
Talent Relationship Management in Practice

Myth or Reality?

Bachelor Thesis

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Abstract

The world of organizations and their human resource management is changing. Challenges such as demographic development, the increasing transparency of the labor market and a continuous shift from manual labor to mental work intensifies the talent shortage, especially in times of high unemployment. Accordingly, organizations are searching for methods to face these challenges in the long term. One such approach is talent relationship management (TRM), as a recruiting approach to obtain qualified employees to staff strategically hard-to-fill positions.

The present Bachelor thesis examines the effectiveness of communication channels to reach young talents with TRM practices in a cross-sectional study, including how attractive those practices are for talents, especially talent communities. This examination takes place against the background of a potential discrepancy between offered and experienced TRM practices.

The sample is based upon a one-off piece of market research involving 128 valid participants, divided into 77 female and 51 male candidates, with an average age of 24.7 years. The acquisition of the participants for the survey occurred through several social media platforms, whereby the link to the online survey was posted on Facebook, Xing and LinkedIn. The online questionnaire was developed for this study and includes self-constructed questions to the offerings and expectations of TRM practices.

From the results, it can be derived that overall the company side meets the expectations of the candidates regarding TRM practices. The effective communication channels to reach young talents are electronic ones, which companies are using to address the talents. Especially with the direct sourcing instrument of talent community, they are offering the talents an attractive TRM practice from their perspective. Nonetheless, it is problematic that the TRM practice of talent community does not reach the talents because the communities themselves are unknown.

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Index of abbreviations

N, n	Survey sample size
TM	Talent Management
TRM	Talent Relationship Management

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1. Introduction: Aim and procedure of the analysis

The elasticity of labor supply is changing. Accordingly, efficient talent relationship management (TRM) should be a main focus for most organizations in the coming years, as part of talent management (TM). Society and the economy are changing due to globalization and the immense development of information and communication technology, whereby the competition is intensifying across all markets. Therefore, knowledge and innovation are important success factors for companies. At the same time, defective education systems and a shortage of skilled labor limit organizations and increase the pressure to perceive personnel as a key resource, especially given that elaborated talent are not available at all times. Furthermore, companies adopt the approach of TRM to perceive their candidates like customers, whereby they approach them actively and build up a strong relationship (Troost, 2014).

1.1. Problem statement

The demographical change is developing into a shortage of skilled labor, especially in Western industrial countries.(Gutman & Gatzke, 2015, p. 11) According to a study by Kienbaum, companies more keenly recognize the shortage of skilled workers (Kienbaum, 2015, p. 14f). There is a value change happening towards a knowledge-based society, whereby the demand for qualified and innovative employees is growing (Gutman & Gatzke, 2015, p. 11). Furthermore, the heads of HR and companies highlight different challenges, such as increasing market remunerations of relevant profiles, the declining quality of applications and a constant increase in the labor turnover rate (Kienbaum, 2015, p. 14f).

Moreover, the internet enlarges transparency in the job market, tightening the competition for qualified and talented employees. The loyalty of employees is declining, especially among top talents. Strong labor migration – particularly regarding the group of high-qualified people – leads to a higher offer of high-qualified profiles – so-called brain gain – as well as a higher risk of migration, so-called brain drain (Gutman & Gatzke, 2015, p. 11f). Accordingly, companies are still fighting “the war for talents”. This term was first

stated in the late-1990s based upon a study by McKinsey and the discussion of TM, sketching out the incipient stages of strategic TM (Michaels, Handfield-Jonas, & Axelrod, 2001, p. 1), Even today, TM is associated with the fight for talents. It is existential for organizations to be equipped with talents. Organizations are motivated to work on their attractiveness on the job market in the embattled market to secure the best employees. Therefore, it is essential to make TM a priority within the organization (Ritz & Sinelli, 2011, p. 3). The new “war for talent” is not limited to the best graduates, but rather all critical target groups that are essential for a company’s success. Companies that act with foresight can reduce the negative consequences of the shortage of skilled labor and build up a competitive advantage through human capital (Bedürftig, et al., 2011).

Studies have shown that many organizations assign recruitment a higher relevance than employee retention (Ritz & Sinelli, 2011, p. 11). TM does not just exist in the literature; rather, it is a promising trend in recent years. The illustration 1 of the Development Dimensions International study (2007) “Growing Global Executive Talent – high priority, limited progress” shows the importance of TM in practice. About 400 leaders were asked about the importance of TM compared to other business priorities, whereby the results clearly show clearly that TM is an essential business priority for the sustainable success of a company. 9% of those interviewed said that TM is much more important, 24.4% rank TM as somewhat more important and 32.9 % rate TM as equally important as other business priorities (Development Dimensions International, 2007, p. 7).

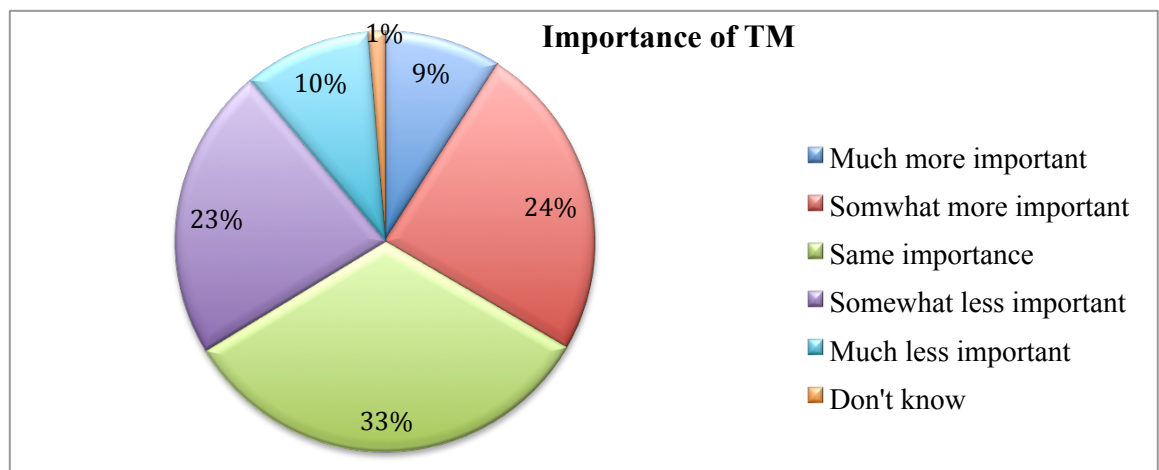


Figure 1: Importance of TM (Development Dimensions International, 2007, p. 7)

The reason for this evaluation is that companies assure their competitive advantage sustainably through employing qualified employees and especially top talents. Therefore, it is essential to make TM a strategic key process of the organization.

Accordingly, organizations are facing the challenge of building up efficient TM, which means identifying their internally talents and developing them further, whereby they have to position themselves on the job market as an attractive employer for external talents. To act successfully, the company needs systematic and authentic employer branding to illustrate the attractiveness and advantages. Moreover, it is necessary to get in touch with new talents and candidates to build up and maintain a relationship that can be useful for the employer and talent in the future (Gutman & Gatzke, 2015). Indeed, this is the purpose of efficient TRM.

Although HR leaders, organizations and researchers commonly discuss TM, the topic remains a black box between the demographical problems of the future and the current skill shortage (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Personalführung e.V. - DGFP, 2007, p. 6 ff.; Kienbaum, 2015; Kienbaum, 2015).

The literature as well as practice demonstrates that there is a “relationship between better talent and better business performance” (Wellins, Smith, & Erker, n.d., p. 2). Organizations try to measure their return on investment of TM. Among the existing literature featuring the possible success of effective TM, the study by the Hackett Group (2007) shows companies that outperform their competitors in earnings throughout the effective managing of talents (Teng, 2007). The results of the study by IBM show similar results (Ringo, Schweyer, DeMarco, Jones, & Lesser, 2008) Moreover, a study by McBassin & Co highlights that organizations with effective human capital management achieve higher returns on the stock market (Bassi & McMurrer, 2006, p. 3). These studies show that the concept of TM is already practiced in companies.

By contrast, the study by Heibel (2013) explores TRM from the perspective of the talents, revealing that they expect a greater offer of TRM practices, while the evaluation of the received TRM programs and practices is patchy (Heibel, 2013, p. 2).

The aforementioned studies show a potential discrepancy in the practice between the effectiveness of TM programs and the experienced quality of TRM practices by the talents. Therefore, this thesis will take a closer look at TRM and its effectiveness and attractiveness from the perspective of the talents.

1.2. Objective target and central questions

According to organizations, the most important external trend in recruitment is the demographical change, followed by the skilled worker shortage (“war for talent”) and social media (Center of Human Resources Information System, 2016, p. 7). Traditional methods of recruitment are insufficient to fill a vacancy with the matching external talents and in the shortest time on the market. The purpose of TRM is by Ed Michaels – director of the consulting firm McKinsey USA – as follows: *“In order to keep the pipeline full of talented people, almost all of the companies are starting to take nontraditional approaches to recruiting”* (Cited in Ritz & Sinelli, 2011, p. 9; Schetter, 2014, p. 47 and Schmidt, 2009, p.68). This description remains up to date. The recruitment process, the transparencies of the job market and communication channels are always changing. Accordingly, companies aim to find new approaches to win and retain talents.

This thesis discusses the meaning of TRM in practice. The purpose of this study is to observe the attractiveness and effectiveness of the TRM practices and their chosen communication channels for young talents. Furthermore, it takes a closer look at the TRM practice of talent communities and its attractiveness for addressing and binding young talents.

The central questions of this thesis evolved based upon the discrepancy detailed in 1.1.

Therefore, the following questions should be answered:

- Which communication channels are most effective to reach young talents through TRM practices?
- How attractive is the participation in TRM practices like a talent community for young talents?

1.3. Overview of the thesis

The theoretical section provides the foundation for the deeper introduction into the topic of TRM. The illustrated theoretical background and the empirical research form the basis for the derived research questions.

The following method section provides an overview of the framework and environment of the study, as well as outlining the methodical approach and the evaluation strategy for the research questions.

Subsequently, the results of the descriptive statistics and the analyzed research questions will be presented.

The interpretation of the results in reference to the research questions will feature in the discussion section.

A conclusion to this study and an outlook for further research approach close this thesis.

2. Theoretical chapter

In the following chapters, the theoretical background and contemporary research will be described. The topic of TRM has high complexity due to its embedding in the topic of TM and the possibility to view it internally and externally. Therefore, the following order of the chapter was chosen to ensure a better comprehension of TRM. First, the fundamentals of TM (2.1.) are outlined, including TRM, before exploring TRM practices (2.2) and closing with a summary and the derivation of the research question (2.3).

2.1. Fundamentals of talent management

TM is often mentioned and commonly associated with different human resources departments and functions. Some perceive TM in relation to human resources development, others see the topic in relation to recruitment and yet others associate it with recruitment marketing. Just as differentiated is the definition of talent and TM across existing literature. Therefore, it is clear that there is no consistent picture of TM, but rather fragments of what this notion includes.

Numerous definitions can be found for the term TM, which can vary depending on the strategic approach. Therefore, under the term TM the following can be understood:

- “Talent Management is a strategic activity aligned with the firm’s business strategy that aims to attract, develop, and retain talented employees at each level of the

organization.” (Hatun, 2010, p. 13)

- “Getting the right people with the right skills into the right jobs”(Capelli, 2008, p. 1)
- “Talent Management is the additional management processes and opportunities that are available to people in an organization who are considered to be a talent” (Blass, 2007, p. 3)
- “Talent Management is a process of strategic importance for an organization. It is a host of activities (relating to talented individuals) aimed at achieving and maintaining advantage over competitors. The most important activities under such process include: identification, acquisitions, development and retention of talents in an organization.” (Ariss, 2014, p. 223)

The authors focus on varying points in the TM cycle, from recruitment through to development and succession (Nolan, 2013), showing how complex this strategic approach is, as well as the importance of its effective management for companies.

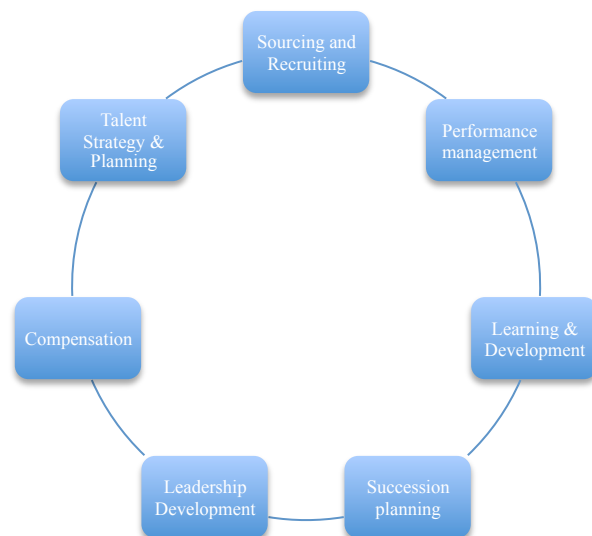


Figure 2: Integrated TM (Bersin, 2010)

Based upon the different definitions presented, it is possible to distinguish several approaches to TM. Considering the introduction and the specified research questions of the thesis, the first definition of TM will serve as a foundation for the further theoretical considerations: “Talent Management is a strategic activity aligned with the firm’s business strategy that aims to attract, develop, and retain talented employees at each level of the organization” (Hatun, 2010, p. 13). Following the TM process, especially the phase of talent strategy and planning in illustration 1 is linked to a company’s business and its

strategic planning process (Hatun, 2010, p. 13).

