

The international talent acquisition process
Case: F-Secure Corporation

Aurelija Viluckyte

Degree programme

<p>Author or authors Aurelija Viluckyte</p>	<p>Group or year of entry 2009</p>
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<p>Teacher(s) or supervisor(s) Elizabeth San Miguel, Tanja Vesala-Varttala</p>	
<p>This thesis was conducted based on F-Secure's needs and interests. F-Secure was interested to find out how international employees view their talent acquisition processes and to review the success of the co-operation with two recruitment partners.</p> <p>The objective of this thesis was to give development suggestions to F-Secure on their international talent acquisition processes. Three different perspectives were researched in order to receive relevant data: F-Secure's current international talent acquisition processes based on internal sources, the experiences of the recently employed international employees on F-Secure's pre-selected recruitment and selection stages, and the current co-operation situation with Recruitment Partners A & B were studied.</p> <p>The thesis project started in November 2011 and ended in July 2012. The theoretical literature studied included talent acquisition through recruitment and selection, candidate experience and recruitment service providers. The data was collected between January and June 2012. The data collection methods included company workshops, e-mails, interviews, a group discussion and a quantitative survey. The research tools aimed to pinpoint the experiences and opinions of the current and past situations in F-Secure's international talent acquisition and to find any improvement ideas from the research participants. Some improvement ideas were based on theoretical evidence.</p> <p>It was found that F-Secure's international talent acquisition process is already well-developed and a lot of attention is given to the end of the process – the pre-engagement process and Day One. Some ideas for improvement were given as well. For example, the use of social media for recruitment purposes, making a more personalized recruitment and selection process, as well as improving the hiring manager's and the recruitment service provider's communication levels were the main improvement points suggested.</p>	
<p>Keywords Talent acquisition, recruitment and selection, candidate experience, recruitment partnership, Social Media</p>	

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1 Introduction

Introduction chapter gives reader an in-depth presentation of the thesis topic and the research problem setting. The case company F-Secure short presentation is also included in the introduction chapter. At the end, the key concepts and the structure of the report are explained.

1.1 Topic background

Talent acquisition may provoke thinking that it is simply a synonym of the recruitment and selection concept. However, according to Rivera (2011), talent acquisition encompasses more than recruitment and selection alone. Talent acquisition takes into account all the involved processes into attracting, selecting and hiring the new employees which reach beyond the recruitment and selection practices. Talent acquisition “includes elements of employment branding, outreach, networking, and relationship building with potential candidate communities”. (Rivera 2011.) The thesis topic of international talent acquisition is focusing on the relationship building with potential candidates, or otherwise networking and creating a positive candidate experience of employer brand and its practices of the recruitment and selection process; the research is also focused on talent sourcing via employing recruitment agencies. Theory on the positive candidate experience (section 2.2) imposes that candidates (as favoured to customers) long for positive experience of the ‘product’ (in this case, recruitment and selection process and employer brand). Therefore, employers must understand the power of positive candidate experience: candidates are potentially a source of referral, good or bad, now and in the future. (Astringer 2009; Crispin & Mehler 2011, 11; Kaiser 2009, 1.) The same understanding applies to employers working with recruitment agencies. Recruitment agencies must also bring as positive as possible image of the employer by conducting appropriate recruitment and selection process. Recruitment partnership management can also relate back to the candidate experience via partnership development.

The thesis is commissioned by F-Secure Corporation headquarters located in Helsinki, Finland. In terms of the research scope, F-Secure is interested in improving the positive candidate experience, enhancing their employer image and attracting more interna-

tional talent into the corporation. These are the main reasons for the conduct of this research.

The concept of positive candidate experience will be studied through the pre-selected recruitment and selection process stages where improvement is sought for. The research design involves the participation of one focus group and two recruitment partners. The focus group consists of recently employed international employees, and the two recruitment partners consist of two representatives respectively. The aim of the research is to collect relevant data from the focus group about their opinions, feedback and perceptions of the pre-selected F-Secure's recruitment and selection process stages, and from the recruitment partners about their partnership effectiveness and development of it with F-Secure.

The research has a few of anticipated benefits to the case company F-Secure. The research findings will give F-Secure an opportunity to look at their recruitment process stages from the foreign employees' point of view, and at the partnership quality from the recruitment partners' point of view. This should create more awareness of which steps of the processes could be improved. F-Secure will be able to improve their process according to their needs. The research will greatly benefit the Human Resources department and the Hiring Managers. The research may also influence the start of the induction process program. The research will additionally include suggestions how F-secure could take more advantage of social media in recruitment and employer branding.

Academic benefits to the Human Resources Management field may be identified. Little research has been done on the concepts 'pre-engagement' and 'positive candidate experience'. This research will help to prove that candidate experience indeed has an influence on the employer appeal.

Last but not least, there are a few of benefits to the author personally and professionally. The topic is in author's field of strong interest, as well as widely beneficial for the future professional life. The author will have an opportunity to network with HR-

specialists in practical situations. Finally, the author will benefit from learning how to conduct a thesis research.

1.2 F-Secure

The commissioning company for this thesis is F-Secure Corporation, more specifically F-Secure's Corporate Head Office located in Helsinki, Finland. F-Secure is "the global leader of software as a service through operators". The main purpose of F-Secure's software is to protect the digital contents of individual and company clients.

F-Secure is an international corporation, operating mainly in Europe, but has offices also in Latin America, USA, and Asian Pacific. Current global personnel size is around 900, whereas the Head Office is home to around 400 professionals. (F-Secure 2011).

The main thesis beneficiaries in the company are the HR department and the Hiring Managers. HR department and the Hiring Managers are highlighted in orange colour on the organizational chart below. Each orange line between the department and the CEO shows a Hiring Manager. F-Secure has, in total, 10 departments operating under the CEO and the President of F-Secure Corporation.



Figure 1. F-Secure’s organisational structure (The chart was modified from the internal F-Secure document, shared during a personal company workshop. 2012)

The HR department team is directed by the HR director. HR director has 9 subordinates in the Head Office in Finland and a few of other subordinates in international offices from Bordeaux in France, Latin America, NA in the USA and Malaysia in Asia Pacific. The functions of each Finland’s subordinates are shown in the figure below.

The boxes containing green colour titles are the ones indicating the HR specialist roles. Some HR specialists have double job roles at F-Secure.

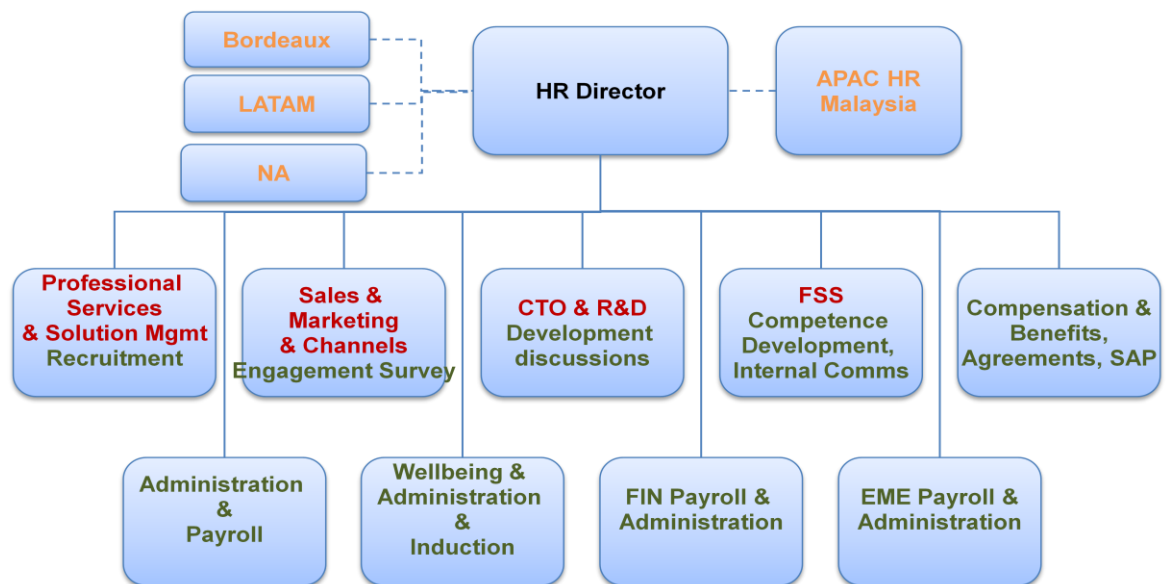


Figure 2. Human resources team structure (The chart was modified from the internal F-Secure document, shared during a personal company workshop. 2012)

1.3 Research problem setting

This thesis topic is international talent acquisition process within specific stages in F-Secure Corporation. The aim of the research is to analyse current international talent acquisition process and to provide improvement suggestions to the HR department in F-Secure. The main Research Problem (RP) and Investigative Questions (IQs) are formulated as follows:

RP: How could F-Secure's international talent acquisition process be improved?

1) What is F-Secure's current recruitment and selection process in selected stages?

The aim of this IQ was to describe the current recruitment and selection process in four pre-selected stages:

- Application stage,
- Interviewing and selection stage,
- Pre-engagement stage,
- and the Day One stage

to have an overview of the case company current practices.

- 2) How F-Secure's selected recruitment and selection process stages were experienced by the recently employed international employees?

With this IQ F-Secure intended to get feedback and improvement ideas from recently (up to 2 years) employed international employees on the pre-selected recruitment and selection process stages. The international employees compiled a focus group.

- 3) What is current co-operation situation with Recruitment Partners A & B?

With this IQ F-Secure aimed to get feedback, improvement ideas and evaluation of the partnership. Suggestions how F-Secure's recruitment and selection process could be improved from recruitment partner's point of view were also welcome.

- 4) What improvement suggestions can be given to F-Secure?

For this IQ the researcher expressed the suggestions for improvement based on the analysis of theory and the key research findings.

The research problem setting from the thesis contents point of view is shown in the *overlay matrix* as an Attachment 1, p. 85.

International talents in the research are both types of foreigners – the ones recruited from within Finland and from abroad. International talents in the research are specifically recently employed foreign talents. The definition for “recent” in this case was defined to be employees that were employed 1-2 years ago. Such decision was made to select the employees which have recent enough experience of the process. The research limitations can be reviewed in the figure below.

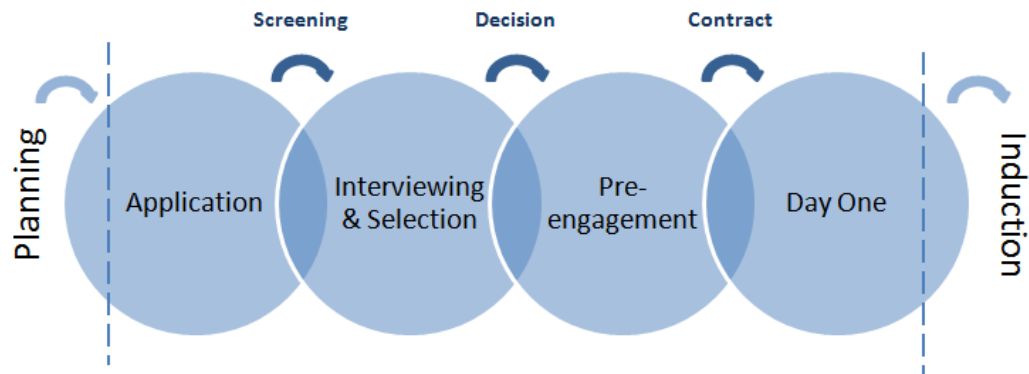


Figure 3. Research limitations

The research is limited to the process starting off with application stage and ending with the Day One stage. The recruitment planning and induction were excluded from the scope of the research because research aimed to focus only on the recruitment and selection process.

1.4 Key concepts

The following part presents the key concepts used for the development of the theoretical framework which can be found under the chapter 2.

Talent acquisition. “Talent acquisition is the ongoing cycle of processes related to attracting, sourcing, recruiting, and hiring (or placing) employees within an organization. This includes elements of employment branding, outreach, networking, and relationship building with potential candidate communities to continually build and enhance the talent pool for an organization.” (Rivera 2011.)

Candidate experience. Candidate experience is described as “the attitudes and behaviors of individuals who aspire to work for a firm about the recruiting process, the stakeholders in the process, the work and the company itself as a place to work.” (Crispin 2011, 11.)

Recruitment & Selection. “The recruitment and selection process is concerned with identifying, attracting and choosing suitable people to meet an organisation’s human

resource requirements. They are integrated activities, and ‘where recruitment stops and selection begins is a moot point.’” (Anderson 1994 in Beardwell 2001, 226.)

Recruitment agency. Recruitment agency is a partner who works on behalf of employer to advertise the job openings and to find the suitable candidates. (Hester 1991 in Fish & Macklin 2004, 31.)

1.5 Structure and conduct of the report

The thesis paper consists of five (5) chapters. The chapter 1 introduces the reader to the thesis topic, problem setting and research limitations. The chapter 2 present the relevant theoretical framework and includes important stages and aspects in the recruitment and selection process. Next, the chapter 3 explains the research methods and reasoning. Moreover, the chapter 4 consists of results analysis and presentation. The reader will find the answers to the Investigative Questions 1, 2, 3, and partially 4 in the chapter 4. The chapter 5 is a conclusion that summarizes the key results and provides improvement suggestions to F-Secure. The reader will find the references list right after the ending section 5.6. Last but not least, the reader may view the Attachments which are situated at the very end of the paper.

2 Talent acquisition through recruitment and selection

The chapter 2 describes talent acquisition through recruitment and selection. The chapter includes seven subchapters. All subchapters, except for subchapter 2.5, cover subjects that are relevant to review for the Investigative Questions 1 & 2. The fifth subchapter 2.5 covers topics relevant to review for the Investigative Question 3.

Theories of the recruitment and selection process begin the chapter in order to give an overview of the talent acquisition processes. The candidate experience theory presentation following next is vital to show how it is interconnected and involved in each of the recruitment and selection process steps.

2.1 Recruitment and selection process

There are a few of definitions for the process of recruitment and selection. “*Recruitment* is 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.” Therefore, “*Selection* is a process which involves the application of appropriate techniques and methods with the aim of selecting, appointing and inducting a competent person or persons.”(Pilbeam 2010, 156.)

While Pilbeam (2010) separates definitions of recruitment and selection, Anderson (1994 in Beardwell 2011, 226) presents recruitment and selection as one goal of the organization to match the strategic needs. Still, Anderson identifies that recruitment and selection are two processes attached to each other: “The *recruitment and selection* is concerned with identifying, attracting and choosing suitable people to meet an organization’s human resource requirements. They are integrated activities, and ‘where recruitment stops and selection begins is a moot point’.”

Recruitment and selection process may be described in a few of ways depending on the theorists. Author has chosen two theories to describe the process, which serve as the most suitable base for the research in focus.

Pilbeam (2010, 156-158) presents recruitment and selection as a system, consisting of few other sub-systems. The system is compared to the production plants, which, in order to produce, have to enter inputs, process them and produce the outputs. Pilbeam identifies inputs as a candidate pool, while the processing unit performs a range of recruitment and selection methods, and, finally, the outputs are considered to be the selected candidate and the candidates who were rejected or exited the process. The sub-systems include four segments – *attraction*, *reduction*, *selection*, and *transition* – and may be viewed in the Table 1 below.

Table 1. The recruitment and selection sub-systems (Pilbeam 2010, 158.)

Sub-systems	Activities
1 <i>Attraction</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pre-recruitment activity - establishing a <i>prima facie</i> case for recruitment; job analysis; consideration of the labor market ● Use of recruitment methods ● Responding to enquiries
2 <i>Reduction</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Filtering, screening and shortlisting
3 <i>Selection</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Use of selection methods and techniques ● Making the appointment – offer and acceptance
4 <i>Transition</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pre-engagement process ● Induction and appraisal

Four categories of the sub-systems are components of the same system, where each component is highly dependent on each other. For example, depending on the outcome of the job analysis, different candidate pools may be attracted. Another example can be choosing the wrong methods to select a candidate, which may result in unsuccessful recruitment. Quality and interdependence of each sub-system are important factors to consider when conducting recruitment and selection process.

Roberts (2005) in his book “Recruitment and selection” provides extensive advice to the recruiters by describing each step of the recruitment and selection process from the practical approach. Roberts also provides with a practical recruitment and selection process flowchart, which clearly depicts the process and is easily understandable. His description makes the recruitment and selection process even more clear and it will serve well as a base for the next chapters of this paper. Please, view the Attachment 2 in p. 87 for the Roberts’ recruitment and selection process flowchart.

Roberts (2005, 6-17) identifies 10 steps in the recruitment and selection process. He starts with role analysis and ends with induction. Two first steps are about identifying the role, skills, competencies needed and the suitable behavioural personality to the job. In other words, it is about defining the ideal person for an open vacancy. Next, identifying suitable attracting methods and posting job advertisements are divided into two separate tasks. Candidate selection starts with screening and short-listing the applications, then interviewing and assessing the selected candidates. Selection ends when the decision and final choice has been made. There are two phases of rejecting candidates from the selection process: firstly, when screening short-list has been prepared, and secondly, when the final decision has been made. Checking references, according to Roberts, occurs before the job offer and employment contract. Monitor and review phase occurs after the employment contract is signed and before induction starts. This task is needed to review gathered data about the candidate and to re-consider the needs of the candidate in order for him to succeed in the job as soon as possible. Monitoring also involves a task of providing the recruiting manager with all necessary information about the candidate and how to manage his/her success. Finally, induction process starts after 'monitor and review' phase.

Both Pilbeam and Roberts identify recruitment and selection beginning with the job specification and competency-based analysis, and finishing up by inducting a new employee. Pilbeam grouped the process into four sub-systems, each of which consists of few separate tasks, while Roberts found many steps involved and positioned all of them chronologically in a sequence.

There are multiple parties who may be/ are involved in the recruitment and selection process. Larger organizations usually have a dedicated HR department and a couple of professional recruiters who take care of the process. Line managers (hiring managers) are usually involved in the recruitment and selection process due to the obvious reasons: they usually decide on the candidate suitability to the team and to the job. In case of smaller companies, which do not have resources to hire HR specialists, hiring a recruitment or consultancy agency could be a reasonable choice. A research conducted

by the CIPD concluded that HR specialists usually get the responsibility for advertising jobs, making job offers and administering the recruitment and selection process. Line managers are most visible during the screening and selection processes. The combined decision making between HR specialists and the line managers is most visible during the screening and selection processes. Only 8-9% of responsibility to advertise jobs and screen applications is outsourced to private recruitment agencies. (Roberts 2005, 30-31.)

