

Enhancing the talent pool: how internships can be used to successfully develop and retain talents.

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The title of your Thesis Enhancing the talent pool: how internships can be used to successfully develop and retain talents.	Number of pages 71 + 5
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<p>The objective of the study is to highlight the importance of the internship program in companies in general and at the sponsoring agency in particular and how it contributes to the process of attracting fresh young talents that can be molded to fit a possible future vacancy. Additionally, this study discusses the advantages and disadvantages of the internship program and managing the interns in an efficient way which adds value to both the company and the intern.</p> <p>The plan is to go through and follow the journey of the interns at agency, research their background, skills, knowledge, previous experiences and how they progress during the internship program which lasts from 3-6 months. Document and study their role in the project's success in addition to highlighting their weaknesses and failure and how they exploited the program to improve their future performances and eventually propose a solution and plan to enhance the program for the next group of interns.</p> <p>Different theories and approaches will be conducted and discussed in relevance to the internship and the agency strategy which can help form the idea of the current state and come up with the new enhancements and adjustments needed</p> <p>Theories, methodologies and practicalities are stated in order to give a clear picture on what will be the basis of the plan.</p>	
Key words Internship, Talents, Development, Intern, Management, Millennial	

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1 Introduction

My interest in conducting this study is based on my interest in demonstrating a change to a process to develop and enhance the talent pool which is the internship program at the sponsoring agency; research the advantages and disadvantages of the program; how it contributes to the success and people growth; attracting new talents; maintaining and managing the interns in a successful way which leads to either shaping them to their future job with full knowledge on the real life work experience or prepare them to suit an open vacancy at the sponsoring agency which is growing constantly. There are many success stories with interns being hired after a successful internship and failed with others taking into account many external and internal factors.

Many studies have been carried out highlighting the internship importance to any company or agency. Internship has mutual benefit in most cases to the intern and the employer, as both are beneficiaries in the end in the case of successful internship. However, this experiment might fail due to lack of process or having a weakly structured process where there might be an area of development. There is a fine line between the employer and the intern expectation from the internship. The outcome of the internship depends on how clear is the communication and the dedication of both parties towards the internship experiment.

Having that said, the agency role is crucial in the success of the program and maintaining talents. The time and financial investment of the employer has a pivotal impact on how efficient can the program be. An article by (Fix 2015) discussing LSV's strategy to attract interns supports my opinion of having to invest more time and money in order to gain a strong intern pool. Schwarts study shows that employers like internships because they provide risk-free-trial access to potential future employees, (Coco 2000, 41-45). However, the intern has an important role in driving the internship to success. Interns should foresee the benefit of the experiment, such as career path advancement; actual job preparedness; marketing, gaining business knowledge and contacts.

Many factors can contribute to the success or failure of the internship. Mandatory internship as a perquisite of studies curriculum, versus optional. Paid versus unpaid, the length of the internship and it being full time versus part time. Offering the opportunity to connect theory with practice, apply academic learning on actual business cases. Therefor the workplace aim should aim for quality versus quantity and take into account that the process of finding the right talents through the process might take time.

1.1 About The sponsoring agency

It is a digital marketing agency that was established in 2001 offering advanced marketing operations, campaign creation, social media management and more. The sponsoring agency started with only 5 employees but growth in people, size and being international was always on top of their agenda, below listed major changes in the agency's history:

- 2007 the agency grew to 50+ employees in Helsinki.
- 2011 the agency grew to 75+ employees in Helsinki and 100 globally.
- 2012-2013 overall turnover and headcount dropped significantly
- 2014 the agency began to turn around and 2015 it was back on a growth path.
- 2015-2016 really proved and continued the model

As a result, today the sponsoring agency has offices in 7 countries (Finland, Sweden, London, USA, Malaysia, Australia and Philippines) dealing with international high profile companies such as Microsoft, F-secure and EMC. The agency draws upon extensive experience in various industries including telecommunications, ICT, software, Internet, gaming, automotive, finance and consumer goods.

Its unique ability to combine strategic thinking and creativity with powerful technologies has resulted in a proven portfolio of value adding service offerings. It offers services on three different focus areas: Marketing, Digital Service Design and Marketing Technology

My interest in this topic specifically evolves from my confidence in being able to contribute by sharing my personal experience and following the progress of the internship program closely. The sponsoring agency started this program in 2011 and since that time has succeeded on many measures, attracting talent that has secured a long-term position and become part of the agency's development

On the other hand, there have been internships that have been objectively less successful for a variety of reasons: lack of support from the program, conflict between the intern interests and the internship actual tasks, the dedication and the demanding nature of the work, in addition to many other factors that will be explored and discussed later in the study.

The sponsoring agency has changed its structure since last year 2015 and is in constant growth. The number of employees has increased, the need for new employees have grown due

to the ongoing new sales activities and the demand for the agency services. New faces are one of its unique features encouraging diversity and constant support for new talents.

1.2 The sponsoring agency's Strategy and goals

The agency strategy is based on media and talent. It exploits its competencies to be concurrent with the client needs. It leads its employees by transparency; agility and inspiration rather than orders. The agency follows the ideation and execution business model.

The sponsoring agency focuses on the continuous digital operational model with the client. Our clients appreciate that we do not just plan and build the solutions — we stay in to operate, optimize and further develop them. (The sponsoring agency, 2016).

Marketo et al. 2016 digital marketing principles embodies the the agency path in following and keeping up with the digital marketing constant changes which can affect client relation maintenance; marketing; content creation and meeting the clients' requirements and expectations.



Figure 1: Digital Marketing Principles. (Marketo et al. 2016)

1.3 Research Problem, goals and objectives

This section is considered the base of the study and the resource of all the upcoming sections and discussions. The research problem has become an area of interest when The agency became clearly an attractive agency to many talented interns but at the same time has experienced lack of structured internship program which has been discussed within the management and is on the Q1 2016 agenda to discuss, analyze the gaps and invest in developing and enhancing the program for a better presence in the internship offering and attractive agencies map.

The other interlinked subject, which is complementary to the internship program and is a main element of the study research success, is the talent management and maintaining the talents after they are defined through a structured and predefined measurement which will be set to determine the qualified talents and help enhance the agency workforce and use the internship program as an essential resource for future talents.

The objective of the study is to observe and be involved in the progression process of the program and assist in the development of the different aspects in order to demonstrate a live case of program structure creation, which can contribute to the success of the talent management process, that is to be implemented in 2016.

The main research question is:

How to develop the internship program to be resource for future talents?

The sub questions are:

What are the standards of the program and on which bases the talents are chosen?

How is the Urho award winner defined? Based on which standards?

How to promote the program? And define the gaps to enhance its efficiency?

How to maintain the talents who secured an actual work in the agency?

Part of the objective also is to get the employees involved in the structure creation. The employees input and own experiences can definitely contribute in generating the needed improvements and set the prerequisites for the new process. Employees should be motivated to prove they are talents to preserve and worth rewarding and maintaining. The effort is mutual by both the employee and the employer. Recruitment and selection requires that organizations use various methods or techniques of selecting the right talent that reflects the culture and value of that particular organization (Armstrong, M., 2006)

1.4 Talent Management essentiality in Company's Business Strategy

Talent management existence in any working place is essential for the process of defining the true talents at the company or organization, the individuals who can be recognized by their skills and experiences, or have the potential according to the company standards and needs. Companies should invest in creating attractive opportunities and appealing working atmospheres for the future talents, such as investing in the company branding and representation; promoting interesting internship program; growth opportunities and talent maintenance.

To be more specific and answer the main question of the research “*How to develop the internship program to be resource for future talents?*” we should first review the existing process of the internship program from A to Z. The following table of an irresistible organization by (Bersin, J., 2014) demonstrates the essential elements of a suitable working environment for interns.

Table 1: The simply irresistible organization. (Bersin, J., 2014)

Meaningful Work	Great Management	Fantastic Environment	Growth Opportunity	Trust in Leadership
Autonomy	Agile Goal Setting (ie. OKR)	Flexible, humane work environment	Facilitated talent mobility	Mission and purpose
Selection to Fit	Coaching & feedback	Recognition rich culture	Career growth in many paths	Investment in people, trust
Small Teams	Leadership Development	Open flexible work spaces	Self and formal development	Transparency and communication
Time for Slack	Modernized Performance Mgt.	Inclusive, diverse culture	High impact learning culture	Inspiration

This table embodies many of the current existing approaches at the agency's strategy for interns and employees' growth, retaining and engagement paradigms.

To cope with the current technical global advancements and incremental business needs, the organizations should invest in their talent management process and maintaining the talent pool to be able to fulfill the constant need for talents. Many studies have been conducted emphasizing the importance of the talent management presence in the companies and organizations.

Talent management achievements can be accomplished depending on how the process is conducted. The first step after the process creation is targeting the right individuals that possess the potential in being future talents; have competence and are culturally fit within the company. “You can teach a turkey to climb a tree, but it is easier to hire a squirrel” (Hoogheimstra 1992, 17-45). Individuals who can be molded to fit the target opening and can easily adjust; contribute and add value to the job and eventually develop to be an asset.

There are advantages and disadvantages in the transparent communication with the talents. Communicating to true talents that on what they are considered could raise the confidence in the targeted talents group but could have a counterproductive result on the rest of the employees, it could raise uncertainty and may lead to other employees to quit thinking that they are less favored; therefore, the communication method should be considered in the strategy creation.

Employer branding is a key element to attract the right talent. The term is often used to describe how organisations market their offerings to potential and existing employees, communicate with them and maintain their loyalty “promoting both within and outside the firm, a clear view of what makes a firm different and desirable as an employer (Backhaus, K., & Tikoo, S. 2004, 120). The first step in order to attract the best people from the scarce resource pool of talents is that the organization must be as attractive and welcoming as possible (Pollitt 2004, 24-28).

Motivation is described by (Evenson, 2003, 21) as the strive to reach peak performance every day, to enjoy the continual challenge of improving results, to genuinely care about their peers and their company, and to maintain positive results. Maintaining the employee motivation will eventually help companies keep top talents in the company. This is an essential issue that should be considered in the process of maintaining and keeping the talents.

Motivation and development are essential factors in the employee engagement and maintaining the talents. Trusting the employees and boost their involvement in the company decision

making and strategy creation could have a definite impact on the level of the employees' engagement. In order to achieve high performance, flexibility in processes is important; to retain talent it is necessary to engage them in decision making and keep them motivated otherwise retention of talent is difficult (Martel, 2003).

The value of the talent could be high, and losing it could be very costly on the company therefore determining the talent value is a key point to the process of maintaining it, thus motivation could be the first step towards keeping the talent. It is the strive to reach peak performance every day, to enjoy the continual challenge of improving results, to genuinely care about their peers and their company, and to maintain positive results (Evenson, 2003, 21).

Talents contribute to the value of the company, especially when considering the available opportunities for talents to enhance their skills and be desirable talents to the companies. In global markets talent is considered an asset of the organization, failure of managers to successfully implement strategy damages the organizational reputation and effects business growth (Schuler et al., 2002, 41-70).

To clearly state the phases of the talent life cycle in the digital organization, the following figure by (Deloitte, 2014) illustrates the steps to create digital talent.

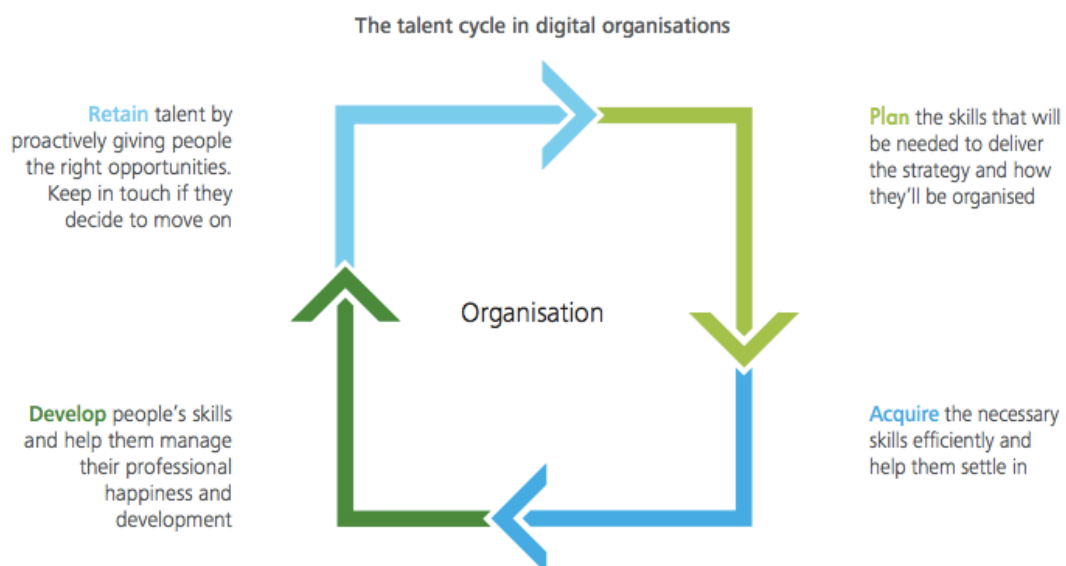


Figure 2: The talent cycle in digital organization. (Deloitte, 2014)

As organizations focus on building a structure to drive digital change, they must not forget their people. Indeed, they must create and execute a plan to grow a base of great digital talent (Deloitte, 2014).

Agency promotion strategy

Taking into account all the aspects discussed in section 2, such as culture, millennials, management theories and internship program formation prerequisites, the agency should firstly think of how strong its image presence among other competition. We are living now in a digitised world where the social media is considered as the core tool to approach people and target a certain group instantly. Thus, exploiting the media channels should be done through a solid strategy and speak the same language as the addressed audience.

