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THE ROLE OF THE EMPLOYER BRAND IN EMPLOYEE ATTRACTION AND RETENTION

Case: Matchtech Group PLC



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'Internal Marketing', 'Workplace Branding', 'Employer Branding', 'Reputation Management'; names vary, but the aim is the same; to attract the best talent in to the business. (Berthon et al., 2005). Developing Employer Brand has become a fundamental factor of many organisation's Human Resource Strategy. Employer Brand is '...a set of attributes and qualities, often intangible, that makes an organisation distinctive, promises a particular kind of employment experience, and appeals to those people who will thrive and perform best in its culture'. (CIPD, 2015). Why does this matter? As Berthol et al. (2005) argue, organisation's personnel is its first market, and jobs are internal products.

The biggest work force by the 2020 is going to be the Generation Y, or 'Millennials', those born between 1983 and 1999. That is why this research mainly focuses on what factors effect on attracting this particular generation. How are businesses prepared to attract them? The company (Matchtech Group), which provides the research environment for this study, has previously drawn heavily focus to its Employer Brand. They were accredited as one of Britain's top employers (CRF, 2010) and voted as the 25th of 100 Best Companies to Work For in the UK (2012, Sunday Times). How were these awards achieved? Can a company manage its Employer Brand? If they can, how is it done?

Four major business reasons were identified as main drivers for this research at Matchtech Group PLC. They are 1) Issues around attracting Millennial work force, 2) Rising staff turnover, especially the new recruits, 3) M&A and rebranding, 4) Building a new internal culture.

KEYWORDS:

Employer Brand, Employee Attraction, Employee Retention, Millennials, Leadership, Generation Y, Human Resources, Reputation, Employee Communications, Mental Models, Company Culture

Minna Janhonen

TYÖNANTAJABRÄNDIN ROOLI HENKILÖSTÖN HOUKUTTELEMISESSA JA SÄILYTTÄMISESSÄ

Case: Matchtech Group PLC

‘Sisäinen Viestintä’, ‘Työyhteisö Brändäys’, ‘Työnantajabrändi’, ‘Maineen Hallinta’; nimet vaihtelevat, mutta tavoite on sama: houkutella parhaat työntekijät työyhteisöön. (Berthon et al., 2005). Työnantajabrändin (Employer Brand) kehittämisestä on tullut perustavanlaatuinen tekijä organisaation Henkilöstöhallinta strategiaa. Työntajabrändi on ‘...yhdistelmä piirteitä ja tekijöitä, usein aineettomia, jotka tekevät organisaatiosta omanlaatuisensa, lupaa tietynlaisen työntekijäkokemuksen ja vetoaa niihin yksilöihin, jotka tulevat menestymään ja pärjäämään parhaiten kyseisessä työkuulttuurissa’. (CIPD, 2015). Miksi tällä on merkitystä? Siksi, että esimerkiksi Berthol et al. (2005) esittää, että organisaation henkilöstö on tämän ensimmäinen markkina, ja roolit/työnkuvat ovat sisäisiä tuotteita.

Vuoteen 2020 mennessä suurin työntekijamassa ovat ‘Millenniaalit’, Y-sukupolvi, eli 1983-1999 vuosina syntyneet. Tämän vuoksi tämä tutkimus keskittyy lähinnä niihin tekijöihin, jotka vaikuttavat tämän kyseisen sukupolven houkuttelemiseen työyhteisöön tai organisaatioon. Kuinka organisaatiot ovat valmistautuneet houkuttelemaan heitä? Brittiläinen organisaation, Matchtech Group PLC, joka on tarjoaa tälle tutkimukselle työyhteisönsä tutkimuskohteeksi, on aiemmin keskittynyt suuresti Työntajabrändinsä kehittämiseen. Heidät akkreditoitiin yhdeksi Britannian huipputyönantajaksi (CRF, 2010) ja äänestettiin 25. Parhaaksi Työpaikaksi koko Yhdistyneessä Kuningaskunnassa vuonna 2012 (Sunday Times). Kuinka tällaisia palkintoja saavutetaan? Pystyykö yritys hallitsemaan omaa Työnantajabrändiä? Jos, niin miten?

Tutkimuksen alussa tunnistettiin neljä ydinsyytä joiden perusteella tämä tutkimus todettiin tarpeelliseksi. Nämä ovat: 1) Y-sukupolven (Milleniaalit) työntekijöiden houkuttelemiseen vaikuttavat tekijät 2) Kasvava työntekijävaihtuvuus, erityisesti viimeksi rekrytoityjen joukossa, 3) Uudelleenbrändäys ja kulttuurien yhteensulauttaminen, 4) Uuden sisäisen kulttuurin rakentaminen

ASIASANAT:

Työntekijabrändi, Työyhteisön Vetovoima, Työntekijöiden Sitoutus, Millenniaalit, Johtajuus, Y-sukupolvi, Henkilöstöhallinto, Maine, Kommunikaatio, Mielenmallit, Yrityskulttuuri

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1 INTRODUCTION

Competition of skilled labour is intense in developed countries, and talented employees vote with their feet. (Wilden et al. 2010) If we followed Wilden's (2010) logic, it would mean that companies operating in increasingly competitive employment markets needed to be alert and develop strategies in order to become the employer of choice; to stand out. How is this done?

In the recent history 'brand management' has taken a turn from just creating the best customer experience to the clients to also looking into internal marketing and internal branding. (Mosley, 2007). Mosley talks about employer brand management as the shaping force behind the organisational culture. Employee's brand experience is something that is created together with organisation's HR, management and marketing; it is how every step of employees' experience is aligned with "the brand ethos of the organisation". (Mosley, 2007).

The aim of this work is to look into, learn and analyse the process of what makes an individual attracted to a certain organisation to the extent that s/he applies for a job and/or accepts a job offer in that organisation. Research for this work took place at Matchtech Group PLC (known as GATTACA since August 2016), and looked into reasons why an individual applied for, or, chose to accept a job offer at MTG PLC.

There are four business reasons why the organisation found this topic urgent; the first one being the fact that there is a belief of Millennial workforce abandoning the old ways of work. This may well be an assumption, and therefore requires a closer look. This generation, born between 1985 and 1999, will be the largest demographic of the working population by 2020, and it is important to acknowledge that the old style of leadership – carrot and stick – may have a very little motivational effect on Millennials. This style, together with annual Performance Management Appraisals, strict working boundaries and

outdated, often unnecessary rules, might make Millennials vote with their feet. (CIPD, 2016).

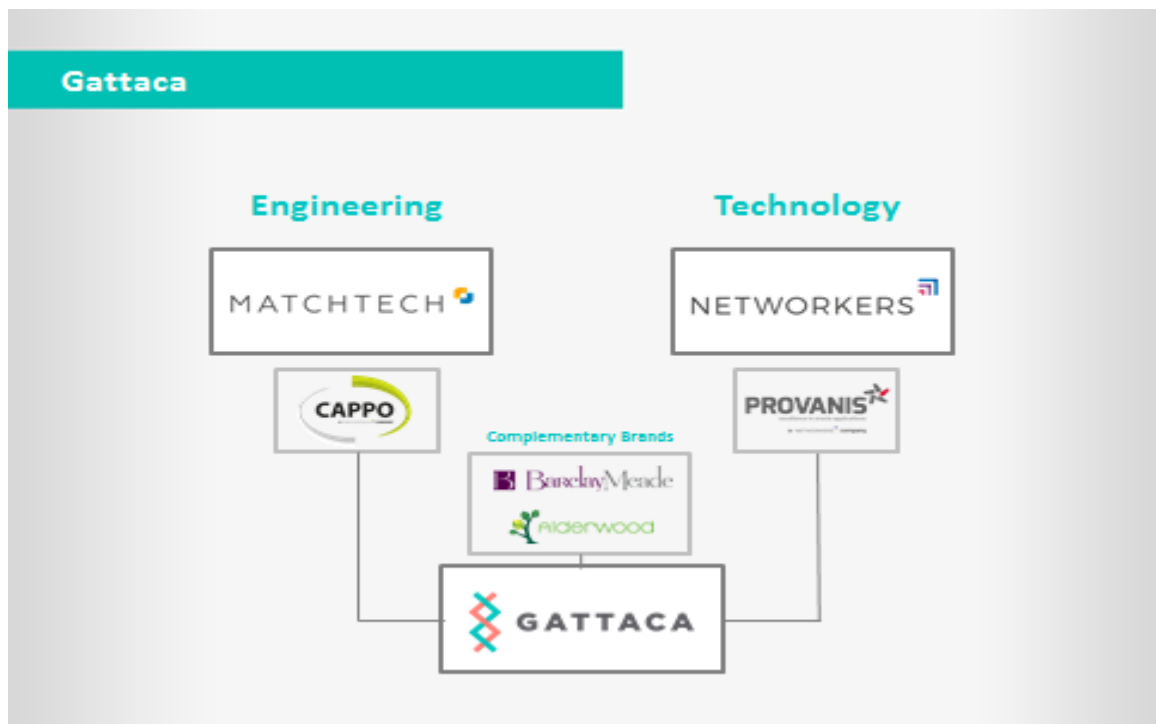
Secondly, based on the facts and figures from the financial year 2015 the business is experiencing a higher than usual level of employee turnover. Even if the attrition generally tends to be higher in sales organisations, MTG has in its history had lower attrition numbers compared to others in the market. (MTG, 2015) This is due the fact that MTG invests heavily into its new recruits with various methods, it is a real concern that the many of the new employees leave before 12 months in the business. This issue together with the second and the last fact create an interesting dilemma; Millennials are not solely money-motivated, so what else a sales organisation can offer as incentives for a Millennial sales professionals?

Third reason; the situation at MTG was an interesting one from (employer) branding point of view due a very recent Merge and Acquisition. This took place when MTG PLC bought Networkers International in early 2015. This M&A has resulted with rebranding of the whole organisation; Matchtech Group PLC is known as Gattaga from 1st of August 2016. The fourth and final business reason was that the senior management wanted to start building 'a clan culture', more of a 'family feel' and 'team work' cultures as a part of the rebranding, which is an interesting choice taken into account MTG is a sales (recruitment) organisation and sales work force generally is motivated by individual targets and incentives.

Taking all of these facts into account gives enough reasons for the business to take a close look to its Employer Brand and its ability to attract the right kind of talent into the business. MTG is an experienced player in the recruitment field; it was founded in 1984, by George Matena, and was first called Matchmaker Personnel. In over 30 years it has grown to be a over 300 strong engineering recruitment specialist.

The M&A had been ongoing before and during the research for this thesis took place. The parent organisation called GATTACA was born in the summer 2016, shortly after the research for this study finished.

The picture below shows the organisational structure of GATTACA from August 2016 onwards:



Picture 1: GATTACA company structure; MTG has for a long history of M&As and of acting as a parent company to smaller specialist branches it owns.

1.1 Thesis structure

This thesis consists of six parts; First Part introduces and describes the topic and themes around Employer Brand, as well as the Case Company, where the research took place. The structure of the thesis is also described in this part.

Second Part is the Literature Review. It looks into different theories and perspectives around Employer Brand, such as the purpose of EB, reputation management, culture management, internal communications, company culture, employee engagement, the role of merge and acquisition (important reason and

trigger for the Case Company's re-branding exercise). Literature review also makes a few remarks on the Future of Employer Branding.