2.2 Candidate experience

This subchapter will cover the topic and concept of the candidate experience. The candidate experience will be defined and explained. The reasons for paying attention to the candidate experience will also be given. A more detailed picture of how the positive candidate experience looks like and how it could be developed is provided at the end of this subchapter. This subchapter is a vital part of the thesis theoretical framework due to the relationship with the Research Problem and the Investigative Question 2 and 3.

2.2.1 Candidate experience as a concept and why it is important

The concept of candidate experience has not been widely studied, however, author has found a few of valuable articles which describe the candidate experience, define the meaning as well as advise how companies should ensure positive candidate experiences during the recruitment and selection process.

As defined by Kaiser (2009, 1) candidate experience is the experience of the recruitment and selection process from the point of view of each applicant and candidate who is/ was involved in the process. Definition for the candidate experience, which was used in section 1.4, is as follows: “The attitudes and behaviors of individuals who aspire to work for a firm about the recruiting process, the stakeholders in the process, the work and the company itself as a place to work” (Crispin & Mehler 2011, 11). In order to understand what candidate experience means, Kaiser suggests looking at the “series of touch points” that contain the candidate experience. Each touch point is to

be understood as any kind of contact between the candidate and the company. Examples include company websites, job advertisements, phone calls, interviews, assessments and job offers. (Kaiser 2009, 1.)

Crispin & Mehler also suggest identifying the starting and ending points of the candidate experience to help employer and recruiters understand which moments might influence candidates either positively or negatively. According to Crispin & Mehler, the candidate experience starts once the applicant (candidate) shows his/ her interest towards the company. Showing interest might occur by sending a job application, phone call, and via a meeting at a career event or other occasion. The ending point of the candidate experience was difficult to determine, however, according to the researchers, it lasts still rather long after the job offer has been accepted. The on-boarding / introduction / induction phase that is organized by an employer to the new employee is still a part of the candidate experience, because a new employee has an open chance to withdraw from the job contract. (Crispin & Mehler 2011, 11.)

Based on three valuable articles (Astringer, M. 2009 “Is your organization ensuring a positive candidate experience?”; Crispin & Mehler 2011 “What they say it is; What it really is; and, What it can be”; Kaiser, M. 2009 “Improving the candidate experience: can you put yourself in their shoes?”) about candidate experience, there are at least three good reasons why employers and recruiters should not oversee the importance of the positive candidate experience and the kind of benefits it might bring.

- 1) The candidate who has obtained a positive candidate experience of the recruitment and selection process can be the company’s best referral source. (Astringer 2009.) Kaiser (2009, 1) also reminds employers and recruiters of not forgetting that today’s internet possibilities give excellent conditions for the candidates “to spread a message, good or bad” through various social websites.
- 2) According to Crispin & Mehler (2011, 11) “we went from an agrarian age to an industrial age to the service economy, and, now, to the experience economy”, which means that candidates (and customers), as much as employers, have impact

on the outcome in today's economy. Candidates are another type of customers, who both long for positive experiences.

- 3) Kaiser (2009, 1) puts an emphasis on the probability of the economy shifting around in such relationship where there will be too few candidates for too many jobs. Exactly for this reason, employers and recruiters should develop their recruiting processes already now so that all applicants and candidates get the best possible impressions of the company and of the stakeholders involved in the process.

2.2.2 What is a positive candidate experience and how to develop it?

Employer's website and career site "is the second first impression" of the company to the candidate after the job advertisement or a chat in a job fair with a representative. The company website must communicate the positive image the same way as through the job advertisement or a company representative. Kaiser suggests investing time to build effective career site, because researchers found that around 90% of people, who visit the career site, actually never apply to the jobs or change their minds. (Kaiser 2009, 3.)

The functionality factor of the career site is also an important matter to consider when developing the candidate experience. Kaiser (2009, 1) encourages recruiters and the hiring managers to navigate their own websites and career sites to see what kind of experience candidates are obtaining. Moreover, in their study Crispin & Mehler (2011, 24) asked 300 jobseekers "How many clicks it takes to get to the job advertisement?". Only 2% of jobseekers said it takes 2 clicks, while 65% of respondents said it takes at least 4 clicks or more.

Social Media can be taken into advantage considering the marketing of jobs and the employer brand. Kaiser suggests creating a marketing approach on the Social Media websites and employ current employees to spread 'word-of-mouth' experiences about the company and advertise open vacancies. (Kaiser 2009, 2.)

The factor of the candidate frustration in terms of the job application forms is another

matter to consider. Companies seem to rarely inform candidates about the amount of time required to fill in the application form and to mention whether some specific documents will be needed to fill in the application form. Candidates usually think that the application form will take around 10 minutes of their time. In the end, they realize that it takes more than 30 minutes to fill in. Kaiser suggests informing candidates of the job application form length beforehand. If possible, candidate's inputs into the job application form should have an option of saving and returning to the form again for later submission. (Kaiser 2009, 4.)

The rates of recruiter responsiveness during the process of recruitment and selection are surprisingly low. Responsiveness or regular communication is one of the most important factors of the candidate experience during the recruitment and selection process. Why? Communication touch points are the touch points when candidate gets into the contact with an employer. Therefore, it is crucial to make their experience as positive as possible. Positive candidate experience in terms of responsiveness and communication can be ensured through recruiter's professionalism, including: confirmation e-mail of the application submission, confirmation of the candidate's application status, the possibility for candidates to call and ask questions, confirmation of the candidate's status after the interview, sending out rejection letters that include feedback. (Astringer 2009.)

Organizations might forget that not only the hiring manager or the recruiter has influence on the candidate's experience during the recruitment and selection process. Other staff like secretary or potential candidate's colleagues that he/she meets in the company premises might influence the candidate experience and the employer image. "Every employee is a recruiter when they meet the candidate." Therefore, special attention should be paid to the way staff welcomes, communicates and behaves towards the candidates. (Kaiser 2009, 2; 5.)

It must not be forgotten that the on-boarding, introduction or induction stage that begins after the job offer has been accepted, is a continuation of the candidate experience. The start of employment must be organized well and professionally in order to

welcome the new employee appropriately. Kaiser suggests that during the 1st day on the job a new employee receives “the welcome card from the hiring manager, fellow employees and the CEO, and is assigned a mentor for the first 60-90 days.” It is also advisable to plan ahead the first year of the employment to ensure the highest rate of employee retention. Kaiser suggests that there should be regular communication and recognition of the new employee. (Kaiser 2009, 5; 6.)

Finally, one more approach – measurement tools, could improve the positive candidate experience of the company’s recruitment and selection process. The candidate experience can be measured through external surveys, internal survey, (internal) focus groups, career site online feedback forms. Implementation of the measurement tools for all types of candidates – job applicant pool, rejected applicants and candidates, new-hires, will increase the positive candidate experience. (Kaiser 2009, 6.) At all times organizations should look for ways to continuously improve the recruitment and selection process.

2.3 Attracting talent

Before posting a job advertisement to numerous recruitment channels, labour market analysis is important to conduct. Labour market analysis is detecting where, how much and what kind of talent can be attracted. (Gong 2003 in Cascio 2011, 242; Pilbeam 2010, 164; Roberts 2005, 92.) It is beneficial to check different channels for recruitment, for example, industry employers, recruitment service providers or advertisers. Finally, knowledge about potential candidate hopes and employment hunting habits is vital. (Pilbeam 2010, 163-164.)

When the labour market analysis is ready, recruiter can start evaluating different talent attraction methods. The aim of using numerous talent attraction methods is to draw quality candidate pool, from which potential employees could be recruited. However, recruitment methods should be evaluated and chosen so that talent attraction expenses remain reasonable. There are numerous means to attract quality candidates. (Pilbeam 2010, 164-165.) All recruitment methods found in five theory books are listed in Attachment 3, p. 88.

However many effective recruitment methods there are available, it is important to be careful when choosing the most appropriate ones. Recruitment method and the job advertisement are the most effective when each target the right candidates and prevent unsuitable candidates from applying (Roberts 2005, 94). The choice of recruitment methods usually depends on the job position level and the value that it brings to the organisation. To define the most cost- and resource-friendly recruitment methods it is also vital to look at the organisational resources. The analysis of cost versus human resources availability relationship may as well facilitate evaluation of internal versus external recruitment as recruitment methods. (Beardwell 2010, 171.)

According to CIPD 2009 research (Pilbeam 2010, 179) the most frequently used recruitment methods are corporate website (78%), employment agencies (76%), local press adverts (70%), professional journals (55%), and employee referrals (46%). Social networking sites account for as little as 7%, but will be growing in the future, while Radio and TV advertisements are the least used recruitment methods (6%).

2.3.1 Advertising

The section 2.3.1 Advertising covers the internet recruitment and Social Media recruitment topics. The definitions of the concepts and main advantages are presented. The less popular methods of advertising and press media advertising were left out due to the irrelevance to the F-Secure's recruitment practices.

Internet recruitment

As defined by Lievens & Harris (2003, 136) "internet recruitment is any method of attracting applicants to apply for a job that relies heavily on the Internet". With this definition there comes an assumption that internet recruitment definition may have various meanings depending on the company's recruitment goals, channels, and favoured uses of internet recruitment. Internet technology may also be used in assessing the candidate suitability, but this action goes beyond applicant attraction, and there-

fore, will be discussed under chapter 2.4 Selection methods. Here author will shortly describe the usage of internet recruitment, and the main advantages and disadvantages.

Veger (2006, 3) says that internet recruitment is a two-way applicant attraction process. One way is called 'you-find-us' and it happens when employers post job advertisements and expect the potentially suitable candidates to apply proactively. Another way is called 'we-find-you' and it happens when a recruiter is actively seeking talent through various job boards and CV banks without necessarily advertising a job advertisement. Both ways are often used in internet recruitment.

The internet is a tool through which applicants can access a large amount of different job postings and may apply to many jobs much quicker rather than sending written paper applications by land mail to each company. Moreover, internet allows applicants to view company description and enhance their ability to decide whether they want to work for a particular company.

From the perspective of an employer, internet recruitment is much cheaper than print media advertising, allows access to a much wider potential candidate pool and is time-efficient tool of attraction. Therefore, organisations use internet recruitment in many different ways: job posting, job advertising, handling e-mailed applications, handling online completed applications, exposing employer brand. (Beardwell 2010, 171; Harris & Lievens 2003, 134-135.)

Other internet recruitment advantages include possibilities to expose employer brand and to show the 'up-to-date organisation' profile, help in handling large amounts of applications, improve internal recruitment use, and to provide extensive information about the company. However good internet recruitment may sound, it has few potential disadvantages that make recruitment process more difficult. Such disadvantages are that the attracted candidate pool is limited to the online advertised vacancies. Additionally, internet recruitment usually results in a high amount of applications, including non-targeted applications. Last but not least, exclusive internet recruitment eliminates

those potential candidates which do not have access to the internet-based job search. (Beardwell 2010, 171.)

Social Media recruitment

Social Media is currently getting more and more popularity as a tool for online vacancy advertising as well as for other recruitment-related uses. Social Media or social networking sites may be otherwise called as the interactive people platform on Web 2.0. Social Media indicates such interactive websites as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, blogs, and others. Pilbeam identifies two main roles of Social Media in the talent attraction process. Firstly, Social Media gives opportunity to dialogue with potential candidates online while promoting the employer brand. Secondly, Social Media may work as a tunnel to finding the relevant information about prospective candidates. Despite the fact that these two Social Media recruitment opportunities are of a great advantage, the second alternative may put the employers in danger against non-discriminatory laws. (Pilbeam 2010, 168-170.)

Pilbeam (2010, 170) and Beardwell (2010, 172) present the case example of how T-Mobile used Facebook to their recruitment advantage. T-Mobile employed Facebook as a platform for the graduate recruitment. T-Mobile chose Facebook, because it is a modern tool to attract prospective recruits and to communicate their brand, organizational values and culture. A separate webpage was created on Facebook to provide graduate candidates with diverse information on the job, company and recruitment processes. The webpage (site) has been in its nature interactive, and as a result, providing information updates about the company and application process, as well as allowing potential candidates to dialogue with each other. The reason behind using such recruitment platform and involvement of multi-direction communication is that it has left a positive impact on the graduates' feelings towards the T-Mobile.

The DWP survey conducted in 2009 states that 33% of employers have been employing Social Media sites as tools to discover broader talent pools and to set up connections with prospective candidates. Moreover, the survey found that 50% of surveyed

employers think that job-seekers should devote more time in creating an online ‘personal brand’. This, in their opinion, should increase job-seekers’ probability to being hired.

Social Media’s use for recruitment is expected to grow, partially because employers are interested in developing Social Media’s offered tools to increase the rate of ‘employee-employer’ connections online. Thus Social Media has a potential to become “the ‘new frontier’ in talent spotting”. (Pilbeam 2010, 170.)

2.3.2 Networking

Networking represents informal means to recruit new talents, as opposed to the previously described channels (Carrol et al. 1999, 237). The paragraph about networking as one of the most popular recruitment methods will shortly cover such means as employee referrals, career events and open days, and recruitment through educational institutions.

Employee referrals

Employee referral is a common way to recruit new people into an organization nowadays, even though the concept has been used already in 1918 by John Lewis Partnership Gazette. Employee referral describes the recruitment using current employees’ network. An employee who offers an outstanding candidate for a job position is financially rewarded. According to the CIPD recruitment survey 46% of the sample employers (750) were practicing employee referrals as one means of recruitment. (Pilbeam 2010, 174.) Employee referrals are also sometimes called ‘word-of-mouth recruitment’. Employee referrals have few upsides and downsides. The main upsides are the speed, cost-reduction and familiarity with the employer. Employer can also benefit from such means of recruitment by assigning employees to take over the recommended employee’s socialization responsibilities. The main downsides of employee referrals are that a large amount of other suitable candidates may not have been identified, and that an employer may be exposed to unwelcome allegations for implied discrimination against other potential candidates. (Carrol et al. 1999, 237.)

Career events and open days

Career events and open days are a proactive approach to the recruitment from an employer's point of view. The format of such fairs may range from casual company presentations face-to-face to the pre-planned programs engaging potential candidates in different aspects of a company. Because these events expose company's image and need professional representatives, the firm has to plan the program carefully to leave the best employer impression to the potential applicants. From an applicant's point of view, career events and open days provide an opportunity to familiarize with a company with no obligation to become an active applicant. (Pilbeam 2010, 174.)

Recruitment through educational institutions

Such recruitment usually results from a relationship between the educational institution and an employer seeking students or fresh graduates to fill their vacancies. Such recruitment may happen in different ways. One example is to set up a recruitment fair for students at college's/university's premises. Another example for an employer is to network with educational institution's lecturers and to provide professional expertise in exchange of lecturers making an employer more exposed to the students. (Pilbeam 2010, 173.)

2.4 Selection methods

The selection process is the time when the suitable and unsuitable candidates are identified. Selection method usage may be influenced by the level of the job position in question. For example, assessment centres are not used for each selection process, but its usage is rather oriented to the management or graduate positions. (Beardwell 2010, 179.)

This subchapter will briefly explain what screening and shortlisting is, and will describe the candidate testing methods – interviews, work sampling, psychometric testing, and the use of assessment centres. The final step of the selection process is choosing the

best candidate to become a future employee. This subchapter will not cover the less used selection methods, such as graphology, astrology, honesty tests, and polygraph tests due to their practical insignificance.

2.4.1 Screening and shortlisting

It is usual in the current economy that the job market supply is smaller than demand. In other words, the amount of attracted job applications will probably overrun the amount of jobs available. In such cases, screening and shortlisting opens up the selection process and is, therefore, the first method to give attention to. The main reason for screening and shortlisting is to produce a manageable amount of candidates, which then further leads to more demanding selection methods. (Roberts 2005, 101.) Referring back to the Pilbeam's recruitment and selection sub-systems, screening and shortlisting stage is called reduction. As mentioned before in chapter 2.1, the stages of the sub-systems are very close, and, therefore, reliant on each other. Pilbeam states that if the reduction stage does not receive careful attention from the recruiters, then the whole recruitment and selection process becomes damaged. (Pilbeam 2010, 157; 188.) However, screening and shortlisting stage is not always needed. Some job positions are hard to fill and, therefore, the amount of job applicants may be small enough to jump to the next selection stage. (Roberts 2005, 101.)

Screening through assessment of application forms and CVs is the most used technique, with the usage rate of 98%. It is natural today that applicants will be expected to present their CV during the job application procedures. CVs are valued by recruiters, because job-seekers have the opportunity to show their ability to select important information related to the job. However, CVs have a disadvantage of exposing only the strengths of the candidate. At this point the importance of the standard application forms comes in. Application form is another widely used screening tool, which usually comes together with the CV. The ideal application form is consisting of questions that are relevant only for the job position in question. However, in reality organizational resources do not allow custom-made application forms. Application forms and CVs together serve for administrative, reference, interview plan and arrangements purposes as well as screening decisions. (Roberts 2005, 103-104.)

Telephone screening, biodata checks and automated screening are other common ways to determine the shortlist. Telephone screening technique is primarily targeted to check such applicants who applied for jobs demanding customer service skills and frequent usage of the telephone. (Roberts 2005, 109.) Biodata checks are based on reviewing the biographical information of the candidate. Biodata is used to predict the future performance of the applicant in question. It is more used for such purposes as security checks in police departments or banks. (Roberts 2005, 110-111; Cascio 2011, 257-261.) Lastly, automated screening or computer-based screening includes a computer software package that recognises the inserted selection criteria keywords and screens through the applications to identify those with matching words. The upside of this technique is that it decreases the subjectivity as opposed to the recruiter shortlisting. The downside of this technique is that it may unselect those potential candidates which used another type of words in their applications. (Beardwell 2010, 174.)

2.4.2 Interviews, assessment centres and work sampling

Interviews as a selection method are the most commonly used (Beardwell 2010, 174; Pilbeam 2010, 195; Roberts 2005, 122). “An interview is a social encounter between an applicant and a representative, or representatives, of an employer and personalises the recruitment and selection process” (Pilbeam 2010, 195). Interviews may be arranged with more than one interviewer and interviews may be arranged more than once during the same selection process (Beardwell 2010, 174; Roberts 2005, 122-124). The main uses and aims of the interview are information exchange, screening purposes, selection tool (Roberts 2005, 122-123), and provision of a realistic job preview for a candidate (Pilbeam 2010, 195). Interviews may be performed in a range of designs, but four essential components tend to be present in each selection interview:

- 1) Initial contact and explanation of the interview programme.
- 2) The interviewer asks questions and the interviewee responds with answers, and other information.
- 3) The interviewee asks questions and the interviewer responds, and supplies additional information.

4) Closing the interview and agreement on what happens next. (Pilbeam 2010, 195).

