

# **Developing Employer Brand Voice Communication in Recruitment**

Case Ubisoft RedLynx

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<p>This study examines the current state of brand voice communication in the candidate messaging activities of the case company Ubisoft RedLynx. The objective of the study was to develop and streamline the transmission of the brand voice during the case company's recruitment process.</p> <p>The study consisted of six project tasks supporting the primary objective of the thesis project. These project tasks included preparing the theoretical framework, analyzing the brand voice transmission in the current candidate messaging templates, preparing the brand vocabulary for supporting candidate communication activities, creating the new candidate communication templates, presenting the new message templates and brand vocabulary, and evaluating the project.</p> <p>The study involved qualitative methods only. First, qualitative documentation analysis was conducted to establish the strengths and development points of the existing candidate communication templates. Then, qualitative interviews with the case company's recruitment and communications staff were carried out. The interviews aimed to obtain information about the current steps and practices of the recruitment process, the interviewees' insight and development wishes regarding the existing candidate communication templates, and how the company's employer brand could be transmitted more effectively in the candidate communication templates.</p> <p>The interviews showed that the existing candidate communication templates brought added value to the company's recruitment messaging activities. However, it became evident that the existing template resources were limited, causing other types of candidate messaging to be created from scratch. The resulting time constraints affected the quality and consistency of candidate communication. In addition, the results from the interviews suggested that the templates could convey the company's brand voice more effectively in terms of word choice and information transmission.</p> <p>Based on the results from the existing documentation analysis and qualitative interviews, the new candidate communication templates and brand vocabulary were created. The candidate communication templates covered stages from the attraction to the selection of the recruitment process. The brand vocabulary included words, terms, and phrases faithful to the company's brand voice attributes and was integrated into the case company's brand voice guide.</p>	
<b>Keywords</b> Recruitment, candidate experience, employer branding, brand communication, brand language, brand voice, brand tone	

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# 1 Introduction

This is a bachelor's thesis for the Degree Programme in International Business in the major specialization of Human Resource Management (HRM). The thesis is a project-based thesis aiming to improve the effectiveness and consistency of Ubisoft RedLynx's brand voice communication in their recruitment processes.

This introductory chapter provides the reader with a detailed introduction to the thesis topic and the project objective, as well as the project environment and limitations. The chapter also includes definitions of the key concepts of the thesis, the structure of the thesis report, and a brief introduction of the case company.

## 1.1 Background

A brand is the distinguishable perception of a specific product, service, company, or organization. It acts as an intangible business tool, driving commercial value, which often exceeds those of non-branded products or services. (Lischer 2020.) The term 'brand' was originally associated with only consumer products and services. Today, the word is used in a much broader context, in which any distinct identity can be described as a brand. Moreover, the brand often doubles as the reputation that the identity carries, whether that reputation is a positive or a negative one. (Barrow and Mosley 2005, 57.)

As the importance of brand strength in the context of competitive advantage grows, companies are becoming more attentive to how their brand or brands are communicated to specific target audiences. To support this, specific language styles are created and cultivated to convey the personality of the organization's brand to these audiences (Delin 2005, 2). A clearly communicated tone of voice is critical, especially in a company's recruitment process and the various stages it encompasses. Increased demand for talent has expanded candidates' options when evaluating potential employers and recruiters, further underlining the importance for a company to speak its candidates' language.

At the time the thesis topic idea was conceived, I worked at Ubisoft RedLynx in the human resources team as an HR Coordinator, with a growing interest and some allocated responsibilities in the field of employer branding. A subtopic of employer branding that fascinated me the most was external branding communications; more specifically, the content creation, copywriting, and linguistic design of the content for our external communication channels.

During this time, the case company was in the process of creating and developing a brand voice guide to document the company's brand voice attributes and language styles to support content creation in varying contexts and channels. However, the transmission of the brand voice in recruitment communication had not yet been established. Thus, I knew that this was the right project to embark on and negotiated with the company stakeholders a thesis topic to support the cultivation of brand voice communication guidelines for recruitment processes.

## **1.2 Project Objective**

The thesis project aimed to improve the effectiveness and consistency of Ubisoft RedLynx's brand voice communication in their recruitment process. The project outcome was a set of message templates used in the company's candidate communication activities, and a brand vocabulary formulated to support candidate messaging. The message templates and brand vocabulary were intended primarily for the company's recruitment staff to use. The project was carried out between January 2020 and May 2020.

The thesis project objective was to update Ubisoft RedLynx's recruitment communication materials and align them with the company's brand voice principles to help strengthen the company's employer brand, improve the candidate experience of future candidates and attract suitable prospective talents in future recruitments.

The project objective (PO) for the thesis project was formulated as follows:

Project objective (PO): Ensuring consistent and efficient communication of company brand voice in Ubisoft RedLynx's recruitment process.

The project objective was further divided into five project tasks (PTs) in the following manner:

Project task 1 (PT1): Preparing the theoretical framework.

Project task 2 (PT2): Analyzing the current state of the case company's recruitment communication touchpoints and existing message templates sent to candidates during the recruitment and selection processes.

Project task 3 (PT3): Preparing a brand vocabulary to support communication on a word and sentence level in the recruitment and selection stages.

Project task 4 (PT4): Creating the new candidate communication message templates for recruitment and selection stages.

Project task 5 (PT5): Presenting the brand vocabulary and new candidate communication message templates. Collecting feedback on project deliverables from HR, recruitment, and communications staff and finalizing them.

Project task 6 (PT6): Evaluating the project.

Table 1 below presents the overlay matrix, including the theoretical framework, project management methods, and outcomes for each project task.

Table 1. Overlay matrix

<b>Project task</b>	<b>Theoretical framework</b>	<b>Project management methods</b>	<b>Outcomes</b>
PT1: Preparing the theoretical framework.	Theories on employer branding, recruitment, candidate experience, and brand communication and brand language.	Desktop study.	Theoretical knowledge base to support PT2-5. Chapter 2.
PT2: Analyzing the case company's current recruitment communication touchpoints through existing message templates and qualitative interviews with recruitment and communications staff.	Data collection from PT1. Existing candidate communication materials of the company.	Interviewing case company staff members responsible for recruitment and communications. Desktop study of existing candidate communication materials.	Current state of recruitment touchpoints and brand voice communication in candidate messaging. Chapter 3.
PT3: Preparing a brand vocabulary to support communication on a word and sentence level in the recruitment and selection stages.	Data collection from PT1. Case company's brand voice guide.	Content creation and desktop study of data collection from PT1 and case company's brand voice guide.	Brand vocabulary for supporting candidate communication activities. Chapter 4.
PT4: Creating the new candidate communication message templates for recruitment and selection stages.	Data collected from PT1-3.	Content creation and desktop study from PT1-3.	New candidate communication message templates. Chapter 5.
PT5: Presenting the brand vocabulary and new candidate communication message templates to HR, recruitment and communications staff. Collecting feedback on project deliverables and	Data collection from PT2-4, feedback on project deliverables from the case company and personal reflection.	Presentation meeting with recruitment, HR and communications staff.	Presentation and finalization of the project deliverables. Chapter 6.

finalizing them based on the feedback.			
PT6: Evaluating the project.	Data collection from PT1-5, feedback from the case company on project deliverables and personal reflection.	Desktop study and personal reflection of data collection from PT1-5.	Evaluation of the project. Chapter 7.

### 1.3 Project Scope

This thesis project was centered on the topics of human resources, recruitment, employer branding, and communications. As the case company had previously been deploying recruitment communications without a framework for the consistent transmission of the brand voice, the thesis project aimed to provide a supporting framework to these practices in the shape of the brand vocabulary and new candidate communication message templates.

As the main objectives of the thesis project were centered around the external communications practices of the company, internal communications practices were not included in the foci of this thesis project. This thesis focused only on improving the external brand voice communication in the recruitment processes of the case company. Other areas where brand voice communication is applied, such as corporate communications or product marketing, were not covered.

As English is the primary language used in all communications within the case company, both the brand vocabulary and candidate communication templates were created in English. In terms of the candidate communication message templates, only the English language templates were assessed. If a template was only written in a language other than English, I created an English language version of such template, however without separate analysis of the version written in another language.

The project outcomes focused solely on written communication done in online channels and digital documents. The project did not focus on communication deployed in face-to-face interactions.

As the external brand communication process is very broad, the thesis foci were the brand communication in the recruitment process, and the design and management process of the employer brand within the field of recruitment communication. Additionally, this thesis provided an introduction into the concepts of recruitment process and candidate experi-



ence, but aimed to explain these concepts from the communication standpoint in detail, exploring topics such as candidate communication and communication of the employer brand in recruitment.

The project scope covered candidate messaging during the **attraction, application, screening, assessment,** and **selection** stages of the recruitment process. Stages not included were the **planning** stage, where the job ad is developed and published, and the **contract** stage, which follows the selection stage and includes the employment contract process. The figure below illustrates the recruitment process stages included in the thesis scope.

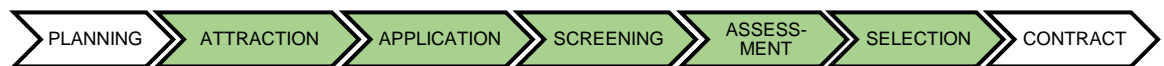


Figure 1. Illustration of the recruitment process areas included in the thesis scope

The implementation of the project outcomes are not studied or discussed in this thesis. The feedback conducted and received for the project outcomes will serve as their evaluation as well as for the evaluation for the entire thesis project.

#### 1.4 International Aspect

The thesis project contained multiple international aspects. Ubisoft RedLynx is a Finland-based company operating in the global market, and a subsidiary of Ubisoft, an international game publisher. In terms of staffing, Ubisoft RedLynx is a multinational company, with roughly one-third of its workforce consisting of expatriate employees.

At the time of writing, the company's employee base was comprised of 24 different nationalities. English was primarily used in both the internal and external communications of the company. Thus, the outcome of this thesis was projected to be beneficial for the company on an international and cross-cultural level.

#### 1.5 Benefits

The thesis mainly benefited the case company's Human Resources, Communications, and Talent Acquisition teams. The candidate communication templates helped streamline candidate messaging activities and save time spent on formulating messages. Moreover, the brand vocabulary supported freeform candidate messaging outside the scope of ready-made templates to help maintain consistency of brand voice communication. Through the developed candidate communication framework, the company's future prospective candidates would receive comprehensive information about the recruitment pro-

cess, and enhance their candidate experience through transparent and frequent communication from the company and effective transmission of the employer brand.

The project outcomes were also thought to be beneficial for future onboarding practices, as both the candidate communication templates and the brand vocabulary provided relevant information about the company's brand voice attributes and communication of the employer brand, which would be useful for possible new additions to the company's recruitment and/or communications team members.

I benefited from the thesis project by learning how to improve the communication of an organization's employer brand to prospective talents, how to design and conduct qualitative interviews and how to analyze and report key findings from the interviews, and how to effectively manage a multidimensional project like this one. On a theoretical level, I gained a thorough understanding of employer branding as a concept, its different components and influencing factors, and how and why it should be effectively communicated in the recruitment process.

## 1.6 Key Concepts

**Recruitment** is an organizational activity aiming to identify and attract people possessing certain skills and competencies to support the company in achieving its strategic objectives. These activities include gathering a number of suitable candidates and improve the chances of them accepting a job offer, while enhancing the company's attractiveness as an employer. (Saks 2005, 47.)

**Candidate experience** is the sum of all contact points and interactions between a candidate and an employer during the recruitment process, as well as the candidate's perceptions and responses to these interactions. It is considered a vital building block of a successful recruitment and selection strategy, as well as a valuable factor for creating a strong employer brand. (Sushman 2019, 2.)

**Employer branding** is "the package of functional, economic, and psychological benefits provided by employment and identified with the employing company" (Ambler and Barrow 1996, 4). While external employer branding covers the strategy to manage and influence an organization's reputation as an employer of choice among key stakeholders and prospective talent, internal employer branding is the reputation of an employer among its current employees (Reiners 2020, 2).

**Brand language** is the verbal transmission of the brand personality and purpose, covering words, phrases, and terminology associated with the brand (Lindstrom 2008). Brand language is primarily used in managing the brand's impression on its target audience (Lerman, Morais and Luna 2018, 2).

**Brand voice** is a subcategory of brand language aiming to formulate a distinct personality behind the brand by further tailoring the words expressed by the brand to suit a specific context or content piece (Sienkiewicz 2019).

**Brand tone** refers to the emotional inflection applied to the brand voice. While a brand's voice is designed to remain consistent across media and content, the brand tone can be modified and adjusted to suit the specific context of messaging by assessing certain attributes such as the formality, casualness, and enthusiasm of the used language. (Ellering 2020, 7.)

## 1.7 Case Company

Ubisoft RedLynx is a video game development studio founded in 2000 and headquartered in Helsinki, Finland. Commonly referred to as RedLynx, the company is one of Finland's largest and oldest game development studios. In 2011, the RedLynx studio was acquired by international game publishing giant Ubisoft, thus renaming themselves as Ubisoft RedLynx. (Ubisoft RedLynx 2019.) At the time this thesis was published, the studio had 145 employees. The company turnover is approximately 11 million EUR (Finder 2019).

Since its establishment, Ubisoft RedLynx has developed over one hundred games on gaming platforms such as PlayStation, Xbox, PC, and Nintendo Switch. At the time this thesis was published, RedLynx was the only Ubisoft studio to develop games for both console and mobile platforms under the same roof. The studio is best known for its physics-based motorcycle racing series Trials, with over 6 million copies sold on all major gaming platforms. (Ubisoft 2019, 31.)

In 2017, Ubisoft RedLynx released the mobile game South Park: Phone Destroyer, which was developed in collaboration with South Park Digital Studios. The gameplay combines real-time battles and collectible cards. The newest addition to the Trials series, Trials Rising, was released in 2019 with a strong focus on user-generated content and real-world competition while remaining faithful to the classic Trials gameplay. (Ubisoft 2019, 31.)

In 2020, Ubisoft RedLynx ranked in 10<sup>th</sup> place in Universum's Most Attractive Employers ranking among IT companies in Finland, based on Universum's 2020 Talent Survey. The

Talent Survey gathers yearly research on some 14,000 Finnish students' views on the country's most desirable employers, ranking the employing organizations by industry and based on how attractive they are perceived by students. (Universum 2020, 2-6.)

At the time this thesis was published, I was working at Ubisoft RedLynx as a human resources coordinator. I am interested in the fields of employer branding as well as communications. Thus, I believe that developing RedLynx's brand voice communication in its recruitment process and updating its recruitment communication materials to better convey the company's unique brand voice can help strengthen and differentiate the company's employer brand, improve the candidate experience of their applicants and aid in attracting suitable candidates amongst potential talent.

### **1.8 Report Structure and Project Management Methods**

The project management process of the thesis project was comprised of six project tasks. Figure 2 below illustrates the project management methods of the thesis project as well as the report structure of the thesis.

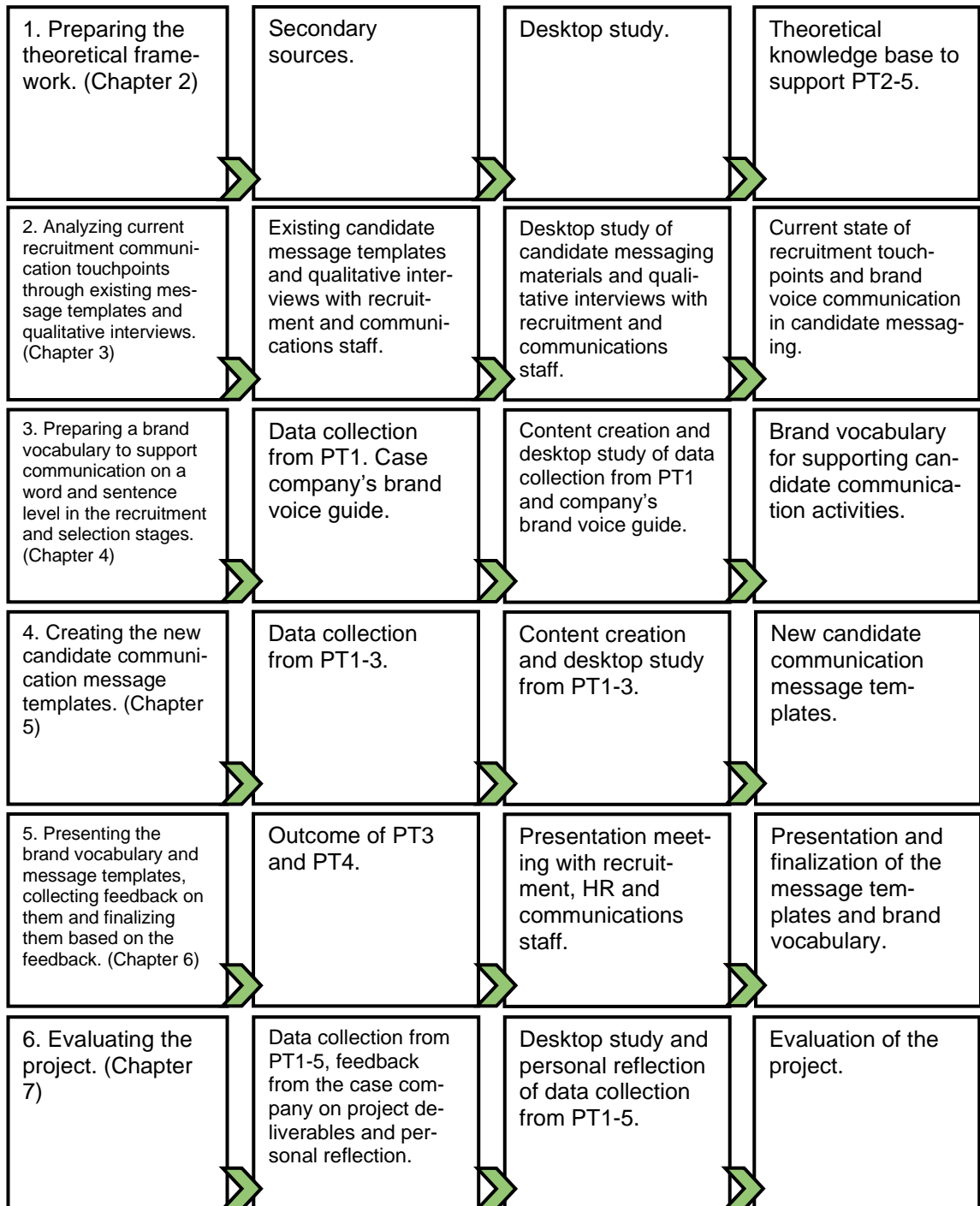


Figure 2. Project management process

## 2 The Role of Brand Communication in the Recruitment Process

Chapter 2 introduces project task 1, which consists of preparing the theoretical framework for the thesis.

This chapter is divided into three main subchapters organized in the following manner. Chapter 2.1 covers the definition and history of employer branding, presents the influencing components of an employer brand and its design and management process. Chapter 2.2 explains the brand communication process and defines concepts associated with the external communication of a brand, presents the concepts of brand language and brand linguistics, and explains the attributes of the brand voice and brand tone. Finally, Chapter 2.3 presents the concepts of recruitment process and candidate experience, and delves into recruitment communication and the importance of employer brand communication in recruitment activities.

The figure below illustrates the key elements in the theoretical framework.