The agency should bear in mind that the targeted customer or potential employee is approached from different other competitive agencies through different methods and means; therefore, building the sustainable relationship is one of steps that can secure a solid awareness of the agency brand and existence. According to a study by (Browne J., M., 2006) about advertising and the Internet, she points out that the Internet provides the consumer or the target group with information and details with no time restriction. The following table illustrates three agencies types:

Table 2. Overview of three most common agency types. (Browne J., M., 2006)

Boutique	Specialist	Full service
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tends to be smaller agency size 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialised services to a niche market / area of advertising 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide spectrum of basic advertising and non advertising services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common to have combined staff roles –eg. Creative writer / Art Director also fulfils Account Service role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Graphic design house • Direct marketing company • Telemarketing services • Advertising research • Media buying • Website design 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New product introduction plans • Market research • Creative and media services • Account management • Production • Financial services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creative product focused 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Like full service agencies focused on one communication area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tend to be larger in staffing size than boutique agencies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually little or no marketing or sales direction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Often work in conjunction with a client's full service agency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now evolving into a full service communication agency – by providing some specialist services in-house

The full service agency type definitely reflects communication responsibility, which mainly focuses on utilising its services for the client service and benefit.

For the agency to build a stable and reliant reputation, it should establish balanced and steady relationship with the client to reflect the success needed to build-up the desired successful image in the market. According to (Browne J., M., 2006) based on Verbeke's 1988 the relationship with the client is based on 4 phases; pre-relationship phase which focus on the start of the business relationship and introduction.

Development phase comes after, which mainly focuses on the business itself and the collaboration between the agency and the client, which eventually leads to maintenance phase where more successful business and work produced. The termination phase will happen at some point, when businesses are going apart and can be done with good terms or bad terms due to external or internal factors.

That being said, the phases mentioned earlier should help form the reputation of the agency in the market in addition to multiple other internal and external factors. Therefore, the intern should be able to build a preliminary idea of the agency state in the market in addition to investigating the culture aspects; employment strategy and management practices.

1.5 The Research outline/ conceptual framework

The study theory framework will highlight the concepts, literature and theory reviewed and the interlink between the data and information obtained in order to gain the answers for the research questions and how the qualitative and the quantitative questionnaire questions were specified and chosen to reach the goal of this case study.

In the following section interlinked topics will be discussed and covered that will help highlight the relation between the literature, the topics reviewed and the research questions.

Multicultural awareness in a work place creates a profound opportunity for people from different cultures to coexist, develop, learn and thrive to learn. Considering the 20+ nationalities at The sponsoring agency, cultural awareness helps the management to deal with interns from different background and how to promote the internship program to attract international talents.

Covering the millennial generation role in the workforce is substantial in understanding the target group and grasping their characteristics and goals helps the company to comprehend their needs and motivational aspects. Going through millennials habits, life style and understanding their aim from the internship will help in the process of the program enhancement process and reformation of the program strategy.

Understanding the management method conducted within the agency determines the working environment and affects how the employees act and behave under a certain management model. This topic is also linked to the cultural influence and social norms in certain regions and countries, legislations and rights of the employees. Understanding all these aspects will help form the idea of how to deal with the talents in an international working environment where many norms, backgrounds and mindsets come together.

It is definitely challenging for both sides to adjust and understand how things should move forward, but tailoring the management strategy by adapting different management method and according to the agency need comes from the awareness of the constantly developing ways, processes and procedures out there and try to adjust it according to the agency need.

Talent management is an important element of any human resource operational model. Its necessity is incremental especially with the current high demand of specialized talents in special fields. The global technological revolution has risen the bar of competition among the young talents and increased the challenge for the recruiting companies to attract the needed talents, maintain and win them as potential employees. Understanding the need of a talent manager in the agency development strategy will eventually help the agency plan the internship program and enhance it to be able to have a focused and more structured internship program. Knowing the agency need and characteristics of the needed talents prior to the internship announcement could save a lot of effort and time in the process of the interns filtering and determining the need of the agency.

Management theories will highlight the role of management in helping the interns succeed in their tasks or be the reason for their failure. Management can be the motivator for succession and the key for development. The management strategy and theories conducted are the base for the internship program enhancement and continuity.

Internship program formation should be based on certain prerequisites defined based on the company's strategy, motivation and goals. The internship program should be divided into phases, which illustrates the process of the internship starting from the induction until the off boarding. The program formation section will discuss the details of the details of the phases and the importance of each phase for the success of the program.

The following figure illustrates the framework connection to the literature review and topics researched.

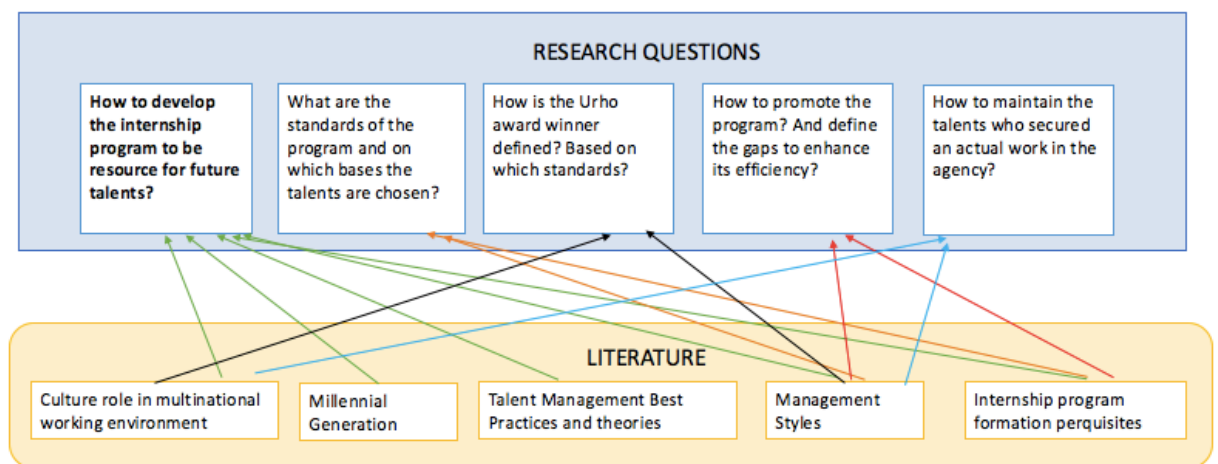


Figure 3: Conceptual framework illustration. (Saleem, N., 2016)

2 Literature Review

In this chapter the literature review I will discuss and focus on the best practices to enhance an internship program and the link between the program development and the talent management process. Literature review will help generate research ideas; organize the findings and develop a critical viewpoint. It will help generate new ideas, substantiate the suggested research and link the research question, proposed suggestions and solutions to support the outcome result and conclusion.

Many studies and researches have been carried out on talent management and how essential it is to maintain those talents to achieve the company or agency prosperity. Taking into account the internationalization and its role in multinational working environments. The increased internationalization, competition, and technological changes that have characterized the past decades, required organizations to become more adaptive to changing demands. One way to Employability culture ²³⁵ become more adaptive was to increase the workers' employability through the possession of broader skills, together with a willingness to change freely between tasks (Guest 1987, 503–521). The sponsoring agency being international with over 20 nationalities from all over the world is a perfect case where global talent management aspect should be considered and culture is definitely plays a key role in the success of the agency talent management. Therefore, organizations have to adapt global best practices of Talent management and at the same time adapt the local requirements and local labor market (Stahl et al., 2007, 34).

The interns target group is naturally students and fresh graduates who are looking for a real life work experience to help them set foot in the actual working life and gain knowledge from mentors. The interns can be classified as “Millennials” a generation, which was born between 80s up until mid 2000. They are ethnically and culturally diverse generation; expressive; goal oriented and technologically shaped. Millenials have great interest in education and are considered to have more colleague degrees than any other generation, which supports the previously stated claim of Millenials being the target of the internship program considering that schools and universities are believed to be the best pole and resource for future talents.

According to a study conducted by Schwarts R.C 2010 mentioning Verner 1993 ten benefits of internship:

1. A new learning environment. Different people acquire knowledge and skills in different ways. The practical settings that internships offer may be more effective learning environments than the traditional classroom; because, problem solving may necessitate exploration in a "real world" environment. An internship can provide the setting in which to apply theory gained in the classroom.
2. Realization of the meaning of professional commitment. Misconceptions often exist related to a career. Enjoyable and interesting parts of a job are sometimes amplified at the expense of less desirable tasks. A full-time internship places students in organizations where they are confronted daily with both the positive and negative sides of their career choices.
3. Assessment of skills and abilities by practitioners. Practicing professionals often have a more pragmatic perspective than college professors. As a result, practitioners' assessment of interns' strengths and weaknesses may provide additional insight into the interns' potential for that particular career.
4. "Experience" as a category on the resume. One of the most frustrating obstacles for entry-level professionals to overcome is lack of experience. Internships provide the opportunity to gain invaluable work experience and create another category on the resume.
5. Two-way screening process. Students can determine whether they feel suited for the career choice during the internship, and those with whom they work can evaluate interns' performances within the context of a real work environment. This is not to say that interns should expect to be hired by the host organization, although this happens occasionally. An evaluation of an intern's potential is more valuable when based on how the student performed on the job, rather than the evaluator's perception of how that student may function on the job. 25
6. New mentor/protégé relationships. New relationships develop as a result of contact with people encountered during the internship. These new relationships can help interns learn more about themselves, both professionally and personally. Through guidance, direction, and suggestion, mentors can help interns develop attitudes and behaviors necessary for success in their careers. Many insights about success can be made, when interns learn from the mistakes and successes of those who have preceded them.
7. Networking. Being on the inside of an organization allows interns to be part of the informal employee network. Students can learn of potential job openings and develop contacts and references for future career moves.
8. Springboard for a career. An internship is the intermediate step between being a student and being a full-time professional. Depending on what an intern makes of the opportunity, it can be either a springboard or a barrier to a valued career position.
9. Mirrored feedback and evaluation. Internships offer students a chance to discover whether theoretical ideas and textbook principles work in actual situations. The resulting successes and failures of the interns help establish a personal, critical assessment of how effective different strategies are in realistic environments.
10. Learning to handle crisis and critical decisions. In the real world, daily incidences are not always predictable, and some situations may occur in which interns have had no experience. The conditions of the moment may not allow for consultation with mentors or textbooks. Action and decision-making in such realistic situations can accelerate the maturation process. Professional growth and development become evident as interns move away from reacting as students and assume the posture of young professionals.

Employee engagement is associated with the organization culture; most often employee engagement has been defined as emotional and intellectual commitment to the organization (Baumruk 2004, 48-52; Richman 2006, 36-39; and Shaw 2005, 26-29). Employees engagement and dedication is usually linked to the organization healthy culture, which is established by

creating a solid relationship between the management and the employees. It has been argued that employee engagement is only meaningful if there is a more genuine sharing of responsibility between management and employees over issues of substance (Purcell et al 2003). The space given to the employees to express and participate the formation of the organization culture will give them the faith that they are part of the wider structure and a sense of having a sensible control over their work.

2.1 Culture role in multinational working environment

Companies and agencies are all internationalized. With the presence of technology many people from different backgrounds can communicate constantly which make the cultural awareness a prerequisite for the collaboration to succeed. Multinational work force exists in every work place now a day thus cultural differences are present and should be taken into account in the daily operation. One can recognize a strong desire to preserve diversity in response to the threat of loss of cultural identity in the face of globalization (Mason 2007, 583-591) cultural diversity remains apparent among learners, perhaps owing to deeply rooted cultural values and modes of thinking that are difficult to separate from learning processes (Nisbett, 2003), cultural awareness helps establish clear and effective communication within the work environment, it has been argued that employee engagement is only meaningful if there is a more genuine sharing of responsibility between management and employees over issues of substance (Purcell et al 2003), O’Riordan states that developing a culture in which career progression and development of staff is prioritized represents an important retention and motivation tool (O’Riordan 2004, 78).

Many cultural aspects should be taken into account in the daily communication and should blend at some point and not be a matter to think about but rather a habitual norm in the daily communication. Schein states that the unique talent of leaders is their ability to understand and work with culture; and that it is an ultimate act of leadership to destroy culture when it is viewed as dysfunctional (Schein 2004, 11). Discussing the high-context culture (HCC’s) and low-context culture differences (LCC’s) will highlight the problems that might arise in the communication and therefore might cause misunderstanding and misconduct of tasks. The cultures of the world can be compared on a scale from high to low context, (Hall & Hall 1990, 27).

In HC cultures, communication style is influenced by the closeness of human relationships, well-structured social hierarchy and strong behavioral norms (Kim et al., 1998, 507–521). An LC culture is characterized by direct and linear communication and by the constant and sometimes never-ending use of words. Individuals from low context cultures are expected to communicate openly and directly in ways that are consistent with the speakers' true feelings and intentions (Gudykunst & Ting-Toomey 1988, 384-400).

Knowing the differences between the polychronic and monochronic business cultures can also help the management to understand the challenges in communication and help the employees to overcome their cultural barriers, excel in their work, contribute and encourage them to show their skills and expertise, which in return will help the management assess the talents who were hiding behind the cultural differences aspects. We can think of the cultures aspects onion layers, each layer represents a certain aspect, moving from the outer layer towards the inner layer we find the symbols, the heroes, the rituals and the values of a culture. (Hofstede, 1991).

Table 3. This table will demonstrate the difference between the polychronic and monochronic cultures, Dahl, S. (2004).