Interviews can be sorted into few different categories. One category would be the interviews which are designed either based on the biographical layout or key competency-based questions (Beardwell 2010, 174). Another category may split interviews into three types: biographical, behavioural, and situational. All of the three types may be integrated into one interview. Biographical interview goes along the chronological data on the application or a CV. Behavioural interview entails questions about previous behaviour at work. Behavioral questions “are based on the assumption that behavioural patterns are consistent over time” (Pilbeam 2010, 198). The aim of the situational questions is to view candidate’s ability to simulate a job-related situation and solve the stated problem. (Beardwell 2010, 174-175, Pilbeam 2010, 198; Roberts 2005, 125-127). Third category explains three approaches to interviews: one-to-one interview, panel interview, and group interview. Panel interviews involve more than one interviewer, and group interviews involve few candidates and one or more interviewers. (Pilbeam 2010, 196-197.) Last but not least, the interviews may be either unstructured or structured. The latter form gives higher predictive validity, because they allow easier and more consistent system of measurement of candidate’s competencies in relation to the pre-specified job criteria. (Beardwell 2010, 174-175; Pilbeam 2010, 195-198; Roberts 2005, 125-127.) Structured interviews have four basic characteristics:

- The interaction is standardised as much as possible.
- All candidates are asked the same questions.
- Replies are rated by the interviewer and preformatted rating scales.
- Dimensions for rating are derived from critical aspects of on-the-job behaviour. (Beardwell 2010, 175.)

The main reason behind the effectiveness of a structured interview is that candidates get assessed by following the same structure and criteria, and the likelihood of discrimination decreases (Pilbeam 2010, 198).

Interviews as a selection method are one of the most challenging tools in terms of objectivity. Interviewers, indeed, meet many challenges of subjectivity. Such examples include:

- one positive or negative attribute imbalances the decision making;
- candidates that are more alike with the interviewer create partiality in decision making;
- pre-impressions that occur through reading the information in the application form/CV;
- distorted impressions originating from the previous interviews with other candidates;
- personal opinion on candidate's appearance and personality;
- negative attributes receive more weight instead of the positive attributes, in case there is a fear of making a hiring mistake. (Cascio 2011, 270-274; Pilbeam 2010, 195-196; Roberts 2005, 170-171.)

Assessment centres

An assessment centre may be conducted by external consultants or internal company HR department employees. Assessment centres include various psychological and knowledge assessments. It is usually described as an applicant selection process during which different candidate is evaluated by the help of multiple metric tools, interviews, group exercises, presentations, work simulations, and psychometric testing. What makes an assessment centre more objective than interviewing, for example, is that these assessments are conducted by more than one evaluator and the results of assessment are compared with a pool of other candidate results, who have participated in the same assessment before. Assessment centre as a selection method is used mostly when recruiting a manager, supervisor, senior expert or a recent graduate. (Beardwell 2010, 176-177.)

Work sampling

Work sampling is one other selection method, through which prospective candidates can experience examples of the real future job in question. For recruiters work sampling is a great opportunity to view the candidate abilities of work performance. Cascio (2011, 298-303) presents a managerial work sampling approach where he states that the aim of the work sampling “is to assess the ability to do rather than the ability to know”. Each work sampling is different depending on the job specifications and design. Work sampling happens in two approaches: reality and simulation. According to Cascio (2011, 299), work sampling is an attractive selection method to use, because of its potential to “high validity, lack of bias based on race and gender, and substantially reduced adverse impact”. Two studies (Cascio 2011, 299) have confirmed that in the United States, France, Spain, Portugal, and Singapore, candidates rated work sampling as one of the three most favoured selection techniques.

For the work sampling exercise to be successful, the design has to be consistent with job criteria and competencies that it assesses (Cascio 2011, 298-299; Pilbeam 2010, 204-205). Managerial work sampling has two types of exercises: group and individual (Cascio 2011, 299). It is highly beneficial to run a trial on the work sample before assigning it to the candidates. Organisations place work sampling in differing stages of the selection process, but usually work sampling stands either as a supplement to selection methods or is included in the assessment centre process. Work sampling is a great opportunity for candidates to receive a job preview; however still, organisations are not willing to invest often in the time-, cost- and resource-consuming method. (Pilbeam 2010, 204-205.)

2.4.3 Selection decision and references

The ending point of the recruitment and selection process is to make a selection decision. The information collected during the process should help identify good and bad performers based on the job criteria. Torrington et al. (2002) “stresses that the final decision should involve measuring each candidate against the selection criteria defined in the person specification and not against each other”. (Beardwell 2010, 179.) In other words, the outcome of the job planning, which happens before recruitment, should work as an action plan to make the selection decision (Roberts 2005, 165).

Roberts (2005,165-166) presents two techniques to decision making: a non competency-based and competency-based technique. A non competency-based technique is otherwise called PERSON, which entails six blocks of information: Personal qualities, Experience, Record of achievement desired, Skills, Organisation-fit, and Needs of the candidate. A competency-based technique uses a map of the required competencies at the rate needed for the job performance in comparison with the candidate results from each of the selection methods used. PERSON and the competency-based techniques are of the “whole picture” approach to decision making. The “whole picture” encompasses the candidate results from all of the selection methods and evaluation is based on the candidate who scored the most. (Roberts 2005, 165-166.)

References

Reference check is one way to confirm the validity of candidate’s background information and helps in making the selection decision. Usually third parties such as former employer, academic advisor, colleague or friend act as referees. 90% of recruiters use reference checks. (Beardwell 2010, 177.) Cascio (2011, 453) states that four types of information may be acquired through reference checks:

- “employment and educational history;
- evaluation of the applicant’s character, personality and interpersonal competence;
- evaluation of the applicant’s job performance ability;
- willingness to rehire.”

However, Armstrong (2006 in Beardwell 2010, 177) recommends that only fact-based information is important, while referee’s insights on candidate’s personality may be inconsistent. In the end, recruiters ask referees mainly such information as the latest employment and absence records.

2.5 Recruitment service providers

There are few types of recruitment service providers and the use of such services has increased significantly since 2001 (Beardwell & Holden 2001, 250; Pilbeam 2010, 172). Beardwell & Holden (2001, 249) suggest that the reason behind intensification of recruitment service providers' use is that non-permanent job contracts are getting more and more usual in today's life. Moreover, recruitment service providers have obvious advantages in personnel recruitment and selection, and, therefore, are being used more and more (Pilbeam 2010, 172). According to Roberts (2005, 27) HR departments in organizations have been downsized so that the HR departments became more like 'procurers' of services rather than 'providers' of service to the company. Volpe (2004, 1) brings in a more practical approach as to why recruitment service providers are chosen. Based on his research, companies usually try to succeed in recruitment and selection in other ways first, before employing a recruitment service provider. Even if the company turns for help from the recruitment service provider, they may still, in addition, consider using few other methods.

In this subchapter, you will read about the types of recruitment service providers that reputable sources recognize, as well as how the partnership between the recruitment service provider and the organization should be formed and managed to succeed.

2.5.1 Types of recruitment service providers

Hester (1991, in Fish & Macklin 2004, 31) defines three forms of recruitment service providers: recruitment agency, selection consultant and executive search firm, also called a head-hunter. In parallel, Roberts (2005, 27-28) presents three ways in which recruitment service providers can be used: registers, selection and search. As defined by Hester (1991, in Fish & Macklin 2004, 31) and Roberts (2005, 28) a recruitment agency seeks candidates through own advertising. A recruitment agent may also provide temporary staff to the employers. A selection consultant works on project-basis and their main responsibilities include advertising, screening the applications, and making a short-list of recommendations for the client. And lastly, the executive search firm, a search consultant, or a 'head-hunter', is concentrating on the executive and specialist

search in the non-active applicant pool. In addition to these, Pilbeam (2010, 172) identifies one more use of recruitment service provider – provision of training and development opportunities for individuals in order to make them more attractive to the employers.

Both Hester and Roberts make a differentiation between the two different approaches that executive search firms and selection consultants or recruitment agents use to find candidates. They state that the executive search firms take a proactive approach to finding candidates. ‘Head-hunters’ are active in search, while consultants and recruitment agents are passive in the way they reach potential candidates. Taylor (2002, in Pilbeam 2010, 172) has identified ‘head-hunter’s’ job approach as “selling the job to the potential candidate and then trying to sell the candidate to the employer”, while other types of recruitment service providers, according to Hester and Roberts, follow a general process of advertising and browsing through the existing registers of applicant profiles.

The main advantage of registers of recruitment agents against other types is that their candidate pool is accessible rather quickly due to the pre-screened profiles, which satisfies client’s usually immediate needs. The benefits of using the selection consultant is that he/ she will take the time to study the role, knows the job market well, knows which advertising techniques to use for each job position. One more benefit has been mentioned to be the possibility for the employer to stay anonymous. The executive search firms have advantages mainly in executive and specialist search, where a substantially smaller amount of suitable candidates can be found. The ‘head-hunter’ search is more targeted to a certain pool of candidates. The main disadvantages of the ‘head-hunting’ services are that it is rather expensive and the generated candidate pool is very dependent on the ‘head-hunter’ and his/her network. (Roberts 2005, 28.)

The costs for employing recruitment service providers vary by type and size of project. However, most of the providers charge a certain percentage based on the first annual salary of the new employee. Recruitment agent may charge anywhere between 10% and 30%, selection consultants usually operate for 20% charge, and the ‘head-hunters’ may

ask for as much as 40% of the first annual salary. The charges are usually placed only when the recruitment is successful. (Roberts 2005, 28.)

2.5.2 Recruitment partnership management

Business-to-business or buyer-supplier partnerships are usually caused, or at least initially, by the cost-savings factor. For the supplier or seller there are some more reasons to launch a partnership. Firstly, there is the opportunity to enhance business and the image in case partnership is formed with a high market share owner. Such partnerships also bring more market position steadiness to the suppliers in today's unstable market. (Tuten & Urban 2001, 151.)

The Tuten & Urban (2001) research results show that the most often causes of forming the partnership from the buyer's side are:

- 1) desire for lower costs
- 2) enhancing competitive advantage
- 3) improving performance indicators
- 4) increasing product/ service quality
- 5) "win-win" mentality & synergy

Tuten & Urban present Mohr and Spekman model of partnership success from the buyer's point of view in their research framework. According to the Mohr and Spekman model, the success of partnership depends on three main factors: attributes of partnership, communication behaviour and conflict resolution techniques. As shown in the figure 4 below, the attributes of the partnership are the commitment, coordination, interdependence and trust.

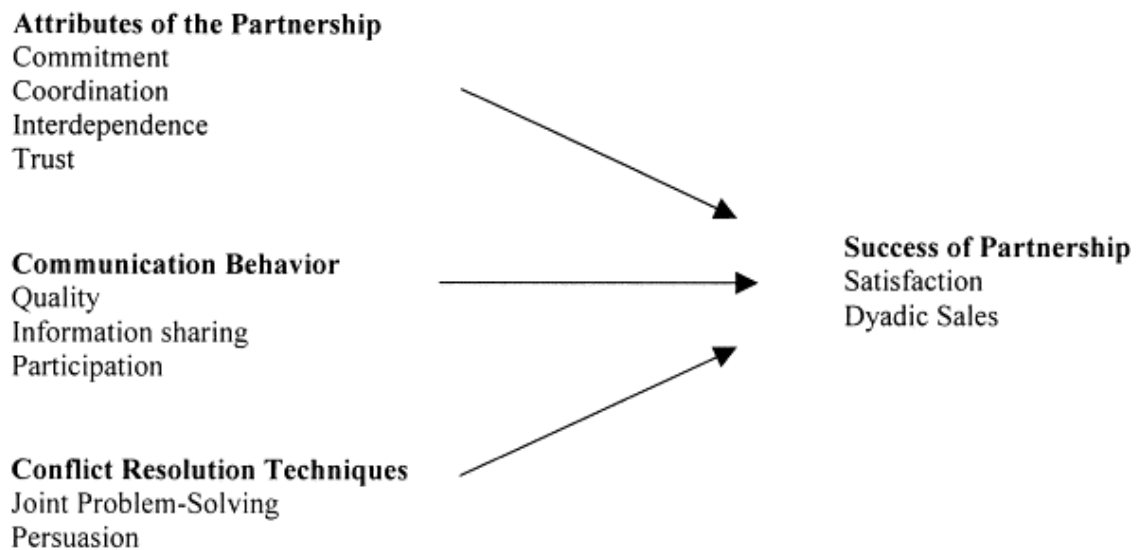


Figure 4. A model of partnership success. (Tuten & Urban 2001, 152)

The communication behaviour must have quality, information sharing and active participation. Last but not least, conflicts should be solved jointly and with persuasion. The product is to be the successful partnership where the buyer is satisfied and produces dyadic sales. (Tuten & Urban 2001, 151-152.)

What is interesting and truly important in this model is the communication behaviour factor. Morh and Spekman (in Tuten & Urban 2001, 152) describe the factor in detail:

“Communication quality includes the accuracy, timeliness, and credibility of the information shared, while information sharing refers to the extent to which critical information is exchanged.”

The authors described participation as the degree to which the partners jointly plan and set goals.

Once the partnership is formed, it also has to be maintained and managed. Tuten & Urban (2001, 162) suggest building a system through which the evaluations of partnership strength can be performed. They suggest evaluating such factors as strong relationship, communication flows and performance indicators. The evaluation sessions are recommended to be held four times a year in order to foresee the possible upcoming problems as soon as possible. One of the interviewees for Tuten & Urban (2001,

162) research has said: “problem situations and how they are handled are a good indicator of the health of the relationship”.

The communication behaviour is once more mentioned as a crucial factor for both maintaining the partnership and getting the partnership to the next level. The communication flows can be maintained through on-site visits or regular personal meetings. It is crucial to take chance to communicate with partner and to set up new goals and hear out new offers or expectations of each in order to improve the partnership relationship. (Tuten & Urban 2001, 162.)

More specifically, there is some research done on the partnership between companies and the third-party recruiters by Volpe & Tucker (2004). In their research Volpe & Tucker studied about the challenges that companies and the recruiters face in partnerships. Here are a few of client comments on recruiters:

- “We are bombarded with calls from recruiters daily;
- You never know if the recruiter you select will find the right candidate;
- How do you know if they have hands-off policy with your competitors?;
- Sometimes you give them a job order and you never hear from them again;
- I don’t have time to argue our fee with every recruiter;
- Why does it take so long to get candidates?;
- Am I seeing the best candidates on the market or just their active candidates?

(Volpe & Tucker 2004, 8.)

On the other hand, recruiters have provided the study with as strong comments as the clients above:

- “They never return our calls; does anyone ever answer their phone?;
- It feels like we are submitting the candidates to the black hole because we never get any feedback;
- HR is to be avoided at all cost... Work directly with the hiring authorities;
- The job specs continually change or are nonexistent;

- If filling this job position had urgency, why do they keep postponing the interview?”

(Volpe & Tucker 2004, 8.)

As a solution to these dissatisfactions, Volpe & Tucker (2004, 8-9) came up with a strategy how to improve the partnership relationship. Fee standardization and formation of clear agreement standards and working methods are the ground rules for any recruitment partnership. The reasons behind these are to avoid spending time and misunderstandings during the process. The recruiter’s recommended candidates should be systematically followed and managed by the client company. Planning up a schedule and time frame of each recruitment process will make the recruitments more fluent and maintain the communication between the partners. Moreover, companies should give the feedback to the recruiters regularly. The strategies listed above should be applied client company-wide so that the system works well. (Volpe & Tucker 2004, 8-9.)

2.6 Pre-engagement process

Pre-engagement process by some other sources is called *transition*, *onboarding*, *pre-start*, *pre-boarding*, *pre-Day One support* etc., which is the period of time between accepting the job offer and starting the Day One at the new company (Pilbeam 2010, 157-158, 213; Stein & Christiansen 2010, 75, 207). Since there is a lack of research and the exact definition on *onboarding*, the author decided to use Wikipedia (2010) as the source to describe it. According to Wikipedia (2010), *onboarding* is more commonly known as the process of *organisational socialization*, which “refers to the mechanism through which new employees acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and behaviours to become effective organizational members and insiders”. Stein & Christiansen (2010, 75-77) present a model of *onboarding* which consists of four phases during the Year One: Prepare, Orient, Integrate, and Excel. What is important to review is the Prepare phase as it stands for the *pre-engagement process* in this context.

Stein & Christiansen (2010, 76) suggest that the Prepare phase of the *onboarding* should be taken advantage of by introducing the company and its activities to the new em-

ployee already before starting to work. Such activities as networking with new colleagues, documentation, benefits, and studying the description of the job position could be achieved during the Prepare phase. Any other legal preparations, such as health checks, police security checks should also be completed before the Day One (Pilbeam 2010, 214). By completing such activities before the Day One, the company can save time and start engaging the new employee already on the Day One. (Stein & Christiansen 2010, 76, 207.)

Pre-engagement process also plays an important role when *cross-border recruitment* is in question. After accepting the offer and before starting a job the foreign employee needs time and resources to relocate. Some companies help these new foreign recruits to integrate not only into their company and job position, but also into the country by employing *relocation service* agencies.

Relocation services are a set of support services for employee relocation from one country or city to another. Relocation services can be, therefore, offered to an expatriate or a new employee coming from another country / city. Not many companies or organizations provide these types of services, but even if they do, the relocation services are usually outsourced to the relocation services agency. (Stroh & Treehuboff 2003, 26-27.)

An outsourced relocation services agency can assist an employee's spouse to find a job in a new location or find the accommodation. However, the main service of the relocation services stays the versatile support during the relocation and provision of extensive information about the new country / city, places to visit, documentation and legality issues as well as banks, medical care centers and other valuable sort of information that new employee or family needs to adjust to the new country / city. This is also the main reason why companies and organizations want to support the employee relocation so that the employee can start working productively as soon as possible. (Stroh & Treehuboff 2003, 26-27.)

2.7 Day One

The tasks and processes during the *pre-engagement process* and the Day One can be very similar in terms of information provided; however, the purpose is slightly different. While the *pre-engagement process* may still take a role of providing extensive, but mostly external, information about the organization, the Day One is the moment when the new employee comes into the organization and sees for himself/herself the internal view of the organization in question. According to Craig (2008, 31) the Day One is usually a very challenging day for both parties – the new employee and the employer. While the employee may be nervous and uncomfortable, it is the employer's job to make a good impression with a carefully organized induction process and properly working IT technology needed for the job. Craig says that the new employee(s) will spend the most of their Day One with HR discussing the basic matters such as health insurance, hygiene, employment contract matters, personnel benefits etc. It is also important to introduce the new recruit with the colleagues that he/she will be meeting daily (Roberts 2005, 190-191).

