Matching - A mixed study on how companies and business students perceive each other

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**Abstract**

Every year many students are graduating from their university and are faced with the difficulty of acquiring an employment, especially large difficulty in Sweden as the unemployment rate is large amongst young adults. The companies are also facing a challenge, of how to receive the best applicants to their job openings, to ensure they will stay competitive as companies. The authors are examining how the students will acquire employment by investigating what demands companies have on applicants and employees at their companies, and what demands the students in Umeå believe the companies have. It is also examined how the companies are marketing themselves to future employees and students and how these marketing efforts are perceived by the students. The theories of interest to examine the research questions mentioned concern employer branding, marketing tools and planned behaviour. This thesis is using a mixed method approach. In the qualitative part of the thesis the authors used semi-structured interviews that were conducted with companies within the business sector in the municipality of Umeå. A survey in the form of a self-completion questionnaire was used in the quantitative part to measure the perception of Umeå University’s business program students. The result showed that the companies valued experience within their field and personality traits highest. The students had a good understanding of what demands the companies had on their employees and felt that they could fulfil most demands, however having experience within the field the company operates within was most difficult. Most companies used marketing tools such as attending recruitment fairs, holding lectures or engaging in student run organisations. The students did like these techniques the best, i.e. marketing through the university and through recruitment fairs, however, did not appreciate marketing through advertisement. The students value the opportunity to talk to current staff at a company and therefore like recruitment fairs and activities that are organized by the university. The main recommendation is that the students should get more work experience and the companies need to make it easier for the students to achieve this, hence, it will enable the students to fulfil more criterions companies have on their employees.
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Chapter one: Introduction

The introduction of this thesis consists of a clarification of the topic in the problem discussion where a brief explanation to the choice of focus for the thesis is given and is followed by the choice of subject. Further on, this will lead on to a research question and purpose explaining the problem at hand as well as the goal of this thesis. Lastly the limitations of the thesis will be stated.

The concept of employer branding is something that has in recent years have received more and more attention. According to Mandhanya and Shah (2010, p. 44) “Employer branding represents a firm’s efforts to promote, both inside and outside the firm, a clear view of what makes it different and desirable as an employer.” Hence, for a company to receive the desired applicants to their job openings, they need to build a strong employer brand. As students of the business program at Umeå University in Sweden, the authors of this thesis are curious as to how companies are working with their employer brand and how students of the popular business programs will become the firms desired future employees, as well as how to find a match between these. Throughout this thesis the authors have chosen Mandhanya and Shahs (2010) definition of an employer brand.

1.1 Problem discussion from the students point of view

According to statistics the business program is one of the most popular programs students are applying to at the university today. During the last 10 years the supply of business educates in Sweden has gone from around 60 000 to 94 000 over this ten year period and an increase of 75% is anticipated up until 2030 according to Statistiska Centralbyrån (SCB, [Statistics Sweden], 2011, p. 112). That means that there is an immense amount of students graduating every year that are looking for future jobs within their new profession to start off a successful career. Throughout this thesis the students will be presented both as students, as well as the companies’ future employees.

In Sweden, the total amount of graduates in the levels bachelor, one year master and two year master, within economics and business for the year 2010/2011 was 6803. The total number of graduates in Umeå University within the same level and direction were 283 in the same year (Högskoleverket, 2012). The large supply of business educates is assumed to lead to large competition for the students to acquire high profile jobs. One reason of the increased competition between graduates to obtain an employment is due to the currently large unemployment rate in Sweden, in September 2012 reported to be 7.4% (SCB, 2012). It is concluded that 7.4% is a large unemployment rate compared to the average unemployment rate in Sweden that has been 5.68% between the years 1980 and 2012 (Trading Economics, 2012). The unemployment rate in Sweden of people between the ages 15-24 was in November 2012 22.6% (SCB, 2012), hence there are large difficulties to acquire employment in the age of the graduating students.

The business students can choose to specialise in four different directions: accounting, finance, management and accounting. There are different lines of work and careers the business graduates could be interested in applying to, but somehow some areas gets more applicants than others and why it is this way can sometimes be difficult to understand. Officials within banks, market
analyzers and brokers are in the top of the list of popular professions pursued by the business graduates according to the SCB report 2011 (SCB, 2011, p. 112). According to Sveriges Akademikers Central Organisation (SACOs; Sweden’s Academics Central Organisation) future prospects for 2016, graduates in accounting have an advantage prior to other directions of business administration to obtain employment (SACO, 2011, p.40). Of the Swedish business students graduating 2008, the most popular direction of business administration was accounting, with 31% of the respondents choosing the subject (Civilekonomen, 2012, p.11).

Business administration is a very wide subject and does not only include the obvious directions mentioned above. The directions that students do not realize are available until a few years into their education can be the profession they will end up having. This gives the graduates a vast amount of choices in professions to pursue. Of the business students graduating 2008 in Sweden, the professions economic functions, budgeting and accounting are where the largest percentage, 36% of the respondents are working three years after graduation. On second place with 18% come administrators, however, no definition of administrators is given in the report (Civilekonomen, 2012, p.28).

The labour market will be presented with a large amount of diverse and differently skilled graduates’ as the students of the business programs have to choose to specialize in a certain field within business. Different factors and reasons might have an effect on the behaviour students examine when deciding on different choices in specialization and as a help to explain these choice is the theory of planned behaviour. The theory of planned behaviour is in this thesis useful to examine the choice students make when applying for employment at a specific company. It takes up why one chose to apply and why not. Ajzen (1991, p.181) find that, the indication of how willing an individual are to put a lot of effort in pursuing an action, the more likely it is that the behaviour to pursue the action is performed. The theory further explains that people that have more confidence about their own skills and capacity to perform an activity, in this case searching for employment, are also the people that are expected to be the ones with higher intentions to perform that activity (Van Hooft et al., 2004, p.28).

Further, the choices of specialization may be depending on factors like the range of business related jobs offered on the employment market. It can also be dependent on the courses that are offered at the university. The university needs to know what is expected of their students when choosing courses to offer. How and why the students make their choices of what courses to take are of interest to the companies, to be able to understand how to appeal to the specific talents they are looking for to join their company in the future. Retaining information of this nature is something they have to explore and also find explanations to and is assumed to cost the companies time and money, but is something that they could achieve trough the use of a successful and clear employer brand.

This leads us to the questions of what criterions the students believe companies have on their employees and how they will be able to live up to these demands competing with all other graduated business students. It also raises the question of whether the companies’ marketing efforts towards the students as excellent employers are reaching the students and where the students find their desired employers.
1.2 Problem discussion from the firms’ point of view
A lot of companies are hiring new employees every year, hence there are not only competition for the students to get hired, but also for the companies to attract what they think of as the most suitable candidates for their job openings. When assuming the companies are searching for the top students within their qualification framework, competitiveness between companies arise in acquiring the best students. To easier achieve for this match to occur the firms have the option of trying to establish a strong employer brand since “It is generally recognized that intellectual and human capital is the foundation of competitive advantage in the modern economy.” (Berthon et al., 2005, p.152). A strong employer brand of a firm will make the students seek them out as an employer with less effort from the company in recruitment, however more effort in building a strong employer brand and this is of true importance for a firm to build a strong foundation and gain competitive advantage.

The companies established in Umeå are no exception to this. The 11 000 established companies within the municipality of Umeå (Umeå Kommun, 2010) need to find a suitable way to build a strong employer brand to stay competitive. Since the company have the opportunity to make the first draft of the new workforce they are able to select the students that will live up to the criterion's and standards that their company values. When assuming that the students also are searching for the best possible career, the companies and students might have different aims that could collide with each other.

Since there are two parties involved in the process of hiring and gaining a perfect match between the employer and employee, there are other ways then the firm seeking out the students to get positions filled. The dream scenario for the companies would be when they do not have to seek out for their future employees, but rather have the desired students seeking out the company, hence fulfilling the matching process and gaining the best students.

This is made through effective employer branding. Employer branding “…is an organization’s image as seen through the eyes of its actual and potential employees…” (Kimpakorn & Tocquer, 2009, p. 534). The employer brand is believed to help in the matching process between a company and a possible employee. Employer branding is important because “Today’s most successful companies are those with the BEST PEOPLE, not just the best products” (Employer Brand Institute, 2009, p. 4). To help companies to get a successful employer branding researchers as Parment and Dyhre (2009) has developed step by step models for the companies. Parment and Dyhre (2009) find that this is the most efficient way of determine the approach of gaining successful employer branding, where Aggerholm et al (2011) also supports this since it helps in achieving a sustainable organization. This model is meant to help companies in their development of a successful and well established employer brand.

One way to build an employer brand is by word of mouth, i.e. to hear from a pleased employee usually is more convincing than other types of promotions (Jobber & Fahy, 2009, p.174). Another way for a company to market its employer brand is through visiting recruitment fairs. However recruitment fairs have its disadvantages if the brand is not clearly marketed. This can be seen if the messages the firm are sending are exposed to “noise”, resulting in difficulties for the recipient to perceive the message in the manner the sender would have intended it (Jobber & Fahy, 2009, p. 218-219). For this reason it becomes difficult to make the best match of new staff members, fitting the right criterions, when recruiting to the company. More of the importance of
employer branding and theory of planned behaviour will be explored and explained in focus in a later chapter.

The above highlighted factors leads to a research gap in what criterion's the business students think a future employer are looking for, what criterion's the companies really are looking for and the difficulties in finding the right match between these. The theoretical research gap that has been found mainly concern what criterions employers have on their employees and what perceptions students have on the companies’ marketing efforts. Jaidi et al have cited Chapman et al (2005) that state that there are not much research conducted in the predictors of job choice. That is why the thesis will use the two main theory’s employer branding and the theory of planned behaviour when analyzing the findings in a later chapter.

1.3 Choice of employer branding as a subject
This thesis concerns the criterions students retain to become more attractive on the labour market and what they think are criterions their future employer values in them. It also concerns how the companies are marketing themselves towards students as future employers, and how the students perceive these attempts. The choice of subject of this paper was a result of personal interest of the authors in finding a suitable employer for future professional life, as well as interest in knowing what is needed to become a more attractive future employee at the companies of the authors’ choice. When having established what was going to be researched, the authors felt that doing the study on students as well as firms was a natural choice. Knowing the reason a company seems more desirable than others to a large population is also interesting as marketing can have subconscious (Krishna, 2011, p. 333), as well as conscious effects on the students’ choices.