	Monochronic Culture	Polychronic Culture
Interpersonal Relations	Interpersonal relations are subordinate to present schedule	Present schedule is subordinate to Interpersonal relations
Activity Co-ordination	Schedule co-ordinates activity; appointment time is rigid.	Interpersonal relations co-ordinate activity; appointment time is flexible
Task Handling	One task at a time	Many tasks are handled simultaneously
Breaks and Personal Time	Breaks and personal time are sacrosanct regardless of personal ties.	Breaks and personal time are subordinate to personal ties.
Temporal Structure	Time is inflexible; time is tangible	Time is flexible; time is fluid
Work/personal time separability	Work time is clearly separable from personal time	Work time is not clearly separable from personal time
Organisational Perception	Activities are isolated from organisation as a whole; tasks are measured by output in time (activity per hour or minute)	Activities are integrated into organisation as a whole; tasks are measured as part of overall organisational goal

Therefore, having multicultural workforce in the agency brings the challenge to the table in the everyday business communication. When thinking of gaining and maintaining talents, all the previously mentioned aspects should be taken into account and be used as a base of the agency process and strategy. Humans are highly adaptable, and the situational influences on thought and behavior are significant (Lemke 1997, 37-55).

2.2 Millennial Generation

Our target talent group can easily be categorised as “Millennials”. What is the millennial generation? They are identified as the generation born between early 80s to early 2000s. William Strauss and Neil Howe came up with the term in their book “Generations” (1991) which by 2020 millennials will form 50% of the global workforce (Price water house Coopers, 2011). They are known to have low loyalty (and engagement levels) towards employers; most likely to voluntary leave when economic conditions improve; consider learning and development as the most essential benefit from employers; look for a good work/life balance; prefer to communicate electronically at work than face to face; career progression is important; attracted to organizations that focus on corporate social responsibility; strong interest in working overseas; and comfortable working with older generations (Price water house Coopers, 2011). Millennials tend to associate psychological contract expressions with job content, career development, training, financial reward and job security (De Hauw and De Vos 2010, 293-302).

They have been raised by helicopter parents meaning their lives have been mostly facilitated with easiness, therefore their motivation level varies according to cultural and gender background. More than half (53 percent) aspire to become the leader or most senior executive within their current organization, with a clear ambition gap between millennials in emerging markets and developed markets, Deloitte (2015). (Harris-Boundy and Flatt, S., J 2010, 30-46) stated that Millennials demonstrate higher levels of individualism than collectivism.

Other sources such as an article by (Nickalls, S. 2014) where she has expressed the importance and advantages of having the millennial workforce. (Zagenczyk et al. 2011. 254-281) Millennial employees are willing to go outside their job descriptions. In return, employers might need employees to provide loyalty or commitment to the company, as well as productivity or consistency in their work (Conway and Coyle-shapiro 2011, 277-299). When employees believe that they have work/ life balance, they typically complete tasks better, and have positive behavioral performance (Demerouti et al. 2014, 241-258). They are interested and motivated to learn; cost efficient in terms of recruitments, their aim is the experience and recognition rather than the money; they appreciate recognition based on their performance; thrive for continuous progress and most of the millennials are educated and considered as the most educated generation yet.

In terms of specific skills, they have grown to be tech-savvy generation and social media gurus, the essential perquisites in the current needed workforce. They are clever socially with big dreams, millennials focus much on the social aspect of work such as having friendly coworkers and interesting work environment (Ng et al., 2010, 281-292). Millennials have shown preference for working in groups and the ability to multitask (Cekada 2012 and Roberts et al. 2012, 40-44)

Therefore, millennials are considered as an asset to any work place more than a challenge. At the agency most of our interns are millennials, therefore fresh ideas and constant improvements are always present in the working atmosphere, and we can absolutely give credit to them for part of the agency's success.

2.3 Talent Management Best Practices and theories

Talent management is the pool of activities which are concerning to attracting, selecting, developing and retaining the best employees in the strategic roles (Scullion et al, H., 2011, 97-114), It emphasizes special programs created for the purpose of employees' potential development (Ashton, C., Morton, L, 2005, 28-31). Aligning talent strategy with business strategy is usually unmet need in many organizations (Heinen, J. S. & O'Neill, C. 2004, 67-82), therefore talent management process is always present whether it is acknowledged and defined within the company strategy or is practiced as a default management process that exists in every company. Recruitment and selection requires that organizations use various methods or techniques of selecting the right talent that reflects the culture and value of that particular organization (Armstrong, 2006).

The organization investment in the new potential future talents can establish a ground for successful structured program that attracts more talented interns who can add value to the organization talent pool, talents in an organization refer to core employees and leaders that drive the business forward (Hansen, F., 2007, 1155- 1179). There are several benefits of talent management such as employee engagement, retention of employee, increased productivity, culture of excellence and much more (Ballesteros, S. R., & Inmaculada, D. F. 2010).

Talent management is important when the firms would like to build winning teams which will be formed by talented people (Davis et al, 2007), according to (Snell, 2005) if a firm wants to be successful, it must invest in talent management of their workers to obtain some conditions in the company like good business environment. Companies should depend on locating, en-

hancing, maintaining, managing and promoting their human talents. People are the real generator of value.

Basically talent management practices are illustrated in finding the potential employees, manage their merits and competences to serve the objective of the company and fulfill the talent's personal goal; in maintenance and follow-up actions to assure the talent performance is fulfilling and the pre-structured process plan is in place. Scheduled reviews to help the talents express their challenges and goals, for the talents management to locate the problem in early stages and try finding a solution to achieve employee development. Feedback is a good way to enhance the talent self-esteem and increase the performance level. Constant feedback gives the sense of engagement and importance from the management towards the talent.

Talent development plan is one of the main practices by talent management, it encourages and motivates the talent to excel and perform at its best. Additionally, rewarding the talents with potential, is one of the best recognition methods and the reward should not only be financial; it could be development plan for talents with potential knowingly they could learn and excel at certain fields or tasks. (Smith 2001, 161) defined recognition as a form of sincere praise or appreciation given to an individual by another and reward as the earned item of value presented to an individual for successful accomplishment of a particular service, task or mission. Investment of resources associated with attraction, retention and development of human resources can therefore contribute to organizational competitiveness (Wright et al, 2001, .303). The key to long-term renewal of organization is the development of human resources that emphasize on knowledge-based economy, attraction and retention (Hamel, G. and Prahalad, C. 1993, 75 – 84.). More than any other asset, talent provides the potential for long-term competitive advantage (Lawler, 2008)

Table 4: In the following table the changes of the development needs are shown by (Michaels et al., 2001).

Old Approach to Development	New Approach to Development
Development just happens	Development is woven into the fabric of the organization
Development means training	Development primarily means challenging experiences, coaching, feedback, and mentoring
The unit owns the Talent; people don't move across units	The company owns the Talent; people move easily around the company
Only poor performers have development needs	Everyone has development needs and receives coaching
A few lucky people find mentors	Mentors are assigned to <i>every</i> high-potential person

Many theories have been developed around the talent management in general and about the talent in specific, about what is the talent to the company and how it should be maintained. One of the theories is the talent base theory, which states that the talent is a resource for competitive advantage and companies should focus on attracting the talents to keep the level of competitiveness in the workplace high, which leads to a more productive working environment. Whereas, the resource base theory depends on how valuable the resource is and the sharable knowledge the talent has to share with co-workers. Ensuring that a sufficient supply of talent is available across the organization to achieve competitive advantage enhanced corporate performance, and maximizing the productivity of an organization's talent pool, (Newhouse et al., 2004).

According to (Michaels et. al 2001, 53-58) there are two views of talent management, strategic and integrated. Strategic talent management refers to succession in the process of new talent economy, whereas integrated talent management refers to developing the talents according to the company necessity. Companies in general should have continuous plan to save the talents and invest financially to assure they are protected against any organizational upcoming change.

2.4 Management Styles

It is the manner of approach to issues of the managers towards achieving the goals of their organization by transforming various resources available to any organization into output through the functions of management (Field, S. & Dubey, S. 2001, 48). According to (Newell

et.al, 2001) talents call for better management accompanied with excellent working opportunities.

Management tend to follow certain practices and theories in order to form their process and apply them across the working environment to define the overall working atmosphere and establish consistency in employees' management. Management strategy is usually built based on the overall strategy formulated to achieve the intended goals. It is the general approach of a manager in dealing with people at work and exercising of authority over subordinates in an effort to reach organizational goals (Quang 2002, 122; Hartzell, 2006)

The six dimensions of entrepreneurship

The agency operational type is entrepreneurial and having an entrepreneur mind is an advantage usually requested from every intern applicant to be able to cope with the agency working environment. Based on an extract of (Mastering Entrepreneurship: your single source guide to becoming a master of entrepreneurship, 2000) there are six critical dimensions of business practice: **strategic orientation; commitment to opportunity; commitment of resources; control of resources; management structure; and reward philosophy.**

Strategic orientation represents the factors that forms the company strategy. A textbook definition of strategy is that it "defines and communicates what an entity creates, by whom, how, for whom and why it is valuable" (Huff et al. 2009, 21)

Commitment to opportunity is the importance of understanding the value if the opportunity and try to utilize it to develop. There are innovative thinkers who never get anything done. It is necessary to move beyond the identification of opportunity to its pursuit. (Mastering Entrepreneurship", FT PrenticeHall, 2000)

Commitment of resources is identifying the resources needed to be able to peruse the opportunity with the needed skills and abilities to perform the tasks needed. A state in which an employee identifies with a particular organization and its goals, and wishes to maintain membership in the organization. (Miller 2003, 73).

Control resources is the skill of observing other party's employees and try to exploit their skills and ideas for the benefit of the organization. Knowing who should be recruited or who should be used as an external resource only. The stereotype of the entrepreneur as exploitative derives from this dimension. The entrepreneur is adept at using the skills, talents and ideas of others (Mastering Entrepreneurship", FT PrenticeHall, 2000)

Management structure states that entrepreneur is stereotyped as egocentric and idiosyncratic and thus unable to manage. However, although the managerial task is substantially different from that of the entrepreneur, management skill is nonetheless essential. (Mastering Entrepreneurship", FT PrenticeHall, 2000)

Rewarding philosophy as an entrepreneurial is based on performance and that's how it is conducted at the agency. As an example the URHO award is mainly based on the performance of the recipient. entrepreneurial companies tend to base compensation on performance (where performance is closely related to value creation). Entrepreneurial companies are also more comfortable rewarding teams. (Mastering Entrepreneurship", FT PrenticeHall, 2000).

Management theories X, Y and Z

Discussing theories X and Y, which were both, developed by (McGregor, D. 1960) based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs, where you need to know where a person is on the hierarchical pyramid to be able to encourage and motivate and focus on how to meet the needs on that certain level.

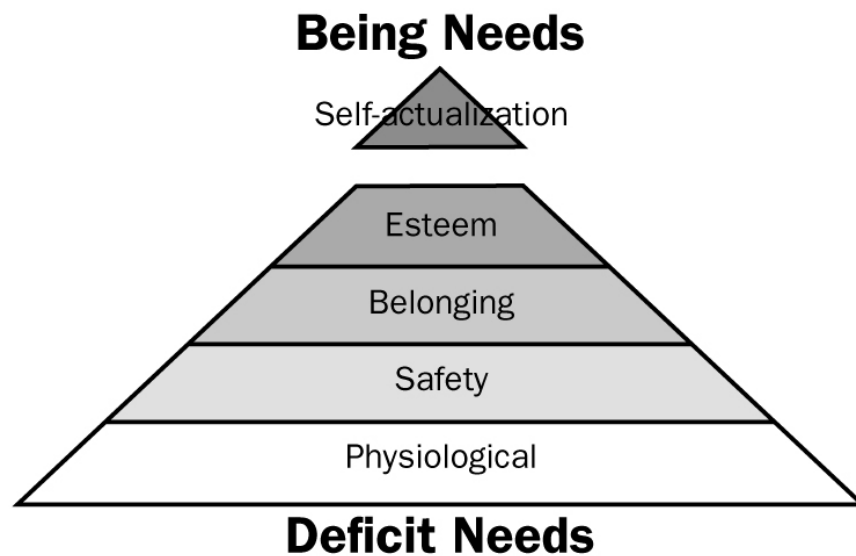


Figure 4: Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (The business Owner 2016)

Theories X and Y are methods and psychologies management uses with its employees to manage the work, based on their interactions. According to (Sund, A.E 2012) a study conducted in 2003 by Miner found that out of 73 psychological theories, McGregor's was rated as second most recognizable and 33rd most useful (Kopelman et al. 2008, 255-271).

Management assuming that the employees are lazy, tardy, with no motivation to work uses theory X approach. Usually when management tends to think that employees need rules to follow, thinks the work is boring and avoid it if they can. Because employees are believed to avoid work when possible, Theory X leaders believe individuals need a great deal of supervision. It is through constant supervision that the threat of punishment works as a motivator (Kopelman et al. 2008, 255-271). Managers using Theory X approach should expect stress and tension due to using threats and harsh tone in the communication. McGregor suggest that several managers use Theory X approach but the outcome result is mostly poor, on the contrary of using Theory Y.

Theory Y approach is opposite to X approach, it is used by liberal managers, produces better working environment and space for people to develop and excel. According to an essay published on UK Essays, regarding literature review on McGregor theory, they stated that Kopelman et al, argue that through questioning these assumptions Mc Gregor came up with a new role for management; that instead of forcing and controlling the employees working underneath them managers should, in fact, 'help them' to reach their potential; McGregor seeing this as a way to help an organization achieve their set goals. According to an essay published on UK Essays, regarding literature review on McGregor theory, they stated that Koppelman et al, argue that through questioning these assumptions McGregor came up with a new role for management; that instead of forcing and controlling the employees working underneath them managers should, in fact, 'help them' to reach their potential; McGregor seeing this as a way to help an organization achieve their set goals.

an important aspect of McGregor's ideas is his belief that managers who hold either set of assumptions can create self-fulfilling prophecies – that is, through their behavior they create situations where others act in ways that conform the original expectations” (Schermerhorn et al. 2011, p.38). (House et al. 1996, 1-97) defined four behaviors: Work Facilitation; Group Oriented; Decision Process; Work Group Representation and Networking Value Based. Theory Z was produced by (Ouchi 1981) during the process of him researching and studying the cooperation between the Japanese and American organisations. Ouchi wrote Theory Z How American Business Can Meet the Japanese Challenge (1981) describing the how did the American and Japanese corporations met the challenges and the effective and functional management process and approach. This is a managing style that focuses on a strong company philosophy, a distinct corporate culture, long-range staff development and consensus decision-making (Cited in: Principles and Practices of Management and Business Communication, Ouchi, 1981, 71).