The Day One is the crucial moment for the employer to make an outstanding presentation of the organization for the new employee as well as to show him/her how important and welcome he/she is to join the organization. Roberts (2005, 191) believes that the correct attitude from the employer would be to make the new employee “go home with a good ‘feel’ of the organisation and its style, and the reassurance that he/she made the right decision”. According to the research by the Leadership Corporate Council, an employee who has been welcomed well to a new company is able to perform by 20% better and 87% less likely to leave the company than those employees who have not been engaged positively enough. (Craig 2008, 31.)

Craig has outlined five rules that employers should follow to ensure that the Day One is well performed:

1. Welcome the new employee(s)
2. Ensure that the IT needs are met and work properly
3. Plan the induction process carefully
4. Avoid information overload

5. Plan activities beyond Day One

(Adapted from Craig 2008, 31.)

Based on Craig (2008, 31) these five rules are enough to ensure a good Day One for the new employee. Other good ideas are to introduce the new hire with the organizational facilities, cafeterias around, parking, restrooms, and company personnel activities.

One another step, which is widely discussed in Christiansen & Stein book 'Successful Onboarding' (2010), is to engage a new hire into the relationship building and broadening his/her local network. The employer can, for example, provide a new hire with a social networking site where the background and contact information of each staff member can be found. Christiansen & Stein state that some companies build up societies and groups on the intranet so that the new hires can easier relate to their new colleagues, and possibly find other things in common besides the work. Such tool is mentioned to be very beneficial with virtual workers. (Christiansen & Stein 2010, 134.) In case there is a number of the new hires coming to the Day One events, Christiansen & Stein (2010, 136) suggest building up small teams from the new recruits. Such activities as group exercises and simulations will help the new employees feel more comfortable, welcome and will easier engage into the organization and broaden their network from the very start.

3 Research methods

The research methods chapter consists of three subchapters. At first, the data collection approaches will be described and the research design explained. Sampling techniques and arguments are also provided under the first subchapter. The reasons behind the research data collection methods are supported by the reputable sources. Secondly, the data collection process description in detail is provided. Lastly, the research participant responsiveness will be reviewed.

3.1 Research design and methods

Saunders et al. (2003, 378) does not hurry to name qualitative and quantitative approaches as different approaches to research, but rather as different approaches to collecting data. Saunders compiled a table which shows the distinctions between quantitative and qualitative data, which beautifully explains reasons as to why certain data collection approach was chosen for this research.

Table 2. Distinctions between quantitative and qualitative data (Saunders et al. 2003, 378.)

<i>Quantitative data</i>	<i>Qualitative data</i>
▪ Based on meanings derived from numbers	▪ Based on meanings expressed through words
▪ Collection results in numerical and standardized data	▪ Collection results in non-standardized data requiring classification into categories
▪ Analysis conducted through the use of diagrams and statistics	▪ Analysis conducted through the use of conceptualization

This research used a combination of the quantitative and qualitative approaches to the data collection. The research was an explanatory study aimed to research a certain sample of people (view section 3.2), and it included a combination of the quantitative survey and the focus group discussion. Saunders et al. (2003, 99) gives a practical example of how surveys and case study methods could be combined. The two subsequent steps in the example support researcher's chosen way to collect data from the certain sample by conducting a quantitative survey and later a focus group discussion.

Saunders also refers to the *triangulation* concept as one of the advantages of using combined data collection methods. *Triangulation* is used in one study by combining two or more data collection methods in order to make sure that the key findings communicate with each other well. In other words, the researcher may check whether what he/she interpreted was interpreted correctly. (Saunders et al. 2003, 99.) Another great reason for the choice of the data collection methods combination was, as Kaiser (2009, 6) suggested in his paper, to measure the candidate experience by surveying the intended population and later conducting focus group discussions to grasp a deeper understanding.

The combination of the quantitative and qualitative approaches, survey and the focus group discussion, were used to answer the Investigative Question 2 (further on IQ) and partially the IQ 4. Interviews were chosen to answer the IQ 3 and partially the IQ 4. The company workshops as a data collection tool were the most effective way to answer the IQ 1.

With the help of the Research Problem (RP) and the Investigative Questions (IQs) (introduced in section 1.2) the reader can see the illustrated relationships between the research methods and the IQs in the research design graph, which is shown in Figure 5, p. 39. The reminder of the RP and the IQs is right below.

The RP is: *How could F-Secure's international talent acquisition process be improved?*

The IQs are:

- 1) What is F-Secure's current recruitment and selection process in selected stages?
- 2) How F-Secure's selected recruitment and selection process stages were experienced by the recently employed international employees?
- 3) What is current co-operation situation with Recruitment Partners A & B?
- 4) What improvement suggestions can be given to F-Secure?

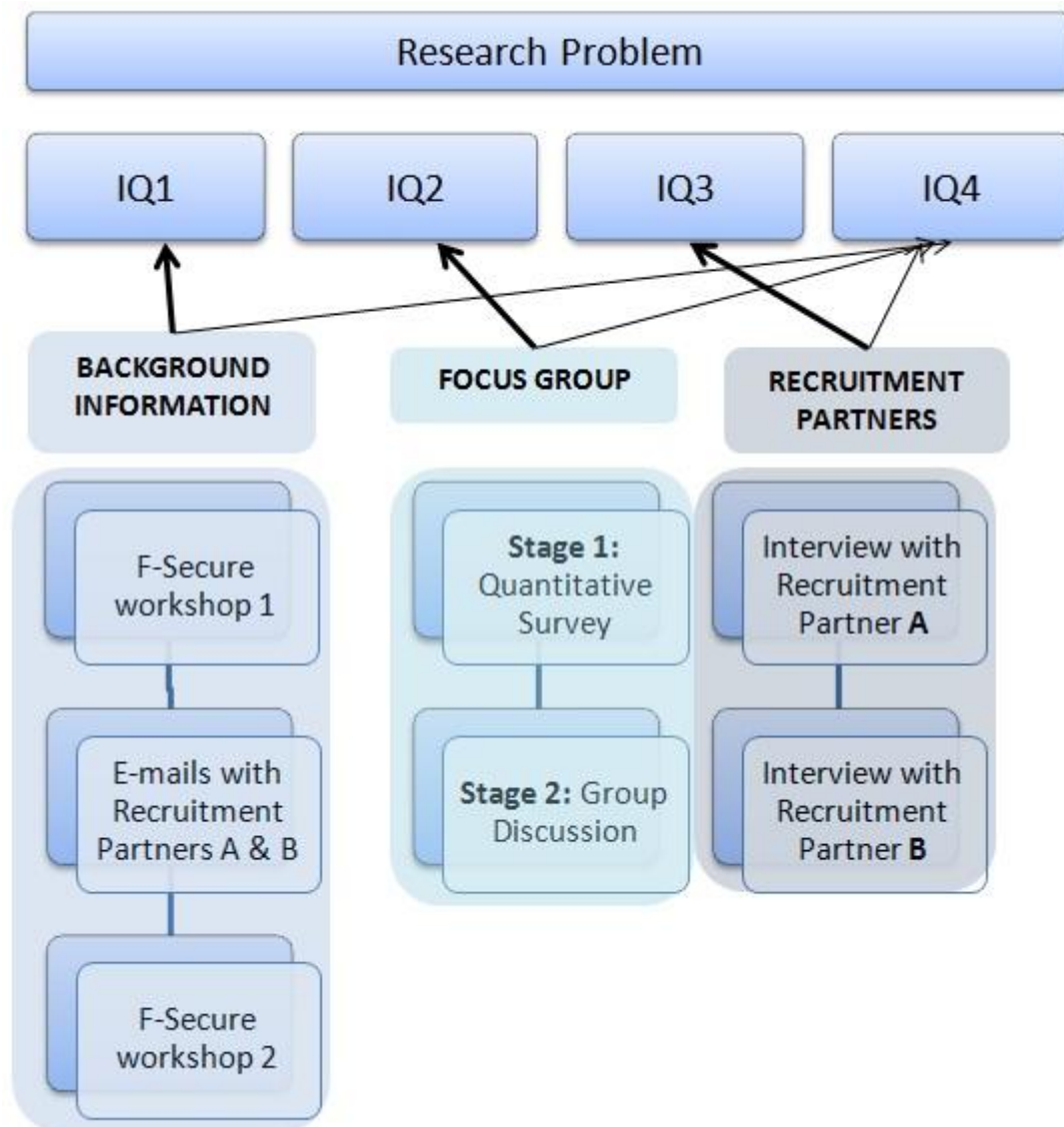


Figure 5. Research design

As shown in the research design graph (Figure 5), three different research method groups will answer all four Investigative Questions. The *first method group* consisted of two company workshops at F-Secure and communication by e-mail with the Recruitment Partners A & B. The company workshops at F-Secure were conducted with the HR Development Manager and the Recruitment Manager. The e-mails were exchanged with one representative of each Recruitment Partner (A & B). The results for the IQ 1 can be found at the chapter 4.1. The *second method group* was named Focus Group and it consisted of two stages. In the first stage an online quantitative survey was sent to the agreed sample of foreign employees. The survey included closed-ended, multiple closed-ended and few open-ended questions. The second stage with a semi-structured

focus group discussion followed after the survey results were received and analysed. The results for the IQ 2 can be found at the chapter 4.2. The *third method group* was named Recruitment Partners A & B (RPA & RPB) and it consisted of two structured interviews (A & B) with one representative from each Recruitment Partner. The results for the IQ 3 can be found at the chapter 4.3.

The sample size for the quantitative online survey had grown from 32 to 47 F-Secure's foreign employees over the thesis process. The growth was caused by the new hires. The sample size was compiled based on the length of the employment. The criteria for length was primarily agreed to be 24 months, but later it was decided to take into account all foreign employees who were recruited since the 1st of April in 2010 to set a clear cut-point. The idea behind selecting recent foreign employees for the research was to get opinions of those who could best remember the recruitment and selection process. A reasonable way to research the foreign employee sample would have been to conduct a few of focus group discussions and then analyze them comparatively (Kaiser 2009, 6). However, the time and scale of the Bachelor's thesis were the main constraints for such implementation. Therefore, only 1 focus group discussion was chosen to be executed.

The sample size of the group discussion was 5 employees. The majority of researchers suggest selecting between 4 and 12 focus group discussion participants (Liamputtong 2011, 42-44). Each group discussion participant employee was selected based on 4 selection criteria in order to make group discussion research tool as valuable as possible. The selection criteria were:

- the length of the foreign employee's employment at F-Secure
- whether the foreign employee was recruited from abroad or within Finland
- whether the foreign employee was recruited directly by F-Secure or other means
- whether the foreign employee has been provided the relocation services

The arguments behind such selection criteria were to find as much as possible different experiences and points of view based on different ways of recruitment that F-Secure conducts. The selection of as new as possible recruits employed by F-Secure was a

cornerstone to ensure that the group discussion data validity and reliability were enhanced as much as possible. Moreover, the factors of being recruited from abroad, by other means than directly by F-Secure and of being provided the relocation services were interesting in nature. These factors could also contribute to the diversity of experiences and result in more variety of suggestions for development of recruitment and selection process at F-Secure.

As for the Recruitment Partners A & B, F-Secure decided to select two recruitment partners with which they wanted to improve co-operation, productivity and synergies.

3.2 Data collection

The IQ 1 was answered through the company workshops at F-Secure headquarters in Helsinki. There were two meetings, of which the first one took place on the 6th of February in 2012 and the second one – on 16th of March in 2012. The first company workshop aimed at receiving relevant information to describe the F-Secure's current talent acquisition process in general, while the second company workshop meeting had a deeper insight, more specific and detailed questions. The information source in both meetings was the researcher's thesis coordinator (Human Resources Development Manager) and in the second meeting also F-Secure's Recruitment Manager participated to give more accurate information.

The IQ 2 of the research was answered through the online survey and the focus group discussion. The online survey questions framework had been changing over time. The researcher, the F-Secure's thesis coordinator and the researcher's thesis advisor had contributed to the changes made to the survey questions framework. The survey questions framework was negotiated since 30th of April until the 20th of May. After careful considerations of the online survey questions and layout, the online survey was conducted and published at F-Secure's Webropol account internally. The link to the online survey was sent internally by e-mail to each of the 47 intended respondents. The online survey was open for 2 weeks, starting date on Monday, the 21st of May in 2012 and ending date on Sunday, the 3rd of June in 2012. The F-Secure thesis coordinator had sent the survey data reports to the researcher by e-mail.

The location of the focus group discussion was at F-Secure's headquarters in Helsinki, which followed shortly after the online survey data was analyzed. The focus group discussion date was 25.6.2012 and the length of the discussion was 75 minutes, including a short introduction. Some special arrangements, like room booking, projector adjustments, small refreshments, took place to make sure that the focus group discussion goes smoothly. The researcher worked as a discussion moderator. The thesis coordinator at F-Secure worked as a note-taker. The focus group discussion consisted of 5 carefully selected participants from the previous sample of the online survey respondents.

The answer to the IQ 3 was reached through the interviews with Recruitment Partners A & B. Interviews with both Recruitment Partners A & B took place in their Helsinki offices. Time and place with them was agreed through e-mail messages. Both interviews with Recruitment Partners A & B took less than 1 hour. The interview with the Recruitment Partner A took 32 minutes, while the interview with the Recruitment Partner B took 39 minutes. Despite the short length of both interviews, all interview questions were answered and the research received very quality and valuable data. The Recruitment Partner A interview took place on the 13th of April in 2012, and the Recruitment Partner B interview took place on the 3rd of April in 2012.

The interviewees of the Recruitment Partners A & B were responsible for the recruitment processes in their companies. The Recruitment Partner A interview was conducted with a Manager of Recruiting in the Helsinki Area. The Recruitment Partner B interview was conducted with a Management Consultant / International Business Partner. Each of the 2 interviews consisted of the researcher and 1 representative.

There had been a small change in the interview framework intended for the Recruitment Partners A & B after the interview with the Recruitment Partner B. During the interview with the Recruitment Partner B researcher had noticed that one of the questions was not of particular relevance to answer the IQ 3 and it was eliminated from the data analysis.

3.3 Research responsiveness

The online survey response rate was 63,8% when 30 from 47 employees answered the survey. The survey data was successfully collected and it contained a lot of valuable open comments, proving respondents' excellent activity and interest in the research. 15 respondents out of 30 showed interests in the participation in the focus group discussion which was held afterwards.

5 international employees participated in the Focus Group discussion. The Focus Group discussion was very successful, all participants had a chance to speak and everybody had comments, experiences to share and valuable ideas. The discussion was quite relaxed, but also intense. The participants showed sincere interest in the topic and were glad to be able to contribute to the development of F-Secure's international recruitment and selection process.

Both Recruitment Partners A & B agreed to meet for an interview. Interviews were successful in terms of quality and valuable data received. Interviewees were interested and motivated about the questions and the research initiative.

4 Results

The chapter 4 is dedicated for the presentation and analysis of the results. The first section 4.1 portrays F-Secure's current talent acquisition process and answers the Investigative Question 1 (IQ 1). The section 4.2 consists of the Focus Group results and answers the IQ 2 and partially IQ 4. Survey results are presented in section 4.2.1 and the Group discussion results – in section 4.2.2. The third section 4.3 reports with results from the Recruitment Partners A & B interviews and answers IQ 3 and partially IQ 4. For a more detailed relationship between IQs and research results, please consult the overlay matrix in Attachment 1, p. 85.

4.1 F-Secure's current talent acquisition process

Theoretical framework in Chapter 2 describes recruitment and selection as a lengthy process, which includes a vast amount of stages and steps. Likewise, F-Secure's recruitment and selection process length and steps are similar. F-Secure performs both internal and external recruitment processes. F-Secure does not perform a separate process for international recruitments. What comes to the practice, F-Secure follows in-house recruitment and selection process and additionally uses few external sources to assist in attracting talent and assessments.

Figure 6 p. 45 shows F-Secure's *external* recruitment and selection process. The top row shows the stages of the recruitment and selection process: *application*, *validation*, *selection*, and *closing*. The process involves four (4) participants, who each complete certain tasks to move forward in the process. The participants are the Recruiting Manager, the HR-team, the candidate, and the External Partner. The arrows show how tasks/steps follow each other. For example, the starting point is the Recruiting Manager's task to search the existing external candidate pool and to order the external job advertising from HR. The next step is for a candidate to send the job application either based on the HR advertisement or External Partner's advertisement. After the Recruiting Manager and External Partner have completed the screening of received job applications, selected candidates are invited to an interview.

The first interview and possible homework task commences the validation stage. After the first round of interviews is completed, the reference check follows. The latter tasks are conducted by the Recruiting Manager, while the next task, involving the final interview and suitability assessment is assigned to the HR team. When there is a necessity, HR team arranges suitability assessments with an External Partner.

Selection stage starts off with the selection of the suitable candidate for the position. At this point, Recruiting Manager agrees the salary with HR team, makes the job offer to the candidate, and submits a new “fellow form”, which includes information about the employee, regarding what kind of tools need to be ordered for the 1st day on the job. When and if the candidate accepts the job offer and signs the contract, HR team updates the employee data in the HR system.

The last stage in F-Secure’s external recruitment and selection process is Closing. During this stage all non-selected candidates are informed by the Recruiting Manager and the External Partner. Recruiting Manager additionally prepares the induction plan so that a new employee can start working.