There is value in producing this thesis for numerous parties; firstly the students at Umeå University whom will get a greater understanding in what the business labour market demands. Secondly the companies whom will find better ways of reaching out to the students and finding the right talents that they are looking for. The university will also gain a better understanding in what the labour market is expecting of their students and how they can help their students to meet these expectations. Finally, it will also bring some insight and better understanding in how employer branding works when unemployment is high and rising.

1.4 Research question and purpose
The above enlightenment in the problem discussions is what leads to the research questions below;

1. What are the companies’ demands (criterions) of competences and skills on their future employees and how are the employers attempting to market themselves to attract new employees?

2. How well aware of the demands (criterions) of competences and skills businesses are demanding on their employees, are the students and how do the students perceive the companies employment marketing efforts towards them?

The purpose of the thesis is to examine if there is a gap between the demands employers have on their future employees, and the future employees’ perception of these companies’ demands on them. The purpose is also to examine how employers are attempting to market themselves towards students as possible future employers and how the students experience the employers
marketing efforts towards them. The research will be made through investigating if the marketing of the companies are reaching the students and if it has an impact on their choice. Both of these purposes are created to be able to find a match between the aims of students and the companies. This will be implemented through investigating patterns and the general view of the students’ perceptions of the companies’ demands on them, as well as through in dept interviews with companies working with business functions as marketing, management, accounting or finance. The authors believe a qualitative approach is appropriate for examining the companies. Further, the students’ perceptions and opinions of the companies will be examined through a quantitative research approach.

The view of this paper is that the companies branding are assumed to affect the students’ choice of employer in the sense that more marketing from companies at fairs or visits at Universities will increase the students’ awareness of the companies’ existence. The view concludes that higher knowledge and positive experiences of a company leads to a greater desire to work at the company. In Jaidi et al., (2011) the authors mean that the theory of planned behaviour can predict different types of behaviour and that a positive attitude towards the company will also increase the likeliness of applying for a job there in the future.

1.5 Limitations

It can be seen as a limitation that the study is only implemented in Umeå, however the authors believe Umeå to be a good choice of population because of the city’s current growth of importance. Examples of factors contributing to the increased importance of the city are that the city is very cultural and are aiming at becoming Europe’s next culture capital. Having the large university with much research as well as having a well established labour-market are other factors. The city is also investing in re-building the European route E4 that goes through most of Sweden. Another reason the authors believe Umeå to be a suitable city is because the city is the largest one in the area Norrland (Umeå website, 2011). As the authors are not aiming at drawing conclusions of the same research question in other parts of Sweden there is no need of empirical evidence from other parts of Sweden.

Due to this limited location this study will only have participants from the business programs at Umeå University, not other programs or other schools. Also only companies whom belong to, or have one or more of the four focus areas of business included in their operations, and are located in Umeå will participate, not other types of companies or from other cities. As the research will show a very geographically local result it may not be applicable on the rest of Sweden considering all Universities have a difference in the extent to which they have relationships with the labour market. Further, some business schools have greater reputation than others and this could be reflected in the demands and criterions the companies in that city have upon their employees.
Chapter two: Methodology

The methodology chapter of this thesis consists of first the epistemological and ontological considerations where there is given an explanation to how the authors of this thesis look upon knowledge and reality of the results produced in the theses. Following comes the research approach and process, where the authors enlighten the reader about how this thesis has been conducted. This is to be followed by an explanation of the method selection and ended with the literature selection were the authors will present and look more critically upon the sources that has been used throughout this thesis. In a later chapter the methods used in conducting the research will be discussed.

2.1 Epistemological consideration

Epistemology is defined as “A theory of knowledge” (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 714). Within epistemology there are many different considerations, where the two main ones are positivism that uses “natural sciences to the study of social reality and beyond” (ibid, p. 15) and interpretivism where the data collected is seen as gathering facts (ibid, p. 15). When the authors of this thesis look at what is regarded to be acceptable knowledge, they do not believe the findings in this research to be true knowledge. The findings are seen as data that might give better indications and help in understanding the subject at hand. The authors do not believe that the human senses can confirm the knowledge or that the result in this thesis is to be proven as true or false, they are rather leaning towards an interpretation of the result.

This thesis has a mixed research approach, meaning that there will be use of both a quantitative and qualitative study. This has given implications to have aspects from different considerations that could be appropriate in this research. Further, it is why the authors have chosen not to state a specific consideration and instead give an explanation to how they see their research.

2.2 Ontological consideration

Ontology is defined as “A theory of the nature of social entities” (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 716) and is often implying if the researchers are using objectivism, meaning that social actors are not influencing the society (ibid, p. 21) or the opposite, constructivism, where they do influence the society (ibid, p. 22). When the authors of this thesis look on how the world and the social actors in it are perceived they do believe that the society is being influenced by the respondents in this research. It is difficult not to influence and incorporate personal values in the way people act and make their decisions. Although the authors of this thesis, have throughout this study and the gathering of the data been trying to act as objectively as possible.

Bryman and Bell (2011) state that a quantitative study often follows a specific pattern of chosen considerations and that a qualitative study often follows another path. However, as mentioned before, this thesis has a mixed research approach and the authors will do their best to join the two parts together. The authors are in this thesis striving to answer the questions, “What are the companies demands (criterions) of competences and skills on their future employees and how are the employers attempting to market themselves to attract new employees?” and “How well aware of the demands (criterions) of competences and skills businesses are demanding on their employees, are the students and how do the students perceive the companies employment marketing efforts towards them?” The authors will try to find the answer in the empirical data.
collected both in the survey and the interviews and from those results try to gain a better understanding.

2.3 Research approach and process
The authors of this thesis started the whole process of writing this thesis by searching for suitable theories to establish a solid foundation to build on and decided on the subject and purpose. The main theory that the authors in the beginning focused on was the theory of employer branding and it gave inspiration for the research questions. At a later stage articles on theories with a focus on marketing tools and planned behaviour were found. This led to the research questions and approach being clearer for the authors and they therefore had to be slightly altered from what had first been written. After much research the authors felt that they had a better and deeper understanding about the theories to write the questions used for both the quantitative and qualitative study.

As the study is made through first establishing theories and later drawing out research questions from the theories, a deductive approach can be seen (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.11-12). However, as the study is mixed and have elements of qualitative research, it can be argued that an abductive approach is used, as the authors are manoeuvring between theory and empirical evidence and the understanding is gradually increased. An abductive approach is more easily applied in mixed researches because it has characteristics from both the deductive and inductive approach (Modell, 2009, p.213). With abduction a researcher is not going directly from practical observations to the theoretical conclusion, but still relies on theories to guide when discovering and obtaining explanations to the observations (ibid, p.213).

2.4 Method selection
The qualitative method gives a wider view on a total impression and offers an understanding to the social processes. It gives an opportunity for a deeper and closer understanding of situations in life, but it also means a more intensive study to be implemented and carried out on all separate research units involved (Holme & Solvang, 1997, p.79). On the other hand the quantitative method enables for the data collected to be statistically generalized. A strength of this method is that it can tell if the questions asked have covered all the units that was meant to be measured (Holme & Solvang, 1997, p.80).

As mentioned in earlier parts of this chapter this thesis will have a mixed method selection, with the use of both the quantitative and qualitative research method. One reason for choosing this direction is well argued for in the literature written by Bryman and Bell (2011), “The use of a mixed methods approach that combined quantitative and qualitative research enable a more rounded and complete picture to be drawn” (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 28). The authors chose to have a quantitative research approach for the students to get a wide picture on their opinions and thoughts of the subject at hand, while the authors chose to have a qualitative approach for the companies as they wished to see a more detailed picture with many different levels and directions of the answers.

The authors of this thesis felt there was a need to use a survey in the form of a self-completed questionnaire for the students, to be able to access a bigger sample. To be able to get the best data from the companies there was a need to conduct semi-structured interviews, since surveys in this case might not have given enough detailed information to be able to answer the research
questions in the best way (ibid, 2011, p. 640-641). Due to the time consuming business of constructing the survey and since most companies had a busy schedule leading up to Christmas, the interviews and survey were conducted simultaneously, on the one exception that the first interview was conducted one day before the survey was released to the students.

2.5 Literature selection
Some of the literature and sources used in this thesis have been collected from the internet through Umeå university library via databases such as Business Source Premier and PsycARTICLES. When searching in the web-based catalogues, key words like employer brand, employer brand process, recruitment process, employee motivation, employee attractiveness, employer of choice, planned behaviour and choice theory where used. These words helped the authors of this thesis to find articles on the employment brand theory, planned behaviour and marketing tools. To obtain more reliability, mostly peer-reviewed articles where used as references in this thesis. Other literature used has come from published books.

It is known that internet pages might over time change their content and therefore the information once found and used from an internet page might not be the same when looking at it another time. Therefore the authors were hesitant to base facts brought up in this thesis on information found on the internet, however in some cases where the information could not be found elsewhere they had to. In these cases the authors used reliable internet pages such as SCB, where most of the information found will not be changed and therefore this will not have any greater effect on the validity or reliability of this thesis.

The main theory used in this thesis is the theory of employer brand. Employer branding as a concept have been applied and used in various amounts of articles where the authors of them have looked into different industries. Still, the authors find that this is not something that makes the theory less relevant to this thesis, since it is a very versatile theory that is easily applied and relevant to any industry where there are people employed, hence the size of the business or what kind of branch it operates within should not make any difference. From this theory the authors later found links to theories about marketing of employer brands and choice of employment in the planned behaviour theory. The authors found both of these theories helpful in examining the research gap and have therefore incorporated them in the questions asked to both students and companies.

In the theories concerning the marketing tools that are used by the companies to spread their employer brand the authors mainly used the promotional tools that had been looked at by Collins and Stevens. By doing so it might have affected the reliability of the result, however, due to that these scholar are well known and well published the authors do not believe it would have had any great effect. The tools chosen are also well known and very common.

The authors have used more than one theory to be able to answer the research questions, however it has not been as easy as they thought to find some of the theories that they wanted to use. The authors had problems finding earlier research on the subject of choice theory related to how people chose employments. That might be due to that not a lot of research have been conducted in that area by the time this thesis were written, and as Jaidi et al have cited Chapman et al (2005) stating that “Relatively few studies have examined the predictors of actual job choice”. Therefore there are not a lot of theories that focuses mainly on choice theory and job choice. The authors
instead used the theories of planned behaviour and based that on two different main scholars and one of them is well known and has published a vast amount of papers on the subject.

The authors experienced difficulties when searching for theories and articles concerning what criterions employers’ requests and looks for in a future employer. Therefore the authors have chosen the criterions that were used as alternatives in the questions in the survey themselves and choose these from their own experience of what has been asked of them in previous employments. The effect was that during the interviews the respondents mentioned criterions that were highly valued that had not been given to the students as an option in the survey. It has therefore given a slight difference in the result on what the companies and students value as important characteristics and criterions for the future employees to fulfil. As it turned out not to be a big difference the authors do not believe this will have any effect on the validity of the result.

Some other theories that are available to use for this thesis could have been communications theories in how the companies are communicating their employer brand towards students, however, as the communication used in companies often is conducted through marketing in one way or another, the authors felt that the theory would be quite similar to marketing techniques in many ways, and chose therefore not to include it.
In this chapter the theories behind employer branding will first be defined and the concept explained as this is important for our research questions of how the companies market themselves as a good employer towards students. The chapter will also take up some marketing techniques companies may use to obtain their brand as well as the theory of planned behaviour to examine how the student think when standing in front of career choices.

3.1 Employer branding

3.1.1 Concept and definition of Employer Branding

Some definitions to employer branding are “An employer brand is an organization’s image as seen through the eyes of its actual and potential employees and should not be confused with the consumers’ brand” (Kimpakorn & Tocquer, 2009, p. 534). Another definition is “Employer branding is the development and communication of an organization’s culture as an employer in the market place” (Mandhanya & Shah, 2010, p 44). As mentioned in the introduction chapter the authors have chosen Mandhanya and Shahs (2010, p. 44) definition of an employer brand to be used throughout this thesis: “Employer branding represents a firm’s efforts to promote, both inside and outside the firm, a clear view of what makes it different and desirable as an employer.”. Although many of the definitions of employer brand are similar the authors felt a need to choose a definition to provide a clearer understanding for the reader on how they look at employer branding. Furthermore, the definition will make it easier to separate the company brand from the employer brand.

There are many similarities between a corporate brand and an employer brand. However there are two key differences between these; the first being that the employer brand is only used in regards to employment and the firm’s characteristics as an employer. The second difference is the fact that corporate brands are primarily used externally, while employer branding is used internally as well as externally (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004, p. 503). Many companies confuse the employer branding with branding in general (Mitchell, 2008, 128). Hence, to gain understanding in the concept employer branding one need to understand the concept branding. The term brand is defined in Tikoo and Backhaus scholar (2004, p. 502) as “A name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors.” and was borrowed from the American Marketing Association (1960).

The basic understanding of the employer branding found in the articles is that the firms “use their brand’s power to motivate employees” (Donath, 2001, p. 7). A strong brand and equity gives pride and loyalty in the workforce, that will encourage and driving them to perform and improve in the level of customer service given (Donath, 2001, p. 7). “Many scholars and consultants have emphasised the specific role of employees in building the service brand and making the brand ‘come alive’.” (Kimpakorn & Tocquer, 2009, p. 532-533).

3.1.2 The process of Employer Branding

Kimpakorn and Tocquer (2009, p. 536) talks about the importance when building a strong brand that the companies brand has a positive image both in the view of consumers and members of
staff. “As members of the company, the employee perceptions are influenced by what they think external actors think of them as a brand.” (Kimpakorn & Tocquer, 2009, p. 536). When a company is trying to build a strong brand they also have to take into account how the current employees see them as an employer, but also as a brand. It is often the employees that go out on recruitment fares and talk to future employees. Many researchers, like Parment and Dyhre (2009) and Minchington and Estis (2009), have looked into the way of step-by-step models to find the best and most efficient way of determine the approach of gaining successful employer branding or also called employer branding process. How different scholars have chosen different amounts of steps’ in their specific employer branding process is not of relevance for this thesis, but what is of importance is more what they have incorporated in their models. Therefore the authors of this thesis have chosen to focus on the most commonly used components that were found in most of the steps in the articles used in this chapter. Figure 1 will help to visualize these components better, being the branding, CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility), HRM (Human Resource Management), values and visions, which has been found in the article “Conceptualising employer branding in sustainable organisations” (Aggerholm et al., 2011, p. 114).

3.1.3 Previous research containing empirical results

The EBI (Employer Brand Institute) defines themselves as “...(EBI) is a global firm providing research, strategic consulting, publications, training and thought leadership in employer branding.” (EBI, 2009, p. 1). EBI have made research in the field of employer branding from the firms perspective. They have conducted a survey regarding the employer branding of 2 025 worldwide companies. The survey contained 20 open- as well as close-ended questions and was conducted online, in employer branding conferences as well as through other types of events (ibid., p. 11).

The results of the survey showed that the department that is most commonly responsible for the employer branding strategies is HR (Human Resources), with a superior percentage. On second place comes collaboration between HR, communications and marketing and third place comes marketing with a marginal difference in comparison to second place. (ibid., p. 20). The most common metric for companies to measure the return on investment their employer branding has are through retention rate, quality of hire and number of applicants (respectively) (ibid., p. 26).

On the question what activities the companies are undertaking to enhance their employer brand the top answers were career website development, recruitment advertising, employer marketing and recruitment branding (ibid., p. 23). However, on the question what activities that has been most successful in enhancing the employer brand several companies replied that they did not know. Some answered defining their employer branding proposition and others said ‘building an effective leadership development program to equip our leaders the capabilities to manage the employment experience more effectively’ (ibid., p. 29).

When asked what is most important to achieve the company objectives regarding employer branding having a defined strategy ranked highest. Senior management and CEO engagement ranked second as third most important. Lowest ranked was conducting internal research and market research (ibid., p. 32).
3.1.4 Step-by-step
Minchington and Estis (2009) have looked at the Employer Brand Institute’s Global Research Study (2009) that has contained 2,025 companies and from that suggested six steps to a successful employer branding strategy and the key aspects according to them is to “get it right the first time”. Their first step is to determine how employer branding is viewed within the company, secondly define employer branding objectives and project scope, thirdly to define the relationship between HR, marketing and communication, fourthly discovering your employer brand, fifthly to define the CEO and senior management engagement and lastly the communications planning. There are other authors that are advocating a step by step model to achieve a sustainable employer branding. Parment and Dyhre (2009) are talking about a five step process to employer branding including research, employer value propositions, communication strategy, communication material and then as the final point to take action.

As an overall view of the whole process, the scholar Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) explains that the first thing a company needs to accomplish is to develop, what they call the “value proposition”. That is done by using the information from the company’s culture, employee’s image, qualities and the method and style of management within the company. From these factors the manager can establish what value the company are and can offer to the current and future employees. When that is achieved the company needs to market themselves to potential employees. This is done by the external employer branding where by a well established employer brand a company become an employer of choice and then can enable in attracting the best suitable employees (Backhaus & Tikoo, 2004, p.503). Not to forget, the company is also sending a message to the current employees through the internal employer brand. The shared values of, and the relationship between a firm’s employer and its employees are the foundation of the internal employer brand (Mitchell, 2008, p. 128). Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) see the goal of the internal branding or as they also call it internal marketing, is to have built up a workforce that are loyal and devoted to the values and organization goals that the company have established. All these parts can also be seen as an interpretation of Figure 1.

3.1.5 Sustainable Organisation
The concept of a sustainability has many broad definitions and in the article by Kryger Aggerholm et al, (2011) the definition is drawn on the principles of the Brundtland Commission: “Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Cited in, p. 107., in WCED, 1987, p. 8). Sustainability has also become an increasingly important subject at universities in Sweden currently, as most Swedish universities offer courses in the subject (VHS [National Admissions Office to Higher Education], 2013). In this article by Kryger Aggerholm et al (2011) the authors argues for the need to re-conceptualize employer branding (EB) as “communicative, relationship building and cross-disciplinary processes, which create, negotiate and enact sustainable employer employee relationships, i.e. long-term relationships between an organization and its potential and existing employees initiated by corporate branding processes integrating the notion of corporate social responsibility (CSR) through sustainable HRM” (ibid, p. 106). This they argue will make the process more sustainable and trustworthy by letting all parties of interest (e.g. shareholders, employees) to co-create the brand values. Kryger Aggerholm et al., (2011) also argue for a redefinition of HRM to the relationship between employer and the employees and also make employer branding a part of the corporate social responsibility philosophy (ibid, p. 107).
Further, the World Business Council for Sustainable Development’s definition of CSR is: "Corporate Social Responsibility is the continuing commitment by business to contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the community and society at large", Meaning that CSR is a concept that is concerning how the company deals with social issues and take responsibility for how they as a company have effected things in the environment and society.

Figure 1 “Employer branding processes in sustainable organizations” (Aggerholm et al, 2011, p 114)

The original meaning of Figure 1 is that branding, CSR and HRM are the three distinct characteristics or steps of creating an employer brand and with these a company can gain a more sustainable organisation. Therefore it is important that the public and employees to have a clear view of what the company’s goals and strategies are to help to archive this. Further, it explains what the company is trying to achieve and what path they are taking to get there. The first step of the model in Figure 1 is; “(1) the anchoring in and supporting of the overall corporate strategy, thus being a strategic branding discipline;” (Aggerholm et al, 2011, p 114), say that this is part of the steady ground a company builds its employer brand on. Step two (2) is “the co-creation of values, i.e. continuous renegotiation of values with stakeholders according to their stakes and expectations” (ibid, p. 115), meaning the importance of letting all parties of interest take part in the process of determining the company values. This is an important step mentioned in the previous section and is said to help when building a clear and successful brand. Furthermore, the values of the society will be reflected through the importance of incorporating CSR, but also by letting the management in to the process. This leads up to the next step, (3) “the establishment of sustainable employer-employee relationships oriented towards a continuous reflection on mutual needs as well as current and future expectations.” (ibid, p. 115).

The incorporation of CSR and clear values are a main part of the process and in Pless et al., (2012, p. 874) the authors talk about new trends that have become important for companies at present. One recent trend concerns the quest of responsible leaders within companies. Since these leaders are expected, by the society to run a sustainable corporation, due to all the treats the society is faced with in environmental and poverty issues (Pless et al., 2012, p. 874). It has therefore led to making companies to try to incorporate sustainability within their management
development activities (ibid p. 874). The authors argue that human resource management, due to its importance in maintaining a sustainable process and CSR efforts should be getting more attention by scholars (ibid p. 875). Furthermore, there is a perception that social responsible organizations take better care of their employees, both current and future ones, however, they are also trying to find ways to improve and get better in matters like the working conditions and wellbeing by the use of sustainable HRM practices (ibid p. 875). Thus, implying the importance of the part that HRM is playing in how a company implements their CSR and sustainable activities (ibid p. 875).

3.1.6 Marketing tools in employer branding

One way of increasing the possibilities of retaining a stronger employer branding is through good marketing. A reason why companies use marketing tools is due to the fact that many attributes that is required for the job are unknown or unknowable (Collins & Stevens 2002, p.1124). This applies for inexperienced job seekers that might have difficulties in comparing the available employment options (ibid, p. 1124). These issues that an inexperienced job seeker can experience could be solved partially by interaction with a company to gain information needed when applying for a job.

Collins and Stevens (2002), amongst others have performed earlier studies on students’ interaction with future employers through early recruitment related practices. It is assumed that companies want to interact with students that are soon to enter the labour-market, as a way for the company to spread information, often done through the current employees, to the future employees. The companies are not unknown to use presence at the campuses as a part in interacting with the students’. Jaidi et al., (2011) give a further explanation on what campus presence can mean by writing “Perceived on-campus presence refers to all opportunities for organizations to present their name and activities to the students on a campus (e.g., sponsoring of campus events, design of specific case studies, job presentations made on-campus by employees), as they are perceived by the students.” (Jaidi et al., 2011 p.140). Collins and Stevens have in their research mainly used marketing theories and looked into four activities, which were word-of-mouth endorsement, advertisement, sponsorship and publicity. This thesis will only look at three of these activities and exclude sponsorship, as the authors do not find that it is likely that many of the respondents have experience of this activity. The authors will use word-of–mouth, advertisement and publicity, due to them being more common and important to see the external influences, but also because they enable for the authors to use some questions with empirical result found in an article.

3.1.6.1 Word-of-mouth

Sullivan (2007) has stated that one reason why a company should not use advertising to show their employer branding is because a person would rather hear others say something good about a company, than see advertising of it since advertising does not have the same credibility. The concept of word-of-mouth says that it is more credible to hear about something from a person that has experienced it rather than from a pamphlet. Word of mouth is used both internally as well as externally in companies (Jobber & Fahy, 2009, p.174). Jobber and Fahy (2009) write about four approaches to word-of mouth, one is to get satisfied customers to enlighten others like their people in their lives about their satisfaction. One way of doing so was by rewarding the consumers that signed up new members. Another one is, by handing out samples or small gift with logos and commercial slogans to spread information about a company (ibid, p. 174).
Students often get key rings, candy or pens given to them at events where companies gather to inform them about their future career choices. A third one is to try to acquiring a well known opinion leader to advertising campaigns and lastly to encourage interaction between potential customers or in this case future employees’ with current employees (ibid, p. 174). The fourth and last one is often used at recruitment fares at the university where students get to meet with the employees of a company rather than its leaders (ibid, p. 174). Hence, it is not that difficult to change to word customers to students or future employees and make the connection to the subject of this thesis.

3.1.6.2 Advertisement and Publicity
One definition and explanation to what advertisement means is “any paid form of non-personal communication of ideas or products in the prime media (i.e. television, the press, posters, cinema and radio, the internet and direct marketing)” (Jobber & Fahy, 2009, p. 343). That implies to be costly but under control by a company. The word publicity can mean “the communication of a product or business by placing information about it in the media without paying for time or space directly” (ibid, p. 348). If one compared publicity to advisement, then it might be more credible to hear something from media then getting information through advertisement (ibid, p. 234). In this comparison one has to keep in mind that while a company can control the message sent by their advertisements the company has no control over how the independent media will interpret a situation and send out messages about them.

3.2 Students job searching behaviour
Another part of the process on how students get integrated in the labour-market is to look at how they make the choice of applying for a job, by looking more into theory that examines the behaviour of their choice and decision process. To make the theory of planned behaviour more suitable for the subject of job searching behaviour, some adjustments have been made to the original model of the theory of planned behaviour that was constructed by Ajzen (1991). These adjustments are the external influences, the indication of job pursuit and the actual choice, all these changes to the model has been found in the article that is written by the authors Jaidi et al., (2011). To help with visualizing the process and the external factor that can influence the intentions of pursuing a behaviour Figure 2 (found below) is used.

3.2.1 Theory of planned behaviour
The theory of planned behaviour is an extension by Ajzen (1991) of the theory of reason action by Ajzen and Fishbein (1980) (cited in Ajzen, 1991, p. 181) but this extension still has the same central factor of an individuals’ intention to perform a specific behaviour as the extended theory. This extension was made due to that the original theory was found to have limitations in “dealing with behaviours over which people have incomplete volitional control” (Ajzen, 1991, p.181). The theory of planned behaviours intention and reason for being designed was to clarify and forecast behaviour in specific situations. Ajzen (1991) is one of the scholars’ that has examined the theory of planned behaviour and found support that this theory can predict peoples behaviours’ when making decisions on matters like career paths, how to exercise or when to resign from work to mention just a few. Where the extended theory differ from the original theory of reason action Ajzen (1991, p 183) continues, is the addition of perceived behaviour control in the theory of planned behaviour, which is a prediction of the intentions and actions of an individual. Ajzen (1991, p.181) find that, the indication of how willing an individual are to put a lot of effort in pursuing an action, the more likely it is that the behaviour to pursue the action is performed.
Looking closer at Figure 2, the sector on the intention of job pursuit in the model Jaidi et al. (2011) support Ajzen (1991) that it can give predictions by “(a) the extent to which people have a positive or negative evaluation of pursuing the targeted job (i.e., job pursuit attitude), (b) the perception of social pressure to apply for a job in the targeted organization (i.e. subjective norm), and (c) the perceived difficulty or perceived control over internal and external resources to get a job offer in that organization (i.e., perceived behavioural control)” (Jaidi et al., 2011, p.137-138).

It is also supported by others scholars that the perceived behavioural control “is supposed to influence behaviour both indirectly (through intention) and directly.” (Van Hooft et al., 2004, p.28). This would mean that people that have more confidence about their own skills and capacity to perform an activity, in this case searching for employment, are also the people that are expected to be the ones with higher intentions to perform that activity (ibid). It is also supported by other scholars, that a persons’ intention to search for a job can be predicted by the positive or negative attitude towards the value of seeking employment and how this person perceives the social pressure to actually find a job and applies for it (Van Hooft et al., 2004, p.27).

In Jaidi et al.’s (2011) research the authors focused on the perception, because they found that what actually affect the pursued behaviour are the job seekers’ perception and not the actual recruitment-related activity. As they put it “recruitment-related activities that are not noticed by the job seekers will not have any impact on their decision-making.” (Jaidi et al., 2011, p.139). Recruitment-related activities are discussed by many scholars and Collins and Stevens brings up in their research, the positive response in the behaviours achieved when people have been exposed to early recruitment-related activities that had been successful. In Jaidi et al, (2011, p.139) research they defined two different categories of recruitment-related activities the first being perceived on-campus presence and recruitment advertising and the second being publicity and word of mouth. These the authors argue, were chosen to give indications both inside and outside the campus area and all this information can be found in Figure 2 below.

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**FIGURE 1** Overview of the research model.

*Figure 2 Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991), (Jaidi et al., 2011)*
Jaidi et al., (2011) explains’ their outcomes being consistent with what the theory of planned behaviour mentioned, the factors of job pursuit attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control have a positive correlation with the behaviour and intention in the person pursuing and the final choice when the students that they examined decided on an employment to pursuit (Jaidi et al., 2011, p.145). Their results and conclusions also follow along with their earlier assumption and expectations “that individuals are more likely to choose the job that they have invested the most time and effort in pursuing as, based on the theory of planned behaviour, this likely is the job about which they have the most positive attitude.” (ibid, p.138). They found that not all students associated positively to the exposure of on-campus presence and that would be an explanation to that perceived on-campus presence did not correlate with job pursuit and behaviour and it also gave negative job pursuit intentions. They also found it to be important when composing a study to look at the impact of both negative and positive sources of information (ibid, 2011, p.150).

Since Jaidi et al.’s (2011, p.141) target population was graduating master students of major European business schools, the authors of this thesis find that the results found in Jaidi et al., (2011) article will be comparable to the result of this thesis. It will also inspire for a discussion of the results in the chapter where the analysis is given. Jaidi et al., (2011, p.144) have in their article brought up some of the questions that they used in their research. This offered the possibility to enable for a better comparison and for the survey that is used in this research to become more valid and reliable. Some questions that were used by Jaidi et al., (2011) in their own research were found in their article on page 144. These have been slightly altered to better suit the purpose of this thesis and used by the authors in the survey of this thesis. These questions were used to give an indication to how external actors might influence the respondents, the respondents’ values and the difference in the influences of negative or positive information about a company, i.e. example through former students or advertisement.

As most might have noticed there has been nothing that explains the parts of actual job choice. This is due to that this thesis are looking at students’ intentions and expectations in a future job search, hence, the authors of this thesis have chosen not to go further into the parts of the model that talks about actual job choice. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier the authors did not find any suitable theory concerning the criterions that the companies are looking for and demand from their employees.
Chapter Four: Qualitative and Quantitative Methods

The method chapter of this thesis consists of two main sections one deeper focusing on the qualitative study and one more on the quantitative study that’s been conducted. Both parts will include the same structure where first the data collection is presented, then in the qualitative part the explanation will be given to the use of semi-structured interviewing and in the quantitative part there will instead be an explanation given to the use of surveys. To follow in both parts, the sample criterions and sample method will be explored, after that the interviews and survey will be better presented. Last but not least the questions used in both the interview guide and survey will be explained not one by one but rather how they match with the specific theories used in this thesis.

4.1 Qualitative Method

“The danger of too much flexibility are just as obvious as the truth in the argument that to give to everybody shoes of sizes 8 is to give the same thing to everybody, yet with different effect” (cited in Holme and Solvang, 1997, p.99, Galtung,1967).

The authors wanted to gain a deeper understanding about how the companies think about their employer brand and recruitment and decided to conduct semi-structured interviews. This part of the research is a qualitative study, since it has a smaller sample size and provides more in-depth information (Edling & Hedström, 2003, p.10-11).

4.1.1 Data collection

When collecting the empirical evidence in the form of interviews a decision about what companies to interview had to be made. The authors hoped to be able to interview large and well known firms, as well as smaller local companies, to ensure as rich and wide data as possible to see differences in marketing techniques and the result of it. The authors were not aiming for a specific amount of interviews, but were rather concentrating on the outcomes and results given by them.

The interviews are anonymous due to it being irrelevant to know the specific companies answers. The interviews were tape recorded to ensure that all the information stated in the thesis is accurate (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.481). The recorded information will only be used by the authors of this thesis, since that was the agreement made with the participating companies. The anonymity of the companies might affect the people that would like to replicate this study. Although, the aim of qualitative studies are seldom to be able to replicate them, as they usually are difficult to replicate due to it being difficult to completely repeat how the questions are asked in interviews and with whom the interviews are conducted. Likewise, this qualitative study will be difficult to replicate as no names of the companies or transcriptions of the interviews are presented. However, the interview guide is provided in Appendix 1 and the answers from the interviews are given in the result and it is known what type of industry these companies are active in, therefore it will increase the possibility to make a replication of this research.

4.1.2 The semi-structured interview

It was decided to conduct semi-structured interviews with the companies, since it lets the interviewee tell his or her story about the specific subject. The interviews have been cross-
sectional, since they have been done at a single point in time, but at separate appointments with the companies (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.53-54). Due to the authors having a clear focus and knowing the research gap, a semi-structured approach will be the best choice for this thesis. It will lead to minimized risks of passing on any preconceptions from the interviewers to the interviewees (ibid, 2011, p.472).

Semi-structured interviews are a way of trying to find out the answers to the questions, by participating in what could be looked upon as a conversation between the interviewers and the interviewee (Holme & Solvang, 1997, p.99). The interviewers should try not to lead the direction of the conversations, but can give follow up question as a guide, to make sure the conversation stays within the frames of the subject. Therefore there is no need for an interviewer to follow the exact order of an interview guide or containment in it, this to give the possibility for the interviewee to tell his or her own story (ibid., p.100-101).

The reason of choosing to conduct face to face interviews is due to some of the advantages compared to phone interviews. When interviewing someone in person the interviewer gets the opportunity to engage in observations of the interviewee and read the body language of the interviewer and therefore have a better chance to be able to ask more sensitive questions, rather than if the questions would have been asked over the phone. To better clarify specific matters there can be use of visual aids, which cannot be used over the phone. However, face to face interviews also mean that the interviewers can influence the respondents answers by how the question is asked or the body language of the interviewer. That was prevented in this thesis by the authors keeping this in mind when asking the questions and putting emphases on asking the questioning in as similar ways as possible (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 207-208).

The authors wanted to conduct all interviews together to ensure that they all were conducted in a similar manner. However, three of the four interviews were conducted by both authors together, with one asking most questions and the other one having a more observational role. The last interview was conducted by one of the authors as the other one was not able to make it. The interviews with Company 1 to 4 was conducted with Company 1 being the first interviewed and Company 4 the last one interviewed.

4.1.3 Selection criterions and sampling method

The criterions the authors were looking at when deciding what companies to interview were that the companies hire employees within at least one of the categories accounting, financing, management or marketing. To make the best decision the authors gathered information about companies that fitted into the description given above and from that selected a number of first choices and seconded choices of companies to interview.

The aim was to try to find respondents from as many of the different categories as possible, but this was proven to be difficult in some of the categories and led to a third option having to be found for some of the categories. This, due to very hectic work situations at many of the companies’ right before Christmas, which is when all interviews were conducted. The sampling method used when gathering data through the interviews were not random, but a selective sampling method. The authors themselves selected what companies to contact, since there were more criterions that had to be fulfilled than in the case of the students.
All the companies that had been chosen were contacted first by phone. Some of the companies wished they could also get informed by e-mail to make sure that the right person at the company, which would participate in the interview, would get the information that they needed. The interviews were offered to be conducted at the offices of the companies to make the interviewees feel comfortable. The authors conducted four interviews, which have led them to get a representative from all the focus areas they had set out to interview. All interviewees chose to have the interview at their office.

4.1.4 The interviews
Since all the respondents and also the authors of this thesis have Swedish as their native language, the interviews were conducted in Swedish. The interview guide was originally written in English, however to make it easier to conduct the interviews it was translated into Swedish. Since this thesis is written in English the interview guide found in Appendix 1 is the original one written in English. This also ensure that a broader audience are able to read and understand the questions used in the interviews of the thesis.

When the authors arrived at the companies they got introduced to the interviewee and were shown to the room the interview was going to be held in. There authors set up and they had beforehand made sure that all the equipment used was working. Before starting the actual interview the authors made sure that it was ok with the interviewee that the interview were being recorded, although this had also been asked when booking the interview. The authors told the interviewee about how long they had anticipated the interview to take and that it was going to be anonymous. The authors also shortly explained what the research was about and what subject they were going to bring up during the interview.

The quotes used in the qualitative results chapter were translated by the authors together, to ensure they were accurate. Furthermore, this was strengthened by having the interviewees taking part of what had been written about their specific company and their interview. The summary they did part-take in was written in English and all interviewed were comfortable with having it sent in English and they all agreed on it when being asked.

When processing the data from the interviews both authors together listened to the recordings from the interviews and discussed how to interpret information, if it was a bit unclear. The authors chose not to transcribe the interviews as it was too time consuming, but instead wrote the information down in the results chapter under the suitable headline immediately. When finished with the results all companies received their own interview from the result via email. Three out of the four participating companies e-mailed back and requested some minor changes to be made in the text, but none that had any effect on the empirical material gathered. Some corrections in the interviews were made mainly because of small misunderstandings or something that needed to be rephrased. No larger changes, or changes affecting the overall results of the interviews were made. All interview material found in the results chapter was approved by the interviewees.

Since these interviews were semi-structured, not all questions were asked in the same order and not all follow up questions asked were the same for every company. This due to that it is the interviewee that is telling their own story, with a little guidance’s from the interviewers (Holme & Solvang, 1997, p.100-101). The authors made sure that all the questions got some sort of
answer and they are satisfied with the lengths of all interviews as they believe they received all the information from the interviews they were aiming at.

4.1.5 The questions
The questions in the interview guide can all be found in Appendix 1 and are based on the theories found in the theory chapter. The questions asked are designed to ensure that the authors can draw conclusions of whether or not the companies fulfil the steps brought up in the theory chapter, concerning having a good employer brand. Hence, in the qualitative part the authors are aiming at using the theory of employer branding mainly. The theory of planned behaviour would not be applicable in our study on the companies as it is focused on examining the decisions job seekers take, something the company have little or no knowledge of.

The first questions asked were personal questions about the interviewee, but since the interviewees are all staying anonymous, some of the answers will therefore not be brought up in this thesis. What trade or focus area the respondents are active within will also not be mentioned, this being a wish from the companies due to the competition on the market and that it might give away what companies are participating in the interviews. Following below, the questions asked at all the interviews will be categorized and explained to easier connect them with the specific theory. The follow up questions have not all been asked in the same way to all the interviewed, since they were asked as a response on what had been brought up by the interviewee and the interviewees did not all bring up the same issues.

Questions about the companies’ employer brand were asked to determine what the company thought about employer branding and specifically their own employer brand. The authors did not want to give the interviewees the word “employer brand”, since it would lead the interviewees too much. By asking questions on how they as companies see themselves as an employer and how others might see them, the answers given would indicate if the companies thought about employer branding and how they work with it. If they do work with employer branding it would also give indications if the companies find it important or not.

The questions about the companies’ internal marketing and communication, including how they work with and communicate CSR to the employees were asked to give indications on how these aspects were working. Due to the theories used and the importance of the environment at the time this thesis was written, the authors also wanted to get an indication on how the company looked upon CSR and sustainability within the company. Further, the questions about the companies’ external marketing and communication, including how they marketed their vision of CSR were asked to give indications on how well it was working and what they found to be of most value. How the companies try to contact students and when doing this, is an interesting matter to know when later analysing the result given by both companies and students.

The questions about the companies’ recruitment process were asked to ensure that the authors would have a better understanding about the company and how they look upon their own recruitment. These questions were asked not as a help to answer the research question, but more to open up the possibility for other questions of importance to be asked. This would also give indications on what the companies are looking for in new employees and how the companies work with recruitment, both internally and externally.
After all the questions and follow up questions in the interview guide were asked the respondents got the opportunity to add comments they found important or clarify matters they thought needed clarifications.

4.2 Quantitative Method
This part of the research has a quantitative approach and it has had a larger sample size than the qualitative study, which has given more respondents a chance to take part in this study and it will therefore not provide any in-depth information about the respondents. This type of study is more relying on the numbers and math given by the observations, it will therefore be easier to compare with other studies and analyze than a qualitative study would be (Edling & Hedström, 2003, p.11).

4.2.1 Data collection
To get the empirical data for the quantitative part of this research the authors decided upon a survey, in the form of a self-completed questionnaire sent out to the chosen population by email. Since the survey is being sent out to the whole population through the school email and not handed out in paper form, the authors still hoped to get a good amount of respondents, to be able to get a reliable result and conduct a valid analysis.

The access to the students’ school email addresses were given to the authors by the student information office on paper, which led to that all the addresses had to be entered manually into the computer. The authors did this through a word document. From the university the authors had gotten access to a survey program called Texttalk Websurvey which they used to construct the survey in. The email addresses were later added in the program Texttalk Websurvey. Before the survey was sent out to the whole target population, a pilot-test was conducted on three of the students from the population. This was done to find out if any of the questions were unclear or if anything else needed to be changed in the survey to ensure that the results would be reliable. A few minor things like spelling mistakes and a wish from the tester to know how many questions were left to answer, made the authors of this thesis make these changes, for the survey to become better. The authors find it relevant when performing a test of a survey to select testers from the actual target population to see what the actual population thinks about the survey. These testers were later able to take part of the survey when it was published. The authors do not think that this will have any greater effects on the result given by the survey.

Although it might be seen as doing parts of the study in more depth the authors feel that the results given will still only be touching upon the surface of this subject. They believe it to be possible to conduct the study in other regions and hope that this thesis will inspire others to do so. If that would be the case, they hope it will enable a comparison of the data, to get better understanding of the subject. The authors’ hope that could lead to the discovery of patterns in the behaviour of the students and maybe even in the companies’ behaviour. To make it easier to get a chance to determine if there is a pattern to be discovered, there will be a need for more research to take place in this field.

4.2.2 Surveys
To best find out the needed information in the view of the students the choice was to use a questionnaire. This approach was chosen due to that it would be the easiest way to let the whole target population get a chance to take part in the survey and not to exclude the students that were
on exchange studies in other countries. Holme and Solvang (1997) mentions in their book that a good way to start when constructing your survey, is to consider how you yourself would and would not react when receiving that specific survey. To motivate a respondent to answer is what it is all about and as a result it is crucial that the survey has a good layout and is understandable (Holme & Solvang, 1997, p.173).

Some issues for a survey sent out by the web is that the respondents often have more than one email address (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 663), therefore the authors chose to send their survey to the students school email. Since important information from the University and the teachers is sent to this email, it is assumed that the students will check their email from time to time. It would also have been difficult for the authors of this thesis to gather and find the whole target populations personal email addresses. It is assumed that some of the population has had their school email address forwarded to their personal emails address, therefore all that is sent to the school email address should be redirected to the personal email address.

4.2.3 Selection criterions and sampling method
The population used in the survey is the business students admitted to Umeå University. When conducting the survey a limitation has been set to students in their second, third and fourth year as the belief that the students in their first year at the university might not have gained as much insight to the subject at matter at present or have been exposed to any marketing from the companies so far. The students also have a slim possibility of making an impact on the choice of what courses to take until semester five and it therefore seems unlikely they have started to think about the process of applying to jobs. The authors are assuming that these criterions mentioned are not fulfilled by the students admitted in the fall of 2012, however they are of importance to fit in to the population chosen for this survey. The authors find that it is most likely that the students admitted before the fall of 2012 will have the criterions needed.

The sampling method used when gathering empirical data through the survey is the total population sampling method. The authors chose this sampling method since they wanted all students, even the students that were on exchange studies aboard, to be able to answer the survey. With this method the whole population have had equal chance to answer the survey, due to that all have been sent an email (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.179-180). Some email addresses have unfortunately bounced back, therefore some people have not received their email regarding the survey. This can be due to that the email addresses were entered manually or that something had been typed wrong on the list of email addresses given to the authors. The likeliness of this having a great effect on the result is slim as 672 emails were sent out and only 15 bounced back.

The authors were presented with the problem of a low response rate on the survey, only 34 responded out of the 672 students that had been sent an invitation to participate. When the first email was sent out only 17 students responded, after a reminder email was sent out five days after the first email had been sent, another 17 students responded. This problem might be due to that the survey was sent out during the weeks leading up to Christmas. As it is assumed that the students have a lot of work of their own, meaning that they would not want to take the time and fill out the survey. Another reason can be that the forwarding from the school email did not seem to work for these emails, hence only students that checked their school email was informed of the survey.
The authors tried to get a higher response rate by informing the students of the survey on social medias such as Facebook, in specific Facebook groups for the business students at the university. This, to make more students aware that they had the survey email sent to their school email. The extra effort to get a higher response rate did however not seem to make any larger difference in the number of replies. The authors believe this can be due to the students separating their private time, e.g. on Facebook, from their work time, e.g. answering surveys. Another reason could be that there were no rewards or prices to win by participating in the survey. However, the authors feel that, since the survey is only one part of this mixed study that is conducted, the low response rate will be helped by the four interviews that have also been conducted. Although it gives the effect that it will not be possible to conduct statistical tests, due to the small group of the responses, hence, it would not give any relevant result. However, the research question does not require that the differences between different variables like gender or age are explored. Since these questions now has already been used and tested, it enables for others to use them in the future and hopefully acquire a higher response rate.

4.2.4 The survey
When collecting empirical evidence through a survey a choice first had to be made, concerning the language the survey would be written in. As most students in the target population are Swedish the authors would have wanted the survey in both Swedish and English, to increase the chance of getting more respondents. However, as the authors of this thesis will be using a program to export the data from the survey platform to the program used for analysis, the authors decided that it is simpler to have the survey in only one language, deciding on English. It will also decrease the possibility of faults to be made when translating the answers from Swedish to English. This can however result in Swedish students not participating in the survey as they might not be as comfortable with English as some of the international students, however this is a risk that is needed to take, to ensure not to exclude any respondents because they do not understand Swedish.

As mentioned in the data collection, the program used to construct the survey was Texttalk Websurvey. Umeå University provides access to this program, since it is not a free of charge program and the authors are students at this university. The reason for choosing this program to construct that survey in was due to the ability of the program to export all the collected data into excel, the program that was used to transform the data into figures and tables. The authors chose to use Excel when analysing the findings from the survey because they wanted to know the means of the answers to the questions with sub-questions ranked on the five numbered likert scale, and excel has a simple function to do this. No statistical program was used because the authors did not consider it to be needed as they were not aiming at examining correlations between different variables to answer the research question. However, this is something that could be interesting to examine in further research. The means of the questions was copied from excel into tables created in Microsoft word and later the number of decimals was decreased manually. The figures were created in Excel by manually putting the data from different questions into a specific type of table. Questions that required a written reply was directly copied from the excel document to the appendix.

The questions used in the survey can be found in Appendix 2, however as they were presented in the web-survey they do not have the same appearance in the appendix as they had in the web-
survey. The questions are however the same. Furthermore, the transformed data from the completed survey will be found in Appendix 3.

The survey have been conducted in the same manner as the interviews in the qualitative part of the study by a cross-sectional research design (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p.53-54). As mentioned in the methodology the questions used in the survey are based on the theories and some of them have been found in an article used in the theory chapter, but have been slightly rewritten to make them easier to understand and fit the purpose of this thesis. The questions that requested a written answer were not mandatory to answer by the respondents, since the authors did not want to force any answer out of the respondents.

4.2.5 The questions
As the questions used in the qualitative study the questions used in the survey can also be found in appendix (2). The questions in the survey are based on the theories used in the theory chapter, but some of the questions have been found in an article and been rewritten. Two of the questions asked in the survey 20 and 21, were only asked to get a better flow in the survey and is not helping in answering the research questions and will therefore not be presented in the result or analyzed. As mentioned in the theory chapter, alterations has been made from questions found in Jaidi et al., (2011, p. 144). The alterations in the questions from their original state has led to questions like, “To what extent do you believe it to be important that your parents, significant other etc approves the companies you choose to apply for employment at” and “To what extent do you believe it would be sensible, wise or useful to apply for your first employment at the company / companies you have mentioned as potential employer(s)” The authors have also chosen not to include any questions about Human Resource Management in the survey as they did not find this to be a relevant question to ask the students as they are not likely to know much about the internal marketing within a company. Instead, the main theory used for the quantitative study is the theory of planned behaviour as it is applicable in the students’ choice of employer and employment search activities.

The questions in the survey did not all appear at the same time on the screen, since the authors of this thesis thought that some of the questions could be a bit intimidating for some respondents and make them decide not to participate. Some of the questions have an extensive amount of sub-questions and therefore demand more from the respondents than most questions. It is also assumed to help the respondents to focus better when they do not see all the questions at the same time. That is why the questions were presented to the students in groups and it made the survey easier on the eye. The questions were divided in groups of three to nine questions, depending on the size and subject of the questions. Following below, the questions asked in the survey will be categorized and explained to make it easier to connect them with the specific theory.

The first six questions presented to the students were asked to give the authors some indications of the background and future plans of the respondents. Question six contained five sub-questions that the respondents were asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 was never and 5 all the time. It can also be seen how many males and females responded, how many from the different business programs and years participated and the difference in age.

The questions concerning employer branding were asked to see the differences in the chosen focus areas of the businesses that the students would like to pursue a career in. How the students think about and see their future employer, but also to see if they already might have a company in
mind that they would like to apply to in the future. In question eight and ten the respondents were given sub-questions, which they were asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 was strongly disagree and 5 strongly agree.

The questions related to external marketing and communication, including CSR was asked to give an indication on how well the students thought some of the most common types of promotions, used by companies to attract and inform students, worked. Questions 16-18 were concerning the recruitment actives and were asked to see where and how the students took part in activities and promotions that are offered to them. Question 19 was asked to see how much the respondents actually knew about CSR and sustainability and if it was something that they valued. To help the students that were less informed on the matter, they were given an explanation to the meaning of CSR before the questions. Within this subject the respondents were asked to rate seven questions with the sub-questions on a scale of 1 to 5. In questions 11, 14 and 19 the respondents had to rate sub-questions where, 1 was strongly disagree and 5 strongly agree and question 12 used the rating were 1 was prefer the least and 5 prefer the most. In question 13 the students had to rate the options where 1 was do not work at all and 5 works very well and in question 16 the respondents were asked rate where 1 was never and 5 was as much as possible, on how much time they had spent on the four activities presented to them. Question 17 was the last question relating to this theory and the task was to rate where 1 was not at all and 5 highly.

The questions relating to planned behaviour were asked to get an indication on what students themselves value and would be looking for when applying for their first employment. But also what criterions they think a future employer would be looking for and if these are qualities that they might possess or not. The authors of this thesis also wanted to know if external parties or some specific personal values would have any effect on if they would send in an application for a job. Within the topic of planned behaviour the respondents were asked to rate five questions with the sub-questions on a scale of 1 to 5. In questions 21 and 22, 1 was do not value and 5 was value highest. Question 23 had the counterparts 1 no chance to fulfil and 5 high chance to fulfil and the questions 24 and 25 both had 1 strongly disagree and 5 strongly agree.

In question 26 the respondents had an opportunity to add comments e.g. to state their own opinion about the survey or the subject at hand.

4.3 Quality criterions
In business research it is common to look at different quality criterions, as an implication to how valid, reliable and easy a research can be to replicate. Due to that this thesis has a mixed study there will also be a need to look more into the matters of trustworthiness.

4.3.1 Reliability
It is of importance to see if the result given by a study would provide the same result if performed again, to make sure that the findings in a thesis can be called reliable or not. One precaution the authors of this thesis have taken is that some of the questions in the survey are based on questions from an article, while all the questions in both approaches are based on theories. All the material that has been used in the quantitative part of the study is presented in the appendix, to make it possible for others to test the results found. Of the material collected for the qualitative research, some parts like the names of the companies have been left out, due to them being anonymous. The authors have made sure to use reliable sources, which, in a majority of the cases will have not changed over time. The authors have tried not to influence any of the respondents or
interviewees in any way, aiming to stay objective to ensure not to affect any of the results gathered.

Though the authors of this thesis feel that, since nearly all the material in the qualitative study is being provided it will offer the possibility for others to perform a similar study again, but as mentioned by Bryman and Bell (2011), one cannot freeze a social setting and the behaviour of the respondents’ change over time and there is the concern if there can be faith in the consistency (Bryman & Bell 2011, p.41). If it would be the case that the result of a re-made study would bring completely new information, it could also imply that there is something wrong in the study. This could be due to, when performing the interviews the authors might in some way have influenced the interviewees and not been as objective as they hoped for. It takes a lot of practice and experience to perform excellent interviews. Although the authors have some experience of performing interviews, it might still affect how the interviews have been conducted, but it is not believed to have any greater effects on the result in this thesis. A conclusion that is supported by scholars like Bryman and Bell (2011, p.43-44), says that it is not that easy to match the quality criteria reliability to a qualitative study and an alternative to this will be provided in a section below.

4.3.2 Validity
Validity is not to be confused with having a great deal of reliability, validity is when someone measure the whole phenomena that was meant to be measured and do not measure other things then that specific phenomena (Andersen, 1994, p.92). It is of importance to realize that there is not only one main type of validity. Bryman and Bell (2011) brings up four main types of validity and those are measurement, internal, external and ecological validity. Measurement validity concerns whether or not a measurement really measures what was meant to be measured, e.g. does IQ measure intelligence? Measurement validity is most commonly used in quantitative research. Internal validity is concerned with whether or not one variable is responsible for causing changes in another variable, while external validity is whether or not the outcome of the research can be generalised outside of the specific research context. Further, ecological validity is concerned with whether or not the findings from the research has captured peoples everyday life, in their natural habitat. (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 42-43). Some argue that validity does not belong in a qualitative study, but there are a large number that argues that it does (Bryman et al., 2008, p. 274).

Due to that this is a mixed research, the authors of this thesis have chosen to look at validity for both parts of the research. From what is explained in the previous paragraph, this thesis is leaning toward the measure and ecological validities, which might come as no surprise due to that this study has a mixed approach.

The authors of this thesis have in the quantitative study preformed, set out to find out what the business students admitted between 2009 and 2011 at Umeå University thought their future employers were looking for. The authors got access to all the students’ school emails and therefore gave the whole target population a chance to participate. Although the whole population did not respond or participated in any way, no other population was measured. In this thesis the authors will not be looking to find relationships between the variables and test if they will hold. The authors are also not aiming to generalize the result from this thesis, but see that as something that someone else could do to continue this research where the authors have ended it. This thesis
is looking at the behaviour that occurs in people’s everyday life and what their attitude is towards the marketing tools used (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 42-43).

In the qualitative study the whole population did not get a chance to respond, because it would have been near to impossible for the authors to conduct interviews with all the companies in Umeå fitting in with the criterions chosen. The authors still find this part to be valid, due to that no other companies then the ones from the target populations where participating in the study. Also the companies chosen to participate all came from different spectra’s in the sphere of business administration, which has given the authors the chance to see the differences in their behaviour and attitude in the different industries.

4.3.3 Replication
Replication looks at, if it is clearly stated how a research has been conducted. If that is the case, it will make it possible for a new researcher to make the research again. Why other researchers perform researches again, is as a control of the results and outcomes, to make sure that they have not been affected by the researcher that first performed the study (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 165).

The questions in both the survey and the interview guide have been written in a manner so they can be used in conducting this study again in a different region or time. Nearly all the material used and gathered in this study are, as mentioned above being provided in the appendix, except the names of the interviewed, due to the anonymity offered to the companies. This will therefore make it more difficult to compare the exact result of this study with a similar study performed by another researcher. However, as the authors never intended for the result to be generalised for other regions in Sweden they consider their research to be valid.

As mentioned in the section on the criteria of reliability, also the criteria of replicating this study could provide difficulties, since no social setting can be frozen (Bryman & Bell, 2011, p. 395). This is mostly connected to external reliability, but does play a small part when a researcher is trying to replicate another study to test the results found. This could provide the risk that the behaviour in the targeted populations might have changed when others makes replications’ of this specific study and get a different result then the authors of this thesis. However, the authors of this thesis does not believe this to harm the trustworthiness of the thesis, since there is a need for more research on this subject to get a better understanding and provide the chance of generalization.

4.3.4 Trustworthiness
Since this study is made in two steps, one being the quantitative research and the second being a qualitative research there has to be provided criterions of the quality in both parts. As some of the above stated quality criterions are not applicable for the qualitative section trustworthiness comes in as an alternative term to be able to assess the second part of the research as it is required (Bryman and Bell, 2011, p. 43-44).

Some of the aspects of trustworthiness have already been lifted in previous parts of this section about reliability and validity, since it is seen as an alternative to be used in a qualitative study. The authors of this thesis do not believe that another researcher can give an exact replication of this thesis and are therefore not going to provide an alternative criterion to this part in the qualitative study.
The authors have also in the qualitative study tried to be as objective as possible when performing the interviews, by trying not to add any personal believes, values or other matters influencing the way the questions have been written or asked. The authors have provided as close of a description of the target population as they could, due to the fact that the companies are anonymous. They find that they are still providing good enough information to ensure other researchers can conduct a similar research. The authors are also providing as much of the gathered material as possible to help to re-make the research, again due to that the companies are anonymous. All this arguments helps to support the idea of trustworthiness that Bryman and Bell (2011) writes about that have been suggested by Guba and Lincoln.

The authors have tried to respect all the respondents’ opinions and views on different matters. The aim of this thesis is to increase the understanding of the subject at hand and the authors hope that it will be of help to both future students when looking for employment and employers looking to hire new employees.

4.4 Ethical considerations
Ethical considerations are an important matter to fulfil, to make sure that this thesis fulfils all the ethical considerations’ and that the authors have treated the respondents in a professional way.

4.4.1 Ethical principles
As a help to better explain the ethical aspects of this thesis the authors have chosen to use the ethical principals stated by Bryman and Bell (2011). They have been broken down into four main principals and these are; if any harm is done to the respondents, lack of informed consent, if an invasion of anyone’s privacy has been made or if deception has been used (ibid, p. 128)

The authors of this thesis have tried to be as considerate to the respondents as possible. The authors have made sure that no questions asked in any of the studies would offend any of the respondents in any way. There has been no people blocked from taking part in the interviews, the only problem was that some of the emails had been entered wrong or was not working anymore, but this was nothing that had been done to stop any of the students from participating.

One way of assuring that no harm is done was that the respondents’ of the interviews were offered and accepted the possibility of being anonymous. All the students that participated in the survey were anonymous, since no names have been entered in the program that the survey was constructed in and only the students’ school emails have been known to the researchers. Since it was over 600 emails address used and that they each contained two letters of the person’s first name and two letters of the surname followed by four random digits, it is unlikely that the authors of this thesis will be able to know who any of the students are. Some of the students had added their personal emails in the system, but these still did not give much away. The program only showed what emails had answered but the authors could not see what email had provided what answer. It is important to know that the authors of this thesis had no interest in trying to match any of the email addresses to actual students at the university. When the survey had been closed the answers were transferred into Excel and the emails were no longer seen and therefore it is not believed that any harm has been caused the students.

Before anyone has participated in the interview or taking the survey, they had been informed about the intentions of this research. The respondents in the interviews have been given more information than the respondents of the survey, because, for them to want to participate in the
interviews they wanted a clearer view on how the information that would come from them was going to be used. The students could themselves decide on if they wanted to participate or not. There has been no use of any form of compensation offered to any of respondents in return of participating. No free publicity to the companies or any items that could be won by the students. All the people that participated, they themselves chose to be a part of this study.

Chapter five: Results
This chapter will show the results of the qualitative study in the interviews with companies, as well as the quantitative study, the survey responded by the business students at Umeå University.

5.1 The Qualitative study
In the qualitative study the results of the interviews will be displayed. Each company will be anonymous and named Company 1 to 4. The results will be divided into enterprises and the four subheadings of each enterprise will be consistent will the subheadings from the Questions heading in the Qualitative Method chapter. The companies that have been chosen for interviews all belong to, or have one or more of the four focus areas of business included in their operations.

5.1.1 Company 1
The first company that was interviewed was a one-sector only company with about 75 employees in Umeå and 2,000 in total in Sweden. The male interviewee had worked in the enterprise five years at the current position and is responsible for the marketing process towards students at the Umeå University. Interview length was just over one hour.

Employer branding
The company wishes to have the strongest employer brand within their industry. They also wish to be the students’ first choice of employer and the interviewee states that they have been this for quite some years. The enterprise wishes to develop the students that start working with them.

The interviewee believes that the firm will continue to have the strongest employer brand of their competitors in the future but that the gap between enterprises in their employer brand will be smaller. He states that there are more competition of acquiring the best students between the competitors today, then it was two years ago, this, due to the fact that all companies wants to be the best and therefore they need to recruit the top students.

Internal marketing and communication
The company values the relationship with their employees and states that they have some values to live by. These values are integrity, respect, team spirit, to build relationships on professional ground, and to lead development forward. They are communicated on the company-website. The enterprise has a Performance Management and Development Process that is used to get employees to develop and reach their potential. This is made by a set of courses as well as by receiving a personal career coach to help the employee to fulfil their aspirations for the coming year.
The interviewee states that the relationship between the HR department (Human Resources) and marketing department are close. The company has a program dedicated to marketing themselves at eight universities nationwide. At this project there are close co-operations between marketing and HR as they meet regularly to discuss their experiences at the universities and their marketing strategies. Within this project HR, marketing managers and the chief operating officer of Scandinavia also meet recurrently. Previously the chief financial officer was also involved in the program. The interviewee means that this shows a very strong support from the management and believes it to be important with management support for their results of the work with students.

The company is also involved in CSR activities such as keeping a sustainability accounting report, equality between genders at the workplace as well as in higher positions of the company, helping children with homework, co operations with the Red Cross and walking with retired citizens. The employees have the choice of what charity work they would like to initiate during their working hours and are also able to come up with new ideas of charity work themselves.

External marketing and communication

The interviewee believes the enterprise is seen as a very large, safe company, both by prospective employees, as well as by customers. He states that the company may not be the largest employer brand in all areas of their industry, however, he believes that the enterprise has the strongest employer brand in the market regarding students.