Theory Z workers have high appreciation to working environment, coworkers and work in general. Employees working under the Z approach tend to work hard; enjoy the working environment; appreciate culture; family and value company's support. Theory Z workers, it is assumed, can be trusted to do their jobs to their utmost ability, so long as management can be trusted to support them and look out for their wellbeing (Massie, J., L. and Douglas, J, 1992, 48).

2.5 Internship program formation perquisites

It is essential now days to form a structured internship program, following the company strategy and needs to be able to manage the interns whom are considered as a source for future talents. In order to achieve goals, set forth in an internship program design, the internship program must adapt to its environment by maximizing its assets and limiting its liabilities in competitive and cooperative relationships with other departments and organizations, (Robert Kelly 1986, 234-242).

The goals of the program should be set and justified as a first preparation step of the program; they should embody the company objective in conducting the program.

The goals should be discussed with the management and many questions should be answered such as: Why is the internship program needed? Is the company searching for a certain set of skilled talents with specific potentials? Is the company willing to conduct a paid internship? The answers should help the company determining the need and the expected outcome of the program. Interns should be presented with the aim and the goal, briefed about the internship opportunity and tasks, introduced to people involved and presented with the benefits.

Internship program is considered as a source of highly motivated and cost efficient resources, minimum future recruitment commitment and are considered as free marketing method. Interns' selection phase is fundamental aspect of the program success.

Determining the timeline for the searching phase and the selection process plays a big role in setting a solid ground for the program. Interns should be considered and treated like permanent employees taking into account the time and financial investment throughout the process from the company. Therefore, the skills and potential are core values to look into the intern,

that's when the pre-setup company standards for the selection process comes in use, thus the management should set the standards in path of the company's goals.

Kolb's experimental learning cycle theory can illustrate the ideal learning process for the internship. Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience, D., A., Kolb (1984). The theory presents a learning process consisting of four stages:

- Concrete experience (DO)
- Reflective observation (OBSERVE)
- Abstract conceptualization (THINK)
- Active experimentation (PLAN)

The following figure illustrates Kolb's theory in more details to grasp the whole idea behind the theory structure:

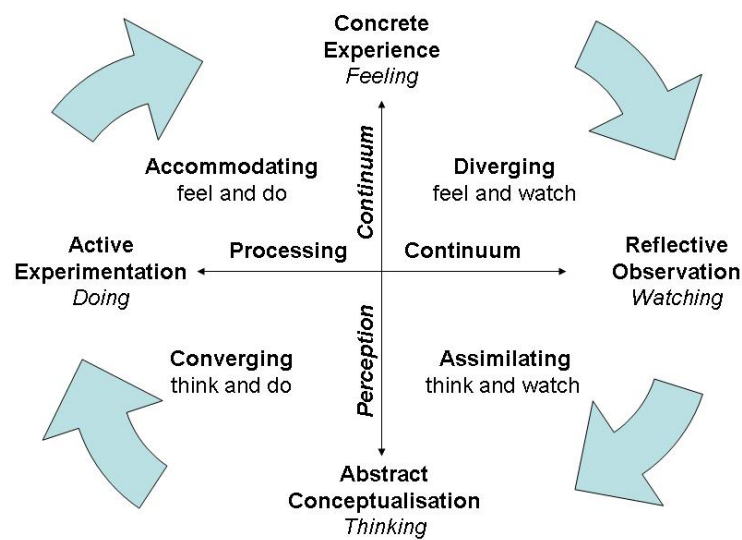


Figure 5: Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle. (Simply psychology 2010)

Intern briefing and work experience phase comes after the selection process and when the intern is involved in the company's projects. That's when blending the intern in the working environment comes as priority, which can be accomplished through pre-planned orientation, and mentoring. The plan should involve introduction to the company's history, objectives and operations.

Motivation is an important aspect of the whole experience. Motivation is driven from within the company; management should act as stimulus for performance enhancement. Leaders know that at the heart of every productive and successful business lies a thriving organizational culture and hardworking people collaborate passionately to produce great results (Gignac, G., E. & Palmer, B., R, 2011). Thus, the relationship between the mentor and the mentee plays an essential role in the intern adjustments to the working environment and the level of support determines the intern progress during the internship, according to (Orpen, C. 1997, 53–60) he argues that the better the relationship between the mentor and the mentee, the better the interns' performance and the more commitment from the mentee is shown towards the working place.

Follow-up, feedback and appreciation enhances the interns' engagement to the work place and increases the involvement in the company. (Jung, J., & Kim, Y. 2012, 3636–3651) state that good working atmosphere and working conditions enhances employee job satisfaction and commitment to the work place.

3 Research Methodology

Research methodology is described as the overall approach to a problem, which could be put into practice in a research process, from the theoretical underpinning to the collection and analysis of data, (Remenyi et al. 2003). Research methodology concentrates on problem to be inspected and may vary according to the investigated problem itself.

Case study strategy is the best fit for this plan especially when the proposed research questions are posed with why and how, Yin (2003). The research philosophy is an over-arching term relating to the development of knowledge and the nature of that knowledge, Saunders et al, (2009). The research philosophy used in this study will be determined in this chapter, discussing the relevant methods used to collect the needed data and the research questions.

The case study research will be based on Saunder's et al. (2007) onion layers, which highlights the stages that should be covered to develop the research strategy. It essential to go through the layers to determine the suitable research strategy needed for the case study research. The layers are illustrated through different philosophies such as Interpretive and positivist; selection of data such as qualitative and quantitative and obviously the various strategies such as survey, experiments and case study. Both qualitative and quantitative research methods will be applied. Qualitative research will be embodied through conducting interviews to gain information about the interviewees view, experiences and feelings. Questionnaire will represent the data and information needed from the quantitative research method, to gain more holistic information and detailed data.

3.1 Research approach

The research approach determines how the theory is formed. It is important to follow research paradigm with proper research approach. Based on Saunders et al. (2009) there are two approaches, deductive approach that is based on positivism paradigm and allows the research to form hypothesis through optimizing the theory. Variety of data and information is collected by the researcher to confirm or reject the hypothesis to resolve issue (**Gill and Johnson 2010**). Deductive approach that implies following an existing theory and going into details trying to apply the existing theory on the researched topic or case is in this study no relevant. The intended result of this approach is to collect data form and information from the existing

case to be researched and try to develop a relevant theory that is embodied in the inductive research approach, which is based on interpretive paradigm.

The following figure demonstrates the difference between the deduction and the induction approaches.

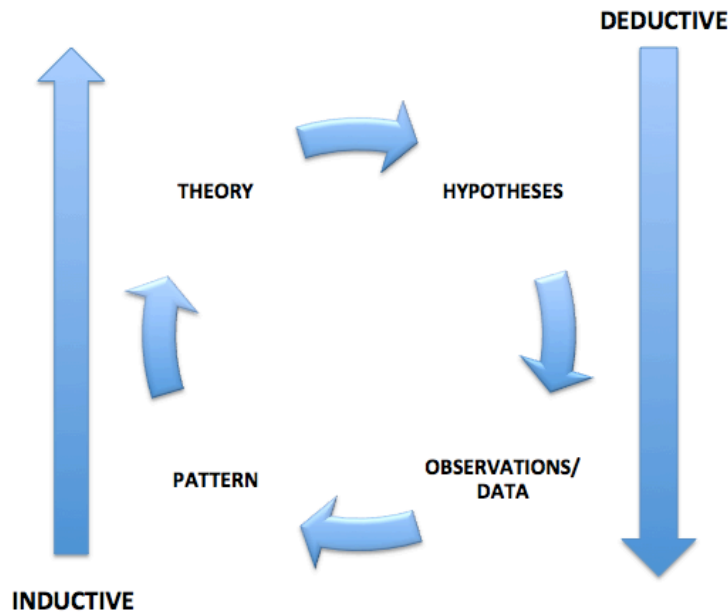


Figure 6: Deductive vs. Inductive approach (Nora Saleem 2016)

In this research I am leaning more towards the inductive approach, which serves the purpose more by depending on existing examples and supports using individual logic. Inductive approach allows the researcher to provide subjective reasoning with the help of various real life examples (**Ridenour, Benz and Newman 2008**)

3.2 Research design features (Ontology, Epistemology and Axiology)

The case study research will be based on Saunder's et al. (2009) onion layers which is epitomised through Interpretive and positivist philosophies; bases for data gathering such as qualitative and quantitative and of course the various strategies such as survey, experiments and case study. Subjective ontology seems the best-fit feature of the research design; Ontology is the science or study of being, **Baikie (1993)**. It is the view of the reality and the assumptions and interoperations of an individual about the reality. In this case study and according to the given facts the choice leans towards positivist ontology.

Positivist believes that there is a single objective reality to any research phenomenon or situation regardless of the researcher's perspective or belief (**Hudson and Ozanne, 1988**). It is important in positivist research to seek objectivity and use consistently rational and logical approaches to research (**Carson et al., 2001**). Ontology will help representing the sponsoring agency's potency to develop and promote the current internship program; raise the awareness and make it more desirable for potential students.

One of the simple interpretations of epistemology was that it is knowing how you can know, Hatch and Cunliffe (2006). Furthermore, knowing how the information is produced, differentiate the good from the poor knowledge and how is the reality represented, they demonstrate coherent relationship. Epistemology will be used to establish the grounds of knowledge between the reality and the research, using interpretive paradigm to rely on comprehended knowledge that relies on qualitative collected data and observations; supporting the methodology, by having already personally experienced the internship process and use pre understanding and knowledge of the current structure to determine the needs, area of development and success criteria in the exiting program.

The philosophies are variant, each of the ontology, epistemology and axiology have their impact on the case study research proceeding. Axiology studies judgments about value, (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009). It indicates that our initiatives are driven from our judgments about values. Judgments are made depending on the values. In this case study research the philosophies are determined based on the values. For instance choosing the data collection method is based on the values that I would see fit to gain genuine information was through conducting qualitative research that is based on human interaction, real emotions and expressions, which can complement the data gathered from the quantitative research, which is normally conducted through a tool.

3.3 Research Methods and Data Collection

Research method refers to the tool, process or way, which were employed to gather the information. In this case study the potentiality of conducting qualitative research method was high due to the amount of ex and current interns. Numbers acquired can contribute to the results collected and show validity. Qualitative method was also considered aiming to gain information from the management members and present their perspective and investment in the internship program, ideas to improve and their take on the current program. Thus, to demonstrate reliability and validity, the mixed method approach was conducted. The combina-

tion of the use of quantitative and qualitative methods in a single study can help researchers to supplement the limitations of each single method, as well as to achieve triangulation (Creswell, 2003 and Fidel, 2008).

3.4 Research Question and Sub-questions Analysis

Internship is defined as “a form of on-the-job training in which people gain supervised experience and practical knowledge that is relevant to a specific field”, (Patton & Dial, 1988). The internship program at the agency has started since 2011, evolved since then and still developing. It started by expressing the need of a certain talent and was advertised through social media in university jobs portal, in particular at Hyperisland University in Sweden. It attracted the attention of several applicants and going through the common process of recruiting and considering it was IT related so mostly the selection process was based on skills.

There was no initial internship program; structured process; follow-up or pre-defined actual planning. There was of course commitment from the agency's side towards the intern and facilitating learning process but nothing predefined. Since last year there has been a structural change in the agency in terms of whole business reconstructions a new business units were formed.

Having structured internship program was one of the essential changes, especially when considered to be the pool for talents. Since last year a lot has been invested in the internship program, and one of the main missing elements of the current internship program will be covered while discussing the study following sub question:

“What are the standards of the program and on which bases the talents are chosen?”

The standards vary from program to another or from a working environment to another; the standards are tailored according to the company own structure, strategy and needs. External factor such as economic stability; technological advancements; and internal factors such as personality, skills and flexibility; should be taken into account in the process of applying the standards to determine the real talents. For designing performance standards organizations should keep in mind the external and internal environment that affects performance (Black et al., 1999). The following table by (Schwartz, P., S., 2012) demonstrates the types of internships.

Table 5: Typology of Internship. (Schwartz, P., S., 2012)

Internship Organization Quick Guide		
Category	Term	Definition
Organization	Independent	Intern working independently and not connected with any other interns
	Larger Program	Intern either working with or being organized within a larger group of interns within the same/partner institutions
Structure	Highly Structured/Formal	Highly structured program with planned projects, activities and events
	Ad Hoc	Unstructured program where projects or activities are decided upon day to day
Focus / Concentration	Project Based	The intern takes on one project and sees it through from beginning to end (i.e. creating a photo database, cataloging a collection of books)
	Position/Field Based	The intern works on a variety of tasks, gaining experience within a specific position or in the overall field, as opposed to one specific project concentration
Compensation	Benefits	The intern receives some type of benefit: a stipend, free tickets to museums or events, transportation, housing, etc.
	Paid	Intern is paid an hourly wage
	Unpaid	The intern is not compensated in any way

Would argue that the current internship program falls under the Focus/ Concentration category; naturally the intern is allocated on a project-based task. Project based internship gives the intern the responsibility and accountability to succeed since day one, being handed a project with different phases and high expectations; excel in the outcome result is expected; minimum guidance with occasional supervision. Therefore, the intern is expected to learn while managing actual projects and learn from the existing projects and take advantage of the mentor hints.

The used standards by the agency to determine and justify the selection process of the interns are based on: skill needed on the specific internship position advertised; high level of initiative and self-motivation; strive for knowledge and commitment. The competency and motivation of all parties involved are indispensable for a successful internship programs (Coco, 2000, 41-45). The chosen standards are also associated with culture and social standards.