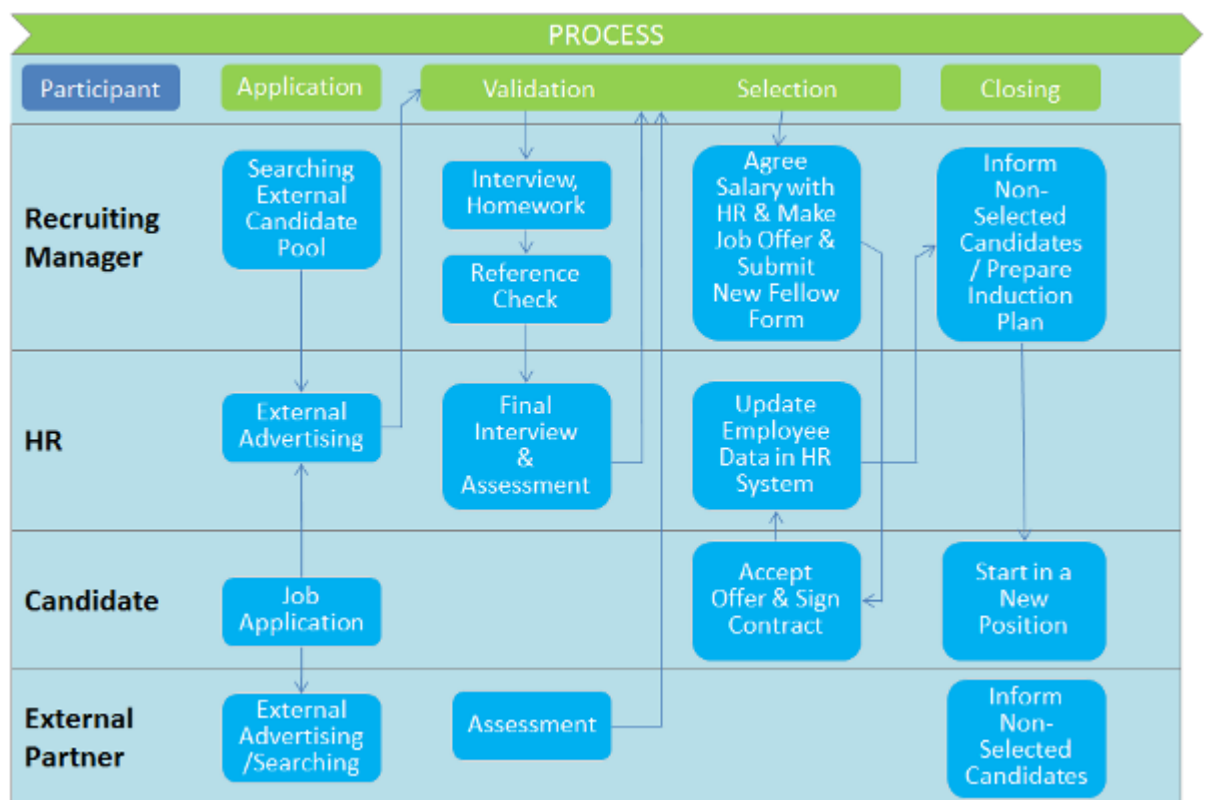


Figure 6. F-Secure's external recruitment and selection process. (The chart was modified from the internal F-Secure document, shared during the personal company workshop. 2012)

The selected stages to research are *application*, *selection*, *pre-engagement process* and the *Day One*. Each stage is going to be discussed in more precise detail below.

Application

For online application procedure F-Secure uses the SkillNet system, which posts the job advertisements automatically on the internal and external F-Secure job boards, as well as Monster.fi. F-Secure also posts job advertisements on professional network LinkedIn, Twitter blog, Facebook pages, company community pages, Jobstreet.com and Joberate.com. However, if the job position is very rare and requires sophisticated skills or too few candidates were attracted through online advertising, F-Secure hires a head-hunter to help find suitable candidates.

F-Secure uses some other Social Media in other countries than Finland. In Germany they use Xing platform, in France – Les Jeudis and Apec platforms. One other international talent attraction tool appears to be the Twitter blog, company Facebook pages, F-Secure LinkedIn profile, and F-Secure community pages. Moreover, F-Secure uses Youtube for job vacancy marketing as well as own networks.

Networking which comes in many forms is also one of the candidate attraction tools used in F-Secure. F-Secure benefits from internal referral program, career events, student visits to F-Secure. One more form of natural networking is that the Recruiting Managers inform about open vacancies to the staff and post the job advertisement on the LinkedIn profile.

Selection

Selection stage starts off with a screening procedure, for which responsible is the Recruiting Manager (Line Manager). If the head-hunting services were applied during the application stage, then the head-hunter performs a preliminary screening on the attracted candidate pool. Then the head-hunter sends the information of pre-screened candidate pool to the Recruiting Manager, who selects candidates for the first round of interviews. Recruiting Manager performs an interview which is based on the technical skills and information identification provided in the CVs. Sometimes candidates may be assigned to prepare homework or perform tasks after the first interview round has been concluded. The homework or tasks are completed on a separate day than the first round interviews.

When the Recruiting Manager selects two best candidates from the pre-selected pool, HR team receives a further role in selection stage. HR team works in two stages. Firstly, HR team asks the candidates to complete the self-evaluation questionnaire online on occupational personality and afterwards interviews them for behavioural-based competencies. In some cases an Assessment Centre may be used for personality tests as an external service. Secondly, HR team gives recommendation to the Recruiting Manager about which candidate, in HR team's opinion, is better suitable for the position in question.

F-Secure uses technical skills interviews and behavioural interviews. Recruiting Managers interview candidates on the technical skills. The aim of the behavioural interviews is to check the match between the occupational personality questionnaire results and the job description needs. HR interviews also include few motivational and general background questions. Recruitment interviews in F-Secure are usually 1-to-1 interviews and sometimes team interviews, where more than one interviewer is present. In addition to that, F-Secure uses Skype online interviews and phone interviews. These are used in case of cross-border recruitment. If the job is higher level position and the candidate resides abroad, then F-Secure buys the flight tickets to Finland to interview that candidate face-to-face. Moreover, during the selection stage the Recruiting Manager is responsible to provide general information about living in Finland, including climate, salary levels, costs etc. to the foreign candidates.

The Recruiting Manager makes the final decision on which candidate will be recruited. The Recruiting Manager, however, considers the opinion of all involved parties as well. What is important to decide before selecting the final candidate, is the candidate's match with the team. References and the occupational personality questionnaires are checked carefully. Sometimes, salary expectation discussions may be a deciding factor.

Pre-engagement process

Pre-engagement process is otherwise called *onboarding* in F-Secure. Onboarding in F-Secure lasts since the interviewing stage started until new recruit starts working, but due to the uncertainty of the real term for the stage in question, the researcher decided to call it a *pre-engagement process* based on the theory. Pre-engagement process includes only few tasks. Employment contract and the Non-Disclosure Agreement are signed. Police security clearance is conducted as well. Welcoming mail is sent to the new employee before the job starts. However, pre-engagement process is visible the most when the *cross-border recruitment* takes place. In other words, when the new employee needs to relocate him-/herself (and his/her family). In such cases, F-Secure provides relocation agency services.

Relocation Services agent provides such information as accommodation possibilities, schools, hobbies, documentation, legalities etc. In addition to that, Relocation Services agency may provide accommodation up to one week and provide assistance in finding permanent accommodation.

Day One

The 1st day on the job in F-Secure is the starting point of induction. The Day One has its participants, roles and tasks. The main participants of the 1st day are Recruiting Manager, HR team, tutor (colleague), and the new employee. The 1st day's activities and roles are presented below.

8:30 in the morning the Recruiting Manager welcomes the new recruit at the Monday Morning breakfast. Recruiting Manager also arranges a meeting with the new employee for the next day's afternoon. At 9:00 in the morning the Security team runs a security introduction, gives the key and takes ID photo of the new employee. Next, the new employee informs HR team with in-house and external contact information. HR team has extensive role during the 1st day on the job. HR team is responsible to introduce the new employee with all practical information needed to start working as well as information about health care, benefits and salary policies. The examples of such information are listed in the table below.

Table 3. HR team responsibilities during the 1st day on the job in F-Secure. (The table was modified from the internal F-Secure document, shared during the personal company workshop. 2012)

Reservations	Healthcare	Free-time activities	Work time
Lunch, snacks, drinks	Business Cards	Public transportation ticket	Smoking
Communication in the office (Phone policies, basic instructions on mobile phones and company phone policy, office communicator, paper mail)	New Fellow (employee) Introduction Day & Tour around the building	Payroll	Car parking
Monthly Meeting system	Purchasing things	Absence policy	Dress code

Moreover, the Day One includes the F-Secure General Info session, which is conducted by the HR team.

Last but not least, the tutor ('buddy') reserves the day to instruct the new employee. Instructions and meeting important people continue the next day and throughout the week. The tutor's responsibilities during the preparations and the Day One include preparing new employee's desk, introducing him/her with the manager and other colleagues, accompanying him/her to the breakfast, lunch and show around the building, and teaching him/her to use relevant computers and machines at work. (Internal F-Secure documents and personal company workshops 2012.)

F-Secure's recruitment partners A & B

F-Secure uses few external recruitment service providers to help in searching for the right talents, advertising and assessing the suitability of the candidates. F-Secure selected two recruitment service partners for this research. The purpose of recruitment service partners' introduction is to show how they are involved into the current F-Secure's recruitment and selection process. To respect their privacy, the names of the recruitment service partners will not be disclosed, but instead called Recruitment partner A and Recruitment partner B (later RPA and RPB).

Recruitment partner A (RPA) is specializing in head-hunting projects which are orientated to the IT firms exclusively. The main services of RPA include candidate search, Human Resources projects and staffing. RPA and F-Secure have started their partnership during the year 2010. RPA has already had opportunities to provide F-Secure with headhunting services for such managerial positions as specialist, supervisor, and manager. At the moment RPA is actively searching for F-Secure the IT experts in Software Engineering, Systems and in Principal consultancy. (Representative of the RPA, Feb 2012.)

Recruitment partner B (RPB) is specializing in recruitment, talent management, business transformation services and in head-hunting executive level professionals. RPB, according to the internal source, works with different kinds of companies. RPB's main goal is to make sure that the people and talents in the companies are consistent with the client company strategies. In terms of services, RPB can complete recruitments, organize various assessments to evaluate candidates. Additionally, RPB provides management and leadership coaching, strategy development, sales development services to their clients. RPB and F-Secure have been in co-operation with the Representative of RPB since the year 2008, while the RPB worked with F-Secure already before. RPB's client F-Secure is taking advantage of RPB's expertise in recruitment and assessments. (Representative of the RPB, Feb 2012.)

4.2 The Focus Group

The data presentation and interpretation of the Focus Group will follow a certain structure. First, the survey data will be presented and analysed. Next, the group discussion data will be analysed and interpreted.

4.2.1 Stage 1: Survey

The survey data is presented and analyzed in eight (8) separate themes. The data description and analysis are done simultaneously. The reader may consult the Attachment 4 p. 89, which consists of survey questions for the Focus Group to follow data presentation and analysis.

Theme 1 - Demographics and employee background

As it has been presented before, the chosen sample consisted of 47 foreign origin employees at F-Secure's Finland offices, 45 from Helsinki office and 2 from Oulu office. 30 of the 47 intended respondents have provided their valuable answers to the survey. The sample is very rich in quantity of nationalities: 5 were from Russia, 4 were from Philippines, another 4 – from India, 2 – from Germany, and others from various world countries like: Portugal, Ghana, France, Canada, Bangladesh, USA, Iceland, Ireland, Spain, Malaysia and Turkey.

77% of the respondents were men and 23% - women. The majority of respondents were aged between 26 and 35 years and represented 70% of the respondents. Other 20% of respondents were aged from 36 to 40 years. You can view more detailed division by age groups of respondents in the figure below.

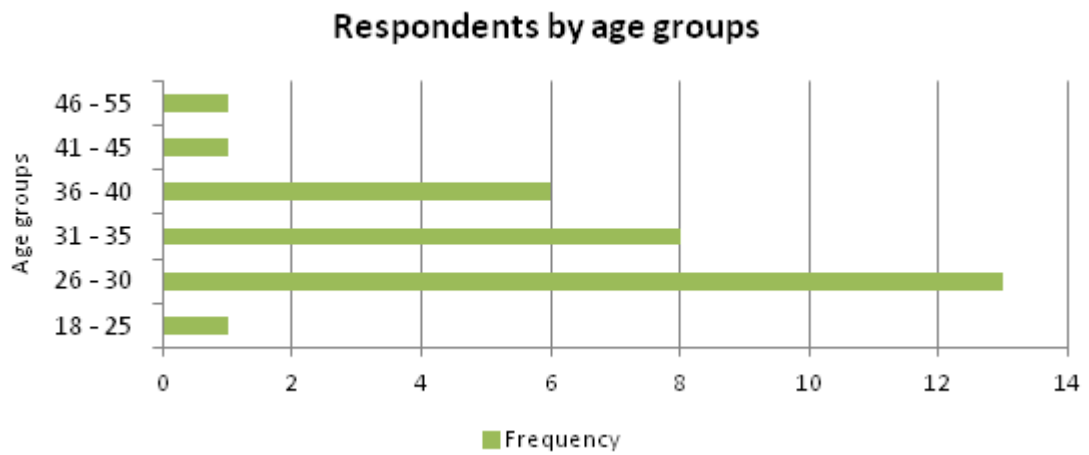


Figure 7. Respondents by age groups.

The majority of respondents had around 6 to 10 years of work experience prior to joining F-Secure. They represented 40% of the respondent population. Around 23% of the respondents had more than 11 years of work experience, and 37% had less than 5 years of work experience before joining F-Secure. The graph below shows the length of employment of respondents at F-Secure so far.

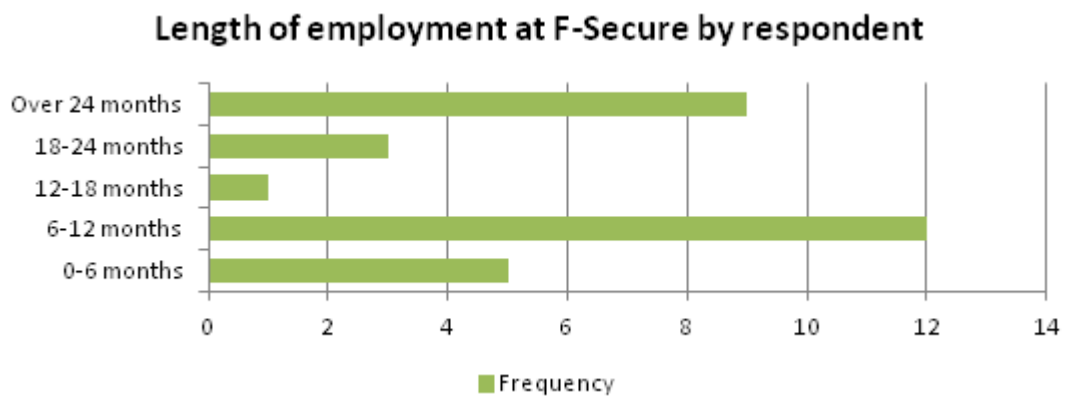


Figure 8. Length of employment at F-Secure by respondent.

All respondents, but one, were recruited directly by F-Secure. The latter respondent was recruited via a recruitment agent. 50% of foreign employees were recruited from abroad and 50% were recruited within Finland.

Theme 2 - Recruitment tools used to learn about the job position

According to respondents, F-Secure website and the employee referral were the most used ways to find out about the job position. Another very popular tool was found to be Monster.fi or another local Monster website. LinkedIn professional network helped 2 respondents out of 30. The figure below shows the relationship between various recruitment tools that could have been used to find out about the job and respondents' given answers. In this case, social events and Social Media websites, except for the LinkedIn, were not popular channels to learn about the job.

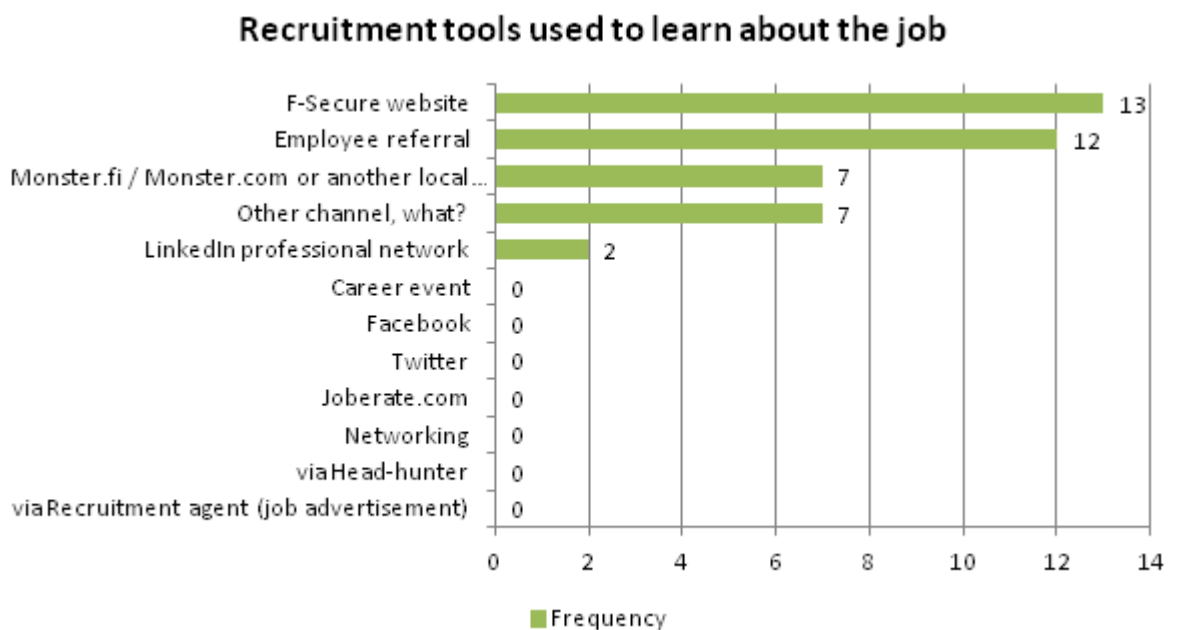


Figure 9. Recruitment tools that were used to learn about the job.

Respondents were also asked to evaluate Social Media websites as channels to look for a job and whether they had used Social Media websites to look for jobs. 70% of respondents thought that Social Media websites are a good place to advertise job positions, while 30% did not think so. Similarly, 67% of respondents used Social Media websites to look for jobs, and 33% did not (see pie charts below).

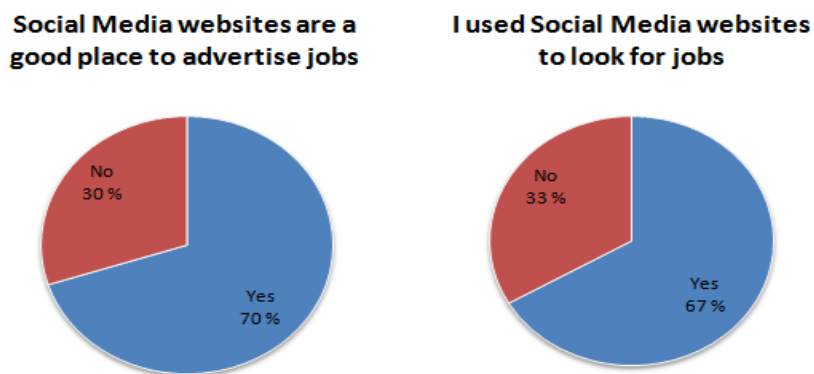


Figure 10. The attitudes of respondents towards the use of the Social Media websites to look for jobs.