Third Part is the research methodology. The process of gathering data was a long process, consisting of various independent phases, all of which, from the start to the finish, have been crucial when drawing together the bigger picture and analysis. Results and data from various sources enabled to reflect and compare with the direction of the company. They also produced a good foundation for business recommendations.

In part four the results and findings are being presented. The gathered data is laid out and analysed. Part five draws from the gathered data a Development Proposal. The last, Part six talks about the limitations of this research and gives future research suggestions.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Employer Brand and its purpose

Employer Brand was first introduced by Ambler and Barrow in 1996 in their article 'The Employer Brand'. Their definition was that Employer Brand is "the package of functional, economic, and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company". Employer Brand and Employer Branding plays a big role in employer's ability to attract and retain the best talent in the market. Dodini (2015) argues that the quality of the people determines the success of the company. Ambler and Barrow (1996) also highlighted that the main purpose of EB is to help management with prioritizing tasks and processes as well as obviously improve recruitment, retention and engagement.

As Zavyalova and Kuchero (2012) point out, employer brand could be the key factor of competitiveness for a company in today's highly competitive labor market. "Aligning employees with the firm's larger strategic goals is critical if organizations hope to manage their human capital effectively and ultimately attain strategic success," said John Bingham, director of the MBA program and associate professor at the Marriott School. (Dodini, 2015). Potential applicants may put emphasis on organisation's HR methods (Turban and Greening, 1997). This is due the fact that applicants usually have not got accurate information of the organisation, and this results them interpreting the signals they receive from the company. Signals create mental models. These signals effect on organisation's reputation with all its stakeholders. (Hannon & Milkovich, 1996).

A 'Millennial myth' has developed over the time, that might not be that big after all. There is a list of 'best practice tips' put together by Ian MacRae (2017), that puts the whole 'How to Attract Millennial Talent' into form that makes sense;

- 1) Clearly define and measure performance criteria
- 2) Hire and promote based on valid predictors of performance

- 3) Avoid making (HR) decisions based on stereotypes
- 4) Hire for potential, train and develop what can be learned
- 5) Understand that some (young) people will be more mature than others

2.2 Reputation management

Hutton et al. (2001) argue, that companies have recognized the need for reputation management, but little or nothing is being done for it. Organisation's (hiring managers) and candidates/employees views differ on actual reasons organisations exists. (Deloitte, 2016). Sohn et al. (2015) points out that well managed corporate social performance combined with a culture of being "a great place to work" attract Millennials, who are coming into the work force. However, it has been warned, that perks, benefits and so forth have a potential to be a "window dressing for a lackluster culture." If a company doesn't have a strong culture to begin with, perks will not improve it. There are several researchers (Ambler, 2003, Berthon et al, 2005) arguing that EB is just an unsuccessful side of the internal marketing. It is also being defined as "internal branding concept" (Martin and Hetrick, 2006). The recent emerge on the interest on EB and its significance could be explained with the evolution of the psychological contract and its importance and relevance on today's employee relations. (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004, Zavyalova and Kuchero, 2012).

2.3 Merge & Acquisition

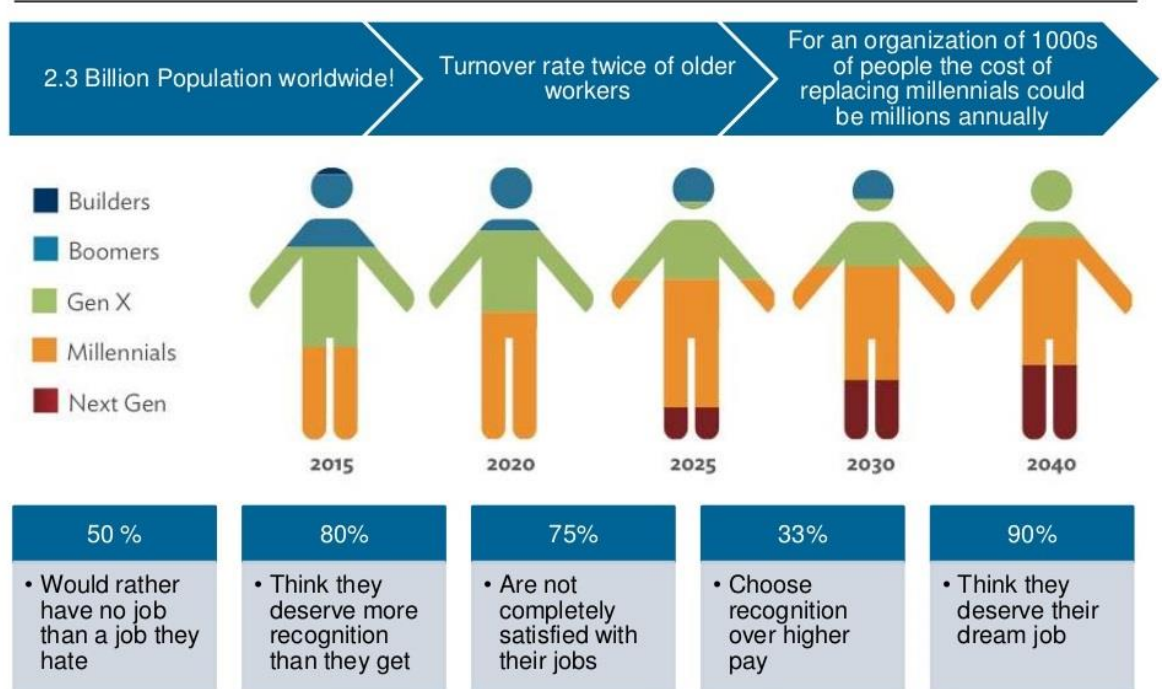
Mergers and acquisitions place an unforeseen pressure on the contract between employees and employers. (CIPD, 2009). MTG acquired Networkers International in 2015, and the process of merging these two organisations into one has been on-going ever since. CIPD (2009) stresses, that M&A is a prime example of 'change and business transformation'. A CIPD survey tells that majority (79%) of employers do not have tools or processes in place to recognise the talent that could help the business in the future. Matchtech Group

PLC wants to recognise their talent and build High Performing Work Systems. Penna (CIPD, 2009) surveyed 1000 employees, of which 71% said they would have stayed in the organisation if their potential would have been recognized. Of these 21% said they did not know if companies had processes and procedures in place to do this. From these findings Penna draw a conclusion that 23% of the talent had quit due the lack of recognition.

2.4 Culture management

“Those who feel in control appear to be a little more loyal.” (Deloitte, 2016). Three quarters of Millennials are confident and feel in control of their career paths. Millennial workforce feels at home in an organisation where the culture is fun, but ambitious. (Walmsley, 2007). This year’s (2016) 13th best company to work for, according The Sunday Times, La Fosse Associates; “This me-first workplace culture is changing. Today, talented and driven employees [recruiters in this case] know they’re more likely to realise their ambitions by working together as part of a high-performing collegiate team. This approach has long-term sustainability and creates a more enjoyable working environment. Recruitment companies will succeed if they foster a “we-first”- workplace culture. At La Fosse, our collaborative environment makes our people care more, work harder and be happier individuals.” Lauren Connolly, La Fosse (2016).

THE GLOBAL MILLENNIAL TAKEOVER



Picture 2: The Generational Differences (Universum, 2012)

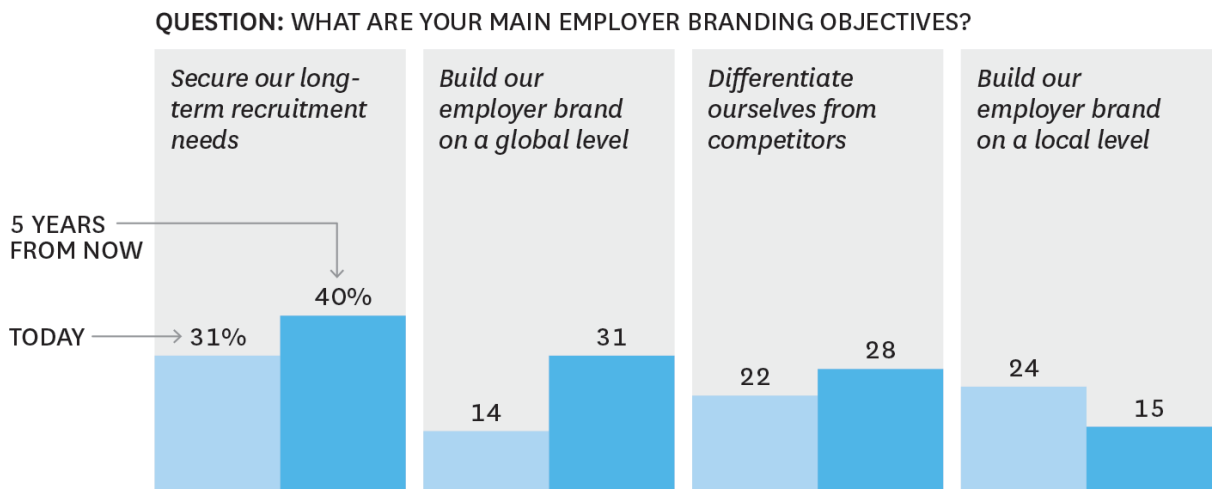
As Dodini's (2001) research as well as Universum's survey (2012) both point out, the Millennial generation feels that if the company culture allows them to get to know each other within the company, they become part of something bigger. They are not just earning money; they are there to be a part of the company and succeed as a team to meet the business objectives.

2.5 The Future of Employer Branding

It is more and more important that HR, Senior Management, Communications and Marketing work seamlessly together so that the right message is being communicated to the market. The future employees need to not only be aware of the reputation of the organisation, but also of its benefits, training possibilities and organisational culture. (Love, 2011).

Employer Branding Is Becoming Strategically More Important

What CEOs and HR and marketing leaders expect it to do for the company by 2020.



SOURCE "2020 OUTLOOK: THE FUTURE OF EMPLOYER BRANDING," UNIVERSUM 2015

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Picture 3: The Importance of Employer Branding in the Future

As the above picture presents, the top two most important elements [5 years from now] with the future of Employer Branding are 'Securing the long-term recruitment needs' and 'Building the Employer Brand on a global level'. As close third and fourth are "Differentiate ourselves from competitors" and "Build the Employer Brand on a local level". (Universum, 2015). It is time for businesses to understand that Employer Brand(ing) goes beyond the marketing materials, logos and vision statements.

Are we focusing too much on what makes the generations different from each other? Should there be more emphasis on 'personality types' and individual characteristics as well as business needs? There are specialists and researchers who do not think that generation, or age itself, plays a huge role when it comes to recruiting, retaining and/or motivating candidates and employees. One of them is Ian MacRae, who puts more emphasis on individuals rather than stereotyping entire generations. The Strauss-Howe model of four generations (below) has been used to explain the generational differences – this has been one of the first models to popularise this concept of different needs of entire population. However, MacRae argues it is more useful in describing historical generations, rather than a valid psychological theory.

The Strauss-Howe model's four generations

Generation type	Recent Example	Description
Prophet	Baby Boomers	Emerges at the end of a crisis period in the history, at a time of social consensus. This generation becomes focused on morals and principles.
Nomad	Generation X	Emerges during a time when the normal social order is under attack. They begin to feel alienated from society and want to build pragmatic and stable leadership.
Hero	Generation Y (Millennials)	Emerges during a time of self-reliance and independence from the social order. This generation becomes team-minded, strong leaders who feel attacked by new generations.
Artist	Generation Z (Homeland generation)	Emerges during a time of crisis and political instability. They become focused on rules early on and favour the ethics of strong institutions and personal sacrifice.