Referring to Chapter 2, section 2.1 where the importance of cultural differences is highlighted and should be taken into account when setting the standards in multicultural working environment with multinational employees. The increasing diversity adds a challenge to how the

assessment is formed. Not knowing the new candidates cultural background and not having a prior experience will increase the curiosity and add a challenge to add more diversity to the working environment.

How is the Urho award winner defined? Based on which standards?

Organization runs because of people working for it, and each person contributes toward achieving the ultimate goal of an organization (Panagiotakopoulos, 2013).

The Urho award has been running for 2 years at the agency and 2 winners have been appointed already. The idea of the Urho award was taken into consideration as talent recognition and motivational method for excelling. It will motivate the talent appointed as the Urho and raise the competitiveness among the other employees to demonstrate their skills and surpass to gain the award as recognition for their unique talents.

What should be taken into account is pointing out the competences and focusing on the right ones instead of a list of generic competences. Currently the award standards are based on 4 questions regarding the professional skills and social skills. In section (5.4) will discuss further how to exploit this award and change the way it is conducted to promote the talents; increase the enthusiasm and raise the motivation amongst the employees. What should be noted that this award is an act of appreciation and encouragement rather than categorizing certain employees, it is an ethical behavior from the management towards the employees.

How to promote the program? And define the gaps to enhance its efficiency?

The costs for hiring are low when graduates can be screened during their internship and it is a suitable method to create a better fit between the intern as a prospective employee and the company (Beard, 1998). The current internship program was active since 2011, it was more actively promoted and structured in 2014. The intention of the program started as for the company need in the summer period for interns to fill in for the permanent employees in the summer time and at the same time have the opportunity to learn from real experiences by managing the client projects and follow-up on the continuity and be present in case of a need during the summer period. Especially covering the need of the foreign projects and making sure that there is always response in case of an urgent need, especially when considering different time zones; holiday seasons; cultural background and business nature.

Many factors were and are taken into account when promoting the program and the expectancy of the applicants. Most importantly is to know, what is the sponsoring agency looking to achieve from the internship program? Are we promoting a paid internship? Are we looking for interns to perform tasks? Or, have the potential to become future employees? Thus, the promotion plan should be considered and studied carefully as the applicants' background is substantial in the program success.

The target group was the Universities students and in specific the "Millennials" who were already mentioned in Chapter 2, section 2.2 who represent the current generation and are known for their special characteristics and career goals; existing employees recommendations and social media contacts utilization. Until the current day, the result has been satisfactory and many interns turned to be successful talents.

Considering the incremental advancements and the changing need in the business industry, in addition to the agency overall and project specific needs, the internship program is always under the scope and constantly considered for enhancements, adjustments and developments. From every intern's experience the agency accumulates the knowledge and employ it in the development process.

How to maintain the talents who secured an actual work in the agency?

The answer to this question will highlight the success internships stories, which ended up to being talents and eventually recruited as employees. Many current employees can demonstrate the successful cases of a felicitous internship journey which led to a real recruitment, prosper in the talent pool and most importantly evidence that internship programs can work efficiently to attract true talents.

Talent maintenance could be embodied through different conductance from the company towards the talent, most importantly the commitment. Commitment has different types and dimensions experienced by different people in the organization at different levels; the intensity may vary as per the affiliation with the organization Elizur & Koslowsky, (2001). Recognition is another mode of showing the importance of the talent and a way to maintain encourage the talents and raise the level of commitment. Additionally, investment in talents is an essential act to show how prominent the talent is.

4 Results and findings of the research

This chapter will focus on the outcome of the quantitative survey questions and the qualitative questions. Both methods were used for the purpose of showing the problems, solutions and suggestions from different perspectives. Both methods helped form the idea around the needed changes to the internship programs. The questions in both research methods focused and were interlinked with the study research questions discussed in section 2.

The purpose of the quantitative research questions is to gain information from the intern's perspective of their experiences, challenges, wins and obstacles they encountered during the internship to formulate the plan on how to develop and enhance the internship program and make it a sufficient resource for talents.

The objective of “*what was your contribution to the agency?*” question was for the respondents to elaborate what was/ is their value to the company and help comprehend their understanding of the standards they were selected for. The statements in the survey discuss numerous of which was the follow-up phase that highlights the maintaining process of the interns. Additionally, “*Would you recommend the agency internship to fellow students / peers?*” was to measure how invested are the interns in promoting the internship program.

Furthermore, the qualitative questions purpose was to gain the same information but get an insight on the perspective of the management and permanent agency's employees who collaborated directly with interns. Try to conclude how invested the agency is in the interns program and what is the upcoming plan and strategy to develop and enhance the internship experience, increase the engagement and help promote the program through the success of the internship cases through ex-interns recommendation.

4.1 Quantitative research survey

The quantitative research method (attachment 1) was favoured due to the easiness of approaching the target group instantly with no time consumption. Qualitative research gives the participants the opportunity to express freely with no restrictions, shyness or fear counting on the anonymity of the participation. Quantitative research method is non-costly and time saving. Participants can be reached whenever considering there are no time barriers. Data collec-

tion is relatively easy and available instantly. There are still some challenges that can arise from conducting the quantitative research such as inability to chase the participants to fill in the survey, unrealistic statements can cause result change to the whole survey result and in some cases it could be costly.

The survey was sent out to the current interns, ex-interns who secured a place the agency after the internship experience and the ex-interns who left. It was sent to a total of 23 people and received the answers of 14 participants, which accounts for around 51% of the participants answering.

The questions of the survey were based on (Likert's 1932) scale, which measures attitudes, feelings and opinions, by responding to statements, which measures the agreement or disagreement. The scale used was from 1 to 5, open questions were considered as well to give the participants the opportunity to express their opinions, criticism and suggestions freely. Open-ended question was also considered which was meant to collect the essential question that can conclude the satisfaction on the internship experience, which evolved around the possibility to recommend the program.

4.1.1 Results

The questionnaire was designed and conducted through SurveyPal CEM (customer experience management) tool.

Year of Birth: *from a scale of 1970-2000*

Based on the first question, which measures the participant's age, the result came back with the birth date range between 1981-1997 with birth date median of 1991. The result verifies the millennials subject and theory discussed earlier in section 2., focusing on the generation that forms the current workforce and the target group for internship and talents. I personally can argue that the agency's workforce is mostly formed of the millennial generation.

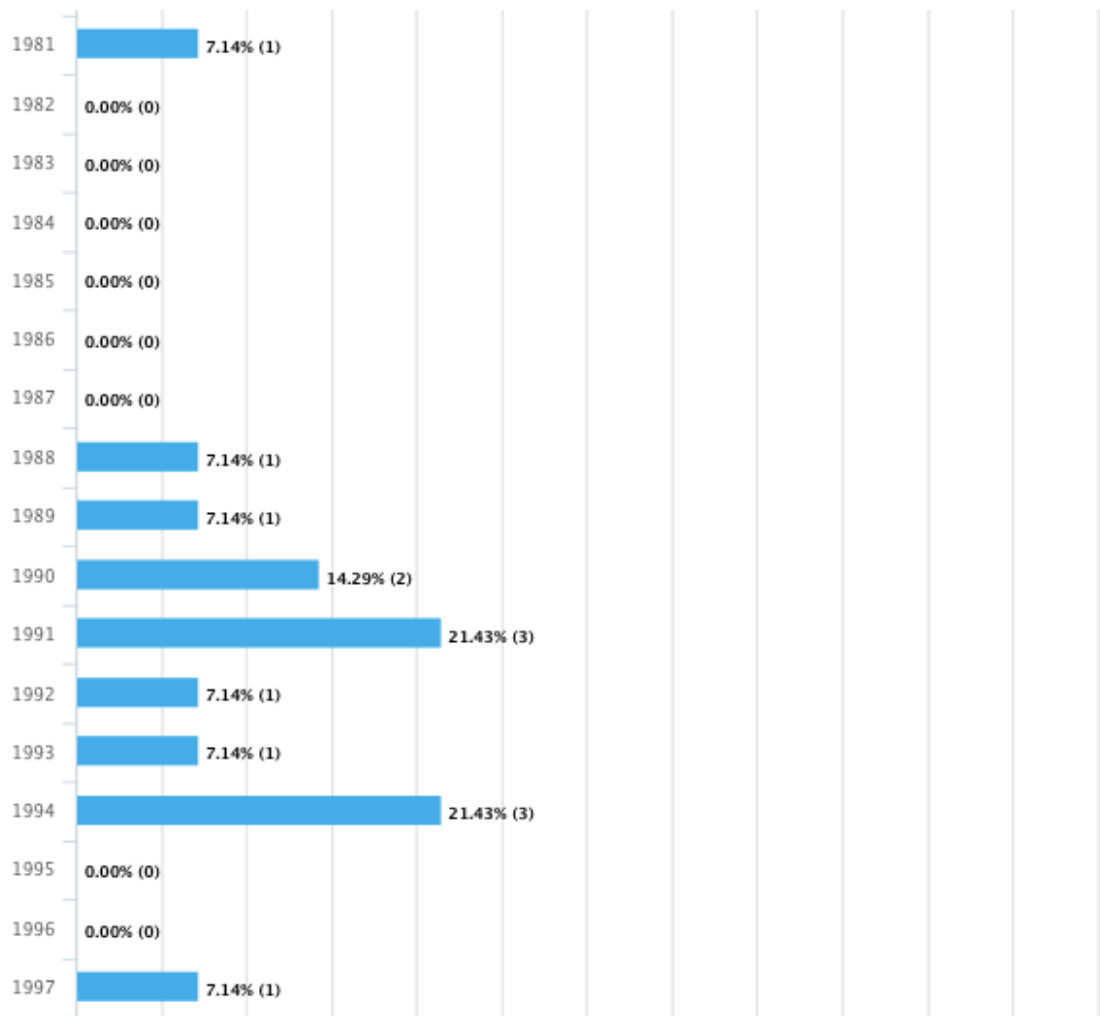


Figure 7: Question 1 quantitative survey result via surveypal (Saleem, N., 2016)

Current Status: - *Currently an intern* - *Ex-intern*

As seen from the survey figure below, 21% (3 current interns) and 78% (11 ex-interns) responded to the survey. The figures demonstrate the high rate of successful internship at the agency and 11 ex-interns so far managed to secure a working opportunity.

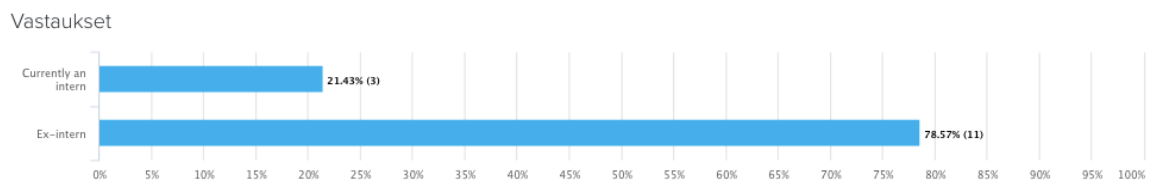


Figure 8: Question 2 quantitative survey result via surveypal (Saleem, N., 2016)

How long have you been working/ worked at the agency?

The result shows the median of 2 years as for how long the ex-interns have been working at the agency. 64% (9 current interns) worked for less than a year and 35% (5 ex-interns) have worked/ still working for over 2 years.

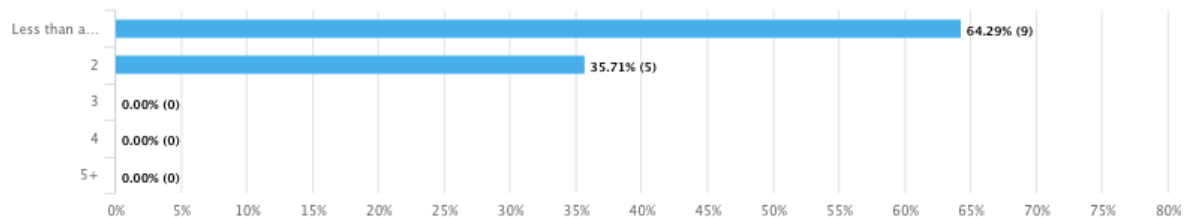


Figure 9: Question 3 quantitative survey result via surveypal (Saleem, N., 2016)

How did you learn about the internship opportunity at the agency?

The result varies, (1 respondents) learned about the opportunity from an agency employee, (5 respondents) learned about it through the university recruitment portal, the remaining (8 respondents) chose the option “*somewhere else*” which can be social media, a contact or and ad.

What was/is your role?

The aim of this question was to illustrate the diversity of the offered internship opportunities by the sponsoring agency. As shown in the figure below, the sponsoring agency has diverse interested group of interns. (3 PMs, 6 Devs, 1 Marketing and 4 other internship) interns responded. As seen the number of Dev. Applicants prove that the current need is focused on the technical skills to fulfill the current digitized business needs.

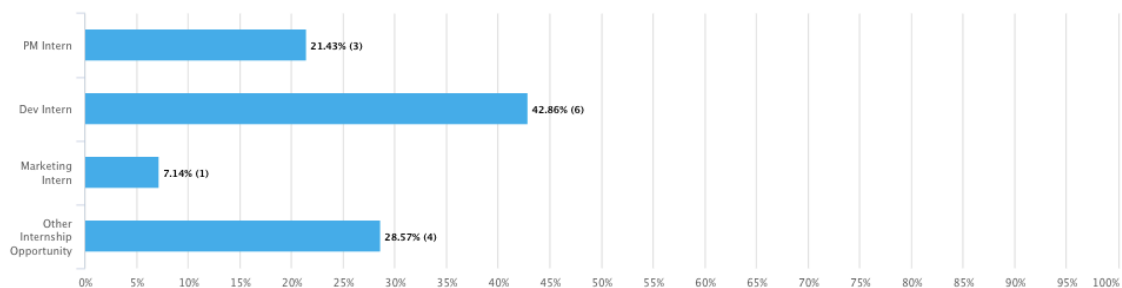


Figure 10: Question 4 quantitative survey result via surveypal (Saleem, N., 2016)

Please state how well were the following phases of the internship program conducted?