The question about Social Media websites received many open comments about positive and negative sides of Social Media use for job advertising. The majority of positive comments underlined advantageous sides of Social Media websites to employers, such as: job advertisements on Social Media attract vast amount of readers, are more visible, one can read peer comments or recommendations, and because people, who are looking for a job, can easily find the job advertisement. Six (6) respondents have particularly mentioned professional Social Media websites, such as the LinkedIn professional network, as suitable place to advertise jobs.

There were a few of negative comments about Social Media. Three (3) out of them have particularly stated that they see Social Media websites as personal tools to stay in touch with friends and family, and not as recruitment tools. Three (3) other respondents made it to understand that Social Media websites may not be the best place to advertise jobs, because such professional and specialized websites as www.mol.fi, www.monster.fi are there already for recruitment purposes.

Theme 3 - Selection tools and interviewing process

For this theme to be answered, the respondents were asked to select the selection and interviewing tools that they experienced during their recruitment and selection process at F-Secure. In addition to this, the respondents were asked to evaluate their impres-

sions, experiences and opinions about the arrangements of interviews and the selection process. Few open comments will be mentioned as well.

All respondents participated in interviews conducted by the Hiring Manager. Other often experienced selection tools were interviews by the HR department representative, homework assignment, phone interviews, and team interviews. OPQ (Occupational Personality Questionnaire), Suitability Assessment and Skype interview tools were used occasionally, depending on the recruitment needs. Two (2) respondents have gone through the interview by Agent.



Figure 11. The selection and interviewing tools the respondents went through

One respondent gave negative feedback about the OPQ. According to him, the OPQ was poorly organized and was impersonal, because of occurrence of sudden surprises without explanations. Two respondents expressed their positive experiences about the testing and homework during the selection process. According to them, the homework, tests and exercises increased their trust towards the recruitment and selection process.

The experiences of the interviewing arrangements and the selection process at F-Secure are depicted in the figure 12 below. In the survey respondents had four choices

for each statement: strongly disagree, moderately disagree, moderately agree, and strongly agree. The researcher chose to show the contrast between ‘disagree’ and ‘agree’ choices to clearly see where the possible process weaknesses lie.

Respondent experiences of the interviewing and selection process arrangements

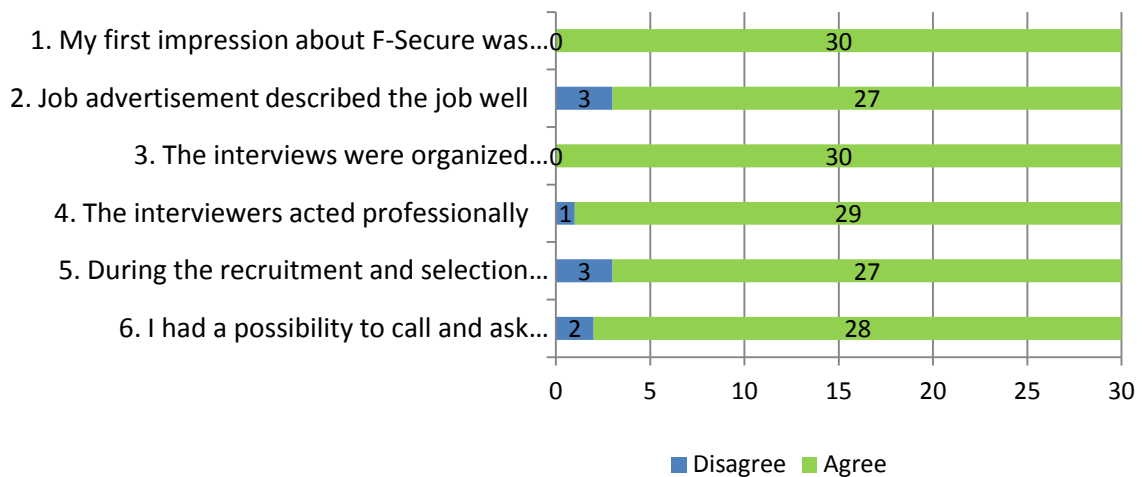


Figure 12. Respondent experiences of the interviewing and the selection process arrangements.

The strongest positive areas of the experiences were around the 1st, 3rd, 4th and 6th statements. The statements 1 and 3 had absolutely no negative opinions. The possible spots of weakness could be seen in 2nd and 5th statements. In overall, the respondent experiences of the interviewing and the selection process arrangements were very positive, with the overall average of 3,56 out of 4, accounting for 89% positivity. No one strongly disagreed with any of the statements.

Theme 4 - Experiences of relocation services and the pre-engagement stage

50% of respondents were recruited from abroad. All of them were provided the relocation agency services. Their experiences and expectations of the agency services quality and professionalism of the agents were evaluated. Please, view the figure 16 below showing the dispersion of evaluation of relocation services.

Respondent experiences of the relocation services agency

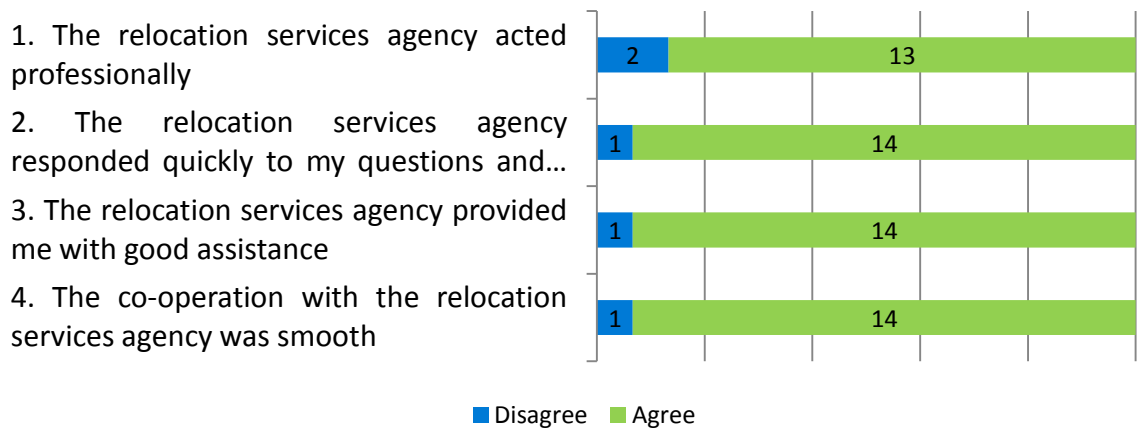


Figure 13. The respondent experiences of the relocation agency services.

The most positively rated statements were about the professionalism and the responsiveness of the relocation services agency. At least one respondent always had a more negative impression or experience of the relocation services agency. The weakest ratings were given to the 4th statement about the smoothness of co-operation with the relocation services agency. In overall, the experiences were rated very positively, averaging in total 3,53 out of 4, accounting for 88% positivity.

80% of respondents thought that the relocation services agency has fulfilled their expectations, while 20% did not. Few comments were given about the relocation agency services professionalism and quality. The respondents thought that the relocation services agency worked professionally, gave answers quickly, and were friendly and showed initiative. However, three (3) other respondents have commented on the relocation services agency's inability to help find accommodation.

In the open comment section, one respondent felt that throughout the interviewing and pre-engagement processes there was lack of personal engagement from the F-Secure's side. Respondent was not picked up from the airport, and the responsible people were slow to meet him/her at HTC building. Another respondent, in contrast, felt that F-Secure makes their employees feel welcome and does not let them to struggle fitting into a new environment.

One respondent said that he/she missed more detailed information about the Finnish tax system during the pre-engagement stage.

Theme 5 - Experiences of the Day One

All 30 respondents have provided with their opinions, experiences and impressions of the Day One and the arrangements. You can view the contrast of their answers from disagree to agree below in the Figure 14.

Respondent experiences of the Day One arrangements

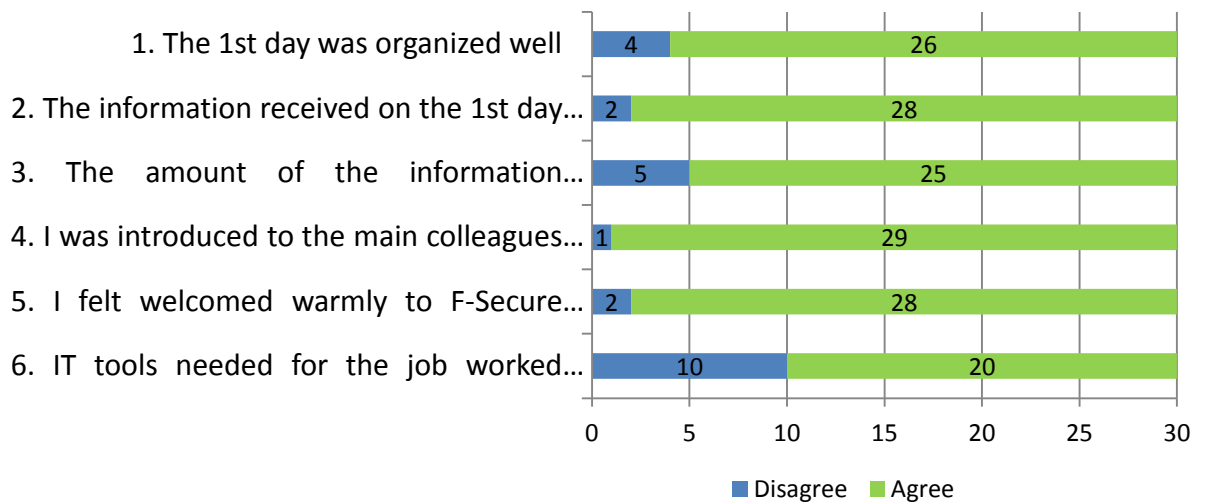


Figure 14. The respondent experiences of the Day One arrangements.

The most positive opinions were expressed to the 4th and 5th statements about the employee introduction to the right colleagues and the feeling of being welcome to F-Secure after the Day One. However, there were opinions and experiences that raise more attention. For example, there were 2 respondents who felt that the Day One was not organized well at all and that IT tools were not working properly since the Day One. The statements 3 and 6 received the lowest average of all statements, correspondingly to 3,1 and 3. Five (5) respondents rated the 3rd statement as ‘moderately disagree’, and 30% of respondents rated the 6th statement on a negative bar side. In overall the evaluation ratings were rather high, averaging in total 3,32 out of 4, accounting for 83% positivity.

The open comment section had few valuable contributions. One respondent said that the buddy (tutor) system was non-existent, which resulted in a rather impersonal support during the first days at work. Another commentator gave feedback on the induction process as a whole, stating that there was no real induction or mentoring process since the Day One.

Theme 6 - The impact of the amount of previous work experience on the respondent opinions and experiences

F-Secure was interested to know whether the amount of previous work experience of respondents had any impact on their survey answers. Questions 9, 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 19 were selected to check whether there could be seen importance in the amount of previous work experience. Only the quantifiable answers were regarded in this analysis.

After making a careful overview, it was concluded that the amount of previous work experience did not have impact on the respondent answers to questions 10, 12, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 19. Some impact could be seen on question 9 answers. The analysis for the impact on the Question 9 answers is divided into two parts. The first part was selected from the respondents who had less than 10 years of previous work experience, and the second part – from those who had more than 10 years of previous work experience. Only such division showed the differences in impact on the question answers based on the amount of the previous work experience the respondents held.

Question 9 – Do you think that Social Media websites are a good place to advertise job positions?

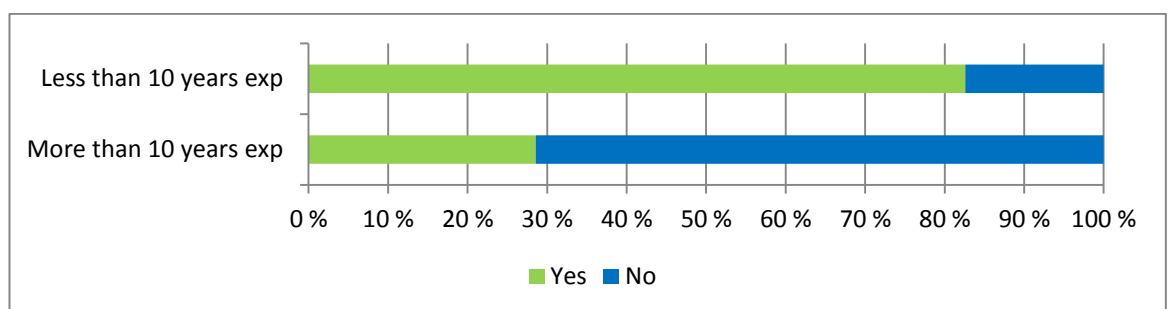


Figure 15. The division of respondents' answers about question 9 based on the amount of their previous work experience.

Based on the above chart, 82% of those who had less than 10 years of previous experience, thought that Social Media websites are a good place to advertise jobs. While 72% of those who had more than 10 years of previous work experience, thought that Social Media websites are not a good place to advertise jobs. Therefore, I made an assumption that the less previous work experience respondent owns, the more he/she is positive about the Social Media as a recruitment tool, and the more previous work experience respondent owns, the less he/she is positive about the Social Media as a recruitment tool for job advertisements.

Theme 7 - Overall feedback for the recruitment and selection process

30% (10) of respondents thought that F-secure's recruitment and selection process was smooth, simple, straightforward, quick and professional.

15% (5) of respondents provided with constructive feedback on the F-Secure's recruitment and selection process. Two respondents missed the career path and goal setting discussions during and after the recruitment and selection process. Some respondents thought that the process was not entirely smooth due to the lack of responsiveness and the need to take care of many things on own initiative. Another respondent thought that the whole recruitment and selection process was too long and therefore had considered applying elsewhere at that time.

Other 55% of respondents did not provide comments.

Theme 8 - Current job satisfaction

All 30 respondents gave their opinions about their current job position satisfaction and whether they would recommend F-Secure to their friends or previous colleagues abroad. The answers are compared and graphically shown in the bar chart below.

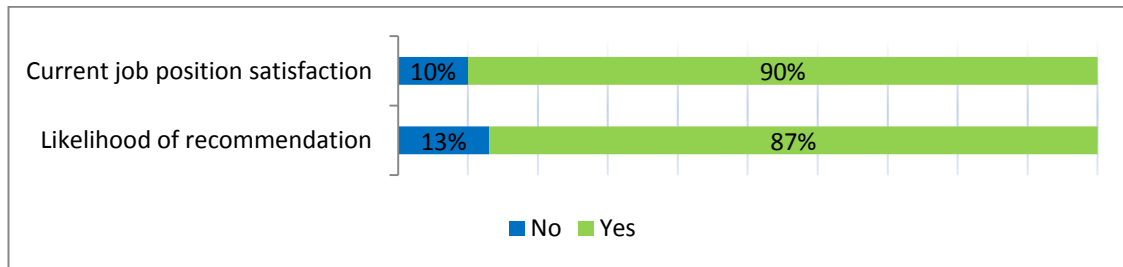


Figure 16. Current job position satisfaction and the likelihood of recommendation to work for F-Secure.

Based on the charts, 90% of respondents are satisfied in their current job position. 10% (3) of respondents rated their satisfaction as somewhat or highly negative. The results for the probability of recommending F-Secure as an employer for respondents’ friends and colleagues were very similar to the current job position satisfaction ratings. 87% said that they would recommend F-Secure, and 13% said they would not. Respondents have left many positive comments about F-Secure as to why they would recommend F-Secure as a good workplace to their friends and colleagues. The list of the positive phrases can be viewed in the table below.

Table 4. Reasons for which respondents would recommend F-Secure as an employer.

-fantastic place to work	-international atmosphere	-openness
-great company	-English as a company language	-honest managers
-good environment	-interesting assignments	-professionally challenging
-competent staff	-non-bureaucratic company	-flexible working hours
-the best company I've worked for so far		

13% (4) of respondents said they would not recommend to work at F-Secure for their foreign friends or colleagues. Two out of four had similar reasons. They said that they would recommend to apply somewhere else than Finland. One of other two said that working for F-Secure is too stressful.

4.2.2 Stage 2: Group discussion

The reader may view the group discussion guide for the Focus Group in Attachment 5 pp. 93.

Theme 1 – Application stage

There were distinctive reasons why group participants applied to a job position at F-Secure. Mostly it was because F-Secure was a familiar and respected brand, which attracted them to apply.

The impressions about F-Secure's job advertisements varied greatly among discussion members. Some thought that F-Secure's job advertisements were clear and appealing, while others said they were vague and uninformative. However, the group agreed collectively on the idea that F-Secure should improve their job advertising through selling the experience of working at F-Secure. The idea suggested improving the job advertisements by inserting staff quotes about F-Secure and by inserting more information about F-Secure's company culture.

Few group members suggested exploiting other Social Media than LinkedIn to sell the company brand in a creative and appealing way. This way job promotion could be incorporated into the company brand advertisement. LinkedIn website was approved by all group members as the most suitable Social Media channel to advertise jobs now and in the future. A member explained the social advantage of LinkedIn in the job-seeker's point of view: "But when I look for a job, I don't only want to know the description of the job. I also want to know the people that are in that company. Maybe I know somebody who previously or currently worked for that company?"

Theme 2 - Interviewing and selection stage

There were no improvement suggestions for the agent's interviewing arrangements. The only group member who went through the agent's interview said that every step of the agent's recruitment and interviewing process was handled very professionally.

The data is more differing on the subject of F-Secure's interviewing arrangements. Two group members had only positive experience and, therefore, had no particular improvement suggestions. Another member experienced a lack of responsiveness from

the hiring manager. Such process made him/her be the only initiator of the contact and interest in the job position as in contrast with the hiring manager's promises. He/she would have expected more fluency in the process and less waiting time without response. One more strong opinion – there was a need of personalization, "a sense of looking after" during the interviewing and selection stage. The feelings of disjointedness and unconnectedness followed such experience.

Theme 3 - Pre-engagement stage and relocation services

Two out of three group discussion participants, who were recruited from abroad, felt that their expectations of F-Secure's pre-engagement stage and relocation agency services were positively exceeded. Another group participant underlined the continual lack of personalization. His/her opinion and expectations are quoted below.

I think if you are bringing a person from another country, you should go and greet him in person. Basically, not to use taxi services and keys, it should be personalized. The first moment, new recruits are vulnerable, when they step out of the plane, it is the time of greeting. (...) Person doesn't have to be from HR, it can be someone from the team, a colleague or an assigned buddy. (...) For me, there was no connection upon arriving, no connection throughout the first week. So it gave such sense of alienation.

(Informant 1, 25 Jun 2012.)

All Focus Group discussion members agreed with the latter opinion and believed that other foreign recruits would appreciate more personalization.

The group members, who were recruited from abroad, thought that the relocation agency services were very fluent and helpful in terms of various documentation needed for moving to Finland. However, two out of three members said that they expected more help in finding a permanent housing. Informants were left wondering whether the relocation services agency was going to provide help in finding housing or not.