TM is based upon the resource-based theory of organizations. The employee is at the core of this definition and stands for the resource, as well as how to plan with it strategically and sustainably. In other words, effective TM contributes towards a sustainable competitive advantage. This is only possible if the organization invests in resources that are valuable, rare and difficult to imitate (Hatun, 2010). “Talent management focuses on how an organization can generate and maintain such resources through its human capital. In doing so talent management has come to focus on talent at the organizational level rather than at the individual employee level” (Hatun, 2010, p. 14).

2.1.1. Definition of talent

The term talent is often discussed owing to the increasing demand for high-qualified employees. Therefore, you can find several definitions of talent, whereby the focus can vary depending on the sector and context. Originally in old English, “*talente, talentan*” was used as a unit of weight, from Latin “*talenta*” – the plural of “*talentum*” – which meant weight, sum of money, originating from the Greek word “*talanton*”, which had the meaning of a scale or weight (Oxford English Dictionaries, 2016). Therefore, it is also accurate in our times in the way that the term talent describes something that you invest in and achieve an increase of value.

In context of this approach, the term “human capital” rather than talent can often be found in literature. The organization can build up a competitive advantage through TM, whereby all employees of an organization have valuable talents. With TM, it is all about the identification of the talent and the right placement of the employees (Lackner, 2012, p. 160).

This general definition can be supplemented – in the economic sense – through the definition of Michaels et. Al. (2001):

“Talent is the sum of a person’s abilities – his or her intrinsic gifts, skills, knowledge, experience, intelligence, judgment, attitude, character, and drive. It also includes his or her ability to learn and grow.”(Micheals, Handfield-Jones, & Axelrod, 2001, p. xii)

In general, the term talent can be described as the ability that empowers somebody to

achieve above-average performance. Accordingly, in the literature talent features in context with terms such as high potential. This is an approach with a focus on individual talent, in line with TRM. Trost (2014) defines talent as “candidates who demonstrate the potential to put in above average performance in the long term” (Trost, 2014, p. 12). He highlights that recruiting talented employees is much more difficult than employing “normal” employees (Trost, 2014, p. 12).

This approach is important to perceive the strategic importance of TRM, because to gain competitive advantage through human capital organizations do not simply need employees in the right positions, but rather they need the best employees in the right positions.

Considering the definition of TM and the different approaches to talent, it can be said that TM and the term talent are featured by employees who inhabit the following:

- Matching qualifications
- Potential for successful development
- Motivation to achieve best performance to support and reach the company goals
- Willingness to stay with the employee for a term that enables a certain service provision that justifies the acquisition, development and engagement costs of the company (Böttger, 2012, p. 2).

Furthermore, in reference to TRM are the target group employees who have the potential to achieve a valuable contribution for the organization, above the view of its own tasks. As described, the term includes an external element. Talents do not simply exist in the own company; rather, the term of talent within the context of TRM expands the view and also includes external talents (Von Dewitz, 2006, p. 238). The literature and practice focuses on TRM in terms of managing external talents in comparison to TM. This thesis will take a closer look at the addressing and binding of external talents.

2.1.2. Talent focus in TRM

This section will take a closer look at the talent focus within TRM. Essentially, TRM describes the early identification and long-term relationship with potential candidates right up to their status as an employee (Jäger & Lukaszyk, 2009, p. 101).

First, we have to explain that TRM has a different recruiting approach. Traditional staff recruitment is focused on vacancies, whereby in daily practice many employees adopt this approach. That means that the employer reacts if a position has to be filled. More precisely, the position will be recruited if the staff is approved. Accordingly, this open and approved vacancy is the trigger for the recruiting process. Furthermore, the classical recruitment process contains the publishing of a job ad, waiting for the incoming applications, application management, selecting potential candidates and eliminating potential candidates in a stronger selection process, finally resulting in the job offer. This procedure fills the individual vacancy, although all the other applicants – even if they had potential – are rejected (Troost, 2014, p. 11). This is the “vacancy-focused approach”, which lies in contrast to the “talent-focused approach”.

Vacancy-focused-approach



Talent-focused-approach

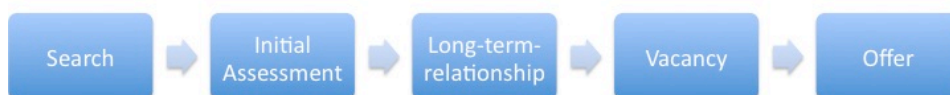


Figure 3: Vacancy-focused versus talent-focused recruiting process (Troost, 2014, p. 12)

Illustration 3 shows the recruiting principle of TRM, which is talent-focused, whereby the talent is at center of the strategic thinking and acting. Accordingly, talents will not search for a vacancy; rather, a vacancy will be searched for talents. The background of this approach is also that talented employees “usually adopt a passive approach to their search for new career prospects, and have numerous attractive options” (Troost, 2014, p. 12).

This identification and bounding process of talents is an ongoing process, independent from the open vacancies. This is especially the case for special positions that are difficult to fill. The talent-focused approach is very promising regarding the upcoming challenges in personnel requirements (Troost, 2014, p. 12).

2.1.3. Definition of TRM within TM

Everybody is talking about TRM, although everybody means something different. Therefore, this chapter clarifies what TRM is, where it can be found in relation to TM and in which form it is common at present.

In general, TM can be understood as the entirety of practices of the human resources policy in an organization with the goal to ensure the long-term casting of critical and strategic functions (Heyse & Ortmann, 2008, p. 11). TRM within TM is another recruiting approach with the goal of binding and winning new talents. TRM is a process of identifying, encouraging and bonding new potential employees. For this thesis, we will look at TRM in practice for external talents, regarding the featured discrepancy in chapter 1.1.

The main idea of TRM is founded upon the principles of “customer relationship management” (CRM), which has its roots in sales. Therefore, the main view is to orient the process to the needs of the client. In TRM, the talent is the client. Furthermore, TRM also has to be oriented to the organizational strategy (Becker, *Auf die richtige Besetzung kommt es an - Talent Relationship Management*, 2013, p. 94). TRM describes the setup and active management of relationships towards potential candidates and employees of restricted target groups through establishing pools to secure a higher quality of personnel in a shorter time frame (Fischer, 2011, p. 84). Therefore, TRM is a fundamental part of TM.

TRM is a central element within TM and employee recruitment. TRM has to be sorted in the integrated TM circle of illustration 2 in the area of “talent strategy and planning” and especially in the area of “sourcing and recruitment” owing to its active sourcing approach. Therefore, TRM is understood as more or less comprehensive e-recruiting strategies and concepts in recent years (Von Dewitz, 2006). The starting point was “the war for talent” and the “new economy” sector of the internet economy subsequently developed the matching solutions (Welsch, 2003, p. 362). On the one hand independent job portals brought a faster and more efficient relation between job offers and demand. On the other hand, solutions are on the market for the setup of talent pools and the effective and efficient e-recruitment of external talents. Many of the software solutions for TRM function as a tool for the applicant management of an advertised position. Accordingly, these e-recruitment solutions are necessary tools for successful TRM, but do not feature

the TRM process itself (Hesse, 2015). Summing up, TRM can be understood as VIP recruitment within TM. TRM is a central instrument within TM, reflecting the recruitment element. It includes the complete process from the first contact with the candidate to the TRM practices of binding, the recruitment of the talent and the on-boarding process.

2.1.4. The process of TRM

TRM includes the complete process from the first contact with the candidate, through to the differentiated and individual loyalty builders up to the hiring.

TRM is an active approach of recruiting and applicant bounding. This is necessary in the meaning that the power relationships between companies and applicants are dramatically changing. Companies will increasingly address candidates directly based upon “active sourcing” rather than waiting for the applications to come in. It is a fundamental part of TRM whereby companies search directly for promising candidates and present selected jobs and the company in the best way. This approach is close to the customer relationship management (CRM) known from the sales department, where TRM has its roots. Moreover, because “TRM is based on the assumption that the better qualified an employee, the more passive they are about searching for new career perspectives” (Trost, 2014, p. 46).

TRM is a permanent ongoing activity and not for individual vacancies. Therefore, TRM has to search for candidates actively and bound them through a long-term relationship (Trost, 2014, p. 46 f.).

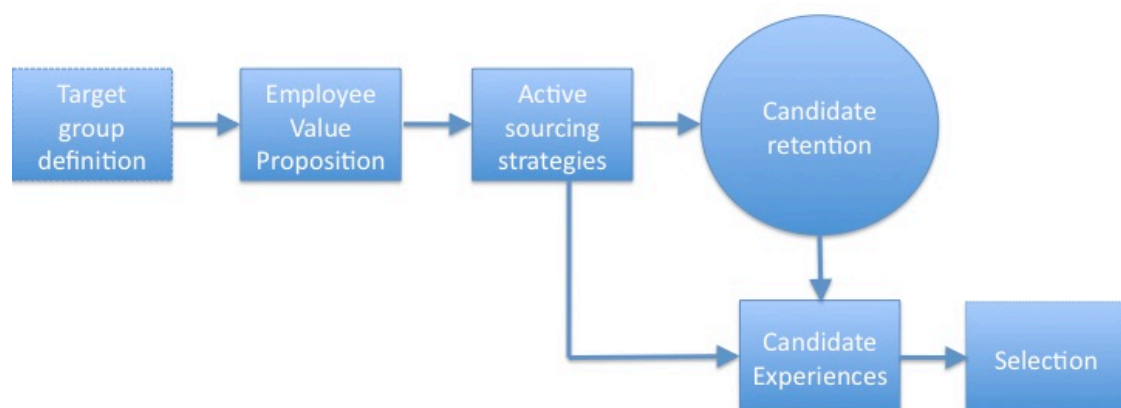


Figure 4: TRM process (Trost, 2014, p. 49)

TRM starts with the definition of the target group. Therefore, the company should have a focus on difficult-to-fill positions in the long term. This means relevant positions in the company that should be filled with better employees than the competitors have (Trost, 2014, p. 49).

Subsequently, the company has to ask itself what are their advantages and how can it convince talents to be employed in their organization rather than somewhere else. These arguments reflect the employer brand, which describes the equivalent process to the marketing of products and services. The employer brand leads to increased recognition and the development of a reputation as an attractive potential employer (Eger & Schrank, 2013, p. 772).

“Employer Branding beschreibt den Prozess, in dem Unternehmen ihre Arbeitgebereigenschaften analysieren und diese mit den Präferenzen der für sie wichtigen Zielgruppen abgleichen. Dort, wo echte und vom Wettbewerb nicht oder nur schwer kopierbare Stärken des Unternehmens zu den Anforderungen der Zielgruppe passen, entsteht eine sogenannte Employer Value Proposition, also die verdichteten Alleinstellungsmerkmale im Arbeitsmarkt.” (Eger & Schrank, 2013, p. 774)

After this stage the active sourcing strategies follow, which are designed to find talents, get in contact with them and maintain contact. Later, this chapter will define what active sourcing strategies are common in practice these days. Subsequently, the main component of TRM follows, namely “candidate retention” (Trost, 2014, p. 49 ff.). “This means employers try to stay in contact with promising talent in order to secure them for the company sooner or later” (Trost, 2014, p. 51).

As illustration 4 shows, TRM is a cyclical process, whereby talent relationship managers have to deepen the relationship further on a regular basis to awaken the interest of the talent for the company and gain the talent as an employee. The important part is that the company gets to know the talent better and vice versa to reach a perfect match in the long term. In this bounding and winning phase, it is important to create a positive candidate experience. At this point, again we have an analogy with the marketing context. Candidate experience is close to the meaning of consumer experience in the way that TRM sees the talents as clients. All of this effort focuses on the final phase of selection, whereby the goal is to win the talent as an employee. Ideally, a candidate would express an interest in employment or being actively offered a job (Trost, 2014, p. 52).

Usually the quality of such staffing is higher and the risk of a wrong choice is lower. Moreover, the time frame of the staffing should be shorter because the recruiter does not have to search. Furthermore, it is more comfortable for the talent because they know a little about the future colleagues and assess their development perspectives better. Even if it does not follow into a contractual relationship between the talent and employer, it does not mean the end of the relationship in general. The status of the relationship still can change, whereby the talent becomes a source for the identification of new talents and based upon the exchange between the talent and talent relationship manager the target group and the TRM strategy can be optimized. Furthermore, the same status change can happen with employed talents (Fischer, 2011, p. 91).

It can be discussed whether TRM focuses on an identified target group, featured in figure 4, rather than the mass. On the one hand, the basic literature – for example authors like Fischer, Trost and Becker – discusses a specific defined target group and small talent pools. On the other hand, Bender defines TRM as a process that gathers and strategically processes all potential candidates of an organization in all online and offline channels. Therefore, “mass” does not exclude the meaning of “great”. The mass of contacts within a talent pool can be segmented to offer special events for chosen parties based upon the newest technological solution.

Bender simplifies the strategic TRM approach into three phases, namely identify, engage and win (Bender, n.d., p. 5).



Figure 5: Three phrases of TRM (Bender, n.d., p. 6)

Identify is close to the active sourcing strategies of Trost. It describes the systematical identification and care of all relevant candidates and talents. There are numerous places and possibilities where potential candidates can be confronted with the company and possible employer.

After the identification follows the admittance in the talent pool and thus the engagement of the candidate. The timeframe of the engagement phase can vary from talent to talent. The phase of engagement is the most important one in the TRM process. Based upon the

regular contact with talents of different target groups, TRM builds up a talent pool with available talents (Bender, n.d., p. 6).

If the talent relationship manager has identified potential talents and bound them to the company, based upon the talent pool or something similar, the final phase follows, namely entry into the company. The recruiting success can happen through different approaches. Recruiters can search directly with the talent pool candidates for a vacancy and address them, reflecting the “source” approach. Alternatively, matching vacancies can be proposed to the talent in the form of a job ad. Following this, the candidate has to apply for it by themselves, whereby this approach is called “inspire”. Moreover, it is important that talent relationship managers check the talent pipeline on a regular basis, which is termed forecast (Bender, n.d., p. 9 ff.).