The intention of this question was to grasp the level of satisfaction from the current and ex-interns of the internship experience. To verify how well the internship phases discussed in section 2.5 were applied and conducted properly. The result of the statements grading that were measure on a scale of: 1=Poor 2=Fair 3=Good 4=Excellent 5=Not Applicable the result was as follows:

Phase	Result
<i>The induction of the internship:</i>	(2 respondents) gave it a score of 1 (poor); (2 respondents) gave it a score of 2 (fair); (5 respondents) gave it a score of 3 (good) and the rest (5 respondents) gave it a score of 4 (excellent), the median of the responses was 2,86. The result of the first four respondents verifies the need of enhancement in the induction phase, which is essential for every new employee to undergo and gets introduced to the new working environment, future colleagues and role.
<i>The structure of the tasks assigned</i>	(4 respondents) scored 2 (fair); (8 respondents) scored 3 (good) and the other (2 respondents) scored 4 (excellent). 29% of the participants stating fair structure is something that should be taken seriously into account and should definitely be enhanced and discussed in the development plan of the internship program.
<i>The briefing and the follow-up process</i>	(4 respondents) scored 2 (fair); (7 respondents) scored 3 (good); (2 respondents) scored 4 (excellent) and (1 respondent) scored 5 (not applicable). The median answers score was 3, which is good but there is an indication of

	the development need in this area as this phase is when the intern gets the motivation and constructive feedback to improve and evolve.
<i>Completion phase and lessons learned:</i>	2 respondents scored 1 for each of the poor and fair; (3 respondents) scored for good; (8 respondents) scored 4 (excellent) and (1 respondent) scored for not applicable. This phase got fairly good results with 57% scoring excellent.
<i>Evaluation and feedback</i>	the result on this phase was distributed almost evenly between fair, good and excellent. (4 respondents) scored for fair and excellent and (5 respondents) scored for good. The variety in the feedback raises the question whether it is related to the difference between internship roles or is it related to the mentor? This answer and the solution will be discussed in section 6.

To what degree you agree or disagree with the following statements

The aim of this question is to collect information on specific conductance and initiatives that the agency carried and procedures implemented during the internship experience. It is important to conclude the level of success of the following initiatives and how well the interns accepted them. The measurement was on a scale of: 1. Strongly disagree 2. Disagree 3. Agree 4. Strongly Agree 5. Not Sure/not applicable and the result was as follows:

<i>Internship had clear objectives stated at the start</i>	(5 respondents) disagreed; (6 respondents) agreed; (1 respondent) strongly agreed and (1 respondent) wasn't sure or thought it was not applicable. This means 40% of the respondents disagreed which signals a problem in the clarity
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	<p>of the internship objective communicated to the interns.</p> <p>This falls under the pre-induction phase where the intern is introduced to the actual objective of the internship.</p>
<i>The internship program was educative</i>	<p>The result was exactly similar to the previous question with 43% of the respondents disagreeing to the statement. Education, learning and knowledge are main outcomes that the intern should take out from the experience, as internship experience goal is to experiment and intake new knowledge in preparation for the real working environment afterwards.</p>
<i>Had the opportunity to work on diversity of tasks</i>	<p>(1 respondent) disagreed and 6 respondents equally agreed and strongly agreed which accounts for 85% of the respondents and 1 respondent was not sure or thought it was not applicable. The responses illustrate the various opportunities offered by the agency to the interns to get involved in diversified and multiple projects.</p>
<i>The responsibilities assigned to me were convenient to my skills</i>	<p>1 respondent disagreed; 7 respondent agreed; 5 respondents strongly agreed and only 1 was not sure or thought was not applicable. The result illustrates the sponsoring agency's effort in matching the interns with the suitable task according to their skills set. In some cases, there has been mismatch or the intern's own change of preference and after experiencing multiple tasks might have found another interesting opportunity within the agency where he or she could perform better and utilise their skills more efficiently.</p>
<i>The program met the expected outcome</i>	<p>1 respondent disagreed; 4 respondents agreed; 9 respondents strongly agreed. The results of this statement demonstrates the overall satisfaction of the internship experience outcome which is almost all the interns agreeing to the statement except one of the respondents and should surely be taken into account.</p>

<p><i>The internship program was pre-organized/structured</i></p>	<p>(1 respondent) strongly disagreed; (5 respondents) disagreed; (7 respondents) agreed and (1 respondent) strongly agreed. This means 40% of the respondents disagreed which indicates that there is a problem in the program formation phase where the program should be established to fit the agency's strategy. The reputation of a pre-organized internship program shows how the agency is investing in the program and makes it more reliable.</p>
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Open-ended questions result

The aim of the open-ended questions is to give the participants the freedom to answer in their own words and state their opinions freely which should be taken into account in the evaluation internship program process and the development strategy.

What was missing from the internship program process? How could it be enhanced?

The responses were interesting as to what was missing from the program, various answers were submitted concerning already known problems or new highlighted issues that need enhancements. For instance, one respondent pointed out the importance of having clear goals and suggested to have a pre-set tasks "It could be beneficiary to outset these goal while interviewing. It could be some overall goals and some structured goals - like completing a certain amount of projects/tasks." another respondent stated the experience with the off-boarding phase which usually should be the opportunity to get the constructive feedback "I also did not enjoy my off-boarding experience. I had no idea what my contract would be like and if I would continue and when. I felt like I just disappeared from the agency without any information".

The subject of culture has been clearly involved in one of the responses, highlighting how people perceive the way of managing tasks differently "I was pretty much expected to work independently from the start. It was a learn-by-doing kind of thing which suits me just fine, but I know that other people would not have been okay with such a low level of supervision / support." It indicates the awareness of the existing of other working habits, cultures and interests around, showing the proper level of communication between the employees.

The mentor importance has been mentioned several times in the responses “The structure was missing and mentor. So the 2 essential bases of the internship were missing which made it hard to learn” in addition to the essentiality of appointing a dedicated resource to manage the interns “It could be enhanced by appointing someone who should take care of the internship program and be in charge of the interns” This step has been implemented at some point where a dedicated person has been appointed to manage the interns, but due to the agency hectic working environment, the task didn’t continue, instead interns were appointed to specific projects.

On the other hand, there were other positive comments regarding the experience “Actually nothing. I think I’ve learned a lot and didn’t miss anything.” Again the varieties in the answers are due to many factors like the individual characteristics, skills set, task nature and cultural background.

What was your contribution to the agency?

The responses mainly revolved around the specific skills sets, product developments and client relationship, which demonstrates the level of commitment towards the projects and clients “I would often put in extra hours outside of the regular work hours. I feel that this contributed to keeping a good relationship with one of the company’s clients, as they were often demanding assistance, which was urgent, and on short notice”. The responses illustrated the involvement of all the interns at the agency with various projects, which was reflected in many answers, and the level of satisfaction can be noticed, as one respondent answered, “I really enjoyed working in the agency and felt very motivated. I wanted to score the tasks given and prove my value to the company so I really put all in. I worked a project manager intern and learned a lot. I feel my contribution was recognized and valued.”

If you are still an intern would you be interested in joining the agency as an employee if an opportunity was offered to you? Or, if you didn’t continue after the internship what was the reason in your opinion?

Several respondents stated their interest in continuing, others stated they have already continued and are currently the agency employees, whereas others expressed different reasons of their intention of not continuing, some were due to the interns plan to go back home after the internship “I would definitely be thinking about an offer to become an employee, but it would be a hard choice because of the fact that I would be leaving a lot of friends, family behind.” Or then due to the unsuitable offer by the agency and one of the reasons was due to the intern realising during the internship that it wasn’t the desired field, this case proved the importance of the internship to

understand and determine the intended career path by experiencing the internship which offers real life work experience in a professional working environment.

What did the the agency internship do very well?

The responses highlighted many positive achievements and executions that helped the interns during their internship. Some answers were contradicting to what was mentioned previously in regards to the induction phase, such as “In terms of HR / office related things, the induction was organized extremely well. The HR manager scheduled frequent check-ups with the interns to pass on feedback and see how they were doing. One PM used to be responsible for coming up with tasks if the interns ran out of things to do, which was really good.” In addition to the assistance and help the interns received from coworkers instantly which helped them to blend in “Everybody is very helpful and for me, who personally haven't had much work experience I feel that it's helped a lot to get used to real working life. It felt like I was being treated as an equal employee even if I was just an intern.”

The overall feedback and responses discussed the positivity of the experience and how it facilitated the blending and adjustment phase within the company and how the interns were treated as normal permanent employees “Everybody is very helpful and for me, who personally haven't had much work experience I feel that it's helped a lot to get used to real working life. It felt like I was being treated as an equal employee even if I was just an intern.” Multiculturalism is one of the agency's attracting features and has been and is always a goal for the agency to implement multicultural environment, the responses demonstrated the successful implementation of the goal “When I first started at the agency, I thought it was very cozy and the space allowed a lot of communication. I appreciated Minna's enthusiasm to promote our different cultures and had a lot of fun at the events she organized. They felt like the best times to get to know other colleagues and get them to know you as we” this illustrates the agency's investment in its employees from different culture and backgrounds.

The sponsoring agency is proud of conducting paid internship, which indicates the company investment in the interns, referring to one respondent “Paid internship shows that the company is investing in interns”. Paid internship can generate more interest in the position which leads to more application therefore it allows the agency to have more varieties of applicants and the opportunity to pick the best fit with the agency culture and task. Additionally, paid internship raises the interest of foreign applicants to apply, which also leads to diversity in the agency, proving the efficiency of this method, the agency had already 5 interns from Belgium who expressed their interest to conduct their internship at the agency.

Would you recommend the agency internship to fellow students / peers

4.2 Qualitative research questions

Qualitative research method was also considered in this study due to the importance and relevance of the selected interviewees in depth information, input and feedback on the agency's strategy in enhancing the internship program. Stating their own experiences whether it was regarding working with interns or being involved in the development process, will provide a solid base for information collected which will help establish the relation between the research results, literature reviewed and the research questions of the study.

The target group consisted of 5 participants, the Account directors, Office Administrator/HR, CTO and senior producer. All the selected interviewees have either worked closely with the interns or have been deeply involved in the internship program creation and development. Due the short timeframe, constant travels, business engagement of the targeted interviewees and my personal business and this study engagement, it was best fit to choose the email interviews in the form of asynchronous communication.

Asynchronous communication eliminates the time difference and time consumption obstacle and gives the respondent proper time to formulate complete answers and provide more details with no time frame limitations presence.

4.2.1 Results

The questions were formulated to extract as much information as possible from the qualitative research questions interviewees and to highlight the agency's involvement and investment in the program development. the questions and their aim are shown in (attachment 2).

Question 1: a) *Since the actual kick-off the internship program how successful do you think it is so far?* The respondents where positive in their feedback on the level of success of the program. One respondent expressed the positivity towards the program and how invested the agency is in the interns "I feel the internship program at the agency has been very successful in that we provide an opportunity for trainees to gain real-world experience and take live-fire responsibility over projects as they earn it. We reward success well and challenge everyone to participate in being the best they can in their areas of competency. We hire many of the trainees afterwards because we are so confident that we have trained them well for the real experience, that we put our money where our mouth is."

Another respondent translated the success of the internship program as a resource for talents which confirms the objective of this study by giving an example on how the agency was fortunate in finding key talents who contributed in the agency's success "We've been lucky to have found so talented people, that we've ended up hiring many of them. And even ended up finding so smart and talented people, that they've been key to some of our customer successes."

The overall feeling is positive but there have been few doubts expressed regarding the induction phase where one respondent referred to the need of the induction phase development "There should be more guidance for the intern" and "I also think that there should be a clear plan for each intern about what are they going to do during their internship at the agency. The worst situation is if there is actually nothing to do" this issue has been brought up by the quantitative survey respondents, therefore this raises the validity of the recurrent issue.

b) Have you worked closely with an intern? Please describe how well did you think was the intern inducted into the program? The answer to this question depends on the role of the respondent and how involved they are in dealing with the interns on daily basis. One respondent admired how the interns formed their own class and managed to form a small community within the agency where they helped each other "They act as a 'class' and have their own community with its own atmosphere. It's inspiring how they help each other and support one another when it comes to the challenges they face in their unique fields. I believe they feel like they are a part of something when they are here, and that is really one of the great benefits of this program." This demonstrates the freedom and support that the interns have within the agency to blend, communicate and form a functional process.

Depending on the position offered there are different forms of inductions, for example the intern developers are usually paired with developers and presented with short term training. The respondent elaborated "we do pair programming when there is something the developer doesn't completely understand. You could call this training, as it often is with topics that are new to the intern. In addition to that, we also do short trainings when needed on new subjects." The induction phase is present depending on the position but may be perceived differently by different people.

Generally, internes are given additional attention to facilitate their integration in the new environment, a respondent highlighted this by stating "Special attention was paid to assure interns that they would have the support needed from their teammates and superiors, to again help them feel comfortable and not be overly intimidated by the tasks they were given"

Furthermore, the admin side who is mainly involved in the pre-internship experience actual start induction which mainly evolves around the practicalities and admin issues have expressed concerns due to what has been communicated regarding the induction phase “based on what I have heard and learned, the induction is not very structured” so there seems to be multiple opinions depending on the roles as mentioned earlier which raises a question regarding the internal communication among the agency personnel.

Question 2: a) Could you define the standards used by the agency to choose the interns?

The standards vary depending on many factors and perquisites for the position, one respondent listed few such as the position; student status being undergraduate; field of studies and English as mandatory considering it is the working language at the agency. According to my knowledge these standards have been more clearly defined starting from 2014 when more time and effort was invested in the program.