Theme 4 – Day One stage

The Focus Group discussion members were asked to describe a well-organized and inspirational 1st day induction at F-Secure. The group exercise brought very good data and the following is a compiled description of it.

First of all, a new employee should be greeted at the door when he/she arrives to work on the 1st day. The person who greets the new recruit should be the hiring manager or someone from the team, a "buddy". It is important to take care of the keys, access codes, log in passwords and other employee documentation with HR during the 1st day induction. All new employee's IT tools have to be ready and work properly on the 1st day. A guided-tour around the building and departments is expected. Meeting people on a personal level is of utmost importance to the new employee. The amount of new information should be limited and customized depending on what new employee needs to know the most. The information should be communicated gradually. New recruits expect to have a common lunch and coffee break with their team and new colleagues. The "new fellow days" which are organized 1-3 months after the start, should follow the 1st day induction without delay. A preliminary introduction to the team could be sent few days before the 1st day. For example, a letter consisting of the team names and job positions with short introduction would be a nice way to engage a new recruit with a sense of belonging to the team already before the start. According to the Focus Group discussion members, the technical and on-the-job training should only follow after 1-3 first days. It should not be included into the 1st day.

What was missing for two out of five group members was the proper introduction to the team on the 1st day. It should not be skipped and should be done as soon as possible. New recruits wish to feel as welcome to the team as possible from the very start.

Theme 5 – Recruitment and selection process

Based on other group members' experiences, Informant 4 suggested that the recruitment and selection process at F-Secure should be as consistent as possible. In his/her

opinion the positive and negative experiences of the process should not be that different: “because hearing stories like this made me feel that this guy didn’t apply to F-Secure”.

Another improvement suggestion for the whole process is to implement a central contact point in the HR, which would allow candidates to call when they have problems or questions about their application or interviewing status. The central point contact details should be provided to the candidates or communicated on the careers website. By implementing such central point, in interviewee’s point of view, F-Secure would increase candidate’s sense of being considered in the process and belief of a functional follow-up.

Another matter will be discussed under this theme. The group discussion members gave a clear picture of how F-Secure could attract more foreign talent.

The group discussion members thought that having a short video presentation of what is Finland and what is F-Secure as a company and environment could really attract more foreign talent. They suggested placing the video into the job advertisement and possibly elsewhere on the corporate website, for example, the careers site. The suggested title for the video was as follows: “What it’s like to work for F-Secure”. Mentioning words like “international” and “global” company in the job advertisement would add credibility that foreigners are welcome to apply to the job position. Exploiting the current international staff to brand F-Secure’s international environment and connect with new potential foreign talents was also agreed by all group discussion members.

4.3 Recruitment Partners A & B

Interviews A & B with Recruitment Partners A & B are comparatively analysed in five (5) separate, but interrelated themes. In the text the Recruitment Partners A & B will be named as RPA and RPB respectively. The results presentation and interpretation are done simultaneously. The reader may view the Attachment 6, p. 94, which consists

the interview guide for Recruitment Partner A & B, to follow the results presentation and analysis.

Theme 1 - Candidate search

Both RPA and RPB agencies look for the potential candidates in two central ways: by exploiting their own sources and by advertising the job position in different marketing channels. For candidate search, both RPA and RPB use their own local CV registers and exercise headhunting when needed. In addition to these, RPA uses the professional social career site LinkedIn and cooperates with other agencies to reach additional CV registers and CV banks. RPB additionally uses their global CV database to search more candidates. When placing a job advertisement, both RPA and RPB use their homepages, Monster site, Oikotie site, and local newspapers, like Helsingin Sanomat. In addition to these, RPA advertises jobs in LinkedIn and to their professional network. RPB has a team of professionals to consult where to place an advertisement in order to attract the intended candidates and together with that RPB selects different combinations of advertising channels depending on the job position.

What RPA and RPB see as potential future recruitment tool is exploiting the Social Media's advantages. RPA also suggested another kind of internet recruitment tool – exploitation of company's own homepages as much as possible to search and locate good candidates. RPA is right now developing a project where they aim to create a site dedicated for the candidates on their homepage. RPB, on the other hand, suggests that taking advantage of networking may be a key in the future recruitment. Moreover, RPB supports the current recruitment arrangement that they have with F-Secure to be used also in the future. RPB's and F-Secure's current candidate search arrangement is a combination of RPB's and F-Secure's sourcing at a concurrent time.

Theme 2 - Understanding client's needs

The theme 2 is about understanding client's needs: client's business and environment, job position specific needs as well as the client's culture and values.

RPA consults the secondary sources, such as client's homepage, brochures, and media to get a general picture of the client's industry, customers and competitors. What both RPA and RPB underlined in understanding the client's needs was that meeting the *hiring manager* is essential, and the following direct quotes are an illustration of that.

“So we have to meet the hiring manager, well, at minimum one time when we start the cooperation. The hiring manager is also the main source to find out more about the company if the client is new.” (Representative of the RPA, 13 Apr 2012.)

“But it means that I need to find the time to talk with them [client] before that [interview/assessment] – we go through the role, the expectations, what thoughts they [client] have of the candidate.” (Representative of the RPB, 3 April 2012.)

According to the agencies, meeting with the hiring manager also clears up such important information as what kind of person and team player the client is looking for. Both agencies stated that they take time to analyze the job descriptions given by the client. RPB put an emphasis on investing enough time to find out as much as possible about the job position that is needed to be filled.

The client's company culture and values are perceived to be an important factor and a must to understand before starting the recruitment for the client. RPA questions the hiring manager to check whether they perceive the client's company culture correctly. RPB takes on a more proactive way – RPB strives to talk also to other people rather than solely to the hiring manager in the company. Other people can be colleagues, team assistants, even the client's customers if it is relevant to the case. RPB admitted that their recruitment process might be taking longer than that of other agencies, because of the time that RPB invests into understanding the client's company culture.

Theme 3 - Cooperation process with the client

Theme 3 results will discuss the challenges in the cooperation process from the RPA's and RPB's points of view as well as describe how the positive applicant (candidate) experience in their recruitment process is ensured.

RPA in general finds it difficult to have an intense and responsive communication with the hiring manager throughout the ongoing recruitment process, when RPA needs quick answers and evaluation of their success.

When we go on in the recruiting process, what we see as an important point, is to have regular information about our success or our process to the customer. We want to tell the client how we have managed and what is the phase, and ask those normal questions that pop up during the process. When we recommend candidates, we want to get feedback from the client, if they agree or disagree, especially from the hiring manager.
(Representative of the RPA, 13 Apr 2012.)

RPB mentioned different kind of issues on this topic. The scheduling of meetings with a client is a challenge. The representative expressed their desire to plan the whole recruitment process in advance to make sure that there is sufficient time to meet the hiring manager and any other people that may be involved in the candidate selection decision making. In addition, RPB put across the fact "that the perfect candidates usually don't exist, <...>. If they [client] make a list of 10 things that the perfect candidate will have to possess, we probably can find someone who knows 6 or 7 of those, and the rest can be learned" (Representative of RPB, 3 Apr 2012).

Another big challenge in the cooperation process is to satisfy the client's expectation of as short as possible recruitment process. The Recruitment Partners A & B both estimated their average recruitment process to take about six (6) weeks. RPA said that it could be possible to make the process last shorter if the hiring managers were quicker to respond. RPB, on the contrary, disagreed that striving for a shorter delivery time is a good solution, as opposed to the chances of missing important information, which may hinder the quality of the service. Based on RPB, taking more time at the beginning

of the recruitment process actually is saving time for the client, because that gives more chances to find the right candidate.

As for ensuring the positive applicant (candidate) experience, both agents emphasized their comprehension of its importance and listed out the actions they take in accordance with it. Both representatives think that professional and friendly handling of candidates is central. Furthermore, both agents emphasized the need to keep candidates informed of the process progress regularly either by e-mail or by calling. Both agencies call those candidates who they previously met. RPB elaborated further on this topic. In addition to the abovementioned, RPB gives an opportunity to candidates to ask questions and makes sure that candidates leave having as clear understanding of the role profile and the client as possible. At the interview opening RPB asks the client to give a company presentation to enhance candidate's positive experience. Moreover, on the assessment day RPB provides candidates with refreshments and relaxed atmosphere. At the end of the assessment, candidates receive immediate feedback from the agent about his/her strengths and weaknesses. RPB believes that in such conditions candidates are able to give more quality answers to questions and leaves the assessment day more satisfied.

Theme 4 - Cooperation development with F-Secure

According to both agencies, the cooperation process with F-Secure has been positive, "normally smooth", and most things go well. RPA appreciates that F-Secure's HR personnel know what kind of information needs to be provided to the agent. RPB emphasizes the easiness of communication with F-Secure's staff: "The company culture at F-Secure is in many ways quite open, so that I can ask the questions quite directly" (Representative of RPB, 3 April 2012).

In terms of what F-Secure could change to improve the cooperation and synergies is establishing more commitment towards the agents' requests. For example, RPA would like the hiring manager respond more quickly and more often, and always provide with some feedback. RPB expects very similar things. The hiring manager should put more emphasis on scheduling and inclusion of agent with all persons that are involved in

making recruitment decisions. Feedback from the hiring manager is also expected by RPB.

Both agencies were happy with opportunity to offer service improvement and additional services to make cooperation with F-Secure more worthwhile and effective in terms of better recruitment solutions. For instance, RPA would be happy to do more than researching: to interview all the candidates before giving any recommendations and to make psychological assessments. According to RPA, interviewing of candidates would save time for the hiring manager and would result in a shorter delivery time. Moreover, RPB would like to help F-Secure's recruitment department with incoming job applications management. RPB assumes that F-Secure, due to a strong employer's brand, receives constantly high numbers of job applications, especially open applications. Therefore, RPB offered to overtake this function – to read and organize applications, and make better use of them when searching F-Secure's own CV registers.

Theme 5 - Foreign recruitment aspects

Both RPA and RPB agents perform non-official language proficiency testing. Both perceive language testing as an important thing to do, especially before sending recommendation to the client. RPA checks the language proficiency during the interview with candidates by asking questions in a certain language needed for the job, whereas RPB relies more on their colleagues abroad to check certain language proficiency. RPB's colleagues abroad check proficiency via Skype interview or by calling. RPB also acknowledges the language factor as a potential challenge when recruiting foreigners.

Both agents agree that international recruitment does not differ much from regular; hence difference in treatment of foreign versus local candidates is minor. Nevertheless, there are few issues that agents must take care of in case of international recruitment: validity of foreign education and the cultural alignment. In RPA's case, it is important to check whether the candidate's foreign education is valid. In RPB's point of view, it is very important that a foreign candidate understand what it means to move to Finland: "We do talk to the candidates about the Finnish culture in a way that they

would understand where they would be coming to, <...>. Those who would be moving to a new country might always have wrong expectations, too high expectations” (Representative of RPB, 3 Apr 2012). In overall, RPA also admits that international recruitment requires more alertness and more careful consideration than that of the local recruitment.

5 Discussion

The last chapter summarizes the main research findings and provides improvement suggestions to F-Secure. The chapter also includes the suggestions for further research and a comprehensive analysis of the research success. The aim of the discussion chapter is to answer the Investigative Question 4 and the main Research Problem – what could be improved in F-Secure’s international talent acquisition process. The first two chapter sections are divided into smaller individual sections to differentiate the variety of findings.

5.1 Key findings

The research design graph shown in Figure 5, p. 39 will help the reader to follow the below sections, which identify the key results based on the methodology tools used.

5.1.1 Talent acquisition process at F-Secure

F-Secure’s recruitment and selection process follows a multistep system, which includes all the relevant steps, such as the applicant attraction, screening, first round interviews, additional selection methods and making a final selection decision based on the pre-determined selection criteria. F-Secure divides recruitment tasks between the HR and the hiring managers involving a couple of stakeholders in the decision making process, which ensures better validity of the selection decision. In addition to that, F-Secure employs recruitment service providers to its advantage for additional application attraction and candidate selection techniques.

Another key finding is that F-Secure puts effort onto new recruit engagement through a detailed program of the pre-engagement process, involving the relocation services, and the Day One stage arrangements.

5.1.2 The Focus Group

Based on the *survey* results, F-Secure's own website, local Monster websites and employee referrals were the most used ways to find out about the job. This finding shows that F-Secure reaches its potential international candidates best via online advertising and internal networking.

70% of survey respondents thought that Social Media websites are a good place to advertise jobs. The less of previous work experience the respondent had, the more s/he was willing to use and see benefit from the Social Media websites.

The survey respondent experiences of the interviewing and selection process arrangements were very positive with a total average of 3,56 out of 4.

The survey respondent experiences of the relocation services were very positive with a total average of 3,53 out of 4.

The survey respondent experiences of the Day One were positive with a total average of 3,32 out of 4. Based on the survey results, a relevant amount of the negative experiences resulted from dissatisfaction of the improperly working IT tools and the overload of information during the Day One. .

F-Secure's recruitment and selection process was evaluated as smooth, simple, straightforward, quick and professional by the 2/3 of survey respondents who provided overall feedback on F-Secure's recruitment and selection process. The 2/3 of these survey respondents formed 30% of the total number of survey respondents.

Last but not least, 87% of all survey respondents were ready to recommend working at F-Secure.

During the *group discussion* it was revealed that Social Media as a visible and international tool should be used for employer branding.

The group discussion also revealed a lack of interviewer responsiveness during the recruitment and interviewing process. Additionally, the lack of personalization prior and during the Day One was strongly announced in the group discussion. The group discussion members wished for a better Day One and beyond structure and planning.

5.1.3 Recruitment Partners A & B

RPA & RPB both look for potential candidates in two central ways: by exploiting their own sources and by advertising the job in different marketing channels.

Based on RPA's & RPB's evaluation, the Social Media and networking will have stronger potential in the future of recruitment.

It was found that the deficiency of intense and responsive communication with the client's hiring manager may cause a series of risks to the success of the recruitment process. For example, both RPA and RPB agree that meeting the hiring manager is essential in order to understand the client's recruitment needs correctly. Next, both recruitment agencies wish for more feedback from F-Secure. Moreover, both agencies have recruitment process improvement suggestions. Last but not least, it was admitted that it is only possible to shorten the recruitment process in case the hiring manager is quick to respond to the agency's questions and needs.

Both recruitment partners preferred the scheduling of the recruitment process in advance.

In terms of foreign recruitment, it was found that it requires a bit more careful consideration than that of the local recruitment. A more careful consideration is needed to review the reliability and validity of candidate's education and to confirm that candidate is truly willing to relocate to Finland.

5.2 Improvement suggestions

This section will answer the Investigative Question 4 and will present the suggestions for development to F-Secure. The list of development suggestions is divided into three separate sections respectively to the three Investigative Questions. Some development suggestions are grounded with the theoretical framework (chapter 2) and some are based on the research results (chapter 4) or my own judgment as a researcher.

5.2.1 Talent acquisition process at F-Secure

Author suggests F-Secure to continuously monitor and improve their recruitment and selection process as well as the pre-start and the Day One. Continuous improvements will ensure that the maximum candidate experience and the (recruitment and selection) techniques' validity rates are achieved.

Additionally, author suggests F-Secure to also review the co-operation relationships with all of their recruitment and selection service providers. Continuous monitoring, feedback sessions, and active co-operation will improve the communication levels, strengthen the relationship as well as will lead to more committed and long-term partnerships. (The reader may review section 2.5.2 for partnership management theories)

5.2.2 The Focus Group

For F-Secure to attract more foreign talent, the author suggests upgrading the standard job advertisements by creating an 'international' outlook and inserting a video describing Finland and telling about F-Secure. The group discussion members strongly agreed that people from abroad have lack of information about Finland. A look into Finland and also the F-Secure's work environment, culture and personnel would definitely increase F-Secure's global visibility and attractiveness. It was also collectively agreed that F-Secure must make its international culture more visible in the job advertisements to attract more foreign applications.

Next, researcher suggests exploiting the Social Media tools in both recruitment and (employer) branding. The key findings on the Social Media (section 5.1) closely connect with the section 2.2.2 and 2.3 theories on Social Media's uses and potential. In such case, the multifaceted use of Social Media tools should increase F-Secure's attractiveness and visibility among potential candidates.

Moreover, more attention needs to be paid to the development of a positive candidate experience. More specifically, the results revealed that more attention has to be given to interviewer responsiveness and stronger personalization during the recruitment and selection process as well as colleague involvement during the pre-engagement and Day One stages. Higher interviewer/ recruiter responsiveness will increase the positive candidate experience. Stronger personalizations meaning having personal attendants (interviewer or a colleague) will make the candidate feel more welcome and comfortable. Having a colleague assigned to the new recruit since the Day One will contribute positively to the employee retention rate. Colleague involvement into the new employee engagement is also very important and it would definitely increase the new recruit satisfaction rate.

Research results also revealed that more attention needs to be given to the arrangements of the Day One. Craig's five rules listed in p. 35 and other theories in section 2.7 strongly support the development suggestion. Moreover, results section 4.2.2 provides a variety of suggestions how the Day One at F-Secure could be improved.

5.2.3 Recruitment Partners A & B

First of all, author suggests F-Secure to arrange open feedback sessions regularly enough with recruitment partners A & B. One of the main factors for the success of partnership that Tuten & Urban defined is the communication behaviour (see Figure 9, p. 38). Their theory suggests holding the feedback sessions four times a year. Moreover, RPA and RPB strongly expressed their wish to receive more feedback from F-Secure. RPA and RPB would like to learn regularly about the way the recruitment process went forward in F-Secure; whether the recommended candidates were the

right kind of people F-Secure was looking for to start with; and what RPA and RPB could have done differently to succeed better in the future.

The answer to F-Secure's desire to shorten the recruitment delivery process was found. To make the recruitment process smoother and faster, author suggests F-Secure to show more commitment towards the communication with RPA and RPB. Special attention should be paid for a more active communication, giving quicker responses and regular feedback provision, early scheduling and the opportunity of meeting all the important people when needed (especially the hiring managers). Volpe & Tucker and Tuten & Urban theory supports this suggestion.

Last but not least, the author suggests considering the implementation of RPA's and RPB's suggested service improvements (view in section 4.3). Author especially recommends taking into account the RPA's wish to interview the candidates before they send the recommendations to F-Secure, and the RPB's offer to overtake the incoming applications management in F-Secure. In researcher's opinion and based on F-Secure's recruitment and selection process (described in section 4.1), the implementation of the RPA's wish to interview the candidates would save time for F-Secure's hiring managers. Moreover, based on RPB's guesses, F-secure receives large amounts of open job applications constantly and may not have enough time to look through all of them. Therefore, RPB's offer could speed up the screening process of incoming applications and create a more structured and a pre-screened candidate register of F-Secure's own.

