UNIVERSITY OF GOTHENBURG
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Please mind the gap between millennials and employers

-Employer branding towards millennial talent within the fashion industry

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Abstract

The fashion industry has been struggling with finding the right talent and it is stated that this is the biggest challenge the fashion and luxury industries will face for years to come. In this race for talent, it is therefore crucial that the companies create compelling employer brands and become the "employer of choice" to the generation that ought to get most focus, the millennial generation.

The study is conducted with a qualitative research approach and contains empirical results made up of qualitative interviews as well as netnography. The purpose of the study is to explore what millennials' want and desire from an employer within the fashion industry.

By conducting qualitative interviews with millennials working in the fashion industry, it has become clear that they mainly desire symbolic and social values in an employer such as opportunities for internal growth and good relationships. The study shows that the millennial respondents value internal employer branding efforts such as organizational culture and teambuilding. External branding efforts of high importance to the respondents are personal targeting, brand image, employer value proposition and employer brand story. The respondents are further attracted to firms that communicate the desired values well and on the right platforms.

Keywords: Employer branding, millennials, employer brand attractiveness, brand image, brand value proposition, communication channels

Preface

After 12 weeks of hard work we can finally announce that our bachelor thesis is done!

We would firstly like to thank our supervisor, Benjamin Hartmann, for his devotion, all the constructive criticism and valuable input he has have given us during this period. We would also like to thank all the participants in our seminar group for the same.

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Enjoy!

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1. Introduction

Over many years there has been a discussion about this one generation, the millennials. This generation has many names. Some call them generation Y or generation next (Brack & Kelly, 2012), while others simply refer to them as young people (Alniacik & Aniacik, 2012), they are however most commonly known as the millennials. Some say that it is a fantastic generation that will save the world, while others say that it is a a group of people that will ruin one's workplace. While we are not currently seeing a large group of people running around in capes, we are also not witnessing workplaces with millennials in the workforce being destroyed. Yet, the discussion and speculations around millennials continues and organizations wonder what to do with them. So, what makes the millennials different, and what does this generation actually mean to the corporate world?

Something else that has gotten more attention over time is employer branding. It is an organization's efforts in promoting what makes them desirable and different as an employer both on an internal and external level (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004). Organizations in all industries have begun to realise that having a strong employer brand is crucial in the competition for the best talent. As the millennial generation has joined the workforce for years and is continuing to do so, it is vital to understand what they want and desire in an employer in order to attract them. One industry that has encountered great challenge in finding the right talent is the fashion industry, and many companies within the fashion industry are concerned when it comes to securing the right talent (Abtan, Gaissmaier & Willersdorf, 2014). Understanding what it is that attracts millennial talent is therefore vital for companies within the fashion industry. Our goal for this thesis is therefore, by conducting in depth interviews with millennials, to understand millennials' wants and desires within a workplace and what it is that attracts them to a certain employer within the fashion industry.

1.1 Background

"Fashion's race for talent continues. In an industry where success depends on a company's creative output and design talent, personnel are powerful advantage" (Pike, 2015, n.p). The fashion industry has for a long time been struggling with the search for the right talent, and according to a study done by Boston Consulting Group (BCG) and Business of Fashion

(BoF) it is the biggest challenge fashion and luxury industries will face for years to come (Abtan, Gaissmaier & Willersdorf, 2014). It is therefore crucial that the companies create compelling employer brands and become the "employer of choice" to the generation that ought to get most focus, the millennial generation. As this is the generation that has entered the workforce in large numbers, and will keep doing so for some years to come (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010), this is the group of people to seek talent within.

There are many different opinions on what years the millennials were born in, though only differing by a few years. Pew research center has however put a timeline on the generation and claims that millennials were born between 1981 and 1996 (Pew research center, 2018). There is meaning behind why 1996 is the last year in which millennials were born. Events that shaped the millennials' lives such as 9/11, the financial crisis and growing up along the evolvement of technology has not had the same impact on people born after 1996. This due to the fact that they were too young for it to affect them (Pew research center, 2018). We have in this study therefore chosen to refer to millennials as people born between 1981 to 1996.

There are many thoughts and speculations on the millennials as a generation. Simon Sinek, in his popular speech regarding millennials, talks about some main aspects he believes has shaped the millennial generation (Crossman, 2016). According to Sinek, these aspects have impacted the lives of millennials and affected them in the working environment as well (Crossman, 2016). From this point of view, millennials is a generation that has grown up with so called "failed parenting strategies", being told that they are special and that they can have anything just by simply wanting it. Sinek argues that receiving better grades due to complaining parents and getting medals just by participating, has lead to lower self esteem in many millennials. Sinek further mean that by growing up with technology and the appearance of social media, most millennials have not learned how to deal with stress either. This due to the fact that social media releases a numbing chemical called dopamine. Social media has, according to Sinek, further made them experts at putting filter at things and showing that everything is great even though it is not (Crossman, 2016). All millennials did however not grow up with the usage of social media, and it is therefore difficult to know to which extent this is accurate for the whole generation. Furthermore, from Sinek's perspective, this generation has also grown up with instant gratification, anything they have desired they have

been able to get in an instant, something he states has resulted in impatience among them. According to him, that has affected them in the corporate world since millennials want to make an instant impact, which is not always possible in working environments. Sinek therefore means that the corporate world is not something that suits the millennials as well as previous generations. It is now, according to Sinek, the organization's responsibility to adapt and make up for the shortfall their upbringing has brought them (Crossman, 2016).

The millennials may therefore have different wants and desires than previous generations such as "baby boomers" and "generation X" when it comes to employers and workplaces. Wants are in our study referred to something the millennials wish for but not with great passion. Desires on the other hand is used when something has a deeper meaning to the millennials (Belk, Ger & Askegaard, 2003). For the companies within the fashion industry to then meet these wants and desires and attract the right talent, it is central to develop a strong employer brand. The term "employer branding" was introduced in 1996 by Amber and Barrow and refers to the attraction and retention of talent (Backhaus, 2016). Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) define the term as the process of building an identifiable and unique employer identity, and something that differentiates an employer brand from its competitors. It is therefore a communication tool directed towards current and potential employees and can, if communicated in the right way, appeal to the wanted crowd (Backhaus & Tikoo 2004).

1.2 Problem discussion

The fashion industry is facing a big struggle at hand, the issue of finding the right talent. In BCG's and BoF's study they found that 50 percent of the responding companies considered it challenging to gain access to the best creative talent (Abtan, Gaissmaier & Willersdorf, 2014). This problem occurs in all different roles within the industry. Although leaders of companies within the industry understand that they have to do more in order to attract talent and keep it, there is still much left to do in terms of employer branding (Bellaiche, Gaissmaier & Willersdorf, 2014).

Many companies tend not to invest enough effort into their employer brands and few have any type of strategy or resources dedicated toward the digital and social media to promote the employer brands (Bellaiche, Gaissmaier & Willersdorf, 2014). Millennials are to some

referred to as "digital natives" because they have grown up along the evolution of technology, and thus tend to be more comfortable with it than previous generations (Hershatter & Epstein, 2010). Technology and the digital world is therefore a vital tool in reaching and attracting this group of people. It is therefore problematic that many companies within the fashion industry do not use digital and social channels enough when it comes to recruitment and employer branding. Even more problematic is it that many companies do not have any kind of strategy to form their employer brands (Bellaiche, Gaissmaier & Willersdorf, 2014). Nevertheless, it is important to point out that not everyone in this generation have grown up with the emergence of technology in the same way. Older millennials might therefore not be as familiar and comfortable with it as younger ones. However, the millennial generation as a whole have had access to internet for significant parts of their lives and are therefore most likely comfortable with the usage of different technological tools.

There has been great interest in the millennial generation and one is very often exposed to different opinions about this generation. The discussion around millennials can sometimes be left without nuance where this generation is talked about without depth and much acknowledgement for differences within the group of people. More and more research has however been done and it has given us further and more complex insights on millennials in the corporate world (e.g Hershatter & Epstein, 2010; Myers & Sadaghiani, 2010) Many studies have however been of quantitative nature (e.g Alniacik and Alniacik, 2012; Cable and Judge, 1996), our study therefore aims to be more interpretive and deep with the qualitative approach. The combination of researching millennials and employer branding is one that can be further explored and looking into this within the fashion industry, it is an area which is yet to be discovered. Since the battle of talent in this industry is tough we find it interesting to look at millennials' wants and desires and employer branding from this point of view.

We believe that in order to truly understand what millennials want and desire, we have to look at them as a nuanced group of people. We will therefore take the perspective of millennials in this study, and by getting further insight in what they want and desire, we can get an understanding of what attracts them to certain companies within the fashion industry.

1.3 Purpose & Research questions

Our purpose for the study is to explore what millennials want and desire from an employer within the fashion industry.

We have formed the following research questions to guide our research:

What do millennials want and desire within a workplace?

What attracts millennials to a certain company within the fashion industry?

How can millennials best be reached?

To contextualize the millennials' opinions connected to employer branding, we have also included the following research question:

What kind of employer branding activities do companies within the fashion industry have?

2. Theoretical background

In order to explore what attracts millennials to a certain employer within the fashion industry we must understand the already existing theories on employer branding and millennials. The theoretical section mainly builds on previous studies, articles and academic literature from the two angles separately. First of all we define the term employer branding. We then get familiar with theoretical research within the employer branding field, definitions and concepts explaining the phenomenon. As a second step we consider previous studies of millennials' professional wants and desires. In a final step we sort out research about communication channels that are best suitable for employer branding towards the millennials. We end the section by presenting key takeaways from the theoretical framework.

2.1 Employer branding definition

Employer branding can be defined as both external and internal and we would like to start by defining and explaining the term internal employer branding. Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) state that internal employer branding aims to mediate and work on a company's culture and identity which is supposed to lead to loyal and more productive employees within the organization. It can be defined as a tool to build a workforce that is committed to the set of

values and organizational goals developed by the company (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) further believe that internal skillful branding investments in human capital truly bring value to the firm and help to create a working environment that is difficult for other firms to imitate. Ravasi and Schultz (2006) mean that one example of a skillful internal investment is building a strong organizational culture. An organizational culture is an important part of internal employer branding and is by Ravasi and Schultz (2006) explained as a set of shared mental assumptions that guide interpretation and action in organizations by defining appropriate behavior for various situations. By continuously exposing employees to a firm's set of values it creates an unique internal culture that is focused on doing business a certain way (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004).

While internal branding aims to keep a firm's current employees, external branding is meant to attract potential future employees. External employer branding treats different branding activities that are suppose to build a strong brand as an ideal employer (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). Backhaus (2016) explains external employer branding as an understanding that just as corporate brands can be perceived as positive or negative, so can employer brands. In the same way that a corporate brand makes a promise to its customers about a product or service, the employer brand promises current and potential employees different experiences they will have if working with the brand. Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) further propose that differentiation of an organization's attributes as an employer is of great importance. They mean that an employer brand must highlight the unique benefits of its employment offerings that differ from the competitors. Furthermore, Backhaus (2016) argues for the fact that all employers do have a brand, but not all of them engage productively in branding activities to claim a differentiated position as employers. By engaging in external employer branding activities the firm will form itself as an employer of choice and with that make it possible to attract the best workers (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004).

Internal and external employer branding are closely linked to one another and successful external branding efforts often require stable internal ones as well (Backhouse & Tikoo, 2004). Chhabra & Sharma (2014) actually suggest that companies that see and treat their internal employees as their first "customers" tend to have more satisfied external customers. This is because their front line employees take better care of them. Chhabra & Sharma (2014)

propose that actions towards current staff should in all situations reinforce the promises a brand makes to its customers. It is further not unusual that internal components are transplanted to the external climate via the employees of a firm. Internal investment is therefore rewarded with dependable external quality customer exchange (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014).

2.2 Employer brand attractiveness

Chhabra and Sharma (2014) argue that we today live in a rapidly changing and technology driven business environment. That fact gives organizations a wide range of new challenges and among them is identification and attraction of scarce talented workforce. One of the bigger challenges organizations face is actually finding suitable potential employees (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014). But just as important it is for firms to look for candidates that fit, equally important it is for the applicants to be attracted to those organizations. Chhabra and Sharma (2014) define employer brand attractiveness as the perceived perks that a potential employee sees in working for a specific enterprise. That is, according to Chhabra and Sharma (2014), to a large extent what employer branding is about; building an attractive brand to appeal to a broad range of talented and skilled potential employees.

There are furthermore different ways to be perceived as more attractive among the skilled candidates and many concepts and notions could be helpful (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014). Continuing the theory section we will define and clarify these concepts that all aim to increase the attractiveness of an employer brand in various ways.

2.2.1 Employer brand image

When talking about employer branding efforts, Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) highlight the concept of employer brand image. Employer brand image is the external stakeholders' perception of a firm as an employer. For example it is the external stakeholders' image of the functional and symbolic benefits of working at the firm (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). Cable and Graham (2000) argue that a positive organizational image has a strong correlation with attracting quality applicants.

Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) and Backhaus (2016) propose that associations and assumptions about an employer brand are important factors that shape the employer brand image. They mean that employer brand associations are pictures and thoughts that a brand evokes in the minds of candidates and are argued to be the key to attracting new employees. The image that is shaped naturally has an impact on the attractiveness of the company among potential candidates for employment (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004; Backhaus, 2016).

Backhaus & Tikoo (2004) imply that the employer brand image is painted by internal branding efforts and is then transferred to the external world in order to create a positive reputation. A well-differentiated and positive employer brand image allows candidates to understand the firm's core values, to seek for similarities between themselves and the firm and at last motivates them to apply for a job. Backhaus & Tikoo (2004) further mean that the associations and sets of assumptions will be carried into the firm by the new employees and will thereby support the firm's values.

Ramzy (2007) agrees that strong brands develop relationships with stakeholders, including employees, by transferring core values to the external environment. Ramzy (2007) further suggests that a good way of establishing these relationships is through brand stories. These stories contain a brand promise of what core values the firm stands for and what the potential employees can expect from working there. Nilsson and Nordgren (2012), who wrote a master thesis about storytelling in employer branding, mean that the stories composed could be everything from myths, core values and experience-, customer- and product stories.

2.2.2 Employer value proposition

Parment & Dyhre (2009) propose that a crucial part in attracting the right kind of talent is the employer value proposition. The employer value proposition can be seen as the central message that argues for why current and future employees should be a part of a certain firm (Parment & Dyhre, 2009). It is the core of the employer brand and the key to creating and implementing an effective approach that appeals to and retains the right talent and also resonates with current and future employees (Universum, 2018). The most decisive criteria of a strong value proposition are that they are true, attractive and that they stand out in a crowd (Backhouse & Tikoo, 2004).

2.3 Millennials' professional wants and desires

When it comes to employer branding, the employees are the ones that become "customers" and are therefore targeted and treated like ones. In order to research what it is that the "customers" want and desire, we define and explain the terms "need", "want" and "desire" within the field of marketing. We aim to clarify the relation between the terms and state the ones that are most fitting for this thesis. Belk, Ger & Askegaard (2003) offer an explanation of the distinction between the term "desire" and the term "want" or "need". The authors mean that desires are overpowering, something that takes control over us and dominates are thoughts, feelings and actions. Needs are, on the contrary, foreseeable, planned, controlled and fulfilled through logical instrumental processes (Belk, Ger & Askegaard, 2003). Needs are something basic and utterly necessary for our existence. While needs are basic and desires are deep, wants are feelings of something you lack, something you want in the moment but can survive without (Price, 2016). In conclusion, wants and desires are psychologically necessary, while needs are physiologically necessary.

In view of these definitions and meanings, it is reasonable to assume that the terms "want" and "desire" are most suitable to use when examining millennials opinions on employer branding. Wants will in this thesis be used when describing e.g. the want for a good salary, as that might not be steered by passion in the same way that other attributes are. While desires are more compatible to use when discussing attributes that have a deeper meaning, such as the desire for strong relationships. Needs will not be used at all since we assume that none of the attributes in employers which millennials seek are attributes they actually need for physiological survival.

Previous research has been done on what it is that employees seek for in potential future employers and what it is that steer these preferences. We include that research in order to have a theoretical background to lean back on, or compare to, when analysing our findings on millennials' wants and desires. Cable and Judge (1996) mean that job seekers have a way of trying to identify themselves with the company and with the company's current employees. Cable and Judge (1996) explain that job seekers often prefer organizations where they feel like their personal characteristics match with the organization's attributes. This is exactly

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why the employer value proposition should be formed in a way that ensures the compatibility with potential future employees' expectations. If the job seekers have a good impression of the company while they find their personal characteristics matching with the company's it is more likely that they will apply for a job (Nilsson & Nordgren, 2012; Cable & Judge, 1996). Cable and Judge (1996) specifically state that core values is an important aspect that allows direct comparison between job seekers and organizations. If different values, or enduring beliefs, match between the two parts, the job seekers will be more interested in applying for a job (Cable & Judge, 1996). Simon Sinek (2009) agrees and states the following:

"Hire people who believe what you believe, they work with blood, sweat & tears. If they don't share your beliefs, they work for your money."

Beliefs, values, culture, image, relationships, career prospects etc. are defined as symbolic attributes of a firm. These symbolic benefits are the ones that let the applicants connect to more abstract attributes, and those are far harder for other firms to replicate (Cable & Judge, 1996). Cable and Judge (1996) mean that potential employees mainly separate potential employers from one another through symbolic attributes rather than functional ones. Cable and Judge (1996) define functional benefits as specific and objective characters of a firm, such as salary, work hours and compensation.

When talking about millennials wants and desires in working environments, Chhabra and Sharma (2014) acknowledge a paradigm shift in the desired characteristics among the current generation (millennials) and the previous generation (baby boomers). Chhabra and Sharma (2014) present interesting findings in their study regarding concrete preferred organizational attributes. According to Chhabra and Sharma (2014), the central take away from the study is that the most common preferred employer attributes among today's students are organizational culture, brand name and wage. Internal training and development and career prospects and growth were found to be the least preferred attributes. Before the data collection, the authors identified several common organizational attributes and out of these attributes they only chose 7 to include in the study (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014). Even though the findings seem to portray a realistic picture, we suspect that it is difficult to know whether the absence of the other attributes produced a misrepresented image of the reality.

In a comparable study, Alniacik and Alniacik (2012) attempted to identify dimensions of attractiveness in employer branding in order to screen their perceived level of importance. Alniacik and Alniacik (2012) collected answers from young respondents that stated their preferred attributes in an employer. The results of the study were slightly different than the ones presented above. According to Alniacik and Alniacik (2012), the most preferred employer characteristics among young job seekers are related to social values. Social value characteristics are defined as career prospects and growth, recognition and appreciation, acceptance and belonging, good feelings and job security (Alniacik & Alniacik, 2012). Some of these attributes came in last place in the above study or weren't included at all. Functional values on the other hand were found to be of high importance to the young workforce. Young employees are therefore also attracted to an employer that provides above-average wage and a good compensation package. Even though social values were found to be the most important, they are not the only important attributes (Alniacik & Alniacik, 2012). Alniacik & Alniacik (2012) further state that understanding which attributes are most and least valued in the eyes of potential employees is likely to help the managers to build better and more attractive employer brands towards a young crowd.

A vital aspect in why the millennial generation is different to previous generations when it comes to professional preferences is their relationship with technology (Hersatter & Epstein, 2010). Hersatter and Epstein (2010) state that as the first millennials were born around the time the internet started, a more natural familiarity formed between this generation and technology. The "digital natives", as these authors call the millennials, have not had to adapt to technology in the same way as previous generations. Hersatter and Epstein (2010) mean that it has instead been more of a natural part of their life, how they search for information and how they interact with the world. Therefore, having grown up with similar technology used today they are more comfortable with using it in a more competent and creative way, which has also enabled them to think of the world as one without boundaries (Hersatter & Epstein, 2010). We must however not forget that this generation spans from 1981 to 1996, and it is therefore important to highlight differences within the generation when it comes to the familiarity and comfortability with technology. It is not likely that millennials born in the early 80's have grown up with internet and that it has been a regular part of their entire lives

like it has been for the ones born in the 90's. We therefore question Hershatter and Epstein (2010) in their all inclusive picture that this is the truth for the entire millennial generation. Members of the millennial generation were however still relatively young when the usage of the internet and technology started growing and it is therefore reasonable that they are more familiar with the digital world than previous generations.

Differences between the millennial generation and previous ones can further be seen in their appreciation for close relationships with managers. By being encouraged from an early age to have strong relationships with parents, teachers and mentors the millennials are more likely to want to gain similar close connections at their workplaces (Hersatter & Epstein 2010). Another aspect that sets this generation apart is the importance of work-life balance. Although the millennials is not the first generation to want to achieve work-life balance, this is the generation that demands it from the workplace according to Hersatter and Epstein (2010). Furthermore, the authenticity and values of organizations is of great importance to the millennials, as well as the level of corporate social responsibility the organizations take. Hershatter and Epstein (2010) further express that millennials is also a generation driven by wanting to make a change and impact. That makes not only the internal aspects of an organization important, but also what the company does to help making the world a better place (Hersatter and Epstein 2010).

According to Brack and Kelly (2012), generations preceding the millennials, such as baby boomers and generation X, believe more in control and command, working individually, looking at their managers as experts and having clear boundaries compared to the millennial generation. There are significant differences in the generations when it comes to baby boomers and generation X as well. According to Smola and Sutton (2002) the differences in what employees value when it comes to the workplace has much to do with generational belonging. Smola and Sutton (2002) discuss that, while baby boomers value a stable employment, and do not expect speedy advancement within the organization, the generation X values being promoted quickly. Generation X is according to Smola and Sutton (2002) more comfortable with change and diversity than previous generations. Millennials furthermore seem to be continuing on generation X:s path, by expecting organizations to take corporate social responsibility (Smola & Sutton, 2002). While generation X values higher

salaries and more financial leverage (Smola & Sutton, 2002), as we have seen in previous studies, millennials desire social and symbolic attributes more.

2.4 Communication channels

A well worked out external branding strategy contains a worked out discussion of the right communication platforms or else it is useless. The selection of channels should be strategically chosen to ensure that the right group is targeted (Chhabra & Sharma, 2014). Appealing to the right kind of potential employees and planting brand awareness in their minds requires communication towards an extensive and wide group (Parment & Dyhre, 2009).

Barrow and Mosley (2005) argue that it is critical that the company, before launching and communicating their external brand, have gained internal support for it. Barrow and Mosley (2005) mean that the external brand is to a large extent dependent on the current employees of the firm. How the employees represent the brand, and what they choose to share about the brand, in both public and personal encounters, is something that will strengthen brand awareness and help shape the brand image in the eyes of the public. This branding effort of spreading experiences and perceptions of a brand is called word of mouth marketing (Barrow & Mosley, 2005).

When talking about reaching a huge crowd, online communication is commonly seen as a better tool than offline communication. Rosethorn (2009) believe that firms are in a position where they must adjust to a digitalized world (Nilsson & Nordgren, 2012). According to Rosethorn (2009), a game changing statement is that people actually trust someone on Facebook that tells a story about a brand more than stories found on the company's website (Nilsson & Nordgren, 2012). Social media has actually become preferred media, globally speaking, and it has gained a huge influential power. Rosethorn (2009) argue that the main reason is that social platforms provide authentic information from across the world at any time which allows users to constantly make comparisons and interact with each other (Nilsson & Nordgren, 2012). Rosethorn (2009) further states that word of mouth marketing is due to this easy information exchange something that has really grown as an online marketing

tool. Word of mouth marketing is far more effective when it comes to influencing a targeted group than traditional advertising (Nilsson & Nordgren, 2012).

2.4 Key takeaways

Since we are researching millennials' wants and desires in employer brands, we need to know what kinds of internal and external branding activities exist. We need to understand these branding efforts in order to see how millennials' wants and desires are connected to them. So, to summarize the theory section we can start by stating that employer brand attractiveness is the main goal with external employer branding and is defined as the perceived benefits of working in a certain company. Employer brand image and employer value proposition are two central efforts that aim to increase employer brand attractiveness. Furthermore, to build an attractive external employer brand, successful internal branding efforts are needed as well and aim to strengthen the current workforce within the organization.

Previous studies about millennials' wants and desires in employers implicate that millennials differ as a generation mainly through their relation to technology, their desire for close relationships with superiors, their desires for internal growth as well as their desire for flexibility and work-life balance. Attributes of symbolic or social character seem to be the most important ones, although functional values still play a role to this group of people. These previous studies are meaningful to consider when we try to achieve this study's purpose, since previous research in the same field can help us interpret our findings and even compare them.

When it comes to communication channels, word of mouth marketing is a better marketing tool than classic one- way mediation and online word of mouth marketing is even more effective. That is indeed good news for marketers who try to reach potential millennial employees since the millennial generation is the one that, according to previous studies, has good relationship with technology.

3. Method

In this section, we present our choice of research method and why it is the most suitable approach for our study. We further explain our collection of empirical material, the choice of semi-structured interviews and how they were conducted, as well as netnography done on selected companies. We reflect and discuss on our method of choice, and end this section by going through the delimitations of the study.

3.1 Research method

For our study we chose the qualitative research method. Since our purpose is to explore what millennials want and desire from an employer within the fashion industry, we wanted to get an insight and understanding in our respondents' views and thoughts in a social environment (Bryman & Bell, 2013, s. 409), that is, their wants and desires in an employer. By understanding the social reality from the millennials' perspective (Bryman & Bell, 2013, s. 409), we may understand what it is that attract them to a company within the fashion industry, and how employer branding can be used to do this. Since we are looking into millennials wants and desires from their point of view, we found that a qualitative study was the best approach, more specifically by conducting semi-structured interviews with selected millennial respondents (Bryman & Bell, 2013).

There has been a lot of discussion around the millennial generation, however as previously mentioned it has often been one without depth and nuance. We therefore wanted to conduct in-depth interviews with millennials, to receive genuine and thoughtful answers from our respondents on their wants and desires (Bryman & Bell, 2013). Furthermore, because our study looks into millennials opinions and feelings, their answers may steer the study in a different direction than initially planned. We therefore felt that the freedom and flexibility a qualitative approach can give us is preferable, and allows for more profound analysis and results (Bryman and Bell, 2013, s. 415).

3.2 Collection of empirical material

Our empirical material is based on semi-structured interviews with millennials, as well as netnography. We first explain our choice of semi-structured interviews, and how they went about. In order to understand the employer branding market from a millennial's perspective, we also need to learn about employer branding activities in practice. That is why we used netnography to look into a few chosen firms and try to understand what it is that fashion companies do and on what channels they try to find new talent.

3.2.1 Semi-structured interviews

We collected our empirical data primarily by conducting semi-structured interviews (Bryman & Bell, 2013, s. 475) with selected respondents. We wanted our respondents to be able to talk freely and be able to give us thoughtful answers. Semi-structured interviews were therefore favourable for us as it allowed us to stay within relatively specific themes, using an interview guide as a guideline during the interviews. But, it also allowed our respondents to talk freely and openly based on our questions (Bryman & Bell, 2013, s. 475). However, we thought it was important not to let the respondents talk too freely, but rather talk openly within the frames of the themes we found to be important for the study, making semi-structured interviews well suited for our study. The themes we identified among the answers will be visible in the interview guide attached (Page 55).

The interview guide is form of list with themes or questions that ought to be addressed and guide the interviews (Bryman & Bell 2013, s. 482). Our interview guide contained open questions so that the respondents would have the ability to talk and answer freely. Open questions also gave us the opportunity to ask follow up questions and adapt the questions depending on how the interview went along (Bryman & Bell, 2013). We constructed our interview guide based on the theories and literature connected to our study, as well as on our own thoughts and ideas around the subject. We used the same interview guide throughout all of our interviews. We did ten interviews with millennials, after about seven or eight interviews we started to feel like the information given to us were becoming repetitive and very similar, we did however conduct a couple of more interviews to make sure of this. Each interview took about 15-20 minutes.

Furthermore, the location of the interviews can be of meaning for the respondents' comfortability according to Bryman and Bell (2013, s. 481). We therefore let the respondents decide where they wish to have the interviews, and we found places that were well suited for the respondents, as well as our intention to record the them. In a semi-structured interview it is often preferred to be more than one while interviewing (Bryman & Bell, 2013, s. 482). We were therefore both there during all interviews and we could this way, with help from each other, make sure to collect as much valuable information as possible. We further transcribed the answers from the recorded interviews.

Transcribing the material allowed us to go through the answers many times, as well as help us interpret it which made the process of analyzing the material easier (Bryman & Bell, 2013, s. 489). We made sure to transcribe the material as soon as possible after the interview was held, switching the person that transcribed the interviews between us. The coding of the interviews started when we had transcribed them. Since coding is a way of organizing and separating data (Bryman & Bell, 2013, s. 580), we used this to identify connections and themes in our empirical material from the interviews. To code our material, we used the technique of open coding where we grouped, compared and categorised the answers into relevant categories and themes (Bryman & Bell, 2013, s. 580). The coding therefore worked as a first step in our analysis. We then used the coded material to analyse it together with our theoretical background for the analysis.

3.2.2 Netnography

It is important to emphasize that the netnography we present of employer branding activities among companies aims to contextualize millennials' opinions and will not be a base for the in depth analysis. By collecting information about how fashion companies brand themselves as employers we are able to see if it is disconnected from, or connected to different theories as well as millennials' wants and desires. We can also gain a better understanding of what employer branding activities look like in practice and how important it seems to be to big companies within the fashion industry.

We did netnography on the chosen companies by observing employer branding activities online. Netnography is by Kozinets (2010) explained as a tool for understanding the cultures of online communication from the participants' point of view. We searched for employer branding activities on different digital channels such as Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, Companie's Websites and Glassdoor. The firms we have chosen to observe online are Chanel, Acne Studios and Zara. We wanted to research a luxury brand, a premium brand, and an apparel chain. This, because we wanted to gain an insight of the whole market since our respondents have working experience from luxury and premium brands as well as apparel chains.

The brands are also interesting to research since they are pioneering within the fashion industry, in Sweden as well as globally. Zara is a world leading company in international fashion and is a part of one of the world's biggest fashion retail concerns (Zara, 2018). Chanel is considered to be one of the most desirable luxury brands among luxury consumers worldwide (Forbes, 2018) and Acne studios ranks as one of the leading Swedish brands on the international market with stores in many great cities (Elle, 2018). Since they are successful and growing, it is interesting to research whether they have covered the aspect of employer branding or if they lean back on their strong corporate brands.

3.3 Selection of respondents

Our purpose for this study is to explore what millennials want and desire from an employer within the fashion industry. To get an understanding of this, we chose to interview selected millennials that have working experience within the fashion industry. When we selected our respondents we chose millennials between the ages of 22-35. This was done in order to try to get an understanding of the whole generation that spans from 1981-1996, rather than just interviewing people that only represent a part of the generation. We also took gender into consideration and selected respondents that would be gender representative, in order to get a view as close to this generation's social reality as possible.

We further chose to interview millennials that currently live in Sweden, as Bryman and Bell (2013) state that it is preferable that the respondents are geographically close to the researchers. Some of our respondents have however had international working experience as

well. We did choose to limit this to Europe, and the countries where some of our respondents have had working experience in are, Austria, England and France. Two of our respondents were born in France but are now living in Sweden, and the rest of our respondents were born in Sweden. Interviewing millennials that have had working experience in other countries is in our case beneficial since the talent gap does not only occur in Sweden, but is rather an international problem. Furthermore, the netnography we made was on selected international companies. That also allows for more credible connections between the results from our interviews with millennials and what we have witnessed from the netnography. This since we were then able to get an understanding of the wants and desires from our respondents that have experience in other countries as well. Thus making our connections between the results from our interviews and what we have witnessed from the netnography hold more credibility.

Our respondents were chosen using convenience sampling (Bryman & Bell, 2013). We selected this method since we both happen to know millennials with working experience within the fashion industry. The respondents have experience in different types of professional positions such as managing, sales a well as communication and marketing. Since we chose respondents with different types of positions, ages as well as working experiences in different countries, we believe that our selection gave us insight in various parts of the fashion industry. We further chose to keep our respondents anonymous. We do offer an attachment of a table (Page 57) with the respondents' age, gender and work experience. Their name is however kept anonymous so that their identity is not revealed. We believed that we might get more truthful and thorough answers from our respondents where they might feel more comfortable talking about specific companies for example, by keeping them anonymous.

When it comes to ethical considerations, we followed the ethical guidelines from Bryman and Bell (2013, s. 137) for conducting the interviews and processing the data. We therefore informed all of our respondents about the purpose of our study. They have actively consented their participation, the respondents also know the participation is voluntarily and that they can end their participation at any time. They are anonymous and the information about them will be confidential, the collected information will further only be used for our research.

3.4 Method reflection and discussion

All methods have their drawbacks, and there is some criticism directed towards the qualitative method. We are aware of the criticism towards the qualitative method and the level of subjectivity it may bring, as the result is to a large extent based on the researchers interpretation and perception (Bryman & Bell, 2013, s. 416). Since we are looking into the millennial generation's wants and desires, and we are a part of this generation ourselves, one might argue this could increase the subjectivity of our study. This is something we are aware of, and have therefore, the whole time actively strived to be as objective as possible. We purely focused on our respondents' thoughts and views and analysed it through the literature related to our study with as open eyes as possible. As mentioned earlier, we were both present during the interviews with our respondents which increased the level of objectivity. We also asked open questions and tried to avoid giving examples to minimize the effect we might have on the answers from the respondents and thus the outcome.

Some would perhaps question the choice of using convenience sampling, as this method may make it difficult to know how representative our respondents can be for this generation of people working within the fashion industry (Bryman & Bell, 2013, s. 205). However, as previously mentioned, we chose respondents from all different ages within the generation, as well as working experience in different counties and in various professional positions. We therefore feel as though our choice of using convenience sampling gave us a variety of respondents who would provided us with insightful information about their wants and desires in an employer within the fashion industry.

To get a picture of the produced quality of a study, one often looks into the concepts of validity and reliability (Bryman & Bell, 2013, s. 400). Since we took a qualitative approach we decided to use the concepts trustworthiness and authenticity instead, as we found them to be more suitable (Bryman & Bell, 2013, s. 402). To create trustworthiness, we had the four criteria of trustworthiness in mind; credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Bryman & Bell, 2013, s. 403-405). To meet this in our study, we were consistent in how we conducted the interviews and how we handled the material after the interviews, as well as connected the results with relevant theories in our analysis. We made

sure to be consistent and thorough as well as create clear descriptions in how we went about throughout the whole study. We also found it important to check in with each other and critically look at our text, making sure we were on the same page. By presenting our interview guide and a table of our respondents, as well as giving citations throughout our analysis from the conducted interviews we strived to increase the level of objectivity. To further create credibility and thus trustworthiness, we sent our study out to our respondents when it was completed so they could read it and confirm that we apprehended the social reality in a correct way.

We strived for authenticity by, as previously mentioned, selecting a group of respondents with different age, experiences in different professional positions and in different countries in order to try to get as much of fair picture as possible. We further focused on the results from our interview and analysed this through theories to get an understanding of the social situation (Bryman & Bell, 2013, s. 405), without letting personal views interfere with our conclusions.

3.5 Delimitations

In this study, we treat a selected group of millennial respondents who have experience within the fashion industry. The study will therefore not produce an answer to the whole millennial generation's wants and desires nor their wants and desires in employers within different industries. The fashion industry is however not a completely original industry and there will most likely be similarities in wants and desires in employers within other industries as well. The results might therefore very well be suited in other business contexts.

As the fashion industry is struggling with finding the right talent we must understand what it is that attracts someone to an employer. We have therefore chosen to focus on attracting talent rather than retaining talent. We therefore focus on external branding since external employer branding is about attracting talent. Internal branding and external branding are however often intertwined which is why we include internal branding in our study.

4. Empirical data & Analysis

In this section we account for and analyze the empirical material we have collected through personal interviews with selected respondents. In order to gain insight in the employer branding activities happening on the market today, we also present netnography on companies within the fashion industry. For simplicity, we present and interpret our findings from millennials and the netonography on companies separately. We begin by presenting relevant and interesting discoveries from the interviews with millennials. We interpret and analyze these findings with the help of our theoretical background. The theoretical framework is thus used to make sense of the findings and help with drawing reasonable conclusions. Discoveries are throughout the whole chapter backed up by anonymous citations from the interviews as supporting and evidential tools to construe the situation. Essential findings from each segment are summed up in a table. We end the section by presenting the netnography on the chosen firms and comment on connections we can see between the firm's activities and the millennial's answers.

4.1 Interviews with millennials

The qualitative interviews with millennials working in the fashion industry aim to clarify their wants, desires, what attracts millennials to companies and how they could best be reached. Overall the answers we received were fairly similar and we managed to see a generic picture of our respondents' wants and desires regarding potential employers. In the table below we have summarized the most common answers among the interviewed millennials. The structure of the table follows the structure of the theoretical section. That because we want to make sure the findings are construed with the theoretical framework as a background. For simplicity, we go through this whole section in the same order as the table.

Segment	Answers	Explanation
Internal & External Employer Branding		
Internal employer branding activities	Valuing employees Strong organizational culture	Valuing employees and having a strong culture leads to a loyal and satisfied workforce.
External employer branding activities	Target personally Brand image Value proposition Story	Targeting personally, communicating stories and forming the brand image all have a positive impact.
Millennials' wants and desires		
Characteristics among employers	Friendly bosses & colleagues Career prospects Compensation Work-life balance Core values	Several symbolic factors are of great importance while the only important functional factor is compensation.
Characteristics among colleagues	Personal friendly relationships Teamwork & communication	Vital attributes among colleagues are teamwork, relations and the ability to communicate freely.
Communication channels		
Communication channels	Word of mouth marketing Linkedin Career sites & own website Instagram	Online advertisement and social media have great influence, most influential is it though when coming from current employees.

Table 1. Summary of findings from interviews with millennials

In the first column we present the themes among the answers and in the second column we presents all the answers. We start by presenting common answers connected to internal and external branding activities; suggestions that the respondents have of activities that they feel are relevant for them. We then present answers connected to the respondents' desired attributes among colleagues as well as the organization in general. At last we present the

millennials' answers to what kind of communication channels they feel are the best. In the third column we present an explanation of the answers. We analyze the most common and striking results presented in the table, individually, under the headlines following.

4.1.1 Internal employer branding

By collecting data on millennials' opinions about internal and external employer branding we aimed to map what the respondents think companies should do to secure a spot as the employer of choice and attract a wide group of millennial talents. Just like Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) claimed, internal and external branding are closely linked to each other as a successful external employer brand comes from a stable internal one. Starting with internal employer branding, from the interviews with the millennials it was clear that the respondents very much value to be taken care of within the organization. Since internal branding revolves around retaining the current employees, millennials do seem to appreciate those kinds of efforts. As Chhabra and Sharma (2014) suggest, companies that are treating and valuing their employees like they are their first and prioritized "customers", tend to have more satisfied external customers. That because the front line employees, such as sales assistants, take care of them better. From our answers, we can see that if companies then let their employees know that they are valuable, and work for making them comfortable and happy, it will lead to the respondents being motivated and wanting to perform even better.

"I start from a point where I choose my preferred attributes in line with what makes me want to perform and work harder. If I do not feel like I am valued as an employee, and that I have good prospects within the company, I will completely loose, ehm (...), my motivation to go to work." (Respondent 2)

When we asked our respondents about desired attributes of the employer, the answers included the meaning of being valued and taken care of. It is with Chhabra's and Sharma's (2014) insight as a background, that we assume that this kind of internal reinforcement leads to external success when it comes to appealing to the respondents. Internal reinforcement is thus something that our respondents do care for and if companies constantly work with that, they can appeal to millennials that desire the same.

Organizational culture is another example of an internal employer marketing activity that makes the employees feel valuable and a part of something bigger. When we asked our respondents about specific efforts that they would want from companies in order to make them want to work there, we got a lot of answers connected to organizational culture. Some of them specifically named organizational culture as a desired effort from the company's side.

"By having a strong brand name and a strong story behind it. Also communicating organizational culture." (Respondent 7)

And even if they in some cases didn't use the term, they described it in other words.

"It is all about making me feel like I am valuable, showing me that the company is like a big family, and that they all know what they work towards and believe strongly in what they do." (Respondent 3)

Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) talk about systematic exposition of organizational values as a tool to steer everyone into working and thinking a certain way. The respondents who talked about organizational culture, expressed the desire of working in solidarity with fellow colleagues and working towards the same goals and visions. Ravasi and Schultz (2006) explained organizational culture as shared mental assumptions that guide interpretation and actions by defining appropriate behavior for different situations. Understanding and acting in line with the organisational core values, visions, stories etc, is something that the respondents appreciate. Furthermore, when we interviewed our millennials, they also considered room for flexibility, initiative and independent thinking as important desires.

"And one of the things I will never forget is when they told us that one of NK's important values is to create a "WOW-experience" for each and every customer. BUT, ehm (...) NK wouldn't give us any instructions on how to greet customers, how to look, how to approach them or how to sell. They, ehm, wanted us to use our talent and our skills and all the tools we could think of, to create this "WOW-experience" by ourselves." (Respondent 8)

As seen by respondent 8, it is very valuable that the employees have the opportunity to take initiative and be creative. One answer also highlighted the importance of understanding that each worker is different than the other and that you can not have a working manual to govern everyone's way of performing within the organization.

"(...) just let employees be pretty flexible about how they take on the work. Some people like working in a calm pace during the whole week and other prefer to work intensively for two days or three and then be free the rest of the week. So I think for me, the managers need to understand that as long as the work gets done, it is ok for everyone do it somewhat differently." (Respondent 4)

Respondent 4 mean that an organization that allows flexibility in both working schedules and the ways in which employees take on the work are appreciated. What we would like to emphasise is that what the interviewed millennials desire is perhaps an organizational culture where freedom in decision making and developing different ideas is allowed to a large extent and even encouraged. The respondents react positively to having sets of values and assumptions that establish a strong collective working in the same direction. Perhaps these values and assumptions should be promoting independence, flexibility and initiative in order to meet the desires of the young workers.

Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) believe that these kinds of internal branding activities towards the employees truly bring value to the firm, and as it seems from the interviews, they bring value to the respondents as well. By using internal actions to build, strengthen and promote a happy environment, where employees feel accepted and part of a collective, we believe that a natural consequence is a stronger and more persuasive employer brand. Since respondents have made it clear that they find internal efforts very important, it is reasonable to state that the respondents are drawn to fashion companies that offer these kinds of activities.

4.1.2 External employer branding

If a company has covered all the given internal attributes that can make them attractive in the eyes of millennials, the next step is to think about branding towards the external crowd. One

thing that we found very interesting among the respondents' answer was how they often mentioned differentiation. From our respondents' perspective, it is not enough for companies to be good or to possess all the right attributes, they also need to differ from the competition and offer something special. Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) argue that an employer should have an employer value proposition which ought to explain what it is that the company offers and argue for why job seekers should choose that firm over another. It is the central message in external branding that highlights the employer's unique benefits of their offerings and it needs to stand out in a crowd. That is why we connect the employer value proposition to millennials' want for something different and something special. Employer value proposition is suppose to show the crowd why they are different as an employer and differentiation is something that the respondents state truly catches their attention. Our respondents appreciate a company that can show they differ from their competition and offer attractive internal attributes.

"...Promote the benefits of working there, and how it differs from other employers." (Respondent 6)

"Be better and different than others, especially when it comes to taking care and valuing their employees." (Respondent 2)

Like Chhabra and Sharma (2014) stated, the competition for talent is getting more and more intense. This therefore shows that fashion companies must be able to differentiate themselves from other companies to attract our respondents. Our respondents felt as this might be decisive when it comes to becoming the employer of choice. In a sea of companies, our respondents express a want of a company that stands out. Whether it is offering a unique organizational culture, generous compensations or training programs, the fashion firms need to find something that separates them from the mass. When the respondents mention differentiation in their answers of their own accord, it is sensible to suspect that it is something they value when picking an employer.

Another thing that might help a company stand out and attract young talents is to create a strong brand image according to Backhaus and Tikoo (2004). Employer brand image is created by internal branding efforts and is transferred to the external world in order to create a

positive reputation. Sets of assumptions and associations are the things that form the reputation (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004). Reputation, or sets of assumptions and associations is something that our respondents referred to when they exemplified good versus bad employers. When the respondents talked about firms they have not worked for they referred to things that they have seen or heard about what it is like working there. From that, they communicated their image of the firm to us and labeled it as good or less good. Therefore, communicating the wanted associations as a firm to the potential employees is not enough. Our respondents naturally form an image from everything they hear and experience themselves as well, and having heard bad rumors about a firm certainly affects the respondents' perception of the brand. That is why the fashion employer of choice, to the respondents, is the employer that has managed to plant a positive employer brand image, and has managed to defend it from bad external reputations.

"(...) the three brands are together and apparently umm, the work environment is awful, like everyone spy on everyone else and if they do mistakes there are consequences… for me that is not interesting at all." (Respondent 4)

Respondent 4 has heard about the bad working environment in a company which has affected the image of the company as an employer. Working there in the future is no longer of desire for respondent 4. Furthermore, when the respondents hear or see positive things about a certain employer, it leads to a very positive attitude towards the firm. When a firm does something good and in line with what the respondents like, it instantly creates strong associations and forms a good image.

"I will always associate a firm like that to something positive, I will always bare in mind that they ehm (...) think outside the box and I would just have a nice perception of them." (Respondent 2)

What kind of image a firm has in the eyes of the public is therefore something that really influences our respondents in their decision about which employer to choose. Furthermore, the likeliness of picking an employer with a good reputation is higher than picking an employer the respondents have not heard much about.

"Of course I would rather apply for a job there than anywhere else, I mean, like a told you, it is important for me that (...) the company is associated with good things, like good doings. Filippa K for example is for me associated with CSR, which, ehm, which gives them an employer advantage. I have heard and read so many good things that they do for the environment and also for their employees, i guess that is just admirable." (Respondent 2)

Filippa K is in the eyes of respondent 2 associated with CSR which creates a good image and gives them an advantage. Positive as well as negative brand associations and reputations seem to paint an image of the employer in the respondent's minds and affect their decision.

Another external branding effort our respondents claim betters the image of the employer are brand stories. As Ramzy (2007) proposes, storytelling is a way of transferring internal core values and establishing relationships with potential employees. Brand stories can be everything from myths to different experiences with the brand and aim to strengthen the wanted external image (Nilsson & Nordgren, 2012; Ramzy, 2007). Brand stories can for example be communicated by current employees who talk about work experiences but they can also be told by the companies themselves (Nilsson & Nordgren, 2012). In general, stories turned out to be of great value to the respondents. The respondents referred to storytelling as an intriguing way of explaining what it is like working at a certain firm and what the brand stands for.

"Tell stories about what it is like working there, as like a (...) branding activity. That is so interesting to hear." (Respondent 6)

"... I've always loved YSL and the story of the brand so yeah. I think it could be my goal to work there. And for a luxury brand, apparently it's pretty cool to work there, as a part of the team of the brand." (Respondent 4)

The last quote ties everything together by implicating that a strong corporate brand story, as well as an employer brand story, has made the company an ultimate working goal for the respondent. Values and beliefs that are connected to the corporate brand and communicated by stories, as well as perceptions about how the corporation is as an employer, shape the external image and make the firm attractive in the eyes of the respondents.

Yet another effort that the respondents highlighted as important when they searched for jobs was the way in which the employers approached them. Instead of always letting all the job seekers apply for the job themselves, the respondents proposed that firms could sometimes reach out to potential employees first, employees that they believe could be compatible for the employment. If a manager is looking for someone new to fill a position as a sales assistant e.g., instead of instantly posting a job ad, they could gather advice from current employees regarding potential candidates that might fit. Or even do research on sites like LinkedIn and from there see if they can find anyone who might be a talent contribution to the organization. When firms use this way of approaching respondents, the respondents feel unique and valuable.

Needless to say, this way of recruiting is not something that can be done constantly, it would limit the opportunity for others with the right competencies to actually apply for jobs. Yet, doing it in addition to posting an ad or doing it only for certain positions, is something that would make our respondents appreciate and value the offers more.

"I think the best way to attract a talent, regarding of the branch, is to target him/her personally. Use all contacts and platforms you can imagine to try to find someone that fits for the job. An employer that does that would ALWAYS have the advantage over a firm that just posts an ad on a carrier site. That way I would know that the firm really cares about what kind of people they hire and obviously they feel like I am special and a good match"
(Respondent 7)

From the responses of the interviewed millennials we can see that personal targeting like this helps with forming the brand image. The brand image is, as we pointed out earlier, of great value to the respondents. When potential employees get approached by serious employers the perception of the firm changes. Whether they get the job or just get to do an interview, the firm has shown that they really care about who they recruit and what kind of co-workers they want in the organization. They display a side of the firm that truly values the employees enough to sit down and look for compatible candidates themselves rather than letting all the candidates come to them.

4.1.3 Millennials' wants and desires

When we looked into millennials' wants and desires we wished to understand what characteristics this specific generation find to be most important in an employer and in a workplace. One employer attribute that we found was of great value to all of our respondents was the desire to have friendly colleagues and bosses, and the ability to have good communication and discussion with them. Our respondents agreed on that friendly colleagues and bosses is a desire of theirs in an employer, and most of our respondents talked about the importance of good communication as well.

"(…) A friendly team is also important, it is always much more pleasant to go working when you know that kind bosses and colleagues are waiting for you." (Respondent 9)

"(…) yeah for me it's super important. Like for me I was raised in a way where if you have a problem you must tell it and fix it quickly. So for me if I can't speak with my manager about my feelings and stuff it's not a good thing." (Respondent 4).

Respondent 9 and 4 gave us answers of a clear theme that we saw amongst all our respondents, the desire of having good relationships with fellow colleagues and bosses. Respondent 4 further expressed the importance of being able to have a good and open dialogue with managers, both when it comes to possible work related problems as well as feelings. This is something we can connect to Alniacik and Alniacik (2012) and their study where they found social values within a company to be most important. Social values such as good relationships with superiors and acceptance and belonging. We can also refer to Hershatter and Epstein (2010), who discuss millennials' desire to have close relationships with managers due to the fact that they have been encouraged to have close relationships to mentors, parents among others their whole lives. Desiring similar connections and relationships with bosses and managers is for many therefore common. Furthermore, some of our respondents even mentioned the desire of having close relationships outside of work. The respondents also highlighted the importance of teamwork with potential colleagues.

"For me, the most important characteristic among my potential colleagues would be the ability to work in teams and have creative and innovative ideas. Besides that, I would have appreciated having friendly relationships outside work in order to work better next to each other at work. Of course everybody would have to do their best to achieve, ehm... the expected results and goals. Out of the two, I guess teamwork. I mean, we are still at work, and we got a job to do." (Respondent 1)

"...For me the most important, if we can have a good discussion that's perfect, and yeah hard work as well. Like I think everyone wants a team who can work and have good communication." (Respondent 4)

Just like Hersatter and Epstein (2010) and Brack and Kelly (2012) expressed, the millennial generation puts great value into teamwork and a sense of community. This is something we indeed can see in the responses we received. Forming and strengthening the sense of teamwork and community within the organization is an internal characteristic that can be expressed externally and improve employer brand attractiveness towards the respondents.

Another interesting aspect that some of our respondents talked about is the desire for creativity within a company. Our respondents' desire for creativity can be connected to the study by Alniacik and Alniacik (2012) who found social values to be the most important for millennials. Social values contain aspects such as using the employees' creativity. Hersatter and Epstein (2010) further explain that millennials tend to think and see of the world as one without boundaries. Having this limitless view on the world might open up for creativity and therefore be something they highly value in a workplace. Especially when the fashion industry is an industry where creativity is expressed in different types of professional roles.

Alniacik's and Alniacik's (2012) study showed that social values are more important than market values (e.g. the organization producing high quality and innovative products). That is an insight we can connect to our respondents' answers as well since none of the respondents mentioned market values as important. Another employer attribute that we found to be of importance for our respondents was yet a social value; the opportunity for internal development.

"(...) And also opportunities for promotion and internal development, I have to feel that I can evolve and not be stuck at the same position during my whole career." (Respondent 9)

Being able to grow within the organization is something all of our respondents put strong emphasis on. Our results therefore show that companies must make room for internal development in order to attract the respondents. The desire for internal growth among young workers is something that Alniacik and Alniacik (2012) mentioned in their study as well. This however goes against Chhabra's and Sharma's (2014) study where they found internal training, career prospects and growth to be the least preferred attributes. These differences can however possibly be because Chhabra's and Sharma's (2014) study was conducted in India. The variations we have witnessed may therefore be due to for example cultural differences. We must not either forget that this is a generation from early 1980s to late 1990s (Pew center research 2018), so finding differences in this group of people and their desires is inevitable.

Furthermore, another aspect that differs Chhabra's and Sharma's (2014) study compared to our results is that they found wage to be one of the most important attributes for millennials. Our respondents definitely mentioned that a good wage is something they want, they however think social values such as a good working environment is far more important than a good wage.

"...I think that a good working environment leads to you being more positive, you can do a better job and your whole everyday life becomes different. I don't think a high wage is worth making you feel down and bad. Then I'd rather have a worse salary, but I also think that if you have a good work environment you can better evolve and there is more room for you to evolve within the organization to get a better salary, it feels like there is more room and energy for that to happen in a good environment." (Respondent 5)

Our respondents found a good working environment to be of great importance and more desirable than having a good wage. We may therefore see related outcomes in Alniacik's and Alniacik's (2012) study, since different aspects of social values can all be parts in creating a

happy and good working environment. Respondent 5 further expressed a vital aspect; a good working environment may help make room for evolement within the organization which later on improves the wage. This is truly a great recognition, as aspects of a good working environment can indeed play a role in internal development and might therefore have a positive effect on the wage.

One thing that came up from the respondents that work or have worked within sales was the want for compensation where one can benefit from performing well. The results from our responding millennials therefore show that they do care for such economic values. However as earlier mentioned, not to the same extent as for social ones.

"I think that it is important to have good bonus systems, that's always good." (Respondent 5)

Just like Alniacik and Alniacik (2012) state in their study, economic values such as compensation do play a role even though the importance of social values take the lead. Furthermore, Hersatter and Epstein (2010) express the importance of organizational core values to the millennial generation and our respondents' answers can be connected to that. This because our respondents claimed that it is desirable that personal values match corporate values.

"...I want to know that I am working for something I strongly believe in." (Respondent 6)

"That is super important, just because at the end of the day you can go home and feel like you've contributed to something good… I would rather sell a product where I know that the people that have made this products have had fair working conditions, and that they care about sustainability and animal rights… I feel like I will more often promote the products that come from a company or brand that I can identify myself with … even if the store gets less of a margin and doesn't make as much money from that product. I still believe that it is more important, for me and the person buying it and everyone around it in the supply chain to feel good." (Respondent 5)

Our respondents feel like, if you work at a company where they share your beliefs you can go home in the end of the day and feel like you have done something meaningful. Sharing core values and beliefs with employers is thus something our respondents desire and something

that they claim will attract them to a company. Just as Cable and Judge (1996) explain, symbolic benefits such as corporate values are important aspects, and sharing values or beliefs may attract a potential employee to an organization more easily. Hersatter and Epstein (2010) further state that the millennial generation is often driven by change and the desire to make an impact, not only internally within the organization but make a change to the better in the world. Respondent 5:s statement correlates to this by expressing a desire for the company to care about sustainability in different contexts. It is important for the respondents to feel like the company cares about these issues as well. It is therefore likely that the respondents will be more attracted to potential employers if they take action in CSR- related questions.

4.1.4 Communication channels

When we talked about suitable communication channels for the interviewed millennials word of mouth marketing was by far the most commonly mentioned. Just as Barrow & Mosley (2005) argue, the external brand is dependent on what perceptions and experiences current employees chose to share about the brand, in both public as well as in personal contexts. The sharing from current employees can affect the brand in many different ways (Barrow & Mosley, 2005). The insight that word of mouth marketing has an impact on potential employees was indeed validated by our respondents. Whether we specifically asked them questions about communication channels, or questions about other kinds of external communication, the respondents referred to word of mouth marketing as a reliable source. Our respondents mean that the reason a word of mouth can be seen as more reliable than promises from the firm is that it comes from someone they know, or someone that does not gain anything themselves out of promoting a brand. Word of mouth marketing aims to, according to Barrow & Mosley (2005), raise brand awareness and help shape the external brand image which the respondents really feel like positive word of mouth marketing does.

"...Yeah, for me if it is a good and real environment, for me it must come from the inside. For example word of mouth is a good way to reach me. Because if it comes from the employees, and someone I know, it must be true. Hearing and reading things the company says is good, but it is not as trustworthy. Even looking at sellers when entering a boutique could give a wrong picture. Sellers are obligated to look happy and welcoming even though they do not feel happy were they are." (Respondent 4).

The respondents agree with that external employer branding needs to come from the inside in order to be reliable and have an affect. Current employees need to be able to share positive experiences with the employer brand, that way the external messages are confirmed internally and then communicated outwards. Word of mouth marketing can further be spread in different ways. As Rosethorn (2009) claims, online word of mouth is more effective than offline word mouth when it comes to reaching a huge crowd (Nilsson & Nordgren, 2012). Rosethorn (2009) mean that people have started to trust social platforms more than traditional marketing since it provides more authentic information (Nilsson & Nordgren, 2012). Our respondents too stated that social media was among the sources they preferred when being reached out to as potential employees. However, they also stated that a firm that posts about a vacancy on a social platform such as Instagram, might be perceived as somwehat unserious. While posts of different experiences with the employer brand, or stories about the brand, on e.g. Instagram is seen as very interesting. To clarify, our respondents gladly read posts about experiences and stories connected to an employer brand on social media. But when it comes to job ads, the respondents believe that those belong on career sites, companies' websites and LinkedIn. So, social media is not in all cases preferred media, websites serve, even for millennials, as a way to ensure that the company is being perceived as serious.

"LinkedIn and career sites. A fun way is also all the other social platforms but maybe not as serious." (Respondent 6)

"...Maybe that's a way, and just promote the brand through every social media channel they can. But for hiring people i think just stick to their own website or a website like Fashion jobs." (Respondent 4)

"Social media allows me to read about personal experiences and see if they match the companies' promises. Instagram is a good tool for that." (Respondent 7)

In conclusion, we can state that LinkedIn is perceived as a more serious channel for recruitment. Channels like Instagram and Facebook are by the respondents considered to be interesting when reading about e.g. employer experiences with a certain brand. That insight is

similar to what Rosethorn (2009) states that people actually trust someone that tells a story about a brand on Facebook more than stories found on the company's website.

4.2 Netnography on companies

The three firms we chose to look into in order to contextualize our empirical analysis of millennial's wants and desires are Chanel, Acne Studios and Zara. We present relevant findings connected to employer branding available on social media platforms as well as websites. We also include different reviews about the employers since we have stated that online word of mouth marketing has a strong impact on the employer image. We start out by presenting relevant findings on Chanel; activities we can see on the internet that are connected to Chanel as an employer brand.

Chanel's official Facebook page is actively used for marketing. A lot of the posts concerns corporate branding, while one recent post caught our eye. It is a video Chanel has posted of students who was given the opportunity to visit one of their fashion shows backstage as well as their ateliers, something Chanel stated was an effort done in order to demonstrate their commitment to education (Chanel, 2018). Furthermore, something very interesting for our study is what an interviewed student in the video expressed:

"It's very inspiring, it makes you want to apply at Chanel." (Chanel, 2018)

Chanel ends the video by writing:

"Chanel hands down its values, its savoir-faire, and its passion to the talented young people of fashion couture"

When we went through the comments below the video, they implicated that people seemed to be amazed by the effort. This really shows that, even though most of the branding activities are connected to corporate branding, the firm really emphasises their employer brand as well. They communicate their passion for education and target young talented workers. The quote by the interviewed student shows that Chanel's employer branding effort has a positive impact which makes the student want to work at the firm.

On Chanel's official website, the brand's passion for education is highlighted. On their website, they have a page called "careers" in which they post available jobs as well as a description of their offerings as an employer. The description is as follows:

"Inspired by our founder, Gabrielle Chanel, who constantly pushed boundaries in her personal and professional life, there is no one way forward at CHANEL.
We offer a unique work environment where you are encouraged to better understand the brand, the business, and your motivations, so that together we can unlock the possibilities of your growth." (Chanel, 2018)

The brand is extremely clear with how important they believe internal growth and development are. They underline that they offer their employees encouragement and tools to both understand the brand and its values as well as personal motivation and growth. That certainly is aligned with what our respondents said; that they desire opportunities for internal growth and that it is something that makes a firm attractive.

Furthermore Chanel is active on LinkedIn, but promotes the corporate brand more than the employer brand, which is interesting. Given that they highlight their passion for education and young talents, LinkedIn could instead be a page where they post job ads and external employer branding efforts.

On Glassdoor, we found negative comments connected to Chanel's managers' way of leading and bad work-life balance. This shows that there are still internal attributes that the respondents value that do not work well enough within the company. However, looking at Chanel's external employer branding it seems like they are actively putting effort into bettering the internal attributes as well as their employer brand.

Acne Studio's career page on their official website doesn't quite give the same impression. Instead of having a description of what the company offers as an employer brand, Acne only has general information about things like their collections and founder. From a job searchers perspective, that isn't perhaps as interesting. When you click on one of the open positions,

you find info about qualifications and job description. Qualifications that describe what a potential employee should offer the brand, but nowhere does it say what the brand offers the employee.

Acne Studio's does not seem to be promoting their employer brand externally on social media accounts either. On Facebook and Instagram they merely promote individual pieces or new collections. Moreover, at LinkedIn, they do have an official account where they regularly post open positions. Since our respondents stated that LinkedIn is a platform where they would like to be recruited or look for jobs, that might be a good effort. Nevertheless, the description of Acne on LinkedIn is the same as on their career page, they do not have any kind of employer value proposition or message that communicates what they offer as an employer.

On Glassdoor, reviews about Acne Studios, are both negative and positive. Positive comments about the brand image and teamwork are for example something that show an employer branding effort. Furthermore negative comments touch the limited room for internal growth which once again, is a crucial attribute to our respondents.

"Brand image and passion will carry the brand in a positive growth…great work environment down to store level. Inspired team members and a passion for the brand running through most team members" (Review on Glassdoor 1)

"Very little opportunity for growth." (Review on Glassdoor 2)

"If you want to keep employees you can't depend on that they want to work for the company only because its fashion. There is a lot of competition and the good people will change."(Review on Glassdoor 3)

Brand image, a nice work environment and passion for the brand are attributes that former employees at Acne Studios stated that the company has. That is also attributes that our respondents stated they value very much. The negative review about limited internal growth

is also something our respondents meant is of great importance and something that former employees at Acne Studio mean the company does not have. Furthermore, the last review showed what we asserted previously, the company has minimal employer branding efforts and it is is not enough to rely on a strong corporate brand. Different initiatives have to be taken in order to retain the talented employees.

When it comes to Zara, we started by looking at reviews on Glassdoor about them as well. We identified negative comments regarding internal attributes that did not work so well. Employees felt like they were not valued and highlighted the lack of team building. Those are efforts that our respondents stated are of great importance.

"Nothing you do is ever good enough. They always want more and they don't give you the right tools to do it." (Review on Glassdoor 4)

Former employees wrote about not being valued in the organization and not having the right tools to cope with the heavy workload. Furthermore Zara does not seem to be putting effort into defending this reputations externally. Just like Acne Studio, Zara focuses merely on its corporate brand on social media. They promote collections and individual pieces on platforms such as Youtube, Facebook and Instagram. One thing that differs Zara from the others is that Zara does not even have a career site on their official website. Zara's webpage directs the visitors to the concern Inditex, in which they are a member, for further information about the employer brand, open positions etc. (Zara, 2018).

On the official website of Inditex, you can apply for jobs and read about the concern as an employer. Inditex combines 10 different corporate brands and states that the employer brand is the same. They refer to the staff in the brands together as a team (Inditexcareers, 2018), which is positive from our respondent's perspective since they do value teamwork. But as Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) state, all brands have an employer brand, all of them just doesn't put effort into forming it. Looking at Zara as an employer, it is reasonable to assume that everyone does not know that they are a part of Inditex, and as we stated, no communication from Zara alone connected to the employer brand can be found on their digital platforms. Therefore, it might be hard to perceive Zara as the employer of choice when no employer

branding efforts are made.

When it comes to Linkedin, Inditex has a profile and posts open positions as well as brands themselves. The concern puts effort into forming themselves as an employer and writes about what they offer.

"You choose us. We are decisive. We trust in the ability and instincts of our professional team. We have got to where we are today thanks to them and the hard work of those people who have shown us where we can improve." (Inditex, 2018)

They refer to all workers within the concern as a team and emphasize the importance of trust. Even though these efforts are positive according to our respondents, it still focuses on 10 different brands in one and it is hard to know whether it is completely truth for each brand individually.

5. Discussion

Our results show millennials' wants and desires in an employer within the fashion industry. It has through our study become clear that organizations within the fashion industry must build and nurture their employer brands in order to attract millennial talent. Since our respondents' wants and desires in an employer within the fashion industry are very similar, where the age and nationality do not make a significant difference in the answers, we believe that the results we got from our responding millennials can be applicable to the generation as a whole within this industry. We cannot state that this is the truth for every single millennial born between 1981 and 1996, but we do however feel as though our respondents gave answers in which they shared most of the wants and desires and we can therefore paint a generic picture of the generation.

We found in our study that social and symbolic attributes are the most valuable for millennials. Millennials still find attributes such as good wage and compensation to be important, however friendly relationships with colleagues and bosses, and a good working environment among other social and symbolic attributes play a bigger role. One internal

attribute that appears to be very important for millennials is the opportunity for internal development. Attracting the right talent therefore has much to do with companies' ability to create an environment that boosts employees' opportunities for learning and gaining different experiences within the organization. It is therefore important for fashion companies to build an environment in which the employees can grow and evolve, be creative and innovative. Companies can put this into practice by for example enabling their employees to explore diverse career paths within the organization, and through this create further expertise and growth. This could also be done by setting up projects within the organization that expose the employees to different areas, something that could open up for more teamwork as well, which seems to important to millennials. We have thus found that it seems to be valuable to millennials for companies to be open in supporting their employees in their development and growth. Companies may therefore benefit from offering their employees opportunities to learn inside as well as outside of the organization. One example could be to sponsor participation in voluntary work outside of the organization. This would coincide with the values of the millennials' as well as showing that the company also adheres to such values.

Working in an environment that fosters creativity and collaboration seems to be of importance to millennials. In an industry where companies' success has a lot to do with their creative output, creative and innovative thinking is key. Companies therefore ought to utilise the creative minds of millennials to generate more value and success. The organizations must also express that they hold attributes millennials desire in order to attract them. This shows the importance of external employer branding. The strong internal attributes must be expressed to potential employees and it has to be done in the right way. Social media is a good way for companies to promote their employer brands and communicate brand stories. Our study however shows that word of mouth has a great impact on millennials, as millennials find that information coming from previous or current employees is the most valuable and trustworthy. This might be due to the fact that millennials have had access to a lot of information in an instant through technology, for a significant part of their lives. By having this access they are also constantly exposed to false information and companies that are only trying to sell.

Since word of mouth is highly influential, we believe that companies should let current employees be promoters of the brand. Firms may benefit from partnering up with or visiting schools, where current employees meet students and talk to them about who they are as a company and what they do as well as what opportunities they offer and what value the company can bring them. As earlier mentioned, Chanel did something similar when they invited students to their fashion show, which was a great initiative by the firm. Not only does this create a positive brand image and feeling towards the company, it also gives the company a chance to scout for future talents among the students, making it possible to find interesting and creative workers. This also creates an opportunity for the companies to target personally, something we found in our study that millennials do appreciate.

There is still a tendency within the fashion industry to rely on the corporate brand, as seen for example in Acne Studios. Exclusive, iconic brands or brands with a story of heritage has been able to attract talent purely based on that. People still wish to work for those types of brands, while our study shows that in order to attract talent one must be able to retain talent as well. The most impactful way to reach millennials is by, as mentioned, word of mouth. If you rely on your brand and do not take care of your current employees, it will be expressed online or offline to potential employees. This might then create a negative image of the brand and company which will have an impact on whether millennials desire to work for that company or not. On the other hand, if a company has strong internal attributes that millennials desire, happy and satisfied employees, that will be expressed as well. It will create a positive brand image that is formed to attract the best talent. We therefore find it vital that companies meet the current employees' desires and nurture them in order to attract new talent. This may also create an important link between the corporate brand and the employer brand as creative and happy employees will promote the company, and therefore create positive associations that affect the corporate brand as well.

Our study shows that companies within the fashion industry must care for, not only their corporate brands, but their employer brands as well. By expressing core values, organizational culture and internal attributes they can attract the right talent. But, it is crucial that all those efforts are communicated through the right channels. Companies should

therefore utilise technology and be visible on platforms such as LinkedIn, different job sites as well as care for the career page on their website to target millennials.

Our study has shown, by looking at millennials' wants and desires, it is important for companies to focus on what they can do for their employees and how they can support them. By showing, through their employer brands, that they work with and possess the attributes millennials desire they are more likely to attract talent. Current employees must in a next step communicate and confirm that this is actually the case, since it is not enough for a company to state that they possess wanted and desired attributes, it must also be shown. Many attributes that we have found to be valuable for millennials are attributes that are important for companies to develop, such as millennials' desire to work within companies that care about social and environmental issues. Previous generations do not perhaps feel as strong of a desire for this as the millennial generation seem to do. Attributes such as corporate social responsibility could therefore be positively influenced by millennials' desires and help develop a positive change. The millennial generation must however also understand that they have to adapt to the corporate world to some extent, it is not just companies' responsibility to adapt and create changes for them. This is something we believe strong leadership and perhaps mentors may help with, since it may guide and help the new talent to grow within the company.

We do believe that our results on millennials' wants and desires are transferable to other industries as well. This can be strengthened by the fact that our answers has similarities to other studies on millennials (e.g Alniacik & Alniacik, 2012). We choose a qualitative approach on this study, other studies done on millennials or young people have often been of quantitative nature (e.g Alniacik & Alniacik, 2012; Cable and Judge, 1996). We feel as though by doing interviews with millennials we got a deep and more nuanced view on this generation, something that we believe is necessary. Since the research on millennials' wants and desires in an employer within the fashion industry is a rather unexplored area, this study might give good insight for companies within this industry to understand how to attract talent and mind the talent gap that is currently there.

6. Conclusions

The challenge to find the right talent is ever present within the fashion industry. The purpose of this study was therefore to explore what millennials want and desire from an employer within the fashion industry, which gives an understanding of what it is that attracts millennials to an employer. By answering the research questions that permeated the study we believe that we have reached the purpose.

We found that millennials value friendly bosses and colleagues, good wage, creativity as well as opportunities for internal development highly. Symbolic and social attributes do however seem to be more desirable than functional attributes. Teamwork, organizational culture, feeling valuable to the firm, sharing core values with the company, as well as working in a creative and happy working environment are all desired internal symbolic and social characteristics. Efforts that are important in retaining employees thus seem to have much to do with attracting talent. By using these internal actions to strengthen the internal brand a natural consequence is a stronger and more persuasive external brand according to the respondents. Our study further showed that employer brand image, employer value proposition and personal targeting is external employer branding activities that would make a firm more attractive to the respondents.

We found word of mouth marketing to have a strong impact on millennials, as information coming from previous or current employees is the most valuable and trustworthy. Thus taking care of current employees is very important, and making employees promoters of the company and the employer brand is indeed very influential. LinkedIn, as well as career sites and companies' websites are also platforms where the millennials best can be reached. The usage of social media is valuable, our study however showed that the best way of using it is to spread stories, values and associations connected to the employer rather than posting job ads and recruiting staff.

By doing netnography we got an insight in companies' employer branding activities. We saw that there are companies, Chanel for example, that work with improving and engaging in their employer brand. We did however also witness firms that depend on their corporate brands to attract talent. Companies within the fashion industry are truly skillful when it comes to their corporate brands. They must however better their focus on building and caring for their employer brands in order attract the right talent. Employers must express internal attributes that are of importance to the respondents, and communicate how they can bring value to the respondents, not just focus on what the employees can do for them.

7. Further research

Employer branding is an area of complexity, and as we have seen the different parts of employer branding are often intertwined and have an impact on each other. Since our study is focusing on millennials' wants and desires in an employer, we wanted to see what attracts millennials to employers rather than what retains employees in an organization. However, we found in our study that in order to attract talent it is important to be able to retain talent. We therefore believe that is would be very interesting to do further research on how to retain millennial talent within the fashion industry.

Since the employees have an impact on the success of companies within the fashion industry we believe it would be interesting to research and benchmark companies within the fashion industry to knowledge companies.

Further in-depth research about how companies act on the millennial's wants and desires in an employer would contribute with additional intriguing results. Research that would map the employer branding activities among chosen companies in the fashion industry in order to see if it matches the millennials' wants and desires is something that would expand and deepen the discussion of the theme.

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9. Attachments

Attachment 1 - Interview guide

General Info

What age and gender are you?

What kind of work experience do you have?

External & Internal Employer branding

What makes you feel like you want to work for a certain company?

How do they become the employer of choice in your mind?

How important is it for you that the core values of your potential employer matches your personal values?

What can companies do and/or evolve to make you feel like you want to work there?

Millennials' wants and desires

What attributes would you ascribe your dream workplace?

(E.g. opportunities for promotion and internal development, friendly bosses and colleagues, flexible working hours, good wage, opportunities for working from home, producing nice products, etc.)

Have you found this in your previous work places?

What do you think are the most important characteristic among your potential colleagues?

Communication channels

If a company were to look for new talents, where do you feel like they could easily reach you?

If a company would want to promote their employer brand, what platform do you think is the most suitable to do so?

(E.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Ads online, Ads at uni, Ads in their stores/webpage, Linkedin etc)

Attachment 2 - Respondents information

Collocation of respondent age, gender and work experience

Respondent	Age	Gender	Work experience
1	34	Female	Has mainly worked in retail. Mostly within skin care and cosmetics for 7 years and in fashion for about 3 years.
2	22	Female	Now work full time as a store manager in Stockholm.
3	25	Male	Mainly within the fashion industry. Started working at Jack & Jones in Gothenburg, and has from there worked himself up to being a store manager at Esprit
4	23	Female	Worked in a shoes brand and in a women brand. Was the manager of the retail section.
5	22	Female	Worked at HM as a sales advisor for 4 months and is currently working at JC.
6	29	Female	Seller within the fashion industry for 10 years
7	25	Male	Main work experience is in luxury retail as a sales person. Around 7 years.
8	23	Female	Worked in retail since 2015. First job was at a high-end store in Notting hill, London. Now I´m a sales assistant at NK in Gothenburg.
9	23	Female	Three internships all made in the fashion/luxury industry.
10	35	Male	Has worked for 11 years within the premium and luxury fashion industry. Currently at Burberry.