In conclusion, TRM identifies talents, builds up a relation through engagement based upon the goal to win them in the long term for the organization. With the focus of the discrepancy of the effectiveness of TM programs and the quality of experienced TRM practices in 1.1 and the central questions, the theses will take the mass approach of TRM as basis for the following study and narrow the research about TRM in practice to the phase of engagement and the attractiveness of the talent community as a TRM practice.

2.1.3. Functions of TRM within the organization

TRM is related to key functions that hold extreme strategic importance to a company. For example, executives in the US note a beneficial relationship between TM and business strategy to maintain the success of the organization (Iyria, 2013, S. 288) “Talent Management is a strategic issue. It is not a ‘nice to have’ or a ‘coincidental benefit’. It is something that has to be worked for, planned and given executive attention” (Mowl, 2007, S. 2), This executive attention should be in functions that have strategic importance in terms of company success and sustainable competitiveness. Moreover, the overall future quantitative workforce demand has to be planned, including the availability of talent on the external labor market (Trost, 2014, p. 22).

Therefore, the goal of TRM is to ensure that the staff is outstandingly better than those of competitors. An above-average value can be achieved by the organization through above-

average performance (Trost, 2014, p. 21). Accordingly, a competitive advantage will emerge, which can influence the future of the company. Therefore, it is significant to find talents who bring above-average performance in the long term, as described in the previous two chapters (Trost, 2014, p. 12).

TRM is a continuous process independent from the actual economic situation. Often organizations make the major mistake of having fewer recruitment marketing activities in difficult times. Based upon the demographical changes and its challenges, it is more important than ever to identify qualified candidates continuously and not only when the organization has an individual vacancy (Beuerle & Westerwelle, 2002, p. 30 ff.).

Companies have to deal with the requirement profiles of the applicants. Therefore, it is important to take these results of the profile analyses into account to form the employer brand. This makes the organization more interesting and perceptible for the candidates. Accordingly, a new understanding of human resources work develops within the organization. To date, human resources departments have largely perceived themselves as a service provider within the company. Nowadays, the tasks are changing towards a strategic function, whereby all instruments of human resources development will be adjusted according to the organizational strategy. Furthermore, the human resources department is an equal partner with all organizational units within the company in terms of the accomplishment of the strategic goals (Becker, Recruiting - Talent Relationship Management von Audi, 2013, p. 97).

Organizations are searching today for somebody for tomorrow. Accordingly, the focus has changed from recruiting towards strategic staffing. Implementing an effective TRM and quality in the recruiting process are central assignments of the management, especially if increasingly more positions cannot be filled based upon the necessary knowledge and competencies (Becker, Recruiting - Talent Relationship Management von Audi, 2013, p. 98).

TRM is a cross-functional process; for example, Audi uses a “SWOT” analysis for the definition of the target group, evaluating their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The goal is to define an expressive talent profile through a focus group comprising employees, executives and personnel managers of the target group (Becker, Auf die richtige Besetzung kommt es an - Talent Relationship Management, 2013, p. 95). Moreover, it is recommendable to create synergy effects. Owing to the cross-functionality, human resource marketing activities such as job fairs, recruiting events and other practices can also be used for TRM to get in contact with potential talents. It should be said that

these activities are more passive approaches where the talent has to move in any form towards the company (Fischer, 2011, p. 89).

In the phase of candidate retention, it is important to integrate the departments. For example, at Audi, meetings and events with representatives of the individual departments is an essential component to make the work life of Audi more perceptible. The dialogue improves mutual trust and the exclusive information supports the development of the talents' opinion (Fischer, 2011, p. 90).

In the final phase, the selection and following the placement can bring some challenges such as misunderstandings, obscurities and different expectations for the talent and the company. Therefore, the intense support of TRM has to be continued during this phase. The talent relationship manager has to accompany the talent throughout the process of placement based upon their knowledge about the talent. The manager will act as a lawyer for the talent. Here, it is important that the talent relationship manager and the supervising HR manager know their area of competence and stick to it (Fischer, 2011, p. 91).

As we can see, the amount of change management effort within a TRM project is high and also important for the effectiveness. The position and understanding of the HR department and leaders will be questioned and possibly changed. Accordingly, all participants have to know that the expectations within a TRM project are completely different to those of a classical recruiting process. It is necessary that all participants communicate on the same level to make it successful, whereby clear roles are essential. The organization should define the role of the talent manager as an equal partner and not as a service provider of the HR department. Therefore, the support of corporate management in the activities within the TRM project helps the concept of TRM within the company and in the public image. Summing up, TRM needs the support of top management to be successful in the long term (Fischer, 2011, p. 93).

2.2. TRM practices

This part will discuss TRM practices for the identification and engagement of potential talents.

First of all, organizations attract potential candidates through all employer branding and recruitment marketing actions. Furthermore, it is important to promote their talent

pool/community and highlight the benefits of the participation and the TRM program. Talent pool and community are two different actions of recruitment and engagement, although they are often used synonymously in the literature and in practice. Essentially, both describe a database of people and their relevant information. A deeper understanding of the difference is shown in chapter 2.2.2. The first contact and entrance on the talent pool/community are very important for the later engagement (Bender, n.d., p. 7). Personal contact can be achieved at career events, fairs and workshops, through university marketing, professional contact platforms such as Xing and LinkedIn and career communities such as Careerloft and blicksta (Manager, 2016, p. Q. 14). Several companies are highly active on social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter or Instagram to get in contact with potential candidates and persuade them to enter their TRM programs. For example, Telekom is active on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Xing, YouTube, Twitter and has a career blog (Telekom, n.d.).

The invitation to the talent pool or community should happen directly or shortly after the first contact. The invitation should work based upon the premise of KISS: keep it short and simple. Another approach to identify potential talents is the refer approach, whereby talents and other employees can talk about their (potential) employer. These referral marketing and referrals programs are useful instruments for the identification of candidates (Bender, n.d., p. 7).

Summing up, for the identification and entrance of potential candidates in the pool/community, every contact of the organization to talents is relevant. Therefore, the quality of the contacts can vary. Accordingly, the engagement phase or phase of candidate retention has the purpose of segmenting the qualified candidates and offering targeted actions of bonding (Bender, n.d., p. 7 f.).

Based on an interview with a Talent Relationship Manager of a global consulting firm, henceforth referred to as Organization X, about their Talent Community and her job as Talent Relationship Manager, the following examples are presented. For example, Organization X has a talent community to which everybody can apply for and is invited to do so, although within the community the organization has the opportunity to filter groups of talents – such as former interns – and can offer them an individual offering. Furthermore, it is partner of the talent community Careerloft, whereby after the contact through Careerloft Organization X can send the participants an invitation to their own talent community and subsequently filter for these participants because in this context the

company learns about the talents and their preferred talent relationship actions (Appendix B, Q. 6+7).

In the following phase of candidate retention, it is important to connect to the talent based upon thought-out actions of bonding to signalize interest and appreciation. Common candidate retention actions are company and career events, invitations to career and specialized fairs, webinars, company news or job advertising. Talent communities are very favored in this phase nowadays. Several companies offer this TRM practice, such as Ernst & Young, SAP, Merck, Shell and Accenture, among others. The community combines different actions to one program and gives the possibility to document every step of the talent in the TRM process.

The purpose of the connection is a potential competitive advantage compared with other potential employers. Moreover, in this phase companies can learn through the exchange with the talent and optimize their TRM processes. Furthermore, the regular touch points create an authentic view behind the scenes and have the purpose of inspiring the candidate (Bender, n.d., p. 8 ff.). For example, Organization X offers their identified talents invitations to events, webinars, newsletters and participation in competitions. Through these touch points, talents have the opportunity to meet recruiters, talent relationship managers and employees of different fields within the company.

Organization X hopes to inspire and engage the candidates through practices like career events. The most important action in the engagement phase is the contact with their employees, who function as ambassadors. On this basis, long-term contacts can evolve up to an application (Appendix B, Q. 2,14,15). Summing up, the goal of TRM is to ensure a long-term relationship between the organization and talent until an application.

2.2.1. Active sourcing

Practices for the identification of talents and candidate retention are mostly through active sourcing and alternatively direct sourcing. This part will explain the terms active and direct sourcing, the practices themselves and their importance.

Active sourcing describes the search, identification and winning of talents with the goal of networking. Active sourcing can be used to find matching candidates for an open vacancy,

although it is also used to build up talent pools. Next to active sourcing is direct sourcing, whereby both approaches are part of proactive recruitment. Active sourcing is online-based and uses social media platforms such as Xing, Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn and talent communities such as Careerloft or company-owned talent communities (for example, EY talent community). Direct sourcing mostly happens offline; for example, at fairs, recruiting events or personal gatherings (Dannhäuser, 2015, p. 4).

Active sourcing ranks 17th among the topics of important internal challenges in recruiting in the study “Recruiting Trends 2015” of the CHRIS at the University of Bamberg. Therefore, German companies perceive it as a future challenge as well as a tool for managing upcoming challenges like the skilled worker shortage.

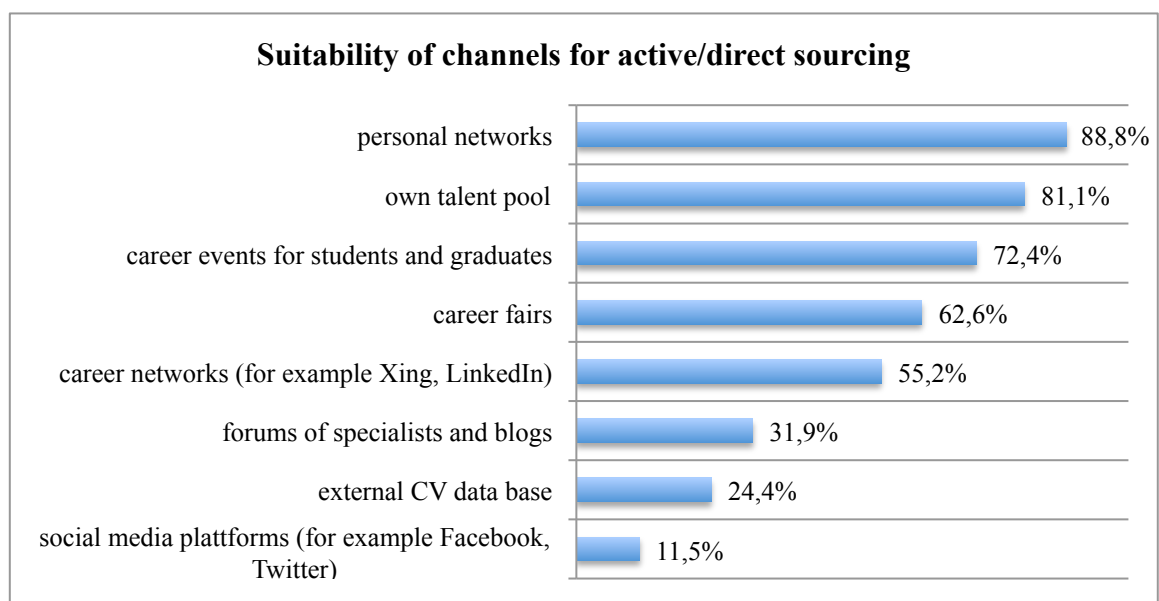


Figure 6: Suitability of different channels for the identification and active/direct sourcing of potential candidates (Center of Human Resources Information System, 2016, p. 48)

As illustration 6 shows, the best practices of active sourcing – from the company perspective – are personal networks and an own talent pool. 81.8 % of the largest German companies share the opinion that a talent pool is an applicable active sourcing channel. Other interesting channels are career events for students and graduates and career fairs, while half of the study participants believe that career networks are suitable channels for active or direct sourcing of potential candidates. The social web is a daily communication tool of the target group of 20 to 30 year olds. Only 11.5 % of the companies thinks that social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter are suitable channels for active sourcing. Therefore, HR managers face the challenge of how to use social media in the process of recruiting and winning candidates (Heibel, 2013, p. 3).

Summing up, regarding the study a talent pool/talent community is seen as suitable channel for active sourcing. This thesis will take a closer look at the attractiveness of talent community from the candidate perspective.

2.2.2. Talent pools and talent communities

Because this thesis analyzes the meaning and attractiveness of TRM in practice and thus talent pools and communities, this section will explain what a talent community and pool is, including their functions.

A talent pool is a database of persons with whom the employer wants to stay in touch. Moreover, actions of bonding will be offered on an individual or group basis. Information about the candidate will be documented and updated along the candidate retention cycle (Trost, 2014, p. 92).

In the sense of the sustainability and long-term approach of candidate retention, numerous companies have further developed the idea of a talent pool. Based upon software solutions, they have developed talent communities accordingly.

A talent community is more than a database; rather, it is an engagement platform for a company in the sense of social media platforms. It can be focused on talents and current employees. Moreover, an organization can develop multiple communities to address different target groups (Waldman, 2016). Companies can also join talent communities of multiple organizations such as Careerloft to use synergy effects.

Talent communities have functions such as a profile that the user can update, its conversational among members and following organizations can build strong relationships with the talents (Waldman, 2016).

A good talent community can differentiate different talent pools. Therefore, recruiters or talent relationship managers can filter between different target groups such as interns, graduates, Bachelor students, etc. and offer actions of bonding for specific target groups. Another important function is the profile of the talent in the community and the autonomous updating of this profile. Furthermore, the organization can ask for the information in the profile that it needs. Moreover, talent communities often have typical social media functions such as posting of news, pictures, videos or events. It has similar

function to social media platforms like Facebook, although it should not be mixed up with such social media platforms. The difference is the type of use and the use intensity, given that Facebook is mostly privately used. A follower of the company's Facebook page shows various private information, such as their relationship status or hobbies, but no relevant information concerning their CV, like qualifications or education. Therefore, it is impossible to identify and engage the talent in the long term through Facebook. It is useful for employer branding but not for TRM (Ludwig, 2012).

Moreover, platforms like Facebook have a user intensity of several hours per day, whereas in talent communities the members do not log in as regularly because the status of their CV does not change this regularly and if the member is not actively searching for a new position they do not need to receive many offers (Ludwig, 2012).

However, often the literature and HR managers perceive the terms of talent community and talent pool as the same. For example, Organization X is a global consulting firm and has a global talent community since fall 2015, although every national sales company can use it differently and offer different actions of bonding. The term "community" would assume an interactive approach, although in practice members send their CV to the database yet have no opportunity to update their profile autonomously. Accordingly, the interactive element is missing. The wrong wording is based upon the global approach of this tool (Appendix B).

In conclusion, talent pools and communities have different functions, although both have the goal of building up a pool of potential candidates to define and implement loyalty measures and document the candidate retention phase.

2.3. Summary

Based upon the shortage of skilled labor and other challenges, traditional approaches of recruiting fail in terms of strategically important or difficult-to-fill vacancies. A forward-looking and future-oriented recruiting strategy is important to find and recruit the right people in the "war for talents" and gain a competitive advantage through human capital.

Many organizations build up professional TM, whereby the management devote focus to contacts of current, former and future employees to recruit at a later point in time. TRM

can involve the engagement of former employees and new talents. Accordingly, TRM focuses on external candidates. TRM describes the practices that establish contact to talents and candidates, create a link to them, maintain a close contact and build up an effective talent pool or community. Pools of applicants give recruiters or talent relationship managers a base of matching profiles to staff a difficult-to-fill vacancy, which is very important for strategically positions. TRM includes the phases of identify, engage and win. This thesis and following the research questions take a closer look at the phase engagement of external talents.

Therefore, TRM practices within the process should include the following:

- Employer branding: a unique and positive company personality that conveys an attractive and interesting picture of the company to the external candidate.
- External recruiting: recruiters or talent relationship managers who search and find the talents based upon active and direct sourcing, through the evaluation of skills and knowledge.
- Talent pools and communities: setting up an effective talent pool/community with qualified candidates, filtering according to specific target groups.
- Engagement: maintaining close contact with interesting candidates to build up a relationship that can be useful in the future for both the candidate and the organization.

If organizations fill their vacancies through this talent-focused approach and no longer with a vacancy-focused approach, they will build up a competitive advantage in recruiting in the long term.

3. Methods

This chapter will depict the methodical procedure of this thesis. First of all, the frame conditions (3.1) will be described, including the sample, the questionnaire, an overview of the variables and the approach of the questioning. Hereafter follows the methodical approach (3.2) with the study design and the exposition of the measuring instruments.

3.1. Frame conditions

The focal point of this thesis, the analysis of the attractiveness of the TRM practices itself and its chosen communication channels for young talents in practice holds importance. Another focus is on TRM practices like talent communities and their attractiveness for binding young talents. For the sample, test persons will be targeted who are studying at present or have graduated recently and rate as high qualified. The analysis is a cross-sectional study with a time of measurement.

3.1.1 Sample

The sample is a part of mass of the population of high-qualified students. It is a representative, simple random sample (Bortz & Döring, 2003, p. 389 ff.). Accordingly, no other characteristic besides the status as a student is considered.

Overall, 832 persons participated in the survey, of whom 702 persons prematurely broke off the survey, equating to a completion quota of 15.62 %. The data will be checked according to suspicious response patterns. The check shows anomalies: two participants had a very low response rate (< 20%) and conspicuous response pattern. Therefore, the total sample comprises 128 persons (n=128), of whom 77 are female (60.2 %) and 51 are male (39.5).

87.81 % of the participants are students. The average age of the participants (24.7 years) shows that the focus and interest of the survey is on people who are job seeking at present or in the near future.

The group of participants aged from 22 to 26 is over-represented, accounting for 65 % of the respondents. Accordingly, a special interest in this study and its content lies in students who are at the end phase of their Bachelor studies. This perception will be supported by exploring the state of study progress. Most of the answers (42.64%) are from students between the 6th and 8th semester, usually the last semesters of the common standard period of study for Bachelor degrees. Therefore, the participants could be taken as representatives of the typical target groups of companies that design and practice TRM programs. Moreover, 70.6% of the participants are students of Bachelor degree courses. Another major group among the participants is Master students (21.4 %), 25.9 % of whom are

studying in the second semester, which explains the high participation of second semester students. Furthermore, these Master students could be taken as representatives of the typical target groups of companies that design and practice TRM programs.

The major fields of study of the participants are largely divided similar to the European distribution, although individual subjects are over- or under-represented (Eurostat, n.d.).

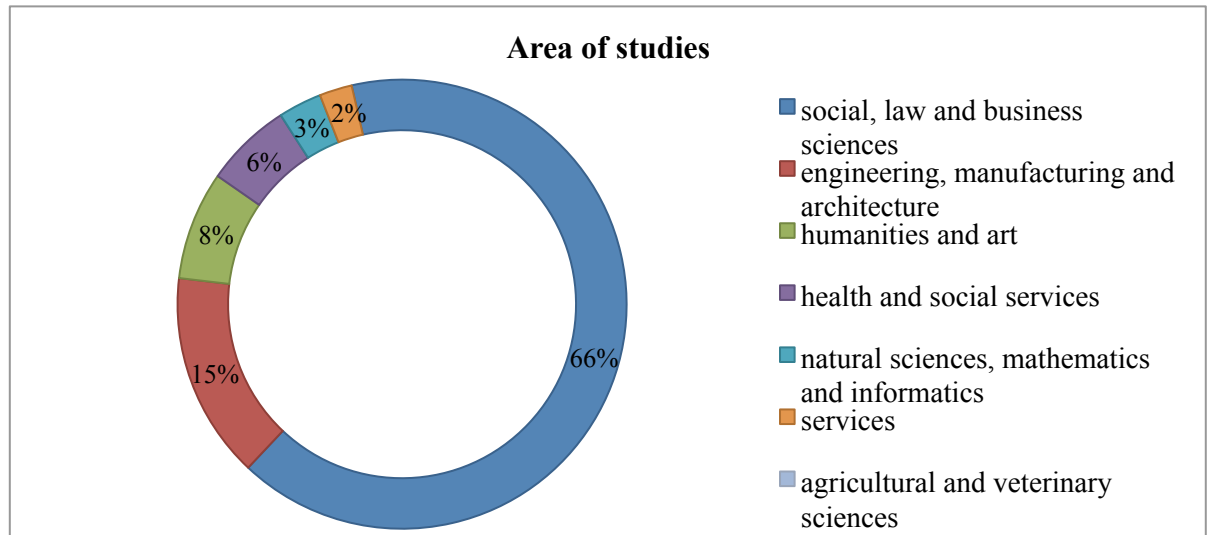


Figure 7: Area of studies

The majority of the participants are students of “Social, Law and Business Sciences”, “Engineering, Manufacturing and Architecture” and “Humanities and Art”.

In comparison to the European distribution of the study “Studierende im Tertiärbereich* in der EU nach Studienfächern im Jahr 2005” of Eurostat, Social, Law and Business Studies are over-represented (66% in the sample vs. 33.5% in the population), while Humanities and Art (8% in the sample vs. 12.4% in the population), Health and Social Services (6% in the sample vs. 11.9% in the population), Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Informatics (3% in the sample vs. 10.5% in the population) and Agricultural and Veterinary Sciences (0% in the sample vs. 2.1% in the population) are under-represented (Eurostat, n.d.).

The average number of work experiences is 4.5. There is a significant difference between females and males, with an average amount of 5.9 working stations for females and 10.2 for males. In general, it can be said that all participants have some work experience and could have been in contact with TRM practices. The most important work experience for the participants was their internship. In this respect, the analysis found no difference between female and male and Bachelor and Master students.

Table 1 shows an overview of the frequency distribution of the socio-demographic data.

	Frequency distribution of the socio-demographic data			
Data	Female	Percentage	Male	Percentage
Sex	77	60.2	51	39.8
Age				
19 – 23	33	25.8	22	17.2
24 – 28	37	28.9	20	15.6
29 – 34	6	4.7	8	6.3
>35	1	0.8	1	0.8
Educational degree				
Bachelor	59	46.1	30	23.4
Master	15	8.6	12	9.4
Diploma	0	0	7	5.5
Other	3	2.3	2	1.6
Status				
Student	70	54.7	43	33.6
Graduate	7	5.5	8	6.3

Table 1: Frequency distribution of the socio-demographic data

3.1.2 Questionnaire

A quantitative method was chosen for the analysis of the research questions in the form of a questionnaire. An online survey is chosen to collect a larger random sample in a time and cost-efficient manner. The questionnaire (see Appendix A) was created with the company LamaPoll and provided for the test persons via a hyperlink. LamaPoll is an efficient survey tool for the creation of online survey and questionnaires. Several companies, research institutes and public institutions create safe surveys with LamaPoll. The platform allows an appealing external design of the questionnaires, anonymous data collection and a simple assumption of the data for subsequent editing.

A pre-test with seven test persons was conducted to test and evaluate the questionnaire. The purpose of the pre-test is to obtain information about the comprehensibility of the questions, possible technical problems and the necessary time frame (Porst, 2014, p. 189).

As a result of the pre-tests, the formulation of four questions was adapted for a better understanding.

After the socio-demographic data, the participants were asked about their work experience and the most important one for their professional advancement. After this background, questions regarding their work experience were asked. Accordingly, questions were asked regarding TRM practices offered and in comparison which practices were expected by the participant. Subsequently, questions relating to their participation in talent pools and communities and their willingness to reveal data followed.

3.1.3 Approach by the questioning

The data acquisition took place from 30.04.2016 until 30.05.2016. The acquisition of the participants for the survey occurred through several social media platforms, whereby the link to the survey was posted on Facebook, Xing and LinkedIn. Facebook is a social network to which everybody has access. On Facebook, the survey was posted in groups of different universities in Germany and abroad. These groups are closed and the administrators have to approve every entry before people can post something in these groups. Xing and LinkedIn are social networks mainly used by the members for professional contacts. In Xing, the survey was posted in a group only for students and their questionnaires, while the same applied in LinkedIn. These groups mainly comprise students in the final phase of their studies.

Posting means that a non-personalized message was sent to groups of student from different study areas, degree programs and countries.

The participants of these groups are mainly students and alumni, as the sample shows. Furthermore, these platforms can be used on every technical and mobile device, meaning that people could participate in the survey on any device.

This approach of posting the survey on social media can explain the high participant numbers of 832 persons overall.

The selection of the test persons within the social media platforms and social networks was chosen due to the purpose of reaching a preferably representative random sample of the population of students in Europe. There is an over-representation of German students, which could be based upon Xing, which is mainly a German network platform.

3.2 Methodical approach

The aim of this chapter is to describe the methodical approach. For this purpose, the study design will be briefly presented, whereby mostly standardized and valid methods are applied for the inquiry of the data.

The study of the research questions – featured in chapter 1.2 – occurred based upon a cross-sectional study with a time of measurement. For the study, a quantitative study design was chosen with an online questionnaire in written form. The questionnaire was made specifically for this study and includes self-constructed questions regarding the offerings and expectations of TRM practices. The most effective communication channels and the attractiveness of the participation in TRM practices will be examined.

4. Data analysis

The evaluation of the data is carried out with Excel. The collected data of the questionnaire in LamaPoll was in the file format cvs and first had to be converted into an Excel format. Because two participants had a very low response rate and conspicuous response pattern, the data sets were corrected before the export into Excel.

The following chapter will show the analysis of the data regarding the research questions. First of all, all research questions will be evaluated individually, followed by an overview of the results.

4.1 TRM in practice

This part will analyze in what way the participants recognize TRM practices and evaluate their participation.

In the beginning, the participants were asked about their expectations of TRM practices and later on about the offer of TRM practices that they experienced at their most important work experience.

The participants are mainly satisfied with the collected work experience. They completed 4.58 workstations on average. 48% of the candidates name their internship as their most important work experience and 23.20% their working student position. 80.95% are satisfied with the collected working experience. Moreover, 75.59% can imagine a future job entry at this employer. Furthermore, most of the candidates (60.1%) had their most important work experience in a very small (23.8%), small (22.2%) or medium (15.1%) sized company. By contrast, around one-third (38.8%) of the candidates had their most important work experience in a large or very large company. Therefore, large companies have to fear the competition of small companies in the fight for talents.

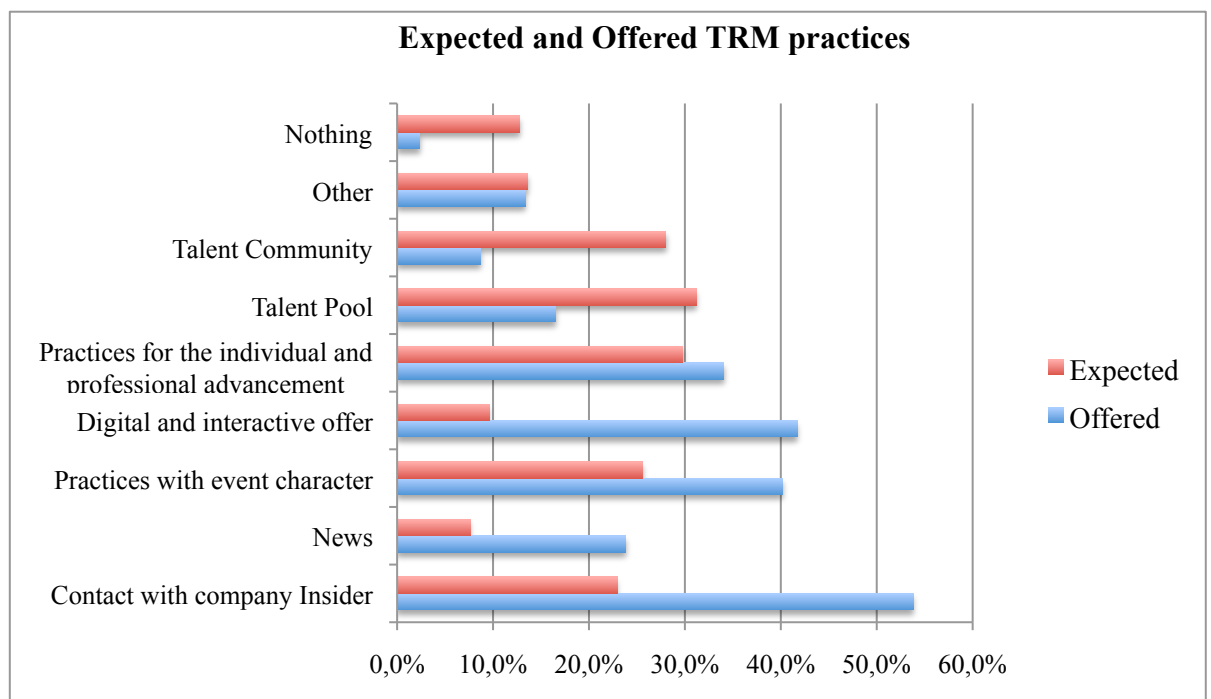


Figure 8: Expected and Offered TRM practices

Figure 8 shows that there are fields where the offer meets the expectation and others where the expectations are higher or outreached.

In the topics of practices for the individual and professional advancement, digital and interactive offer, practices with event character, news and contact with company insiders, the expectations are outreached. In the topics of talent community and talent pool, the expectations of the participants are higher than the offer. Solely in the topic of other does the offer meet the expectations. Interestingly, there was an offer of TRM at companies although the participants did not expect one. An analysis of differences between the degree programs or gender was conducted, albeit without finding any anomalies.

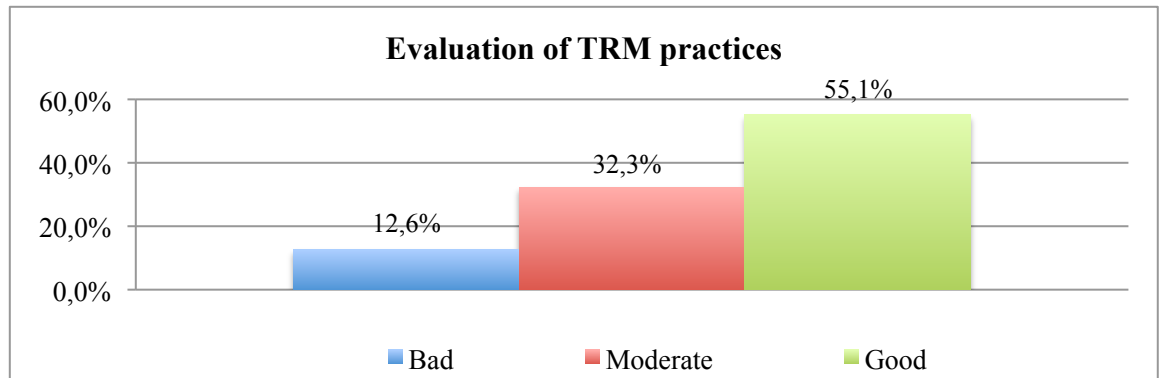


Figure 9: Evaluation of TRM practices

Figure 9 shows how the participants evaluated the experienced TRM practices. More than half of the participants (55.1 %) evaluate the practices of their former employee as good. An analysis of differences between the degree programs or gender was conducted, again without finding any anomalies.

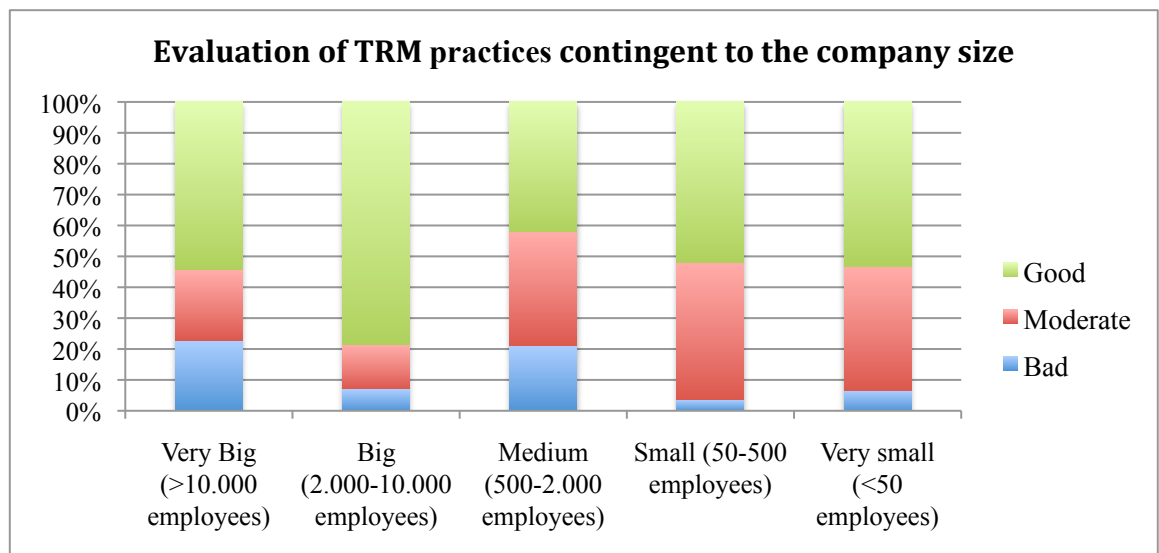


Figure 10: Evaluation of TRM practices contingent to the company size

The differentiation based upon company sizes shows no substantial differences in the experienced quality of TRM practices. On the one hand, the figure shows that large and very large companies have a high number of candidates with good experience, meaning

that it is potentially easier for large companies to remain in touch with candidates compared with small companies. On the other hand, very large companies have the highest number of candidates with a negative TRM experience.

4.2 Evaluation of the most effective communication channels to reach young Talents through TRM practices

This part will analyze the results of the questionnaire concerning the most effective communication channels for TRM practices.

The most preferred media of communication is electronically (59.8%), followed by in person (36.6%). Only a small number of participants (1.6%) prefer written communication channels. These participants are Diploma and Master students. Furthermore, no participant prefers not to be reached at all. The analysis of differences between the sexes featured no noteworthy differences.

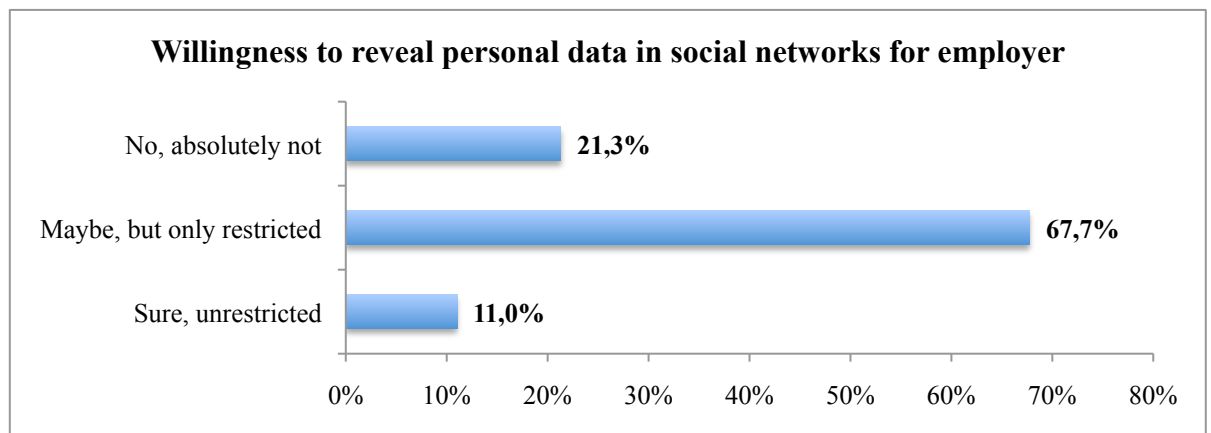


Figure 11: Willingness to reveal personal data in social networks for employer

On the one hand, the preferred communication is electronic, although the willingness to reveal personal data is limited. Most of the participants (67.7%) would reveal their personal data in their profile in a restricted manner, in the form of restricted content or for selected people. Moreover, 21.3 % of the participants state that they would not reveal their personal data in their profile for employers at all and only 11 % would reveal their personal data unrestricted for employers.

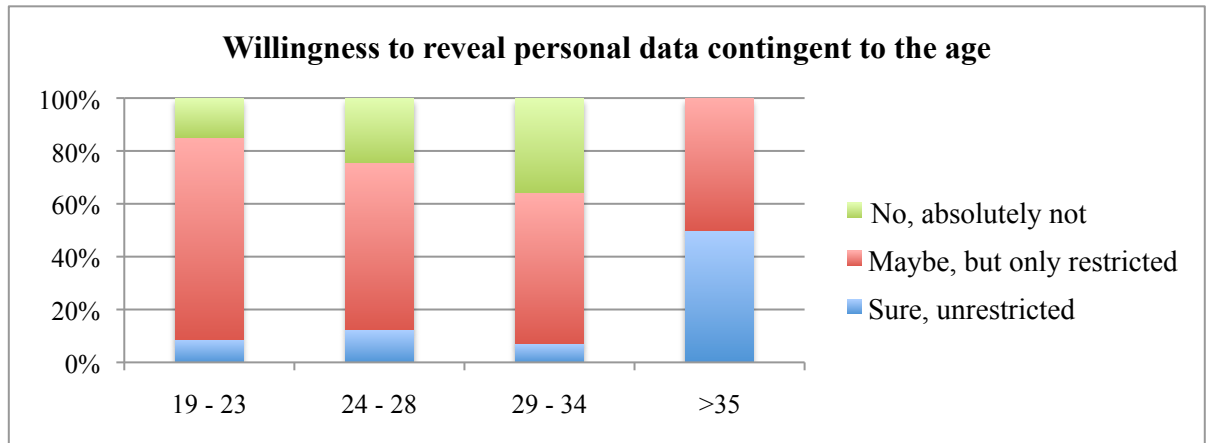


Figure 12: Willingness to reveal personal data contingent to the age

The analysis of differences according to gender or study degree featured no noteworthy differences. Moreover, figure 12 shows that the willingness to reveal data in social networks differs between the age groups. In general, the skepticism to provide companies with personal profile information in social networks is strongly pronounced across all age groups. The oldest participants (>35 years) would mainly reveal their personal data unrestricted in comparison to the other age groups. The over 35 year olds (0%) and the participants aged 19-23 years old (14.8%) have the lowest percentage of participants claiming that they would not reveal their personal data at all. The data refutes the occasional assumption that younger people are less protective of their privacy on the internet.

4.3 Attractiveness of participation in TRM practices

This part will analyze the results of the questionnaire concerning the attractiveness of participation in TRM practices, especially talent pools and communities.

Most of the participants had not participated in either talent pools (85.2 %) or communities (88.3 %). An analysis of differences between the degree programs or gender was conducted, but did not find any anomalies.

Moreover, talent communities are also unknown, with 63.1% of the candidates not knowing any specific talent communities.

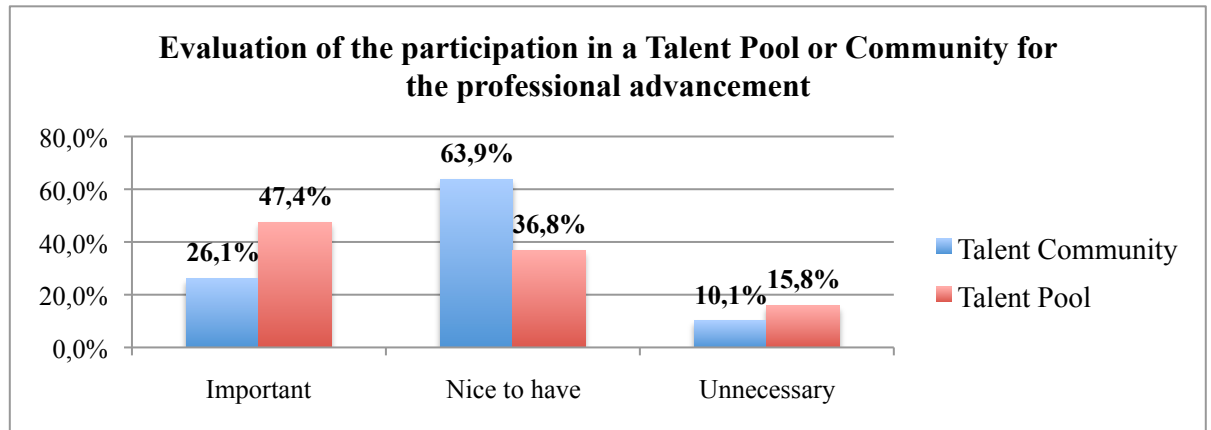


Figure 13: Evaluation of the participation in a Talent Pool or Community for the professional advancement

Figure 13 shows how the study participants who participated in a talent pool evaluate their participation for their professional advancement. Almost half of them (47.4 %) think that the participation in the talent pool was important for their professional advancement, while a further 36.8% think it is nice to have and only a couple of talent pool participants (15.8%) think it is an unnecessary practice. The analysis of differences between gender or study degrees shows that most females (62.5 %) see the talent pool as important for their professional advancement. By contrast, most males (63.6 %) see the talent pool as nice to have for their professional advancement. This picture is similar to the analysis of differences between the study degrees, whereby most Bachelor students (46.7 %) think that participation in the talent pool is important for their professional advancement and most Master and Diploma students (75 %) think that it is nice to have.

Moreover, figure 13 shows how the participants of talent communities evaluate their participation for their professional advancement in comparison to participation in a talent pool. Most participants in the talent community (63.9 %) consider them as nice to have for professional advancement and only around one-quarter of the talent community participants (26.1 %) perceive it as important for their professional advancement.

The analysis of differences between gender or study degree featured no noteworthy differences.

Summing up, in general talent pools and communities are seen as useful for the professional advancement of young talents.

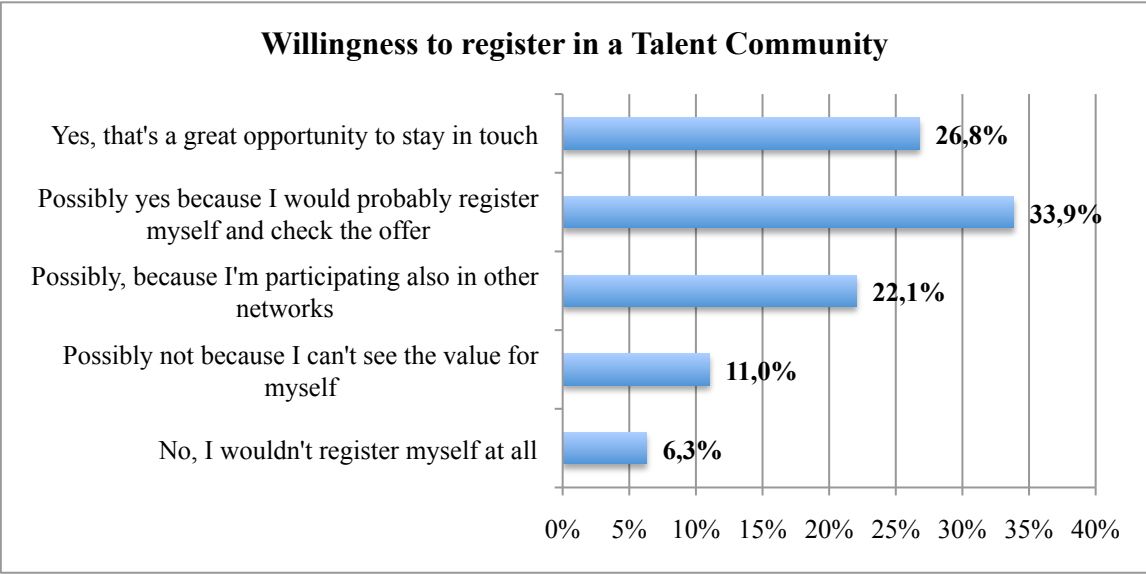


Figure 14: Willingness to register in a Talent Community

Figure 14 displays the willingness of the participants to register in a talent community, showing that more than half of the participants are positive (60.7 %) towards the registration. Most of the participants (33.9 %) say possibly yes, depending on the offer. The analysis of differences between gender or study degree featured no noteworthy differences. Overall, it can be said that there is a general interest in talent communities.

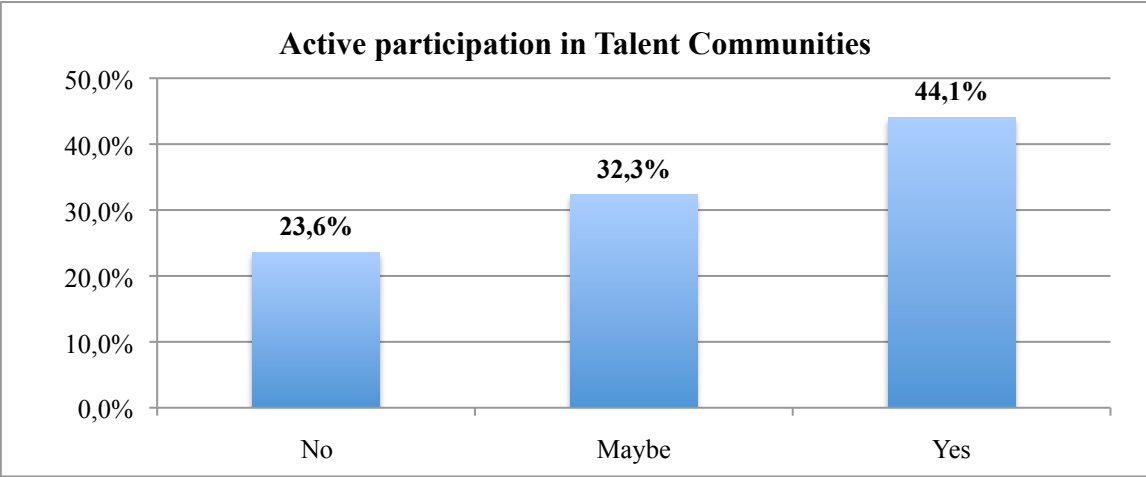


Figure 15: Active participation in Talent Communities

Figure 15 shows whether the participants are geared up actively participate in such communities; for example, updating their profile or networking with others. Most of the participants (44.1 %) would actively participate in such communities. Moreover, 32.2 % of the participants said that they would perhaps actively participate. The smallest amount of participants (23.6 %) would not participate actively. The analysis of differences between the genders featured no noteworthy differences, while the analysis of differences between

the study degrees revealed that most Bachelor students (50%) would actively participate and most Master/Diploma students (38.2 %) stated that they would not actively participate in such communities.

The participants are divided in terms of whether they would participate in multiple talent communities of the employers of their choice. Most of the participants stated maybe (45.3 %), while 29.1 % would be open to participating in multiple communities and 15.6 % would not. The analysis of differences between gender or study degree featured no noteworthy differences.

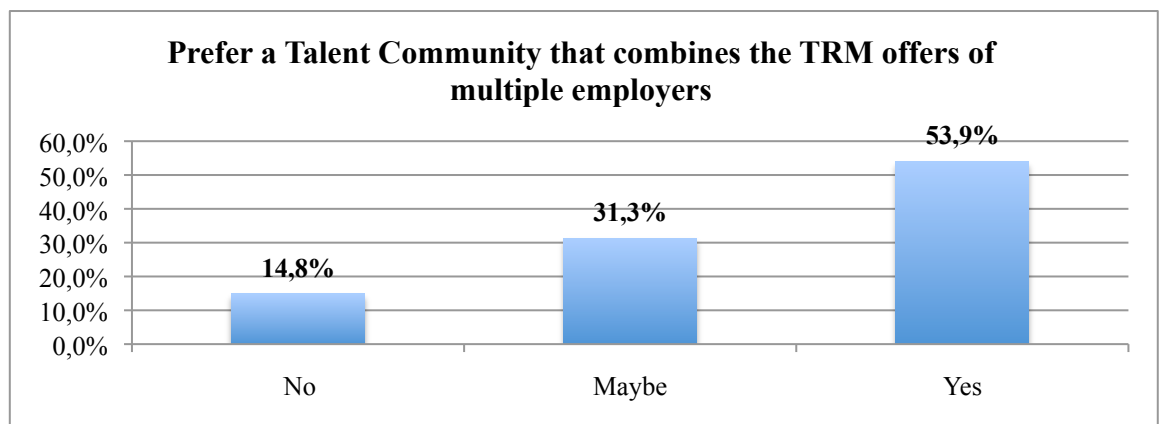


Figure 16: Prefer a Talent Community that combines the TRM offers of multiple employers

Accordingly, most of the participants (53.9 %) would prefer a talent community that combines the TRM offers of multiple employers, as figure 16 shows. The analysis of differences between genders featured no noteworthy differences, while therefore the analysis of differences between the study degrees revealed that most Bachelor students (64 %) would prefer a combined talent community whereas most Master/Diploma students (41.2 %) are divided and said that they would perhaps prefer a combined community.

In conclusion, the participants are interested in joining talent communities and actively participating, although Bachelor students are more attracted by the TRM offer of talent communities compared with Master students.

4.4 Overview of the results

Overall, the company side meets the expectations of the candidates regarding TRM practices, from of the candidate view. Most of the participants (55.1%) evaluate the received practices as “good”. Altogether, the participants expect an extensive TRM offer,

which is mainly met by the companies. There exists a strong interest in practices that demonstrate cultivation of contact, such as talent pools (31.2%), practices for the individual and professional advancement (29.8%), talent communities (28.0%), practices with event character (25.6%) and contact with company insiders (22.9%).

The expectations and offers diverge in terms of talent pools and communities.

Very clearly, there is a decline in importance of traditional media as opposed to digital media. Therefore, 59.8% of the candidates want to communicate electronically with the organization and 38.6% of the candidates consider contact in person as important.

The large majority (59.8%) of the participants prefer digital TRM communication. Moreover, the majority (97.7 %) of the participants have a profile in social media platforms. However, at the same time social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn or Xing seem to be unsuitable TRM channels, because candidates protect their private profile information very differentiated and the majority (89%) does not provide it at all – or only in a restricted manner – for TRM purposes.

The study clearly shows the interest in TRM practices such as talent pools and communities.

The talent community concept –displayed as an “online community, in which you can update your profile, get invitations, get in touch with mentors and company insiders and find job advertisings etc.” – is viewed positively, with around two-thirds of the candidates claiming that they would register and use a talent community, whereas only 6 % would not at all.

5. Discussion and outlook

The background of this work is a potential discrepancy in practice between the effectiveness of TM programs and the experienced quality of TRM practices by the talents, as outlined in 1.1. This study has the goal of ascertaining which communication channels have the best effectiveness to reach talents and evaluate the attractiveness of TRM practices such as talent communities.

This chapter will interpret and discuss the results of the methodical and theoretical view in relation to the central questions. First of all, a discussion of the framework and the

descriptive data will take place (5.1), followed by a discussion and interpretation of the results of the central questions (5.2), before finally providing a conclusion and outlook (5.3).

5.1 Framework and descriptive data

The selection of the participants for the sample pool happened arbitrarily. This means that only those who felt addressed by the topic and wanted to participate freely in the survey completed the questionnaire.

An insufficient representiveness and sample bias could be present. A representative sample is given if the composition of the target population is met at most (Moosburger, 2012, p. 195).

The overall study group of this thesis comprises all students in Europe and young professionals. The acquisition of the test persons happened in groups and forums of Facebook, Xing and LinkedIn. This limits the overall study group of the group to persons with corresponding characteristics, such as the status as a student and an interest in networking. The dataset represents the important TRM target group. Moreover, it shows an imbalance with an over-representation of students that are close to entrance into the job market, because based upon their state of study progress they are interested in participation in TRM practices. This can be seen as a self-selection effect. A final statement about the quality of the sample cannot be made.

Moreover, this study is based upon a comprehensive questionnaire. The completion quota of the study is 15.62 %. This low quote can be due to the scope, although it is most probably owing to the chosen acquisition channels in forums of professional and social networks. Indeed, this could have been optimized.

An imbalance exists in the share of women with 60.2% against men with 39.2%.

The majority of the participants does not know any specific talent community and have neither participated in a talent community (85.2%) nor a talent pool (88.3%). These results could question the reliability of their statement regarding the attractiveness of TRM practices such as talent communities.

5.2 Discussion of the results of the central questions

The experienced TRM practices/offers mostly exceed the expectations of the participants. This results feature a contrary picture to the study of Intraworlds from 2013 (Heibel, 2013, p. 15). Accordingly, companies have closed the gap between wishes and reality to a certain extent. Moreover, the quality of the experienced TRM offers has increased. In the Intraworlds study from 2013, only 37% of the participants evaluated the experienced TRM offer as good, while 17% had lost the contact completely (Heibel, 2013, p. 15). In this study, 55.1 % of the candidates evaluated the experienced offer as good. This highlights that TRM has a stronger importance, not only in literature but also in practice. Moreover, figure 10 shows that the TRM practices of large and very large companies are evaluated better than the programs of smaller companies. One potential reason for this could be that the majority of the organizations have realized that development and especially retention practices are gaining increasing importance considering the demographic change and the evolving shortage of qualified employees. Another reason for this could be that larger companies also have more resources available to invest in TRM programs. At the same time most of the participants had their most important work experience for their professional advancement in a rather small sized company. This increasing competition of small companies should be taken seriously, because these former workforces of interns or working student are an important recruiting source. Furthermore, if the first working experience was not good it is even harder to bind the talent or to build up a relationship. Following TRM practices could be offered to present interns and working students as well, to improve their work experience.

Most of the candidates (59.8%) prefer the communication of TRM practices electronically, followed by communication in person (36.6%). This reflects the expectations of the candidates regarding the TRM offer. The most favored offers are a talent pool, talent community, practices for individual advancement, practices with event character and contact with company insiders. The only electronic approach among these is the talent community, whereas all of the others are more or less TRM practices that have a personal communication approach. The talent community is the link between the talent and company. The expected offers such as practices for the individual advancement, practices with event character and contact with company insiders can be promoted and communicated via the talent community, although the real offer or TRM practice for the

engagement of the talent is in person. This renders the talent community not only a TRM practice itself, but rather it also functions as a communication channel. This features the importance of direct sourcing within the engagement phase.

Communication electronically can happen via different channels, such as talent communities, email, professional networks such as Xing or LinkedIn or social networks such as Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. On the one hand, the candidates wish for digital communication, although on the other they are unwilling to reveal their personal data in social networks to employers in an unrestricted manner. Moreover, 21.3% of the candidates would not reveal their personal data at all for the employer. Accordingly, social networks can prove broadly unsuitable for the effective engagement and winning of talents. Companies are confronted with the challenge to create fitting and exclusive TRM formats – especially digital ones – to reach talents.

Summing up, social networks remain a private matter, although talent communities meet a strong interest among talents. Candidates are more open towards talent communities, whereby 60.7 % of the candidates are positive towards registration in a talent community despite the already high community offer on the internet. The candidates expect to gain contact to company insiders, matching job offers, news of the company and invitations to events from membership in a talent community. Following the results of the study feature that talent communities are an attractive practice to reach talents in the digital times.

In conclusion, the best communication channels to reach young talents are digital ones< especially for getting in contact, maintaining dialogue and promoting TRM practices. For the deepening of the relationships between the talent and organization, contact and communication in person is preferred.

The companies have increased their portfolio of TRM practices and their quality, although the practices of talent communities and pools remain below expectations. 31.2% of the participants expect the offer of a talent pool and 28% expect the offer of a talent community. Talent pools and communities are the TRM practices where actions of bonding are offered on an individual or group basis and information about the candidate will be documented and updated accordingly (Troost, 2014, p. 92). These are very important for the engagement phase (Figure 5). The candidates are mostly willing to participate actively in these communities (Figure 13). The talent community is a suitable platform in the view of the candidates in terms of maintaining contact. However, regarding all of the

fields of interest displayed before, internal job market (the highest interest), invitations to company events and the opportunity to participate in seminars for the individual development are reasons for the participation in a talent community. Moreover, talent pools and communities have a more exclusive character than social networks. This means that actions such as news, jobs and events posted or communicated over a talent pool or community have a more serious and reliable appearance than communication via social networks such as Facebook, Twitter or Instagram.

At this point, it is interesting to observe that Bachelor students are more interested in active participation in a talent community – with about 50 % – compared with Master and Diploma students, with just 38.2 %. The reason for this could be that Bachelor students see a higher potential in talent communities for themselves in terms of the job-seeking process compared with Master or Diploma students, who typically have more work experience and could thus build up a larger network thus far. This is supported by the evaluation of the participation in a talent pool for professional advancement, where most Bachelor students (46.7%) evaluated such participation as important for their professional advancement, in comparison to this most Master and Diploma students (75%) evaluating such participation as nice to have. Therefore, a talent community is potentially not the most attractive and best TRM practice for Master and Diploma students at present.

There are also differences between males and females. Most of the female participants of a talent pool (62.5 %) perceive this offer as important for their professional advancement, whereas most male participants of a talent pool (63.6 %) see it as nice to have. One reason could be that women and men network differently: women build stronger and deeper personal relationships with contacts, whereby the fundament of the relationships is sympathy rather than the status, function or potential of a person, which is often the case in relationships for men. Therefore, the networking of women is often more long term compared with men. The networking of women is also nicer but also less functional than networks of men. Moreover, women feel obliged to do or avoid certain things, whereas male colleagues are more independent in their behavior in networks (Fritze, 2015). These differences in networking could be one reason for the different evaluation of talent pools. Talent pools have a long-term approach and try to build up a relationship where both sides get to know each other better with the time and practices being offered. Potentially, this approach is less attractive for men than women.

In general, figure 11 displays that talent pools are evaluated as more important for professional advancement than talent communities, which most participants evaluate as

nice to have. On the other hand, the participants prefer slightly talent communities (54.0%) over talent pools (46.05%). One reason for this could be that talent pools have a more exclusive character than talent communities. Typically, you have to be invited into a talent pool, while most talent communities are free to join. That makes the participation more important for the professional advancement. Accordingly, talent communities are more attractive to join because the access is easier, although the participation in talent pools is evaluated higher based upon the exclusive character.

Moreover, the significance of the evaluation regarding participation in a talent pool or community in terms of professional advancement is questionable because only 14.84 % (19 people out of 128) of the candidates had participated in a talent pool before, while only 11.72% (15 people out of 128) of the candidates had participated in a talent community. Nonetheless, the data can be seen as a trend.

The participants answered that most of them (55.2%) would prefer an exclusive talent community. This is also an indicator for the assumption that participation in a talent pool is more valuable for the candidates in comparison to the talent community based upon the missing character of exclusivity. Moreover, the talent pool is a less active and interactive TRM practice than the talent community, given that in a talent pool the organization gets in touch with you and you do not have to network by yourself, look for events or jobs or have to update a profile. As discussed in chapter 2.1.2, the more talented an employee is, the more passive they are in the job-seeking process. Accordingly, participation in a talent pool is evaluated as important for professional advancement because it has an exclusive character and in a talent pool the organization does the work and the talent simply benefits. In comparison to this stands the strong interest of the participants in joining a talent community and slightly preferring it over a talent pool.

One reason for this could be that a talent community is an advanced talent pool. On the one hand, a talent community can promote its offer and actively address target groups. On the other hand talents do not have to wait for an offer; rather, they can join the community of the employer in which they are interested and filter the offer, such as job advertisings, events, company news, etc. according to their own preferences.

Talent pools and communities have many of the same features. Most large companies offer either a talent pool or a talent community, as featured in chapter 2.2.2. Talents expect these

offers of engagement (figure 8) and they are willing to register in a talent community (figure 14).

Most candidates (45.3%) would potentially participate in multiple communities. However, a community that combines the TRM offer of multiple employers would be more attractive. Nowadays, we have a major offer of social networks and companies have used those as well professional networks for employer branding. Especially most Bachelor students (64%) would prefer a combined talent community. Therefore, a talent community combining the TRM offers of several companies – such as Careerloft – has several advantages for the talent. The talent can compare the offer of the companies especially at the beginning of their career and thus it gives them the opportunity of orientation. A platform like this has a wider range of offers; for example, Careerloft organizes about 100 career events per year. Moreover, it has a larger job market, with Careerloft having accompanied and advised about 850 of their members to a new job to date (Careerloft, n.d.).

Master and Diploma students are not as interested in participation in a talent community compared with Bachelor students. Therefore, it is not an attractive TRM practice for them like the classical TRM practice of talent pools. One reason could be that their personal network is already advanced. Therefore, TRM practices where they have to act actively or have to be interactive have no use and are not attractive. For this reason, the media preference is an indicator, namely the 1.6% that have a written media preference are Diploma and Master students.

In conclusion, talents in general are expecting the offer of a talent community, whereby they would register themselves and actively participate in such communities. All of this shows that there is an interest in participating in a talent pool or community. Therefore, a talent community is an attractive TRM practice for them and their professional advancement. Interestingly, in comparison to the interest, the attractiveness of a talent community is highlighted in the notion that 85.2% of all participants have not participated in a talent pool and 88.3% have not participated in a talent community to date. Moreover, 63.1% of the candidates do not know any specific talent communities.

Summing up, the effective communication channels to reach young talents are electronic ones. Companies using the preferred electronic communication channels to address talents – especially with the direct sourcing instrument of talent community – offering the talents an attractive TRM practice from their perspective. This means that the reasons why the

offer and the expectations are not met in the study are not that the companies do not use effective communication channels for their TRM practices, the TRM practice is not sufficiently attractive or because companies do not offer this practice; rather, it is because the talent communities themselves are unknown. A reason for this could be, that the term talent communities is new and often mixed up with the term talent pool, how displayed in 2.2.2. Another reason could be that the communities are not promoted by the organizations and therefore unknown.

As defined in 1.1 and 1.2, the thesis is confined to the candidate retention or engagement phase of the TRM process, as well as the TRM practice of talent communities and its attractiveness for binding young talents. The solution for the aforementioned problem is to find in the phase of identify – or more detailed in the employer value proposition – other than the talent community, featured in the chapter 2.1.4. However, this was not a subject explored in this research but could be subject of future research.

5.3 Conclusion and outlook

As displayed in the introduction, the recruitment and long-term bonding of qualified employees will be a growing challenge for organizations in the upcoming years. The purpose of this Bachelor thesis was to validate the attractiveness of TRM practices like talent communities and examine the effectiveness of the communication channels to reach young talents with TRM practices. The background of this thesis was the potential discrepancy in practice between the effectiveness of TM programs and the experienced offer and quality of TRM practices by the talents.

First of all, the exposition of the concept of TM, TRM and its practices took place in the second chapter, reflecting the theoretical part of the Bachelor thesis. Besides the definition of the relevant specialist terms and the placement of TRM within TM, the focus was on the components of the TRM process. First of all, in the context of TM differences between the talent- and vacancy-focused approach in recruiting were indicated. In this context, it was determined that the talent-focused approach is beneficial in relation to the speed necessary to staff a strategic and difficult-to-fill position and the quality of this recruitment. The

TRM process includes the identification of the talents, the engagement of the talent and winning the talent.

For TRM process and the understanding of a talent community as a TRM practice, it is necessary to know the differences between active and direct sourcing and their meaning as instruments within TRM. For the engagement phase in the TRM process, the theoretical chapter featured the common TRM practices, especially the instruments of talent pools and communities. Talent pools are a kind of database with qualified potential candidates for the staffing of key positions, assisting in the talent-focused recruiting approach. By contrast, a talent community is more than a database; rather, it is an engagement platform for a company in the sense of social media platforms.

The literature has discussed whether TRM should be quality- or quantity-oriented. Based upon the research question, this thesis adopted the theoretical quantity-oriented approach of TRM outlined by Bender in chapter 2.1.4. After the identification, the mass of contacts within a talent pool or community can be segmented to offer special events for chosen parties based upon the newest technological solution. Accordingly, through new technology in the form of a talent community, intensive contact and individual TRM practices can be offered to a wider mass of candidates.

Following this, an empirical analysis was conducted to evaluate the theoretical concept of TRM concerning its relevance in practice.

The discrepancies between literature and practices featured at the beginning of the thesis decreased in relation to this study. Companies do not only evaluate TRM as important; rather, they also react. The study shows that the majority of students and young professionals evaluate their collected work experience during their study time as positive. Thereby, this presents the company with every opportunity to build up a valuable talent pool. Through TRM, they have every possibility to invite all interesting candidates into their program. Organizations should promote their talent community to foster interns, working students, etc. Based upon the good evaluation of the work experience and the notion that the candidates can imagine a later job entry at this employer, it is a valuable source of talents. This invitation should happen directly and based upon the premise of KISS: keep it short and simple (Bender, n.d., p. 7).

Talents prefer electronic communication channels, especially for communicating the offer and being addressed. For the practices themselves, they prefer the personal communication approach.

The results highlights that the candidates are active on the social web and thus they protect their sphere of privacy. Social networks do not seem to be beneficial for TRM practices. Marketing and employer branding should happen for the target group in this central media format to be recognized by the talents. Facebook remains the most popular social network worldwide, with 91.3% of the study participants having a profile on this network. Accordingly, social networks are beneficial for employer branding and mass communication in the recruitment marketing is beneficial to promote the TRM programs and especially the talent communities, because – according to chapter 2.1.3 – it is recommendable to create synergy effects. All human resources marketing activities such as job fairs, recruiting events and other practices can be used to promote the talent communities (Fischer, 2011, p. 89).

Summing up, digital communication is wished for during the identification phase as a way of addressing the talents, while in the engagement phase it is used to remain in touch with talents and offer TRM practices. Personal communication is important for the engagement phase in terms of building a relationship, getting to know each other and offering individual and personal TRM practices.

Based upon the theory presented in 2.1.3, the main view is to orient the process to the needs of the client, which in TRM means the talent (Becker, *Auf die richtige Besetzung kommt es an - Talent Relationship Management*, 2013, p. 94). To be successful with TRM, it is important to offer attractive practices such as talent pools, talent communities, practices for individual advancement, practices with event character and contact with company insiders, as practices that are ranked highly on the wish list of the candidates. Moreover, a talent pool or community should be used to remain in touch on a regular basis. On the one hand, social networks barely provide a chance for successful TRM, while on the other keeping in touch with the talents via the social web in the form of exclusive talent communities would be actively used by the candidates. Talent communities are attractive for talents if they offer attractive practices. Talent communities as an active sourcing instrument do not work if they are unknown beforehand. The study reveals a potential field of optimization, whereby employer branding efforts should focus more on TRM practices; moreover, mass communication via social networks should promote their TRM practices such as talent pools or communities to a greater extent.

Talent communities are an attractive TRM practice, particularly as an active sourcing approach through a digital link between the organization and talent. Talent communities are attractive especially for Bachelor students. For Master and Diploma students, talent communities are considered less attractive, given that they prefer more classical TRM instruments such as talent pools. The difference between the genders is that females see the talent communities as slightly more attractive than males, as well as evaluating the participation higher for their professional advancement compared with their male colleagues.

The participation in a talent pool is evaluated higher, although most of the participants can imagine registering and actively participating in talent communities. An optimization field of talent communities is that most of them are free to join and not exclusive. The talents would prefer exclusive talent communities and being addressed individually. Another field of optimization would be to encourage talent communities of multiple organizations, like Careerloft. Potential owing to the background of the high number of social and professional networks and several benefits, talents prefer this configuration.

In conclusion, the effectiveness of electronic communication channels is decisive for the attractiveness of talent communities as an advanced digital talent pool. Accordingly, the communication channel is the right one and this platform in the form of a social network with a bundled TRM offer makes the talent community attractive for talents. Nonetheless, talent communities do not currently reach the talents. The reason has to be found in the preceding step of the employer value proposition and the identification phase, which was not a subject of this study. The purpose of the connection to the talent and TRM in general is a potential competitive advantage to other potential employers, although a competitive advantage cannot be generated with an anonymous talent community.

A critical point is that the empirical study featured a smaller sample than the comparative study of Intraworlds, for instance. An interesting approach for future research in this field could involve a larger empirical study, researching the first contact channels and the employer branding instruments for TRM practices like talent communities to find out about the problem of their anonymous nature.

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Appendix A: Questionnaire

Hello and welcome to my survey!

In order to find out about the attractiveness of Talent Relationship Management practices for young talents and how common those practices are, I would like to ask for your opinion and experiences.

I hope for your kind support.

We assure you that your queried data will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.


If you have any questions, comments or feedback to this survey please contact me at following email.

lindakroj@web.de


Please specify your gender

- Male
- Female
- Not specified


How old are you?

Click here to select 

Please choose your home country

Click here to select 

Which semester are you currently studying in?

Click here to select 

Please choose your educational degree.

If you aren't finished yet, choose the one you're currently studying.

- Bachelor
- Master
- Diploma
- PhD
- Other

What is your major field of study or degree program?

What is the number of your extracurricular experiences/work experiences, such as internships, student jobs, side jobs, final theses, etc.?

Your work experiences

Specify the most important extracurricular/work experience for you and your professional advancement. What kind of experience was it?

- Internship
- Side job
- Student position/working student
- Final thesis in cooperation with a company
- Freelancing opportunity
- Employee (full-time)
- I have no work experience
- Other

How did you find this position?

- Employee referral
- Company website
- Social media or professional network
- Talent Community
- Internet job boards

- Internal recruitment
- Recruitment Agency/Headhunter
- College recruitment programs
- Print newspaper
- Other

What was the industry of this work experience?

- Automotive
- Gastronomy
- Transportation and Logistics
- Industrial
- Commerce
- Real Estate
- Politics and Administration
- Tourism
- Finance
- Medicine and Healthcare
- Services
- Media and Culture
- Software and IT
- Education and Research
- Other

What was the company size of this work experience?

How (well) do you rate your experience at this position?

- Good
- Rather good
- Moderate
- Rather bad
- Bad

After this experience could you imagine a future job entry in this company?

- Yes, absolutely
- Probably yes
- Maybe
- Probably not
- Never

Which Talent Relationship Management practices did this former employer offer?

External Talent Relationship Management describes practices which have the purpose of socializing with new talents and build up relationships with them in order to bind them to the organization.

You can select more than one answer

- Contact with Head of HR
- Contact with superior/manager
- Contact with colleagues
- Company news
- Event invitations
- Social gatherings
- Newsletter
- Access to the intranet
- Talent Pool
- Talent Community
- Company Newspaper
- Individual gifts
- Greeting cards
- Job offers
- Thesis/Projects
- Specific news of the industry
- Training opportunities
- Feedback
- Nothing
- Other

How do you evaluate the Talent Relationship Management practices that your former employer offered?

- Good
- Rather good
- Moderate
- Rather bad
- Bad

Which Talent Relationship Management practices would you have liked from your former employer?

You can select more than one answer

- Contact with Head of HR
- Contact with superior/manager
- Contact with colleagues
- Company news
- Event invitations
- Social gatherings
- Newsletter
- Access to the intranet
- Talent Pool
- Talent Community
- Company Newspaper
- Individual gifts
- Greeting cards
- Job offers
- Thesis/Projects
- Specific news of the industry
- Training opportunities
- Feedback
- Nothing
- Other

Talent Pools

Are/were you participant of a talent pool?

A talent pool is an instrument for recruiters to comprise the profiles of potential candidates that suit the employer's needs the best. It is to understand as a group of internal and external candidates who are actively interested in the organization, the industry, and the companies' success and are engaged over time to fill vacancies and refer people they know.

- Yes
- No

Of which employer

Which practices were offered by the talent pool?

You can select more than one answer

- Invitations to company events
- Exclusive social gatherings like a fireside evening
- The opportunity to participate at seminars/workshops for the individual development of soft skills
- Entrance to the intranet
- A profile that you can update
- Internal job market/job offers (Summer job, working student position, Bachelor/Master thesis, Traineeships Etc.)
- Networking with other Talents
- Contact with HR staff
- Contact with former colleagues
- Newsletter
- Company Newspaper
- Personal gifts
- None
- Other

How do you evaluate the participation in the talent pool for your professional advancement?

- Important
- Rather important
- Nice to have
- Rather unnecessary
- Unnecessary

Talent Communities

Willingness to register in a talent community

A talent community is a method of social recruiting, by relying on the collection of talent networks, of people that are part of the job seeking process. In fact it is an online community, in which you can update your profile, get invitations, get in touch with mentors and company insiders and find job advertisings etc.

- No, I wouldn't register myself at all
- Possibly not because I can't see the value for myself
- Possibly, because I'm participating also in other networks
- Possibly yes because I would probably register myself and check the offer
- Yes, that's a great opportunity to stay in touch

Would you prefer an exclusive or public talent community?

Exclusive means that you need an invitation by the employer to enter into the community and public means that anyone interested in the community of the employer can join.

- Exclusive Talent Community
- Public Talent Community

Would you participate in multiple talent communities of the employers of your choice?

- No
- Probably not
- Maybe

- Probably yes
- Yes

Would you participate actively in those communities in the way of updating your profile or communicating with other users?

- No
- Probably not
- Maybe
- Probably yes
- Yes

Would you prefer a talent community that combines the Talent Relationship Management offers of multiple employers?

- No
- Probably not
- Maybe
- Probably yes
- Yes

What sort of offer would you expect from a talent community?

You can select more than one answer

- Invitation to company events
- A view behind the scenes
- Exclusive social gatherings like a fireside evening
- The opportunity to participate at seminars for the individual development of soft skills
- Webinars
- News of the company
- News of the industry
- Newsletter
- A profile that you can update
- Internal job market
- Networking with other talents
- Contact with HR staff
- Contact with superior/manager

- Contact with former colleagues
- No participation
- Other

Do you know any talent communities?

You can select more than one answer

- Accenture Talent Connection
- EY Talent Community
- Merck Talent Community
- L'Oreal Talents
- Shell Talent Community
- Dell Talent Community
- KPMG-Community
- Bosch Talent Community
- Philips Talent Community
- Deloitte Talent Community
- None
- Other

Are/were you participant of a talent community?

A talent pool is an instrument for recruiters to comprise the profiles of potential candidates that suit the employer's needs the best.

- Yes
- No

In which talent community do/did you participate?

Which practices did the talent community offer?

You can select more than one answer

- Invitation to company events
- A view behind the scenes

- Exclusive social gatherings like a fireside evening
- The opportunity to participate at seminars for the individual development of soft skills
- Webinars
- News of the company
- News of the industry
- Newsletter
- A profile that you can update
- Internal job market
- Networking with other talents
- Contact with HR staff
- Contact with superior/manager
- Contact with former colleagues
- No participation
- Other

How do you evaluate the participation at the talent community for your professional advancement?

- Important
- Rather important
- Nice to have
- Rather unnecessary
- Unnecessary

Talent Pool vs. Talent Community

Which Talent Relationship Management practice is more attractive for yourself and your professional advancement the participation in a talent pool or the participation in a talent community?

- Talent Pool
- Talent Community

Willingness to reveal personal data for career and network purposes

Which sort of media would you prefer for communication of Talent Relationship Management practices?

- Electronically
- In person
- Written
- Not at all
- Other

Would you allow your profiles in social networks public for companies or employer?

- No, absolutely not
- Probably not an only with a highly restricted content
- Maybe, but only with a restricted content
- Probably, but only for selected people
- Sure, unrestricted

Do you have profiles in the following social networks?

You can select more than one answer

- Facebook
- Xing
- LinkedIn
- Careerloft
- None
- Other

Do you get messages from Recruiters/Headhunters over social media platforms?

- Very often
- Often
- Rarely
- Never

How do you think about this form of active recruiting?

- Totally annoyed
- Annoyed
- Indifferent
- Pleased
- Honored

Please click the button below to complete the survey.

Thank you

Thank you for taking time out to participate in this survey. I truly value the information you have provided. Your responses are vital for illustrating the attractiveness and importance of Talent Relationship Management practices for young talents.

Appendix B: Interview with a Talent Relationship Manager

Interview with a Talent Relationship Manager of a global consulting firm, at the 27th of may 2016, henceforth referred to as Organization X, about their talent community and her job as Talent Relationship Manager.

Questions to the talent community of Organization X

1. Handelt es sich dabei um eine globale Talent Community von Organisation X oder gibt es einzelne nationale Communities?

Die Community ist global angelegt, aber jedes Land „nutzt“ sie unterschiedlich bzw. bietet unterschiedliche „Leistungen“ an. Das Tool entspricht aber einem globalen Standard.

2. Welche Leistungen bietet die Talent Community von Organisation X den Mitgliedern?

Eventeinladungen, Webinare, Newsletter, direkte Ansprache durch unsere Recruiter,

Gewinnspiele

3. Wie lange besteht die Community von Organisation X?

Seit Herbst 2015

4. Wie viele Mitglieder hat die Community?

Dazu darf ich offiziell keine Angabe machen.

5. Welche Leistung ist die beliebteste oder meist genutzte?

Webinare und Events sind sehr beliebt und erfreuen sich hoher Anmeldezahlen. Der Newsletter wird auch erstaunlich aktiv gelesen und geklickt. Daher würde ich sagen, dass das Gesamtpaket bisher sehr gut angenommen wurde.

6. Wie kommt es das Organisation X eine eigene Talent Community hat und ein Partnerunternehmen von Careerloft ist?

Unser Talentmanagement umfasst zahlreiche Maßnahmen, Careerloft ist als externer Kooperationspartner eine davon. Eine eigene Talent Community ist davon aber losgelöst zu sehen, da wir hier die Kandidaten pflegen die mit uns bereits in Kontakt standen und Interesse an uns haben (z.B. Praktikanten, Workshop-Teilnehmer, Eventkandidaten). Der Austausch ist hier intensiver und die Angebote noch umfangreicher. Auf Careerloft finden sich viele Unternehmen, so dass hier der Kontakt nicht so direkt ist, wie in der Organisation X Talent Community.

7. Es ist ja eine öffentliche Community in der sich theoretisch jeder anmelden kann. Unterscheidet sich das Angebot der Leistungen unter den Mitgliedern?

Genau, jeder kann sich anmelden und soll dies auch gern tun. Wir haben innerhalb der Community die Chance z.B. unsere ehemaligen Praktikanten herauszufiltern und hier noch einmal separate Angebot zu bieten.

8. Es ist ja eine Talent Community, wieso gibt es dann keine interaktive Social Media Plattform?

Das Wording ist in der Tat etwas kontrovers, da es ein globales Tool ist, wurde sich auf die Bezeichnung „Community“ geeinigt, wohl wissend, dass das interaktive Element fehlt. Dies können wir nur durch unsere Events und Webinare erreichen.

9. Können Sie jetzt schon sagen ob die cost-per-hiring reduziert wird bei der Rekrutierung über die Talent Communities?

Dazu würde ich auch keine offizielle Aussage treffen. Aber das ist natürlich ein Beweggrund für die Gründung einer solchen Community.

10. Wie viele Leute hat Organisation X (Deutschland) bisher über die Talent Communities rekrutiert?

Dazu würde ich auch keine offizielle Aussage treffen.

Talent Relationship Manager

11. Wo ist die Stelle des Talent Relationship Managers organisatorisch eingeordnet?

Die Stelle ist im Bereich des Employer Branding eingeordnet und findet sich dort neben Kollegen aus dem Social Media und Hochschulmarketing wieder. Diese Einordnung ermöglicht einen optimalen Austausch bei allen Belangen, die Arbeitgebermarke effizient zu platzieren.

12. Was sind die Aufgabenbereiche eines Talent Relationship Managers?

Das klassische TRM umfasst bei uns die Betreuung aller Prozesse und Kommunikationen innerhalb der EY Talent Community, die Betreuung unsere Förderpraktikanten, das Schülermarketing und die Kooperation mit externen Plattformen (z.B. Careerloft, Blicksta). So setzen wir ganzheitlich ab dem Alter der Schüler an.

13. Begleitest du die Talente von der Suche, Identifikation, Beziehungsbindung bis zum Vertragsabschluss?

Nein, ich gebe ab dem Zeitpunkt der Bewerbung an unsere Recruiter ab. Für mich ist der strategische Ansatz hinter dem TRM wichtig (wo, wie und bei wem platzieren wir uns).

14. Welche Medien nutzen Sie als Talent Relationship Manager heutzutage um Talente zu finden und anzusprechen?

Hier nutzen wir unsere eigene EY Talent Community und externe Plattformen, z.B.

Careerloft. Aber auf jeder Messe, bei jedem Workshop ergeben sich Kontakte, die wir über EY langfristig binden und von uns begeistern wollen.

15. Welche Möglichkeiten haben Sie bei EY den Kontakt mit dem Talent zu festigen?

Wir erhoffen uns, durch die Maßnahmen die wir durchführen und z.B. durch die Events die wir anbieten die Kandidaten zu begeistern und zu binden. Der wichtigste Faktor sind jedoch unsere Mitarbeiter die am Markt als Botschafter fungieren und entsprechend auf Events mit den Teilnehmern agieren. Darüber entstehen häufig auch langfristig Kontakte die bis zur Bewerbung begleitet werden.

Statutory Declaration

I declare that I wrote this thesis independently and on my own. I clearly marked any language or ideas borrowed from other sources as not my own and documented their sources. The thesis does not contain any work that I have handed in or have had graded as a Prüfungsleistung earlier on.

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My name: Linda Victoria Kroj

Title of the thesis: Talent Relationship Management in Practice – Myth or Reality?

Using the Example My own survey

Date: _____

Signature: _____