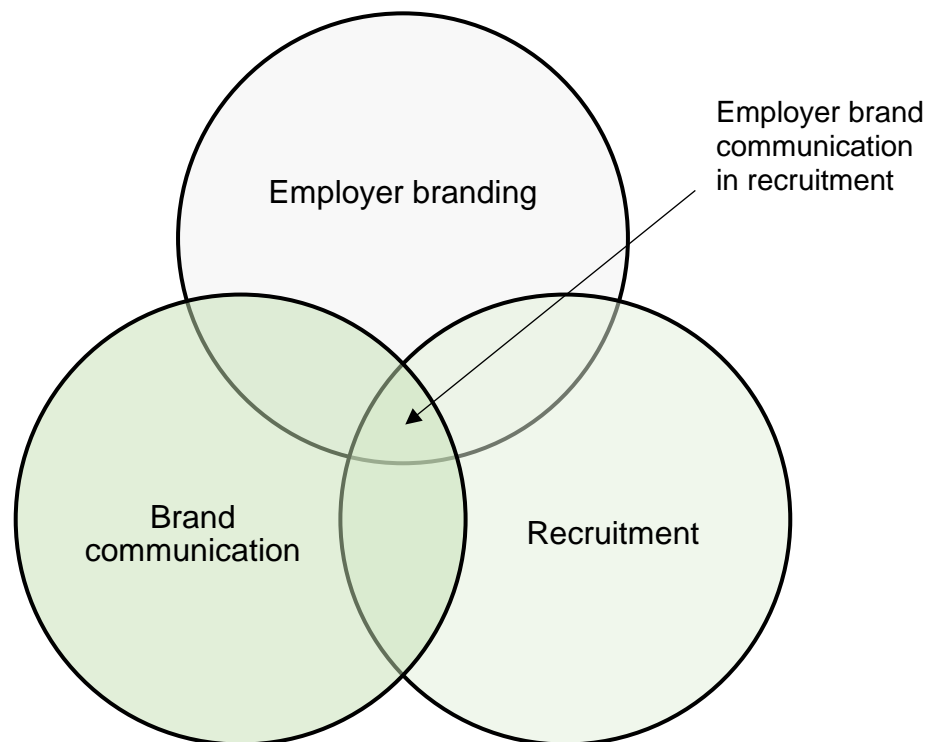


Figure 3. Theoretical framework

## **2.1 Employer Branding as a Concept**

The terms brand and branding are commonly used in today's vocabulary. A brand represents the full personality of the company and its interface between its audience. The term branding is often used to encompass many aspects, from the general marketing of a product to a new logo or name. (Davis 2017, 12.)

In the world of business, it is important to distinguish the varying elements and likenesses of corporate, consumer, and employer brands. Consumer brands are crafted in consideration of customer perceptions of the company's products and services. In contrast, corporate brands are associated with the company's reputation based on its purpose, vision and values. An employer brand focuses more specifically on the company's reputation as an employer both inside and outside the organization (Mosley and Schmidt 2017, 12).

All three brand types share the goal of attaining an image that is noticeable, relevant and unique to the target audience (Moroko and Uncles 2008). The brand types are characterized by values and personality traits, offer clearly defined functional and emotional benefits and aim to position themselves in the minds of their target audiences and to differentiate from their competitors. The brand types are also influenced by the same concepts of positioning, segmentation and differentiation, also referred to as brand fundamentals (Barrow & Mosley 2005, 61). Meier (2006, 15) suggests that while corporate brands must coordinate their brand image keeping in mind multiple stakeholders such as shareholders, customers and the public, employer brands maintain a single stakeholder relationship with their employees.

Employers have become more aware of the importance of attracting and recruiting employees whose values align with those of the organization (Ind 1998, 323). To support this, the development of an employer brand helps the organization to differentiate itself among employers in the competitive talent market. Moreover, employer branding aims to enhance the knowledge current employees have of the culture and strategy of the organization. (Backhaus and Tikoo 2004, 501-502.)

### **2.1.1 Emergence of Employer Branding**

Employer branding is a relatively new concept that has not yet undergone extensive research, nor has it established a unified definition. Thus, its core characteristics have been subject to varying perspectives as suggested by numerous theorists. The concept was first defined in the late 1990s; in the December edition of the *Journal of Brand Management* in 1996, Tim Ambler and Simon Barrow described employer branding as "the pack-

age of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment and identified with the employing company” (Ambler and Barrow 1996, 4). To this day, this is considered one of the most common definitions for the concept.

Employer branding was first perceived as a bridge between human resources and marketing, but it soon gained traction among organizations as a strategic tool covering the entire employment experience and earning an important role in companies’ HR activities. In a 2003 survey conducted by The Economist, it was found that 61 percent among HR professionals and 41 percent of non-professionals recognized the importance of building a strong employer brand within an organization. (Lacka-Badura 2015, 17.)

Jiang and Iles (2011, 98) suggest that employer branding “represents a further extension of branding theory and research” alongside creating distinctive employee value propositions and communicating to existing and potential employees that the organization is a desirable place to work. Moreover, Backhaus and Tikoo (2004, 117) define the employer brand as “the promotion of a unique and attractive image of the firm as an employer – a distinct employer identity.” These definitions focus on the external perception of the employer; the “branding” aspect of employer branding.

This goes to show that while employer branding does not carry a universally agreed definition, the varying characterizations give insight into the multidisciplinary nature of the employer brand and hold equal importance when the big picture of employer branding is examined. Theorists have, however, found common ground on the key benefits of building and developing a strong employer brand. These benefits include large-scale attraction of high-quality talent, improved employee retention and decreased turnover, higher levels of employee engagement, increased profitability and attainment of key performance indicators in various organizational sectors (Barrow & Mosley 2005, xvi; Mosley & Schmidt 2017, 9; Rosethorn 2009, 163).

Oftentimes, the cultivation of an employer brand sparks questions from inside the organization regarding the best suited representative to drive the employer branding strategy and the practices supporting it. Rosethorn (2009, 163) suggests that the employer brand must be actively sponsored by the organization’s CEO and leadership team, as well as adopted and understood by every individual within that organization. Mosley and Schmidt (2017, 10) agree that existing employees should participate in employer branding as content creators and brand advocates, as well as engaging with potential talent.



While the process of forming an employer brand has been illustrated, the process of effective employer brand management requires certain components to be established in the employer branding strategy. These components are further defined in Chapter 2.1.2. The process of designing and managing the employer brand will be explained in Chapter 2.1.3.

## **2.1.2 Employer Brand Components**

As mentioned in Chapter 2.1.1, this subchapter explains and discusses the components that form and influence an employer brand. The correlation between the components will also be discussed.

The **employee value proposition (EVP)** is considered to be one of the most influential building blocks of the employer brand. While the customer value proposition grants a customer a reason to buy a certain product, the employee value proposition communicates to the prospective employee what the organization has to offer that is of value and persuades them to join or remain with the company (Armstrong 2009, 496).

The EVP is not limited to attracting prospective staff, however; it comprises everything an employee experiences during an employment relationship. For organizations formulating an EVP, Hubschmid (2012, 52) suggests that a focal point should be on answering the following question: "Why should a talented, well-qualified, and motivated person prefer this company over all the others as an employer?" In simple terms, an EVP must be designed within the organization and effectively communicated outside of it to attract potential talent.

**Employment experience** is a term used to describe the experiences of an employee during various stages of their employment at an organization (McLeod and Waldman 2011, 10). While an EVP is an external promise to prospective employees, employment experience is the actualized delivery of the promise throughout the employee lifecycle. Successfully striking a balance between the two enhances the development of a strong employer brand.

**Employer image**, as described by Cable and Turban, is the external perception of a company as an employer. An organization's employer image can be further broken down into three subcategories: employer information, job information, and people information. Employer information consists of objective and factual attributes of a firm such as company policies and procedures, while job information refers to the information available on a certain job role, its description, and career development opportunities associated with the

job. People information is obtained through the company's existing and prospective employees and the information transmitted by them about what working for the specific firm is like. This information aids prospective employees in deciding whether they would be a good fit in the organization. (Cable and Turban 2001, 125-127.)

Understanding the difference between **internal** and **external employer branding** as well as their correlation with each other is a crucial step in the process of building a successful employer branding strategy. While a company's internal employer brand focuses on what the company's employees think about working at the organization, while the external employer brand is about what people on the 'outside' think of the company as an employer.

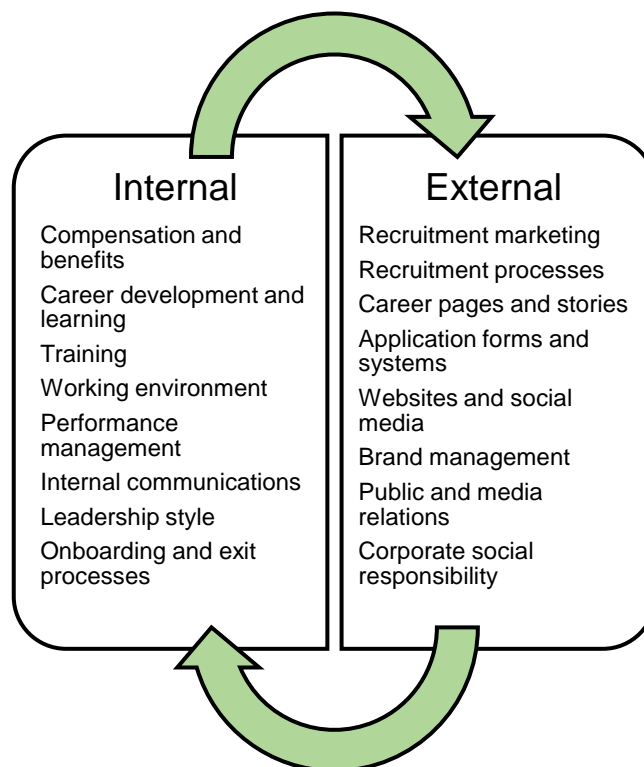


Figure 5. Visualization of the attributes of internal and external employer branding (Adapted from Laine 2017)

Theorists have varying views on the individual components of the employer brand and their relation to each other. This, in turn, has given way to the creation of various employer branding models. Minchington (2009) refers to his employer branding model as the **employer branding ecosystem**. It presents a wide range of elements that shape and affect employer branding activities both internally and externally.

Moreover, Minchington suggests that the employer branding ecosystem “identifies and adapts to the key elements of systemic change in the world at work”, which is visible from the inclusion of industry aspects and trends affecting the industry the organization operates in (Minchington 2009).

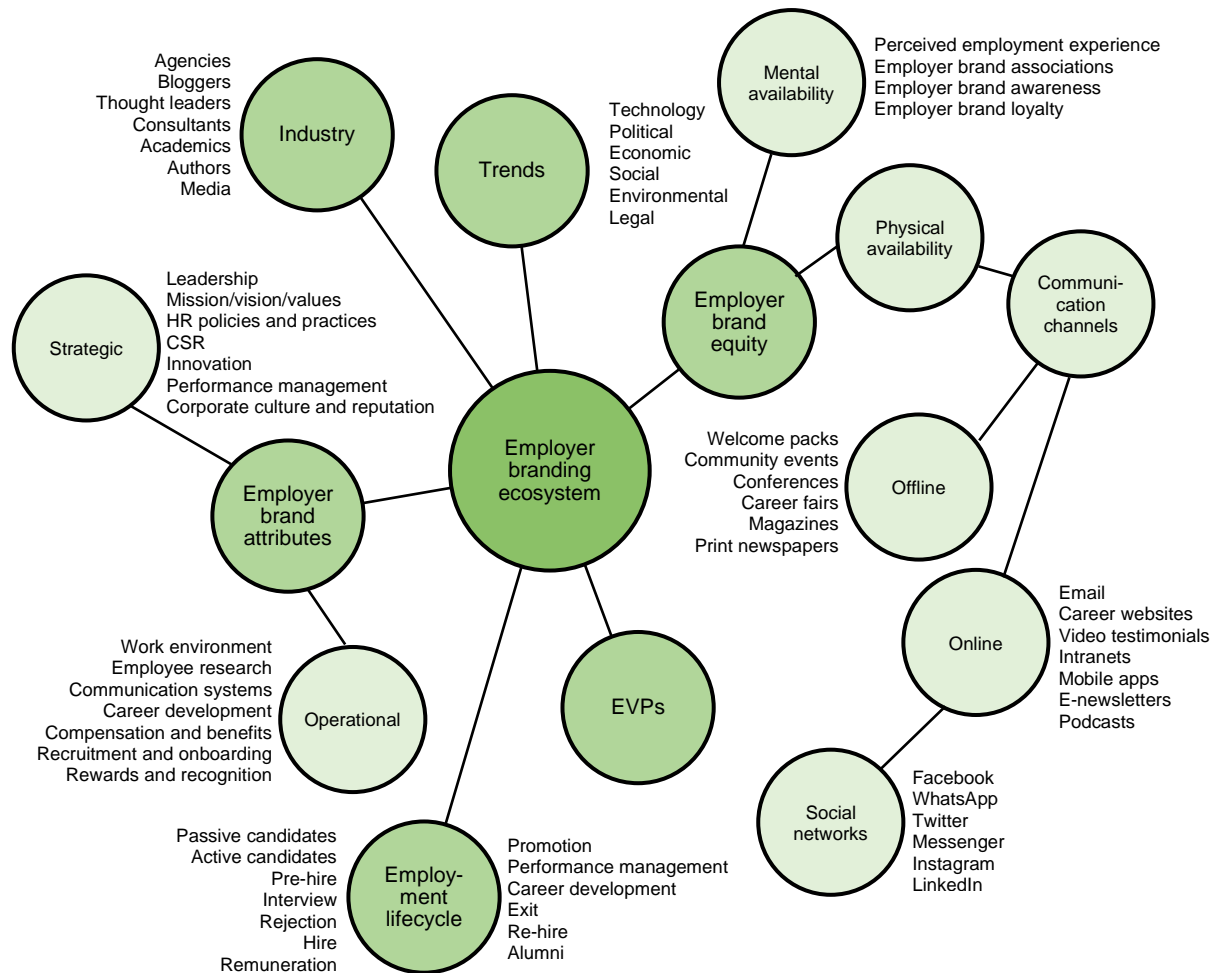


Figure 4. Employer branding ecosystem (adapted from Minchington 2009)

Once an organization has defined and aligned these concepts with their employer branding strategy, it is time to think about the management and the external communication of the employer brand to guarantee a holistic employer brand experience. The process of designing and managing the employer brand will be explained in the next chapter.

### 2.1.3 Designing and Managing the Employer Brand

This subchapter focuses on the employer brand design and management process on an organizational level. Barrow and Mosley suggest that the process of managing an employer brand consists of unifying the current brand reality and brand vision. Developing

and refreshing the brand while preserving its clarity and consistency is at the core of employer brand management (Barrow & Mosley 2005, 65).

A detailed employee experience model has been outlined by Barrow and Mosley (2005, 150), which they refer to as the employer brand mix. This model is comprised of twelve key dimensions divided into organizational and local aspects. The employer brand mix aims to showcase the various factors influencing an employer brand.



Figure 6. The employer branding mix (Barrow & Mosley 2005, 150)

As part of employer brand development and management, Barrow and Mosley suggest that the concepts of positioning, segmentation and differentiation are essential. Together, these concepts are referred to as **brand fundamentals** (Barrow & Mosley 2005, 58).

**Brand segmentation** refers to the breakdown of a large target audience into smaller groups. In an employer branding context, organizations use segmentation to divide current and prospective employees into specific groups to help identify the exact needs of

such groups. In practice, these segments can be features such as salary and seniority grids. (Barrow & Mosley 2005, 100.)

**Brand differentiation** helps brands emphasize what sets them apart from their competitors and makes them better at fulfilling the needs of the target audience. This is done through the formulation of the employee value proposition (EVP), which acts as the most significant differentiator of the company. (Barrow & Mosley, 62-63).

Following the successful segmentation and differentiation of a brand is the **brand positioning**. The purpose of brand positioning is to define the current reality of how the brand is perceived by the target audience alongside with the future brand vision. The employer brand proposition must be positioned carefully among current and prospective employees and offer tangible, relevant, and unique experiences. Barrow & Mosley, 126-127.)

## **2.2 Communicating the External Employer Brand**

This subchapter relays the process of external employer brand communication. Chapter 2.2.1 presents branding concepts that are essential to understanding the employer brand communication process, while Chapter 2.2.2 focuses on the verbal aspect of brand communication, namely brand language and brand linguistics. Chapter 2.2.3 goes in depth into brand voice and brand tone.

### **2.2.1 Brand Personality and Brand Communication Process**

This subchapter explains the brand communication process and the general concepts associated with it. To help the reader associate the concepts with employer branding, examples of the concepts from an employer branding standpoint are also presented. To remain within the scope of this thesis, the concept of brand communication is discussed from an external standpoint and with prospective employees as the target audience.

**Brand communication** is regarded as an important part of brand management and is the total sum of activities performed by an organization to influence the target audience's opinions about a brand. Brand communication is considered a core component of brand management and brand strategy and helps in perpetuating a purposeful conversation with the brand's target audience (Bhasin 2019). Barrow and Mosley (2005, 129) note that brand communication plays an important role in helping to improve the general understanding of the company's brand, as well as enhance the external perception of what the organization offers.

**Brand personality** is the articulation of the brand’s unique personality traits. Parameswaran (2008, 122) describes the brand personality as “seeing the brand as a person and defining the traits as possessed by the brand”. In some cases, brand personality is constructed with selective communication and management of the brand, while in others the formation of the personality is entirely dependent on the culture and behavior of the people representing the brand that the target audience comes into contact with. (Barrow & Mosley, 61).

A brand is communicated through every contact a target audience has with the brand. These contact points are also referred to as **brand touchpoints**. Brand touchpoints comprise all points of interaction or communication between a brand and its target audience. Each individual touchpoint represents a single component in the overall brand experience of the target audience. Brand touchpoints that are designed and implemented by the organization are crafted to engage their target audience and provide them the best possible brand experience (Aitman 2019).

A brand touchpoint can be tangible, such as a product or physical environment, or intangible, such as a service or a word-of-mouth discussion concerning the brand. In addition, brand touchpoints can be conceived by the brand owner, such as in the case of an advertisement; or the brand user in the instance of a blog post reviewing the branded product or service. (Abbing 2010, 170.)

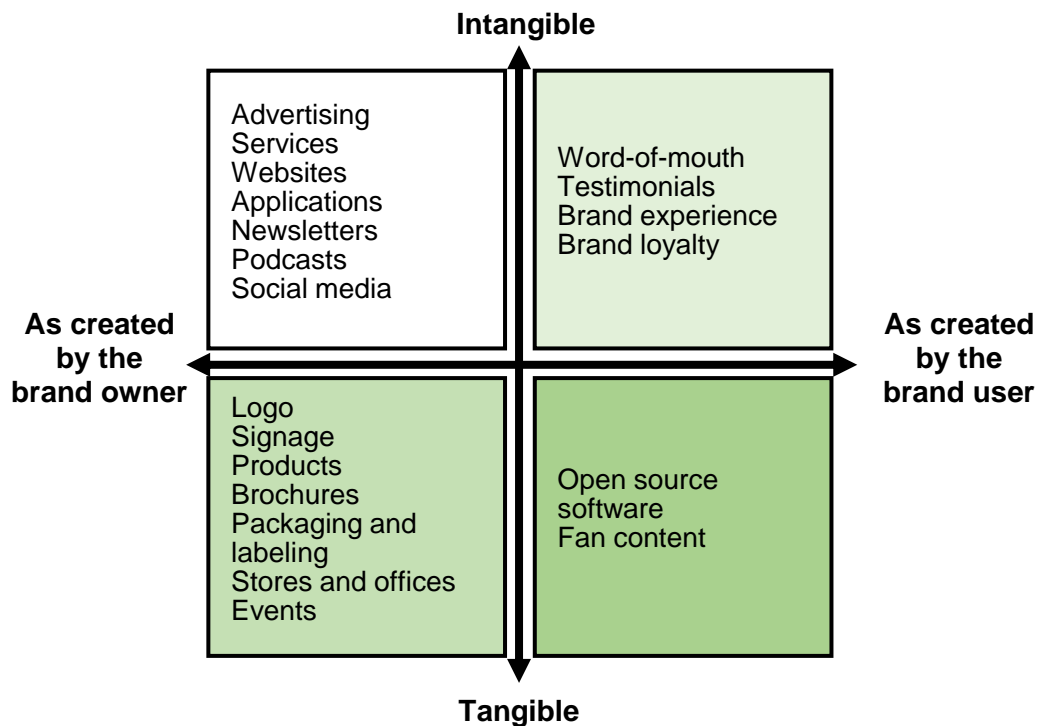


Figure 7. Visualization of brand touchpoint attributes (Adapted from Abbing 2010)

Abbing (2010, 171) reminds that all brand touchpoints should be designed with three main objectives in mind: fulfilment of the needs of the brand's target audience, alignment with the brand's identity and strategic goals, and faithfulness to the brand promise. Discrepancies between the communication of the brand and the perceived reality of the brand may lead to feelings of illegitimacy by the target audience, or even create expectations for the brand that subsequently fail to be delivered (Barrow & Mosley 2005, 64).