Picture 3: Strauss-Howe's four generation types

"A person's date of birth is not a very useful characteristic in predicting motivation or performance" MacRae, 2017. What MacRae suggests, is that personal traits and individual aspirations are far more important, than large generatisations, when it comes to what motivates an invidual to do anything.

3 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research purpose and area

At the time of MTG going through large M&A and re-branding projects, the management found the topic of Employer Branding a major issue affecting their future success and growth. The research was commissioned by the Head of Recruitment and Reward at Matchtech Group PLC. The final decision to carry out this research was decided together with the wider HR and senior management team. The ongoing M&A activities over the course of past couple of years have resulted with a need to assess the way the company is being seen and how it wants to be seen; what kind of reputation it has in the market?

The research objectives, for trying to find answers to these questions, are to understand and recognise the role [significance] of Employer Brand, strengths and limitations of it, and to find ways for taking Employer Branding to practice at MTG. Ultimately it is to find and set road signs for the future work around EB when it comes to Employer Branding at CATTAGA, that is MTG's future after M&A activities.

The way the research tries to reach these goals is to combine an overview of the current literature, use historic qualitative and quantitative HR data provided by the business and collect qualitative data by conducting semi-structured interviews. Based on the data, results and analysis recommendations are being developed for the management for further consideration.

Research is in the cross roads of HR, Recruitment, Marketing, Communications, Performance Management, Reputation Management and Organisational Culture/Development/Design.

Research limits itself to recent literature on the topic and best practice across local, national and international markets.

3.2 Research methodology and philosophy

As Saunders et al (2012) suggest, the research process is like peeling the layers of an onion. Approach to the research ontology in this work is that nothing is seen as black and white. The reality has many shades, and is more contested and contradictory. Researcher is inclined to consider and explore, hence the preferred quantitative approach. Researchers view is that knowledge is created together, in mutual and contextual understanding. This makes the research epistemology the following; how do we understand a unique person's world views? Researcher's personal philosophy is a mixture of interpretivism and pragmatism. She believes that reality differs between locations and can be constructed within communities. (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998).

The research approach in this thesis is inductive, meaning that exploratory techniques to discover are being used. As research strategy there was a mix of 'grounded theory', meaning there is a new theory, tool, guidance or a model constructed from the data. (See Recommendations). 'Phenomenology' means here that the research topic is the topic under the spotlight, adding some insights from the large population (survey).

As the time horizon, this research was carried out during the summer 2016, so it is mostly cross-sectional, however some of the secondary data is from as far as 2013, so some of the longitudinal characteristics do apply.

3.3 Research design and questions

The research questions are based on the following objectives;

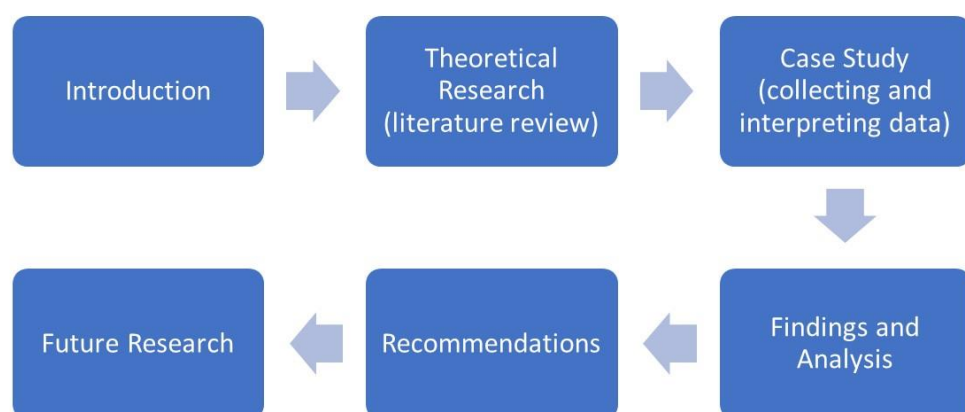
1. Nature and significance of Employer Brand
2. Strengths of Employer Brand
3. Limitations of Employer Brand
4. Alternative strategies for enhancing Employer Brand

The reasearch carried out during Summer 2016 was built around these objectives.

Research questions were formed to investigate the subject area of Employer Brand and its sub-categories from a very practical point of view. Research questions were formed in a way that they would deliver data for the business from different directions and levels. As mentioned before, MTG has previously drawn focus to its Organisational Culture, and has also been successful in it by winning external recognitions and awards; in its current M&A environment the need for doing research on what the employees feel and think is important so that the business keeps doing the right things, and does not base its strategic decisions on assumptions.

MTG is a sales organisation, and focuses heavily on developing its sales force. However, they have recognised the importance of their professional and support staff as well in the company's success. For this research a decision was made to combine a substantial amount of historic data from surveying the sales force during 2013, 2014 and 2015 with interview results of professional and support staff.

Research Design



Picture 4: Research Design (Janhonen 2015)

Design for this research is presented in Picture 4 (above). Introduction to research methods was very thorough, and formed a good basis for the rest of the work. Theoretical Research enabled a good continuity for this in a form of a literature review. Drawing from literature review and early stage interaction with the business itself, a Case Study started to come together. Case study itself formed a good combination, as it consisted of historic [numeric and narrative] data as well as interviews. F

The qualitative research sample is limited to Matchtech Group's support staff that had recently joined [less than 12 months into the business] MTG. The quantitative or exited [between 2013 and 2016] the business at MTG's office in Whiteley and Bromley in United Kingdom. Research does not include any other MTG's [overseas] offices.

The flow of the research followed five steps before reaching the final stage of drawing the findings and recommendations together from the data. The five steps were:

1. The first meeting over a cup of coffee with the company's HR Specialist, the Head of Recruitment and Reward, to select the topic and research framework for the thesis.
2. Research on the topic; literature, online resources, benchmarking competitors, journal articles.
3. Learning from the exit interviews and leavers survey data gathered over the course of three previous years via semi-structured interviews and online surveys. (2013-2016)
4. Meetings with HR personnel and other managers (finance, marketing, IT) to further investigate the topics and ideas raised during the first meeting with the Head of Recruitment and Reward.
5. Semi-structured interviews with 9 recently recruited (less than a year in) professional and support staff members to gain understanding from the new staff member's point of view.

3.4 Research validity and reliability

Employer Branding is a debated field; is it part of marketing department's concern, corporate communications' or HRs'? Developing it certainly has impacts accros the business. Maybe it should be part of everyone's concern in the business? Finding information and research about the topic was relatively easy, and there is a lot of it. The information about this topic is relatively young; challenge was to recognise what information is relevant and what is not. The oldest source used for this work is from 1990. (SOHN, M. et al. 1990), and most of the information from 2000 and onwards.

The purpose of this thesis work was to find out the signifigance and role of Employer Brand in attracting and retaining talent. A particular emphasis was put on considering what factors affect attracting and retaining Millennial workforce.

The final outcome of this thesis will be Employer Branding recommendation and guidance for the business' Marketing and HR managers in recruiting and retaining Millennials. The current theoretical research done on this matter combined with the data this research provided offer a good base for the guide.

The quantitative data, that was exit interviews and leaver surveys from 2013 to 2016, was easily accessible via the Head of Recruitment and Reward, and there was abundance of it. This data helped to create a picture of issues that affect employees to leave the organisation.

Quantitative research was carried out via interviewing nine recently recruited service, support and professional staff members at Matchtech Group PLC's office in Whiteley, England. They very individually hand-picked by the Head of Recruitment and Reward; they were picked to in order to present a widest possible picture of the organisation's Millennial workforce that just had joined the business. They were able to give answers and opinions on what is MTG Employer Brand, what should be done differently and works well. All in all, this reserch offers the views of a relatively small pool of professional and support

staff; however, a small focus group is not necessarily a bad thing. A wider pool of views of sales force (leavers) is being given.

The most important factor when carrying out semi-structured interviews was to create an environment of trust with the interviewed employees. The very first step was to contact everyone's line manager and to ask if she/he was fine for the employee to take part. The managers had a chance to see the questions and make up their minds after assessing them. All the selected employees were then contacted individually, the reason for them being chosen to be interviewed and the reason behind the interview explained. An option to take part and to not to take part was given, with a caveat that there would not be any consequence whether or not they took part or not. The interview questions were then sent to the selected employees before the interview, so that they knew what they were expected to give answers to. According to Lotti (2001, via Kananen, 2015) it is important that the respondents understand the questions and that the respondents give the information willingly. The reliability of the answers is linked to how well the interviewees understood the questions.

The leavers survey information presents the opinions of 83 employees who left the business during 2013, 2014 and 2016. The questions were determined by HR and management of the MTG, and were looking to understand the underlying reasons for why employees leave the company. The exit interviews (were available for this research) were reviewed and assessed, but not used in too much of in detail due to time constraints. Elements and themes were backed up, and links between the three different data were made.

It should be noted that this research is mainly limited to the employees of Matchtech Group PLC's staff in the United Kingdom, however MTG is a global, growing company with various locations around the world. More work in learning what the company's global Employer Brand is should be done.

Findings from the leaver surveys and exit interviews are being presented via charts (pictures), and Culture Survey interview data is being presented by giving selected snippets as examples; this allows the reader to get closer to the

qualitative data via stories. There could have been more comparing the results with other theoretical sources, however, literature review shows that academic framework exists.

4 FINDINGS

This section of the thesis presents the findings of the mixed method research as well as the analysis. Also a discussion around the findings is presented in this section. As mentioned earlier, four main business reasons had been identified as main drivers for this paper. They were

- 1) Issues around attracting Millennial work force
- 2) Rising staff turnover, especially the new recruits
- 3) M&A and rebranding
- 4) Building a new internal culture

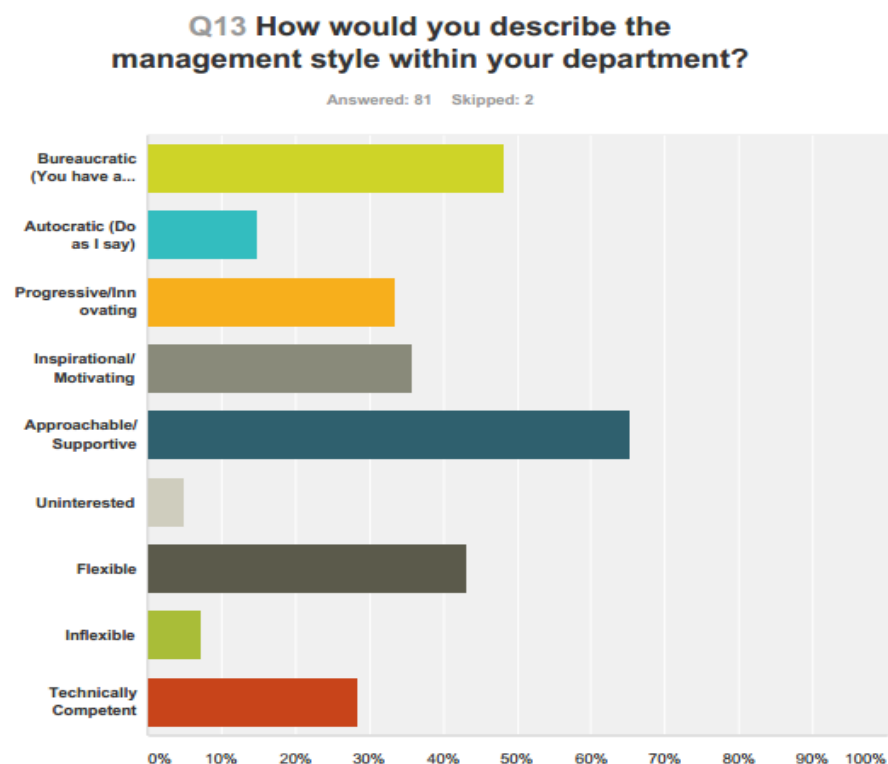
In this section an attempt to identify reasons behind these drivers is being made.

4.1 Total Sample

The total sample of the first stage data (83) consists of total 92 respondents; 9 Exit Interviews (2016) and 83 Leavers Surveys (2013-2016) answers. The second stage data consists of 9 individuals, who were recently (less than a year in the business) recruited employees of the MTG. This sample gives a good overview on how employees perceive MTG as an employer in a broader context (Exit Interviews and Leaver Surveys) as well as what has attracted them to work at MTG recently in the first place (the interviews with recently recruited). 6.1 Exit Interviews and the Leaver Survey The first stage data, the Exit Interviews and Leaver Surveys (2013-2016), consists of altogether 92 respondents. These individuals had been working for MTG from 0.5 month to 20 years. From this data can be drawn some main characteristics of MTG as an employer.

4.2 The Leaver Survey

The Leaver Survey is a massive document from 2013 to 2016. With 83 responses over the course of 3 years it is a valuable tool in trying to understand the challenges MTG has. As the saying goes, employees do not leave organisations, they leave their managers. The Leaver Survey asked how the employees feel about the management at MTG, and overwhelming majority did see the management as approachable and supportive. The second biggest demographic is “bureaucratic”, third “flexible”. What can also be seen here, is that minority sees the management as “autocratic”, “uninterested” or “inflexible”.

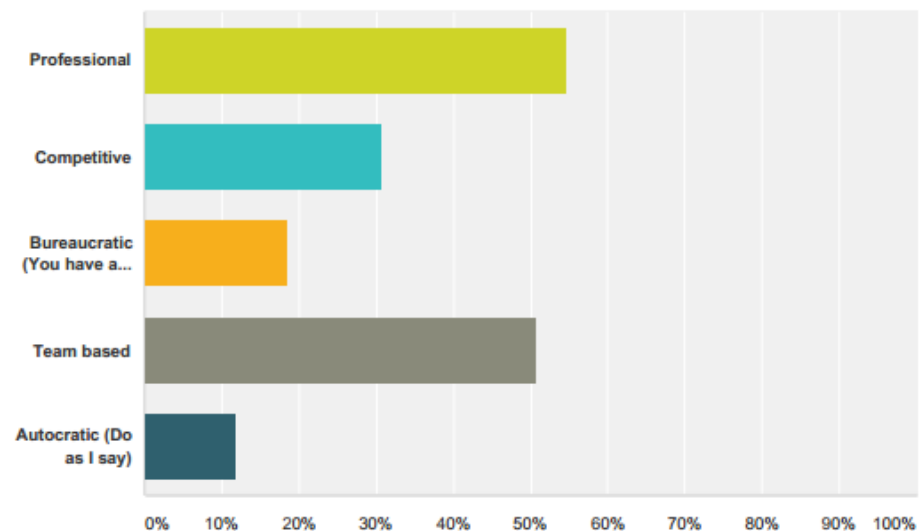


Picture 3: Matchtech Group PLC Leaver Survey Q13 “How would you describe the management style of your department?”

Matchtech Group PLC Leaver Survey

Q10 How would you describe the culture in your office?

Answered: 75 Skipped: 8



Picture 4: Matchtech Group PLC Leaver Survey Q10 “How would you describe the culture at Matchtech.”

Management plays a big role in creating the company culture. In this case, ‘Approachable’, ‘Bureaucratic’ and ‘Flexible’ management creates a ‘Professional’, ‘Team Based’ and ‘Competitive’ culture. The open answers to this question showed concerns of “Networkers culture being ‘absorbed’ to MTG”. The individual giving this answer stressed the fact the NWI has had a ‘very distinctive culture’, and was worried that the business would suffer if this is totally lost due the M&A with MTG. MTG’s and NWI’s merge creates an interesting layer for the future of this organisation. The CEO has highlighted the importance of combining the two cultures in order to become successful. The reason why MTG sees this crucial right now is that right after the M&A there was a peak in employee turnover and also a drop in meeting the sales targets.

The challenge in merging these two cultures can be seen here:

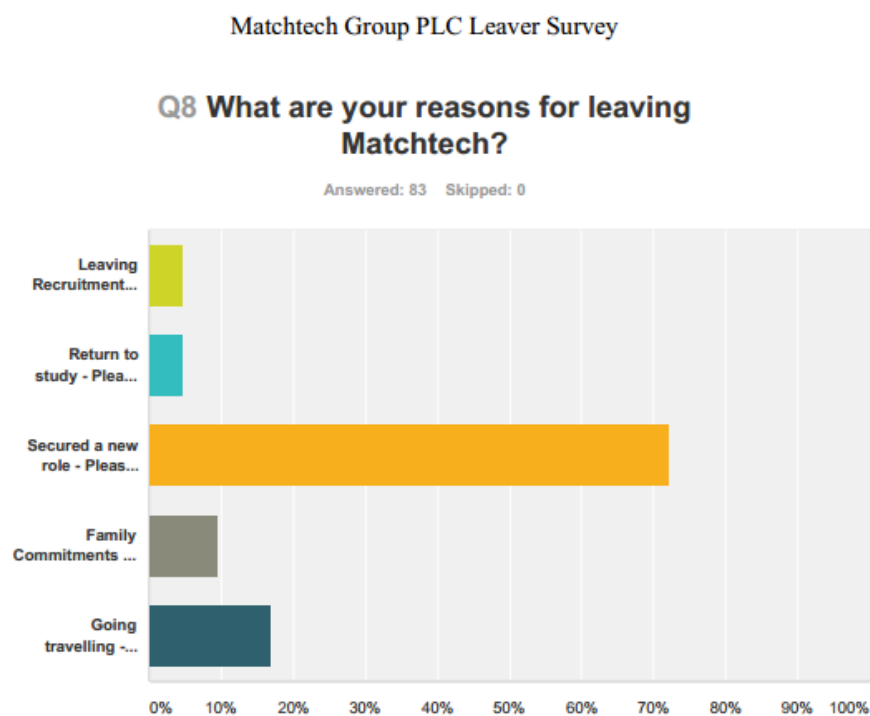
Networkers International	Matchtech Group
Risk taking; setting up numerous global offices, some of which had worked and others had closed as they had not managed to be cost effective.	Risk Adverse; historically MTG has always been extremely cautious when considering other office locations, which has resulted in a very small global footprint with only one other office outside of the UK in Germany.
Maverick; While the NWI brand was well-regarded in some markets, In certain markets which MTG also operated within their risk taking, non-process ways were regarded as 'cowboy' by some of our clients.	Professional; the MTG working environment has been described as corporate by our employees, sometimes it's felt our rule-conscious work-force potentially miss opportunities because they don't look for opportunities to bend the rules.
Stereotypical sales workforce; the demographic of the sales workforce in NWI is very one dimensional, predominantly male, aged 20-23, with similar backgrounds (education, work experience) and outside interests. No women in senior management positions in sales.	Diverse workforce; as a more mature business, MTG's workforce reflects that. A more even split between male and female sales employees, with three female directors in sales. More flexible working practices in place and a more diverse age range as well.
Sales focused; Sales activity in NWI is very visible, with screens in the office detailing the most recent 'deals' and quarterly trips to lavish resorts for the biggest billers.	Process driven; MTG is very compliant in it's approach to winning and managing business, while we have some excellent business development individuals, there is often a lot of bureaucracy surrounding the ability to service new clients. Our legal team check everything with a fine tooth comb.

Picture 5: The culture differences between Networkers International PLC and Matchtech Group PLC (2015)

Leaver Survey made the respondent to think about what they would miss the most about MTG after leaving the business. Answers to this were for example; “The people” “My colleagues” “The friends I have made” “Awesome working environment” “My team” “Networkers community” “Bromley office” “The banter” “Ambitious and professional atmosphere” “Global opportunities” “Work/life balance” “Location” “Nothing” “The IT team” “My manager” “Opportunities”

Based on the answers, MTG has the ingredients of a professional and ambitious sales organisation, where most of the employees leaving will miss the people they worked with as well as the work environment with great opportunities.

What makes employees leave?

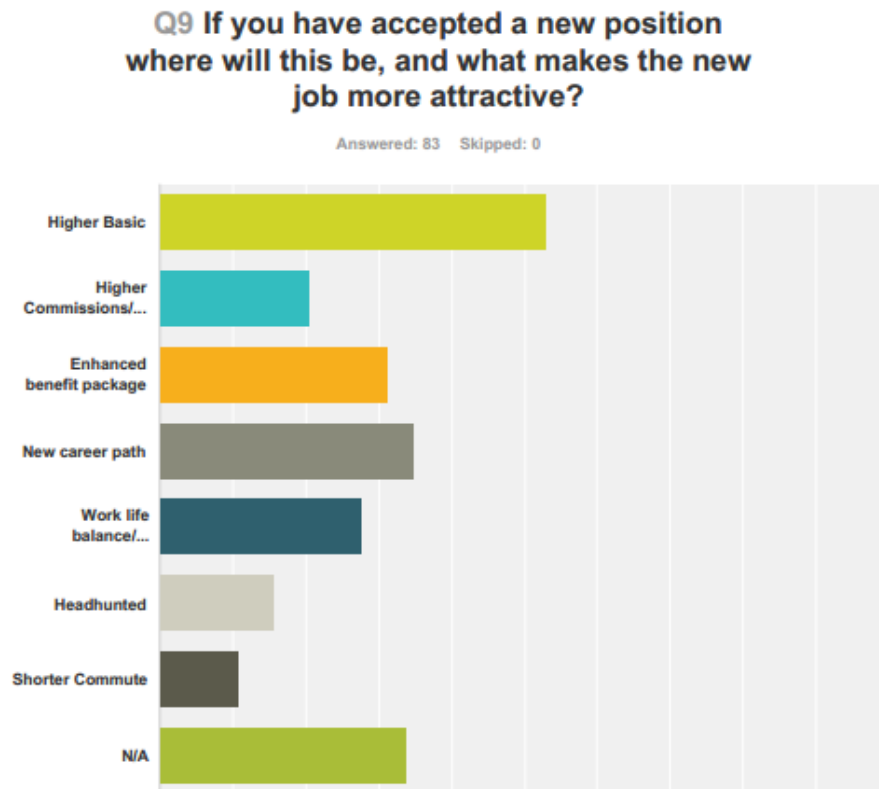


Picture 6: Matchtech Group PLC Leaver Survey Q8 “Reasons for leaving Matchtech.”

Top three reasons behind leaving have been

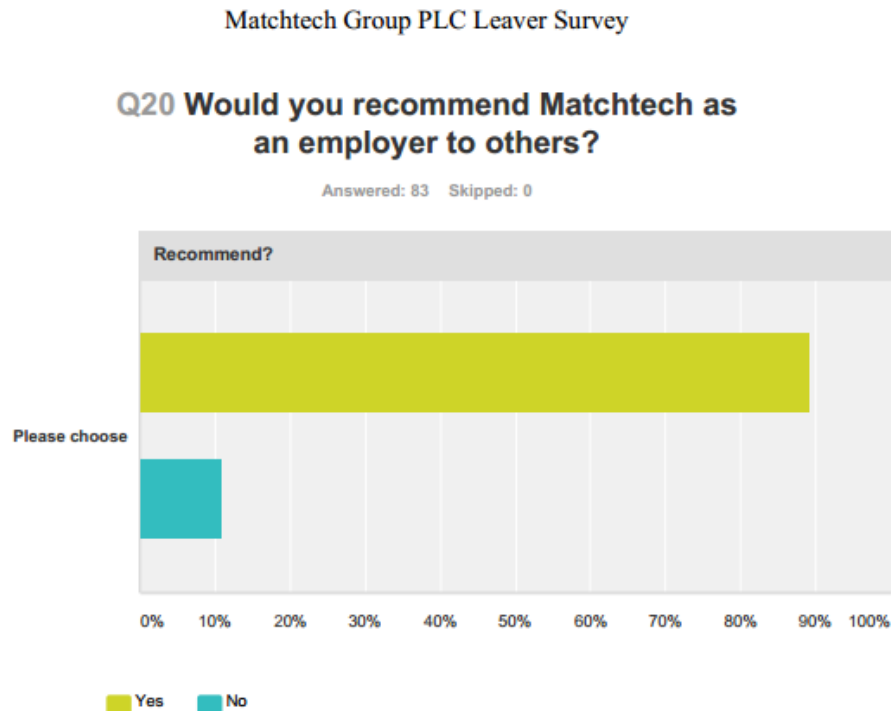
- 1) Securing a new role, 2) Going travelling and 3) Family commitments.

Recruitment industry is known for high employee turnover rate, and the competition of the best talent is fierce. MTG is known for its high quality in-house training, so many RC's start their careers via MTG, and then going after roles with a higher basic (starting salary).



Picture 7: Matchtech Group PLC Leaver Survey Q9 "What makes the new role more attractive?"

When asked what has made them accept the new position, the overwhelming majority answered "higher basic", meaning a higher starting salary. In MTG majority of the employees work as Recruitment Consultants, and they earn a commission on top of their basic salary, as do most RC's in the business. Second highest reason behind changing jobs has been "a new career path", and third "enhanced benefits package". Some of the leavers were head hunted, or in a lookout for better work/life balance, shorter commute or higher commission.



Picture 8: Matchtech Group PLC Leaver Survey Q8 “Would you recommend Matchtech Group PLC.”

Almost 90% of leavers would recommend MTG as an employer to others.

4.3 Exit Interviews

The Exit Interviews (2016) asked the employees leaving MTG, what could be done in order to enhance the work environment at MTG. The responses to this were;

*“...Listen to the people in lower ranking team members.”
Employee, left after 11months*

“...Create a Team Culture. To better understand the market and motivate the team.” Employee, left after ½ month

*“ ...Each team have a different bonus scheme and in a company that's so keen on recognition and rewarding that's difficult.....”
Employee, left after 10 months.*

“The new casual dress day on Fridays is very confusing, why not just have a dress down day? Hot desking between teams and brands which would help with the community.” Employee, left after 1y9months

“As a recruiter you need to be on the phone as much as possible. The quietness at times in the office was not great. I believe that the ideal level of noise should equate to you just about being able to hear yourself on the phone. The atmosphere within the office would be very quiet at times” Employee, left after 20 years

“Communication.” Employee, left after 8.5 years

From these responses can be drawn the following analysis; the employees who left the business, after ½ year to 20 year employee relationships, felt that the issues that need addressing are: 1) employee voice, 2) team culture, 3) reward and recognition, 4) communication.

The Exit Interviews also touches upon the issues, regarding either their own role, or the organisation as a whole, the respondents enjoyed the least while working at MTG. The answers to this ranged from

“The atmosphere, I always found it to be very intimidated and I haven't always been made to feel welcome. It's been hard, I haven't felt like I've fitted in, it's a big corporate environment and I think you have to be a hard bastard. There have been times that I've felt totally left out...” Employee, left after 11 months.

“Lack of communication ... Stuff just tends to happen and we aren't told.” Employee, left after ½ month.

“Lot of marketing meetings that I didn't understand. The ‘in-house jargon’, but this wasn't a bad thing”. Employee, left after 10 months
“..I wasn't interested in the subject [Town Planning] and so did not want to waste anyone's time”. Employee, left after 5 weeks

MTG operates in the recruitment industry, and it is a very sales orientated business. One can assume, that perhaps these individuals were not in the right place, and therefore it might have been good for both them as well as for the business that they moved on. However, the answers do bring issues around communication, motivation and company culture/atmosphere again to the surface.

4.4 Recent Recruits

The second stage data consists of 9 semi-structure interviews. All the individuals interviewed had worked for MTG less than a year, ranging from 2 weeks to 9 months. What makes this sample unique, is that no RCs were interviewed, instead employees from the Shared Services and Support functions. They do not represent the majority of the company's employee demographic, but are as important in order to keep the business alive. The reason to interview staff from Marketing, IT, BIDS, Finance and Admin functions of the business was made, because all the other data (exit interviews and leaver surveys) represents the voice of RCs.

4.5 MTG's Employer Brand

When it comes to attracting and retaining new talent, MTG has so far used a sort of 'Family Feel' culture to do this. In recruitment industry MTG is not the biggest player, nor the youngest, either. It is experienced, and now also international (offices in the UAE, China, Singapore, various locations in Europe, the USA just to mention few). The senior management has recognized that the "old" approach might become challenging in the future, therefore instead of 'Family-Feel' it is pursuing towards 'Clan Culture', as the company is expanding rapidly. This is based on a recent 'cultural survey' that was carried through soon after the M&A in both organisations in order to find out what the new organisation should thrive towards. Now that the merge has been ongoing for a

year and a bit, it is interesting to find out how the two cultures have indeed been mixing together– or have they?

Together with developing the company's culture and updating its vision and mission one of the most significant, and visible to the markets, change that this M&A is going to bring is the change of the Group's name from Matchtech Group PLC to GATTACA. This was announced to the markets in August 2016. This is a part of the rebranding process MTG is currently going through, and it is yet to be seen what kind of affect it will have in different aspects in the business. On one aspect, this research tried to find out what kind of thoughts rebranding process creates in the recent recruits.

When the respondents were asked question **'What is Employer Brand'**, their definitions were:

"Profile that is promoted to the employees and future employees."

"The name of the company, values, what they stand for."

"A strong brand you want to work for. It is a concept; why would one want to work for it in general? A strong brand, like 'Coca Cola' or 'British Airways'."

"Is it how company looks, how it attracts new employees?"

"With my last job the employer brand was so bright and fun. They are the facts that make the company interesting. How people recognise the company as."

"I don't really think Matchtech has one? Their logo? And maybe also the company's ethos. I don't think the one MTG now has, 'Matchtech Group PLC – Making the world a better place' tells to people what we do."

"I suppose it is kind of, when I look at brand, how focused and targeted the brand is in the industry. How well established they are. What is their story? It is the key to exist out in the market?"

“Like a window of which external individuals can have a peek through of what the business is like.”

“Logos and marketing. What it means to me is how the company tries to create a defined look and feel. The design package of a company to get the company message through.”

The respondents saw ‘Employer Brand’ as something tangible and recognizable, such as the company logo and colours. It was also viewed as “how the company comes across”, as well what is the company’s story; what makes the company interesting enough to attract new employees. When asked how MTG differs from other companies in the same industry, the answers were as follows;

“...This is a large company. They are respected in the engineering community. They focus in their client’s industries. We are seen as experts and our voices are being heard across the board...”

“..This is a very big company, they do a lot for their employees, and they communicate well..”

“...The history, the journey. How the company has been growing and building under the main brand. MTG is very focused in their own industry..”

“..MTG is personable and relaxed. Seems quite different considering the level on what MTG operates..”

The fairly newly recruited employees saw MTG as a large, secure and stable company, which has a long and rich history, when comparing it to other companies in the similar business. When asked why and how they had ended up applying for work at MTG, the answers varied

- MTG approached

“...I was approached via a job board. I was made felt needed. There was one other company that approached me, too, but it was located in London, so obviously the commute did not appeal”.

- Atmosphere/culture (had heard of it or had worked at MTG previously)

“...Team atmosphere.”

“...I did recruitment before, never really liked it – but did like the company. Was able to apply to do marketing here. First time around it was the location. Also the good reputation”.

- An interesting open vacancy (applied independently straight for a role)

“..I saw a job advert and I applied here, as well as to 4 to 5 others.”

- Benefits

“...It was a good opportunity. The actual company is very well know. Benefits and things they do to their employees.”

- Location

“...Location and the job role; I was able to build this role, it was a blank canvas. Also work/life balance. I was contacted by Matchtech after I had uploaded my cv to a job board”.

The most of the answers were a combination of two or more reasons mentioned, as one can imagine when looking for and accepting a new role. MTG is suffering a lack of direct applications; and so it really is; less than 1/3 of these roles in Shared Services were filled via a direct application process. What does a Millennial employee working at MTG value in an employer? The answers were (not in a particular order)

- Need to feel appreciated, valued and recognized
- Flexibility
- Team work

➤ Feedback

“...People like to feel appreciated, they’ll work harder for the company. More flexibility towards people. People want to know how they are doing. When you have worked for a company for a long time, you might feel like you are being kind of forgotten.”

“...I want to get feedback and being able to talk to my direct manager. Also having a good team. I want to work for a large company but not too corporate.”

➤ Training

➤ Stability

➤ Structure

➤ Career progression

“...My ability to develop and grow. And also how the company is doing and what is my impact on that. I want to work for a steady and secure company.”

➤ Fun

➤ Benefits

“...I need the fun aspect. We only live ones, we need to have fun too! It is nice how we are being valued and treated here. At Matchtech you don’t have to ask for what you are entitled for”.

The results of this particular question do not surprise. As a research by Deloitte (2016) points out, Millennials want to enjoy their work, they value progression opportunities, they want to have a decent salary; but the company culture and people they work with matter more than money.

When the recent recruits were asked what is lacking at MTG, the answers varied from a need of “more creative environment” to “better communication”.

- Emphasis on creating an inviting and fun work environment

“...A central space everyone could use. Cafeteria, games room perhaps, pool table or something. It is silly to sit by your desk for 9h. You need to have breaks to be productive and innovative...”

“...The disparity of the dress down Friday; a proper dress down Friday thank you! This is not fair how it is now being carried out..”

- More specified training, especially for employees in shared service

“...Training should be changed. There is no training plan for people in shared services....”

- Communication

“...Effective communications. There is a lot of communicating, but not two ways. What are the business aims and objectives?”

- Emphasis on creating a team culture

“....Working as one, as a group. There is resistance to change (between MTG and Networkers). There is quite a lot of blaming. There could be more feedback.”

- Emphasis on induction/learning one's role/getting to know the business and colleagues

“...More getting to know the various departments/shadowing/getting to know the people in business. More emphasis on learning the role when starting to work here.”

“...I am not used to working in a huge floor with a lot of people; I don't mind this at all, but I would like to have more emphasis on getting to know all the people in my floor/building.”

MTG, based on the interviews, needs to be more targeted with training. The Shared Services recruits felt that the inductions and trainings were not for them,

but for RC's. The interviewees also felt there should be more emphasis and work done on creating 'inviting, fun and innovate' culture. They felt this could be done via creating a 'central, communal place', a kitchen or a game room for breaks. Third major issue that was mentioned more than once was that the people wished there was more time to learn the new role, maybe do more shadowing and also more time to get to know the people on the same floor/in own team.

The opinions and ideas on what MTG should do differently (on attraction new talent):

➤ Think future

"...I suppose the only thought here is "where is MTG going to be in two years", so a need to think about where we want to go. Recruiting for future needs rather than short term". "...The Grad dates should/could be done differently. How to build bridges to universities and returning students?"

➤ Think local

"...Maybe more stuff on a local basis. They obviously are a very big company, but one knows them if they already are in the business. To become well known outside the own industry." "...I found MTG via a job board. Wasn't hunting them down, was just looking for local admin roles. Approach the local universities more; universities job boards. Create an app, maybe?"

➤ Think differently

"..Rebranding is now something we are doing differently".

➤ Think location

"...Coach from the station to get the office more accessible. One woman left just because of the lack of flexibility, one left because of illness. The location is not the best!"

The interviewees felt that there is room to grow on a local level. They also pointed out the importance of thinking the future, not only recruiting for today's needs. Rebranding was seen as a good opportunity to differentiate in the market.

When asked, what kind of feelings or thoughts the re-branding creates the answers ranged from

“...I don't know how that affects me, I know we need to inform our clients.”

to

“...‘CATTAGA’ is made of all of us, it is the DNA of all of us.” The level of knowledge of the rebranding varied, as well as the enthusiasm towards it. However, nearly everyone saw it as a chance to create something new, especially with “inviting Networkers in.”

The interviewees felt that there is room to grow on a local level. They also pointed out the importance of thinking the future, not only recruiting for today's needs. Rebranding was seen as a good opportunity to differentiate in the market.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

This research set out to find out the significance of Employer Brand in attracting employees into the business. Employer Brand is a lot bigger concept than just the visual appearance of the company. “Employer branding is a tool that has been put forward to tackle competition, as it applies the long-term strategy of branding to the HR tasks of recruiting, attracting and retaining the right employees” (Hillebrandt & Ivens, 2013). Some of the answers given by the employees can be repeated here; “EB is the story and the history of the organisation”, “EB is the ethos of the company”, “EB is something internal and external”, “EB is what makes organisation interesting”. Employer Brand is seen as a set of values, promises and stories.

The current staff is the most powerful advocate of the company, and when it comes to recruiting new talent into the business, the power of employee referral and word-of-mouth outweighs any paid efforts. The significance of Employer Brand, starting with internal marketing and making sure the existing staff thrives, in attracting employees is undeniable.

Nothing is more costly for an organisation than a wrong recruitment decision. Therefore it is important to recognise the areas of improvement in order to tackle the issues.

5.1 Recommendations

The interviews and the survey data gave a substantial amount of data of MTG’s Employer Brand; its positives and negatives. This final section of the report is going to point out some of the key areas that might be useful for the business to take a closer look at.

Creating an interesting and inviting company culture is a good way to go forward with developing the attractiveness of Employer Brand. (Love, 2011).

Based on the result shared earlier in this paper the following development areas are identified;

- Induction Process
- Company Culture
- Performance Management.
- Learning and Development

Induction

Recently recruited employees felt that the induction lacked enthusiasm towards the organisation. The interviewed staff also felt that the induction was not inclusive enough, as it is targeted to RCs.

Suggestion: to look into and develop a more inclusive induction process is given. This might result in more engaged Shared Services and Support employees, making the turnover rate lower.

Company Culture

MTG has a vibrant and active, sales organisation's 'Work hard, play hard' culture. There could be more done in order to engage the existing staff to communicate about this externally.

Suggestion: Arranging a social media competition (internal), or posting video greetings from staff members to social media (external). These actions might be able to articulate the vibrant and youthful culture to wider audiences and result in more attraction as well as word of mouth referrals.

Performance Management

Based on the interviews, nearly all recently recruited employees felt that there was not a sufficient amount of time to learn the new role. Also an earlier presence of 360 degree feedback was also requested.

Suggestion: Developing a more efficient way to on board the new recruits. This might result in more confident and engaged employees.

Learning and Development

The development of the induction process, as well as improved training opportunities/paths for the Shared Services Staff would most likely fall under the L&D team's responsibilities. MTG boasts and attracts with its excellent *Training*. However, all the recent recruits in Shared Services feel that they have been left out. They said that there is not enough career,- and personal development opportunities for them.

Suggestion: Creating personal development plans for the employees in Shared Services. This might result in more confident and engaged employees.

Sometimes the answers to the burning questions are closer than one might think. In this case, the Top 3 Tips from Matchtech Group's own employees on the organisation's Employer Branding are as follows:

Think future

Think local

Think differently

6 FUTURE RESEARCH SUGGESTION

Drawing from current theoretical research, what we can see and experience in the market and this case study, one can argue that Employer Brand and Reputation Management, expanding to attractive Organisational Culture, cannot be ignored by contemporary businesses that are interested in their performance, talent and overall success.

This area of study is fascinating to research, as it has many dimensions and it is rapidly evolving. This can however make researching this topic challenging, if one does not take care of narrowing the research questions down to a specific area/subject. This particular research and case study suggest that companies could benefit from listening more to their employees and learning from their experiences. It also shows, that businesses' need to work more in cross-sections of different departments.

One of the main conclusions this research was able to provide is the following mantra; "Think future, think differently and think local". These comments were concentrated from employees whose, apart from two, day job is not marketing or HR. It shows that cross-fertilizing across the business with different departments gives good food for thought. It goes both ways; candidates should not generalise an organisation based on just general mental models, created by media or word of mouth, nor should large, global employers should give in to "lazy stereotyping" when it comes to entire generations. As the research has pointed out, a business that undergoes a merge and acquisition, this issue grows even more important – is this the way to go, more individual approach? Is it time to forget the age of an applicant? How are companies preparing for differences in individual skills, motivation and needs? What role technology plays in attraction and retention?

"Employees are customers and jobs are products" This in mind, as demonstrated in this research, businesses can start with asking feedback from

their *internal customers* (employees) in order to develop its Employer Brand and Organisational Culture.

More work [case studies] and future research could be directed towards finding out how companies, who draw focus to the intersection of HR, Organisational Development and Marketing differ from the ones that are not. Is there a difference in success, and if, to what extent? Are these companies more able to attract and retain talent, especially millennial? This point takes us to another question that needs more exploring; what is different generation's needs when it comes to Employer Brand and its sub categories?

An area for further and more in depth investigating is 'mental models' of potential candidates. What affects and what does not affect their decision making? All companies have brand; more research could be carried out on how much company's 'familiarity' affects and persuades an individual to apply or accept an offer in a company.

"Some authors assert that the source of sustained competitive advantage lies in the human resources themselves, and not the practices used to attract, utilise or retain them." (Ferligoj et al., 1997; Wright et al., 1994).

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1 – Matchtech Leaver Survey

Stage 1

Semi-structured survey, carried out in 2013-2016. Matchtech Group PLC Leaver Survey (83 responses, 22 questions)

Q1: Full name *

Q2: Where were you based?

* Beijing * Bromley * Cape Town * Govent Garden * Dallas * Dubai * Glasgow * Guang Zhou * Houston * Kuala Lumpur * Mexico * Qatar * Sao Paolo * Singapore * Toronto

Q3: What is your vertical? * IT * TELCO * ENG * EXEC

Q4: What is your vertical? * Conversing comms * Key accounts * OSS/BSS * Exec recruitment solution * Delivery to TELCO * Sales support to TELCO * Power and Transmission * Oil and Gas * Energy * Engineering * Mining * Transport and Distribution * Construction and Infrastructure * Delivery for ENG * Insight Data and Analytics * ERP * Digital Technology * Managed Accounts * Infrastructure * Project MGT * Delivery for IT * Sales support for IT * Group support * Finance/Banking

Q5: Did you enjoy your job? (open question)

Q6: What makes Matchtech a good place to work? (open question)

Q7: What would make Matchtech a good place to work? (open question)

Q8: What are your reasons leaving Matchtech? * Leaving Recruitment Industry - Tell us about your new career * Return to study - Please tell us your course * Secured a new role – (Please answer question 9) * Family Commitments - Did

Matchtech show Flexibility? Please leave comments * Going travelling - Please let us know where? *

Q9: If you have accepted a new position, where will this be, and what makes the new job more attractive? * Higher Basic * Higher Commissions/ Package * Enhanced benefit package * New career path * Work life balance/ flexibility * Headhunted * Shorter Commute * N/A

Q10: How would you describe the culture in your office? * Professional * Competitive * Bureaucratic (You have a say) * Team Based * Autocratic (Do as I say)

Q11: On a scale 1-5 how would you rate your overall job satisfaction? * 1 Low level of satisfaction * 2 Mid-level of satisfaction * 3 Neutral * 4 I was committed to my job * 5 I was fully engaged and committed to my work at Networkers

Q12: How did the following impact your job satisfaction? * Remuneration * Overall benefits package * Support from peers * Support from line managers * Morale of the team * Quality and quantity of communication * Technology and helpdesk * Training * Career progression * Advancement prospects

Q13: How would you describe the management style at your office? * Bureaucratic (You have a say) * Autocratic (Do as I say) * Progressive/Innovating * Inspirational/ Motivating * Approachable/ Supportive * Uninterested * Flexible * Inflexible * Technically Competent

Q14: Did your line manager..? * Show fair treatment? * Give praise for good work? * Deal promptly with your problems/complaints? * Give you encouragement and help when needed? * Listen to suggestions/criticism and give feedback?

Q15: How often did you receive feedback from your manager? * Regular formal feedback * Regular informal feedback * Occasionally/ Adhoc feedback * Only received feedback informal appraisals * Never received feedback

Q16: How adequate was the training you received throughout your employment? * Sufficient - job related training * Training offered - but not specific to needs * Insufficient job related training * Received no formal induction or job related training

Q17: What do you think of career progression at Matchtech? * Adequate career opportunities * Fair promotions * Glass ceiling effect (nowhere to go)

Q18: Communication – how well informed are you in the following areas? * Organisational objectives, direction and strategy * Purpose of the department and the teams objectives * Own individual priorities/ targets * Financial company figures * New projects/ offices/ markets * Company wide success stories * International office staff - who's who?

Q19: What will you miss the most of Matchtech? (open question)

Q20: Would you recommend Matchtech as an employer to others? * Yes * No

Q21: Additional comments (open question)

APPENDIX 2 - Matchtech Exit Interviews

Semi-structured survey, carried out during 2016 at Matchtech Group PLC (9 responses, 24 questions)

Q1: What is your name? (open question)

Q2: What is your job title? (open question)

Q3: What is your vertical? (IT: 100%)

Q4: What is your length of employment? (open question)

Q5: Describe the process of starting with the company (Your induction into the business, your team, handover and training on the systems). (open question)

Q6: Describe the aspects of your role, and the Company, that you enjoyed the most. (open question)

Q7: Describe the aspects of your role, and the Company, that you enjoyed the least. (open question)

Q8: Please answer these multiple choice questions * I was challenged by my job * I was fully aware of how to satisfy my Career aspirations within the company * I felt that I was equipped to do my job well * I felt that I was acknowledged for good work * I enjoyed attending work each day * I was provided with what I needed to do my job well * I was motivated whilst at work * I found my role interesting

Q9: What significant changes have taken place with your employment in between your starting with the Company and leaving the business? (open question)

Q10: Please answer these multiple choice questions to advise us why you are leaving the business. * Leaving the recruitment industry * Disliked an aspect of working for the company * Going travelling * Seeking better remuneration and package * Family commitments * Headhunted

Q11: If you have already obtained an alternative position, describe the advantages of the new Company compared to Matchtech PLC? * Higher basic * Greater earning potential * Better working environment * Opportunity to fulfil career aspirations * Better benefits package * Shorter commute * New career path

Q12: Are there any unresolved issues that made you want to leave, or do you have any additional comments? (open question)

Q13: What could have been done to retain you in the business? (open question)

Q14: If Matchtech were able to offer you the same package as the new Company, would you have stayed at Matchtech PLC? (open question)

Q15: What suggestions do you have to enhance the working environment - within both your team and the whole office? (open question)

Q16: How did the following impact on your job satisfaction? * Remuneration * Overall benefits package * Support from peers * Support from line managers * Morale of team * Quality and quantity of communication * Technology and helpdesk * Training * Career progression * Advancement prospects

Q17: Did your line manager..? * Show fair treatment? * Provide praise for good work * Deal promptly with any problems/complaints * Provide encouragement and help when needed * Listen to suggestion/criticisms and give feedback

Q18: How adequate was the training you received throughout your employment? * Sufficient - Job related training * Training offered - But not specific to needs * Insufficient job related training * Received no formal induction or job related training Q19: Were there areas where you believed training requirements within your role were not met? (open question)

Q20: What do you think about career progression within Matchtech? * Adequate career opportunities * Fair promotions * Glass ceiling effect - nowhere to progress * Other (please specify)

Q21: Imagine if you owned the Company: Suggest five changes that you would implement into the business - Perhaps you could consider the following: Management Style Working Environment Terms and conditions of employment Work-Life balance Training Promotion (open question) Q22: Would you recommend Matchtech as a place to work (open question) Q23: Do you have any final comments? (open question) 42 | Page

APPENDIX 3 – Matchtech Culture Interview

Qualitative data

Stage 2 of the data collection; Questions and selected answers. (July 2016).

This appendix is the interview questionnaire carried out at Matchtech Group PLC. 9 full interviews were carried out. Interviewees were recent recruits (less than 12 months in). The questionnaire included questions about following topics: company culture at MTG, employees views and perceptions on employer brand, reasons for applying and accepting a role at MTG.

Interview 1 (Marketing, Female, FTC)

In your own words – what is Employer Brand?

Profile that is promoted to the employees and future employees.

How does Matchtech differ from others in the same business?

It is a large company. They are respected in the engineering community. They focus in their client's industries. We are seen as experts and our voices are being heard across the board.

What made you apply to work at Matchtech?

The job description was well written, and I noticed that I would actually be a part of a larger team, and this appealed to me. a) The benefits are very good. Here is a team atmosphere here. b) I heard from friends and friend's friends who had been working here that this is a great organisation to work for. Team atmosphere. It wasn't the sector/industry I was brought in, but the way everything was handled. My interview lasted almost 3 hours, with tasks, interview and everything.

How was the induction?

The induction was very thorough, it is still on going, actually. Everything has been very well organised! The first day's induction What struck me, or the only

negative thing I would like to bring forward, is that the lack of enthusiasm and excitement towards the company during the first day/induction. The induction was dull. First week should be more upbeat.

How are you been engaged?

There hasn't really been the chance or need to go the other way yet with communication. I do feel there is a constant flow of it. A lot of social events, nearly every week. I don't know are we listened to, but we are being spoken to. I know I can always ask, and I will get help.

What do you value in your employer?

Structure. Good benefits. A good sort of team ethic. You don't get stuck by yourself. Good location/transport links. Well known. I like to work for companies that are in the other end of the medium, larger and secure. Previously I worked for a large book company, well known in their industry. I like that MTG is well known in its industry.

Is there something lacking?

A cafeteria! It is a bit disjointed. A central space everyone could use. Some sort of games room, pool or something. It is silly to sit by your desk for 9h. You need to have breaks to be productive. More breaks mid-morning and mid-afternoon. The disparity of the dress down Friday; a proper dress down Friday thank you! This is not fair how it is now being carried out.

What would make you change jobs?

No career progression. No salary increase. What should MTG do differently? Should push more the employee referral scheme. Highlighting the company culture a bit more. Reaching students, or people a bit younger.

Would you recommend MTG?

Yes, definitely. How would you describe the management here? Management is great!

How do you feel about the re-branding?

A really good timing to do this. It might've been confusing because of all the sub-brands and everything. To really invite the Networkers to come in. It is more important internally to have the overarching group. It has more internal value than external. "CATTAGA" is made of all of us, it is the DNA of all of us.

Clan Culture:

This sounds exactly the kind of organisation I want to work for. If you create a team culture, you create a support network. It is a really good way to work. The fact that induction is done in mixed groups, is very good.

Employee Engagement: Critical feedback, KPI's, a positive working environment, once a week someone brings cakes in, going out for lunch, a clear business plan, incentives, rewards, staff awards.

Interview 2 (Finance, Female, 3 months)

In your own words – what is Employer Brand?

The name of the company, values, what they stand for. How does Matchtech differ from others in the same business? This is a very big company, they do a lot for their employees, they communicate well (quarterly, newsletter) etc.

What made you apply to work at Matchtech?

It was a good opportunity. The actual company is very well know. Benefits and things they do to their employees. I had been applying for other roles, admin based.

How was the induction?

I missed the actual induction, I had a holiday booked. I never got a proper induction. They could introduce people in your floor a bit more, make one feel more part of a team.

How are you been engaged?

The quarterly presentation. Intranet's good. Events are engaging, you mix with people from different floors/departments.

What do you value in your employer?

People like to feel appreciated, they'll work harder for the company. More flexibility towards people. (commuting/working hours). People want to know how they are doing. When you have worked for a company for a long time, you might feel like you are being kind of forgotten.

Is there something lacking?

Training should be changed. There is no training plan for people. More developed for specific roles in the business. I have had a good couple of hours wasted just because I have been sitting in those trainings.

What would make you change jobs?

Basic salary/salary/bonus. People in general think that the salary is not good enough. MTG could try to make this a bit more accessible, because not everybody drives.

What should MTG do differently?

Coach from the station to get the office more accessible. One woman left just because of the lack of flexibility, one left because of illness. The area is not the best!

Would you recommend MTG?

Yes, definitely, for someone who drives and is not too fussed about the commute. (The finance office is lacking the buzz at the office – too big turnover). A lot of people think that it is easier to commute to Southampton or Portsmouth than here.

Did the benefits have an effect when deciding to accept the job at MTG?

I missed out with all the benefits because I did not know you should sign onto those.

How would you describe the management here?

My own team is fine, we are busy, but the work in our floor lacks morale and it is not fun. My own manager stepped a bit back because we have a team leader.

How do you feel about the re-branding?

We have been talked through that, I don't know how that affects me, I know we need to inform our clients. We are being informed.

Clan Culture/Company Culture

This is a large company that acts like a family/small company. So I do resonate with this very much.

What could make you more engaged/motivated?

More flexibility. There also was a team night out where the team was able to express their feelings, and this hasn't happened in a long time. It boosted the morale and gave the chance to talk about things that bothered. There should be more and various ways to express their feelings/things that are bothering. Surveys are not enough. The dress down Friday with a long list of rules, takes the fun away! We are not stupid, we are adults. This just felt silly. "Everyone upstairs would like to be asked these [interview] questions". Even if this would be done a couple of time every other months with a couple of employee, it would boost the morale."

Interview 3 (Female, Internal Recruitment, under a year into the business)**In your own words – what is Employer Brand?**

Strong brand you want to work for. It is a concept; why would one want to work for it in general? A strong brand. “Coca Cola or British Airways”. Values, benefits, culture. We look after you, if you work hard for us.

How does Matchtech differ from others in the same business?

I came straight to Matchtech. We provide training, we pay employees to do qualifications. The benefits, social events, fun things. Ad hock trips, rail card. Regardless if you are part of the support or sales department. Incentives. Similar sized companies do not do the similar events/have this kind of employee benefits as us. Ranstad and Hays; people think they are just a number. Here everyone knows everyone. We do things together. Other companies do not invest their employees as much as us. Our training is consistent and thorough, lasts a year and a bit.

What made you apply to work at Matchtech?

I did a work experience (2 weeks) here, and then it took a year before I graduated and applied here. I applied to many other graduate schemes as well. Everyone here are so friendly and nice. After the interview I knew I wanted to work here. The benefits had a large role in making the decision. Rent-A-Car was offering a role to me, but they did not tell anything of the company culture/benefits to me. I probably should’ve asked more questions from them.

How was the induction?

The induction I had last August (by Lee), it was personable, chatty – not scary. Went through quite quickly. “No one is telling about the angry swan to the new recruits! And there should be more instructions about the local area”. Parking There is a “Welcome to your first day – letter”. Something physical (not just an email) is a good thing, it reminds one of the first day. (Cattaga notebook, pen

etc) Here it is a very good thing that many times the candidate meets the team and vice versa. This is good in so many ways.

Did benefits have an effect?

Yes, definitely. The social benefits were a big influence. Here I knew the people I was going to work with.

How are you been engaged?

Charity. Christmas Tree – charity campaign, buying gifts for children. Refugee charity– event. Going out to the pub on Fridays. Staff is being informed via email/newsletter; rebranding, PULSE; Internal recruitment.

What do you value in your employer?

To feel appreciated. To know that I am helping/worthwhile. To get recognized when I have gone above and beyond. Progression opportunities. Is there something lacking? Working as one, as a group. There is resistance to change (between MTG and Networkers). There is quite a lot of blaming. There could be more feedback. The other side of the HR can be difficult and rude to work with (Networkers). Networkers assume a lot of things. More understanding that I am not a miracle workers. Communication could be better.

What would make you change jobs?

Organisation fit matters, substantially better salary, and company's reputation. Better benefits. Have you thought of leaving: No What should MTG do differently? The Grad dates should/could be done differently. How to build bridges to universities and returning students?

Would you recommend MTG?

Yes, definitely. How would you describe the management here? Jenny is so easy to approach. She is not scary. The top management is a bit scary. Keith is very engaged and they want to create a culture. If they are stressed/under pressure they can be a bit difficult to work with. They need to tackle the issue

that Networkers do not like us. (Matchtech)/Differences in the culture. This was very much noticeable during the three peaks challenge for example.

How do you feel about the re-branding?

More fresh, more current. And Cattaga is cooler, fun and, like, attractive. Matchtech is more corporate. We are kind of moving towards sort of a “Google company”. We do not have the positive reputation (yet) with the Cattaga – name.