5.3 Suggestions for further research

The completed research was limited to the specific recruitment and selection stages until the 1st day on the job. Based on author's own opinion and on a received e-mail from one of the group discussion members, the further research on F-Secure's induction / introduction process could be of value. During the Focus group discussion members gave a few of comments also about the later than Day One arrangements and the way they need to be improved. In addition to this, Kaiser (2009) defined the length of the candidate experience to go beyond the Day One until the permanent job contract comes into force.

The following suggestion for further research is to additionally involve the rejected applicants and candidates in the measurement of the candidate experience. In author's own opinion, there may have been some bias in the completed research on the candidate experience because the research was limited to the hired employees' experiences only. F-Secure could make a survey orientated to the rejected applicants and candidates and review their insights, experiences and development suggestions for the recruitment and selection process improvement.

Another type of the recruitment and selection process development research could be done in F-Secure. It could be based on interviewing F-Secure's HR personnel about separate steps of the recruitment and selection process in more detail. The goal of the research could be finding improvement suggestions for the recruitment and selection techniques being used. This type of research, in author's opinion, should be conducted by a specialist in the field.

5.4 Methodological review of the research

This section explains how the research tools were used in the research and evaluates their effectiveness, validity and reliability. The communication between the research tools and theory are also reviewed.

5.4.1 Company workshop and e-mail data

The company workshop data was collected based on the theories studied on the recruitment and selection and the steps of it. The theory base helped to understand what kind of questions needed to be asked from F-Secure to get an overview of their recruitment and selection process. The e-mail exchange with the Recruitment Partners A & B was also used to gather the background information about their services and the co-operation with F-Secure with the help of the studied theories.

5.4.2 Validity and reliability of the Focus Group results

Both survey questionnaire and discussion guide for the Focus Group were compiled based on the studied data and the recruitment and selection processes that are in use at F-Secure. For example, both survey and group discussion followed a certain structure. It always started with the application stage and ended with the Day One stage. Moreover, in both research tools an international angle on some questions was used.

The use of both quantitative and qualitative methods for the Focus Group research was, in author's opinion, successful. The success can be seen in the way results spoke to each other (see sections 5.1.2 and 5.2.2). The survey data provided a more statistical side to the results. The group discussion pictured the survey results in a more qualitative way by explaining what was good and what needed improvement. Though the survey questionnaire was more orientated to the past experiences and the group discussion – to the future perspective in scope of improvements, the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods proved its worth. Moreover, the high survey responsiveness rate and the respondent enthusiasm to participate in the group discussion proved effectiveness and respondent initiative. However, the author must make a critical observation of the combination of the two methods for the Focus Group. Theory (section 3.1) suggested that the survey should have been followed by a higher amount of group discussions. By applying the latter angle, the Focus Group findings could have been more conclusive and reliable.

Moreover, a question of consideration should be raised for the most obvious research limitation which has been mentioned in section 5.3 – the Focus Group consisted of recruited candidates only, whereas all the rejected candidates and applicants were not taken into account. Considering such facts, the research results might have been distorted by the respondent bias. The respondent bias could be the result of the fact that the researched sample was recruited by F-Secure.

5.4.3 Recruitment Partners A & B interviews data

The interview framework for Recruitment Partners A & B followed the structure of the recruitment and selection process at F-Secure, as well as benefited from theory on recruitment and selection, candidate experience, and recruitment service providers. The international angle in interviews was used as well.

The use of the structured interviews for RPA and RPB proved the results to be more reliable and valid. In need the meanings of questions were orally explained to the interviewee to make sure that the answers were of the quality that the researcher was looking for.

5.5 F-Secure's comments and feedback

“Aurelija Viluckyte has done a Bachelor's thesis of the topic F-Secure's international talent acquisition process for F-Secure Oyj during the time November 2011 – July 2012.

The international talent acquisition topic was in her own interest area and fitted nicely also to the F-Secure's need to clarify how foreign people see the recruitment process in F-Secure and what we can learn to develop our partnership with couple of our recruitment agencies. F-Secure set a very challenging goal for her to look at the topic from different perspectives. We wanted to get the information about our recruitment agencies, interview our foreign employees that have been recruited in past two years during 2010-2012 and also make some deeper discussions with a selected focus group. Aurelija was very motivated about the topic, and made an excellent project plan how to approach the topic.

After agreeing the practicalities, she took the initiative and booked the interviews herself proactively, made survey question drafts and also interviewed people responsible for the recruitment process in F-Secure. She was flexible and willing to change the questions according to company's needs. She really listened to the company's wishes and needs and took those needs to be part of her Bachelor's thesis. She also kept a

presentation about the results to F-Secure's HR team and we had very fruitful discussion about the suggested development ideas. During the thesis process, Aurelija was very proactive and structured, but flexible. It was nice to cooperate with her during the project. She really made this challenging project to happen by being persistent, and she did what she promised.

Thesis results gave a very good overview about F-Secure's recruitment process, and, more significantly, important ideas and perspectives how to further develop it both from the foreign employees and recruitment agencies point of view.

We wish Aurelija good luck in her future, and we really hope she has learnt a lot and from different perspectives from recruitment area and build some networks for the future. F-Secure has received valuable information and development ideas to look into the future.”

Helsinki, 30th August 2012

Tiina Mehto, HR Manager, F-Secure Oyj

5.6 Personal learning

Writing thesis and participating in a project that aims to improve a certain company's practices has indeed taught me a lot and improved many of my skills. Because of the nature of the thesis long process, I had an opportunity to follow and evaluate my own project management skills. Thesis project was a real challenge to me due to the complexity of the research methods used.

What's more, I have read a lot of and a variety of books and articles for my theoretical framework study. The literature has taught me a lot of new things and perspectives in talent acquisition and the way it affects the company's success and strategy. I found that there are so many steps and perspectives to take into account when conducting the talent acquisition process from the beginning to the end. I also had an excellent opportunity to study the recruitment service providers, - another interesting topic which was not discussed much during my specialization studies.

I have also got to perform tasks that I have not experienced before during my studies. Such examples include conducting the group discussion and thesis results presentation to a department of the company (F-Secure). During the thesis writing process I met many recruitment and HR professionals thanks to the research scope. Such experience clarified a lot of questions and also made me even more interested in the recruitment and HR field.

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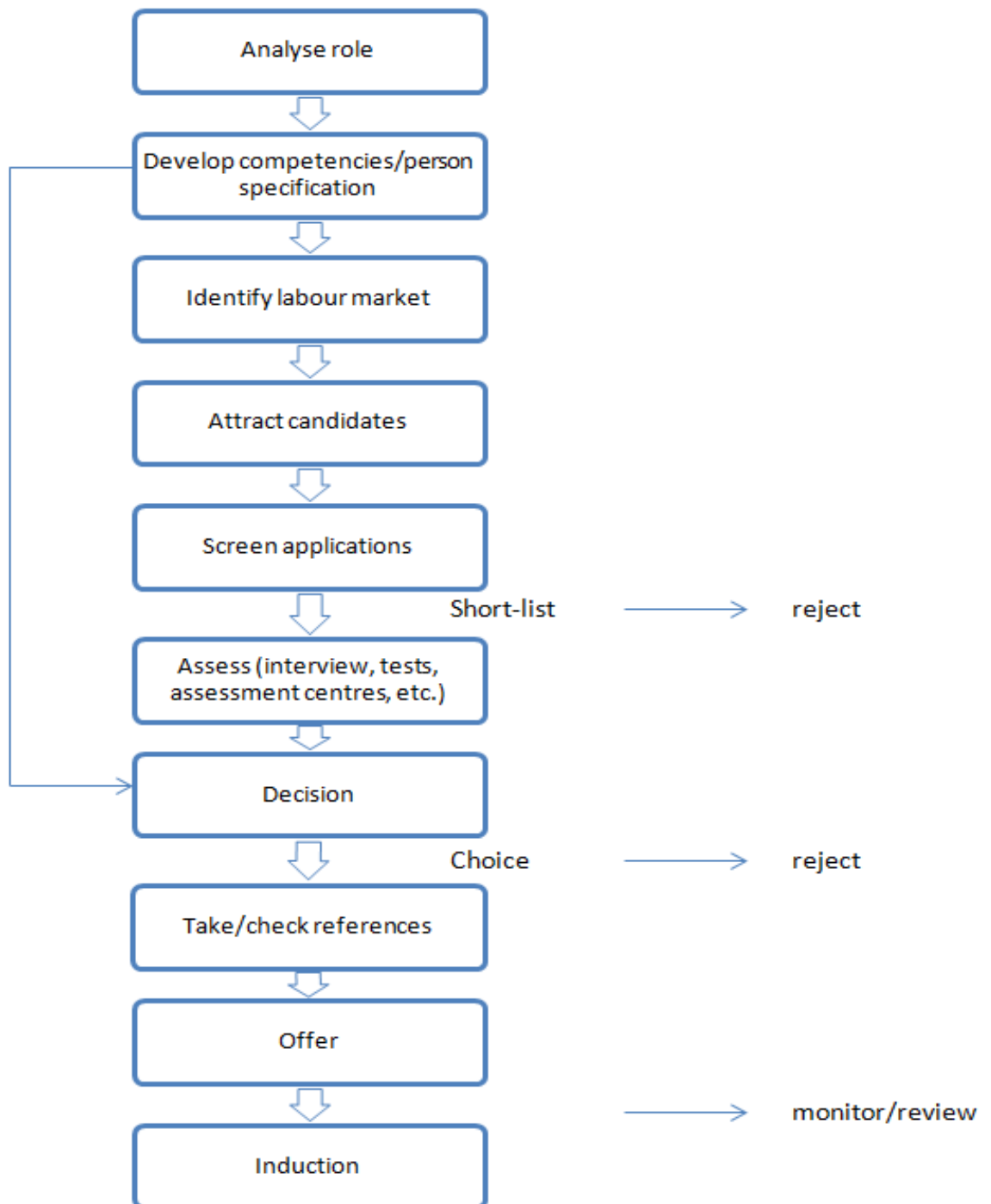
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Attachments

Attachment 1. Overlay matrix

Investigative Questions (IQs)	Theoretical Framework	Measurement Tools & Questions	Results
1) F-Secure's current recruitment process analysis in selected stages	2.1, 2.3, 2.4, 2.6, 2.7	Company workshops 1 & 2	4.1
2) How F-Secure's selected re-cruitment process stages were experienced by the recently employed international employees?	2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6, 2.7	Survey: B.6, B.7, B.8, C.11, C.12, C.13, C.14, C.15, C.16, C.18 Group Discussion: 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9,	4.2, 5.1
3) What can be developed considering the co-operation with re-cruitment agencies 1 & 2?	2.1, 2.5	Partner interviews: C.1, C.2, C.3	4.3, 5.1, 5.2
4) What development ideas can be given to F-Secure?	2.2	Survey: C.9, C.10, C.15, C.18 Group Discussion: 4, 5, 7, 8, 10 Partner interviews: A.3, C.1, C.2, C.3	5.2

Attachment 2. Recruitment and selection process flowchart



Attachment 3. Recruitment methods

(Compiled based on: Pilbeam 2010, 165; Cascio 2011, 242-243, 246; Roberts 2005, 91-95; Beardwell 2010, 170-171; Beardwell 2001, 238-240.)

Methods	Tools
Own corporate website	-advertisement on a website -open applications received
Internal recruitment	-staff notice board -intranet/ extranet
Press advertising	-local, regional and national newspapers -professional and trade journals, other publications
Internet recruitment	-commercial job boards -government job boards -through Social Media websites -through recruitment blogs -CV banks -direct mails -notice boards
Advertising in	-television and radio -vacancy boards – internal and external -leaflets, posters and recruitment caravans
Recruitment service providers	-employment agencies -recruitment consultants -head-hunters -careers service
Educational institutions	-direct access to schools and colleges -university milkround -notice boards
Public relations	
Professional organizations & labour unions	
Fairs & events	-recruitment fairs -open days -careers conventions -events
Networking	-formal and informal personal contacts -word of mouth -employee referrals

Attachment 4. Survey questions for the Focus Group

A. Demographics

1. Country of origin*
2. Gender: *
 - Male
 - Female
3. Age groups: *
 - 18 – 25
 - 26 – 30
 - 31 – 35
 - 36 – 40
 - 41 – 45
 - 46 – 55
 - 56 – 65
4. How many years of previous work experience did you have before joining F-Secure? *
 - 0 – 2 years
 - 3 – 5 years
 - 6 – 10 years
 - 11 – 15 years
 - 16 – 25 years
 - Over 25 years
5. How long have you worked for F-Secure? *
 - 0 – 6 months
 - 7 – 12 months
 - 13 – 18 months
 - 19 – 24 months
 - Over 24 months

B. Finding your job. Please, select suitable options in each question.

6. You were recruited.. *
 - directly by F-Secure
 - via a recruitment agent
 - By other means, what? (open space)

7. You were recruited.. *

- from abroad
- within Finland

8. How did you learn about the job position?

You can tick more than 1 option.*

- F-Secure website
- Monster.fi / Monster.com or another local Monster website
- Joberate.com
- LinkedIn professional network
- Twitter
- Facebook
- Career event
- Employee referral
- Networking
- via Head-hunter
- via Recruitment agent (job advertisement)
- Newspaper or magazine advertisement
- Other channel, what? (open space)

9. Do you think that Social Media websites are a good place to advertise job positions? Please, comment your choice. *

- Yes (why?) (open space)
- No (why?) (open space)

10. Have you used Social Media websites to look for jobs? *

- Yes
- No (why?) (open space)

C. Experiences of the recruitment and selection process.

11. Which of these elements was part of your recruitment interview(s)? You can tick more than 1 option. *

- Interview by Line/Hiring manager
- Interview by Agent
- Interview by the HR department representative
- Team interview
- OPQ (Occupational Personality Questionnaire)
- Suitability Assessment
- Phone interview
- Skype interview
- Homework
- Other (what?) (open space)

12. Please, choose the suitable option for you depending on each statement below. *

Statement:	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
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1. My first impression about F-Secure was positive.

2. Job advertisement described the open job well.

3. The interviews were organized professionally.

4. The interviewers acted professionally.

5. During the recruitment and selection process I was informed regularly about my status.

6. I had a possibility to call and ask questions during the recruitment process.

13. (Go to question Nr. 16 if you were recruited within Finland) For those recruited from abroad: were you provided the relocation services? (e.g. house hunting help) (non-mandatory question)

- Yes
- No

14. If the relocation services were provided to you during the recruitment and selection process, please choose the suitable option for each statement about the relocation services agency. (non-mandatory question)

Statement:	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
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The relocation services agency acted professionally.

The relocation services agency responded quickly to my questions and con-

cerns.

The relocation services agency provided me with good assistance.

The co-operation with the relocation services agency was smooth.

15. Did the relocation services meet your expectations? (non-mandatory question)

- What was good? (open space)
- What was missing? (open space)

16. Please, choose the suitable option for each statement about the 1st day of the induction. *

Statement:	Strongly disagree	Moderately disagree	Moderately agree	Strongly agree
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1. The 1st day was organized well.

2. The information received on the 1st day was relevant for me.

3. The amount of the information received in the first day was optimal.

4. I was introduced to the main colleagues that I was supposed to work with.

5. I felt welcomed warmly to F-Secure after the 1st day by my manager, colleagues and the HR.

6. IT tools needed for the job worked properly since the 1st day.

17. How satisfied are you in your current position? *

- Highly dissatisfied
- Moderately dissatisfied
- Moderately satisfied
- Highly satisfied

18. Please, give an overall feedback of the recruitment process. *

(Possibly comment on such happenings as surprises, challenges, motivators)

19. Would you recommend working for F-Secure to your friends or previous colleagues outside of Finland? Please, comment on your choice. *

- Yes (why?) (open space)
- No (why?) (open space)

After the survey data is collected, we will organize a group discussion to grasp a deeper understanding of the topic. If you would like us to invite you to the group discussion, please, leave your name or e-mail below in the open space. The names will be used solely for the discussion member selection purposes.

- Name: (open space)
- E-mail: (open space)

*- mandatory question

Attachment 5. Discussion guide for the Focus Group

Focus on the future

Theme 1 - Application stage

1. What attracted you to apply to the position in F-Secure?
2. What do you think about F-Secure's job advertisements in general?
3. What do you think about Social Media websites as a channel for job advertising in the future?

Theme 2 - Interviewing and selection stage

4. Those recruited or interviewed by the agent, how would you improve the agent's interviewing arrangements?
5. Those recruited by F-Secure directly, how would you improve the arrangements of the interviewing in F-Secure?

Theme 3 - Pre-engagement stage and relocation services

6. For those recruited from abroad, what were your feelings when you arrived to Finland? (in terms of a job position and the overall satisfaction)
7. How F-Secure or relocation services agency could support foreigners better in the future during the recruitment process?

Theme 4 - Day One stage

8. Describe a well-organized and inspirational 1st day induction as a group.
9. "What I wish I knew when I started?"

Theme 5 - Recruitment and selection process:

10. How would you develop F-Secure's recruitment and selection process?
11. Please, share your ideas on how to attract more foreign talent to F-Secure? (Finland's office)

A. Candidate search

1. How do you find candidates?
 - a. Do you use your candidate database?
 - b. Do you literally do headhunting within your networks?
2. What kind of marketing channels do you use to search candidates?
3. What are the new ways of recruitment or trends that could be used in the future?

B. Understanding client's needs

1. How do you make sure that you understand your client's business and their environment needs?
2. How do you make sure that you understand the position specific needs? How carefully do you study the job descriptions of the client?
3. How do you get to know the company culture and values of the client?
4. How much client's values & culture have an effect on your decision about which candidate should be recommended?

C. Cooperation process with the client

1. What are the most critical points/processes in the recruitment coordination with a client?
2. How could the delivery time be shortened or developed? (in terms of the recruitment process)
3. Cooperation development with F-Secure:
 - 3.1 What works well in cooperation with F-Secure?
 - 3.2 What could F-Secure do differently so that you could provide the service faster & better? (expectations)
 - 3.3 What could you do differently for F-Secure to improve the service success? (possible new offers)
 - 3.4 How do you ensure positive applicant experience in your recruitment process?

D. Foreign recruitment aspects

1. In case of foreign recruitment, do you test candidate's proficiency in languages before sending candidate recommendations to the client?
2. Do you pay attention to some specific information about foreigners? (work permits, visas, legalities, anything else?)
3. What kind of challenges are there when recruiting foreigners vs. locals?

Any current projects with F-Secure?

Free comments: