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Recruitment Process Development

Improving the recruitment process at StaffPoint

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Recruitment is an important function for all organisations. The current demographic and market trends as well as future expectations favour the use of more flexible and cost-effective forms of labour. Temporary recruitment agencies provide outsourced recruitment and temporary workforce as a service when needed, providing both flexibility and cost-efficiency for organisations that prefer to avoid retaining workforce themselves.

Competition for temporary recruitment agencies is intensifying and continuous improvement is necessary to compete. This research studies possible improvements to the existing recruitment process of the temporary recruitment agency market leader StaffPoint. A secondary aim for the research is to suggest improvements that would develop the recruitment process at StaffPoint into an industry benchmark process.

Soft Systems Methodology is utilised in the research to model an ideal version of the existing recruitment process at StaffPoint and compare the ideal process to the existing real world process, therefore allowing the consideration of viable and feasible improvement suggestions for StaffPoint.

The study finds that modelling the recruitment process in SSM yields greater understanding of the modelled process. Further considerations suggest improved use of technology to increase efficiency of many tasks in the process, especially conducting virtual interviews and automating the everyday temporary work service better. Furthermore thoughtful implementation of the improvements is called for to ensure high quality operations for StaffPoint.

The suggested improvements and acquired understanding convey that StaffPoint already has a good quality recruitment process which could nevertheless be improved further to enforce the position of a market leader. Furthermore the discovered potential for improvements suggests how setting further practices for continuous improvement would benefit StaffPoint now and in the future.

Keywords	optimal recruitment process, organisation, temporary work, recruitment agency, SSM, StaffPoint

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Rekrytointi on tärkeä osa-alue kaikille organisaatioille. Tämänhetkinen yhteiskuntarakenne ja markkinasuuntaukset sekä tulevaisuuden odotukset puoltavat joustavia ja kustannustehokkaita työn muotoja. Vuokra- ja rekrytointiyritykset tarjoavat rekrytoinnin ulkoistamista sekä vuokratövoimaa palveluna asiakkaalle tarpeen mukaan, tarjoten joustavuutta ja kustannustehokkuutta organisaatioille, jotka haluavat välttää oman työvoiman pitämistä.

Vuokratyö- ja rekrytointiyrityksien kilpailu on kiihtymässä ja jatkuva kehittyminen on välttämätöntä kilpailussa. Tämä tutkimus tutkii kehitysmahdollisuuksia vuokratyö- ja rekrytointiyritysten markkinajohtaja StaffPointin olemassaolevaan rekrytointiprosessiin. Toissijainen tavoite tutkimuksessa on ehdottaa parannuksia, jotka voisivat kehittää StaffPointin rekrytointiprosessista alan esikuvan ja vertailukohdan.

Soft Systems Methodology (SSM) –metodologiaa hyödynnetään tutkimuksessa olemassaolevan StaffPointin rekrytointiprosessin ideaaliversion mallintamiseen ja vertaamiseen olemassaolevaan prosessiin mahdollistaen käytännöllisten ja realististen kehitysehdotuksien muodostamiseen StaffPointia varten.

Tutkimuksessa huomataan kuinka rekrytointiprosessin mallintaminen SSM:ssä mahdollistaa koko mallinnetun prosessin paremman ymmärtämisen. Tutkimus myös ehdottaa teknologian käyttöä monen prosessin osan tehostamiseksi, erityisesti virtuaalihaastattelujen käymiseksi ja jokapäiväisen vuokratyöpalvelun automatisoinniksi. Lisäksi ehdotusten tarkasti harkittua käyttöönottoa painotetaan korkean laadun varmistamiseksi StaffPointilla.

Kehitysehdotukset ja saavutettu ymmärrys mahdollistavat johtopäätöksen, että StaffPointilla on jo valmiiksi hyvälaatuinen rekrytointiprosessi, mitä olisi silti mahdollista kehittää pidemmälle markkinajohtajan aseman varmistamiseksi. Lisäksi havaitut kehitysmahdollisuudet johtavat ehdotukseen suunnitella ja asettaa käytäntöjä jatkuvaa kehittämistä varten StaffPointin hyödyksi nyt ja tulevaisuudessa.

Avainsanat	optimaalinen rekrytointiprosessi, organisaatio, vuokratyö, rekrytointiyritys, SSM, StaffPoint

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Terminology

benchmark	a good example, something to compare against
optimal	as good quality as possible
synergy	advantages from combining aspects
systems thinking	considering a single system within set boundaries
process development	improving a process or aspects of it
temporary work	rental work agreed on shift-by-shift
temporary recruitment agency	an intermediary renting temporary employees or recruiting as requested for client organisation(s)
SSM	Soft Systems Methodology
SSM / Rich picture	visual representation of all aspects of a situation, problem or system
SSM / Root definition	comprehensive definition of a system
SSM / PQR	what (P), how (Q) and why (R) of a root definition
SSM / CATWOE	customers (C), actors (A), transformation (T), worldview (W), owner (O) and environmental constraints (E) of a root definition
SSM / conceptual model	model to understand the steps, influences and controls of a system relevant to situation
Efficacy	provable required quality delivery
Efficiency	minimising costs (time / money)
Effectiveness	contribution to organisation in the long-term

1   Introduction

Every organisation engages in recruitment in order to grow or change and as the demands on organisations in tough economic situation require flexibility, adaptability and cutting costs it is temporary recruitment agencies that are perfectly poised to provide those aspects. Temporary agencies have been increasing their temporary work business in contrast to the traditional forms of work while recruitment outsourcing is already an everyday occurrence across industries. Against this backdrop the temporary recruitment agencies are under pressure to continuously improve and compete better in the intensifying market for workforce.

The current temporary recruitment agencies have formed to cater to the needs of their clients and as such function well in their chosen industries and services. However to go forward and improve even further, a benchmark is needed for their core of services i.e. recruitment. The market leaders both internationally and nationally already have set practices and processes that provide their clients with services in a timely manner. However the future market leaders are the ones that look forward and keep improving especially their core processes.

This research concentrates on structuring the ideal recruitment process of a temporary recruitment agency as a system and comparing it to an existing market leader agency StaffPoint's recruitment process to areas of improvement to transform the process of a market leader into a true benchmark process; Soft Systems Methodology provides the tools for this and indicates how ways to improve the processes include using technology to automate and standardise as well as to ease communication and screening to provide a more efficient and better quality service.

2   Literary review

The research in this thesis is a crossing point of three areas of knowledge that are already closely related, i.e. recruitment, temporary recruitment agencies and soft systems in process development. Recruitment is the first area of knowledge to consider for this thesis. It is a broad subject as every organisation has to consider and execute recruitment at any point the organisation changes or grows. Human resources and re-

cruitment can be considered managing and understanding people as well as their motivation and actions. Recruitment especially has close ties to all other areas of HR as it either results in actions and management in other HR areas or is the result of others. Recruitment could also be described as a way for the organisation to change to meet the needs of the operations. The recruitment and HR area of knowledge is very diverse with different management, motivational and psychology theories involved. Furthermore because of the importance of this area it can be considered surprising that according to the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD, 2011, p8) in 2011 only 54% of the surveyed organisations in the UK had a formal resourcing strategy in place.

Jackson *et al* (2010, p1) claim that HR professionals in industries spend the majority of their time in activities connected with different aspects of staffing, e.g. recruiting and developing employees for the organisation. According to them (Jackson *et al*, 2010, p2) the two most noteworthy factors influencing recruitment and selection in UK and further were demographic change and a change in the flexibility of working patterns now and in the future.

As the demography of many European countries and the U.S.A. changes it is also imperative for organisations to change as the workforce changes; it has been found that the amount of female and foreign workforce has been increasing while the average age of the population is also increasing. As there are different groups of workforce and potential workforce it is therefore reasonable to consider that recruitment also requires varying strategy and methodologies to attract and retain the best candidates from the different groups. (Jackson *et al*, 2010, p2-4)

In addition to demographic changes it is important to note the change in the flexibility required from work and employment and therefore also recruitment. Companies have less money to spend on employees and according to CIPD (2011, p21-23) companies across the UK have been cutting back on recruiting activities and more companies especially in the public sector are reducing their recruitment budget compared to the previous year, mostly because of financial difficulties. Furthermore the findings for the current situation and the near future by CIPD (2011, p34) indicate there is an extensive lack of skilled workforce to fill while companies are required to act more flexibly and adapt to changing situations by utilising part-time workforce and outsourcing recruitment or even the work required to minimise costs and maintain adaptability.

These developments of recruitment are echoed in both Finland experiencing a rise in temporary workers (Statistics Finland, 2011) and expected global trends (Sullivan, 2012). In difficult financial and talent management situations it is temporary recruitment agencies that offer the possibility for organisations to both adapt and cut costs.

Temporary agencies and temporary work is the second area of knowledge this thesis touches upon. Already Martinez explains in his book from 1976 *The Human Market-place* how temporary work has been around since the ancient Greek markets to current day New York where labourers come together in hopes of finding employment for the moment. (Martinez, 1976, p7-8) He also outlines how "middlemen" have been acting as intermediaries in the trade of employees throughout the history of developed cultures from Sumerian priests directing villagers to medieval peasants and later day slave trade all the way up to the current agents and agencies connecting clients and employees as temporary workers. (Martinez, 1976)

Present day temporary recruitment agencies function globally and nationally, developing best practices and shaping the recruitment industry as they function (PKS, 2013; de Poel, 2011). Temporary agencies have been a much discussed topic in recruitment for a few years as even though unemployment is rising and the markets are in recession temporary agencies have been profitable, even growing during financial problems. (Statistics Finland, 2011) This has also been expressed by market leaders such as de Poel (2012) in the UK. Furthermore Beygelman (2007) discusses the popularity of the term Recruitment Process Outsourcing (RPO), i.e. outsourcing all or parts of recruitment to external agents, and found it a much discussed topic as organisations consider RPO to cut costs. Additionally he refers to the work of temporary agencies as "recruitment as service" which reflects the intermediary role of temporary agencies quite well.

Due to the rise in demand for temporary recruitment agencies there are many companies doing business on the Finnish markets across different industries. Some of the largest recruitment intermediaries in Finland include for example companies such as Barona, StudentWork, StaffPoint, OP-Team, Adecco and Manpower (Finnguide, 2013). The companies function on all industries in Finland and offer large amounts of workforce or recruitment services to varying client companies; e.g. during the year 2011 StaffPoint alone delivered 2 800 worker-years' worth of employment and currently has

15 000 employees in their network and a turnover of 120 million € (StaffPoint, 2012); with these figures StaffPoint is the Finnish market leader temporary agency.

The sheer size of the market for temporary work in Finland alone requires the companies to continuously adapt and improve; high competition demands active improvement and the complex intermediary role of the agencies results in the highest quality organisations succeeding (Johnson *et al*, 2011, p111). Therefore also organisations, practices and processes are continuously improved. This improvement ties the agencies in with the third area of knowledge in the thesis, process development and soft systems.

The third area of knowledge relating to the research in this thesis is process development and especially soft systems in connection to problem solving. Palmberg (2010) and Eckhardt *et al* (2010) offer contemporary views on process development discussing the potential of organisational structures centred on process management and the benefits of process standardisation. However in relation to this research the process development is considered on the level of a recruitment system. This type of consideration permits formulation of the system as a root definition and conceptual model, both tools of Soft Systems Methodology (SSM). By structuring and defining a recruitment process as a system and utilising the idea of an ideal process or system it is possible to understand the system better in order to improve the existing process.

Considering further SSM and its uses in relation to recruitment and this research, SSM has been used before in myriad HR and recruitment problems and situations, e.g. to find out competence requirements for recruitment needs (Brocklesby, 1995). The creators of the methodology, Peter Checkland and his colleagues at the Lancaster University, designed SSM through their action-research over continuous 30 years of research. (LUMS, 2013; Checkland, 1999) SSM is considered a highly valued methodology for any complex situation or problem requiring structuring of soft and hard factors to better understand the situation and find a way forward (Dick, 2002; Stanislaus, 2009). Checkland (1999, pA7-A8) himself has stated that SSM does not create models of the real world but models of relevant systems to compare to the real world, all in order to solve problems through discovering feasible actions.

SSM is not an obvious first choice for process development as process development is often referred to as a structural organisational issue (Palmberg, 2010). Nevertheless the modelling of SSM used in this thesis is an attempt to better understand the recruit-

ment process as a system through the inspection of a relevant system and therefore find aspects of improvement in the current process of a market leader. Furthermore all the methodology in SSM is aimed at finding feasible changes to the current way of doing things, a way to go forward. (Checkland, 1999, pA29) On the basis of this thinking it is reasonable to consider SSM a situational viable methodology for process improvement as it connects well with the complex nature of HR and recruitment as well as the often complex and messy intermediary role of temporary recruitment agencies.

These three fields of knowledge, recruitment, temporary recruiting agencies and development intersect for this thesis and the aim of the research in this thesis is to create new knowledge at the intersection of these fields. This new knowledge is created by improving the existing recruitment process of a market leader organisation and therefore adding to the existing knowledge. It could be argued that a top temporary agency organisation and their process is already a benchmark for the competing organisations and the whole industry. However organisations have to go through continuous improvement in the form of a learning cycle to avoid being left behind in competition by the innovators of the industry (Johnson *et al*, 2011, p111); therefore there is value in developing further benchmarks and improving even for the industry leader.

3   Industry and the recruitment process

3.1   Recruitment, temporary agencies and StaffPoint

According to CIPD (2012) "Recruitment is the process of having the right person, in the right place, at the right time." This is an extremely concise way of describing the whole process of recognising recruitment need, advertising for the position, gathering and processing applications, testing the applicants, making the decision on which candidate to recruit and retain the recruited employee. Recruitment could be described as filling a void in the organisation, to acquire skills or talents lacking in the organisation or at its simplest finding an extra pair of hands to execute the required work.

Every organisation has to recruit when they grow. The recruitment could be internal to find a performer for a certain task or it could be external to find new members to the organisation. Therefore recruitment can be considered an industry that connects to all other industries. However recruitment cannot be considered a pure industry as it is a function supporting the operations in all organisations regardless of the industry. Nev-

ertheless in recruitment there are many organisations concentrating purely on the recruitment industry; these organisations include for example head hunters or talent scouts, temporary or recruiting agencies and talent managers.

This thesis concentrates on temporary recruiting agencies and their recruitment process. Temporary agencies act as an intermediary for other organisations across industries. A client organisation that has recognised the need to recruit is able to outsource the rest of the recruiting process to an agency and therefore save both time and resources of the organisation. An agency has the experts and skills in place to effectively attract, screen and provide employees through existing channels and at a possibly lower cost than an organisation concentrating on their core business. The other function of a temporary agency is providing employees to other organisations from their own workforce or employee pool; in this instance the employee is employed by the agency and is on loan to the client organisation. This type of work on loan from an agency is temporary work for a client. A temporary worker agrees on individual shifts with the customers or the agency and therefore the client is able to adapt to changing situations and requirements of business without retaining a large workforce themselves or to rapidly acquire skilled extra workforce as situation demands. (MoEE, 2009)

Temporary work has been increasing lately on the Western markets as the financial situation of many organisations is precarious due to the declining markets. According to CIPD (2011, p23) temporary work has been a good way for many organisations to cut costs and avoid retaining workforce themselves; instead it is cost-effective to hire temporary workers when the situation demands extra workforce. In Finland and EU the temporary working industry is well regulated (EIRO, 2008)

An example temporary agency is StaffPoint, functioning nationally in Finland. StaffPoint is a good example of a temporary agency as it functions across a wide range of industries to provide employees and recruits for a multitude of clients. Logistics, office work, industrial and manufacturing, hotel/restaurant/catering, store work, ICT and calling centre are all industries StaffPoint functions in (StaffPoint, 2013). According to StaffPoint (2013) they provide both skilled temporary personnel as well as recruit the best employees for their clients as recruitment service. This gives them great access and insight to all the aforementioned industries. Furthermore StaffPoint has an extensive pool of employees in their network which they can employ at various clients in the industries; even if the leading organisations in the industry change there will nevertheless

remain the need for skilled workforce. During the year 2013 StaffPoint is merging with another recruitment agency HR House to form a new instance of StaffPoint; the new StaffPoint will be a leading agency on their field in Finland (StaffPoint, 2012).

The aim of this thesis is to develop a theoretical benchmark recruitment process for a temporary agency and the current process at the industry leader StaffPoint is a good basis on which to further develop a benchmark. In the next section the steps in a generic recruitment process will be outlined in order to better understand the development of the process and afterwards the specific process of StaffPoint is developed with SSM to develop that benchmark process.

3.2 Recruitment process

Various sources (CIPD, 2012; Roberts, 1997, p.3-17; Jackson *et al*, 2010, p15) suggest distinct stages for a generic recruitment process. In most cases the outlined stages are logical steps in the chain from recognising the need for recruitment and leading up to successful integration of a new employee to the recruiting organisation. Even though the steps vary in both nature and execution from organisation to organisation, it is possible to identify generic stages that all recruitment goes through. Nevertheless the different stages are not necessarily conscious steps for the recruiting organisation as they might be completed intuitively in less structured recruitment.

In Figure 1 there is reproduced a chart by Roberts (1997, p5) which illustrates the logical chain nature of a recruitment process. This provides an initial overview of the whole process as the stages in the chart correspond well to the generic stages listed in the following sections.
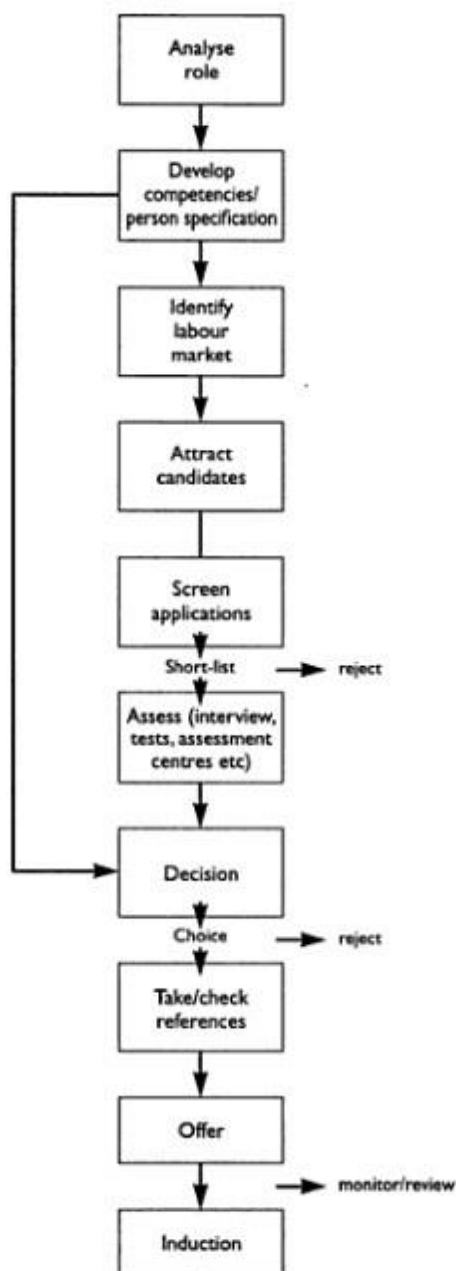
Figure 1. Selection process flow-chart (Roberts, 1997, p5)

3.2.1 Position analysis

The first stage in any recruitment process is Need recognition. There are a multitude of reasons for recruitment need such as the need for expertise and knowledge or purely the need for an extra pair of hands to execute the work required in the organisation. The reason or need for recruitment results in the starting stage of the recruitment process and it is also the input for the next stage in the recruiting process. (Jackson *et al*, 2010, p15)

The second stage of the recruitment process is Analysis of the need. In this stage the organisation has to recognise the specific requirements of the position and need(s) the recruitment are based on as recruiting a fashion store manager has very different requirements from recruiting a temporary warehouse worker. These requirements have to be weighed with the needs of the organisation in mind as well as the current organisation and personnel situation. There are cases when contemplation on this stage results in a shift of the recruitment process as the position could possibly be resourced internally with existing personnel; this could not be recognised without contemplating the specific requirements and the current personnel situation and results in so called internal recruiting (businessdictionary.com (2013a). It also has to be taken into account how internal recruitment results in a void left behind by the internally recruited and this void has to often be filled by further recruitment. Furthermore to these considerations the financial situation e.g. budgets and forecasts of the organisation have to be taken into account when resourcing for the recruitment and future employment. Roberts (1997, p65) notes the importance of recruitment role and competence analysis as the basis for the whole recruitment process. (Jackson *et al*, 2010, p16-19)