In marketing, brand touchpoints are divided into three categories: touchpoints taking place during the pre-purchase experience, the purchase experience, and the post-purchase experience (Abbing 2010, 171). In an employer branding context, these touchpoint categories are subsequently transformed into pre-application experience, application experience, and post-application experience. When the touchpoints are carefully outlined and their content and messages are conveyed in an effective and strategic manner, they help in shaping the organization's employer brand and bettering their position as an employer of choice (Gózdź 2019).

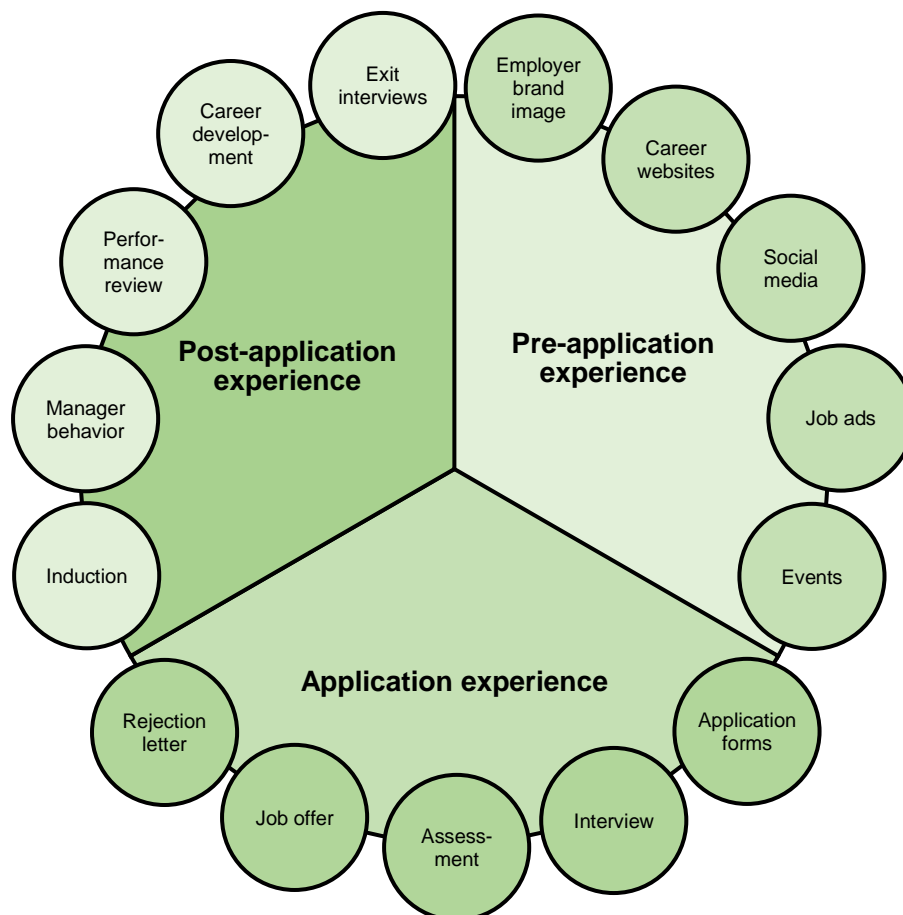


Figure 8. Visualization of employer brand touchpoints

Verbal transmission of the brand's personality and purpose is another crucial factor in effective brand communication. This will be discussed in Chapter 2.2.2.

### **2.2.2 Brand Language and Brand Linguistics**

**Brand language** is the verbal and linguistic identity of a brand, comprising its choice of language and vocabulary, as well as the tone of voice used in various situations (Carnevale, Luna & Lerman 2017, 580).

A brand language aims to build a strong association between the brand and the words used in the communication of the brand. Lerman & al. (2018, 2), adds that brands use language as a strategic tool to manage their impression on their target audiences and effectively target these audiences. Moreover, creating a strong brand language and verbal identity is thought to help the brand's awareness as well as differentiate the brand from its competitors with a similar offering (OnDemandCMO 2013).

Following the growth of social media and online marketing, organizations have begun to broaden their presence through a variety of marketing channels. Subsequently, brand language is ever present in these messages, wherever written and spoken language is used. These instances include recruitment activities, corporate communications, investor relations, sales presentations, conference speaking and retail staff. Internally, companies deliver brand language through internal presentations, staff conferences and through intranet sites. (Capps 2016.)

According to Lindstrom (2005, 53), the first step in integrating specific language styles into a brand is identifying the words that best reflect the brand's personality. These are described as words the brand wants to "own". Once this is established, integration of the brand language into all communications performed by the organization is noted as the best way to secure the language to the brand, instead of it being "suddenly placed on top like a piece of decorative icing." (Lindstrom 2005, 53.)

Multiple factors contribute to the way the brand personality is conveyed through language. Di Somma (2015) narrows these factors down to three: formality, dialect, and rhythm.

1. Language formality conveys the relationship and potential conversations between a brand and its target audience. Upscale brands often express themselves through sophisticated language and concepts, while popular brands may emphasize visual representation of their personality, focusing less on verbal brand transmission.
2. Dialect refers to the way a brand adds uniqueness to its verbal expression and complements the brand's visual identity. Dialect also has a strong correlation with



the industry the brand is positioned in, and seeks to differentiate the way the brand speaks to avoid having it “blend in” with the rest of the brands in the industry.

3. Rhythm refers to the speech pattern of a brand’s language. It aims to influence the target audience to ‘hear’ the brand in interactions. Retail brands may opt to convey urgency through certain word choices or commands, while professional brands may speak in longer, pensive sentences. Ultimately, the way a brand speaks is a direct product of the atmosphere it wishes to create in the minds of the target audience. (Di Somma 2015.)

The high number of internal and external sources influencing brand language subsequently makes it challenging to control. While the visual identity of a brand is commonly managed from a central source and has clear design guidelines to secure consistency, the verbal transmission of the brand can be very scattered throughout various sources, both internal and external. (Capps 2016.)

To assess and review the consistency of the brand language, a **brand language audit** can be performed. Lerman (2008, 43) describes the brand language audit as an inventory of the language styles utilized in the communication of the brand, as well as the linguistic approaches used by the brand with which it aims to differentiate itself among its competitors. In addition, the audit identifies the key messages that the brand sends to its target audience using the specific language styles.

**Brand linguistics** is a term used to describe the combination of certain linguistic elements and modes of meaning in brand communications (Lerman & al. 2018, 151). The linguistic domains in brand linguistics include psycholinguistics, sociolinguistics and semiotics. These three domains focus on separate factors of language and subsequently influence brand communication in specific ways.

1. Psycholinguistics studies the acquisition, storage and processing of language by the human mind. In brand communications, psycholinguistics gives insight on various areas including brand name development, ad copy, brochures, and websites. Additionally, it aids the understanding of how brand category perceptions differ based on the words used to describe the categories.
2. Sociolinguistics examines the connection of language with social structures and human relationships. While psycholinguistics focuses on language inside the mind, sociolinguistics examines language outside the mind and in communications with others. In brand language contexts, sociolinguistics helps understand language styles, word usage and sentence construction to communicate social relationships, and how the language chosen for brand communications can cue particular social identities as well as reflect and connect with an overall culture.
3. Semiotics studies the use and interpretation of signs and symbols. Semiotics helps understand how language can be used and even manipulated to communicate a variety of brand meanings, how the components of language are interpreted, and

what meaning is derived from those symbols. In brand communication, semiotics provides insights in branding practices such as advertisement and packaging design. (Lerman & al. 2018, 17-18.)

Once the specific language styles and preferred “atmosphere” of wording are agreed upon, the fundamentals of the brand voice are established. The concepts of brand voice and tone are discussed in the following chapter.

### 2.2.3 Brand Voice and Brand Tone

**Brand voice** refers to the personality, attitude and values expressed by a brand, similarly to a person’s voice when transmitted through spoken word. The main objective of the brand voice is to formulate a coherent personality behind the company through specifically chosen words. (Sienkiewicz 2019.) Brand voice is considered a fundamental of effective branding and a key element in building the brand story (Lerman & al. 2016, 51.).

Much like the brand language, the brand voice must be consistent and recognizable throughout all content delivered by the brand. Contradicting messages can convey a sense of uncertainty in the target audience’s mind. Increased repetition of specific words, punctuation and sentence structure allows the target audience to associate the brand with its specific voice with more ease.

While brand voice describes the company’s personality, the **brand tone** conveys the emotional inflection applied to the brand voice (Ellering 2020, 7). While there are varying definitions for the term ‘tone of voice’ in the context of branding, most sources define it as a combination of linguistic elements undertaken by a brand to express the brand personality and differentiate the brand from its competitors (Delin 2005, 10; Lerman & al. 2018, 51; Sienkiewicz 2019). Subsequently, the tone of voice influences the way the target audience of the brand perceives the brand’s message (Nielsen Norman Group 2016).

Ellering also notes that while the brand voice remains consistent throughout content and media, the tone may be changed and adjusted to better suit the particular context of a transmitted message. A practical example of this could be the difference between a social media post about a spring sales campaign and an announcement about a company crisis; the specific contexts call for contrasting approaches in formulating the tone of voice for the two content pieces. (Ellering 2020.)

Moreover, Verbina (2019) suggests that the flexibility of the brand tone allows its customization depending on the media used to convey the message, content format and length, emotions or actions the content wishes to evoke in the target audience.

The linguistic attributes employed by both brand voice and brand tone include word choice, word order, sentence structure, as well as usage of idioms, metaphors, rhymes, and punctuation (Lerman & al. 2018, 52.)

In a 2016 study conducted by Nielsen Norman Group, it was found that the formulation of a brand's tone of voice had significant influence on readers' perceptions of an organization's friendliness, trustworthiness, and desirability. In addition, the study found that a reader's impression of an organization's integrity and honesty is a strong predictor of their willingness to recommend that brand. The outcome of the study consisted of four dimensions for creating comparable brand tone profiles for different content pieces to better manage the target audience's perception of the brand. (Moran 2016.)

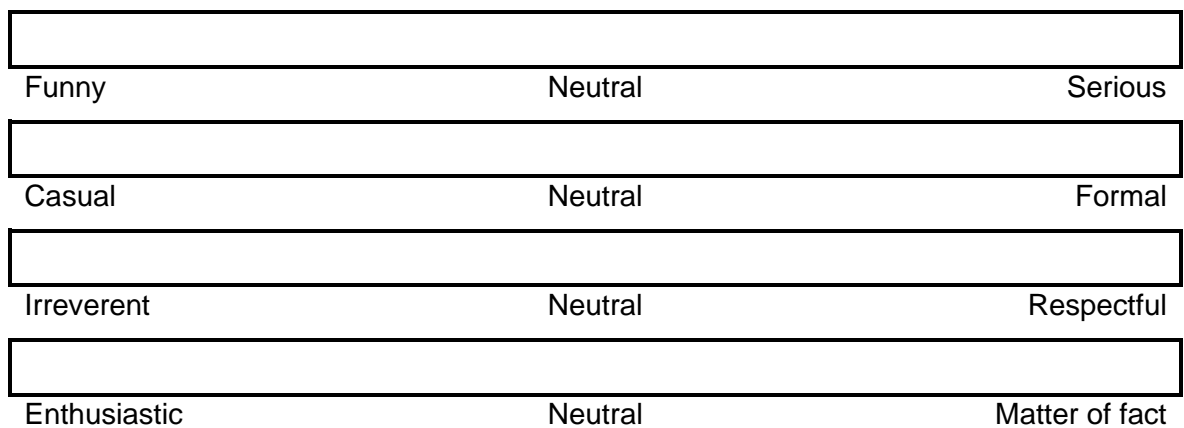


Figure 9. Four dimensions of brand tone of voice (Adapted from Nielsen Norman Group 2016)

On an organizational level, the person or persons responsible for defining a company's brand language, voice and tone should possess a number of competencies. Knowledge of the brand culture is considered of utmost importance to properly define the brand values. Analytical skills are essential to conduct proper target audience research and brand positioning, as well as writing skills to express the brand personality in verbal content. Finally, a collective intention on an organizational level to streamline the brand's way of speaking to their target audience is required to successfully design and implement the brand's unique language styles. (Verbina 2019.)

### 2.3 Recruitment and Brand Communication

This subchapter explains the concepts of recruitment process and candidate experience and relays the steps of communicating the employer brand to the target audience during

the recruitment process. Chapter 2.3.1 explains the concepts of recruitment process and candidate experience, while Chapter 2.3.2 delves into recruitment communication and recruitment touchpoints which influence candidate experience. Chapter 2.3.3 discusses the role of communicating an employer brand in the recruitment process.

### **2.3.1 Recruitment Process and Candidate Experience**

The term “war for talent”, initially coined by Steven Hankin in 1997, refers to the increasingly competitive labor market where employers aim to attract and retain employees amid shifting workforce demographics (Keller and Meaney 2017, 2.) This is not done in vain; Ployhart (2006) agrees that high-performing employees give companies a competitive advantage over their rivals due to the challenging nature of finding and replacing talented employees. Moreover, Rueff and Stringer consider that “having the right people at the right time and place is a make-or-break factor for organizations of all sizes” (Rueff and Stringer 2006, xxii).

Pilbeam and Corbridge (2006, 143) define the **recruitment process** as “a process which aims to attract appropriately qualified candidates for a particular position from which it is possible and practical to select and appoint a competent person or persons.” The action of building a recruitment process consists of an organization defining and outlining a recruitment need, effectively utilizing appropriate recruitment methods and selection techniques, and of continuously reviewing and modifying the process. (Pilbeam and Corbridge 2006, 142.)

In most cases, the recruitment process follows a series of clearly outlined steps. The process commences with the employer identifying the need for hiring and defining the selection criteria, which serves as a framework for selecting the final candidate for the position later on. The initial step is also called the **planning** phase. The next step includes the **attraction** stage of the candidates, where the job ad is created and published, and prospective candidates begin applying for the open position.

The attraction phase is followed by the **screening** phase, also known as the reduction phase, consisting of assessing candidates through screening applications, conducting interviews and tests, and reducing the number of applicants in the applicant pool to help bring the employer closer to the final candidate for selection. The last step of the process is the **selection** phase, where the final candidate is chosen among the remaining applicant pool, and the employment offer is extended to the candidate. Upon the candidate accepting the job offer, the candidate is **hired** into the company as an employee, successfully concluding the recruitment process. (Dessler 2013, 138.)



Figure 10. Recruitment process steps (Adapted from Dessler 2013, 138)

**Candidate experience** is the sum of all contact points and interactions between a candidate and an employer during the recruitment process, as well as the candidate’s perceptions and responses to these interactions. Candidate experience considered a vital building block of a successful recruitment and selection strategy, as well as a valuable factor for creating a strong employer brand. (Sushman (2019, 2.)

Dinnen and Alder suggest that the two primary reasons behind the importance of good candidate experience are the direct effect on a candidate’s perception of the employer and the brand impact resulting from a positive or negative candidate experience. Moreover, Dinnen and Alder argue that one of the defining factors of poorly constructed candidate experience is the lack of an appointed responsible or department in an organization with full control over the entire recruitment process. (Dinner and Alder 2017, 72-73.)

The main elements of candidate experience follow quite similar steps as that of the recruitment and selection process but from solely the perspective of the candidate. This is alternately referred to as the **candidate journey**. The candidate journey can then be further broken down into the awareness, consideration, interest, application, selection, and hire.

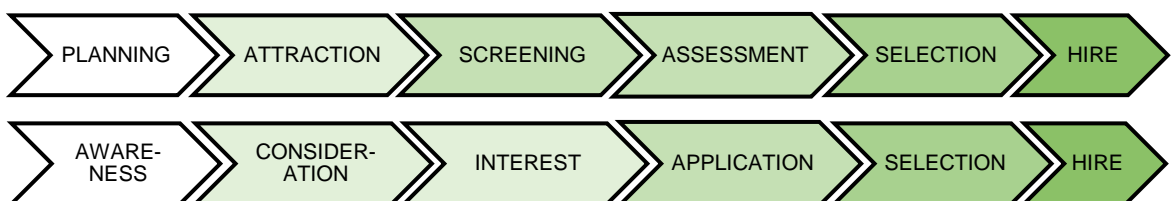


Figure 11. Comparison of the steps of the recruitment process and the candidate journey (Adapted from Dessler 2013, 138; Zojceska 2018)

Zojceska (2018) suggests that mapping out a candidate journey unique to the organization’s recruitment practices gives way to improved candidate experience. It adds to the development of the company’s employer branding activities and helps understand candidates’ needs and wishes in different phases of the journey. Dinnen and Alder (2017, 72) add that continuous analysis, optimization, and improvement of candidates’ experience of the recruitment process proves valuable especially when searching for high-quality talent.

Word-of-mouth is also an important communicator of employer reputation among candidates. Mosley (2014, 244) reminds that if a candidate has a negative experience during the recruitment process, they are likely to share the experience with their peers, thus working against the organization's employer brand. To avoid this, employers should practice honesty and transparency during the recruitment process, communicate clearly their unique value proposition, and provide a positive impression of the organization as an employer (Paauwe 2017, 2.)

### **2.3.2 Recruitment Communication**

This subchapter explains the concept of **recruitment communication** and its impact on the candidate experience. Breaugh and Starke (2000) define recruitment communication as the total sum of information and messages transmitted during the recruitment process, with the employer as the sender and the job applicant as the recipient.

According to Allen, Van Scotter and Otondo (2004), research has recognized the importance of effective communication in candidate attraction, namely in the content of sent messages and the perceived role of the recruiter as the message sender. Breaugh and Billings (1988) add that the recruiting company should design their messages to be both credible and understandable from the candidate's perspective.

The degree of comprehension of sent messages can also be affected by the message medium, for which theorists hold varying views. Stiff (1994) suggests that a written message may be clearer than a verbal one because a written message can be read and examined more than once. Conversely, Lengel and Daft argue that even complex messages may lead to better understanding when they are transmitted verbally, due to the nature of in-person communication having variables such as tone of voice and non-verbal cues. Subsequently, a written message lacks all such nuances. (Lengel and Daft 1988.)

However, a recent study conducted by Jansson (2018, 68) found that in recruitment communication, email is found to be the preferred medium for correspondence between the candidate and the employer. Jansson's study also emphasized the importance of designing recruitment communication to be efficient and convenient from the candidate's viewpoint. Candidates expect continuous and consistent communication to convey the organization's respect toward the prospective employee. (Jansson 2018, 68.)

**Candidate communication touchpoints** comprise various instances during the candidate journey where communication between the candidate and the employer takes place.

During the candidate journey, candidates can have multiple interactions with the recruiting organization's employer brand and its employees, both online and offline. These instances include seeing an organization's job advertisement and visiting their career site, talking to a company representative at a career fair, filling out a job application online and attending an interview. (Zojceska 2018.)

Templates for candidate communication refer to ready-made message patterns supporting all stages of the recruitment process from a communication standpoint. As recruiters perform high volumes of candidate correspondence and include common elements into sent messages, formulating templates for candidate communication saves time spent per each composed message. In addition, they help streamline and maintain consistency of the interaction between the candidates and the recruiter. Pavlou (2020) reminds that while message templates are valuable tools, they may carry the risk of lacking personalization if they are not customized to the company's communication style. Sent messages should mirror the company's language and aim to emulate a face-to-face conversation.

### **2.3.3 The Role of Employer Brand Communication in Recruitment**

This subchapter focuses on the communication of the employer brand during the recruitment process, with the prospective employees of the recruiting company as the target audience.

As stated in Chapter 2.1, a strong employer brand is considered an essential ingredient when attracting top talent. Communicating the employer brand helps shape perceptions and understanding of the employer brand (Barrow & Mosley 2005, 144). In recruitment, employer brand communication aims to differentiate the employing company among its competitors, ultimately gaining an advantage as an **employer of choice** as perceived by prospective employees. Hubschmid (2012, 53) further defines an employer of choice as a first-choice, or top-of-mind company, to which job seekers decide to apply.

Backhaus and Tikoo note that during the recruitment process, the employer brand relays information to the prospective employee that "contributes to a formation of a psychological contract between the employer and the employee." Thus, employer branding messages should truthfully convey information about organizational culture to reduce the possible perceptions of a breach in the psychological contract. Conversely, failing to provide a realistic preview of the job and company culture may possess the risk of increased turnover. (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004, 508.)

Although employer branding and communication are prevalent in each stage of the recruitment process, their impact is most significant in the attraction stage of the process, as the primary outcome of recruitment activities in the attraction phase is the potential candidate's decision to apply for the job (Kainulainen 2014, 25). However, Mosley (2014, 244) suggests that the external communication of the employer brand through recruitment advertising should carry the same brand attributes into the application and screening process to ensure a consistent experience of the employer brand by the candidate.

Employer brand communication also aids in applicants' self-selection process, or the decision to pursue a job application. An employer portraying sufficient information on their organizational values helps candidates to decide for themselves whether or not they wish to work for the employing company based on perceived fit between the person and the organization. (De Cooman and Pepermans 2012, 218.)

This concludes Project task 1, the preparation of the theoretical framework. With the finalization of the theoretical framework, the reader should now possess a holistic understanding of the relevant theoretical concepts to advance onto the next tasks. Project task 2 is reported in the next chapter.



### 3 Current State of Brand Voice Communication in the Recruitment Process

This chapter introduces project task 2, which consisted of analyzing the current state of brand voice communication in Ubisoft RedLynx's candidate communication templates. The analysis was conducted qualitatively using existing documentation and through individual qualitative interviews with the company's Talent Acquisition Specialist and Communications Manager.

Chapter 3.1 explains the project management methods of the project task, and Chapter 3.2 presents the results of the existing documentation analysis. Chapter 3.3 and Chapter 3.4 report the results of the qualitative interviews.

#### 3.1 Project Management Methods

To analyze the brand communication in Ubisoft RedLynx's recruitment messaging, three different project management methods were utilized.

First, the **current recruitment touchpoints were identified** by consulting the company's Talent Acquisition Specialist on the instances they communicate with candidates, as well as by examining existing candidate communication templates. The purpose of outlining the recruitment touchpoints was to establish a proper timeline of candidate communication in terms of order and frequency. The process of identifying the recruitment touchpoints included highlighting emerging obscurities or missing information, which was documented into development points presented in Chapter 3.2.

Second, the **existing candidate communication templates were analyzed**. The knowledge base for the analysis consisted of theories on candidate experience and recruitment communication. The theoretical concepts are relayed in Chapter 2.3.1 and Chapter 2.3.2. The foci of the analysis included quality of grammar and punctuation, word choice, faithfulness to RedLynx's brand voice, and level of information provided from the candidate's viewpoint.

During the analysis, obscurities or missing information in templates were noted and documented as development points. Attention was placed in outlining recruitment touchpoints that were missing a template altogether, as well as making a note to create an entirely new template for such touchpoints. The results of the analysis of existing candidate communication templates are presented in Chapter 3.2.

The third project management method consisted of **individual qualitative interviews** with Ubisoft RedLynx's Talent Acquisition Specialist and Communications Manager. The interview structures and questions were formulated based on the obscurities documented during the recruitment touchpoint and message template analysis. The interviews sought to receive more information on how candidate communication has been carried out in the company, as well as clarify parts in the message templates that were unclear or missing information. Additionally, the interview delved into what the Talent Acquisition Specialist and Communications Manager wanted to improve, change, or remove from the templates altogether. The results from the interviews are relayed in Chapter 3.3 and Chapter 3.4.

At the time this thesis was written, the Talent Acquisition Specialist worked as the only recruiter and the Communications Manager as the single communications responsible in the company. The questions of the qualitative interviews were formulated based on three distinct themes: the company's current recruitment process and practices, the existing candidate communication templates, and the company's employer branding and employer brand communication in the recruitment process. Different questions were presented to the Talent Acquisition Specialist and Communications Manager based on their field of expertise. The interview questions are presented in Appendix 1.

The interviews were conducted online on April 24<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> and lasted for approximately one hour each. I recorded the interviews and took notes of the interviewees' responses after the discussions while listening to the recordings.

### **3.2 Results of Existing Candidate Communication Template Analysis**

This subchapter relays the results of the analysis of the existing candidate message templates. Key development points for the message templates are also provided.

Consultation of the company's Talent Acquisition Specialist revealed that Ubisoft RedLynx had a total of seven ready-made messages for candidate messaging, out of which six were message templates, and one was an automated message integrated into the company's external recruitment tool. Aside from these ready-made messages, the Talent Acquisition Specialist had kept documentation of candidate communication instances in their files, using this documentation in a freeform manner in situations where the usage of templates was not applicable. However, to remain within the scope of this thesis, documentation outside the templates was not analyzed.

To understand the sequence in which the existing templates were used during the recruitment process, I arranged the templates in chronological order. The chronological order of the templates is relayed below.

1. Automatic thank-you message for submitting an application
2. Candidate rejection based on job opening application, no pipeline
3. Candidate rejection based on open application, no pipeline
4. Candidate rejection based on open application, add to the company's talent pool
5. First-round interview invitation, face-to-face
6. First-round interview invitation, remote
7. Second-round interview invitation

Following this, I formed a chronological timeline to clarify and outline the candidate messaging instances where the templates are used during the recruitment process. It was found during the consultation of the Talent Acquisition Specialist that the candidate rejection templates were used interchangeably for various candidate rejections during the recruitment process, even though they were labeled as applying to rejections following the application stage.

The templates were identified to cover the **application**, **screening**, **assessment**, and **selection** stages. Figure 12 below illustrates the current state of candidate communication touchpoints.

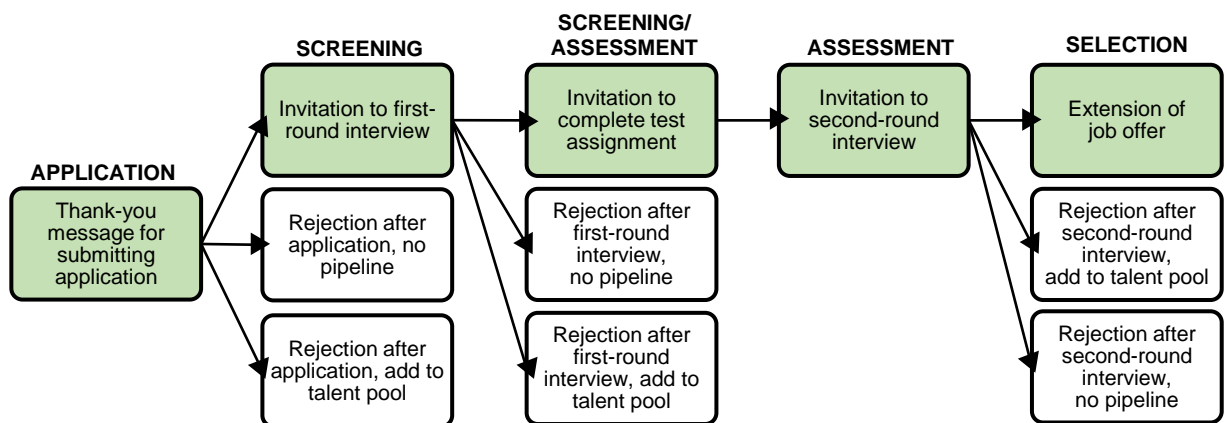


Figure 12. Chronological visualization of the company's current candidate communication touchpoints

Following this, I moved on to the analysis of the existing templates for candidate messaging. I conducted the analysis from multiple viewpoints: grammar and punctuation, word choice, communication of the employer brand, faithfulness to brand language, and level

and quality of the information provided. Additionally, I aimed to analyze the templates from the viewpoint of enhancing the candidate experience, interpreting the messages from the candidate's perspective.

The **thank-you message for submitting an application** was a standard message formulated by Ubisoft, which was sent to all candidates who had applied through the company's recruitment tool. The message disclaimed that it was an automatic reply sent by the company, and informed the candidate that their application had been received by the company and was in review by the recruitment team and that they would be contacted regarding the status of their application after it was reviewed. The message also encouraged the candidate to visit Ubisoft's career website for frequently asked questions about the recruitment process if they wished to find out more information about the process. Ubisoft's social media channels were also shared with the candidate in the message.

Based on the analysis of the message, I found that the thank-you message was very informative and assured the candidate that their application was indeed under review, as well as provided useful action points such as studying the frequently asked questions about the recruitment process and visiting Ubisoft's social media channels. However, I thought that the message could be modified to include RedLynx's career website and external channels to maintain a consistent transmission of RedLynx's employer brand. In addition, I felt like the language could be edited to convey RedLynx's brand voice attributes more effectively, as the language in the thank-you message was somewhat generic.

The **first-round interview invitation** templates consisted of two separate versions: a face-to-face interview at the RedLynx studio and a remote interview for candidates who resided outside Finland or were otherwise unable to attend an interview at the company's premises. Both versions included a brief introduction thanking the applicant for their interest in the company, as well as the affirmation that the hiring team found the candidate's profile interesting and would like to hear more about them in an interview. Then, basic information about the interview was relayed to the candidate, such as the proposed date and time for the interview, the estimated duration of the interview, and a listing of the teammates who would participate in the interview. In addition, the face-to-face interview template also included the address of the Ubisoft RedLynx studio and briefly explained arrival instructions to the studio by public transportation and by car.

By analyzing the first-round interview invitation templates from the candidate's perspective, I found that the information provided was clear and extensive. However, I found that the language was mainly formal and lacked the casualness that the company's brand lan-

guage aimed to convey. The grammar and punctuation could also be corrected. Moreover, I found that the remote interview invitation could include a place in the template for providing a link to the remote interview meeting space, as well as include brief instructions for accessing the meeting space. This would minimize the time spent on relaying the information to the interviewee.

The **second-round interview invitation** templates also consisted of two versions; one was written in Finnish and the other in English. The English language version was specified to be sent to candidates who are based outside Finland and are invited to the second round of interviews as a face-to-face interview at the RedLynx studio. The message explained that if the candidate accepted the invitation to travel to Finland and be interviewed at the company's premises, their traveling expenses would be covered by the company. Additionally, instructions were provided for the candidate to relay their personal information for flight ticket and accommodation booking purposes.

The second-round interview invitation also described the types of meetings the candidate would be having with different teammates at the interview, as well as tips to prepare for a personality assessment. This personality assessment consisted of an online self-evaluation to be completed before the interview date, and a meeting with the Talent Acquisition Specialist where the self-evaluation would be discussed along with other questions aimed to find out more about the candidate's working style and their motivational aspects.

Analysis of the second-round interview invitation templates found no distinction made for the instance that a person who was invited for the second round of interviews was already based in Finland, but who did not speak Finnish and would, therefore, require correspondence to be carried out in English. The other version was written in Finnish and was specified to be sent to candidates who are already living in Finland. This message was slightly shorter and did not include the travel practicalities that the English language version did. This creates a bit of a bias. Thus, a conclusion was made that the new templates for the second-round interview invitations should both be written in English. The English language version also implied that the candidate had already been interviewed in the first round, only remotely due to the geographical distance between the candidate and the hiring team.

By analyzing the second-round interview invitation template from the candidate's perspective, I felt it was very informative and did not require an extensive overhaul of message content. Rather, numerous small modification suggestions were documented, concerning

mostly grammar and punctuation as well as personalization, such as replacing “the” with “your” to help the message address the candidate more.

For **rejecting candidates in the application phase**, there were three templates available. The first rejection message was intended for candidates who had applied to an open position and were not selected for the first round of interviews. The second rejection message was sent to candidates who had applied with an open application not tied to a specific job opening, but whom the company would not consider a prospective candidate in the future. The third rejection message was also sent to candidates applying with an open application, but it was explained in the message that the company would add the applicant to their talent pool to source prospective talents from in their future recruitments.

Examining the rejection messages from the viewpoint of the candidate, I felt that the language of the existing templates was slightly bland, and seemed like they could be sent by any other company instead of associating the message with RedLynx’s brand language. Based on the analysis, I found that modifications could be made to have the rejections sound more encouraging, or provide a personalized angle by better elaborating the reason why the candidate was not chosen for the next stages in the process.

The rejection messages also had a signature, which gave the impression that the messages were sent out from a centralized source of the recruitment team and could not receive any replies to the rejection message itself. I interpreted this as informing the candidate that they were not welcome to contact the company after a rejection decision had been communicated to them. This, in turn, could prevent potential talents from reapplying to the company’s new job openings. Thus, I made a development point to remove this disclaimer when designing the new rejection templates.

To conclude the analysis of the templates, I found a number of collective strengths and weaknesses. What I found positive was that the templates provided most of the information necessary to the candidate, whether it be an interview invitation or an applicant rejection. The templates also included highlighted parts that indicated to the user that these parts would have to be tweaked to suit the message context, such as specific dates and times. In terms of language, the templates were concise and easily comprehensible, which was something I decided to preserve when creating the developed versions of the templates.

However, I found that the templates lacked the transmission of the company’s unique brand voice. The reasoning behind my interpretation was that upon reading through the

templates and assuming a candidate's viewpoint on examining the message information, I was not able to identify the RedLynx brand or brand language in the message content, and instead felt that the messages could be sent by any employer. Nevertheless, this finding provided me a good ground to work on, as the difference between the existing templates and the developed templates would most likely be significant. While I decided to adhere to the simplicity of the templates' language, I wanted to better convey the company's brand voice in individual word and sentence choices, word order, and punctuation.

By analyzing the templates from the standpoint of bettering candidate experience, I found that the templates could be designed to be connected to each other and include a brief statement referring to previous communication with the candidate. For example, a thank-you message sent after the first-round interview could have a sentence referring to the interview that took place recently. In addition, I also wanted to create such an atmosphere that upon reading the message, the candidate could "hear" the intonation and rhythm of the message, as if the message was being spoken to them in person.

Furthermore, it became clear that there should be a few templates for miscellaneous instances not tied with a specific stage in the recruitment process. One example of this would be an on-hold or status update message template, for the instance that the recruitment process is delayed, or that there are other changes in circumstances. The objective of the on-hold message would be to maintain a connection between the candidate and prevent them from building feelings of uncertainty about the process, or, as a worst-case scenario, exiting the recruitment process altogether after being met with silence for too long. Another example of a miscellaneous template would be a response template for when a candidate withdraws from the recruitment process.

For rejection messages, I found that there should be a few readily formulated reasons for why the candidate was not chosen for the next steps in the recruitment process. The rejections could also include a few calls to action to prevent the candidate from getting discouraged about the rejection, such as the suggestion to keep visiting the company's career site. For candidates added to the company's talent pool, there could be a more encouraging statement reassuring the candidate that the recruiting team would be in touch with them if a similar position opened in the future. Moreover, I thought that the rejection template resources could be expanded to distinguish better the different stages in which they are sent. There could be a separate rejection template to be sent after the first-round interview, as well as after the second-round interview where the rejected candidates are considered as "runner-ups" to the candidate who has received a job offer from the company.

This concludes the analysis of the existing candidate communication templates. To gain a comprehensive understanding of the case company's wishes regarding the new candidate messaging resources, I moved on to individual qualitative interviews with the company's Talent Acquisition Specialist and the Communications Manager. The results of the interviews are reported in Chapter 3.3 and Chapter 3.4.

### **3.3 Results of Interview with Talent Acquisition Specialist**

The objective of the interview was to find out more information on how candidate communication has been carried out at RedLynx, as well as receiving clarification on parts in the recruitment message templates that were unclear or missing information. Additionally, this interview sought to find out if there is anything the Talent Acquisition Specialist would like to improve, change, or remove from the candidate communication templates altogether.

#### **3.3.1 Recruitment Process Steps and Practices**

The **first question** of the interview asked if the Talent Acquisition Specialist consented to the interview being recorded, which they did. **Question 2** asked about the Talent Acquisition Specialist's practice of informing the candidates about the next steps in the recruitment process, and when they preferred to do it. **Question 3** asked if they informed the next steps proactively, or if the candidate themselves should raise the question.

The general rule the Talent Acquisition Specialist followed is that the candidate is informed of any next steps in the recruitment process whenever those steps are relevant to their specific status in the process. In contrast, the Talent Acquisition Specialist said that it is a less common practice to inform the candidate of a potential next step in the process. For the Talent Acquisition Specialist, the most common way to bring up the topic of the next steps was during the first and second round of interviews, when the interview session is coming to its end. They preferred to do this proactively, without deliberately waiting for the candidate to ask the question.

**Question 4** asked about the communication method and message content when explaining the next steps to a candidate, and **question 5** specifically asked if the next steps are ever relayed in writing. The Talent Acquisition Specialist said that there was usually no common practice to relay the next steps in writing, but instead, the emphasis was placed on informing the candidate of the steps in person.



Based on the results from question 2 through 5, I formulated a development point that while the repetition of the entire hiring process during candidate messaging was not necessary, a communication touchpoint could be created after the first-round and second-round interview, reminding the candidate that the hiring team will be in contact with them as soon as the next step in the process can be taken and thus highlighting transparency in communication. This touchpoint could then be made into a message template.

**Question 6** sought to find out how important the Talent Acquisition Specialist considered informing applicants about next steps in the recruitment process, and why they consider it important. The Talent Acquisition Specialist considered that keeping candidates informed of the big picture of the hiring process is an essential element of creating a good quality candidate experience. For example, candidates clearing the first-round interview are invited to complete an extensive test assignment, which may take multiple weeks to successfully finish, so communicating the possibility of receiving the test assignment promotes transparency and helps them prepare for the potential assignment.

**Question 7** asked about how specific the Talent Acquisition Specialist preferred to be when informing candidates of the next steps in the recruitment process. They said that informing candidates of schedules is more vague than precise, due to possible short-notice changes in the hiring process affecting the promised timeframes. Hiring managers have various responsibilities in addition to recruitment activities, and especially early-stage game development projects tend to have rapidly changing demands. In addition, sudden changes or uncertainties in headcounts may result in hiring freezes, all of which affect ongoing recruitment processes. Due to this, the Talent Acquisition Specialist preferred to estimate in weeks rather than days when informing candidates of decisions made regarding next steps in the process, while still emphasizing that they take their candidates' involvement in the selection process seriously even though schedules cannot be set in stone.

Based on the Talent Acquisition Specialist's responses to questions 6 and 7, several strengths and development suggestions were found. It was positive to see that they found informing candidates of the hiring process steps valuable and that they had an established practice for its communication. Based on the findings, however, I would suggest that each interim communication instance such as a follow-up message after an interview would remind the candidates about the upcoming steps and decisions in writing as well, instead of having candidates rely on solely face-to-face discussions with the recruiting team to receive updates on the next stages in the process.

### 3.3.2 Existing Candidate Communication Templates

**Question 8** sought insight into whether the existing candidate communication templates brought value to the Talent Acquisition Specialist's candidate messaging. The Talent Acquisition Specialist found it effective to have ready-made message templates instead of writing each message from scratch. As the sole recruiter in the case company, the Talent Acquisition Specialist said that they send hundreds of messages to applicants in different stages of the recruitment process, and time constraints have affected the consistency of candidate messaging. This has resulted in some candidates receiving longer and more personalized responses and some receiving very brief messages.

**Question 9** asked what the Talent Acquisition Specialist would keep as is in the existing candidate communication templates, and what they would change in the templates. According to the Talent Acquisition Specialist, there were no specific parts in the existing templates that should be kept unchanged, and that all of the existing templates could be modified to better convey the company's brand language. However, the Talent Acquisition Specialist suggested that the message content be kept as clear and concise as possible, keeping in mind the candidate's perspective when designing the templates.

In addition, the Talent Acquisition Specialist thought that the templates could communicate the company's employer brand and working culture more effectively. This is something that had not been done before in the templates, and the Talent Acquisition Specialist thought that it would be good to leverage when creating the new templates.

Based on the results of the interview questions 8 and 9, it was clear that good-quality template resources would ensure that candidate messaging is kept consistent even during hectic periods. I also included a development point to enhance the templates' usability, providing highlighted parts to indicate editable sections and formatting dates correctly and consistently throughout all templates.

**Question 10** asked about whether the Talent Acquisition Specialist found enough issues related to technical setup and network connectivity that would require a disclaimer in the remote interview invitation explaining possible delays on the hiring team's side. The Talent Acquisition Specialist was of the opinion that testing all technical setup before the interview to ensure that the interviewers are on time should be a standard practice and that there is no unnecessary delay to the beginning of the interview. Therefore, they did not think it was necessary to give any such disclaimers.

However, the Talent Acquisition Specialist thought that additional tips regarding the remote interview could be shared with the candidate. Based on the results of question 10, a development point was created for the remote interview invitations, asking a candidate to ensure prior to the interview that they have sufficient network connectivity, are able to turn on their web camera, and that they are in a quiet place.

**Question 11** asked to elaborate on the online self-evaluation survey, which was sent to the candidate in the second-round interview invitation. The Talent Acquisition Specialist said that the self-evaluation was sent to the candidate in a separate email from an external assessment agency. In the existing template, it was only specified that the self-evaluation is sent in a separate email. Based on the result in Question 11, an improvement suggestion was identified that it should be specified in the second-round interview invitation that the self-evaluation is sent from an external source, and that the candidate should check their junk email folder just in case they do not receive it in their inbox. The automatic email from the agency could also be personalized to better suit the company's unique brand language.

**Question 12** asked how the Talent Acquisition Specialist personalized rejection messages to candidates applying to open positions, and if they had existing categorizations which rejections were generally based on. They elaborated that rejecting candidates in the application stage does not provide them sufficient personalization points for the rejection messages. This is also due to open positions receiving a large number of applications, creating time constraints for personalizing each rejection based on the application.

For rejections after interviews, the Talent Acquisition Specialist noted that they were most often done via phone call, however, if a candidate resided abroad and had not specified a phone number or a sufficient country code for the recruiter to successfully contact them, the rejection message was then shared via email. The most common grounds for rejection after an interview was the decision to proceed with a candidate that better suited the current needs of the game project the position was opened for.

**Question 13** asked about how rejection templates for open applications could be personalized. According to the Talent Acquisition Specialist, instead of the rejection being based on the candidate not suiting the current project needs, it should be emphasized that the company currently does not have an opening fit for the candidate's profile and background, so as not to create an impression that the candidate is to blame for the situation. The Talent Acquisition Specialist also suggested that a new rejection template for open

applications were created; one rejecting inquiries of internships or summer jobs in the instance that the company did not have a suitable opening.

Looking at answers to question 12 and 13 from the viewpoint of candidate experience, I concluded that generic rejection grounds should be provided in the candidate rejection templates sent after the application stage, and a few personalized options could be relayed in rejections sent after the first and second round of interviews. For open applications, I agreed with the Talent Acquisition Specialist's suggestion of emphasizing the lack of a suitable position or opening fitting the applicant's profile. I also made a development point to create a response for a candidate inquiring about a possibility of a traineeship or a summer job at the company.

### **3.3.3 Employer Brand Communication in the Recruitment Process**

**Question 14** asked what the Talent Acquisition Specialist tried to do to create a positive view of Ubisoft RedLynx during the recruitment process. When communicating with candidates, they aimed to create an easily approachable and down-to-earth impression of themselves as a recruiter. They also strived to relay information in a clear and concise way that would proactively respond to questions or needs that the candidate might have.

**Question 15** asked what more could be done to help generate a positive view of the company in candidate messaging. The Talent Acquisition Specialist suggested that the language in the candidate communication templates be made livelier and better reflect the company's brand voice attributes. In addition, they recommended that the templates' language be as neutral as possible. As the templates are written content used by multiple people, tailoring the messages to a specific writer persona could risk a candidate perceiving a discrepancy between the written correspondence and face-to-face conversations with the hiring team.

**Question 16** asked about which of the four writing principles of Ubisoft RedLynx's brand voice the Talent Acquisition Specialist found most prominent in the message templates. The four writing principles are Uncomplicated, Positive, Friendly, and Confident, and they are explained in Chapter 4.2. For the Talent Acquisition Specialist, Uncomplicated stood out as the most important principle, which could be emphasized in the message templates with brief sentences and a clear objective in each message. Important things in the messages could be further emphasized with bullet points and bolded text.

To better convey the Positive and Friendly principles, they felt that respecting the mutual interest and two-way decision making when advancing the candidate in the selection pro-

cess is a good way to do that. They especially liked the second-round interview template, where a specific sentence emphasized this: “Hopefully you’re still excited about the position, because we’d like to invite you to our studio for a second interview.”

While the Talent Acquisition Specialist did not consider Confident as that essential of a principle, they said that it could be transmitted in how the template message content provides information to the candidate. The candidate should rest assured that the employer always has a specific proposition or action to make and inform the candidate and that there is no pressure on the candidate to independently try to advance the process.

The results of questions 14 through 16 suggested that the templates’ language should be designed to convey clarity and friendliness, certainty that the candidate is kept up to date with the latest information regarding the recruitment process, and awareness of the candidate’s interests and wishes regarding the possible advancement of the process. Although the Talent Acquisition Specialist viewed that certain brand voice attributes should be transmitted more than others, I recommended that the attributes be kept at a balance, aiming to transmit an equal combination of all four brand voice attributes in the template message content.

The final question, **question 17**, asked about development points that The Talent Acquisition Specialist might have for the candidate communication templates. They thought that a generic and friendly on-hold template could be made for any sudden recruitment freezes or other instances. The on-hold template would not be dependent on any stages of the recruitment process. It would be designed for strong candidates, with whom we absolutely want to resume discussions, but are unable to due to specific circumstances that we may not be able to influence.

They suggested that the existing rejection templates get rid of the disclaimer that the messages cannot receive a reply. In rejection templates, it would be good to add transparency to the candidate communication by explaining why the applicant was not selected for further consideration, and listing a few possible reasons in the template for easier use. The Talent Acquisition Specialist also commented that they would like to see new templates for the following candidate communication touchpoints: an outreach message for passive candidates who have not sent in an application, a response example for a passive candidate turning down an outreach request, a response template for a candidate withdrawing from the hiring process they are currently in, and a job offer template.

Looking at this answer from the viewpoint of my own analysis, it appeared that the Talent Acquisition Specialist had similar views to mine on the existing candidate communication templates. I also found the Talent Acquisition Specialist's concrete examples of new templates useful and documented these as development points for the creation of the new set of candidate communication templates.

### **3.4 Results of Interview with Communications Manager**

The objective of this qualitative interview was to receive the Communications Manager's insight into how the employer brand communication could be carried out more effectively in the candidate communication templates. Some of the questions were identical to those asked in the interview with the Talent Acquisition Specialist. By doing this, I sought to find out possible similar or contradictory perspectives between the two interviewees.

The first three questions were identical to some of the questions asked from the Talent Acquisition Specialist. **Question 1** asked for permission to record the interview, which the Communications Manager allowed. **Question 2** asked their view on which of the four writing principles of Ubisoft RedLynx's brand voice should the candidate communication templates' language convey the most. The Communications Manager was of the opinion that the transmission of the four principles should be evenly dispersed across all messages in the templates.

Delving deeper into the individual brand voice principles, the Communications Manager thought that the templates' language should focus the Clear and Concise characteristics of the Uncomplicated writing principle. In terms of the Positive writing principle, they warned about the overuse of positive-sounding words, especially if the message handled topics that could be perceived sensitive or even negative, such as in the instance of a candidate rejection. For Confidence, they highlighted the importance of promoting a dynamic feel in the message and talking about Ubisoft RedLynx as an employer with a confident tone. With Friendly, they suggested that the messages be examined from the candidate's viewpoint and focus on whether the message feels genuinely friendly when read.

**Question 3** asked what the Communications Manager would like to see in the candidate communication templates that would better emphasize the company's employer brand and create an even more positive view of the company as an employer. They responded that this could be supported by consistent communication of the company's brand voice throughout all candidate touchpoints. In addition, they highlighted that the objective of each message should always be clearly perceptible.

Moreover, the Communications Manager felt that the company's social media posts and other external content should ideally be at the forefront of reflecting a positive view of the company as an employer. They did not see a necessity in introducing company culture facts in candidate messaging, as this would steer away from the main objective of the messages. They suggested that the candidate communication templates be formulated with language that is distinguishable from standard corporate language.

Based on the Communications Manager's responses to questions 1 through 3, I made a note to focus on creating a streamlined transmission of RedLynx's brand voice across all message templates, emphasizing clarity and friendliness of the transmitted message. Additionally, I decided to make each key point of each message as clear as possible. This could be achieved through specific word choices and rearranging sentences inside templates to bring the foci of the messages to the beginning of the text.

**Question 4** asked about a potential way of encouraging candidates to acquaint themselves with RedLynx's social media and other external channels in the candidate communication templates? The Communications Manager was of the opinion that the possibility for a candidate to acquaint themselves with the company's social media channels should be relayed in the first-round interview invitation. They said they would not advertise it in prior communications with the candidate, as they felt that the most relevant moment for research of the company's external channels was in preparation for the first interview round. Based on this response, I made a note to include links to the company's social media channels in the first-round interview invitations, highlighting that visiting them is not mandatory to the candidate while encouraging them to familiarize themselves better with the company's employer brand.

**Question 5**, the final question, asked about any potential improvement suggestions the Communications Manager had for the language of the candidate communication templates. The Communications Manager reminded that from a communications perspective, the objective of the message should be clearly understood from the writing, and this applies to candidate communication as well. They noted that upon first glance of a message, people are often most focused when reading the first and last parts of the message and suggested that this be kept in mind when formulating the candidate communication templates as well.

Moreover, they gave the suggestion that the new candidate communication templates be formulated with as simple language as possible to ensure ease of future modification so that other people could edit the templates and not create a discrepancy in the overall

voice and feel of the messages. This was similar to the Talent Acquisition Specialist's remark against tailoring the templates too much to lose their neutrality.

The Communications Manager also gave the recommendation to have a visualization of the recruitment touchpoints alongside tentative timeframes between each touchpoint (e.g. "time between touchpoints"), as well as who is responsible for that touchpoint and takes care of the respective candidate messaging. As the Communications Manager was freshly acting out as a hiring manager with recruiting a colleague for the Communications team, they wished that the candidate communication timeline was visualized to help understand the big picture of the communication touchpoints and when correspondence should take place. This was noted in the creation of the new candidate communication templates in Chapter 5.

In regard to the writing styles, the Communications Manager suggested the use of bullet points and bolded words to further emphasize the most important aspects of the messages in the candidate communication templates. Consistent formatting of times, dates, and time zones should also be paid attention to. In terms of word choice, they reminded that passive voice should be avoided, and active voice should be used instead; for example writing "we have selected you" instead of "you have been selected."

Based on the Communications Manager's perceptions of the existing candidate communication templates, several strengths and development suggestions were found. I agreed with the Communications Manager's note regarding the emphasis of active voice rather than passive voice in the templates, as that would help engage the candidate more. I also made a development point to include correct formatting of dates, times, and time zones in the new templates to maintain the consistency of their transmission, as well as to ensure that users of the templates wrote them correctly each time. Moreover, I decided that I would bolden the key points of the messages; words such as **first-round** or **second-round interview**, **test assignment**, interview times and dates, and proposed deadlines of test assignments and job offers. Regarding rejection templates, however, I decided against boldening their contents, as that could be perceived as understating the candidate's ability to comprehend the key point of the message.



## **4 Creating a Brand Vocabulary for Recruitment Communication**

This chapter introduces project task 3, which consists of preparing the brand vocabulary as a component of the Ubisoft RedLynx brand voice guide to support the personalization of messages sent to candidates participating in the company's recruitment processes.

Chapter 4 is organized in the following manner. Chapter 4.1 relays the project management method used for this project task. Chapter 4.2 gives the reader an in-depth view of Ubisoft RedLynx's brand voice and its development. Chapter 4.3 presents the complete brand vocabulary.

### **4.1 Project Management Method**

The primary purpose of the brand vocabulary was to boost the effectiveness and consistency of the communication of the company's brand voice. In the context of this thesis, the brand vocabulary aimed to create added value to candidate communication activities during the recruitment process in the form of a consistently communicated brand voice throughout all messaging. For communication instances that the templates did not cover, such as designing the job ad copy, the brand vocabulary would then support the composition of these messages.

Moreover, the brand vocabulary was projected to serve as a concrete learning tool for acquainting employees with the company's brand voice; specifically employees engaged in external communications practices across the company. Since external communication activities are also performed by Talent Acquisition teams, referring to the brand vocabulary is projected to help the company's Talent Acquisition teammates in maintaining consistency of brand voice communication in their own messaging, as well as balancing their communication style with the company's brand voice attributes.

The project management method used to create the brand vocabulary included studying theories and models on brand language and brand communication to establish a theoretical knowledge base for the brand vocabulary. These theoretical concepts are outlined in Chapter 2.2.

Additionally, I studied Ubisoft RedLynx's brand voice guide to better assimilate the company's brand voice attributes, which would support the design process of the words and phrases included in the brand vocabulary. I designed and wrote the brand vocabulary in Microsoft Word, the same program where the company's brand voice guide was created.

The creation of the company's brand voice guide was not a project task in this thesis, as it was completed before the thesis was written. However, the defined brand voice attributes served as an essential knowledge base for designing the brand vocabulary. Ubisoft RedLynx's brand voice is explained in the following paragraphs.

Ubisoft RedLynx's revised brand voice was defined in collaboration with the company's marketing, HR, and communications staff. The purpose of defining the brand voice was to establish a clear framework and guidelines for the language styles used by the RedLynx brand to promote consistency in the communication of the RedLynx brand voice. The brand voice principles were specifically defined to serve RedLynx's brand as an employer, as opposed to a company solely focused on game development.

As explained in Chapter 2.2.3, a brand's voice must be consistent and recognizable throughout all of its published content to effectively convey the brand personality and values. This was also highlighted in RedLynx's brand voice guide with the following statement:

"We need to be consistent in the way that we communicate who we are. The more consistent we are, the more likely it is that people will understand what makes us special."  
(Ubisoft RedLynx 2020, 3.)

The brand voice development project sought to define the goals of what the brand voice wanted to achieve. Moreover, it explained which staff or departments would be implementing the brand voice in their operations, and how future communicators of the brand voice should be trained to effectively implement it in their communications. As stated in Chapter 2.2.2, the main goal of the brand voice is to establish a coherent brand personality through specifically chosen words.

The project was followed by the creation of a brand voice guide, serving as documentation of the brand voice principles as well as relaying concrete writing style and language guidelines faithful to the brand voice. As RedLynx's official corporate language is English, the brand voice guide was created to serve English language communications only.

The brand voice guide also included specific writing goals to help content creation. **Three writing goals** were established, which outlined how the key message of each content piece should be identified and transmitted, as well as to help the company's content producers reassess if a specific piece of content is informational and of standard quality. The

writing goals were relayed in the brand voice guide with the creation of the following paragraph:

“With the content we publish, we aim to:

1. **Convey a message.** Don’t create content just for the sake of creating content. Avoid creating false impressions and convey your messages in a forward-looking way.
2. **Make people hungry for more.** Provide information packaged in such an inspiring way that people go “ooh” and become curious to know more.
3. **Find the hook.** Every successful communication depends on an emotional connection to the reader. Whatever the purpose of the particular copy, identify the relevant insight or common truth that will spark recognition and interest.” (Ubisoft RedLynx 2020, 5.)

The foundation of RedLynx’s brand voice lies in **four writing principles**. The writing principles are adjectives intended to guide all of the company’s communications and to support the composition and deployment of sent messages. The frequency of each writing principle can be “dialed up and down to suit the message and the audience” (Ubisoft RedLynx 2020, 4-5). Additionally, each writing principle is accompanied by three supplementary adjectives to serve as supporting characteristics for the writing principle.

The **Uncomplicated** writing principle is accompanied by supporting characteristics describing this principle in detail, such as clarity and conciseness. The **Positive** principle can be conveyed in a message by emphasizing optimism and empowerment. **Confident** strives to create content that attracts readers and showcases pride, and **Friendly** promotes warmth, inclusivity, and sensible humor and quirkiness. Table 2 below relays the writing principles and their supporting characteristics.

Table 2. Writing principles of Ubisoft RedLynx’s brand voice. (Adapted from Ubisoft RedLynx 2020, 4-5.)

Writing principle	Supporting characteristics of the writing principle
<p><b>Uncomplicated</b> By avoiding jargon and complex terminology, we stand a much better chance of getting our message across. If we are clear in our language and concise in our explanations, we will appear more credible.</p>	<p><b>Clear</b> Good writing is accessible to all its audiences. Use straightforward vocabulary and simple explanation to communicate your message and content with audiences from all over the world. Avoid technical or jargon-laden language (some game jargon is fine, as long as it’s not over the top).</p> <p><b>Concise</b> Never use two words when one will do. Be confident enough to get straight to the point. Cut out excess and avoid artificially lofty language.</p> <p><b>Single-minded</b> Avoid complicating your writing with several different ideas. Re-</p>

	move distraction and communicate one idea at a time.
<p><b>Positive</b> Positivity is infectious. When talking about our projects, our people and our culture, we should share our enthusiasm and invite readers to join us, develop dialogue and engage our audiences.</p>	<p><b>Dynamic</b> Use the active voice, rather than the passive. We work in a fast-paced environment and our stories should reflect that.</p> <p><b>Empowering</b> Use stories to motivate readers and share opportunities and achievements.</p> <p><b>Optimistic</b> We have a lot to look forward to. Use language that highlights the benefits rather than the limitations but do strike a balance with being realistic. (Let's not become cheesy aerobics instructors with overtly chirpy language!)</p>
<p><b>Confident</b> We're seriously in the business of fun: we are focused, determined and committed. Let's celebrate our successes individually and collectively.</p>	<p><b>Magnetic to pull people in</b> Evoke emotions in the audience by showing how enthusiastic we are about what we do.</p> <p><b>Proud</b> We are real professionals in what we do. Talk with pride and conviction about our attributes, history and achievements.</p>
<p><b>Friendly</b> Putting people first means writing with our audience in mind and adjusting our tone of voice and language to suit them.</p>	<p><b>Inclusive</b> Make everyone feel welcome by using gender-neutral language and more broadly, avoiding overtly masculine/feminine language. Use inclusive language: "we," "our," "ours," "us," rather than "Ubisoft RedLynx," or "the company."</p> <p><b>Warm</b> We care for our people. We speak casually, and conversations with us are like talking to a friend. We address the reader directly. The content we produce is easily relatable because we look at the messages from our audience's standpoint and evaluate what challenges and passions they have.</p> <p><b>Cheeky</b> We're quirky but not inappropriate and prefer winking to shouting. We're never condescending or exclusive—and we're good at laughing at ourselves. We don't crack jokes just for the sake of cracking them, but only where showing our witty sense of humor has a meaningful place amid a "more serious" message.</p>

## 4.2 Ubisoft RedLynx's Brand Vocabulary

The complete brand vocabulary consisted of example words, terms, and sentences which reflect Ubisoft RedLynx's brand voice attributes. The vocabulary included nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and conjunctions. Greetings and short phrases were also provided. The brand vocabulary content was categorized by word class and alphabetized to help users search and select the words and phrases they consider the most fitting for their purposes.

The brand vocabulary was integrated into the company's existing brand voice guide with the following preface:

“Using offbeat humor and a conversational voice, we play with language to bring joy to our audience’s day. You can choose a word or two from our list to bring in lightness to your message or check out the Urban dictionary for synonyms.” (Ubisoft RedLynx 2020, 7.)

The brand vocabulary consisted of a table with two separate columns. The first column displayed a word, and the second column provided synonyms that fit the context of RedLynx’s messaging and remain faithful to the RedLynx brand voice. This was referred to in the brand vocabulary as a **RedLynx-ified word**. For example, the word “good” could be replaced, or RedLynx-ified, by synonyms such as “awesome,” “stellar,” or “brilliant.” In the context of brand linguistics, the -ified suffix suggests that a word is transformed into one that is more reminiscent of the RedLynx brand language.

The complete brand vocabulary was integrated into Ubisoft RedLynx’s brand voice guide and can be viewed in its entirety in Appendix 3. The table below shows the vocabulary category of verbs and provides an example of the alphabetization.

Table 3. Brand vocabulary

<b>VERBS</b>	
Gather	Come together Gather ‘round Join forces/efforts
Help	Aid Assist Back up Chip in Collaborate Come to the rescue Grease the wheels Lend a helping hand Reinforce Support
Talk	Chat Chit-chat Converse Discuss Have a chat Have a conversation Have a dialogue Have a word with Mention
Wait for	Be on the lookout for... Keep your eyes peeled for... Make sure you stay in the loop... Stay tuned for...

## **5 Creating the New Candidate Communication Templates**

This chapter introduces project task 4, which consisted of creating the new message templates for Ubisoft RedLynx's candidate communication during the recruitment and selection phases. Chapter 5.1 covers the project management methods of this project task, and Chapter 5.2 relays the new candidate communication templates.

### **5.1 Project Management Methods**

I created the new candidate communication templates based on the results of existing template analysis as presented in Chapter 3.2. Additionally, I leveraged the key development points from the qualitative interviews as reported in Chapter 3.3. Based on the existing documentation analysis and interview results, I formulated a target framework of candidate communication touchpoints to serve as a background for the new template package.

The goal of the new candidate communication message templates was to streamline and simplify Ubisoft RedLynx's candidate communication activities, enhance the candidate experience of prospective talent and help strengthen Ubisoft RedLynx's employer brand by creating consistency to the brand voice communication in the recruitment process. From a candidate standpoint, the templates aimed to provide all of the necessary information that a candidate would need or find useful during specific stages of the recruitment process. To serve as a comprehensive resource package, the templates were designed to aid communication in each stage of the recruitment cycle; covering the attraction, application, screening, assessment, and selection phases of the process.

The message templates were designed and created using Microsoft Word. This allowed easy storage of the files and utilization of the copy-paste function to the online recruitment messaging tool that the case company was using at the time. In terms of communication medium, the message templates were intended to be primarily used in emails, but the template structure allows their use in other communication channels as well, such as text message or LinkedIn. The templates were also designed to be integrable into the external recruitment tool used by the company.

The process of creating the new set of templates included developing existing versions of the message templates first, followed by creating the templates that were missing an existing version. Creating new versions of the existing templates required modification of multiple aspects to achieve the desired outcome. First, I screened the templates for grammar and punctuation issues, after which I tweaked the language to better suit the

company brand voice by changing word and sentence order wherever necessary and replacing simplified words and adjectives with synonyms that better reflect Ubisoft RedLynx's unique brand language.

For overhauling the brand voice communication of the new message templates, I used the data collection and analysis from Chapter 3 to fix the development points, obscurities and missing information of the existing templates. Theoretical framework in Chapter 2 describes the various elements of employer branding and brand language, which I leveraged in the formulation of the language used in the message templates.

While formulating the language for the new templates, I strived to maintain a balance of Ubisoft RedLynx's four brand voice attributes; Uncomplicated, Positive, Confident, and Friendly, which are explained in Chapter 4.1. Preserving especially the Uncomplicated principle of the brand voice was also emphasized by the Talent Acquisition Specialist and Communications Manager in the qualitative interviews reported in Chapter 3.3. Based on the data collected from the interviews, the templates were designed to serve different writers, not conform to any specific writing persona, and be easy to modify and edit according to different preferences.

## **5.2 Ubisoft RedLynx's New Candidate Communication Templates**

Following the analysis of existing candidate communication templates in Chapter 3, a target state of the recruitment touchpoints was outlined highlighting the frequency of communication. This served as a framework for the new set of candidate communication templates, which were formulated on the basis of this target state. The new recruitment touchpoint framework is illustrated in the figure below.

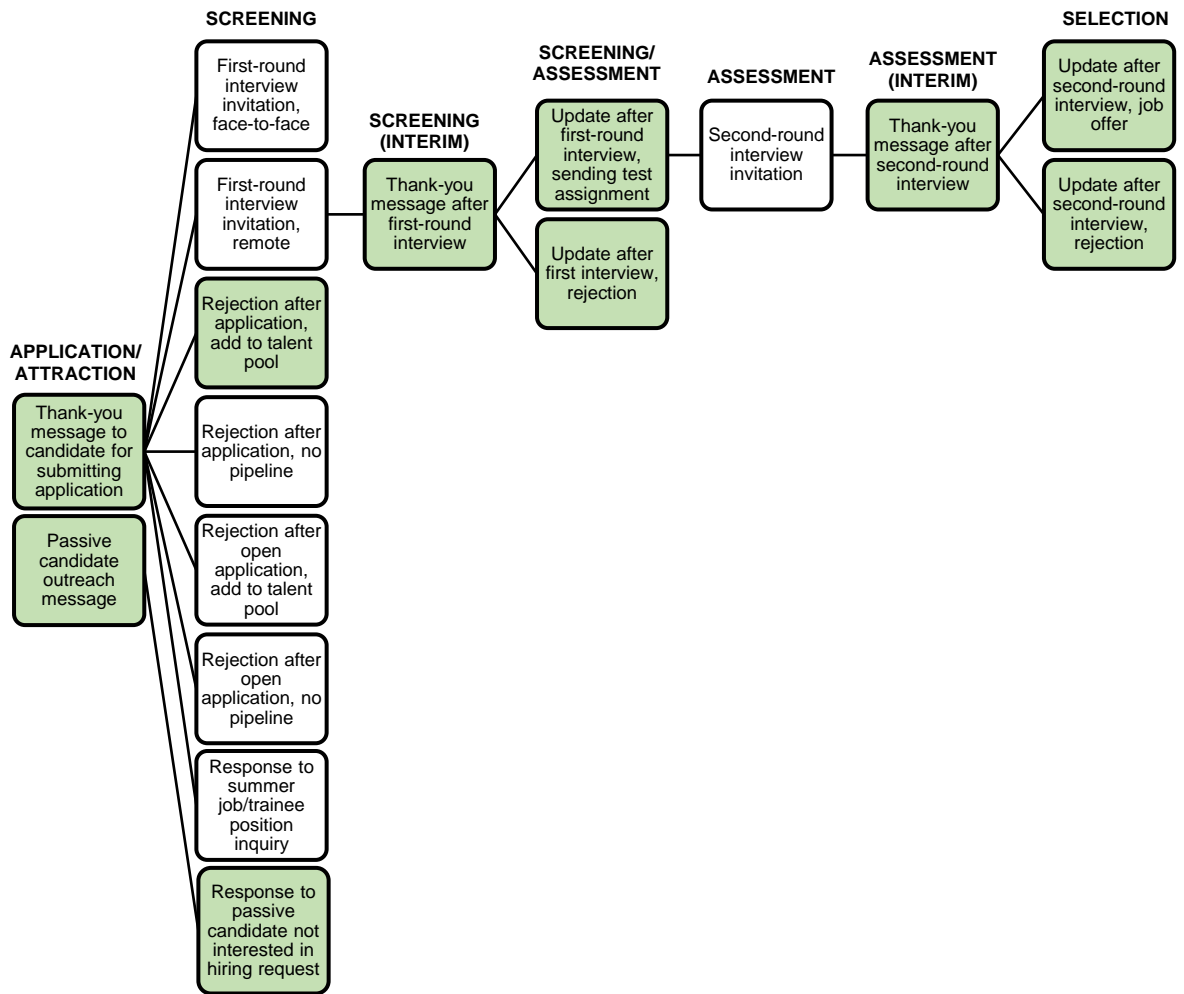


Figure 14. New candidate touchpoint framework

The completed template package consisted of 21 different message templates for candidate communication, each one tailored for a specific candidate touchpoint during different stages of the recruitment process. The candidate communication templates can be viewed in Appendix 2. The figure below showcases all templates in each stage of the recruitment process they are intended to be used in.



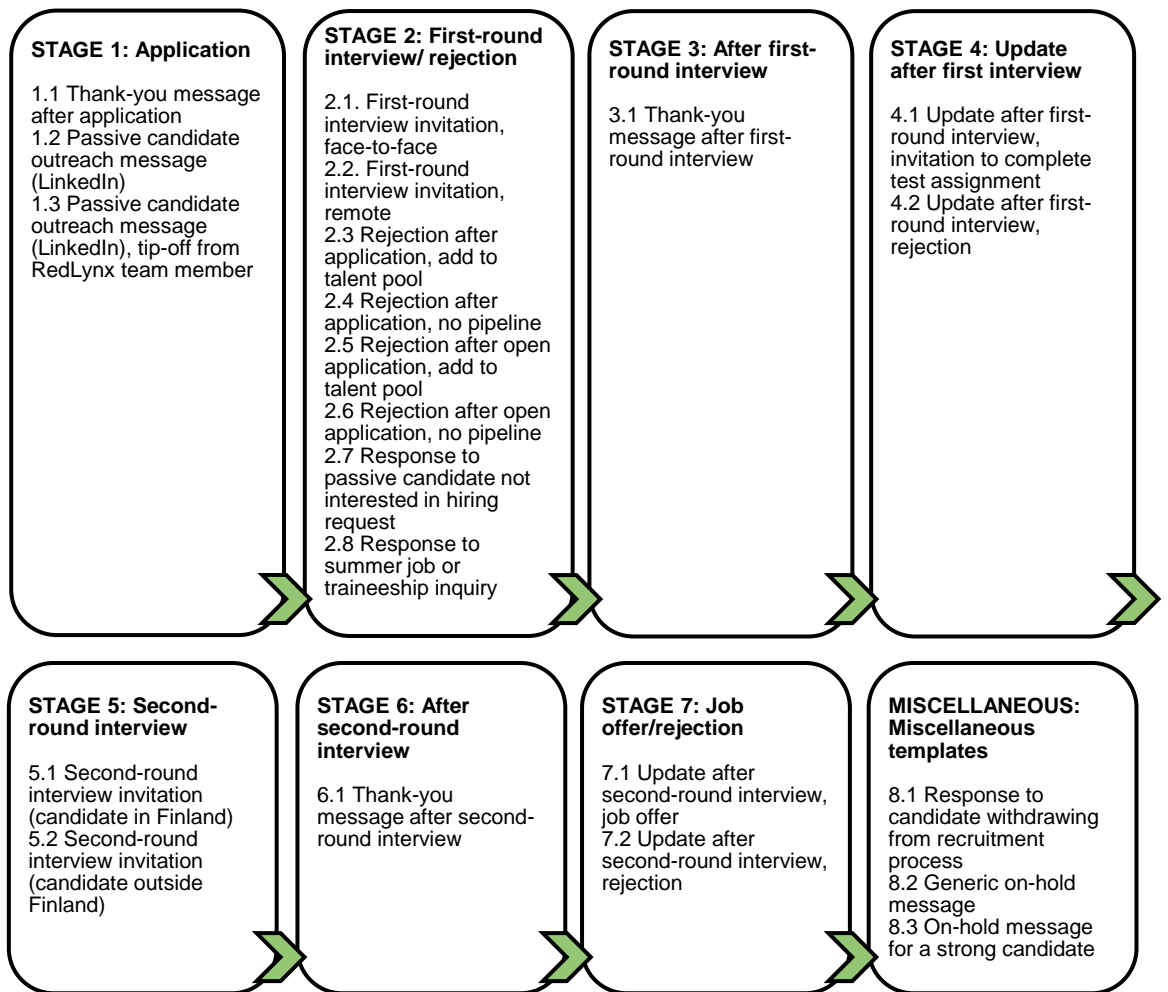


Figure 15. Visualization of the new candidate communication templates

The first candidate touchpoint template is a **thank-you message** sent to all candidates who have applied through a job opening or submitted an open application, thanking them for their interest in the company and informing them that their application is currently reviewed by their hiring team. The second template is a **headhunting message** to passive candidates and is mainly intended to be used on LinkedIn. The passive candidates have not applied to an open position or submitted an open application, but the recruiter wishes to proactively approach them and, upon acquiring consent and mutual interest, include in one of their hiring processes as a prospective candidate. The third template is a similar headhunting message, but is sent to passive candidates who have been **referred by an existing employee** in the company.

The **first-round interview invitation** templates are separated into face-to-face and remote interview invitations; the selection of either template is determined by whether the candidate's current residence is in Finland or abroad. Candidates who are **rejected after**

**applying** are sent rejection messages based on the type of their application and whether they will be internally considered for future job openings in the company. In addition, a response to a passive candidate turning down a hiring request was also formulated into a template.

A **thank-you message after the first-round interview** is sent to candidates who have successfully participated in the first round of interviews. The thank-you message also aims to keep the candidates up to date with the status of the hiring process, as well as minimize risk of candidates being met with silence after the interview while the hiring team makes their next decision.

After the decisions following the first-round interviewees have been made by the hiring team, candidates who have been selected for the next stage are sent a follow-up email inviting them to **complete a test assignment** as a next stage in the hiring process. The candidates who are not considered for this next stage receive a **rejection**. Despite the negative decision, the rejection message aims to communicate to candidates that the hiring team values their effort in the recruitment process, that they can receive feedback from their interview upon request, and that their profile will be saved for future job openings in the company for which they might be a good fit.

After the selected candidates complete the test assignment and the assignments are reviewed by the hiring team, **second-round interview invitations** are sent to the candidates. These are separated based on whether the candidate is based in Finland or abroad. As the second-round interview invitation is more comprehensive, lengthy and requires more preparation from the candidate's side, an overview of the interview day is relayed to the candidate in the message, along with tips and example questions designed to help the candidate prepare for the interview.

Following the second-round interview invitation and preceding the hiring decision, a **thank-you message after the second-round interview** is sent to candidates who have attended the interview. In the message, the candidate is also informed of any tentative timelines for when the hiring decision will be made.

The selection stage includes two templates. The first is intended for the candidate selected to be hired for the position of the specific recruitment process, and consists of a **job offer** sent by the hiring manager. The second is sent to the candidate or candidates who subsequently **do not receive a job offer** for the position. It is specified in the rejection template of this stage that the priority is to inform runner-up candidates of their rejection

via phone call. However, if calling the candidate is not possible and the rejection should be delivered in writing, the template can be used.

Finally, templates for miscellaneous candidate communication instances were created. The first template is a recruiter's **response to a candidate withdrawing from the recruitment process**. The template was formulated as a generic and flexible response adaptable to the stage the applicant is currently in the hiring process. The second template is an **on-hold message** communicating to candidates of a recruitment process that the specific process is put on hold and no interviews or hiring decisions for the position are being made at this time. The third template is an **on-hold message for a strong candidate**; while this template emulates the generic on-hold message, it has been tailored slightly to communicate to the candidate that they are still being strongly considered for the role, and that they will be contacted as soon as the hiring process for the position may continue.

## **6 Presenting the New Candidate Communication Templates and Brand Vocabulary**

This chapter explains project task 5, which included presenting the new candidate communication message templates and the brand vocabulary of the brand voice guide. Chapter 6.1 covers the project management method of preparing the presentation, while Chapter 6.2 reports the feedback received on the project deliverables as well as the revisions made based on the feedback.

### **6.1 Project Management Method**

The **objective of the presentation** was to relay the project management methods of the design process of the candidate communication templates and the brand vocabulary, as well as a roundup of suggestions for further development. Additionally, the presentation explained practicalities surrounding the complete project deliverables, such as where the new candidate communication templates and the brand vocabulary could be accessed within the organization's digital files.

The presentation was designed and created in Microsoft PowerPoint. The PowerPoint slides of the presentation can be found in Appendix 3.

**The presentation was held** through an online meeting on May 12th, 2020 to Ubisoft RedLynx's HR team, which included four teammates: Ubisoft RedLynx's HR Director, HR Specialist, Talent Acquisition Specialist and Communications Manager. The presentation focused on the phases and steps of the new candidate touchpoint framework and the attributes of the new candidate communication templates, as well as the brand vocabulary and its uses. Visualizations of the candidate touchpoint framework and brand vocabulary were also presented. Additionally, suggestions for further improvement were provided. These suggestions are also reported in Chapter 7.2.

### **6.2 Feedback and Revisions**

The participants found the new candidate communication template package and brand vocabulary comprehensive and of good quality, and that both project deliverables brought added value to the company's candidate messaging. Upon asking if the participants would have liked to see additional templates for any instances, they found the quantity and scope of the completed template package adequate.

**Feedback from the Talent Acquisition Specialist** included the successful transmission of the brand voice attributes in the templates, and that the template content was skillfully formulated with the candidate's perspective in mind. They especially found the interim messages, such as candidate follow-up messages after interviews, to be a good addition to the template resources. As a revision suggestion, they said that the templates containing more information than usual, such as the interview templates and the job offer template, could be shortened even further to be as succinct as possible. They also noted that those templates with a possibly disappointing message to the candidate, such as the rejection messages, should come off as less apologetic or unnecessarily positive, and suggested that the key point of each message were brought in the beginning of the message regardless of whether the transmitted message is positive or negative.

**The Communications Manager** seconded the Talent Acquisition Specialist's positive remarks on the new candidate communication templates and added that the small word choices made the language of the templates lively and friendly. They suggested that rejection templates could be modified to include an identical introductory text to help streamline the messages, as the current introductions had some variance. With templates that are sent to candidates progressing in the hiring process, the focal point of the messages could be boldened, for example **second interview** or **test assignment**. They also noted that the templates should be revised once more to make sure that the transmission of the brand voice is equal and consistent across all templates. Finally, they suggested that the brand vocabulary be expanded to include more words and sentences.

**The HR Specialist** thought that the project was concrete and easily implemented in practice, and that the project opened their eyes to how many touchpoints there actually were throughout the candidate journey. They thought that the comprehensive template package was a valuable addition to the recruitment communication assets. **The HR Director** also noted that the template package and brand vocabulary would serve as useful onboarding material if the company were to grow their recruitment team in the future.

Based on the feedback, **revisions were made** to the candidate communication templates. Word choices were simplified in lengthier templates such as the second-round interview invitation. In addition, the templates were reassessed, and certain words were tweaked to better mirror the brand voice attributes and convey the desired atmosphere more effectively. The selection of words and sentences in the brand vocabulary was also increased.

The final versions of the project deliverables can be viewed in Appendices 2 and 3.

## 7 Conclusion

This chapter presents project task 6, which consists of finalizing and evaluating the thesis project. Chapter 7.1 covers the key outcomes of the thesis project, and Chapter 7.2 presents recommendations for the case company, while Chapter 7.3 relays suggestions for further research and projects. Chapter 7.4 presents the evaluation of the thesis project, and Chapter 7.5 concludes the thesis with the reflection on personal learning throughout the thesis process.

### 7.1 Key Outcomes

The project objective of the thesis was to develop Ubisoft RedLynx's brand voice communication in their recruitment processes. To support the objective, six project tasks were created and implemented. **The first project task**, which was presented in Chapter 2, was to prepare the theoretical framework to establish a knowledge base for the thesis topic. The theoretical framework covered the definition and history of employer branding, its influencing components and the processes of employer brand design and management. Other topics included the brand communication process, brand language and brand linguistics as well as brand voice and brand tone. The framework also discussed concepts of recruitment process and candidate experience, as well as the topic of recruitment communication and the role of employer brand communication during the recruitment process.

Key findings from the theoretical framework included how many different internal and external components influence an organization's employer brand, how brand language affects brand perception in various aspects, and how different linguistic parts of a message can be broken down and assessed according to how they transmit the brand personality. Another key observation was the way a company's employer brand is transmitted to prospective talents through candidate communication, and how candidate communication is a determining factor in the recruiting company's external employer image and the company reputation.

**Project task 2**, reported in Chapter 3, consisted of analyzing the current state of brand communication in the recruitment process, with candidate messaging as the specific focus. This was done through analysis of existing candidate communication templates and qualitative interviews with the company's Talent Acquisition Specialist and Communications Manager.

First, the current recruitment touchpoints were identified. Then, the existing candidate communication templates were analyzed. Lastly, the Talent Acquisition Specialist and Communications Manager were interviewed.

Based on the qualitative interviews with the Talent Acquisition Specialist and Communications Manager, several development points were found concerning the communication of

**Project task 3** was reported in Chapter 4 and covered the creation of the brand vocabulary. The result of the project task was a complete brand vocabulary consisting of words and phrases. The goal of the brand vocabulary was to add value to candidate communication activities specifically in supporting communication instances that the templates did not cover.

The brand vocabulary was created by first studying theories on brand language and brand communication to establish a knowledge base for the design process of the vocabulary. Additionally, I studied Ubisoft RedLynx's brand voice guide to better understand the unique brand voice attributes to ensure that the brand vocabulary was faithful to the company's brand voice.

The brand vocabulary consisted of example words and sentences and their "RedLynx-ified" counterparts, which were synonyms and alternate idioms that were designed to mirror the company's brand voice attributes. Based on the feedback received in Project task 5, the words in the brand vocabulary were categorized by word class to make looking up words in the vocabulary easier. The vocabulary content was then sorted into nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs. Greetings, exclamations, interjections and short sentences were also included.

Following additional revision suggestions, the brand vocabulary content was expanded, and the categories of the vocabulary such as nouns, adjectives and exclamations were arranged in alphabetical order. Individual words and sentences inside the categories were alphabetized as well. The complete brand vocabulary was integrated into Ubisoft RedLynx's brand voice guide. The brand vocabulary can be viewed in Appendix 3.

**Project task 4**, presented in Chapter 5, was comprised of designing and creating the new candidate communication templates. Based on the recruitment touchpoint mapping in Project task 2, a new candidate touchpoint framework was created to support the design process of the new candidate communication templates. The result of the project task was a set of 21 different message templates to support candidate communication activities.

The templates covered communication instances ranging from the application phase of the recruitment process all the way to the selection phase.

As the company originally had six templates for candidate communication, fifteen new templates were created to cover the candidate communication instances throughout the whole recruitment cycle, resulting in a total of 21 different templates.

**Project task 5** was explained in Chapter 6 and consisted of presenting the new candidate communication templates and brand vocabulary to Ubisoft RedLynx's HR, Talent Acquisition and Communications team members, and finalizing the two project deliverables based on the comments and revision suggestions received during the presentation.

The feedback received from the HR, Talent Acquisition, and Communications team members on the templates and brand vocabulary was positive, and that the two project outcomes brought added value to the candidate communication efforts of the company. Additionally, as noted by the company's HR Director in Chapter 6.1, the project outcomes could be used as a part of onboarding material for possible new Talent Acquisition teammates in the future. Based on this, I would interpret that the project outcomes may have a positive and long-running impact on the company's operations.

The outcome of the thesis project was the finalized candidate communication message templates and the brand vocabulary. The candidate communication template package consisted of 21 different message templates, providing a baseline for communication during various parts of the recruitment process from the attraction phase to the selection phase of the process. The brand vocabulary was integrated into Ubisoft RedLynx's brand voice guide.

**Project task 6**, the final project task, is reported in Chapter 7.4 and discusses the evaluation of the project.

## **7.2 Recommendations for Ubisoft RedLynx**

This subchapter reports the recommendations for the case company based on the development suggestions that were documented during project tasks 3 and 4.

During the completion of project task 2, which was to analyze the brand voice communication in the current candidate communication templates through existing documentation and interviews with the Talent Acquisition Specialist and Communications Manager, I documented emerging obscurities or missing information and formed development sug-



gestions that Ubisoft RedLynx could implement in the future to further improve the communication of the company's employer brand in their candidate messaging.

The first suggestion for the company would be to implement the usage of the brand vocabulary and new candidate communication templates as soon as possible. This is possible to perform in a relatively short timeframe, as the templates and brand vocabulary had been made accessible to the HR, Talent Acquisition and Communications team members after the presentation of the project. Implementing the templates and brand vocabulary is projected to minimize time spent on formulating candidate messages on an individual level, as well as ensure that the brand voice communication in candidate messaging is performed effectively and consistently.

The second development suggestion would be to customize the introductory message in the online self-evaluation sent by the external assessment agency alongside the second-round interview invitation. It was found in the qualitative interview with the Talent Acquisition Specialist that the online self-evaluation introduction message has not been customized, and it is likely that it is a default introduction formulated by the assessment agency. As the self-evaluation invitation can be classified as a candidate communication touchpoint, customizing the introduction message could further improve the consistency of the brand voice communication.

The third recommendation is for the company to develop a more comprehensive overview of candidate touchpoints and the persons responsible for the communication in specific instances. There could be specific timelines created to help members of the hiring team to know when to send which message, as well as provide a division of who is responsible for sending which message.

The fourth development suggestion is for Ubisoft RedLynx's Talent Acquisition staff to perform regular and collaborative review of the candidate communication templates. This is to ensure that the templates contain the most up-to-date information regarding the recruitment process and that they continue to be aligned with the company's employer brand. Additionally, the brand vocabulary can also be tweaked in the future, if words and sentences need to be added or removed to remain faithful to the brand language.

The fifth development suggestion would be for RedLynx's HR and Communications teams to conduct training for Talent Acquisition team members to better understand the effective communication of the employer brand to candidates who they communicate with. The reasoning behind this recommendation is that while the new candidate messaging tem-

plates are aligned with the company's brand voice, communication of the employer brand needs to be supported by messages transmitted in face-to-face situations as well and discrepancy between written and verbal messaging should be minimized. The goal is to form a coherent brand across all candidate touchpoints regardless of the medium.

### **7.3 Recommendations for Further Research and Projects**

This subchapter reports the recommendations for the case company regarding further research and projects. These recommendations fall outside the scope of the thesis, but would be beneficial for the company to consider deploying in the future.

As this thesis had a specific focus on external employer brand communication, I would recommend the company to conduct research on its internal employer brand image such as employment experience and employer brand loyalty. This would help the company gain a more comprehensive understanding of their internal employer brand image and adjust their internal branding activities accordingly. In addition, comparing the internal and external employer brand image would improve the organization's understanding of its employer brand, providing clarity into any emerging gaps between the external and internal brand image and giving way to further improvements.

The second recommendation would be for Ubisoft RedLynx to conduct quantitative or qualitative research on candidate experience among employees who are currently working or have previously been recruited to the company. This would help the company and especially its recruitment staff to gain a better understanding of their impression as an employer during the recruitment process, as well as how satisfied employees and previous applicants have been with the candidate experience of the recruitment process. The findings would then be useful for improving the candidate experience in various aspects.

### **7.4 Project Evaluation**

The completion of the project outcomes was successful. Upon presenting the project outcomes, the HR, Talent Acquisition and Communications teammates understood the necessity and usage of the new templates and brand vocabulary, as well as the added value that the project outcomes would provide in the company's candidate communication activities. The teammates were satisfied the size and scope of the completed template package as well as the brand vocabulary.

The questions for the qualitative interviews were designed based on the desired result of Project task 2, which was the analysis of the current state of brand voice communication

in the recruitment process. The interviews were conducted over the duration of two days, after which the key findings of the interviews were analyzed, and conclusions were formulated based on the analysis. The interview results were useful in the creation of the new candidate communication templates as well as the suggestions for further development to help continue improving the templates.

Regarding my personal evaluation of the project outcomes, I thought that quantity of the new candidate communications templates was sufficient. There were ultimately no touchpoints that lacked a crucial template for formulating the message. With this, I followed a “more is more” approach, and preferred to design templates for instances that might be a bit rarer, such as a headhunting approach for a passive candidate who has been tipped off by a RedLynx team member. This in turn would minimize the risk of time spent on composing a message if there is the possibility of formulating a ready-made template for it in the first place.

Regarding the timeline of the project, I had initially set myself a rather rigid schedule, breaking down project tasks into smaller activities and aiming for one to two weeks for completing each activity. However, the progress ended up being less linear than projected, and while I started early on project tasks such as the theoretical framework, I worked on them little by little throughout the thesis project and finished them during the last days of the thesis schedule. Nonetheless, I was able to complete the thesis project successfully within the original timeframe, and was satisfied with my effort put into the thesis and the project outcomes.

## **7.5 Reflection on Personal Learning**

The process of completing this thesis was not the most linear. In Fall 2019, I had started working in the Ubisoft RedLynx HR team and quickly realized my desire to write my thesis on the topic of employer branding. However, while going through existing theses centered on employer branding, I noticed that many of them were research-oriented theses, and I did not feel like I possessed enough skills necessary to conduct a research-oriented thesis. Luckily, a project-oriented thesis sounded much more plausible and upon discussing possible topic options with the company, the initial thesis topic idea started taking shape. During the thesis planning stage, the company’s brand voice guide was in its early development stages, which brought a clear thesis topic idea into my mind, which in turn molded into the topic I am writing about in this thesis today.

Writing the theoretical framework for this thesis was one of the most challenging tasks of the project. As the thesis topic was centered around multiple theoretical concepts, writing

a comprehensive yet concise knowledge base proved to be quite an arduous process. The preparation of the theoretical framework was also the most time-consuming project task; while completing other project tasks, I went back and forth in the theoretical framework, adding and removing parts to build the backbone of the thesis project. The theoretical framework ended up being the first and last part of the thesis project that I worked on, but I was ultimately satisfied with the broad array of concepts I was able to present and discuss, creating a multidimensional knowledge base for the project.

The thesis project provided me with experience of project management, scheduling and process documentation. I also had the opportunity to try out qualitative interviewing. As I had not conducted structured interviews of any kind before, I was able to learn more about formulating interview frameworks, as well as screen the interview framework for questions that were not relevant or asked the same thing as another question. I also learned to analyze interviews and transcribe them, as well as extract parts of them that were relevant to the thesis topic.

Overall, I was able to complete the project on schedule. I did experience a slight time crunch toward the end of the thesis, during which most of the project tasks were completed simultaneously. Individual project tasks, such as the theoretical framework and creation of new recruitment message templates were delayed from my original schedule. One reason might have been that my schedule was too ambitious, keeping in mind that alongside writing this thesis I was still working full-time at Ubisoft RedLynx and was completing university coursework at the same time.

I feel the proudest for starting this thesis project, sticking to it through thick and thin, and successfully finishing the project while being employed full-time and completing coursework on the side. Despite the possible limitations, I was able to overcome all challenges and achieve the project outcome on time.

In terms of professional experience, I greatly value this opportunity of having completed a thesis within the field of employer branding, communications, and human resource management. I hope that the project outcomes, the new candidate communication message templates and the brand vocabulary, will benefit Ubisoft RedLynx in their future candidate communication endeavors. I am also interested in working in an employer brand management role in the future, should such a possibility present itself.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1. Qualitative Interview Questions

#### Interview with Talent Acquisition Specialist

1. Is it alright for you if I record this interview?
2. Do you at some point(s) in the recruitment and selection process inform the candidates you are considering of the next steps in the recruitment process? If yes, when do you do so?
3. Do you have a practice to inform all of this or does the candidate need to ask the question to get the information?
4. How do you explain the next steps? Please elaborate the communication method, contents, etc.
5. Have you had instances where you have relayed the steps in writing?
6. How important do you consider it is to give information about the next steps to the applicant? Why?
7. Do you prefer to be vague or punctual with informing the candidate of the specific schedule of the next steps?
8. Do you think the current recruitment templates bring value to your candidate communication?
  - 8.1 If yes, what kind of value? If not, could you please explain why?
9. What do you recommend should be kept as is in the recruitment templates you currently use? What do you recommend should be changed in the recruitment templates?
10. In remote interviews, do you think there are enough issues related to setup, network connectivity, etc. that would require a disclaimer in the interview invitation that there may be delays on the hiring team's side? If yes, what should the disclaimer focus on?
11. In second-round interview invitations, how is the online self-evaluation survey sent to the candidate?
12. How do you ensure the personalization of the rejection message? Do you use pre-existing generic categories which the rejections are based on? If yes, please elaborate.
13. For rejection templates for open applications, what could they contain to ensure that the message is as personalized as possible?
14. When communicating with candidates, what do you do or try to do to create a positive view of Ubisoft RedLynx?

15. What do you think could be done in the candidate communication templates to generate an even more positive view of Ubisoft RedLynx?
16. If we consider the four writing principles of Ubisoft RedLynx's brand voice (Uncomplicated, Positive, Confident and Friendly), which ones do you think the candidate communication templates should emphasize the most? Alternatively, do you believe they should be written with a balance of all four principles?
17. Is there anything you'd like to say about or add to the candidate communication templates, before we wrap up the interview?

#### Interview with Communications Manager

1. Is it alright for you if I record this interview?
2. If we consider the four writing principles of Ubisoft RedLynx's brand voice (Uncomplicated, Positive, Confident and Friendly), which principle do you think the candidate communication templates should embody the most? Why?
3. To better emphasize our employer brand in our candidate messaging, what would you like to see in the candidate communication templates? (In terms of word choice, message content, atmosphere, etc.)
4. How would you encourage candidates to acquaint themselves with our social media and other external channels in the candidate communication templates? At which point do you think it is relevant to do that?
5. What more could be done in the candidate communication templates to generate an even more positive view of Ubisoft RedLynx?
6. Is there anything you'd like to say about or add to the language of the candidate communication templates, before we wrap up the interview?

## Appendix 2. Ubisoft RedLynx's Candidate Communication Templates

### 1.1 Thank-you message after application

Hey there, [FirstName],

Thanks for applying to Ubisoft RedLynx! We appreciate you taking the time and interest in working with us.

Your application has successfully found its way to us and is currently being reviewed by our team. We'll keep you posted on your status in this selection process. Until then, take care and have an awesome day!

Best regards,

[Name]

[Title]

Ubisoft RedLynx

### 1.2. Headhunting message (LinkedIn)

Hi [FirstName],

I hope this message finds you well! I'm reaching out to you because we're currently looking for a [JobTitle] here at Ubisoft RedLynx.

Based on your impressive background in [Industry/Skill], and skills with [Application/Programming language/other], I think you might be a great fit for this opportunity, and I'd like to tell you more about it and see if it aligns with your career aspirations.

Would you like me to schedule a quick call with you this week to discuss and give you some more details? What time works best for you?

Thanks, and looking forward to connecting with you!

Ubisoft collects your personal data to propose you suitable job offers. Learn more about how we process your data and about your rights via the link below.

<https://legal.ubi.com/PrivacyNoticeRecruitment/en-INTL>

### 1.3 Headhunting message (LinkedIn), tip-off from RedLynx team member

Hi [FirstName],

My name is [Name] from Ubisoft RedLynx, and I've worked with some people you know such as [TeamMember1] and [TeamMember2].

[TeamMember1] and [TeamMember2] mentioned you might be a great fit for a [JobTitle] opportunity that we currently have available here at RedLynx.

I'd like to schedule a call to tell you more. What time works best for you?

Thanks, and looking forward to connecting with you!

Ubisoft collects your personal data to propose you suitable job offers. Learn more about how we process your data and about your rights via the link below.

<https://legal.ubi.com/PrivacyNoticeRecruitment/en-INTL>

## 2.1 First interview invitation (at-studio)

Hi [FirstName],

Thanks for applying to the [JobTitle] position here at Ubisoft RedLynx! Your profile and application stood out to us and we're excited to hear more about you in an **interview**.

We currently have one open timeslot for an interview. Would this work for you?

[Weekday, Month Day (Year)], at [Hour:Minute]

The interview will take approximately one hour. You'll have the opportunity to discuss the position in-depth, as well as learn more about what it's like to work at Ubisoft RedLynx.

You'll be meeting with our following studio team members:

· [Name], [Title]

· [Name], [Title]

Our studio can be found at **Kumpulantie 3, 00520 Helsinki**, very close to the Mall of Tripla. Tram number 9 and buses 50/59 stop conveniently right in front of our building. Should you come by car, there are guest parking spots in the courtyard. Just let our lobby reception know of your license number, and you'll get a permit to park.

In the meantime, if you want to learn more about us, feel free to check out our Instagram and LinkedIn pages at [@ubisoftredlynx](#).

Feel free to reach out to me at any time if you have questions. Looking forward to hearing from you soon!

Best regards,

[Name]

[Title]

Ubisoft RedLynx

## 2.2 First interview invitation (remote)

Hi, [FirstName],

Thanks for applying to the [JobTitle] position here at Ubisoft RedLynx! Your profile and application stood out to us and we're excited to hear more about you in a **remote interview**.

Here's an open timeslot for when we'd be available to have a chat with you. Would this work for you?

[Weekday, Month Day (Year)], at [Hour:Minute], Helsinki time zone

The interview will last approximately one hour. You'll have the opportunity to discuss the position in-depth, as well as learn more about what it's like to work at Ubisoft RedLynx.

You'll be meeting with our following studio team members:

× [Name], [Title]

× [Name], [Title]

For remote interviews, we use **Google Hangouts**. At the time of the interview, you can access the Hangouts meeting space here [\(insert hyperlink\)](#). Please ensure you have sufficient network connectivity, you're able to turn on your web camera and that you're in a quiet place.

In the meantime, if you want to learn more about us, feel free to check out our Instagram and LinkedIn pages at [@ubisoftredlynx](#).

Feel free to reach out to me at any time if you have questions. Looking forward to hearing from you soon!

Best regards,

[Name]

[Title]

Ubisoft RedLynx

### 2.3. Rejection after application, add to candidate pool

Hi, [FirstName],

Thanks for applying to the [JobTitle] position here at Ubisoft RedLynx! We really appreciate that you took the time to consider us -- we know there are a lot of companies out there that are hiring!

While we appreciated your application, at this time we have chosen to proceed with another candidate.

Although we're unable to offer you a role at this time, we don't want to lose you forever. While we don't currently have an opening to match your competencies and experience, we and hope you don't mind if we reach out to you in the future. We kick off fresh recruitments regularly, and we'd like to save your profile for possible matches in our future recruitments.

We'd sincerely like to thank you for your interest in Ubisoft RedLynx and hope we'll have the chance to consider you for another role in the future!

Best regards,

[Name]

[Title]

Ubisoft RedLynx

#### 2.4. Rejection after application, no pipeline

Hi, [FirstName],

Thanks for applying to the [JobTitle] position here at Ubisoft RedLynx! We really appreciate that you took the time to consider us -- we know there are a lot of companies out there that are hiring!

While we appreciated your application, at this time we have chosen to proceed with other candidates .

We kick off fresh recruitments regularly, so please keep an eye out for our new openings on the [www.redlynx.com/careers](http://www.redlynx.com/careers) website, or turn on the job alerts from us on LinkedIn to be the first to receive notifications of our newly posted jobs.

Once again, we'd like to thank you for your interest in Ubisoft RedLynx, and wish you all the best in your career endeavors!

Best regards,

[Name]

[Title]

Ubisoft RedLynx

#### 2.5. Rejection after open application, add to candidate pool

Hey, [FirstName],

Thanks for expressing your interest in a career here at Ubisoft RedLynx! We really appreciate that you took the time to consider us -- we know there are a lot of companies out there that are hiring!

While we currently don't have an opening that matches to match your skills and experience, we don't want to lose you forever. We hope you don't mind if we reach out to you in the future. As we continue to kick off fresh recruitments regularly, we'd like to save your profile for possible future matches in our next job openings. Also, please keep an eye out for our new openings on the [www.redlynx.com/careers](http://www.redlynx.com/careers) website.

We'd sincerely like to thank you for your interest in Ubisoft RedLynx and hope we'll have the chance to consider you for another role in the future!

Best regards,

[Name]

[Title]

Ubisoft RedLynx

#### 2.6. Rejection after open application, no pipeline

Hey, [FirstName],

Thanks for expressing your interest in a career here at Ubisoft RedLynx! We really appreciate that you took

the time to consider us -- we know there are a lot of companies out there that are hiring!

While we currently don't have an opening that would match to match your skills and experience, we still hope you'll keep us in mind in the future. We kick off fresh recruitments regularly, so please keep an eye out for our new openings on the [www.redlynx.com/careers](http://www.redlynx.com/careers) website, or turn on the job alerts from us on LinkedIn to be the first to receive notifications of our newly posted jobs.

Once again, we'd like to thank you for your interest in Ubisoft RedLynx, and we wish you all the best in your career endeavors!

Best regards,

[Name]

[Title]

Ubisoft RedLynx

### 2.7. Candidate rejection, open application, too junior/requested trainee or junior position

Hey, [FirstName],

Thanks for expressing your interest in Ubisoft RedLynx! We really appreciate that you took the time to consider us and are interested in a career in the video game industry.

While we don't currently have openings for trainee or internship positions, but I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce you to the Ubisoft Graduate Program, our fast-track accelerator program into the games industry, which our studio also actively participates in. The application for the kicks off every year in January, and while I understand that January is still a few months away, and I would still warmly encourage you to check the program out if you're interested in kick-starting your career as a game professional. More details here: [https://www.ubisoft.com/en-US/careers/graduate\\_program.aspx](https://www.ubisoft.com/en-US/careers/graduate_program.aspx)

Thanks again for your time and effort, I wish you all the best in your career endeavors!

Best regards,

[Name]

[Title]

Ubisoft RedLynx

### 2.8. Response to candidate not interested in headhunt request

Hi, [FirstName]

Thanks for letting me know, I can completely understand that. If you happen to know somebody in your network who has [Skill/experience/other in X] and would be interested to work in a game studio in Helsinki, Finland, feel free to share my contact information [Email].

Best regards,

[Name]

[Title]

Ubisoft RedLynx

### 3.1 Thank-you message after first-round interview

Hi, [FirstName],

Dropping in to say thank you for the interview! We really appreciate that you took the time to meet with our team members regarding the [JobTitle] role here at Ubisoft RedLynx. It was really cool to learn more about your skills and accomplishments!

Our next step with the hiring process of this position is to evaluate all of our interviewees, so please allow up to [X days/weeks] for us to get back to you. No worries, we'll keep you in the loop!

In the meantime, should any questions cross your mind, feel free to reach out whenever. Thanks again, have a great rest of the week!

Best regards,

[Name]

[Title]

Ubisoft RedLynx

### 4.1 Update after first interview, sending of test assignment

Hi, [FirstName]

I'm writing to you to follow up on our discussion related to the [JobTitle] position open here at Ubisoft RedLynx. We got a great impression of you in the interview, and hopefully you feel the same!

As a next step in this process, we're excited to invite you to complete a **test assignment** to showcase your skills. You can find the assignment attached.

We would appreciate it if you could return your completed assignment to us by [Weekday, Month Day/ in a timeframe of X weeks]. Do let us know if meeting this deadline is challenging.

Please reply to me and [HiringManager] (in CC) with your finished test assignment. We'll give you feedback based on the assignment.

Should any questions cross your mind regarding the assignment, feel free to reach out to myself or [Hiring-Manager]. Thanks in advance, have a great day ahead!

Best regards,

[Name]

[Title]

Ubisoft RedLynx

### 4.2 Candidate rejection after first interview

Hi, [FirstName],



We really appreciate that you took the time to meet with our team regarding the [JobTitle] role here at Ubisoft RedLynx. It was great to learn more about your skills and accomplishments.

We often have to make difficult choices between many high-caliber candidates. Unfortunately, we've chosen to move forward with another candidate who better suits our project needs/[other reason]. However, we kick off fresh recruitments regularly, so please keep an eye out for our new openings on the [www.redlynx.com/careers](http://www.redlynx.com/careers) website or turn on the job alerts from us on LinkedIn to be the first to receive notifications of our newly posted jobs.

We'd like to sincerely thank you for your interest in Ubisoft RedLynx, and wish you all the best!

Best regards,  
[Name]  
[Title]  
Ubisoft RedLynx

### 5.1 Second round interview invitation (candidate in Finland)

Hi, [FirstName],

Thanks a lot for your effort with the test assignment, we were truly impressed by your great work!

I hope you're still excited about the position, because we'd like to invite you back for a **second interview** and the final stage of the selection process!

Would it be possible for you to visit us on [Weekday, Month Day (Year)]? The day will include getting to know the team, the project and our studio better. I would advise to prepare at least a few hours for the visit.

A key part of our recruitment process is getting to know your preferred working style and what motivates you. This will be assessed through an online self-evaluation and an interview with me. The self-evaluation takes about 30 to 40 minutes to complete, and you'll receive the invitation to complete it in a separate email sent via Cubiks Assessment (please check your junk/spam folder if it has not found your inbox!).

As the objective of our next meeting is to talk about your responses to the self-evaluation, it would be great if you could complete it before your visit. During our meeting, we will also talk about your concrete experiences at work, so it's a good idea for you to prepare to answer to questions like these:

- × Can you describe a time when you've been proactive in finding a solution to a problem encountered by your team?
- × What significant decision did you make recently? How did you go about it?

Please let me know if you're available for the visit and whether you have any questions. Looking forward to meeting with you again!

Best regards,

[Name]  
[Title]

Ubisoft RedLynx

## 5.2 Second round interview invitation, (candidate outside Finland)

Hi, [FirstName],

Thanks a lot for your effort with the test assignment, we were very impressed by it/we think you did a really great job on it!

I hope you're still excited about the position, because we'd like to invite you to **visit us at the RedLynx studio in Helsinki!** The day will include getting to know the team, the project and our studio better, as well as more interviews and meetings.

Can you travel to Helsinki to visit our studio on [Weekday, Month Day (Year)]?

Of course, all your travelling costs will be covered by RedLynx. After we have confirmed the date, [Name] (in CC) will be in touch with you to help you with all your travel arrangements. [Name] can start the travel arrangements faster if you send us the following information and material as soon as possible:

1. The airport you wish to travel from
2. Your phone number
3. A photocopy of your passport information page (you can also snap a photo of it with your smartphone)

A key part of our recruitment process is getting to know your preferred working style and what motivates you. This will be assessed through an online self-evaluation and an interview with me. The self-evaluation takes about 30 to 40 minutes to complete, and you'll receive the invitation to complete it in a separate email sent via Cubiks Assessment (please check your junk/spam folder if it has not found your inbox!).

As the objective of our next meeting is to talk about your responses to the self-evaluation, it would be great if you could complete it before your visit. During our meeting, we will also talk about your concrete experiences at work, so it's a good idea for you to prepare to answer to questions like these:

- × Can you describe a time when you've been proactive in finding a solution to a problem encountered by your team?
- × What significant decision did you make recently? How did you go about it?

Please let me know if you're available for the visit and if you have any questions. Looking forward to meeting you face to face!

Best regards,

[Name]

[Title]

Ubisoft RedLynx

## 6.1 Thank-you message after second interview

Hi, [FirstName],

Hope you're doing well! I wanted to thank you for visiting us to learn more about the [JobTitle] position here

at Ubisoft RedLynx! The team really enjoyed meeting you, and I hope you got better insight into the role and the project.

We want to make the best hiring decision and are currently wrapping up final interviews for this role. We're aiming to have all interviews completed and reach a decision in [X] weeks. I'll update you as soon as possible.

Feel free to reach out for any questions you might have. Wishing you a good rest of the week!

Best regards,

[Name]

[Title]

Ubisoft RedLynx

#### 7.1 Message after second round interview, job offer

Hi, [FirstName],

I'm excited to offer you a position in our team here at Ubisoft RedLynx as a [JobTitle].

We are offering a gross monthly salary of XXXX€ and the proposed start date is [Weekday, Month Day, Year], which we can update depending on your wishes. You will join [Project] project, and report to [ManagerName, ManagerPosition]. You can read more details in the offer letter attached.

Let me know what you think! I would appreciate if you could get back to me by the end of this week/by [Month Day]. Should you have any questions about the position, conditions, benefits or something else, feel free to reach out to me or [Talent Acquisition Specialist].

Looking forward to having you on our team!

Best regards,

[Name]

[Title]

Ubisoft RedLynx

#### 7.2 Rejection after second interview\*

(\*If a second-round candidate is rejected, we recommend calling the candidate directly to inform them of the rejection.)

Hi, [FirstName],

We really appreciate that you took the time to meet with our team regarding the [JobTitle] role here at Ubisoft RedLynx. The competition for this role was high and you were one of the few candidates we selected for the final stage of interviews.

It was a tough decision to make, as we think your skills and experience in [X] are stellar and very valuable. However, unfortunately we're not able to offer you a position in this role at this time. In the end, we chose

the candidate who had more experience in X/showcased more proficiency in X/[other reason].

However, we think you're a very strong candidate and we'd like to keep your profile and reconnect with you in the case of any future openings.

We'd like to sincerely thank you for your interest in Ubisoft RedLynx, and wish you all the best!

Best regards,

[Name]

[Title]

Ubisoft RedLynx

### 8.1 Candidate withdraws from hiring process

Hi, [FirstName],

Thanks so much for letting me know. I understand the situation, and if there's anything we could have done to change your mind, I'd like to know. Either way, I'd like to thank you for considering us and I wish you the best of luck in whatever you do next!

Best regards,

[Name]

[Title]

Ubisoft RedLynx

### 8.2 On-hold message (generic)

Hello, [FirstName]

I'm writing to you regarding the [JobTitle] position here at Ubisoft RedLynx. Due to unforeseen circumstances, we're putting this job on hold and are currently not proceeding with discussions or interviews.

We know that the waiting game isn't ideal to anyone, and we really appreciate your patience. We'll be in touch with you as soon as we're in the clear with the next steps.

Thanks again for your cooperation, wishing you a great rest of the week!

Best regards,

[Name]

[Title]

Ubisoft RedLynx

### 8.3 On-hold message (strong candidate)

Hello, [FirstName]

I'm writing to you regarding the [JobTitle] position here at Ubisoft RedLynx. Due to unforeseen circumstanc-

es, we're putting this job on hold and are currently not proceeding with discussions or interviews.

We know that the waiting game isn't ideal to anyone, but we consider you a very strong candidate for this position, and are keen on resuming discussions with you as soon as that becomes possible.

In any case, we appreciate your patience with this, and you can rest assured that we will be in touch with you as soon as we're in the clear with the next steps. Thanks again, wishing you a great rest of the week!

Best regards,

[Name]

[Title]

Ubisoft RedLynx

### Appendix 3. Ubisoft RedLynx's Brand Vocabulary

<b>WORD/PHRASE</b>	<b>WORD/PHRASE, REDLYNX-IFIED</b>
<b>ADJECTIVES</b>	
Crazy	Outrageous Shameless Totally nuts
Good	Amazing Astonishing Awesome Incredible Badass Kickass Magnificent Stunning Wonderful
Happy	Chuffed Delighted Gleeful Joyful Merry On cloud nine Overjoyed Pleased
Lucky	Blissful Catch a break Favorable Fortunate Serendipitous
New	Brand new Fresh (Our) latest (Our) most recent Shiny
Nice	Cool Dazzling Funky Neat Nifty Snazzy Sweet
Successful	Champion Glorious Reigning Rejoicing Triumphant Victorious
Unusual	Eccentric Kooky Off-the-wall Quirky Unexpected Wacky

Talented	Masterful Multitalented Savvy Skilled Stellar
True	Genuine For realsies No-bullshit No-nonsense
<b>ADVERBS</b>	
A lot	A bunch of A good deal A great deal A myriad of Ample (use as you would an adjective) An abundance of Bunches of
Many	A plethora of Heaps (of) Multiple Numerous Quite a bit of Tons of
Rarely	Barely even Hardly In rare cases In the rare instance of Not too often Seldom
Sometimes	(Every) now and then From time to time Occasionally On a few occasions Once in a blue moon
Very	Amazingly Extraordinarily Incredibly Really Extremely Outstandingly Seriously
<b>CONJUNCTIONS</b>	
Also,	Better yet, In addition, Oh, but there's more! On top of that, That's not all, There's more where that came from!
But	Alas, Even so, However, Nevertheless, That being said, Then again,

<b>INTERJECTIONS</b>	
[Happy expression]	Bravo, Hooray, Huzzah, Three cheers for [x]! Yay! Yippee!
Hello	Greetings, Guess what? Hey there, Hi there, Psst... Yo!
No	Nah No way José Nope Think again! Not quite
[Surprised expression]	Ooh! Woah! Well, I'll be! Well, I never! Whoa! Wow!
[Swearword]	Flippin' Fudge
What?	Huh? Really?
Yes	Aye-aye! Indeed (we do)! Right on! Yep Yup Uh-huh That's right, You got it, You guessed it, You bet (we do)!
<b>NOUNS</b>	
Employees	Fellow devs Teammates Team members
Chance	Advantage Lucky shot Opportunity Upper hand
Office	RedLynx studio Studio
Preview	Peep Sneak peek* (* <i>not sneak peak!</i> ) Snippet
Success	Accomplishment Achievement Hit



	Smooth running Triumph Victory
<b>PHRASES</b>	
Have a nice weekend!	Have a great weekend! Wishing everyone an awesome weekend!
Here is... [x]	Allow us to introduce to you [x] Behold our... Check out our... Have you seen (our) [x] yet? Say hello to (our) [x]!
How are you?	How's it going? What's cooking? What's up?
Thank you to...	(Big) thanks to... Props to... Shoutout to...
We think that... [x]	[x] is important to us... We prioritize [x] in our daily work... We take [x] seriously... We totally agree on the fact that...
<b>VERBS</b>	
Gather	Come together Gather 'round Join forces/efforts
Help	Aid Assist Back up Chip in Collaborate Come to the rescue Grease the wheels Lend a helping hand Reinforce Support
Talk	Chat Chit-chat Converse Discuss Have a chat Have a conversation Have a dialogue Have a word with Mention
Wait for	Be on the lookout for... Keep your eyes peeled for... Make sure you stay in the loop... Stay tuned for...

## Appendix 4. Thesis Project Presentation

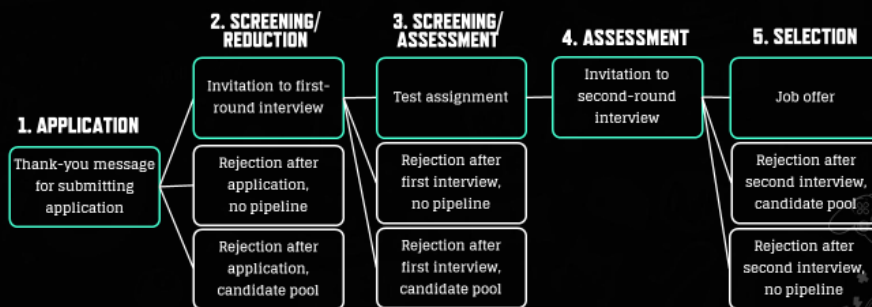


## FINDINGS FROM PROJECT MANAGEMENT METHODS

- × Project management methods
  - × Analysis of the current candidate communication touchpoints
    - × What should be kept, what should be added
  - × Analysis of the existing candidate communication templates
    - × Which touchpoint has/does not have a template
    - × Viewpoints: grammar and punctuation, word choice, brand voice faithfulness, level of information provided
- × Development points
  - × Effective transmission of brand voice attributes in candidate messaging
    - × Uncomplicated, Positive, Confident and Friendly
    - × What this meant in practice: clear and concise messages without losing the distinctly "RedLynx" vibe in the message content and atmosphere
  - × No rock left unturned -- overhaul of all existing templates
  - × Templates for "interim" touchpoints between stages in the recruitment process to keep candidates warm
    - × Important component in creating a good candidate experience as well

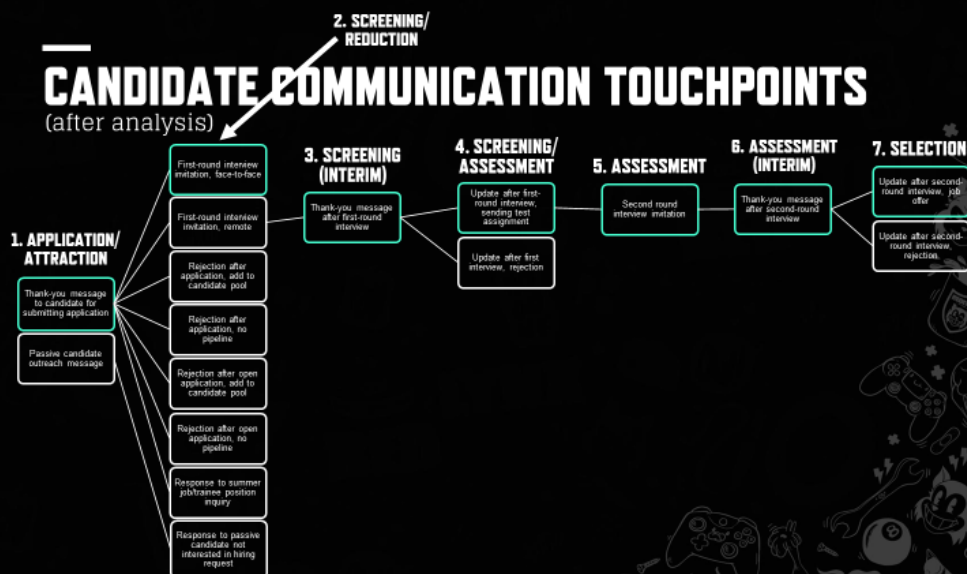
## CANDIDATE COMMUNICATION TOUCHPOINTS

(before analysis)



## CANDIDATE COMMUNICATION TOUCHPOINTS

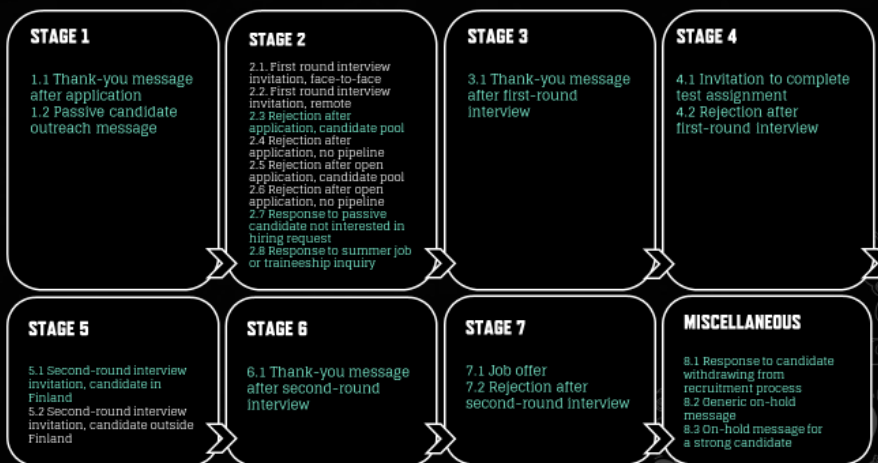
(after analysis)



# CANDIDATE COMMUNICATION TEMPLATES

- × Six (6) existing templates were originally available
  1. First round interview invitation, face-to-face
  2. First round interview invitation, remote
  3. Second round interview invitation
  4. Candidate rejection, job opening, no pipeline
  5. Candidate rejection, open application, no pipeline
  6. Candidate rejection, open application, candidate pool
- × New templates were created based on the new candidate touchpoint framework and results of existing template analysis
- × Results: “A few” new templates were created ☺
  - × A package of 21 different templates in total

# CANDIDATE COMMUNICATION TEMPLATES



# BRAND VOCABULARY

- × Integrated into RedLynx’s brand voice guide
- × Seeks added value to all communications activities, including candidate communications
- × Consists of “regular” and “RedLynx-ified” words
  - × Nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs
  - × Greetings, exclamations and interjections plus short sentences are also included
  - × Alphabetized and categorized

REGULAR	REDLYNX-IFIED!
No	Nah Nope No way José Think again!
True	Genuine For realsies No-bullshit No-nonsense
Crazy	Outrageous Shameless Totally nuts
Thank you to...	(Big) thanks to... Props to... Shoutout to...
We think that... [x]	We prioritize [x] in our daily work... We take [x] seriously... We totally agree on the fact that...
Here is... [x]	Allow us to introduce to you [x] Behold our... Say hello to (our) [x]!
[Happy expression]	Bravo, Hooray, Huzzah, Three cheers for [x]! Yay! Yippee!



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## SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

- × Implementation of templates and brand vocabulary as soon as possible
- × Systematic review of templates and vocabulary
  - × To ensure that information regarding recruitment process is up to date
  - × Language and content aligned with RedLynx's brand/employer brand
- × More holistic overview of candidate touchpoints
  - × Timelines for **when** to send which message
  - × Clear division of **who** is responsible for sending which message
- × Customization of automated messages to suit RedLynx's language style
  - × Ubisoft for **thank you for application message**
  - × Cubiks for **online self-evaluation invitation**

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## CONCLUSIONS

- × Overall, the project was successful
- × While progress of the entire thesis project was not the most linear, individual project tasks were started and completed with compact timelines
- × A very fun and sufficiently challenging project, which I am thankful to have had the opportunity to embark on ☺
- × Thank you, lovely teammates, for the cooperation and support!

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## THANK YOU

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