Clan Culture/Company Culture

Unrealistic. We need to think as one company, but we do not act like it. The rebranding might help with this. There just is such a big division between the two cultures. What could make you more engaged/motivated? The sales people work towards incentives; there could be more variety of incentives/weekly rewards etc to other employees/departments here at MTG. Would like to work towards holiday incentives.

Interview 4 (Marketing, Female, previously did recruitment at MTG)

In your own words – what is Employer Brand?

Is it how company looks, how it attracts new employees. With my last job the employer brand was so bright and fun. The facts that make the company interesting. How does Matchtech differ from others in the same business: Matchtech is a middle-sized, not as the huge ones. Regardless these MTG has that familyfeel.

What made you apply to work at Matchtech?

I did recruitment before, never really liked it – but did like the company. Was able to apply to do marketing here. First time around it was the location. Good reputation. How was the induction? The training and induction was brilliant; amazing. Very thorough.

Did benefits have an effect?

I loved the fun side of Matchtech! The salary helped of course.

How are you been engaged?

Massively. Everyone is giving me big projects, and takes me to meetings and gives responsibility. I feel needed. Makes me want to go work. Valued, appreciated and listened.

What do you value in your employer?

I need the fun aspect. We only live ones, we need to have fun too! It is nice how we are being valued and treated here. At Matchtech you don't have to ask for what you are entitled for.

Is there something lacking?

No, not at the moment. (Been here only for a month this time around). I am massively happy to be back here. What would make you change jobs? If there was no progression here. Senior post and bigger salary.

Have you thought of leaving?

No.

What should MTG do differently?

I don't really know what's been done. Do we go to universities, or? Rebranding is now something we are doing differently. Website, it looks so bad.

Would you recommend MTG?

I have already, one of my friend is starting on Monday.

How would you describe the management here?

Very interactive and approachable.

How do you feel about the re-branding?

I came in just before it. It is very exciting. It will bring us all together. This will bring consistency throughout the line.

Clan Culture/Company Culture

Very cheesy. Maybe this is something they are trying external people to see the culture as. In recruitment RCs do work together to reach the incentives.

What could make you more engaged/motivated?

A salary review.

Interview 5 (Admin, Female, 2 months in to business)

In your own words – what is Employer Brand?

How people recognise the company as. I don't really think Matchtech has one? Their logo? And maybe also the company's ethos. "Matchtech Group PLC – Making the world a better place?"

How does Matchtech differ from others in the same business?

I had not heard about MTG before. The size and age of it. Mainly young people working here.

What made you apply to work at Matchtech?

Applied many admin roles. The conversations with hiring manager and the recruiter at MTG were good, lengthy and thorough. Benefits. Internationality. Social side.

How was the induction?

I remember it was a lot to take in, but not relevant for my role. It was a ppt presentation of the company's policies and history. It was informative and short. It was hard to see the benefit because it wasn't relevant for me. It was for the sales force, not for support staff. In my previous work place we were given a

massive welcome pack, a folder with the company's vision, mission and values, pictures of the managers with names, org. chart etc.

Did benefits have an effect?

Yes, a huge one.

How are you been engaged?

(Socials, End of Quarter events; helping to understand where the business stands and where it is going). The manager, whenever she heads down here, wants to have a chat with us on what is going on.

What do you value in your employer?

Stability. Growing business, constantly takin people aboard.

Is there something lacking?

More getting to know the various departments/shadowing/getting to know the people in business. More emphasis on learning the role when starting to work here.

What would make you change jobs?

If I would not enjoy. If I would feel like I was stuck, no room for my progression. If there was a job with similar benefits and salary closer to home.

Have you thought of leaving?

If the traffic gets worse, then yes. Or if there was a job closer to home.

What should MTG do differently?

I found MTG via a job board. Wasn't hunting them down, was just looking for admin roles. Approach the local universities more; universities job boards. App?

Would you recommend MTG?

Yes, 100%: if you drive and have a car. I am happy to work here. Progression, benefits.

How would you describe the management here?

My direct manager is not always here, only once a week. I think she is easy to approach. I was never formally introduced to me head manager (above my direct manager). I would like things to be more structured. They all seem nice and smiley, easy to approach. They all have time to meet you have a chat with you.

How do you feel about the re-branding?

There will be new computer programs that will come with the rebrand to help us to do our work.

Clan Culture/Company Culture

It is a really good idea. It will also bring all the “brands” together.

What could make you more engaged/motivated?

More ways to express opinions/one-on-one discussions with manager. More team work. More personal development opportunities.

Interview 6 (IT, Male, under a year into the business)

In your own words – what is Employer Brand?

I suppose it is kind of, when I look at brand, how focused and targeted the brand is in the industry. How well established they are. What is their story? It is the key to exist out in the market?

How does Matchtech differ from others in the same business?

The history, the journey. How the company has been growing and building under the main brand. MTG is very focused in their own industry.

What made you apply to work at Matchtech?

Location and the job role; I was able to build this role, it was a blank canvas. Work/life balance. I was contacted by Matchtech after I had uploaded my cv to a job board.

How was the induction?

It could be more specified between the sales and the shared services. It was too focused on the RC's work.

Did benefits have an effect?

It was a bonus, they are a good way in long term to have in place. They weren't the main reason. The role and work/life balance mattered more.

How are you been engaged?

Work in progress, at least in the IT team. We have a comms team, we have a new intranet coming up. I know some of the key strategic initiatives regarding on future ways to engage the staff. I feel that there could be some tweaks here and there, when it comes to two way dialogue, but I haven't been in any organisation where that would've worked perfectly. We need to make it more "social" (the communication).

What do you value in your employer?

My ability to develop and grow. And also how the company is doing and what is my impact on that. I want to work for a steady and secure company. I am ambitious so I want to see opportunities and progression.

Is there something lacking?

MTG is a great employer. I would be championing so much on what is already great. MTG treats their staff so well. The employee/employer relationship is almost like a partnership because of the the ability to buy shares.

What would make you change jobs?

Goes back to not being able to progress and grow. Not enough challenges.

Have you thought of leaving?

What do I need to do to get through my probation is more in my mind.

What should MTG do differently?

I suppose the only thought here is “where is MTG going to be in two years”, so a need to think about where we want to go. Recruiting for future needs rather than short term.

Would you recommend MTG?

Yes. They do a lot of work with managing employee’s expectations. What tells a lot about MTG is the amount of people who are here for a long time, as well as those who leave and come and back.

How would you describe the management here?

Compared to my previous roles there is less micromanagement here. You are given way more freedom and trust. You are given the framework to work in that helps a lot. It makes you want to deliver and do your part.

How do you feel about the re-branding?

Make sure there is no confusion with our clients with the brand

Clan Culture/Company Culture

We shouldn’t even been talking about “locations” and “brands”, there should be the “group”. We are not successful if all of the brands are not successful

What could make you more engaged/motivated?

Knowing the business objectives, vision, mission and where the company is going.

Interview 7 (Finance, Female, 3 months in to business)

In your own words – what is Employer Brand?

Like a window of which external individuals can have a peek of what the business is.

How does Matchtech differ from others in the same business?

I came to the business through Barclay Meade. They kept in contact. They do what they say will do.

What made you apply to work at Matchtech?

I was approached via a job board. I was made felt needed. There was one company that approached me, but it was located in London, so obviously the commute did not appeal.

How was the induction?

It was a bit of hit and miss; my team wasn't ready for me, so it was a bit of a hassle. The induction itself was good, but too much targeted towards the RC. There should've been more "this is the organisation"; "this is your role"; "this is how it feeds into the bigger picture".

Did benefits have an effect?

No, they did not. Everything in the contract said "have a look at the intranet", I did not have an access to the intranet.

How are you been engaged?

A lot of social events, quarterly presentations and celebrations. On a day to day level; there is a lot of being asked from us, and we don't get credit over it.

What do you value in your employer?

That I feel valued and that my work is being appreciated. Training.

Is there something lacking?

Effective communications. There is a lot of communicating, but not two ways. What are the business aims and objectives? There is a bit too much emails coming through.

What would make you change jobs?

If the job doesn't turn out to be as it was sold to me. If I feel that my contribution is not appreciated by the business.

Have you thought of leaving?

I have had a little bit of the feeling of someone looking over my shoulder.

What should MTG do differently?

If I was to recruit someone to my team, I would feel that the culture here is very secretive. I can't really give references because I don't know these figures.

Would you recommend MTG?

Yes, I would.

How would you describe the management here?

I have not been exposed in a broader context. They are busy, but they could be a bit more visible. They should have a higher profile. I wouldn't even recognize them if they would walk towards in the street.

How do you feel about the re-branding?

I am a bit unsure about it. It sounds buzzing and catchy; how this change is going to take place and how it is going to be communicated to the public, so I am a bit intimated what this will do to the business.

Clan Culture/Company Culture

I like the sound of it. Reaching the goals together as well. What's going to happen if reaching the goals together doesn't happen? Team culture is better than individuals trying to get ahead alone.

What could make you more engaged/motivated?

Communicate with me, but do not send useless information. Keep me updated of the business objectives. Don't keep me isolated; I do have a genuine interest towards the business. I would like to have more interaction with the sales/business side of the operations. There should be more training that is not solely focused on the sales staff. More face to face interaction. I would like to have it more. More feedback would be appreciated.

Interview 8 (BIDS, Male, 4th weeks in to business)**In your own words – what is Employer Brand?**

Logos and marketing. What it means to me is how company tries to create a defined look and feel. Designing package of a company. To get a message through.

How does Matchtech differ from others in the same business?

MTG is personable and relaxed. Seems quite different considering the level on what MTG operates.

What made you apply to work at Matchtech?

I saw a job advert and I applied here, as well as 4 to 5 others.

How was the induction?

Really good. The first day was really easy, learning of the organisation. It has been very thorough, I have never had this in depth induction previously.

Did benefits have an effect?

No, it was the role and the pay. I wasn't used to this kind of benefits. How are you been engaged? They did the big staff survey recently. There is a big social

formal and unformal scene. Almost weekly social events. Team events, nights out. Regular line manager meetings every week.

What do you value in your employer?

I want to get feedback and being able to talk to my direct manager. Also having a good team. I want to work for a large company but not too corporate.

Is there something lacking?

I can't really think of much. I am not used to working in a huge floor with a lot of people; I don't mind this at all, but I would like to have more emphasis on getting to know all the people in my floor/building.

What would make you change jobs?

I am on a 12 month contract, it depends if there is a room for me to continue.

Have you thought of leaving?

Nope, not during these four weeks.

What should MTG do differently?

Maybe more stuff on a local basis. They obviously are a very big company, but one knows them if they already are in the business. To become well known outside the own industry.

Would you recommend MTG?

Yes.

How would you describe the management here?

There is a meeting coming up to meet the directors. I guess from that perspective that I haven't met them and what I have read of them is that there isn't too strict silos. Open doors. Own manager is giving freedom and responsibilities, and very encouraging. No micromanaging.

How do you feel about the re-branding?

It makes a lot of sense. It probably varies between people who have been here different length of time. For our team (BIDS) this makes a lot of sense.

Clan Culture/Company Culture

Absolutely. It stood out in the first place from MTG. What could make you more engaged/motivated? They can't really do anything. Maybe if someone is on a 12 month contract to make them know early on if there is continuity.