3.2.2 Sourcing candidates

The third stage is consideration of recruitment responsibility and channels. The choice of medium and person or organisation responsible for recruitment depends greatly on the budget, time and organisation available for the recruitment. In a large corporation there is often a division for recruitment and staffing which is able to handle recruitment internally to the organisation. This is taken in contrast with smaller companies where a personnel manager might manage the whole recruitment process alone. A third option is to outsource recruitment to a temporary agency which is the mode of recruitment in focus for the thesis. (Roberts, 1997, p121-136)

When an internal manager or division holds responsibility of the recruitment it is also evident that the control of the process and choices remain inside the organisation. Therefore the responsible parties are able to utilise their knowledge of the organisation in their recruitment choices and in the whole process. Furthermore there is the high and often unrecognised advantage of grapevine recruitment i.e. recruiting a person familiar to someone in the organisation. Grapevine is a very effective way of recognising possible applicants for a position as an existing employee might have knowledge of a person fulfilling the requirements of the open position and owning interest for the position; this can be beneficial as there is already knowledge of the applicant in the organisation and the costs of recruitment are lower; there is no need for costly advertising if the applicant is informed of the position through an acquaintance.

Nevertheless it has to be taken into consideration that recruitment can also be costly and time-consuming, especially if there are no parties in the organisation dedicated to recruitment. In these instances organisations are able to outsource to recruiting and temporary agencies or individual consultants. This type of outsourcing can be highly beneficial to the organisation as a recruitment agent already has the familiarity of the industry and actors in the industry as well as high competence in all parts of the recruitment. A recruiting agency might have the professionals and practices in place to manage the recruitment with lower costs and more efficiently than the organisation itself. It is also possible to outsource only a part of the recruitment process and retain the rest internally. This could include outsourcing applicant scouting and initial interviews while engaging the applicants in a second interview at the organisation as well as managing the last stages and choices of the process internally. Nevertheless a very important note for outsourcing recruitment is that the external agent has to have enough knowledge and familiarity with the organisation to be able to make the right choices and benefit the organisation better by finding the right person for the position. (Beygelman, 2007)(Roberts, 1997, p36-37)

A complementary decision to the responsibility is the fourth stage, to decide how to advertise the open position to possible applicants (Sullivan, 2010). Choices vary from electronic mediums (internet, websites and recruiting portals) as an important channel as well as local and regional papers, radio, recruitment and other events, even television. The decisions on recruitment responsibility and channels are most often taken in

conjunction as there might be existing practices or natural choices to these depending on the organisation. Nevertheless they are separate stages in the recruitment process.

3.2.3 Advertising and screening

Fifth stage of recruitment is all about strategic communication and is effective if designed the recipient in mind. Roberts (1997, p121) calls this stage "Attracting applicants". The Job advertisement is a document and a communication from the organisation or recruiting agent to the possible applicants, potential clients and the public alike. For the possible applicants the advertisement should be both informative and inviting. A well designed advertisement will attract the most suitable applicants to apply for the position as well as target the message well enough that applicants unattractive to the organisation or incapable of meeting the requirements of the position do not uselessly apply. (Comaford, 2012) This saves time and bother from both the applicants and the recruiters who go through the applications and make the shortlist decisions; this is much more efficient if the advertisement itself communicates the requirements clearly and avoids unnecessary work. Furthermore a possible applicant would seek the basic and as realistic as possible information included in an advertisement: location and length of the work in question, possible benefits and information about their possible future employer. Career decisions are a major part of any employee's life and information both helps decision making and portrays a better image of the organisation.

Additionally at this stage it is very important to also note the possible legislation concerning recruitment and temporary work. In Finland the national employment offices are required to post any legal job advertisements on their website to be promoted to potential candidates looking for work; this opens up further sourcing channels for the recruiter as the employment office displays the informed positions to increase employment as per their agenda (Laki julkisesta työvoima- ja yrityspalvelusta 2012, 3(2)).

When considering potential clients the job advertisement is an advertisement for the organisation. It is a public document often placed in multiple mediums. Advertisements are also noteworthy items for organisations seeking business partnerships or looking for service providers. As other organisations take note of a well-designed advertisement that is also informative about the organisation itself, it is an advertisement of the whole organisation. (Sullivan, 2010) The same thinking applies to the advertisement as a message to the public. Many kinds of people keep an eye out for job advertisements;

this might include people looking to be employed in a new organisation, already working or unemployed, competing organisations or the public in general. A good advertisement and the possible agent between help create an image of the organisation in the minds of anyone receiving the message. Therefore it is only good sense for an organisation or the agent to design the messages carefully.

After the message of a Job advertisement is delivered, the next and sixth stage is Interviewee selection. This includes both going through the received applications, shortlisting the potential candidates and inviting the most promising for an interview. When a job advertisement is posted the position is considered open for a stated period. As a period is stated it is prudent to wait until the stated period is over to make a decision, otherwise the recruiter risks missing out on a potential good candidate if their application would be sent close to the end of the period. In case there are large amounts of applications or the recruitment is considered an on-going process it is of course possible to go through the applications as they come in. However in that case it would be prudent to still retain from making a decision until all the applications have been gone through to find the best candidate(s). (Jackson *et al*, 2010, p25-27)

Shortlist selection is a difficult task at best and often requires recruitment experience and position knowledge to shortlist the best candidates on the basis of short application documents. An application typically consists of a cover letter and a CV. The cover letter is a document to justify candidate superiority for the position and the CV is the evidence for this justification; notes of the noteworthy experiences, education and skills of the candidate. Another style of application is a form designed by the recruiter and according to Koskinen (2013) is commonly employed by recruiting and temporary agencies, StaffPoint as an example. It provides a recruiter the means to compare applications based on specific sections in the forms, therefore increasing efficiency and clarity in the process of shortlisting. Regardless of the method this is the stage of recruitment that requires the most manual work from the recruiter as the applications, sometimes a large quantity, have to be analysed and considered. (Roberts, 1997, p137-160)

3.2.4   Interviewing

After the applications and applicants have been shortlisted, it is a matter of communicating or agreeing to the applicants a time and place for the next stage, interviews. In setting an interview time the candidates often appreciate recruiter goodwill in finding a

suitable time as the candidates might also be otherwise engaged for a good part of any week.

The interviews form the seventh stage of a recruiting process. Interviews can be in many forms, according to Roberts (1997, p185) interviews can either be structured or unstructured or a mix of both, depending on both the preference of the recruiter and often demands of the position. For example a manual labour position could require a more structured interview to find out the skill level and formal qualifications to fulfil the requirements of the position whereas the interview for sales agent could be unstructured to gauge the candidate's ability to handle stress and engage customers while promoting and closing deals. However for the recruiter the main point in any interview is to find out how suitable the candidate is for the position in question. According to Sullivan (2010) an interview is a two-sided sales situation as the recruiter is attempting to sell the organisation and position to the candidate while the candidate offers himself for the position at a specific price and attempts to find out as much as he is able to about the position and organisation. (Jackson *et al*, 2010, p27-31)

After the completion of interviews comes the eight stage of further candidate testing. This stage is optional in the recruitment process depending on if the recruiter has already acquired enough information on the candidates. Nevertheless depending on the position further testing might be crucial in discovering candidate's actual suitability for the position as an initial interview might not gauge actual skills required in the position well enough. Roberts (1997, p161-162) outlines how further testing, including a simulation, psychological testing or a secondary interview, is important and reveals further information to aid in making the final recruitment decision. (Jackson *et al*, 2010, 32)

3.2.5   Selection

The most evident stage of a recruitment process is the ninth stage, final recruitment decision or which candidate to actually hire for the position if any. Roberts (1997, p9) notes recruiters have to be careful in this stage as the decision to be taken should be to choose the best candidate for the position, not the candidate most preferred by the interviewer; all in order to avoid subjectivity. However Lup & Yakubovich (2006, p2) state it is natural to gather to the organisation personnel that are similar to existing personnel to avoid upsetting the existing organisational culture. On the other hand diversity to the culture would instead improve the existing culture (Judge & Robbins, 2010,

p151). Therefore the style of decision has to be made consciously or unconsciously to follow one or a mix of these lines of thinking when deciding on the candidate to recruit.

Making the decision is completed by signing a contract with the chosen candidate. Signing the contract is a gateway in the recruitment process as from there on the candidate transforms into an employee. One step that is often ignored in making the recruitment decision is to inform the candidates that were not chosen of the decision; this is done as it is yet another strategic communication retaining goodwill with the other candidates for possible future recruitment processes and improving the public image of the company. Often this informing is done after the contract has been signed with the chosen candidate. (Jackson *et al*, 2010, p36-37)

3.2.6 Induction

Often the recruitment process is considered as completed after the contract has been signed; however there are further two stages to consider according to Jackson *et al* (2010, p37-39) and Sullivan (2010): Employee orientation and retaining.

As a new employees enter the company they have to familiarise themselves with the position, tasks and existing organisation; this is an important step and according to Jackson *et al* (2010, p37) should also be considered part of the recruitment process. It is a stage to make sure the employee is able to be effective in the new position as soon as possible as well as to acquire the knowledge they need and want to fulfil the position; which effectively ties in with recruiting him for the position and is therefore part of the same process.

Furthermore a properly executed orientation ensures the employee is able to integrate well into the organisation (Jackson *et al*, 2010, p37). An integrated employee is more probable to remain working for the company in the future; it is important not only to find new people to fill positions but also to retain the people working in their positions already to avoid further need for recruitment. According to Sullivan (2010) the impression of retaining employees should be kept in mind throughout the whole recruitment process; it is an iterative step, not just the last stage of the recruitment process.

Depending on the recruiting organisation, the open position, the responsible recruiter and the recruitment process could look very different from organisation to organisation

and time to time. However the main components are often the same. In the following section a specific recruitment process of a temporary agency is outlined as the basis for process development in conjunction with SSM tools to develop a benchmark recruitment process for temporary agencies.

4   Developing a benchmark recruitment process

4.1   The recruitment process of a temporary agency

When developing a benchmark process it is important to base the development on a good example of an existing process. For the aims of this thesis the recruitment process at the Finnish temporary agency industry leader StaffPoint is used as the basis for further development.

Figure 2. StaffPoint Recruitment Process (Koskinen, 2013)

As demonstrated in Figure 2 the recruitment process of StaffPoint is a logical chain of actions from the request to recruit until the recruitment follow-up. At StaffPoint the recruitment process and practices have to cover many different industries and situations. Currently the organisation has an established general recruitment process that begins with a request to recruit. According to Koskinen (2013) the need usually arises from a

client filling out a request form or verbally giving the same information to StaffPoint. In the form the client has to outline the open position and their own analysis of the requirements, which are taken as the boundaries for the recruitment process. When receiving the request the recruiter that assumes responsibility of that process also agrees on a timetable for reporting to the customer and phases of the recruitment.

First act when a StaffPoint recruiter looks for a candidate is to check the employee network or CV-bank that the company has on file. Finding a candidate in the network or CV-bank removes the need to advertise or screen many candidates and is therefore extremely efficient. If there are no suitable candidates already on file, the recruiter designs and publishes a position advertisement on the StaffPoint website as well as other chosen media such as the Finnish employment office webpage and StaffPoint's Facebook profile. (Koskinen, 2013)

An important task during the application period is answering inquiries and screening incoming applications. Appointed StaffPoint recruiters answer questions about the position and the process on the phone and through email as well as go through the applications as they come in to discover potential candidates, therefore acquiring also an idea of the current status of that recruitment process and identifying possible further measures to source candidates. Decision on which candidates to interview is made on the basis of fulfilling the qualifications for the position and the recruiter's impression of candidate's suitability for the position. The chosen candidates are then invited to attend a face-to-face interview at the StaffPoint offices. The interviews are usually one-on-one meetings at a closed space to give an impression of the freedom to conduct confidential negotiations. Sometimes it is not possible to meet face-to-face and a phone interview is arranged at a set time to replace a physical meeting. (Koskinen, 2013)

After the interviews the recruiter reports the current status of the process to the client. This reporting is concurrent with deciding on candidates to present to the client as well as running background checks on the candidates' references. Candidates that are chosen to continue to secondary interviews or testing are then invited to attend either an interview with the client or a chosen capability test at StaffPoint, online or at the client. Often the secondary testing ends with the client and possibly the recruiter agreeing on the choice of which candidate to employ. Afterwards it is the recruiter's responsibility to inform the declined applicants of the decision and thank them for their participation in

the process, so as to ensure that they are not disappointed in the process and could possibly be interested in a future process or position advertised by StaffPoint.

After the main portion of the recruitment has ended at the recruitment decision the recruiter either follows-up the recruited employees induction him- or herself or hands the induction off to other StaffPoint personnel responsible of arranging work shifts for the recruited employees or to personnel responsible for the client or industry in question. Nevertheless the induction and situation of the new employee is followed up on after two months of employment have passed. This gives the recruiters a measure of the performance of the recruitment and service by StaffPoint as by then the employee is either performing well or has realised otherwise his compatibility with the position. Furthermore at that point the recruiter and StaffPoint in general are able to serve the client even better by suggesting changes or presenting evidence of profitability of service.

The recruitment process at StaffPoint is already a good example of a holistic recruitment process as it takes into account all of the generic recruitment process stages and has formed them into set practices to ensure smooth operations. Some of the stages are defined differently to the generic stages; however their base idea is the same. The following section will introduce the tools in SSM that will allow for further inspection and development of this process to develop it as an even better industry benchmark.

4.2   Soft Systems Methodology

SSM or Soft Systems Methodology is a versatile methodology to structure complex situations for improvement and feasible actions. Different tools and parts in the methodology are utilised to better understand and improve upon a problem, situation or system. SSM takes into account all the different factors affecting a situation and structures them in an understandable way through relevant systems or the idea of an ideal system; it provides a holistic view and perceptions that can be used to outline tangible actions as steps to improve from the current situation. (Dick, 2002; Stanislaus, 2009)

SSM was developed as an action-research methodology by Peter Checkland and colleagues at Lancaster University to understand soft and complex problems better in order to attempt solving them (LUMS, 2013) A recruitment process is a good fit with this thinking as it is a major process where a multitude of things have to be taken into account and individual actual steps in the process are important enough to have impact

in the whole process. SSM allows for the comparison of an ideal relevant system and the real world to discover actions and points of improvement; therefore the author considers SSM a good methodology in this research to structure and improve the current recruitment process.

SSM includes many tools and steps to help the researcher to understand a system and the system's structure as well as compare it to the real world to realise desirable and feasible changes (Checkland, 1999, pA29). Often referred (Dick, 2002; Stanislaus, 2009) SSM tools include for example rich picture, root definition, conceptual model and finally comparison for change. As a concise explanation a rich picture is a visual representation of all the issues regarding a situation and is better at conveying messy situations than a written description (Checkland, 1999, pA16-A17); however for the aims of process development the other SSM tools are more useful than a rich picture.

According to Checkland (1999, p167) the root definition recommends systemic thinking; it describes the system relevant to the problem including all aspects of the situation or simply puts into words the comprehensive definition of the relevant system. When drawing up a root definition the first step is to define **P**, **Q** and **R** in the relevant system, namely what is done (**P**), how is this done in broad terms (**Q**) and why it should be done (**R**). The **PQR** is accompanied by identifying the **CATWOE** criteria of the system or the customers of the system (**C**), actors carrying out activities (**A**), transformation or what the system does (**T**), worldview perspective to make sense of the system (**W**), owners of the system (**O**) and the environmental constraints on the operation in the system (**E**). Furthermore to these definitions the system is usually guided by certain information or knowledge which is defined under "**guided by**…".

All the aforementioned definitions come together to form a possible root definition as follows: A system to do **P** for the **C**, by **Q**, **guided by** …, in order to achieve **R**. The system is owned by **O** and staffed or operated by **A**, within the constraints of **E**. It is needed because **W**. (derived from Checkland, 1999, pA22-A23)

A root definition gives a comprehensive definition of a system, however to understand and develop a system or process further the next tool of SSM, a conceptual model, is required. A conceptual model is derived from the root definition, however in addition to the root definition information it is a model to display the operational steps as well as

the controls and monitoring of those steps as well as the efficacy, efficiency and effectiveness of the whole system. (Checkland, 1999, p169-173)

The next and essential step in SSM is to utilise the root definition and the conceptual model as comparisons to the real world and see what is missing or could be done better. This can be achieved by both a discussion amongst parties utilising the methodology or comparing the steps in the conceptual model to the real world with the following four questions crystallised from the outline by Checkland (1999, p177-179):

- Does the activity take place?
- How well is the activity carried out?
- What changes need to be made?
- Are the changes viable and feasible?

Completing the steps from root definition to the real world comparison is a structured way to go from the basic definition of the process and develop it further for an ideal benchmark process that temporary agencies could strive for. In the following section the core recruitment process of a temporary recruitment agency is considered through the root definition and conceptual model as well as finally the comparison to the existing process at StaffPoint to recognise feasible changes to improve the existing and develop a possible better benchmark process for temporary agencies.

4.3 Process improvement

4.3.1 Root definition

On businessdictionary.com (2013b) there is a clear and concise explanation of a recruitment process:

> The process of finding and hiring the best-qualified candidate (from within or outside of an organization) for a job opening, in a timely and cost effective manner. The recruitment process includes analyzing the requirements of a job, attracting employees to that job, screening and selecting applicants, hiring, and integrating the new employee to the organization.

This concise description offers a good comparison to the root definition in SSM and below can be found the formulated root definition of a core recruitment process based on the functioning of temporary agencies in general and the recruitment process of

StaffPoint (Koskinen, 2013). According to the formulation (see Appendix 1) a recruitment process is

> A system to recruit new employee(s) for the client organisation, by using available manpower, channels and suitable steps, guided by wishes of the client, requirements of the position, recruiter's subjective experience, agency practices and legislation, in order to fill an open position with a suitable employee. The system is owned by the recruitment agency and staffed or operated by recruiters, within the constraints of recruiter time, capabilities and availability of the candidates as well as compensation guidelines. It is needed because there needs to be an employee in the open position for the organisation to do business or grow.

As a definition this is very comprehensive description of the core or root of the recruitment process as a system and as such more detailed and structured than the description offered on businessdictionary.com (2013b). Furthermore this root definition functions as the first step to developing the specifics of a benchmark recruitment process.

4.3.2   Conceptual model and task improvement comparison

The next step after completing the root definition is the structuring of the conceptual model. The conceptual model includes all separate actions involved in the whole process mapped out and limited by the monitoring and control functions as well as the definitions for efficiency, efficacy and effectiveness. For the completed conceptual model, please refer to Appendix 2.

The final step in the development is to compare this structured model of an ideal system and compare it to the real world e.g. the current recruitment process of StaffPoint to find out biggest differences between the two and what would be the feasible actions that could bring the current process closer to the ideal benchmark process of the conceptual model.

The following is a table (Table 1) comparing tasks in their current and ideal form as well as the difference between the two. Four steps were chosen from the activity steps of the conceptual model (see appendix 2); steps that are important to the process, can be inspected for the current status and possible improvement as well as in author's judgement include the most potential for improvement. The tasks in the table are tasks singled out from the ideal recruitment process and judged on the current situation and possible changes of the selected tasks in the recruitment process of StaffPoint. Explanations and improvement suggestions for each comparison can also be found below.

Table 1. Process task improvement table

process task	is it done?	how (well) is it done?	what could be changed?	are the changes viable/feasible?
1. Analyse need & position	yes	standardised recruitment request form	automating request forms electronically & tie-in advertisements	yes, note variety of industries and quality control
7. Screen applications	yes	applications considered individually	applicants should be considered for effectiveness of process	hard to implement because of communication
9. Interview	yes	face-to-face or phone interviews	increasing virtual conferencing and global communication	yes, easy access to tools, however depending on industry
18. Follow-up employee performance	yes	inquiry after two months of working	automated feedback channels and standardised measuring	yes, however depending on type of recruitment

The first task that could be improved is the analysis of the recruitment need and analysis of the position that the recruitment process is for. At the moment at StaffPoint the recruitment request is documented in a standardised form across all industries and this form is then used as the basis for the whole process. Either the client sends the completed form to the agency to engage services or then agency personnel query the relevant information from the client on the phone or otherwise. (Koskinen, 2013) This handling of forms requires manual work from sales or recruiting personnel; this simple process could be improved further with automating communication.

A system to electronically offer and receive the recruitment request would help clients to access and utilise the form while reducing the manual work required. Furthermore this system could offer clients tailored forms depending on their industry as well as tie-in with the advertisement and recruitment management system to allow automated generation of an advertisement for set channels. This type of communication development via technology would make this task more efficient as well as allow the personnel concentrate on the actual recruitment. Nevertheless this type of system would still require screening and confirmation of the generated advertisements before publishing and therefore it would not be a fully automated system. Furthermore the variety of industries and many types of forms in the system could be confusing for the client and great care as well as experience of each industry would have to be utilised to ensure each form was relevant, useful for the sake of the recruitment and informative enough for the client.

A second improvement suggestion that stems from the comparison is about the screening of applications. At the moment at StaffPoint each application is considered for that specific recruitment process and at times the recruiter is able to transfer or copy the application to another recruitment process if he/she judges the application suitable for the other process and has enough knowledge of the other recruitment to judge the suitability of the application. (Koskinen, 2013) However this is inefficient and sometimes good applicants are not considered for recruitments they might not have applied for varying reasons e.g. the recruitment was not open at the time or the applicant had not noticed the recruitment in question. Therefore it could be more efficient and reasonable to transfer from screening applications to screening applicants.

If each applicant would be considered as a potential candidate for all possible recruitments this would increase the possibility of filling the position with the most suitable candidate as possible. This type of change is viable but nevertheless only maybe feasible as it could be hard to implement because of the communication and knowledge requirements. To judge a candidate for all open positions this would require either the communication of the applicant to people with knowledge of all open positions or a recruiter or a recruitment system that had knowledge of all recruitments and could consider the candidate holistically. The communication needs in this instance would be hard to implement as at any given time there are possibly hundreds of recruitments open and it is not physically possible to know all the recruitments well enough to screen an applicant.

The third task considered for improvement is interviewing applicants. StaffPoint has currently set practices for inviting applicants for either face-to-face interviews at the StaffPoint office or engage them in phone interviews. Rarely interviews are also conducted through an online video conference in Skype, a web call and video conference software (Koskinen, 2013). Often in recruiting the recruiter needs a reserved space for the interview, a time suitable for both the candidate and the recruiter as well as for them both to be present at the place for the interview i.e. the StaffPoint offices in this case. Technology and communication tools available for everyone are making contacting others electronically easier and communication in general more global. Therefore interviewing could also be considered made easier across distances with ICT tools.

Video conferencing and different messaging mediums are eliminating the need to meet physically at a set place and therefore making it easier to arrange a meeting virtually

than at the offices. This improvement is very viable and definitely feasible for a recruitment agency to consider, however depending on the industry and the recruitment the applicants might not be knowledgeable enough or culturally open enough yet to consider a virtual interview instead of a physical meeting. Therefore this type of change would have to be implemented carefully and possibly an option to have the physical meeting would have to be retained to also source candidates regardless of their technological prowess.

The fourth step that holds potential for further improvement is the last activity step of following-up the recruited employee's performance and therefore also the performance of the recruitment. StaffPoint has a practice in place that the recruited employees are contacted two months into their work at StaffPoint or StaffPoint clients (Koskinen, 2013). This is a good practice to find out how the employee has fared, however this inquiry and judgement is done subjectively by the recruiter or booking staff and therefore has only superficial benefits. This feedback from the employees and customers about the performance could very well be automated and processed to monitor the effectiveness of the whole recruitment. Furthermore this follow-up step would then tie-in with the monitoring of the whole recruitment process. This would also ensure any control measures are effective to improve the process further. However a temporary employee working for StaffPoint on a shift-by-shift basis is very different from a recruitment request from a client to find a suitable candidate for a full-time position, therefore the considerations and standardised measurements would have to be different depending on the type of recruitment.

Ilona Eichhorn (2011) discusses in her thesis developing measurements for HR House, a temporary recruitment company later merged with StaffPoint, and she concluded that any standardised measurements would need to be considered per industry as well as across industries to compare the performance of recruitment in the different industries as well as holistically (Eichhorn, 2011, p43-44). Furthermore she states (Eichhorn, 2011, p46) that any measurements would need to be continuously monitored and designed to give information the organisation needs most to improve. This further emphasises the consideration of the efficiency, efficacy and effectiveness criteria in the conceptual model (see Appendix 2) of a recruitment system i.e. how the process supports long-term recruitment business and operations while screening and delivering the most suitable applicants in the least time spent.

The improvements outlined in these four steps are all viable and all at least somewhat feasible. In the essence of SSM these improvements are possible actions to bring the existing system closer to an ideal system, a benchmark process. StaffPoint as a market leader already has a well-structured recruitment process which could be improved further if some or all of these actions would be implemented. In that case the recruitment process at StaffPoint could be a good benchmark for all temporary recruitment agencies in Finland and even abroad. In the following sections the process development in SSM, benchmarking and this specific process are critically considered.

4.4   Inspecting the process

Benchmarking is essentially comparing the existing with a better quality example (Johnson *et al*, 2011, p96). Process development and ideal systems are both ways to try and reach this best of a kind comparison for the benefit of improving their existing process and operations. It could be argued that benchmarking promotes organisational development and learning as the organisation as an entity learns how and what to improve. (Judge & Robbins, 2010, p151)

The outlined improvements in the previous section are all attempts to improve the existing process and they all would ideally improve the efficiency and performance of the organisation in their own way. Most of the actions involve automating, standardising or virtualising actions to save money, time and effort of personnel and applicants. Furthermore screening applicants instead of applications would result in finding more suitable candidates to the open positions and therefore delivering better quality service. All of this can be seen as a primarily good thing.

However also most of the suggestions have caveats in them as the tasks would still need to be supervised by a person or they would require otherwise conscious change and contribution to ensure the improvements would function as intended and avoid creating problems. Problems could in these actions stem from half-hearted changes making things even more complicated and therefore increasing the workload of personnel or they could stem from executing a purely standardised solution to a diverse field of different industries. In order to act on these suggestions and bring about actual improvement these changes should be considered further and implemented responsibly and separately. That would be the way to create lasting change and add value to the process and organisation.

Furthermore the improvement suggestions have to be considered on their practicality. It might be that not all of the changes are feasible to execute at the moment considering the on-going merger of StaffPoint (2012). Some of the suggestions are suitable to be implemented slowly over time as not to disrupt operations while others might be easier to implement as soon as possible to avoid prolonged disruption to operations. However when weighing the capability for improvement and the benefit possibilities against the considerations of feasibility and required investment to the changes it is arguably a better choice to invest some time and money currently to save larger amounts of money and effort in the future, even possibly make more money for the organisation through increased quality.

Considering even further changes and benchmarking for the organisation in the future it could be beneficial to investigate the possibility of setting practices for improvement as well as organisational learning and development. HR Development or HRD will be an even more important issue in the future as according to Sullivan (2012, 2013), Statistics Finland (2011) and CIPD (2011, p6,24,34) talent management will be an even larger issue because talented employees will be in even higher demand and experts will be sourced globally and even straight from the competition. Furthermore the trends indicate (Sullivan, 2012; CIPD, 2012, p34-35) that the relationship of employers and employees will continue to change towards flexibility as both individuals and companies want to adapt more readily to changing situations and value talent more highly. This situation promotes temporary and recruiting agencies as their services will be in even higher demand than before and the competition will continue to intensify.

4.5   Process development experiences in SSM

SSM is the choice of method in this research to better understand and improve the recruitment process. Constructing the root definition (see Appendix 1), conceptual model (see Appendix 2) and the improvement table (see p20) has given insight on the whole recruitment process as well as how the system could ideally work. SSM was meant by Checkland (1999, pA29) to be used as a tool for understanding and finding viable and feasible actions to go forward. In the case of comparing the existing recruitment process at StaffPoint and the ideal process structured with SSM tools the method gave good indications and insight to the author of possible tasks that could be im-

proved upon. The experience of using SSM for this research was a positive one and it is definitely a purposeful methodology for structuring and modelling systems.

However the methodology in SSM is primarily meant for complex problems and situations and finding understanding for the participants. In that sense the insight and suggestions acquired with the methodology are subjective insights of the author that became evident in the course of the research. Therefore SSM is not a generally suitable methodology for process development. However in this instance it was situationally suitable and provided better understanding and insight of potential improvements, therefore it can be considered a suitable methodology in this research. Furthermore the improvements suggested are real and viable improvements and as such indicate a possible way for StaffPoint to improve and act as a benchmark for the industry.

5   Conclusions and recommendations

The temporary agency as a market is very competitive as there is more and more demand for outsourcing and flexibility in recruitment (French & Rumbles, 2010, p13)(Jackson *et al*, 2010, p5) In a competitive market it is important for the organisations to continuously improve (Johnson *et al*, 2011, p111). Inspecting the generic recruitment process and using the tools of SSM to create a structured representation of an ideal recruitment process and system gives great insight and understanding of the whole process, therefore the methodology in SSM is suitable to studying the aspects, steps and structure of the process. This insight allows for comparison between the recruitment process at StaffPoint and the ideal system created through SSM, therefore improving closer to a benchmark process for temporary recruiting agencies.

SSM proved to be a situational but good methodology for this type of research as it involves structuring the situation and increases understanding of the system in question. Furthermore the basic principle of the methodology is to find viable and feasible actions to go forward and closer to the ideal system in the real world which is also the basic principle of benchmarking.

In the research to get closer to a benchmark recruitment process all the improvements identified strongly implied that better use of technology to automate and standardise

would make existing tasks more effective and therefore decrease the workload of the personnel, allowing them to concentrate on more important aspects of recruitment. Furthermore interviews could be conducted electronically to save costs and time, which would be beneficial for both the recruiters and attractive to the applicants. Finally it became evident that a set practice for measuring and follow-up would be beneficial for the whole organisation as an organisation that measures the performance of recruitment well would also be able to improve the quality of service and therefore compete better and even increase business.

However it also became evident that it would be reasonable to execute improvements to the process with thought and care as functioning across multiple different industries as temporary recruiting agencies do can require more thought and tailoring from any changes than an organisation functioning on a single industry. Nevertheless as the benefits of the improvements outweigh the investments required, it is highly recommended for StaffPoint to strategically plan and put in place changes to the existing process to become an even better market leader.

Furthermore looking to the future it would be recommendable to plan and set strategy and practices for further organisational and process improvement as the trends imply that business in the future will require even greater flexibility and global communication in the field of recruitment as talent management and candidate sourcing will change from regional to global and the need for outside workforce in the existing Western societies increases. (Sullivan, 2013)(CIPD, 2011, p34-35)(Jackson *et al*, 2010, p2-5)(Bos, 2011)

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Temporary agency recruitment process root definition

The elements of a root definition (PQR, CATWOE, guided by…) defined on the basis of recruitment in general, functioning and operations of recruitment agencies and the recruitment process at StaffPoint (Koskinen, 2013).

P (what)	to recruit new employee(s)
Q (how)	by using available manpower, channels and suitable steps
R (why)	in order to fill an open position with a suitable employee
C (customers)	client organisation
A (actors)	recruiters
T (transformation)	need to recruit suitable employee => that need met
W (worldview)	needs to be an employee in the position for the organisation to do business or grow
O (owners)	recruitment agency
E (environmental constraints)	recruiter time, capabilities and availability of the candidates as well as compensation guidelines
guided by…	wishes of the client, requirements of the position, recruiter's subjective experience, agency practices and legislation

The root definition is as follows:
A system to do **P** for the **C**, by **Q**, **guided by** …, in order to achieve **R**. The system is owned by **O** and staffed or operated by **A**, within the constraints of **E**. It is needed because **W**. (derived from Checkland, 1999, pA22-A23)

Therefore the root definition of the ideal recruitment process is as follows:
A system to recruit new employee(s) for the client organisation, by using available manpower, channels and suitable steps, guided by wishes of the client, requirements of the position, recruiter's subjective experience, agency practices and legislation, in order to fill an open position with a suitable employee. The system is owned by the recruitment agency and staffed or operated by recruiters, within the constraints of recruiter time, capabilities and availability of the candidates as well as compensation guidelines. It is needed because there needs to be an employee in the open position for the organisation to do business or grow.

Temporary agency recruitment process conceptual model

Structured model of an ideal recruitment process on the basis of the root definition (see Appendix 1), generic recruitment stages (see p7-13) and the recruitment process of StaffPoint (Koskinen, 2013).

19. Appreciate wishes of the client, requirements of the position, recruiter's subjective experience, agency practices and legislation

1. Analyse need & position

2. Check database for candidates

3. Design advertisement

4. Publish advertisement

5. Answer inquiries

6. Gather applications

7. Screen applications

8. Invite for interview

9. Interview

10. Report situation to client

11. Screen for secondary testing

12. Interview at client or test capability of candidate

13. Make or request from client recruitment decision

14. Inform accepted candidate(s)

15. Inform not-accepted candidate(s)

16. Sign contract

17. Induct employee

18. Follow-up employee performance

20. Monitor activities

21. Take control action

22. Candidates screened and delivered with minimum time spent

23. Monitor system

24. Take control action

25. Contribution to long-term recruiting and temporary business

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