Generally, the recruitment process is not that different from the process of recruiting a permanent employee, one respondent stated “Recruitment and selection of interns follows a very similar process to the recruitment of employees for fixed-term and permanent positions – including multiple rounds of face-to-face interviews and internal selection.”

Another respondent mentioned an essential factor which sets the standards a bit high which and it is the paid internship verse the quality and skills “We pay trainees very well and so we expect them to come with a certain base level of knowledge” additionally, knowing the intern’s personal goal is essential to grasp their value to the agency, the response to that was “How they answer questions about their career goals has a significant impact on who we chose to bring into our family.”

The chemistry between the intern applicant and the company is a core factor and is considered as one of the key standards we look for in the applicant. It has been brought up in one of the respondent’s answers “A big thing is the chemistry between the interviewee and the interviewer, but the decision is made on how they perform in the tasks we ask them to do in the interview. Of course there’s differences in the interview, depending on the position they’re applying for. Furthermore, one respondent has listed few qualities that were considered as standards for the the intern selection process “Potential, motivation, education, international experience, personality + the X factor.”

b) It is obvious that all the current interns belong to millennial generation, Is the agency targeting this group of applicants only?

According to some of the respondents it is coincidental, most of the applicants fall under the millennial category “I don’t think that we target on the millennials, but as most of the undergraduates fall to that category, it is likely that we hire those as interns.” Considering that we target the students mostly that’s what categorises the the target group under the millennial category. One respondent commented that “The agency targets students primarily for internships because we want to be a part of the next generation of entrepreneurial thinkers in Europe. We take the smartest and brightest individuals we can find who are still participating in their studies because we want to be a part of that education. When you match fantastic education with real-world experience, the interns gain a level of understanding of their applied fields that you can’t gain with education alone.”

It has been also pointed out that rather than looking at the age of the applicant usually we are looking for enthusiastic, striving to learn and interested in new technology applicants who naturally falls under the young generation which eventually is categorised under the millennial generation. One response rejected the idea of the categorization “No. We do not look at age of the applicant directly. We obviously get applications from people that are in school, and most of them are today millennials.” And justified the the current interns age group by responding “we need people to be very interested in learning, to be able to grasp many of the concepts of the newest things in the internet and to be comfortable with the latest and greatest, we often find that more in younger people.” Which is a valid point, the agency has received several applications from older age group who were looking for internship and they were considered for interviews but in reality there was a higher competition from the younger students who who are exposed to the latest technologies and trends in the market which are essential for survival in the fast paced business environment.

A respondent who is deeply involved with the internship program implementation commented “I believe the agency is targeting students / professionals in a specific phase of their development when they are just about to or have just transitioned from their most recent academic pursuit into the working world. In terms of age or generation that means that a large majority of the target applicant group will be around the average age of completing higher education – for example 20-30 years old – however it is very possible that a viable and promising candidate may be going through that same transition into a career in digital marketing at an older age.”

Question 3: a) In your opinion was there a planned follow-up process after the intern/ talents have been recruited? The answer to this question was mostly positive, highlighting the fact that the follow-up phase is natural and is done on different occasions. Again it depends on the position and the mentor, one response was that “We plan many parts of the internship program and follow-ups are one part of it. We also like to embed the trainees into a team and so their direct supervisors might be different from one another”. It has been also pointed out that the following up

comes spontaneous and part of the mentoring process “We often find ourselves in meetings with our interns asking them how they are doing, are they learning everything they hoped for, and trying to tailor their assignments to get the best possible experience.”

Again, it has been emphasised that the follow-up is based on individual initiative rather than a set rule depending on which team the intern belonged to “The answer to this will vary on a case by case basis – but for the majority I would say yes, there was a clear and stated plan. As said previously, efforts were made to focus the intern’s role, and kept his/her role as simple and clear as possible – either by limiting the number or types of accounts or projects they would be working with. This was not always possible, and I feel especially in the case of PM interns the follow-up and planning would vary based on the account teams they were working with.”

b) How would you describe the internal communication within the agency in general?

The communication is under constant development, it is flexible and customised according to the need. As the respondents pointed out that “The agency has its own set of challenges and I feel we take those in stride. We don’t ignore that challenges exist, but face them head on and try to find solutions that fit the culture of the company” as it is the case everywhere, the communication is always under review and subject for development. Furthermore, the communication is efficient due to the tools used internally “We have many tools in place to help streamline communications and have templates for outlining many tasks so the language can remain consistent. We try very hard to organize and communicate well.”.

The efficiency of the internal tools for communication have been emphasised again by another respondent who stated: “The weekly company stand-up has been a good development in internal communication – as have the introductions of the corporate chat (Flowdoc), knowledge base (Confluence), and internal Facebook group. These are all tools that keep the organisation closer and communications flowing better than it has in the past”

Basically internal communication depends on how it is perceived by the employee, so there isn’t an exact measurement on how affective it is, one respondent clarified this issue by stating “The organisation is a social entity, and some employees feel they are entitled or should be of certain things – even though the topic may not impact their work or role directly”

Q 4: a) Do you think we have secured talents through the internship program?

It has been proven once again that the internship program is a key resource for talented applicants. One of the responses described how the success of the interns and their potential have taken them forward in their career path “Without question we have secured some incredibly bright individuals through our internship program. We have had several people promoted to lead accounts, high-budget

projects and work with highly-sensitive clients” this answer has been reoccurring in different ways by the respondents.

Another issue has been reflected in the answers, which is how much the agency invests in its interns to help them learn and progress “We train our interns as if they were full-time employees coming on board. When those trainees prove to be more than a student and show more than a basic level of understanding, when we find those people who are truly hungry for success, then we pull the trigger and bring them in” the agency have been generous with the opportunity given to the interns to develop, involving them in actual client work. There have been few cases where the internship didn’t succeed due to many factors, which could occur at any internship program, for instance mismatch of the opportunity offered and the intern’s goal, failed communication or adjustment within the agency culture. These cases have been a learning lessons for the agency and a resource for development.

The conclusion and what all respondents agreed upon is that the internship program was definitely a resource for key talents who are already agency’s permanent employees “We have definitely secured talent that we wouldn’t have access to otherwise through the internship program. We have several former interns who have shown their enormous talent during their internships, and have stayed on as highly-valued permanent employees.”

b) How are we maintaining them?

This question has been perceived differently by the respondents, some translated the talents maintenance through communication and feedback “Consistent positive reinforcement and giving responsibility where it is deserved.” And others referred to practical method of maintenance “it’s the fact that our projects are all so different, that everyone in the company needs to be comfortable in learning new things all the time.” Whereas other respondent suggested by offering them positions at the agency and an opportunity for continuation, additionally to have “talent pool” as a reference of the existing talents “and it would be good to have “a pool of talents” somewhere updated.” Or through communication and feedback “Consistent positive reinforcement and giving responsibility where it is deserved.”

What would be a common agreeable point all respondents pointed out was the importance of the feedback and communication, a respondent emphasized on the open communication and its importance “Key part that I believe helps maintain talent is a very open and approachable company culture. People of all roles and seniority are in the office and available to speak with anyone, and while there is now some structure in the organisation – the culture is still from my perspective very much flat. For myself and own

team members, we have had fairly regular catch ups and pseudo-development discussions – however more could be done on this front to standardize.”

Q 5: a) As recognition method the URHO prize was applied, how did you come-up with the idea? Are there any other recognition methods?

“The URHO prize is a company-wide award for individuals who have proven themselves time and time again to be exceptionally valuable to the agency” This was one of the respondent’s responses when asked about the URHO award. It is considered as a public recognition to the awardee and motivational method for the others. This award demonstrates how invested is the agency in taking care of the employees and assuring the appreciation of the talents as one respondent said: “We also like to use a lot of positive reinforcement with our trainees and take their successes very seriously.”

The awards have a positive impact on the talents in general and interns in specific, it enhances the confidence “When you recognize someone’s talents, you reinforce their motivation and they strive to work even harder.” It also has a social effect when some of the awardees post the recognition in social media as one of the respondents observed “also it was obvious when looking at the people and how they for example reported that on social media.” also it was obvious when looking at the people and how they for example reported that on social media.”

Additionally, another respondent confirmed that there have been other recognition methods and there will be more “There have been other recognition methods – for example YouEarnedIt – and some others are in the process of being developed still.”

Q 6: How is the agency investing to enhance and develop the internship experience? What are the upcoming changes to the internship program at the agency?

The intention to develop the internship program has been always an objective of the agency, a respondent have expressed the desire to bring back the “internship project” concept which has been conducted earlier at the agency “The agency is investing in communicating and developing One change I would look to reintroduce is the “internship project” concept that has been executed with some interns to add focus and a tangible outcome/ deliverable from the internship in addition to other activities during the internship.”

Since 2014 the internship program has been reevaluated several times and enhanced especially after the outcome and the gained talents through the program have demonstrated the success and efficiency of the process. One respondent stated “It is always important to reevaluate and adjust your processes and programs to get better results. Our internship program is something that gets quite a bit of focus and we are very proud of the effort we put into it. The next class of interns will likely be one of the best

we've ever had and we look forward to guiding them to gain their real world experience. Their missions will be slightly different than the last class to better suit the timeframe of their employment and we might make other minor changes to help better educate them.”

5 Conclusion

5.1 Measurement concepts (Validity, reliability and triangulation)

To prove the credibility of the research the validity and reliability have to be proven. They are both complimentary to each other. They both prove the sufficiency of the data and information collected. Validity and reliability are closely related, the research cannot be valid unless the assessed information is proven reliable and vice versa.

5.1.1 Validity

Quantitative research validity is measured depending on the questions of the questionnaire. The validity of the answers can be validated by proving that the answers can be generalized, that has been accomplished by having recurrence of many answers by different respondents. Additionally, the validity was proven by making sure that the sample selected to gain the data from for the questionnaire are statistically representative of the interns in the agency. Your readers will be assessing the validity of your statistical analysis on the basis of your statistics being appropriate for the type of the quantitative data and the questions you are trying to answer (Saunders et al., 2012).

In regards to the validity of the qualitative research results, outlining the relation between the questions asked and the literature, methods used and justifying the choice of questions will validate the outcome of the qualitative research which was established in (Table 6, attachment 2).

5.1.2 Reliability

Reliability was achieved through having similar answers to a question from different respondents. Justification for the responses were discussed linking them to the literature and theories discussed in the study.

As human feelings cannot be measured they should be assessed. Proving the reliability of the qualitative research questions, multiple interviews will be conducted until the needed data is provided and no new data can be collected from conducting further interviews. According to

Saunders (2012) consequently you need to state clearly in your method how many interviews were undertaken before data saturation was reached.

Collecting the data as a researcher and being personally involved with the subject researched, I intended to be bias and exclude any affect my impressions, knowledge or involvement might have on the result.

5.1.3 Triangulation

Triangulation is supposed to support a finding by showing that independent measures of it agree with it or, at least, don't contradict it (Miles, M.B., & Huberman, A.M, 1984, 235). Data triangulation is applied in this case study research to confirm the validity and reliability, especially when multi-method approach is used to strengthen the research result gathered from the qualitative and quantitative research. Thus, any findings or conclusions are likely to be more compelling and accurate (Yin 2003) cited in (Gregory, M., B. 2007, 46) by involving different types of samples. Data triangulation will not be used for the purpose of validating the results only but to gain perspective on the researched topic from different angles.

5.1.4 Ethical Issues

Following (Saunders et al. 2009) emphasize on the ethical issues that should be considered in the process of collecting data.

- **Confidentiality.** the information was set to be confidential and no data collected will be shared without the participant approval
- **Privacy.** The participants had the choice to participate or not. One follow-up email reminder was implemented for the quantitative research questionnaire and a deadline for the qualitative research was sent.
- **Anonymity.** The quantitative research respondents were assured anonymity when submitting the research questions answers
- **The purpose of the study.** the purpose of the study was pre-communicated to the participants assuring that the data collected is for this study and company visibility intention.

5.2 Suggestions and conclusion

In this chapter I will discuss the suggestions developed based on the results of the quantitative and qualitative researches, taking into account my own experience, notes and observations.

The results of the researches helped illustrate the current condition of the intern's program and the internal and external factors that had an impact on the success or failure of the program. Fulfilling the objective of this study, listed below are the suggestions to the sponsoring agency based on the results collected from within the workforce and the management.

Promoting the internship program

Based on the survey and the agency's references, the largest group of applicants for the internship opportunity at the agency belong to the millennial generation, therefore the internship opportunity program promotion should be more focused on activities in universities and educational institutes. Not only through attending job fairs and advertising through the job portals, but I would suggest being more involved and participating as guest lecturers, telling the story of a personal success story, the agency transformation journey or sharing a case study.

By facing and interacting with the students face to face, it will leave a mark, raise interest in the sponsoring agency and exploit the opportunity to promote the internship program among a group of students who are striving for a chance secure an internship.

On-boarding and off-boarding

On-boarding have been an issue and was brought up in both qualitative and quantitative research results. Although it was considered to be functional to some extents but there was definitely an area for improvements. The following issues should be under the scope when on-boarding an intern:

- Induction is an essential phase of the on-boarding, when the intern is provided with the work necessities, introduced to colleagues, the mentor and all contacts needed. Induction should facilitate the internship experience start for the intern.
- The level of the intern's experience will determine how much follow-up and observation is needed which is to be confirmed during the recruitment process.
- The mentor commitment to assist in this phase is crucial for the intern's successful continuation.

Furthermore, making sure that the off-boarding of the interns is treated with cautious and the aftermath should be taken into account. Interns who leave after the internship has finished should have a proper off-boarding in terms of follow-up, meeting to discuss the pros and cons of the experience and most of all making sure that the intern leaves on good terms. The objective is to assure that the reputation of the agency is not affected. Interns raise visibility of the agency and proves the agency investment in the educational sector.

Mentorship importance

It is a fact the the current method at the agency all are acting as mentors and the interns can ask anyone at the agency for help but still implementing mentorship process will help structure the internship experience and assure the intern with help when needed. Mentors will guide and assist the intern to execute the tasks and assuring the intern to be on the right track.

Talent pool

It is strongly recommended to create a talent pool, dedicated to manage the existing talents and review the needed future skilled employees and create the process to acquire them. The plan could consist the assessment of the current existing talented employees who have the potential for development to become future talents and determine the required skills in the upcoming employees to fill the future positions.

The talent pool helps the agency selecting candidates for job openings in short time frame, consisting of internal candidates who represent the agency values and goals and external candidates who have the potential of becoming future talents.

Rewarding and Recognition Process

Recognition is a form of sincere praise or appreciation given to an individual by another and reward as the earned item of value presented to an individual for successful accomplishment of a particular service, task or mission (Smith 2001, 161). Recognition should always be part of the employee maintenance plan, appreciation and recognition has fundamental impact on the talent performance. Recognition process should not be considered costly, but could be part of the employee assessment process.

The recognition methods vary, they could be as rewards like the URHO prize that has been offered to 2 talents at the sponsoring agency already and it had a positive impact not only on the rewarded talents but on the whole company members, it enhanced the internal communication and the information exchange, feedback and opinions about colleagues. Therefore, I

would recommend the agency to implement a scheduled assessment process for all the employees acquaint them with the process to encourage them perform at their best always.

Talent Manager

The main representative that the agency is missing currently is the “talent manager”. It is a skill and doesn’t evolve around a person who has social skills, good with people and being friendly only, it requires management skills, professional alignment between the agency goal and individual talent’s goal. It can be considered as a precaution plan against any change ahead of the curve. I would strongly recommend that the sponsoring agency should consider investing in the current administrative/ HR manager for her proven management and social skills. The first step would be engaging her in a specialized talent management preparation training.

The following figure illustrates the talent management life cycle, showing the phases that the talent encounter during the talent management plan.



Figure 13: Talent management life cycle by faq-logistique (Heidrick & Struggles).

Talent management success is linked to the existence of the “talent pool”, organisational restructuring, globalisation and competition highlight the need for both organisations and individuals to be focused on investment in learning (Garofano, C.M. and Salas, E. 2005, 281-304).

The talent management process usually starts by identifying the need for the agency's future business plan, process establishment, assessing the existing talents and how to develop the the employees who don't fit within the agency's development plan.

Finally, based on the overall study and results gained from the qualitative and quantitative researches, in addition to my own experience, observations and notes, the final conclusion of the needed changes on the current agency process is drawn in the following figure which demonstrates the suggested process to the agency to fit and integrate the talent management within the process and invest more in the internship program.

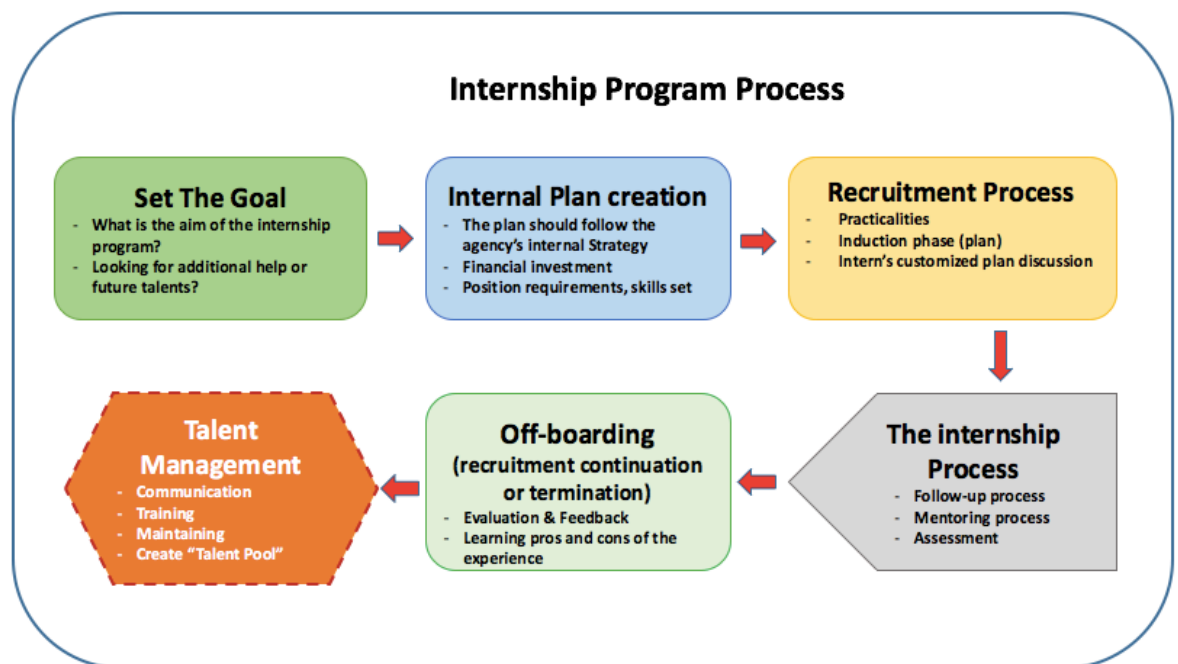


Figure 14: Suggested internship program process, (Saleem, N., 2016)

Conclusion

This study has been conducted on the sponsoring digital marketing agency using quantitative and qualitative research methods. The agency is in the process of incremental change and development. The constant change in the workforce, multicultural environment and considering the agency's aim to implement an organized internship program which attracts the best talents in the market, it has become evident that there is a need to research and investigate the impact

of the current process and strategy, collect feedback on the needed changes and improvements from the employees' perspective. The results collected through the quantitative research highlighted several areas which were subject for development.

Furthermore, qualitative research provided an insight on the management awareness of the issues in question, their plans to overcome any obstacles, enhancement and development strategy.

I believe the study have provided the sponsoring agency with a holistic view of the current internal operations in regards to the internship program, the intern's satisfaction and ex-interns evaluation of the internship experience. The study highlighted the areas that needs improvements and provided practical examples on how some processes succeeded and how others failed.

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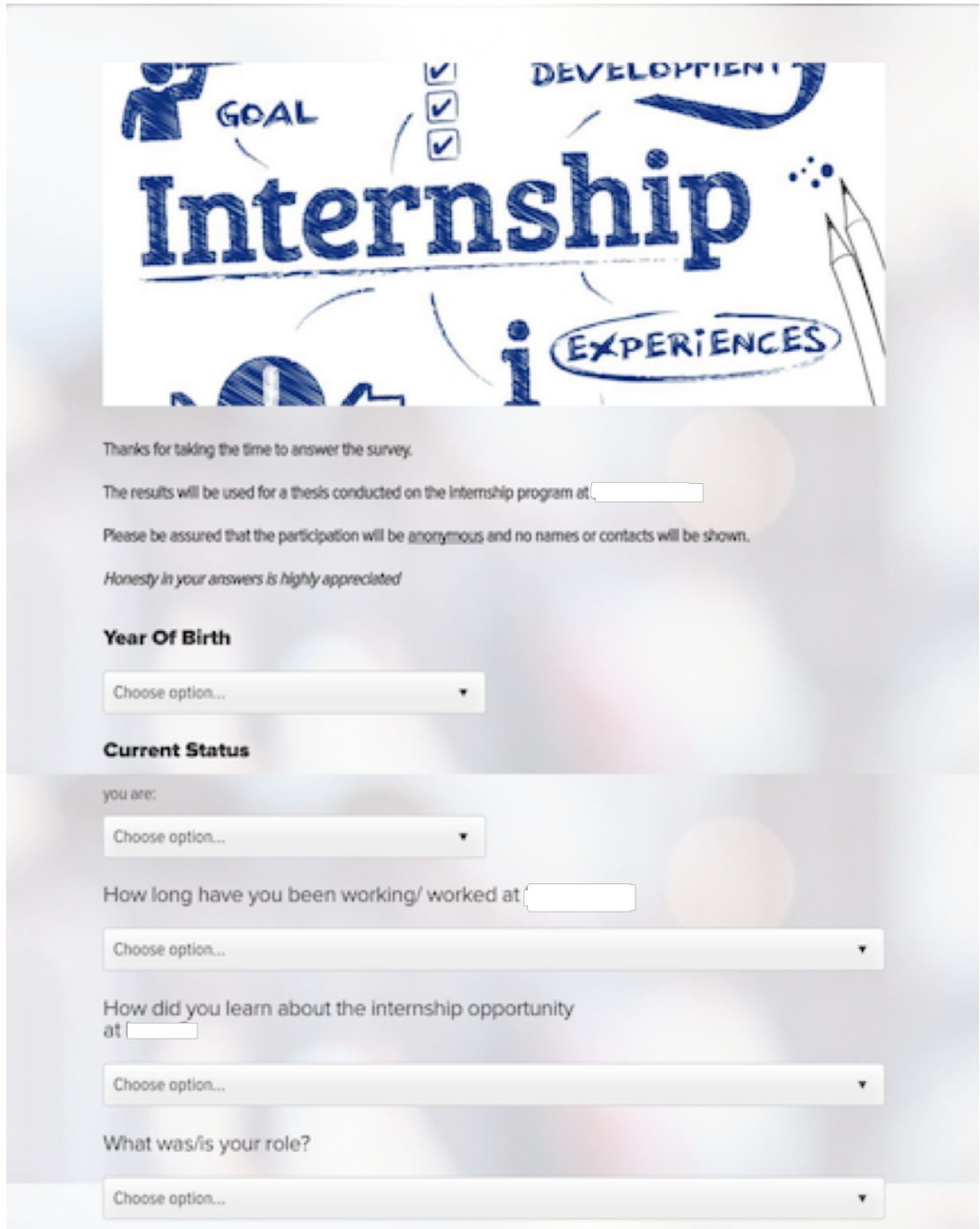
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Attachments

Attachment 1: Quantitative questionnaire

SurveyPal. (Saleem, N., 2016)



The image shows a screenshot of a SurveyPal questionnaire titled "Internship". The header features a hand-drawn style with the word "Internship" in large blue letters, surrounded by icons and text like "GOAL", "DEVELOPMENT", and "EXPERIENCES". Below the header, there is a thank you message and a disclaimer. The questionnaire consists of several questions, each with a dropdown menu for the answer.

Thanks for taking the time to answer the survey.

The results will be used for a thesis conducted on the Internship program at [redacted]

Please be assured that the participation will be anonymous and no names or contacts will be shown.

Honesty in your answers is highly appreciated

Year Of Birth

Choose option...

Current Status

you are:

Choose option...

How long have you been working/ worked at [redacted]

Choose option...

How did you learn about the internship opportunity at [redacted]

Choose option...

What was/is your role?

Choose option...

Please state how well were the following phases of the internship program conducted?

	1=Poor	2=Fair	3=Good Applicable	4=Excellent	5=Not Applicable
	1	2	3	4	5
The induction of the internship	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The structure of the tasks assigned	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The briefing and the follow-up process	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Completion phase and lessons learned	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Evaluation and feedback	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

To what degree you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	1.Strongly Disagree	2.Disagree	3.Agree	4.Strongly Agree	5.Not Sure/not applicable
	1	2	3	4	5
The internship program was pre-organized/structured	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The internship program was educative	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Had the opportunity to work on diversity of tasks	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
You always had the help needed and when needed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The responsibilities assigned to me were convenient to my skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The program met the expected outcome	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Internship had clear objectives stated at the start	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What was missing from the internship program process? How could it be enhanced?

What was your contribution to ?

If you are still an intern would you be interested in joining as an employee if an opportunity was offered to you? Or, if you didn't continue after the internship what was the reason in your opinion?

What did the internship do very well?

Would you recommend a internship to fellowstudents / peers

- ☐ Highly recommend
- ☐ Recommend
- ☐ Recommend with reservations
- ☐ Would not recommend

Save and resume later

Submit

Attachment 2: Qualitative research questions

The following table illustrates the qualitative questions and their relation to the theories and literature. (Saleem, N., 2016)

Question Type	Question	Question Purpose
Ideal	Since the actual kick-off the internship program how successful do you think it is so far?	The aim of this question is to gain information from the agency personnel on how well was the induction phase applied, discussing the internship program formation
Multiple	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have you worked closely with an intern? Please describe how well did you think was the intern inducted into the program? 	This sub-question is meant to obtain precise information and to provide actual examples on how was it illustrated.
Interpretative	Could you define the standards used by the agency to choose the interns?	This question should help us understand the agency's strategy in selecting and filtering the interns' applicants.
Provocative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is obvious that all the current interns belong to millennial generation, Is the agency targeting this group of applicants only? 	This sub-question is to discuss the target group for potential interns and future talents.
Ideal	In your opinion was there a planned follow-up process after the intern/ talents have been recruited?	This question focuses on the offboarding of the internship program or transition phase to a regular agency's employee.

Interpretative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How would you describe the internal communication within the agency in general? 	The aim form this sub-question is to understand how is the internal communication within the agency is perceived.
Leading	Do you think we have secured talents through the internship program?	The answer to this question should confirm whether the internship program is successful and functional in attracting talented applicants and if it achieved the goal
Interpretative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are we maintaining them? 	This sub-question is to confirm that the agency is following a certain strategy to maintain the talents acquired through the program
Interpretative	As recognition method the URHO prize was applied, how did you come-up with the idea? Are there any other recognition methods?	The aim of this question is to help understand the rewarding process at the agency.
Leading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do you think this helps to boost the chosen talent self-esteem? 	This sub-question is to gain information on the post-reward phase and how did it help the rewarded employee and influenced his/ her performance
Multiple	How is the agency investing to enhance and develop the internship experience? What are the upcoming changes to the internship program at the agency?	Finally this multiple question is to grasp the company's investment in the program and what are the current plans in the pipeline and the future considerations.