work for InterNations specifically such as internal recruiting, employees' referrals, online recruitment and recruiting through colleges and internships
- Job posting channels: job posting channels will cover only social media channels that InterNations heavily relies on when posting job ads. Other job posting chan-

nels or methods like newspapers advertisements, customers and agency recruitment are still effectively working for different companies.

### 2.1.1 Definition of Recruitment

Recruitment is defined as a process in which companies create job vacancies for specific positions in order to select appropriate candidates. This includes establishing job posts on different websites and appealing candidates who are qualified and suitable to apply for the positions. (Gómez-Mejía, Balkin & Cardi 2012, 194.)

### 2.1.2 Recruitment Methods

Recruitment methods are of great importance to companies because suitable recruitment methods result in right applicants and vice versa.

The following are methods to help recruitment successful. Companies often use a combination of different methods, rather than relying on one. This list of methods includes internal recruiting, employees' referrals, college/internship recruitment, and online recruitment. Under each category, definition, advantages and disadvantages of the method are explained thoroughly.

**Internal Recruiting**

Internal recruiting means companies hire current employees from one department for another. With internal recruiting, companies have a chance to save a large amount of money in recruitment agencies and job advertisements. A job vacancy can be mentioned in staff channel or in company newsletter. (Torrington, Hall, Taylor & Atkinson 2008, 49.) Moreover, organizations give their employees opportunities to climb up the ladder, thus stimulating their passion for better work performance and professional career development. (Gómez-Mejía, Balkin & Cardi 2012, 202; Torrington, Hall, Taylor & Atkinson 2008, 50.)

> Giving preference to internal recruits, particularly for promotions, has the great advantage of providing existing employees with an incentive to work hard, demonstrate their commitment and stay with the organisation when they might otherwise consider looking for alternative employment. The practice sends a strong signal from management that existing employees are valued and that attractive career development opportunities are available to them. Failing to recruit internally may thus serve to put off good candidates with potential from applying for the more junior positions in an organization." (Torrington, Hall, Taylor & Atkinson 2011, 161.)

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Another advantage is that existing employees already have ground knowledge of company culture and policies, thus taking much less time to adapt to new working environment and less effort in induction (SHRM 2008; Dessler 2017, 173; Torrington, Hall, Taylor & Atkinson 2008, 49). For vacant positions that are hard to recruit, internal recruiting appears to be advantageous because companies can retain talents. Study by CIPD 2017 proved that internal recruitment was a good choice in the event that vacant positions lack appropriate applicants. SHRM also indicated that higher-level jobs will be filled easier with promotion (SHRM 2008).

Then again, this kind of recruiting automatically opens up a new position which needs filling in. Moreover, limited number of people applying for the positions may cause trouble. Even though good enough people are employed, best fit candidates are not taken into consideration. (Torrington, Hall, Taylor & Atkinson 2011, 162; Beardwell & Claydon 2007, 196; Torrington, Hall, Taylor & Atkinson 2008, 50.) What's more, companies lose its chance of adopting new ideas and creativity which only benefits from new comers rather than existing employees (SHRM 2008).

Recruiting internally is an effective and efficient way that InterNations has been applying. In order to keep employees within the company, InterNations offers them positions in different departments so that they have a sense of challenge and personal development.

**Employees' Referrals**

Employees' referrals mean that companies recruit new people through recommendation of current employees. It was studied that people hired via employees' referrals tend to work at the company for longer period of time and express better loyalty than those hired by different methods. Referrals from current employees work so well because they already have a sense of how it is like to work at certain organization. Therefore, people they refer to will most likely share similar characteristics that organizations are looking for, thus staying longer at the job. (Gómez-Mejía, Balkin & Cardi 2012, 202.)

Conversely, there are certain downsides towards this kind of recruitment. Recruiting new employees through word-of-mouth seems to create discrimination and lack of diversity of workplace (SHRM 2008).

**Recruiting through colleges/internships**

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Companies have a chance of recruiting suitable, potential employees from college students. Students are the ones constantly seeking for job opportunities. Therefore, it is time saving and wise to turn to schools for future hires. (Gómez-Mejía, Balkin & Cardi 2012, 204.)

Another way to enter a large pool of job seekers is via career fairs at colleges and universities. Making companies available and open for new talents suggests students to apply for the company. Besides, recruiters can even scan CVs on the spot to look for potentials and attract more people by giving all benefits of working at the organization (Pritchard 2006, 60.)

Furthermore, offering internships to students also counts as a way of filling vacant positions. Training interns will probably benefits companies in the long run since after graduation, they have a higher chance of coming back to internship companies to work full-time. (Pollitt 2007, 8.) By this, companies have got a trial period of interns' work performance before offering permanent job offer. (SHRM 2008).

**Online Recruitment**

Online Recruitment means that companies recruit via online channels. Corporates can post job vacancies economically on different websites such as Monster, LinkedIn, Top Jobs, Net Jobs, etc. and on social media in order to find suitable candidates with little money spent. Online recruitment has been recently utilized for cost-free effective recruitment method. (Torrignton, Hall,Taylor & Atkinson 2011, 168; Pilbeam & Corbridge 2006, 154.) Employers can view applicants' job application details online and CV can be attached to the application email. Thus the application process is converted electronically. (Pilbeam & Corbridge 2006, 154; Pilbeam & Corbridge 2010, 168.)

Recruiting via social media, companies have an upper hand on checking candidates' backgrounds online, thus giving a pre-idea of their personalities and living styles. In this sense, organizations shorten their recruitment process. (Forbes 2018.)

### 2.1.3 Recruitment Channels on Social Media

Posting job vacancies on social media means building a social relationship with your potential candidates by engaging them with topics the companies are discussing about. Once they get connected with your employer brand, they will turn into your applicants. (Belton 2014, 12.)

Print and radio advertisements could be used for recruiting. However, as technology advances and most candidates are available on social media. Also, speaking from InterNations's viewpoint, candidates engage better to job ads on social media. Therefore, job advertisements on social media, career sites work more effectively. Social media include Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn and any other kinds of media that companies are active on. Walters (2012, 4) showed that employers and job seekers has come to consensus on LinkedIn as a professional site to look for jobs and research about companies and applicants meanwhile Twitter and Facebook serve a more personal purpose.

Companies use their company website as a career portal, apart from other social media channels (Gómez-Mejía, Balkin & Cardi 2012, 203). The following table (Table 1) explains reasons for candidates to check companies' social media when applying for a job. Though the majority of job seekers look for company culture and information on their social media, there are a rising number of job seekers who visit companies' social media to look for career opportunities (54.1%). (Table 1)

Table 1. Reasons for checking companies' social media when applying for a job (Walters, 2012, 4)



| Job seekers | |
|---|---|
| Information on the organisation | 75.9% |
| Insight into company culture | 66.9% |
| Insight into how the business wants itself to be perceived | 49.9% |
| Career opportunities | 54.1% |
| Profiles of existing employees | 50.3% |

Although Table 1 indicates that a large percentage of candidates turn into applicants via social media, table 2 below which is a survey about effective attraction methods carried out by CIPD in 2017 demonstrates that job advertising on companies' websites is more efficient. CIPD 2017 presented that job advertising on companies' own website accounts for nearly three fourths of all respondents (74%), followed by professional networking sites such as LinkedIn (60%) in all sectors. It turned out to be quite of a surprise that even though social media has been the hub where job seekers turn to when looking for jobs, social networking sites like Facebook held not even nearly to half of all respondents (40%). (Table 2)

Table 2. Effective attraction methods, by sector (% by respondents) (CIPD 2017)

| | All respondents | Manufacturing and production | Private sector services | Not-for-profit | Public services |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Own corporate website | 74 | 59 | 73 | 83 | 82 |
| Professional networking sites, for example LinkedIn | 60 | 55 | 73 | 40 | 50 |
| Commercial job boards | 58 | 51 | 67 | 53 | 46 |
| Recruitment consultants | 52 | 68 | 59 | 44 | 30 |
| Social networking sites, for example Facebook | 40 | 31 | 43 | 45 | 38 |
| Apprenticeships | 29 | 35 | 27 | 23 | 34 |
| Specialist journals/trade press | 28 | 22 | 20 | 38 | 45 |
| Links with schools/colleges/universities | 28 | 27 | 30 | 27 | 25 |
| Encourage speculative applications/word of mouth | 27 | 31 | 31 | 29 | 16 |
| Professional referral schemes | 26 | 24 | 36 | 14 | 13 |
| Local newspaper, online or in print | 21 | 17 | 12 | 34 | 39 |
| Search consultants | 20 | 20 | 20 | 17 | 22 |
| Jobcentre Plus | 15 | 15 | 11 | 22 | 22 |
| Secondments | 14 | 8 | 14 | 15 | 19 |
| National newspaper, online or in print | 12 | 2 | 4 | 25 | 32 |
| Alumni (previous employment) | 10 | 8 | 13 | 10 | 6 |
| Links with local organisations making redundancies | 8 | 13 | 9 | 8 | 3 |
| Local Employment Partnership (LEP) | 3 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 4 |
| Other | 5 | 4 | 4 | 7 | 5 |
| Base | 820 | 143 | 396 | 106 | 175 |

Job advertisements should include company name and brief introduction, job title and main responsibilities, required competencies, salary, benefits, application method, opportunities and possible challenges and statement of essential matters like opportunity equality. (Foot & Hook 2011, 176).

Company name and swift introduction of what the company is and what kind of benefits it can bring as an employer play an important role since people need to know which organization they are applying for. Good employer branding can become a strong selling factor. (Foot & Hook 2011, 176.)

Job title and main responsibilities are necessary to mention in job advertisements so that candidates have a brief idea of what the job involves. (Foot & Hook 2011, 176.)

Companies need to include required competencies because they act as a pre-selection phase. Based on competencies the job requests, candidates can determine whether they are a good fit for the position or not. Thus, mentioning skill requirement in good detail

benefits hiring process tremendously in term of cost efficiency and time management. (Foot & Hook 2011, 177.)

Opportunities and challenges can be included to give candidates a head-up of what the position requires. For instance, the job involves traveling to different regions, which may become a hindrance for some people. In other cases, the job appears to be more attractive if the job brings opportunity to achieve something or a challenge to overcome. (Foot & Hook 2011, 177.)

Application method is especially emphasized so that people know who and how to sign up for the position. Different organizations have distinct ways for job application such as contacting specific person, sending email with application form and CV, and showing up for a certain interview event. (Foot & Hook 2011, 178.)

In job advertisements, it is of great importance to underline how beneficial to work at particular companies and what core value the company acts on. "Recruitment is your opportunity to highlight what your organization has to offer. What is your brand as an employer? Has your company been recognized for being a positive place in which to work?". (Gómez-Mejía, Balkin & Cardi 2012, 202.)

Research by Insight series revealed that job advertising quality had a major influence on whether job seekers would apply for the role or not (Insight series 2012). The research findings are displayed in Table 3 below. Almost all respondents stated that job description (99%) was the most influencing factor while viewing job advertisements, followed by salary/benefits and company description (98% and 92% consecutively). (Table 3.)

Table 3. "Factors influencing job seekers when viewing job adverts" (Walters 2012, 3)

**Factors influencing job seekers when viewing job adverts**

|  | Strong Influence | Some Influence |
|---|---|---|
| Description of job | 86% | 13% |
| Salary and benefits | 69% | 29% |
| Description of company | 44% | 48% |
| Prior knowledge of employer and its brand | 41% | 43% |
| That employer is named in advert | 41% | 42% |
| Quality of grammar/language | 33% | 47% |
| Publication/website where advert appears | 12% | 45% |
| Presentation of advert (spacing, logos etc) | 6% | 38% |

### 2.2 Selection

After posting job vacancies and attracting applicants, suitable selection methods cannot be left out. Based on certain nature of the jobs, companies decide appropriate selection methods. This chapter includes definition of selection, application forms, application screening, selection methods and job offer. Details of each section will be presented in-depth under each category.

There are many steps calculated in selection process. When applications land in talent pool, shortlisting or application screening begins. Different methods of shortlisting will be presented below. Only mostly used shortlisting methods are explained as they work better at InterNations. Then, there comes job offer section. After evaluation tests and a couple of interview rounds, InterNations are ready to make final offer to suitable candidates.

#### 2.2.1 Definition of Selection

Selection is a procedure in which employers decide to employ or not employ any applicants. This decision can be made based on candidates' test result, interview performance and based on analysing their characteristics against job requirement. This decision can be made based on candidates' test result, interview performance and based on analysing their characteristics against job requirement. (Gómez-Mejía, Balkin & Cardi 2012, 194.)

#### 2.2.2 Application Forms

Companies also use application forms as a tool for candidate assessment. Application forms scan candidates' applications to elect applicants with suitable work experiences, background, and education. They ensure that applicants pass the minimum job requirements. (Gómez-Mejía, Balkin & Cardi 2012, 209.)

Depending on the length and difficulty of application forms companies give out determines the number of application returns. In the markets where labour is in shortage, too lengthy or difficult application forms will deter applicants to fill in their submission. (Pilbeam & Corbridge 2006, 177.)

Application forms should be well-structured and carefully designed so that they avoid sensitive issues. For instance, application forms are designed to be age neutral and mention issues such as data protection, proper assistance for disadvantaged people, equality and diversity management and some other legal matters. (Foot & Hook 2011, 182.)

InterNations collect applications via application forms online which are concise and focused. Application forms consists of personal information such as name, email address and phone number. Candidates are able to attach CVs and relevant documents like reference letters and cover letters in the application forms. Online applications land on InterNations's talent pool which will be presented extensively in the chapter Reflecting and Developing Work Through Diary Process.

### 2.2.3 Shortlisting

Once application forms land in companies' talent pools, companies start screening or shortlisting applications. Shortlisting appears to be challenging in the event of a large pool of applicants or too small number of applicants. There are three approaches to shortlist a pile of applications.

The first way requires HR managers to sort out applications themselves and pick out a few best candidates, then discuss with one another to come to agreement. They need to decide on which criteria more important than others, then score applicants' CV and application forms based on those criteria. (Torrington, Hall, Taylor & Atkinson 2011, 174.)

The second approach refers to hiring a scoring system "as advocated by Roberts (1997) and Wood and Payne (1998)" (Torrington, Hall, Taylor & Atkinson 2011, 174).

The third one suggests making use of software system to shortlist candidates. When people apply online, companies' systems will automatically scan key words in their application forms. This kind of approach turns to be of great significance in the event that application forms contain multiple choice questions instead of open ended ones, where criteria are precisely defined. (Torrington, Hall, Taylor & Atkinson 2011, 174.)

### 2.2.4 Shortlisting Methods

Different types of tests are as well applied to evaluate candidates, such as cognitive ability test, physical tests, personality tests, honesty tests and so forth. Under each method, definition and purposes of the method will be discussed. The list below will not present every selection method but only focuses on the ones which work for InterNations. Of course companies use various tests to evaluate suitability of candidates such as personality tests, honest tests, drug tests and so on. However, attainment tests and ability tests are efficiently used along with interviews at InterNations.

**Cognitive ability tests**

Cognitive ability tests are the tests that aim at determining one's capability on particular field based on job requirements. These tests' purpose is to assess candidates based on job-specific tasks. For instance, people applying for IT position have to pass a math test. These tests aim at testing mental capabilities of candidates and evaluating how well candidates perform specific job requirements. (Gómez-Mejía, Balkin & Cardi 2012, 209.)

**Attainment tests**

Attainment tests are the tests to check what candidates already have knowledge on. To illustrate, in some companies, interviewers ask their applicants to prepare a PowerPoint presentation and present in the interview. (Torrington, Hall, Taylor & Atkinson 2011, 191.)

*Interviews*

As far as it is concerned, interviews are the most common tool to assess applicants. There are different types of interviews like individual interviews, panel interviews and group interviews. The following individual interview is called structured interview. Structured interviews are concentrated on job requirements and job analysis so that interviewers assess job abilities of candidates instead of picking up on personal questions. (Gómez-Mejía, Balkin & Cardi 2012, 211.)

A structured interview which is directly built on job study should be carried out in order to determine best suitable candidates. In structured interview, three types of questions are typically applied:
- "Situational questions": candidates must answer to specific work related situations given by interviewers (Gómez-Mejía, Balkin & Cardi 2012, 213).
- :Job knowledge questions": determine whether candidates have a ground knowhow of the job (Gómez-Mejía, Balkin & Cardi 2012, 213).
- "Worker requirements questions": evaluate whether candidates are willing enough to fulfil tasks under general job environments. (Gómez-Mejía, Balkin & Cardi, 213).

Structured interview helps interviewers to follow a consistent track, thus assessing candidates more accurately (Gómez-Mejía, Balkin & Cardi, 213). Sometimes interview questions range from structured to unstructured ones which allow candidates to express their minds freely and interviewers hold little control. The combination between these two kinds of questions should balance well so that testers take control over the interview questions while give interviewees certain freedom to speak their minds (Bratton & Gold 2007, 258). There are some topics which interviewers should not mention in the interview such as children related questions, age, mental or physical incapability, height/weight, maiden

names, citizenship, criminal records, smoking, and HIV positive. (Gómez-Mejía, Balkin & Cardi, 213).

The number of interview stages applicants think is appropriate for selection is presented in the figure below. According to Robert Walters' research survey, the majority of job seekers expect companies to implement ideally two interviews (64%). More than one fourth of all respondents stated three interview rounds were reasonable before a job offer (28%). (Figure 1)



■ 3%    One
■ 64%   Two
■ 28%   Three
■ 4%    Four
■ 1%    Five or more
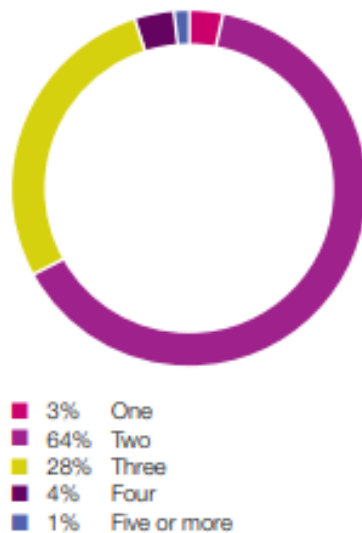
Figure 1. Number of interview stages job seekers think is reasonable for an employer to undertake (Robert 2012)

Having said that, number of interview rounds also depend on how much information and how well candidates exchange their experiences with recruiters. Table 4 below presents factors that influences job interviews. From job seekers' viewpoints, receiving enough information about the role plays a tremendously important role in the interview (81%) while the most imperative factor according to employers is the opportunity to explain experience properly (86%). (Table 4)

Table 4. Factors influencing in job interviews (by % of respondents) (Robert 2012)

| | Job seekers | | Employers | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Strong Influence | Some Influence | Strong Influence | Some Influence |
| Receiving/providing enough information about role | 81% | 18% | 79% | 19% |
| The opportunity to ask questions | 61% | 34% | 79% | 18% |
| The opportunity to explain experience properly | 57% | 36% | 86% | 13% |
| Welcome experience on arrival | 50% | 45% | 50% | 44% |
| Perception of employer brand | 48% | 44% | 52% | 40% |
| Appropriate setting for interview | 36% | 49% | 44% | 49% |

Interviews can be carried out in form of one-on-one, panel or in groups. In the event of one-on-one interviews, one interviewee will be questioned by one interviewer. This type of interviews appears to be less stressful for candidates. However, it raises the controversy whether the decision given by one interviewer is valid and unbiased enough. Therefore, companies adopt panel interviews where one interviewee is interviewed by several members of recruitment team. In this sense, the decision made by a collective of people rather than one person in charge; however, it can be an oppressive factor from candidate's viewpoint. (Pilbeam & Corbridge 2006, 181.) Panel interviews are also applied at InterNations to gain more insights of interviewers over candidates. More often, two hiring managers interview candidates and decide together.

More often, to save time and maximize the chance of choosing best fit candidate, companies apply group interviews in which contestants together perform a task and based on it employers evaluate their ability in teamwork, leadership, confidence, sociability and competitiveness. Group interviews are suitably used in situation that companies have a large number of applicants but such short period of time to select people. Interviewees express their anxiety, stress over this type of interview since they have to on one hand show their worth to employers and at the same time compete with fellow applicants, which more or less affect their performance in the interview. (Pilbeam & Corbridge 2006, 181.)

**Telephone interviewing**

Telephone interviewing are often used by companies in the occasion they need to speed up the selection process and interviewing in person takes too much time and geographically inconvenient. (Torrington, Hall, Taylor & Atkinson 2011, 185). Phone interviewing should be well structured and fairly monitored like face-to-face interview. It is supposed to evaluate candidates, not simply a chat on the phone. (Foot & Hook 2011, 199.) More of-

ten, this appears to be the phase before interview-in-person. From candidates' point of view, phone interviewing seems intimidating since they do not have experiences with those. (Torrington, Hall, Taylor & Atkinson 2011, 185.) Recruiters ask about applicants' background, experiences, and job qualifications to measure whether they are a right fit for the job or not.

Telephone interviewing is not applied at InterNations. However, on the occasion of poor internet connection or Skype disconnection, interviews are conducted by phone.

**Group methods**

Group methods cannot be left out when considering selection methods. Studies indicate that group methods are effective to measure one's ability to get along with others, communicate well, make an impact on others' work, analyse things in a logical way, determine their roles in group work, and apply their past experiences in solving new issues. While those tests mentioned above assess a candidate individually, group tests can assess them collectively. Based on situation given out for the group, each group has different scenarios and solve problems in different ways. Each aspirant needs to expose themselves in a way that can best express their abilities as well as work in harmony with others. (Torrington, Hall, Taylor & Atkinson 2011, 193.)

**Recommendation letters**

Letters of recommendation are considered to be a tool of selection. They are written by previous employers. Companies often use recommendation letters to look back on candidates' former employment record as a proof to predict future success. Recommendation letters tends to speak out on behalf of applicants who they are, what personalities they possess and how their work performance in previous experience. They act as a plus point in candidates' applications, which helps employers to select applicants easier. (Gómez-Mejía, Balkin & Cardi 2012, 209.)

**Work sampling/portfolios**

Work samples or work portfolios are pieces of work which represent candidates' capabilities. Work sampling or portfolios can be accepted as a selection tool, especially for job positions in art and photography. Employers expect interviewees hand over their portfolios during interviews. It goes without saying that people polish their portfolios with a view to having higher chance of getting hired. (Torrington, Hall, Taylor & Atkinson 2011, 195.) For

example, when InterNations hires for Public Relations position, hiring managers want to look at candidates' writing samples to evaluate written communication skills.

**Assessment centres**

Assessment centres are one of selection methods in which they assess aspirants' abilities collectively combing different selection methods.  Companies can conduct assessment centres in-house or outsource them. All the recruitment and selection methods listed above can be implemented at assessment centres. Based on job requirements and a collection of competencies listed, assessment centres evaluate potential job seekers' capabilities. Companies establish a matrix as to display the connection between required appropriateness and practical activities. Assessors are necessary for such assessment centres to work sufficiently. They evaluate contestants closely and then give a consensus on singular applicant's scores from which chosen candidates are picked. (Torrington, Hall, Taylor & Atkinson 2011, 194.) In order for this method to work out, applicant specification should be outlined clearly and selection techniques match well with job competencies and assessment process. (Rashmi 2010, 147.)

### 2.2.5    Most Popular Selection Methods

CIPD, 2017 carried out two surveys with results displayed below. Figure 2 below shows that competency-based interviews have been used the most to select candidates with the percentage of 78%. Application form/CV based interviews come second in the list with 74%. (Figure 2) Research showed that the result in 2017 shared similar pattern with previous years' results with two types of interviews took the majority of percentages, followed by specific skill tests and general ability tests. (Table 5) Accounting for more than 50% is specific skill tests (53%). In 2017, study showed that tools to enable self-selection, gamification, and analytical algorithms to match people to roles were not popular as selection methods, contributing 6% all together. (Figure 2 & Table 5)
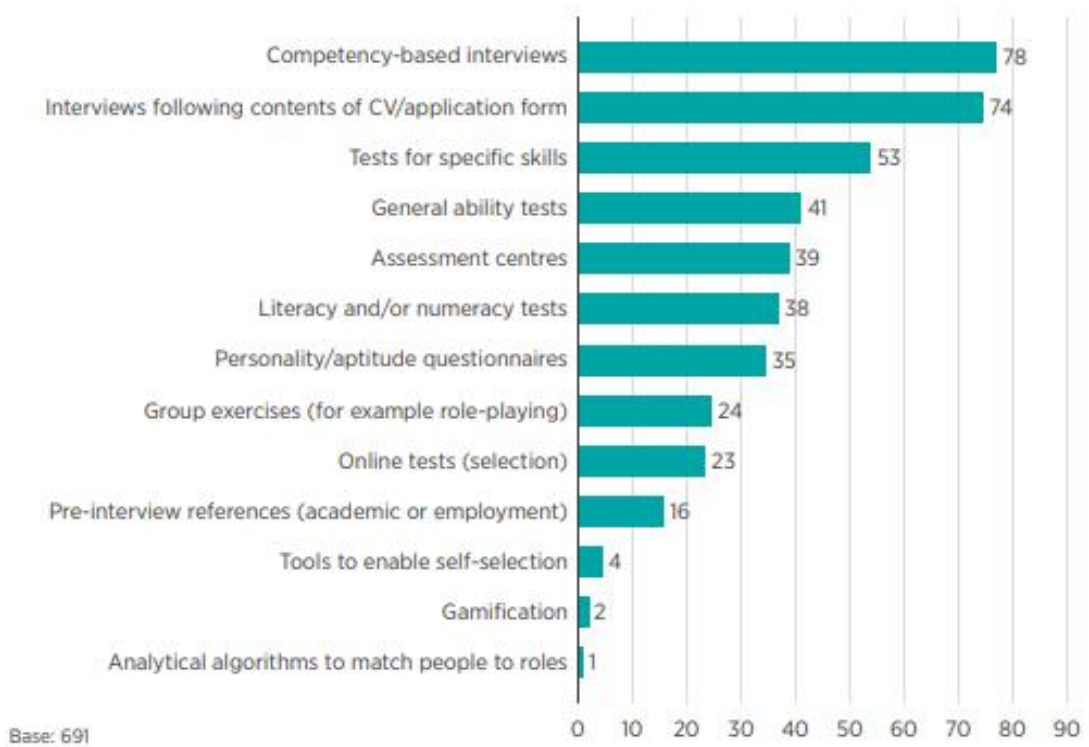
Figure 2. Methods used to select applicants (%) (CIPD 2017)

Table 5. Selection method, by survey year (% by respondents) (CIPD 2017)

| | 2017 survey | 2015 survey | 2013 survey | 2011 survey* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Competency-based interviews | 78 | 77 | 82 | 70 |
| Interviews following contents of CV/application form | 74 | 83 | 71 | 63 |
| Tests for specific skills | 53 | 52 | 55 | 49 |
| General ability tests | 41 | 47 | 45 | 23 |
| Assessment centres | 39 | 38 | 43 | 35 |
| Literacy and/or numeracy tests | 38 | 45 | 45 | 38 |
| Personality/aptitude questionnaires | 35 | 36 | 42 | 35 |
| Group exercises (for example role-playing) | 24 | 27 | 28 | 21 |
| Online tests (selection)** | 23 | 24 | 22 | n/a |
| Pre-interview references (academic or employment) | 16 | 22 | 22 | 9 |
| Tools to enable self-selection*** | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Gamification*** | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Analytical algorithms to match people to roles*** | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 2 | 5 | 6 | 3 |

Base: 691 (2017); 505 (2015); 460 (2013); 605 (2011)
*This question was not included in the 2012 survey.   **This response option was added in 2013.   ***This response option was added in 2015.

Glassdoor survey (2015,12) studied that nowadays job applicants have to go through more job screenings than before since employers want to guarantee that they hire best fit candidates for their vacancies. Throughout selection process, they combine different methods together such as interviews and tests to have a thorough assessment.

According to Glassdoor research on US market (2015), one-on-one interviews scored the most percentage and maintained its popularity throughout a four-year period (2010-2014), followed by phone interviewing which took more than half of the percentage. Background check and different kinds of tests namely personality test, ability test, drug test have become more prominent through time. (Figure 3)
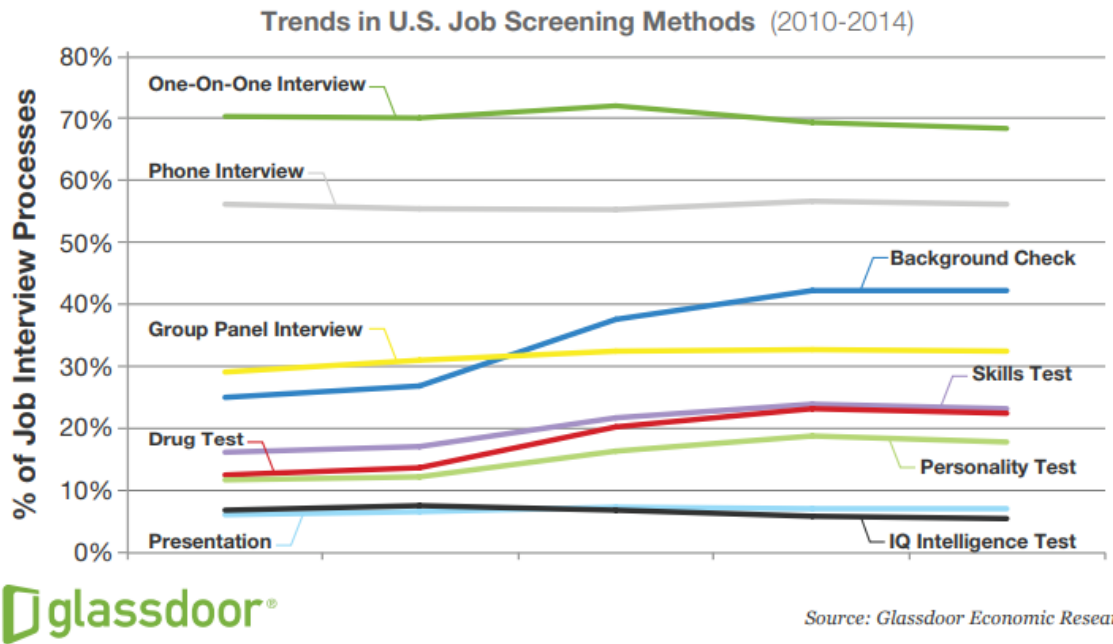
Figure 3. Popularity of different selection methods practiced by employers (Glassdoor 2015 with permission)

Economists analyze the selection methods patterns that companies want to pick out best suitable candidates for the positions meanwhile also have the urge to fill vacant positions as quickly as possible to cover losses caused by unfilled positions. Thus, interviewing appears to be the most effective way to achieve their goals. (Glassdoor 2015, 13.)

### 2.2.6 Job Offer

HR department will handle job offers with chosen candidates via phone, email or directly in person. Candidates will have a chance to discuss and negotiate salaries and benefits to come up with mutual consensus. Candidates will be given a deadline when they need to get back to the company with their decision. (SHRM 2008.)

Those candidates who didn't get chosen should also receive a proper rejection for them not to feel left out of the recruitment process. Also it is vital for companies to show their professionalism in rejection letter by not hurting them verbally and communicating well about appropriate time for rejections. (Rashmi 2010, 136.)

Contracts at InterNations are compiled in both English and German as InterNations is a German company. In the contracts, contractual issues and clauses such as position and place of work; work period; salary; vacation days; sick leave days; termination terms; travel and other expenses; working hours; confidentiality; side activities; and company security. At the end of any contracts, signatures of both parties are signed.

## 2.3 Induction

After being selected, induction cannot be left out in the procedure. In this subchapter, definition of induction and induction methods will be discussed. Under definition of induction, a brief introduction of **Onboarding** and **Orientation**, and distinction between induction and the other two terms are drawn to give readers an understanding of all three definitions.

### 2.3.1 Definition of Induction

"Employee induction is the act of installing a new employee into a position within an organization. It can refer to anything from a ten-minute "welcome abroad" speech to a three-day training programme." (El-Shamy 2003, 3.)

Induction can be used as orientation with the same meaning. However, orientation refers to more job-oriented and to making sure new employees are capable of performing the job well. Orientation is a short activity to help new employees to know more about the company and the job.

Induction can take a few days to a few weeks depending on how companies decide on the length. Meanwhile, on-boarding begins much earlier before employee joins the company and lasts longer than induction. Onboarding occurs during recruitment and selection process. (Derek, Laura, Stephen & Carol 2011, 216.)

### 2.3.2 Induction Methods

In new employees' induction, there includes a few following things:
- Introduction to the company, its mission, vision, organizational structure and guiding principles.
- Greetings from colleagues
- Job description and performance expectation
- Safety practices and security introduction
- IT introduction and cyber security
- Meeting other department colleagues
- Lunch with the team
- Necessary contact details
- A buddy to shadow work for new person
- The company's tool introduction
- Regular team meetings

(O'Meara & Petzall, 2013, 271.)

Each company carries out induction differently and there are more activities added in induction session. However, the list above consists of induction activities that InterNations covers. These activities are implemented on the first day of new employees. Some are done with department team and supervisor. Some are carried out by HR team such as IT introduction and safety practices.

# 3   Reflecting and Developing Work Through Diary Process

This chapter focuses on reporting weekly activities I performed during my internship. It consists of 13-week report (18 February 2019 – 17 May 2019). After listing key activities on weekly basis, I will give personal thoughts and suggestions to develop InterNations's recruitment process.

My main task that covers throughout my internship was checking emails and Personio for candidates' updates and messages. Personio introduction is mentioned below under calendar week eight. Personio talent pool contains all open job vacancies. Since my role on Personio was HR Responsible; thus, I was only able to view internship positions, not full-time positions. There were at least five internship vacancies open on Personio in departments: Online Marketing, Public Relations, Human Resources, Social Media, Community Support and Business Solutions. Steps of recruitment for each department will be listed below. I started my work day by checking Outlook email, going to Personio to reply to candidates' messages. If applicants were qualified, I moved them to the next bucket in the talent pool, scheduled written evaluation tests, scheduled interviews and also sent internship offer email to them.

Details of each department recruitment and recruitment procedures are explained through diary weeks below. My first two weeks (calendar week 8 and 9) were induction weeks where I got shadowed and supervised by the former HR intern. From the third week on (calendar week 10), I was on my own to perform tasks. In this diary report, I only pick the most important thing of each week to explain. I will not go into detail of Personio's positions and candidates' message reply as it was my every day work routine.

A few things which are covered in this diary report include interns' projects, training sessions, on-site workshops, candidates' interviews, the company's meetings and Happy Helper.

## 3.1   Calendar Week 8, 2019

During my first week of internship, I was introduced to InterNations's tools, necessary documents and interns' recruitment process. The recruitment process involves screening candidates in talent portal, evaluation written tests and interview setup.

### 3.1.1    Reporting on Work Activities

My internship started on 18 February 2019 at 9:00 (German time). Every Monday morning, the whole company has breakfast together in a conference room. The purpose of the weekly breakfast is to get to know other colleagues better and introduce new full-time employees or new interns. As new employees always start on a Monday of the month, they have a chance to know their colleagues before jumping into work. The same applies for interns. It is nice to be greeted by fellow interns when joining InterNations.

After breakfast, I headed to Human Resources (HR) office to get my computer set up and sign some paper work with HR Team Lead. The HR Team Lead explained about company security rules, and scanned my insurance and passport for monthly wages.
For my first two weeks of internship, the previous HR intern handed tasks over to me. I had introduction of Confluence — company's notice board, Jira — project management tool and Personio – HR tool to manage employees. Details of the handover are presented below under different categories.

**Department introduction**

Departments which have interns consist of Human Resources, Social Media, Public Relations, Editorial Office, Online Marketing, Business Solutions, and Community Support. Public Relations, Editorial Office and Social Media belong to a bigger department called Content and Communications.

Editorial Office team takes care of reviewing articles, edit articles according to InterNations's guidelines, write articles on InterNations's platforms and grade all candidates' written tests. Editorial Office team includes two managers and one intern.

Public Relations (PR) team is in charge of writing press releases, carrying out annual surveys, contacting the press and posting articles on Confluence page. This team has one Senior PR Manager and four PR interns.

Social Media (SM) cares for all social media channels of InterNations such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram. There are only two members in this team: one Senior Social Media Manager and one SM intern. They also write articles on InterNations's platform, help with creating employer branding videos and create video contents.

"Online Marketing Department is responsible for attracting new members from around the world via desktop and mobile campaigns on the main paid online marketing channels (e.g. Facebook, SEA, Display) as well as through organic traffic (e.g. SEO)." (InterNations 2018.) Online Marketing team has one Senior Manager and one intern.

"Business Solutions is our newly founded business division that is developing B2B tools to offer our core product to corporate clients. This will enable them to help their expat employees settle in better and faster in their new host location" (InterNations 2018.)

Community Support (CS) team checks requests on InterNations's platform and keeps platform clean and healthy against spams and misused purposes. They also help users with their problems like forgotten passwords or a bug on the site. (InterNations 2018.) Community Support belongs to Community Management team which deals with more users-related issues like payment and membership cancelation. Community Support team has one Team Lead, three full-time managers and three interns.

**Recruitment process**

Recruitment procedures were covered during induction week. InterNations is proud of concise and transparent intern recruitment and selection process. The following is flowchart of InterNations recruitment process. (Figure 4)
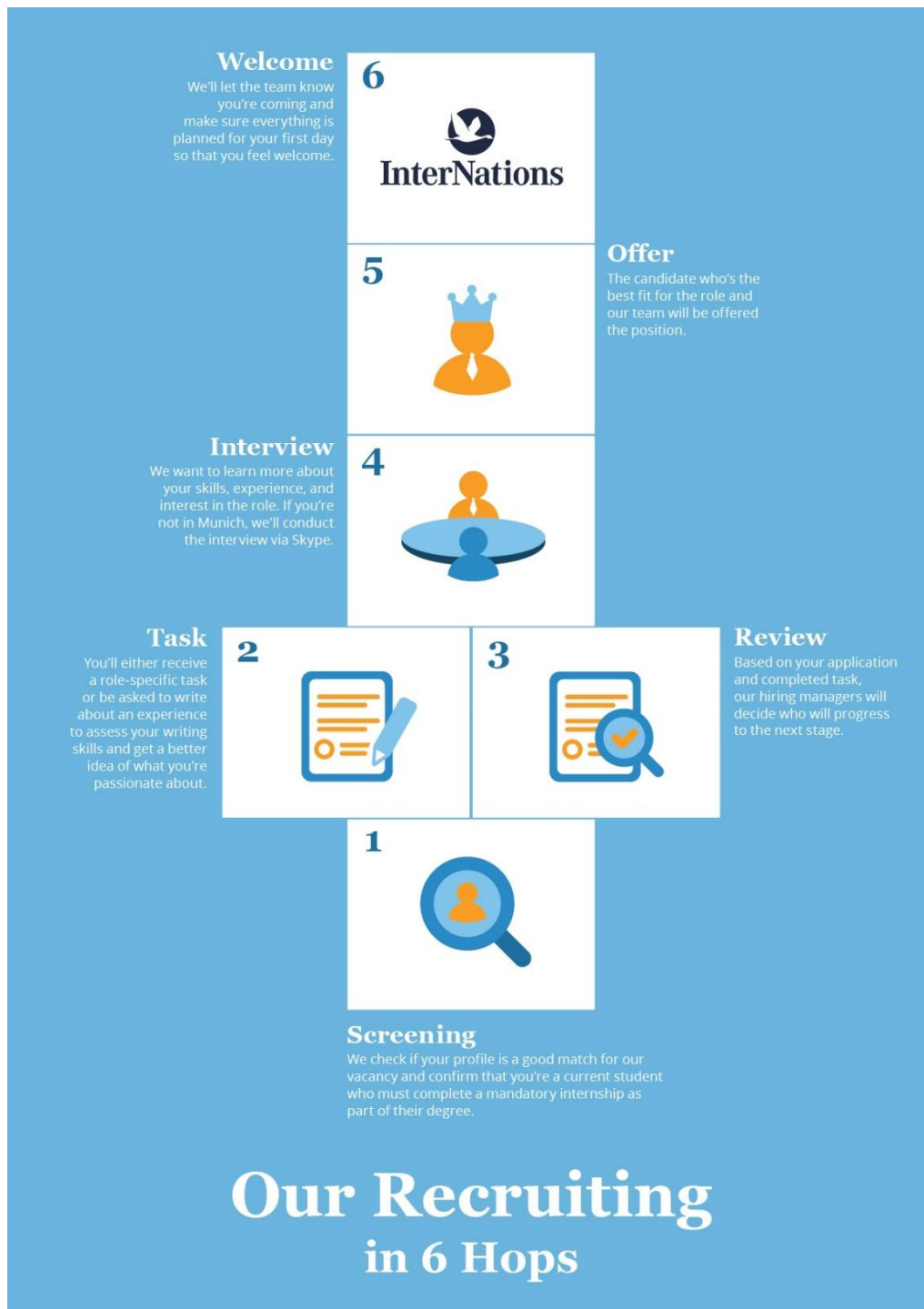
Figure 4. InterNations' recruitment steps (InterNations 2018)

When applications land in Personio — InterNations' HR tool to keep track of candidates and employees, InterNations needs to contact applicants within 2 weeks. In the occasion that candidates' applications land in InterNations' email, HR interns forward their CV and their email address to Personio email (internations-jobs(at)m.personio.de). HR managers will process and move them to Personio page.

Since internships at InterNations are all mandatory internships, it is required to ask for university attendance paper to confirm that students and need to fulfil mandatory internships for at least 6 months.

If candidates are studying at German universities regardless of their nationality, their attendance papers from universities are enough to confirm their status. Students at other universities will need to provide a certificate which states that this is mandatory internship certificate for at least 6 months. The certificate needs to be signed and stamped by their university.

A complete application includes CV, cover letter and mandatory internship certificate. In the occasion that any of these documents is missing, InterNations cannot proceed with their applications.

After assuring their studying status, CVs and cover letters should be taken into consideration. Since the main language at work is English, all candidates need to pursue proficiency in English in order to perform daily tasks. By looking at their CVs and cover letters, the company decides which candidates are qualified enough to carry on. Internship positions such as Public Relations or Social Media require higher proficiency in English, if not native speakers, due to their work nature to write professional articles, and press releases. Online Marketing job mainly involves researching data and monitor ads' and campaigns' performance by analyzing the relevant data and KPIs; thus, applicants need to have software skills.

After confirming their internship requirement matches, candidates' availability was checked to see whether their time matches company's need. If all criteria match, written tests are scheduled.

**Written tests**

Once applicants are shortlisted to proceed, InterNations uses role specific written tests as selection method.

Different positions require different kinds of tests. All tests can be completed virtually at candidates' comfortable environments and be sent back on time.

Online Marketing intern positions include managing numbers and campaigns on Facebook and Display for InterNations' ads to appear on specifically targeted groups. There-

fore, Online Marketing test is an Excel test to evaluate candidates' analytical skills. Meanwhile, tests for other departments are written tests to evaluate written communication skills.

Public Relations and Social Media intern positions require to fulfil 2 tests: one is the English test and the other is role-specific test. English tests are sent to evaluate candidates' English skills. When candidates pass English tests, they will complete the second test. The nature of Public Relations and Social Media jobs is to write press release and articles, the second test evaluates their job-related written communication skills.

HR intern sends test invitation to candidates with suggested time and date. Once candidates confirm test date, HR intern adds test reminder to Personio calendar which is linked to Outlook calendar and will be reminded. The test reminder includes HR manager and Senior HR Manager so that they can send the tests in case HR intern is absent.

The first writing task applicants need to complete is English test, also called Important Decision. English test applies to Social Media, Public Relations and Community Support. Except for Online Marketing which has an excel test evaluated by Online Marketing manager, the rest of written tests are evaluated by Editorial Office team.

Once HR intern receives the test back from candidates, HR intern creates a Jira ticket for Editorial Office team. Then Head of Content and Communications Department, will assign person to grade tests. Usually, tests are graded by Senior Editorial Office Manager. Tests are graded from 1 to 5 in spelling, grammar and style in which 1 is excellent and 5 is unsatisfactory. HR intern uploads the test on InterNations Jira as a word document, and removes candidates' names. The file' name should include department where the test is for and date when candidates complete them. Once HR intern creates a Jira ticket, the person should add two HR managers as watchers.

When Editorial Office team has graded tests, HR intern downloads the test, saves it with candidate's name and department and uploads graded test back on Personio as a pdf file. If the tests come out above 3 (acceptable), HR intern requests review from department managers to look at that candidates' tests and schedules interviews. Hiring managers of those departments will review applicants' profiles and test results to decide whether they want to interview those applicants or not. The following table (Table 6) indicates grading table for interns at InterNations (InterNations 2018).

Table 6. Candidate grading chart (InterNations 2018)

| Min. Grade Requirement | Spell | Grammar | Style |
|---|---|---|---|
| **MR** | 3.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| **Changemakers** | 2.0 | 3.0 | 3.0 |
| **HR** | 2.0 | 2.5 | 2.0 |
| **EO** | 1.5 | 2.5 | 2.0 |
| **PR** | 1.5 | 2.5 | 2.0 |
| **SM** | 1.5 | 2.5 | 2.0 |
| **OM** | 2.0 | 3.5 | 3.5 |
| **BI** | 3.5 | 3.0 | 3.0 |

**Interviews**

Once hiring managers review candidates' tests and want to proceed with their applications, HR intern schedules Skype interviews for candidates and adds hiring managers in interview reminder on Personio.

Before setting up the interview, HR intern sends interview invitation to candidates with Team Factsheet as attachment. The Team Factsheet document includes information about InterNations's mission and vision; team setup and work culture. When setting up interview on Personio, hiring managers and HR managers are included in the interview reminder.

Department hiring managers are responsible for adding candidates on Skype and write feedback for HR department once the interview is done.

**Internship Offer**

Hiring managers are happy with candidates and want to offer them internship offer, HR intern sends out email to inform candidates of their interview result, along with manuals for new comers as attachment. The Manuals include German cultures and norms; living in Germany; finding accommodation; transportation; and festivals in Germany.

Senior Human Resources Manager sends out contracts to interns, along with newcomer information which candidates fill out and send back to HR department. Newcomer Information document consists of new interns' personal details, bank accounts, and emergency contacts.

In the occasion that the candidate pauses on the offer, recruitment for the position is still open for other candidates. If the hiring manager is happy with another candidate, first candidate will be given a deadline to sign the contract. Otherwise, the offer goes to the second chosen one.

**Induction**

Once job contract is signed, candidates will be moved to induction phase. The company will prepare for their induction by assisting with internship working visa, providing travel discounts, confirming Erasmus grants.

### 3.1.2 Reflecting and Developing Work

The idea of Monday breakfast is helpful and beneficial as staff from different departments can meet and catch up. Also, interns bond better after weekly breakfast as they know more about each other's interests and personalities. As an HR intern, I felt the responsibility to take care of new interns. Therefore, I made sure interns show up in the breakfast to greet newbies. On my first day at work, I was integrated well into company's work culture thanks to Monday breakfast. This nice and friendly culture should be maintained through HR interns especially. However, more often, Monday breakfast turned into interns' breakfast as full-time employees only came to pick up pastries. This results negatively into the company's culture in a way that employees become distant from one department to another. This is the small activity to bond within the company that staff needs to spend 30 minutes of their morning to say "hi" to their colleagues. Moreover, not attending Monday breakfast affects negatively on new employees joining the company as they show up in an empty breakfast and do not feel welcomed by fellow colleagues. As an improvement, InterNations should make it compulsory for employees to attend Monday breakfast – a small act of bonding.

Admin session with HR Team Lead went effectively and smoothly as she explained to me the importance of a secure password and raised my awareness of cyber security. I had a friendly encounter with her and nice greetings from the rest of HR team. As a result, I un-

derstood the essence of creating a strong password for my computer and thus protecting the company's cyber security. Admin session is implemented on the first day of new employees. Therefore, new employees have a chance to meet HR team, get introduced to the company's system and the team. During admin session, HR Team Lead explains next steps new employees should do if they move to Germany from another country. HR Team Lead raised the crucial part of address registration in order to get tax card and gets new employees' acquainted with German culture and German system of charging tax. New employees, including me, feel warm welcome from her and get aware of administrative work.

What InterNations has been doing great is two week handover from old interns to new ones. There interns can be more responsible for what they learn and practice teaching skills when shadowing new interns. This way, managers will not have divided attention from their regular tasks and add things up on their plates. When I started my direct supervisor was on vacation. Therefore, I got taught by previous HR intern, who is an experienced person in HR field already. I wrote down process of recruitment and selection, from what to do if applications do not land on tracking pipeline to how to reply to candidates in an appropriate way. It was a large amount of information at hand to digest. Having said that, I felt that two week handover was such a lengthy time as I learnt quickly in the first week. Orientation weeks should be shortened to a week.

InterNations has been doing a great job in keeping recruitment efficient and transparent. Maximum waiting time for processing applications is two weeks while in other companies, process can take months. Communication among departments is efficient. As a result, I have no suggestions regarding InterNations's recruitment procedures.

I got introduced briefly about company structure, tools, and recruitment process. It would be more effective if there were any hand-outs or written documents to check upon. It took me a long while to sort out my notes and organize them in order not to miss out any steps. Another issue I faced was a lack of necessary documents as everything stayed in the computer of previous intern. I could not get accessed to those documents till the last day she left. Confluence is the internal noticeboard where all documents and updates are kept. I failed to realize the importance of Confluence and how to search for suitable documents there. As an improvement, leaving interns should well inform new interns of the importance of Confluence and actually spend time researching and reading Confluence.

With regards to written tests, I had trouble remembering which department needs which tests as there are so many tests. When sending out emails of tests, I needed to remember

adding correct time for the tests and test requirements. To memorize this better, I created a Word document writing down each department test and time.

### 3.2 Calendar Week 9, 2019

This week was my second week of orientation. Job posting channels, on-boarding documents and procedures were introduced to me. In on-boarding procedures, as a HR intern, I took care of interns' university papers, sent emails informing their internship schedules and helped them with visa application if needed.

### 3.2.1 Reporting on Work Activities

**Job posting**

Job posting and all recruiting channels were handed over to me. InterNations officially advertises their job vacancies on the website. XING, the biggest job seeking tool, is the umbrella company of InterNations. Therefore, InterNations also posts job vacancies on XING.

Moreover, the company also reaches out to different universities in Germany as well as in European countries. InterNations puts together a list of universities to contact and post job offers.

Since InterNations runs based on memberships and events, it is recommended to post job vacancies on university portals free of charge. Some universities prefer to be contacted by emails for job vacancies while others allow companies to post their internship offers directly on their website.

InterNations manages all applications via Personio which is a user-friendly and fast processing HR tool. Personio is used for not only keeping track of candidates' applications and messages, but also for keeping employees' files and updates. Employees can request sick leave or remote work on Personio by themselves. Requests are granted by the supervisors.

If candidates apply on InterNations' website, their profile will land automatically on Personio. If candidates apply via universities' portals, their applications will land in internship email of InterNations. Those applications will be moved to Personio in order to be proceeded. I was advised not to reply to candidates via email, only on Personio, with the aim of keeping track of full conversations.

**Recruitment process in flowchart**

The whole process to recruit candidates is complicated and involves small steps. There-fore, one of the previous HR interns visualized interns' recruitment process with flowchart. (Figure 5 and Figure 6)
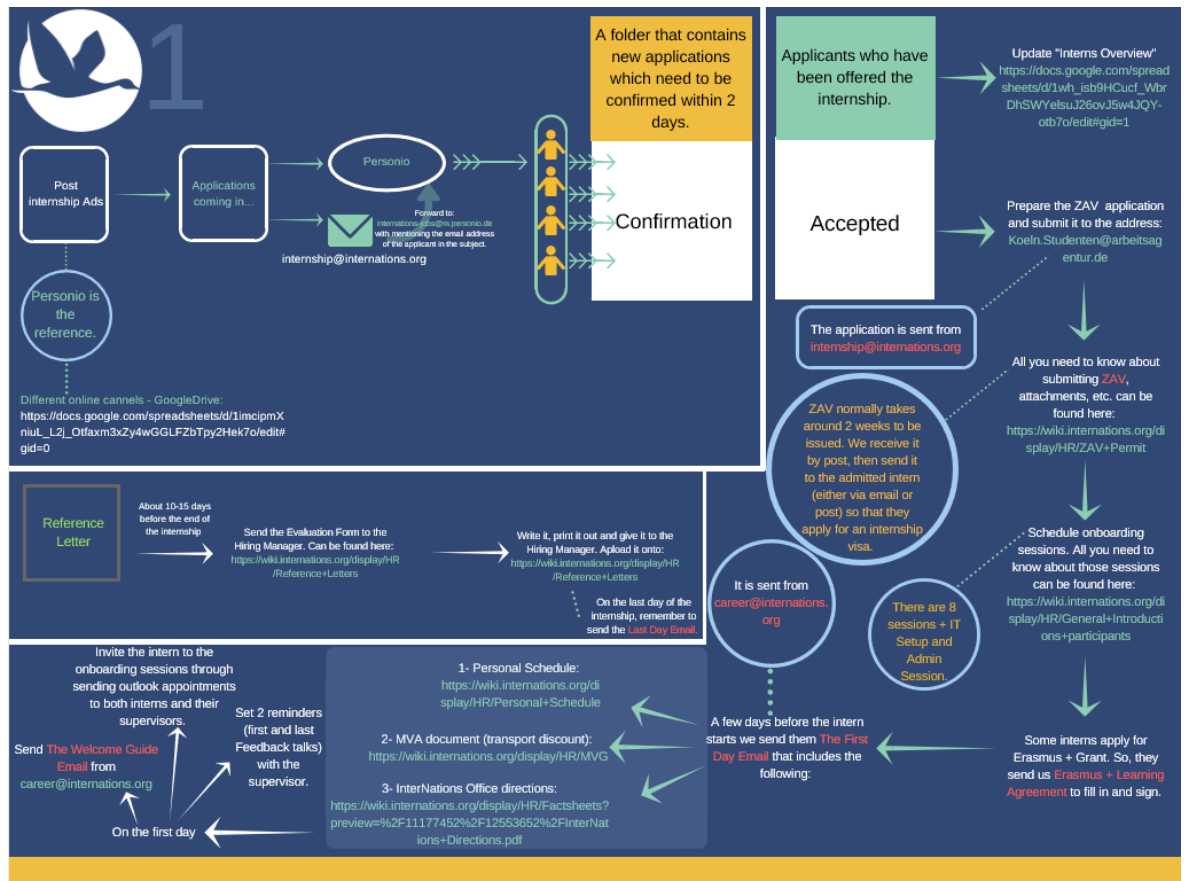


Figure 5. Interns' recruitment procedures at InterNations (1)
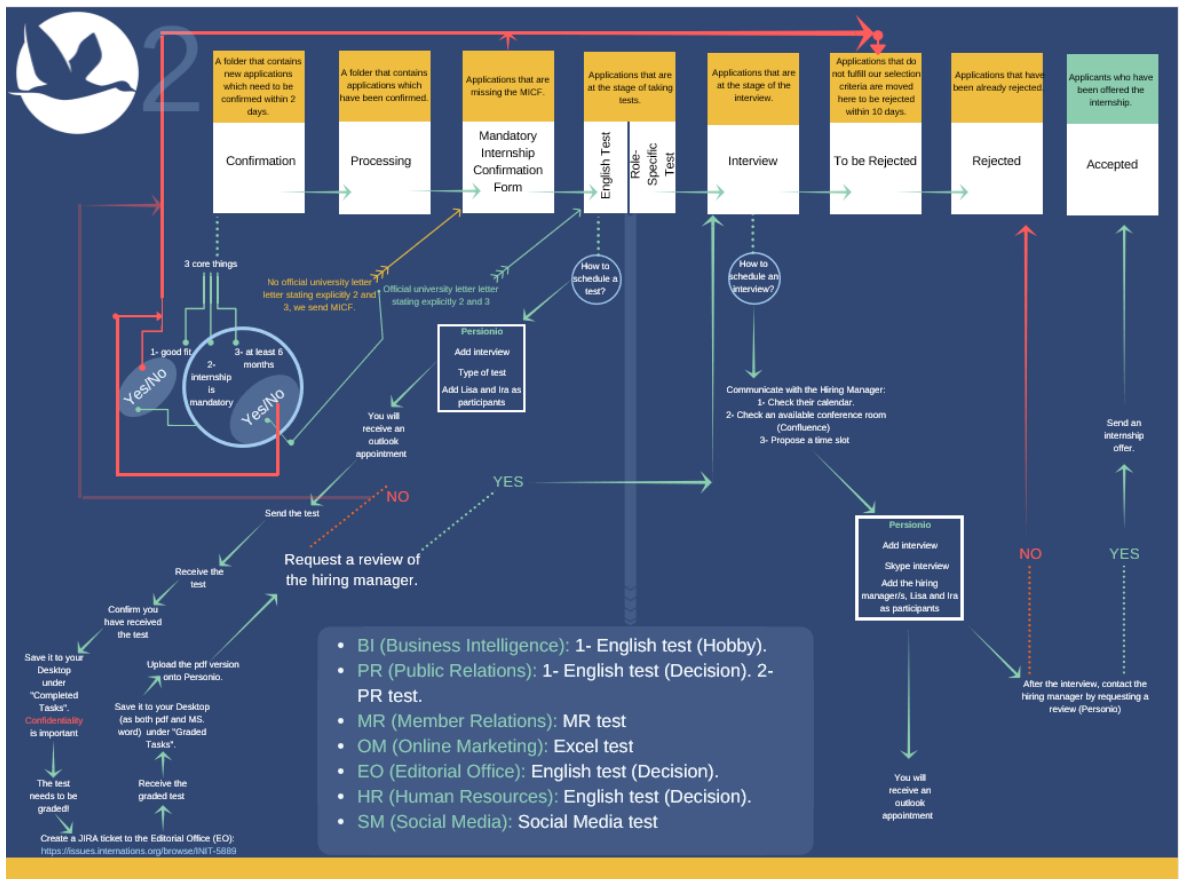
Figure 6. InterNations Recruiting Mindmap (2)

**Visa application process**

ZAV application process was presented. ZAV which stands for Zentrale Auslands- und Fachvermittlung is a work permit for students who are required to complete mandatory internships in Germany.

For Non-EU citizens, InterNations helps candidates with visa application. In order for HR intern to apply for ZAV, candidates need to provide formal obligation paper which states that salary from InterNations is not enough and candidates should have a secure financial source.

Non-EU citizens need to have ZAV paper which legalizes working in Germany. ZAV will be applied by InterNations and takes roughly a month to come.

ZAV application includes formal obligation, passport scan, and certificate of enrollment, internship plan which supervisors will fill out, ZAV application form and university recognition by Anabin. Anabin is a German system which consists of all German-recognized universities in the world.

**Team introduction**

Before candidates start their internships, they are for a short introduction, T-short size and their picture in order to post on internal InterNations page — Confluence. Introductions and pictures can be forwarded to HR Manager to post on Confluence and T-shirt size to Feel Good Manager who is in charge of ordering employees' shirts and welcome packages.

**First day at InterNations**

'First day' emails are sent to candidates a few days before they start their internship via Career email address which is managed by the whole HR team (career(at)internations.org). In the email, personal schedule, MVG paper and InterNations direction are attached.

**Last days at InterNations**

A week before interns leave, 'last days' emails are sent via career email address. In the email, deregistration and registration paper are attached. HR intern makes sure to change recipients' names and the length of Albatross membership offer. If interns stay up to 6 months, InterNations offers 6 months free membership. If interns stay more than 9 months, the company offers 12-month membership.

**Newcomers' Day**

Newcomers' Day is to introduce new team members to the company, including both full time employees and interns. Newcomers' Day is usually set up a month in advance by HR intern.

Due to different sessions hosted by different managers, it is necessary to follow strictly the timeline scheduled for each session. The following list is Newcomers' Day timeline:
9-9:30: Team breakfast at Lodge
9:30-10:00: Office tour
10:00-11:00: Meet the Co-CEO
11:00-11:30: Confluence Intro
11:30-11:45: Break
11:45-13:00: Brand and Style Guide

13:00-14:00: Lunch
14:00-15:00: Portal Tour
15:00-15:45: Working at InterNations
15:45-16:00: Break
16:00-17:00: Guiding Principles
17:00-17:45: IT Intro

For each session in Newcomers' Day, Outlook calendar reminders are created, adding all involved people and informing them of participant list. In Outlook calendar reminder, conference room for each session is booked and included.

**Welcome guide**

On interns' second day, a 'welcome guide' email is sent from Career email address. HR intern should remember to change new comers' names. In case there is more than 1 newcomer, the email's recipient can be internship email and add all new comers' emails in "Bcc" so that they will not see each other. After sending the email, HR intern update in onboarding checklist.

**IT setup and Admin session**

IT setup is to create new interns' accounts and get them familiarized with the computer. Admin session is carried out by HR Team Lead to sign contracts in person, scan passports and insurance for monthly wages, sign InterNations's security regulations.

Calendar reminders for the two sessions are set up by HR intern at the same time as making interns' personal schedules. HR Team Lead and IT team are added to the reminders. Usually new interns have their computers and seats ready when they start. Only for HR interns, new intern needs to use laptop for first two weeks until previous intern leaves.

**Photoshoot day for new comers**

New interns get their pictures taken on the first Wednesday of the month, after Newcomers' Day. There are two pictures taken: one picture is formal, meant for public uses; another is polaroid picture which is used to hang up in the office hallway. Each intern has 3 minutes for one picture. Videographer is the one taking photos and editing them.

Two conference rooms are booked for the photoshoot. Calendar reminders are created for the videographer and HR managers to keep them up-to-date.

### 3.2.2 Reflecting and Developing Work

Instructions to post job ads were clear. There is a list of Excel sheet consisting of all university partners and websites to post job vacancies. The list is detailed and well-informed of universities' names, contact person, link to post ads. InterNations has a good system with colour coded list to distinguish internship channels and full-time job ads. However, the list itself seems lengthy to scroll through and also confusing to identify sometimes. Not to mention, in case the person who is in charge of posting was colour blind, this list would not make sense. Therefore, I sorted all internship channels to a new tab under the same file and named it "Internship universities partners" and separated other colour-coded channels for full-time job offers. This helped to focus solely on internship sites without messing up with full time channels. Next to each university, I added notes to keep HR team updated with universities I posted job ads. On the occasion of failure to post job ads on certain universities, notes helped to remind for next time posting ads.

Although there are a good number of university partners to post job ads, only a few certain universities from which candidates apply. There is a pattern of more popular universities which generate more successful applicants. As a result, I focused on posting job ads on those universities, rather than going through the list. I also updated job ads more often on universities in the United Kingdom to look for Public Relations or Social Media interns as interns in these departments needed to have a good level of English to fulfil the job. There is one university in London which InterNations keeps personal contact with for a large pool of adequate students. Students at this university are mostly English; thus, their English levels are sufficient. I found it convenient and efficient to contact this university directly when we needed to fill an internship fast.

Recruiting mindmap that one of previous interns made was concise and compacted. It might help to visualize the whole process. Bracket of test list plays a beneficial role in remembering names of tests and departments. It includes all abbreviations for each department, which helps new interns to remember internship offers for each department. Although the mindmap is nicely created and in such detail, I found it hard to interpret all information presented. For development, I created a word documents with details of each steps and how to correspond to all possible situations. The word document was more word-based and detailed so that HR interns would visualize them as they read.

InterNations communicates actively with both candidates and accepted employees to help them with visa process and accommodation search. "First day" and "last days" emails from InterNations are well-informed and helpful for newbies to get more information of how their first days will be and also for leaving team members to be aware of deregistration. The only trouble I faced when preparing for "first day" email was to prepare personal schedule. Personal schedules mainly rely on department supervisors to plan and fill in with dates and time. Without supervisors' inputs, I could not send out First day email and complete personal schedules. With some specific supervisors such as Public Relations and Social Media, communication and efficiency were swift and smooth. They got back with final personal schedules after a few days. However, for some others like Community Support, it took longer to get personal schedules. Therefore, after a few weeks of familiarizing with structure and people, I learnt to send personal schedules to supervisors two weeks in advance and remind them after a week. Constant communication was the key to make productivity and perform my job well.

When preparing for Newcomers' Day and Photoshoot day, recipient list always changed. Every time small details needed to be changed, reminder email on Outlook calendar automatically sent to all recipients again. It caused a lot of confusion because people received many emails at once, especially if information on email title did not align with information presented in email body. What I created to minimize sending out multiple emails and improving precision of email reminder was to book conference rooms a month in advance to ensure there would be a room for Newcomers' Day. Two weeks before Newcomers' Day, I added recipients, body text and sent out. This helped me significantly to improve productivity and erase confusion.

### 3.3 Calendar Week 10, 2019

In this week, I prepared reference letters and leadership certificates for a leaving intern. I prepared documents for Team Meeting and Management Board Meeting.

#### 3.3.1 Reporting on Work Activities

**Reference letters**

Once interns have finished their internship, reference letters are prepared by HR intern with feedback input from interns' supervisors. An email is sent to supervisors along with evaluation form and list of task previous intern performs. The date in the reference letter should be the end date of their internship. Evaluation list is an Excel list of criteria to assess interns' performances on. The list is evaluated from excellent, good to satisfactory

and poor. Supervisors of the interns need to tick on the right column. InterNations uses templates for evaluation. There are different texts suitable for "excellent", "good' and "poor" performance. Even if interns' performances were poor, it would not be allowed to use negative words in reference letters according to German law.

One PR intern was leaving at the end of the week; thus, I prepared her reference letter based on her supervisor's evaluation on her performance.

**Leadership certificate**

Interns host any interns' project will get a leadership certificate at the end of their internship. The certificate is prepared by HR intern. The certificate includes intern's full name, month of the project the intern leads, signatures of both CEOs (Malte and Philip).

As the leaving PR intern led an interns' project, I needed to prepare her a leadership certificate as well.

**Interns' projects**

Interns work together on a project every month. Topics of projects are suggested by full time employees. Interns have meetings to discuss about the project every Tuesday afternoon. When I joined, the current project was to come up with quizzes for Social Media about Expat Insider, one of the world's largest and most comprehensive surveys on life abroad. I created the meeting reminder on calendar, added all interns and supervisors as recipients and conference room. The reason to add supervisors in reminder email is to inform them of their interns' activities. I also was charge of keeping track of attendance and added attendance list on Confluence – internal portal – under the correct project.

**Team Meeting and Management Board Meeting**

Every Wednesday of the month, the company has staff meeting for two hours in the morning. Team Meeting is set up by Malte – InterNations' CEO. In the meeting, CEO and Heads of each department present their department updates and company news. Also new employees and interns have a chance to introduce themselves to the whole employees. Porto team joins the company meeting as well so that everyone is on the same page of what happens to each department and what will happen next.

A few days before Team Meeting, Management Board has a meeting to go through company's news and align with management decision before announcing them to staff in Team Meeting.

I needed to prepare PowerPoint slides for MBM (Management Board Meeting) and Team meeting. PowerPoint slides should follow InterNations's guidelines and formats. I was in charge of adding HR news into PowerPoint slides, informing of leaving members, new team members and joining team members. Each section follows certain styles and animations. Blocks for leaving team members should appear on the slide at the same time and be arranged in ascending order of time. New team members and joining members can be divided into different segments if there are so many. Segments are divided as Community Core, Business Solutions and InterNations Go!. InterNations Go is the name of Porto team. It is important to always make sure that the person's face is visible and easy to recognize in the picture.

**Training sessions for interns**

Interns get interns' dedicated training session every month. Intern training sessions happen every third Thursday afternoon of the month. Hosts of interns' training sessions are full-time employees working at InterNations. Topics are decided by hosts. Training session on the same topic can be implemented again once every 6 months to a year. Interns can also suggest topics that benefit their professional development and work life. I created reminder email on Outlook for interns, supervisors and the trainer. In the email body, I informed interns of the trainer and the topic. If any trainers had specific requirements or pre-training preparations for interns, I would include them in the email message as well. After creating email reminder, I updated on Confluence about date of training session, topic and training host.

I prepared topics for training sessions a month prior to implementing dates. I sent email to potential host for the following month to ask if they have time to facilitate interns' training session. It usually took me a couple of trials until someone agreed to host as everyone was busy with their regular tasks.

**Feedback talk**

InterNations is proud of their feedback culture. Feedback talks are carried out by interns' supervisors and interns. Interns have two feedback talks with their supervisors: one in the middle of their internship; the other at the end of their internship when they are about to

finish. Middle-term feedback talk is to get to know intern's performance and opinions. In case supervisors are not happy with specific things, feedback talk is a chance to tell interns and vice versa. If interns want to have improvement on particular subjects, they can bring the topic up during feedback talk. Feedback talk is to find mutual voice in performance standards and personal opinions. If mid-term feedback talks aim at improving performance, final term feedback talks focus on reviewing performance and future suggestions. This is time for supervisors to tell interns their impressions on interns' performances over internship period. Interns can also give feedback to supervisors on areas of developments which they think necessary and important for InterNations. Of course interns cannot benefit much from final feedback talks but they can make an impact on future intern generations.

There are two forms interns fill out before each feedback talk: one form about personal findings and suggestions; the other for evaluating leadership skills of the supervisors. In the first form, interns fill out personal developments through internship and areas they want to change or improve on. These areas will be discussed during feedback talks with supervisors.

I set calendar reminders for supervisors to schedule feedback talks with their interns. Feedback talk reminder is only meant for supervisors to remember scheduling a date. In the reminder, I added my HR supervisor so that she was informed.

### 3.3.2   Reflecting and Developing Work

Team Meeting and Management Board meeting occur once every month. I had to prepare PowerPoint slides for each meeting separately. Team meeting is informed to all employees around a month in advance. However, Management Board Meeting does not have a specific date. I was a bit passive to wait for the CEO to inform me of MBM date and create slides. More often, the CEO informed me a few hours before the meeting took place. I had to move my schedules and prioritize MBM slide preparation. I learnt to give myself an approximate date that MBM occurs and prepare slides a month in advance. When the CEO asked, I only needed to double check if everything was displayed in right formats, and correct.

I found feedback talk culture at InterNations helpful as it showed supervisors care for interns' performance and personal development. Feedback talks serve both interns and supervisors well. If supervisors need interns to change or improve on something specific, they can bring it up during feedback talk and vice versa. If interns want to particularly im-

prove something, feedback talk is a chance to speak up. I found my feedback talk useful because I could take over more tasks as I requested my supervisor.

Projects for interns are nice to implement and helpful for interns from different cultural backgrounds to work together and solve problems together. With appropriate supervision and leadership, projects can be implemented successfully and generate positive outcomes. However, I felt like meetings were excuse for interns to hang out and small talk. We discussed the topic for first ten minutes of an hour meeting and spent the rest of the time talking. Moreover, I joined in the middle of a project; therefore, there was not much for me to do as the project was coming to an end. Although I was briefed about the project topic before the meeting, I did not feel integrated into it. I did not understand the topic well enough to contribute ideas. Adding to that, I was new to the interns' group, so everyone was curious of my personal backgrounds and stories. As a result, I got carried away in conversations and forgot about the project. Furthermore, project's leader was talking simultaneously with misleading conversation the rest of the team had. Therefore, no one listened to what the leader had to present and project's outcome was not successful. To improve this issue, I believe it was responsibility of project's leader to pull team members back on track by acting firm and calling out on bad examples.

### 3.4 Calendar Week 11, 2019

I participated Newcomers' Day, prepared departmental exchange session and posted job ad for Community Support Working Student position.

#### 3.4.1 Reporting on Work Activities

I had a Newcomers' introduction day on Monday, 4 March where I got introduced to company's guidelines, tools and had a chance to meet the CEO.

| | |
|---|---|
| 09:00 – 09:30 | Team Breakfast (Lodge) |
| 09:30 – 10:00 | Office Tour |
| 10:00 – 11:00 | Meet the Founder, Co-CEO (Malte – Lodge) |
| 11:00 – 11:30 | Confluence Intro (Franziska – Albatross) |
| 11:30 – 11:45 | Break |
| 11:45 – 13:00 | Brand & Style Guide (Lenore – Albatross) |
| 13:00 – 14:00 | Lunch Break |
| 14:00 – 15:00 | Portal Tour (Nichelle & Samantha – Albatross) |
| 15:00 – 15:45 | Working at InterNations (Ira & Sarah – Albatross) |
| 15:45 – 16:00 | Break |

| 16:00 – 17:00 | Guiding Principles (Daniela & Dani / Miriam & Laurabel – Lodge) |
| 17:00 – 17:45 | IT Intro (Lars – Albatross) |

Every Tuesday of the week, interns have interns' meetings to work on a project together. Projects vary monthly and full-time employees usually pick topics for next projects. The purpose of interns' projects is to get interns work together as a team. It is nice to have a project to work on besides day-to-day tasks. The current project was to come up with ideas of how to appreciate and acknowledge team members' efforts more and foster an appreciative culture at InterNations. The topic was given by HR Team Lead and lasts for a month. In every project, one intern volunteers or is picked to be project leader.

On Wednesday, I had a cross-departmental exchange session which is held every Wednesday of the month and hosted by one department. During department exchange session, an intern or interns introduce their department to other interns and explain their daily tasks and responsibilities. This month's session was hosted by Public Relations. There are four interns in the team. Therefore, they are allowed to host one session together.

One Customer Service working student was about to graduate; thus, could not continue working as a working student. I needed to find a replacement for him. I opened job offer on our website and posted job ad on different pages such as on university channels, XING, and Smart Recruiters. Smart Recruiters is the most effective channel and most candidates apply from Smart Recruiters. However, applications from Smart Recruiters have mixed qualities: some are good and qualified candidates, some are totally out of consideration. When candidates apply on Smart Recruiters, applications land in Internship email which needs to be transferred to Personio.

One intern in Public Relations is finishing her internship at the end of the month. Thus, I sent email to ask her supervisor to evaluate her. From supervisor's evaluation, I put words together and printed out reference letter.

### 3.4.2 Reflecting and Developing Work

Newcomers' Day is a plus point for InterNations. It helps new employees understand more about the company structure, company's guiding principles and communication standard. This is also a chance for the CEO to personally meet new employees and get to know them individually. From my viewpoint, Newcomer's Day is well structured and informative.

It takes full 8 hours but employees get well informed. As I joined in the middle of the month, I had to start working before my Newcomers" Day. Therefore, I was a bit lost for the first week as I did not know about how appropriate I emailed candidates or which text format to use. As for improvement, I suggest to carry out a mini Newcomer's Day to get employees who start in the middle of the month to get familiarized and informed. InterNations takes pride in developing a good circulation of interns and coming up with interns' projects to help interns develop individually and professionally. However, interns' meetings were poorly conducted and hardly saw any results. Meetings were set up for interns to come and have a chat with one another.

My suggestion to this issue is that project facilitator should come by meetings once in a while to check on progress so that interns do not feel neglected by full-time employees. Also, project leader should take control and lead the project. Interns divided in groups to have personal chats. Therefore, assigning tasks individually will help them feel responsible and involved in the project.

As a daily routine, I checked my emails and checked Personio for candidates' emails. I replied to all emails before moving on new tasks. I generated my own routine to fit with my schedule. I was mainly in charge of interns' recruitment, so I had to ensure smooth communication with candidates and secure a new intern when one was leaving. Each position had its own difficulty when recruiting. For instance, Community Support interns need to qualify specific requirements before evaluating written communication skills. Most of the time, candidates applied to job portal were either graduates or did not meet requirements. I had trouble maintaining a stable candidate flow as not a single suitable candidate applied. To overcome this problem, I tried to post job ads on social media, especially on international pages that I knew would attract attention. I posted Community Support Internship on a Facebook page for Vietnamese students in Finland as I knew for a fact, all most all bachelors' students needed to complete mandatory internships. As they studied in Finland, the process would not be lengthy to go through. I also personally contacted some close university partners to ask them push notifications of Community Support internship. As a result, three candidates qualified to take the internship. I not only maintained good flow of candidates, but also found 3 new interns to replace existing ones.

### 3.5   Calendar Week 12, 2019

I prepared training session, attended HR meeting and set up on-boarding for a new intern.

### 3.5.1 Reporting on Work Activities

**Interns only department exchange**

Interns in different departments have a cross departmental exchange meeting where interns in one department explain what they do in their department to other interns. The purpose of departmental exchange meetings is for interns to know about responsibilities of different departments and understand other teams better.

This month's session was hosted by Editorial Office intern. I set up reminder on Outlook calendar and invited all interns and their supervisors in recipients' list. In the message body, I informed interns about host of the session and department they work in. Hosts were free to decide format of the presentation and relevant activities. Sessions last for an hour or less depending on how much hosts present and how man activities generated. The most common way of presentation is PowerPoint slides to explain department work and a few job-related activities adding on top to better visualize tasks and responsibilities.

**On-boarding preparation**

I prepared on-boarding for two new interns in April: one in Editorial Office and the other in Public Relations. I set up IT setup and Admin Session on calendar, put these sessions in their personal schedule plan and sent the plan to their supervisors to fill in department-related tasks. Also, I created transportation discount paper for them. Once supervisors sent back interns' personal schedules, I sent them their "first day at InterNations" email including personal schedule, MVG paper, and instructions to the office.

**Training session**

I had Interns' Training Session on Thursday hosted by a full-time employee with the topic: "ARA-Approach: Authenticity, Responsibility and Awareness in Personal and Professional Contexts". There interns worked in pairs to talk about best and worst experiences when they first came to Germany. And then, on the second pair work, the trainer asked us to talk simultaneously to describe our first experiences in Germany.

**HR team meeting**

HR team has a weekly meeting every Friday to catch up with each other's work updates, inform of vacant positions and brainstorm a topic together. In this meeting, HR Team Lead

had an idea to organize workshops for hiring managers about important social skills for hiring process. As a team, HR came up with a list of social skills that we considered important for all candidates applying for InterNations. Based on the list of social skills, two follow-up workshops were carried out for all leadership positions. The aim of two workshops was to find mutual voice in candidates' social skills when hiring. It would be significantly essential for HR team as we became more involved with interviewing process. Some positions which used to be interviewed by department hiring managers now transferred to HR team to handle. Therefore, understanding general important social skills played a crucial part in selection. Of course it was not easy to agree totally with any skills but leaders' opinions should draw a pattern for HR to generate results.

### 3.5.2   Reflecting and Developing Work

I had trouble looking for a host for training session. I asked Head of Public Relations and Human Resources Manager but they were too busy to facilitate a session. It was a tough call till I emailed global mailing list to ask if anyone would like to host interns' training session. One person working in Community Management accepted my invitation. The training session was really helpful and interesting for me. It taught me about projection method. The idea behind this method was to reflect and think twice before criticizing others. Pair work was also interesting to see how conflicting the conversation turned out to be if two people spoke at the same time.

I found the idea of regular HR meetings helpful to catch up with each other's updates. Even though HR sit in a room together every day for eight hours, the team is not always physically available for updates and news. Sometimes a person is on vacation, another works from home or the other gets sick. Of course not a 100% the full team showed up in weekly meetings due to vacations, sickness. On those occasions, meetings would be postponed till the week after to wait for the full team. Therefore, an agreed date of meeting was a wise idea for people to resolve personal issues and attend meetings as much as they could. During the meeting, I also had a chance to know more about other vacant positions and company's updates. I learnt more about visa process for non-European candidates by listening to my managers' discussion.  Moreover, I played a part in the meeting as well since I presented my updates on vacant internships and potential candidates. My managers gave me complete autonomy to work at my own pace as long as they saw productivity out of my performance. I did not usually share updates as we worked through the days but when there was HR wrap-up meeting, I keep others posted of what I was doing.

I felt lost during my first HR meeting as I was not briefed about my roles in the meeting or current projects HR was working on and all company's information I had no clue about. Then after a few weeks, conversations got clearer and I even had contribution to some topics discussed.

### 3.6 Calendar Week 13, 2019

This week interns kicked off a new project and I spent most of my hours preparing for the project. The rest of the time I spent on replying to candidates on Personio and set up written tests

### 3.6.1 Reporting on Work Activities

**Interns' project**

Interns had a new project called "Charity Program" in which interns needed to raise money for Senegalese community via activities. The project was suggested by a full-time employee who worked in Community Management and worked for this charity project in Granada. He found this project idea meaningful and would like to develop it in the company as an internal project. The original project in Granada was called Teranga. Each month Teranga chose a country to help and raise awareness. The month we started this project was in Senegal. We, interns, decided to organize an event monthly to raise awareness of Senegal and raise fund for the charity. In order to do that, we made African snacks, went floor by floor and introduced the project and asked for donations. We had a small budget saved from weekly office snacks and Monday breakfasts. We cooked all snacks ourselves, fresh and hot. The activity went smoothly. We introduced project topic, project's purposes. As a result, interns raised a good deal of money. All money was sent to the charity program in Granada.

**Training session**

Along with the activity, we had training sessions on top of regular monthly sessions to focus on volunteering and communication. Training sessions serve as learning activities where interns spoke out what skills they wanted to develop. We set up training sessions on top of regular training sessions which took place monthly. Therefore, we had another training session called "Intercultural Communication". This is an extra training session hosted by Research and Development Manager. She had psychology backgrounds and followed up with a master's degree. She participated in a few company's projects and helped with Community Management team setup. Before the session, she asked interns

to do a small survey related to personalities. The survey asked multiple choice situational questions such as working alone vs. working in a team; open communication vs. reading between the lines, etc. In the end, the system patterned up answers and produced points for four evaluating types. Four types included Contexts, Environment, Risks, and Collectivism. During the session, the trainer asked participants to do activity first before explaining theory behind it. She asked us to write down words related to cultures: what factors makes cultures different. As we were writing ideas down, she posted them on a white board. There was a picture of an iceberg with one thirds on above sea level and two thirds under sea level. She compared an iceberg with cultures. There are things we recognize by observing cultures but there are also things only understood by living them. Ideas we came up with were posted according to our perception. For instance, food, drinks and clothes are things we can touch and taste, which are easily differentiated from one culture to another. Japanese Kimonos are different from Korean Hanboks, both of which are traditional dresses. On the other hand, beliefs, mindsets, and religions cannot be easily distinguished, but we can feel them. Those factors are the ones affecting communication problems even if we can still converse orally. In some cultures, it is common to be straightforward and speak up opinions without hard feelings. Meanwhile, in some others, it is definitely rude to be straightforward. They tend to refer to things with high contexts and require perceivers to read between the lines. That is the reason why misunderstanding happens, especially in an international company. This training session taught us how to stay aware of those hidden iceberg parts and find mutual grounds to agree on. At the end of the session, the trainer revealed results of the questionnaire but nicely put together in a chart. There we could all see where we stood in intercultural communication.

**Personio and job posting**

I checked Personio to reply to candidates every day. At the moment, there were a few internship positions open such as Social Media, Community Support, Business Solutions and Public Relations. PR and Community Support are two positions I never closed as their teams included three and four interns. Moreover, as one PR intern terminated her contract earlier, I had to find replacement as soon as possible. Thus, I posted job ads on university channels and emailed personally to an UK university that InterNations had direct contact with. This university usually saved us with finding immediate replacements in case of emergencies. I sent a few tests out for candidates in Social Media and Community Support. For Business Solutions, I had issue with getting visa for an intern as she could not find an appointment in France for her visa application. From the company's side, we needed someone to start as soon as possible as the team was under staffed. I was waiting for her ZAV to come to the office and she tried to book an appointment.

### 3.6.2 Reflecting and Developing Work

Interns' meetings were better structured and more effective after intervention from supervisors. Leaders of the project took control and assigned tasks specifically to individuals. This way they commit more to the project. Project facilitator was also active in checking on progress of the project by coming by meetings from time to time. When I set up reminder for meetings, I included project facilitator so that he felt welcomed and involved with the project. As he was incredibly motivated and passionate about this project, he spread his positivity to interns and we produced better work results.

I very much enjoyed the training session about Intercultural Communication as it opened my perception of cultural differences. The method the trainer used in the session was tremendously effective by asking participants for pre-preparation. She had an effective way to catch attention by creating activities before explaining theory as she recognized theory part would be rough and dry to digest on its own. The activity did its magic and shaped our attention towards cultures and communication. I loved the questionnaire she asked to do and how she placed every answer in one sheet to compare. There we did see the differences in how we all perceive and work. I leaned towards working independently more than working in a team. I enjoyed no context environment in a way that I felt free to speak my opinions and looked for transparency. I preferred to be on the safe side of preparation rather than taking risks. Through a small activity, I had a chance to confirm my working and communication styles. All in all, it was an excellent, well-designed session to attend. Training sessions should always reach this standard of quality. The trainer had a particular coaching style to draw people's attention and generate positive outcomes. This session was also practical and relatable to real life, both professional and personal contexts. I felt like I could apply the findings here in my work and my personal life to improve communication among colleagues and international friends.

### 3.7 Calendar Week 14, 2019

In this week, I followed up on situation of Business Solutions intern and sent out tests to candidates on Personio.

### 3.7.1 Reporting on Work Activities

**Business Solutions intern**

Last week I had issue with getting work visa for a Business Solutions intern. She managed to book an appointment in France. However, as she went to submit her documents, they declined to give her six-month internship visa as her ZAV lasted only three months.

She called me to rush for a new ZAV. Having said that, it was impossible to get a new ZAV fast as ZAV was dependent on her certificate of enrolment at university which would expire in three months. In order to get her ZAV extended, she needed to submit a new certificate of enrolment. ZAV usually took two weeks to process and was sent to InterNations office. This meant that she could not start as soon as we expected her to. Process might take months to pursue.

**Personio candidates**

I moved applications on emails to Personio and screened candidates on Personio for PR positions. I checked if they were students and had to complete mandatory internships before asking for certificate of enrolment. A couple of PR candidates who already submitted their enrolment papers were scheduled to do English tests.

### 3.7.2   Reflecting and Developing Work

This week went smoothly and relaxingly. Other than replying to candidates on Personio and dealing with Business Solutions situation, I did not have much to do.
The situation with Business Solutions intern was unfortunate and procedures to get her started were tiresome and lengthy. At some point I was not sure if I could get her started as visa application seemed to be more difficult for her than others. It was not easy to handle paper work. Part of this issue came from my fault. When I screened her documents, I should have realized certificate of enrolment lasted only for three months. I did not check it carefully enough to spot the problem. I was more focused on filling the position as soon as possible to maintain work flow in Business Solutions.  I got rushed from different parties, but in the end, all we could do was to wait. There was no number to call ZAV office and fix the problem efficiently by phone. They only worked via emails and written requests. To improve or avoid the situation in the future, I should check documents more carefully, especially with candidates who needed work visa.

## 3.8   Calendar Week 15, 2019

I worked on interns' project and personal on-boarding session for new interns as some interns had feedback on poor integration of interns' package.

### 3.8.1   Reporting on Work Activities

**Interns' projects**

Followed by the success of our first activity which was to introduce interns' project by offering snacks, interns came up with another idea to inform of the project to the rest of employees who did not have a chance to listen to presentation the last time. This time, we thought of organizing an after-work party. In the party, we also prepared African snacks like last time and added a couple of new dishes. We asked for leftover money from office snacks and Monday breakfast to buy ingredients and cook them during lunch hours. As people enjoyed snacks very much the last time, we hoped this time we could keep up with high expectations. While people enjoyed food and drinks, interns had a small presentation to introduce our project idea and purposes. We prepared a short video of the project activities in Senegal where volunteers interacted with children there. Interns had to ask for permission to throw such a party after work. We were thinking of getting people finish work an hour earlier and joined the party. The party invitation was sent out by me to all employees at InterNations. Based on number of people accepting invitation email, we calculated how much snacks we should make for the party.

**HR regular meeting**

HR had weekly meeting on Friday. HR Team Lead informed me of feedback other interns had regarding to on-boarding new interns. Some said they were not informed well of current projects and understood the idea of such projects. Then HR team discussed how to improve interns on-boarding better. Therefore, I came up with the idea of organizing an interns' on-boarding session separately with regular Newcomers' Day. The sessions were only aimed at introducing interns' package to new interns and answering queries they might have.

### 3.8.2   Reflecting and Developing Work

The idea to throw a party introducing the project was brilliant. However, party was poorly organized and inconsistent. We divided the presentation into parts so that everyone had a role in the final presentation. However, when colleagues gathered to listen to the presentation, no interns showed up in the stage to carry out the presentation together. As scripts for presentation were prepared last minute, I only had time to go over my lines and relied on the rest to perform their parts well. No interns showed proactive approach in presenting and left me standing on the stage. In the end there was another intern joining me in the presentation and saved it.

For the presentation, we invited Porto team to join us digitally. We agreed to present at 17:00 which was 16:00 in Porto, at which time we did not present as there were hardly

anyone attending the presentation in Munich office. Therefore, we pushed the schedule an hour later and by the time we presented, Porto team was no longer available to listen. It was a big failure to bridge the gap between two far-away offices.

Another disappointing thing was the number of participants. When we counted people to make snacks, we made for 30 people. However, in the end, only 10 people showed up. Organization failed hard with regards to engaging employees.

Above all disappointing factors, interns managed to generate a good sum of money for charity.

When it came to improvements, I expected each intern to take the lead and be proactive in doing things. It was the effort of the whole team, instead of the effort of one person.

### 3.9    Calendar Week 16, 2019

**Happy helpers**

It is one of interns' responsibilities to help out with buying snacks and Monday breakfast, which is called Happy Helpers. Offices get snacks every Tuesday of the week and Monday breakfast for the company. Each week there are two interns picked to buy snacks and breakfast. Feel Good Manager chooses weekly interns and sends them email a week before their session. One round begins with buying snacks on Tuesday and breakfast for the following Monday. Money will be given by Feel Good Manager who organizes company's events, takes care of offices, orders supplies and calls maintenance if needed. In her email, she instructs carefully of things to buy and quantity. There are two office buildings on the same street, so happy helpers need to buy snacks for both buildings on each floor. Snacks include cookies, vegan cookies, chocolate without nuts in case people are allergic, candies, healthy nuts. In the summer, ice-creams are also included. Breakfast consists of pastries like croissants, donuts, and plain bread; and juices (orange and apple). After happy helpers finish their round, they bring back receipts and shopping bags to Feel Good Manager.

I was a happy helper last week with a new PR intern. I also needed to instruct the new intern what to buy and how many kitchens to cover.

**Personal on-boarding**

As HR team discussed last week, this week I facilitated my first personal on-boarding talk with a new Community Support intern. I set up Outlook calendar reminder and added her

in to remind of the meeting. In the meeting, I personally introduced her to interns' projects, the purpose of interns' project, interns' department exchange and training sessions. I made sure she was well-informed of all interns' packages. After the on-boarding session, I sent her emails of interns' packages including upcoming training sessions and meetings. The reason I sent extra email after the session was to help new interns remember key points of the discussion. It was a short half an hour session to explain and answer questions.

### 3.9.1   Reflecting and Developing Work

Happy helper idea was useful for the company to use extra help from interns. It was not a heavy task to complete and anyone would get familiar with what to buy after doing it once or twice. I found it hard to please everyone as we all have different tastes. People complained every single time about snacks whether they were too little, or had nothing people liked. I did not feel like it was interns' responsibility to satisfy everyone's tastes. We simply did what we were asked to complete. To improve this situation, Feel Good Manager should send out survey for all the staff to fill out, regarding their special diets and favourite snacks. Then, in the happy helper email, she could list names of specific snacks to buy, instead of giving interns total freedom to decide.

I felt positive about personal on-boarding session. When I joined InterNations, I was lost with interns' projects and training sessions. I failed to understand the idea behind them and my roles in those meetings. Moreover, I jumped in the middle of a running project; thus, catching up with what others had done was difficult. When HR team had the discussion of how to integrate interns better to the interns' package and InterNations' offer, I was thinking of a personal session to explain to new interns about all projects. From my perspectives, as a HR person, I felt the responsibility to on-board newbies carefully. Personal on-boarding sessions were short, concise and helpful though loads of information was given to newbies. I put my feet in newbies' shoes and realized that information I gave though helpful and important would come in one ear and come out the other. As a matter of fact, new people will not remember much about the details of interns' projects. Therefore, after meetings, I sent an email wrapping up everything I touched on.

### 3.10   Calendar Week 17, 2019

Interns had monthly training session this week. I prepared on-boarding for new HR intern. As I had more capacity in my work hours, I asked to participate in a few interviews with HR managers.

### 3.10.1  Reporting on Work Activities

**HR intern's on-boarding**

As a new HR intern would start in a couple of weeks, I prepared her personal schedule, MVG paper and sent her "first day" email. I edited a Word document which contained details of recruitment procedures, visa application, and other tasks HR intern needed to fulfil. I wanted to prepare my new intern better for the internship. Therefore, I made her personal schedule which used to be Senior HR Manager's responsibility.

**Training session**

I participated in interns' training session called "Project Management". The trainer is Senior HR Manager. After HR meeting about interns' integration and project productivity, she decided to facilitate a training session about project management particularly designed for interns and their current issues. In the training session, the trainer explained definition and steps of project management. After theory part, we moved on to practice part where the trainer gave all participants some post-it notes to reflect on the current interns' project and write down improvements which would make projects' progress better and more effective. Then, each participant posted their notes on a board and presented the idea they came up with. Many interns had similar development suggestions, such as assigning tasks to individuals, carrying out feedback or evaluation talk after each project and attending the meetings with a good purpose of contribution. Other ideas that we thought about were:

- Starting meetings off with a solid plan
- Discussing meeting rules and regulations
- Following up on the task completion
- Breaking down tasks
- Involving everyone
- Respecting the meetings
- Not taking personally
- Doing team building exercises
- Reminding of previous meetings' notes and ideas
- Taking meeting minutes
- Listening to everyone's ideas
- Staying open to every opinion

**Engineering interviews**

Internship vacancies had been filled, so I had free time in my working hours. I asked my HR managers to join some interviews for IT positions. Therefore, I sat in three interviews this week with my supervisor (Senior HR Manager). She added me to the position on Personio so that I could see interviewing candidates. HR conducted first calls for Engineering to justify their skills, personality fit, and introduce the company and team setup. The purpose of first calls was to get to know candidates and confirmed if they had knowledge to perform the tasks well.

Before the first interview, I prepared myself by searching for IT languages and programs' names in order to understand the interview better. The position was Backend Developer, so I looked for Backend languages and checked InterNations's requirements for this position.

During the interview, I did not sit in front of the camera as I did not feel ready to be seen. Thus, I sat opposite of the laptop taking notes. I wrote down interview questions my supervisor asked and her introduction to the company. I tried to note down names of IT languages as the candidate spoke, but names slipped my mind as I jolted down.

After the interview, I handed over my notes which contained my impression of the candidate to my supervisor. Notes would be reviewed by IT hiring managers and CTO – Chief Technical Officer. Once they reviewed candidates' applications and notes, they would inform us to proceed and send tests to candidates.

After first interview, HR manager sent tests to approved candidates. The test was a coding challenge in which candidates had a week to solve and send back the test. Coding challenge was a mini exercise aiming at evaluating candidates' skills of coding.
Once the coding challenge was accepted by CTO and IT hiring managers, HR manager set up second interview, but only this interview took place in Munich office. For candidates who did not live in Munich, InterNations would book flight ticket and accommodation so that they could come for on-site interview. In case visa process to enter Germany took too long to acquire, InterNations agreed to conduct online interview like the first interview. In the interview, candidates walked CTO and IT hiring managers through their coding solutions and explained their answers. The second interview took half a day as after running through codes and interviews, candidates had a chance to meet the team and went for lunch.

I got familiar with interview process and questions after a couple of interviews. There was always a set of fixed questions HR managers needed to make sure from candidates such as visa process, salary range, and necessary skills.

### 3.10.2  Reflecting and Developing Work

The training session finished off great as it made us contemplate and reflect on our current project. Interns came up with pretty solid ideas which afterwards were put in practice. The training session could have been planned and implemented differently to wake participants up with a call to action. The first half of the session focused only on theory in a way that trainer read PowerPoint slides to participants. It could have been done better by coming up with a practice game before giving out theory. My suggestion is to give participants a project and asked them to implement the project step by step. Then trainer could ask them to generate project management definition. After the game, trainer concluded definition and steps of project management.

Training sessions took place in late afternoons always; therefore, it is understandable for both trainer and participants to feel exhausted lose focus. The best way to avoid dozing off would be practice games.

I was proud to take initiatives in suggesting more tasks for personal development. Participating in IT interviews broadened my knowledge of IT and interviewing skills. In order to understand interviews thoroughly, I spent lots of time researching IT programs and languages. I stepped out of my comfort zone to learn something new and beneficial.

From personal perspectives, engineering recruitment process was well designed. Before sending tests to candidates, InterNations created first contacts to give applicants a feeling of personal recognition and understanding of the company. After the test, applicants had a chance to meet the team in person and performed tasks on the spot. This revealed candidates' skills and team player factor.

### 3.11  Calendar Week 18, 2019

I joined a couple of interviews with an Engineering Team Lead and took over a full-time position as my supervisor was on vacation.

### 3.11.1  Reporting on Work Activities

**Interviews with Engineering Team Lead**

After sitting in a few interviews with HR manager to understand first introduction call for IT positions, I asked my HR managers to join Engineering Team Lead in his interviews with the aim of understand interviewing process from IT sides. I wanted to develop a round and full experience from HR point of view and IT point of view. Interviews with Engineering Team Lead were conducted differently from HR managers. As he is a technical team lead, his questions sounded more technical and revolved around hypothetical situations. He also aimed at figuring out candidates' match to the team through technical questions which required candidates' understanding of the field, job and practical experiences. His interviews sometimes took an hour to conduct as he touched many aspects.

**HR meeting**

On Friday, HR team had their regular team meetings so that everyone informed others of their current work and updates. My supervisor went on vacation for a couple of weeks; thus, vacant IT positions that she was in charge of were taken over by another HR manager. My supervisor asked me to take over full-time Junior PR Manager position from screening candidates to coordinating interviews. After the HR meeting, I was added to that position on Personio as HR Responsible.  I started off by reading comments of HR manager and PR hiring manager on current candidates, checking candidates who matched requirements and moved them to interview phase. The recruitment procedure for this Junior PR Manager position would be to first screen applicants to make sure they had German work permit and agreed with the company's salary range. Candidates should have at least half a year of experience in PR field. As PR deals with press and writes press releases, candidates should possess decent English skills, both written and spoken. After all requirements were checked off, candidates would be moved to first interview which was carried by a HR person. The purpose of this initial call was to get to know candidates, figure out their motivation to apply for InterNations and checking if their social skills fitted with the company's guiding principles.

InterNations has eight guiding principles:
- Embrace differences
- Listen and say what you mean
- Nobody stands alone
- The ball's in your court
- Move forward, keep learning
- Be data-informed
- Go the extra mile and recognize when others do
- Leave your comfort zone

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(InterNations 2018.)

In the first interview, I also introduced the company to candidates, presented team setup and responsibilities and informed of further steps of recruitment process. After the interview, I wrote down some notes to give PR hiring manager.

When she approved to move forward with particular candidates, I sent them written test with which applicants had a week to complete. The test included two mini tasks: one was to generate strategy and tactics for a PR campaign; the other was to write press release for the campaign. Once candidates sent back their tests, they would be graded by Editorial Office team. PR hiring manager reviewed graded tests and candidates' profiles before informing me if she wanted to proceed.

Followed was a second interview with PR hiring managers. Senior PR Manager and Head of Content and Communications department joined the second interview to assess candidates' skills. The reason for two interviewers evaluating applicants was to avoid biased opinions and assess candidates more thoroughly.

After the second interview, hiring managers would decide whether to offer a candidate the position, when the person would start, and how much would be the salary. HR Team Lead would sent contract out and took care of administrative papers.

### 3.11.2 Reflecting and Developing Work

Sitting in technical interviews was tough for me to understand to the full of IT knowledge and skills. I tried to note down questions asked and Team Lead's answers for my personal development. However, as a HR person, it was difficult, not to mention impossible, to mimic such interviews. Engineering Team Lead had an intense and blunt way of interviewing candidates that made them anxious and scared. Personally speaking, I would prefer him to respect candidates and ask questions nicely, in a less attacking way.

Taking over a full-time position was a big step for me. When I was assigned to Junior PR Manager position, I was not sure if I could handle the position well. It would not be the first time I was in charge of a full-time position. Previous times I participated in the interviews with HR mangers as a role of observer. However, this time I had to be responsible for it on my own. I tried to force myself out of comfort zone and handle the position with extra care. I was worried if my knowledge of PR was not enough or my understanding of the compa-

ny was not concrete. Thanks to the preparation of previous positions I participated and interviews I sat in, I understood recruitment process better and faster.

### 3.12 Calendar Week 19, 2019

I supervised new HR intern and took care of Junior PR Manager position from screening to interviewing.

### 3.12.1 Reporting on Work Activities

**Junior PR Manager position on Personio**

I screened PR candidates in the talent pool and moved them to suitable buckets. I scheduled two first interviews during this week. Candidates had relevant PR experiences, good profiles, agreed with the company's salary range and had work permit.
In the interview, I asked candidates to walk me through their CVs and highlighted relevant PR experiences. After that, I focused on the most related experience or current work to ask more questions. I concentrated on finding out their motivation to apply, their personalities, and social skills. Therefore, focusing on one specific experience, I asked how they handled conflicts, how their team and working culture went, what steps they took to solve disagreements and what challenges they faced during their work. Through people-oriented questions, I picked up their characteristics via their tone of voice and their approaches to issues. If candidates already had "manager" title and managed a team of their own, my questions revolved around what leadership styles they pursued and how their team mates talked about them.
The one crucial point in InterNations's work culture is feedback and open communication. Candidates should have experiences or good positive approach to feedback, especially constructive criticism. When a problem arises, the company encourages everyone to speak up their minds and communicate openly in order to keep a healthy and positive work environment.

**Supervision of new intern**

New HR intern joined this week. I would supervise her for two weeks before I left. I introduced her InterNations's organizational structure, the importance of checking Confluence dashboard and get familiar with Confluence as it contains all updates and important documents. Followed was introduction to Personio and recruitment process. I sent her a Word document consisting of every little detail of recruitment steps. She found the document so

helpful and detailed that she could turn to the document whenever she felt lost and forgot something in the process.

### 3.12.2 Reflecting and Developing Work

It was tough to juggle between on-boarding new intern and taking care of vacant positions and carrying out interviews. I felt like my attention was divided and left with a mess in mind. It took me half a day or even a day to screen candidates on Personio and still need-ed to supervise new intern's work. To improve new HR intern's integration into tasks, I created a Word document writing down in detail of recruitment process and every task HR intern should accomplish. I found my list effective, detailed and easy to follow as I used more words to explain steps rather than diagrams and pictures.

Though it was a tough week, I fortunately managed well during that busy week. As I intro-duced new intern to recruitment process of interns, she was in charge of them since. This spared time for me to take care of full-time position. This week was a great example of workload that I imagined to fulfil during my internship. I suggest InterNations to give HR interns more tasks to fulfil and test boundaries.

I had anxious feelings before my first interview in life. It acted as a blocking stone to my career. Once I lifted that stone up, I saw myself moving forward and getting more experi-enced. My interviews went well. I developed an interviewing routine to review candidates' profiles before interviews, write down their experiences and my expected questions. After candidates' answers, I built my question system around.

I questioned about practicality of the first HR interview with applicants. I only interviewed candidates whose applications PR hiring managers already reviewed and proceeded with. With or without first HR call, those candidates would have tickets to move forward and I sent them the tests. My concerns affected interview quality. At some point, I ran out of questions as they spoke and left an empty silence in between. My solution to this issue was to leave candidates good first impression on the company before they continued to complete written tests. During interviews, I tried to give facts and information of the com-pany and team setup, as well as work culture and employee benefits. I focused more on their social skills to ensure their match to the company's culture.
I found it hard to jolt down, ask questions and listen simultaneously. I often got distracted with what candidates presented and forgot my points to write. I improved this problem by separating my paper sheet in two parts. Left part was spared to write down impressions

and right part was to write down questions in mind. In this way, I would not lose track of what candidates were talking about.

After the interview, I spent 5 minutes to gather my thoughts about the candidates and posted my notes on Personio for hiring managers to review. I tried to note as detailed as possible with the focus on candidates' personalities and social skills. I backed my opinions with facts and evidence I gathered from interviews' answers and impressions.

### 3.13 Calendar Week 20, 2019

I helped with preparation of on-site workshops and had final feedback talk with my supervisor regarding my performance during internship.

### 3.13.1 Reporting on Work Activities

**On-site workshops**

During my last week of internship, I helped with preparing for on-site workshops for all hiring managers and leaders. The topic of workshops was "Social Skills for Hiring Process". Hiring managers and leaders were divided into two groups. Each group attended the workshop separately. The first group to attend workshop consisted of Business Core leaders such as Content and Communications, Business Solutions, and Community Management. The second group mainly included IT leaders. Each workshop lasted half a day (4 hours). HR Team gathered a list of social skills which were collected by HR team and the rest of the staff. Besides technical skills which are important to perform the job well, leaders of each department sat down together and aligned with three top social skills which all candidates must have to go through recruitment process.

As job requirements and mind-sets of each leadership groups differentiated, results came out a little different. With Business Core leaders, it was a fast discussion to align with three top skills as they leaned towards people orientation. Candidates must have good communication skills, become good team player and come across as a proactive person. However, it was a tough call for Engineering team to find mutual voice. The discussion went on longer than scheduled but they did not seem to be happy with their chosen skills. They grouped different skills from various groups together and renamed group names. IT leaders required more from their team members, rather specifically. Team members should not take things too personally and strictly, should definitely have a good sense of humour and understand the importance of the company's products.

After two workshops, three top social skills leaders from both workshops agreed with
were:

- Communication skills
- Open-minded team player
- Proactive approach

**Final hand-over session with new HR intern**

The purpose of this meeting was to make sure new HR intern get everything under her
control and understanding. In this session, she walked me through recruitment process
and other task details, which helped her to visualize and remember them.

**Final feedback talk with my supervisor**

I had final feedback talk with my supervisor. In the talk, I had a chance to speak up from
my experience what I think should be improved, also listened to my supervisor's feedback
on my performance and development. I suggested to change two week of handover to
new interns to one week as two weeks was too lengthy. However, it should not be
changed as different people perceived and absorbed information differently. When I
joined, it took me a few days to handle all tasks well. Meanwhile, another intern could take
more than two weeks to stand on their feet. I also recommended giving HR interns more
tasks as current responsibility would not take up eight hours a day. But then again, it de-
pended on how much time a person picked up the pace and worked independently.

### 3.13.2 Reflecting and Developing Work

My last week went really fast with handing tasks over fully to new HR intern, attending
workshops and having feedback talk with my supervisor.

Workshops were well planned and implemented. Through them, I gathered useful skills for
my professional backpack. Participants in those workshops were all hiring managers;
therefore, I had a chance to listen to their opinions in selecting candidates. I actively
helped with preparing workshop documents, and gathering leaders' ideas into a docu-
ment. By doing this, I learnt the most important skills companies look for in candidates and
what kind of answers interviewers expected from applicants. I also collected a few more
interview questions to ask candidates through sorting out workshops' results.

InterNations cares about employee feedback and constantly improves for staff, which is one of plus points that makes InterNations stands out from other companies. I loved the idea of carrying two feedback talks: one in the middle of internship and the other at the end of the internship. Open feedback is the most efficient way to understand what employees think of the company and workload. Moreover, it is a way to appreciate employees' good work.  I felt like my work served as an important part of the company and I was valued and appreciated by my good performance.

# 4   Conclusion

Through 13 weeks of internship, I have grown tremendously in a professional way. In this chapter, my key findings for personal development will be discussed with the aim of helping myself to see my strengths and development areas for future improvement. Also, key findings for InterNations to improve their business management structure will be interpreted.

## 4.1   Key Insights on Personal Development

During my internship at InterNations, the nature of the job in HR field and the company has taught me significantly. I went extra mile to discover my talents in talent acquisition side of HR by being responsible for all internship vacancies, guaranteeing a smooth circulation of interns in the company and also by taking over a few more tasks to get out of my comfort zone.

I discovered a new horizon of IT recruiting which would be my focus area in the future. Participating in IT interviews requires me to understand IT terms and meanings with a view to asking in-depth questions to candidates. This is my development area to research on. For my personal development, I wish to pursue courses in IT to understand how all technical programs harmoniously work together in order to recruit best suitable persons for suitable positions.

I had a chance to be in charge of the whole recruitment steps for a full-time position in PR, which served as a crucial advancement in my professional path. I learnt a great deal of interviewing experiences and handling candidates. Observing interviews and coordinating interviews are totally different. I appreciated that I did not pass an opportunity to experience both.

I took ownership of my tasks and took care of them from start to finish. I handled different tasks at the same time and turned stressful situations to memorable ones. I realized my talents to work more productively under stress.

Apart from aspects I have grown in HR field, active sourcing is my focal area but did not have a chance to practice and learn during my internship. Nowadays, not only candidates find suitable companies, but also the other way around. Companies actively search for suitable matches. With the help of technology and targeted tools, I believe I will familiarize with outbound hunting techniques.

### 4.2    Key Insights on Company Development

When it comes to recruitment and selection procedures, InterNations has been performing very well and effectivelyInterNations always keeps communication transparent with candidates and keeps waiting time as low as possible. The company has defined clearly what they look for in candidates by sketching important skills and requirements. They understand the company's culture and their employees. Therefore, in this topic, I do not have any suggestions.

Moreover, InterNations has been doing great in appreciating employees, giving interns certain space to develop and freedom to get creative with their jobs. I valued that InterNations has feedback culture to five open constructive feedbacks with a view to helping interns improve their performance. Feedback talk is also a way to verbally appreciate interns of their hard work and contribution. Managers and supervisors at InterNations are helpful and open to suggestions of new tasks and responsibilities as long as interns can handle them with good quality standard.

InterNations needs to develop a more thorough and consistent induction for new employees. More specifically, HR team should have a more consistent way of on-boarding new HR interns. Apart from leaving interns handing over tasks to new ones, HR managers should also explain current HR projects, purpose of weekly meetings, and expectations from HR interns. It is good to have two week handover to go through procedures' details and prepare new interns to work on their own. It will be more beneficial for new interns to know managers' expectations from them and standard of performance. After a week of getting to know tasks, HR supervisor or HR Team Lead should conduct a personal, one-on-one talk with the new intern to make sure the person get integrated well. In the meeting, HR managers can introduce other managers' tasks and responsibilities, current projects, regular meetings and their purposes. This meeting is a good idea to align both parties' expectations. Some interns might be happy with only interns' recruitment process; meanwhile others might need to have more tasks at hand.

Furthermore, InterNations can improve induction by creating a mini NewComers' Day for employees who join in the middle of the month. NewComers' Day should be the first day for new employees and interns to get introduced about InterNations's mission, vision and guidelines. New employees who join at the beginning of the month participate in Newcomers' Day on their first day at work. However, for those who start their job and internship at the middle of the month, they need to start working two weeks before they get introduction day. For full-time employees who have already been working in companies,

they have an idea of how professional formats should look like. Meanwhile, for interns who just start their first job at a company, they will have trouble fixing fonts and writing styles regarding a simple thing like writing date and time. Therefore, I suggest InterNations to organize a mini orientation day for employees and interns joining in the middle of the month. Orientation day should include sessions in official Newcomers' day such as meeting CEO, Confluence introduction, brand and styles, guiding principles and IT introduction. On the occasion of only one new employee joining, it is responsibility of specific department to conduct orientation day.

When it comes to Monday breakfast, InterNations should make it a culture to attend breakfast, especially when a new employee or intern joins. At the moment, mainly interns attend breakfast on Mondays. Full-time employees come to pick up pastries and leave for work. More often, a new full-time employee was left in the breakfast with a couple of interns. It was hard for interns to generate conversations as responsibilities differ and interns did not know all departments in the company. After the breakfast, the new person felt lost as no one came to instruct her where to go and where her department sits. As a solution, employees should definitely show up in the breakfast, or at least a few people from the same department attend to show appreciation and welcome.

Adding to induction of new employees, InterNations should introduce the company's culture, mission and vision during recruitment phase, with a view to get candidates familiarized themselves with the company. For all recruiting positions, there should be a short introduction call implemented by HR team or specifically HR intern. This call plays a beneficial and crucial part in embracing the company's employer brand and broadenin HR intern's interviewing experience. First of all, during first introduction call, candidates should be well-informed of the company's mission, vision and work culture. After the call, candidates need to sign up on the platform as an user and test InterNations's products personally before moving forward with selection phase. Secondly, when candidates sign the contract either in person or virtually, InterNations should include the introduction of company and department setup. By this, new employees will not be completely lost on their first day at work. Lastly, this initial call benefits HR intern in a way that he/she gains experience to interview applicants. Interviewing is not one of HR interns' responsibilities. Therefore, having first calls with candidates can broaden their task circle and prepare themselves for future career path. All in all, with all the benefits of first introduction call listed above, new employees will truly be integrated into the company's work culture fast and efficiently.

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