At labour market fairs at the university, as Uniaden, the company focuses on activities to develop the students further. The interviewee thinks that a satisfactory relationship with the employees of a enterprise leads to more applications from prospective employees.

The way this company communicates their relationship with their employees are through personal meetings with potential future employees. With personal meetings the company are referring to i.e. lunches with students to help them, guide them and develop them in the direction of an employee at the company. However, he states that “many employers are mistaken personal meetings with putting a person that is employed at the company on labour market fairs, instead of putting a person from a recruitment company, or HR.” The interviewee thinks that it is important to build a relationship with students early in their education.

The company employs about 300 individuals every year and has usually some kind of job opening advertised, but they also have spontaneous applications to jobs most of the time. The interviewee believes this is due to the company’s strong brand and because they are very development oriented.

The company focuses on both branding activities and recruitment activities, however the focus is different at different times of the year. The recruitment activities at the university are mainly personal meetings with students, being seen at labour market fairs, having co-operations with student led organizations, lecturing university courses as well as having the CEO of the enterprise to guest lectures and helping students with writing good résumés. Handing out fruits to students before exams are also something the company does, however that is more of a branding activity. The most successful method for attracting the right students are, according to the interviewed, the ones that involve personal meetings, and the least successful have been those with many students and no chance to get to know them, as labour market fairs.
The company’s CSR involvement is marketed on their website for the public. The interviewee believes that CSR is something that job applicants at their company values since they will be able to do charity work and contribute with good to the society. He also believes CSR makes a difference in whether a person applies for a job at their firm or not. He is convinced that if a company do not have a CSR focus, it would probably result in a negative outcome for that firm. The interviewed declare that the company does not require any sort of experience or competences on CSR to acquire employment at their company for an applicant. He believes that having a CSR initiative will be more vital for companies in the future.

**Recruitment process**

When a person applies for employment at the company, first he or she needs to go through a screening process at the HR (Human Resources) department in the Stockholm office. After this, the process differs depending on what department you are applying to, this due to the difference in number of applications. In the largest department the process continues with a personality test, numerical test, inductive test and a verbal test through internet. Following this comes an interview with the HR department and if successful, they help to guide the applicant to the suitable position. The last step in the process is an interview with the group-supervisor of the position to ensure a fit of personalities. The group-supervisor has the final decision of employment for the applicant. There are about four directions a person can be employed within at this company, and each of the directions have sub-directions, hence it is many opportunities to work in different fields.

**Company’s criteria’s of their employees**

The company wants to be number one in their industry and want to be the most attractive employer and be able to deliver their services towards customers as well as towards students. In extension, this means that their employees need to be the best to live up to the company’s expectations.

According to the interviewee, the level of importance of grades is different depending on what department a person is applying to. The largest department does not put much emphasis on the grades, while another department has larger competition leading to the applicant needing to have at least 75 percent of the grades above pass. The company also values if the applicant have experiences of travelling abroad for studies since this applicant have shown that he or she is independent and also have experiences in more languages.

To work at this company one needs to show that they have studied a set of courses that is needed for the job and should also have at least a one year master (four years of studies in Sweden) to acquire employment. The applicant should be outgoing, have some previous experiences within the field and have leadership experience.

Something students in Umeå are missing is previous experiences in the field, confidence in their own abilities and good CVs. “People start with their CVs far too late” according to the interviewee, the applicant should start thinking about what is missing on their own CV very early in their education to guarantee these gaps will be filled.

The company values when students themselves take the initiatives to talk to them or when applications are sent in, however most students do not take this initiative or are very formal in their interaction with the firm, making it difficult for the employer to get to know the student.
well. The interviewed states that students from Umeå University have not realized that they are among the best in the field this company works within and lacks confidence in their own abilities.
5.1.2 Company 2
The second company interviewed was a company with about 11,000 employees in Sweden. This company is active in many different sectors, and therefore the results from this interview will be more general than that of some of the other companies. The female interviewee was the chief of recruitments and competences and had been working at the current position for two years. She had also been working for another five years at other positions within the same company. Interview length was about forty minutes.

Employer branding
The interviewed states that the company values its employer brand and are careful to obtain it. She says that the company feels proud about the employer brand and that they are a popular employer. The interviewee explains that the company’s marketing as being an excellent employer has recently been affected by newspapers angling news of how the company treats its employees unethically. She says that those news makes her sad as they were not true. She believes that it was not in the interest of the journalists to report the whole story.

The interviewee believes that it will be more difficult to obtain the right employees in the future and that the competition between companies will become harder than it is today. The company will work more with employer branding and recruitments in the future and work on becoming better at the internal recruitments and at realizing that the company already might have an employee that fits an advertised position. According to the interviewed there will be a great reduction in the labour force in 2017. She believes that an employer that is flexible and innovative will be the most popular ones in the future.

Internal marketing and communication
The company market itself towards their employees by giving all employees health maintenance gym cards as well as having an employee association. Other goals the company strives for is to make every employee feel safe, having good understanding of the employee contract a worker enters, having satisfactory management and having a great working environment. The company has also adopted CSR by having ecological coffee and waste sorting in all corridors. CSR is involved in almost all processes in the company, according to the interviewed.

The interviewee state that the company “conducts annual working environment measures, and they stand very acute. The scale goes up to six and the company has this year got an average of 4.8” (2012). The measurement takes up what makes people enjoy their workplace, what makes people feel healthy and what makes people develop. The results of the measurement indicate that the current employees at the company are satisfied with the company as an employer.

Every year the company conducts a competences supply plan to see what professions that needs to be filled with new employees. The managers of these professional groups make a plan of activities to perform the coming year together with the HR department. As for the communications between marketing and human resources the company is at the moment displaying a weak link between the departments. However, in the future the company will work on becoming greater at this because of the upcoming labour shortage. The management of the company are involved in marketing and employer branding activities as they set the goals for the coming year and follow up these goals.
External marketing and communication
To market themselves, this company participates in labour market fairs, education fairs as well as other fairs. The current employees at the company attend the fairs and explain what their work consists of. At the moment the firm does not need any business educates and therefore they have no marketing efforts directed at business students.

According to the interviewed, the company hires many unemployed young adults for a period of six months to ensure they get one foot into the labour market. She also states that the company admits interns and that most of them get an improved opinion of the company after they have had their internship compared to before their internship. The firm start marketing themselves to students at the age 14 to introduce the company to students before or early in their work-life.

The company receives many job applications every year, last year they received about 23 000 applications, most being for advertised jobs, but also some spontaneous applications. For some professions the firm needs to headhunt employees. When asked if the interviewee believes that a company considered as being a good employer will receive more job-applications than one that is not, she answered “is it important how many applications one receives? What is important is to get the right applicants.” In addition, she state that the employer brand the company have ensure that they get the right people to apply for employment at their company. Another reason the company has been blessed with having high competencies of their employees is because the company is situated in a University city.

The interviewee believes that it is important to market that they have adopted a CSR objective. She believes that for some professions it can be important for a job applicant that the company they apply to have adopted a CSR focus, but to other professions, as within business branch professions, it might not be as important, but rather more important that the tasks of the employment is interesting. The company does not require that their job-applicants have experience with CSR. In the future the interviewee believes that CSR will become even more important than it is today.

Recruitment process
When recruiting employees to a vacancy the company first seek internally for the competences needed for the job. Some of the employees in the company may also have precedence over new employees. If no-one can be recruited from internally the job will be advertised in the newspapers and via internet. The job application is sent in via the web and the manager of the advertised job is the one that choose who to employ.

Company's criteria's of their employees
The competences required of new employees the company is in search of are very different depending on what type of job they are advertising. When advertising jobs within the business sector most employees have some sort of university education, however some of these employees do not have any college education, but rather a high school education with business as major.
5.1.3 Company 3
The third company is a one-sector only company with about 380 employees in the northern region of Sweden. The firm is active in 24 countries around the world. The female interviewee has worked at the company for 22 years and at the current position within HR for eight years. Interview length was about one hour.

Employer branding
The interviewee states that the company is strong and therefore there are many interested in working with them. According to the interviewed, people show great interest in the company and think it is a fine company. The interviewee states that she, herself also think that it is an excellent firm.

The enterprise feels safe, have great development potential and the employees have large chances at affecting their own development as well as strong possibilities to work at management level or be in charge of an office. There are also possibilities for the employees to work abroad. The interviewed states that all of these factors are what is making them a stronger enterprise than their competitors in their employer brand. Nonetheless, the company has received a label as being a 'safe and boring' company. This is something they are currently working on changing by showing prospective new employees all opportunities for workers at the company.

The company believes that in the future their employer brand will still be strong, but that the company might not be the largest of their competitors, but rather the best one. The 'safe and boring' label will hopefully be gone in the future, according to the interviewed.

Internal marketing and communication
The interviewed state that the company is seen as a safe and good workplace by both current employees and external actors. “This can also be seen in the employee turnover, as it is a low employee turnover. It is few people that leave the company. One continues to work at the company and to work for a long time.” The interviewee says “Here one works the entire life”.

The company value a good relationship with their employees, it is important that their employees enjoy working at the enterprise, according to the interviewee. The firm have some guidelines of how to relate to each other at the workplace, such as showing respect and faith in each other and to be responsible. These guidelines are communicated to the employees in a book all employees receive when they begin their employment. The book covers how to be an employee at the company, what the company values and how the company works.

The relationship between worker and the company is good, according to the interviewee. Every year working environment surveys are conducted at all offices to see how employees think the working environment is. According to these surveys the employees are satisfied with the working environment of the company. It is possible for employees to receive grants for health maintenance. Encouragements are also given to the employees to perform activities involving co-workers. These are factors that could contribute to the satisfaction of the employees.

The company ensures that their employees are satisfied by having individual dialogues between the manager and the employee to ensure the employee are able to perform the work required of him or her and are able to feel comfortable in the tasks and the office. The employees are welcome to bring up suggestions of how to improve the organization and are also able to make
some decisions for the local office. Each employee get to decide how they would like to contribute to the operations plan the company has set up for each year.

According to the interviewed, the communications between marketing and HR works well. The CEO and management of the company are not involved in the recruitments and employer brand for each local office, however they are involved in recruitments for higher positions as regional managers. The managers of the local offices are responsible for marketing and managing the employer brand of the office, but can, if needed get assistance from the national headquarters.

External marketing and communication

The company market itself to new prospective employees by attending labour market fairs as well as lectures on Universities, i.e. given by the CEO or regional managers. On the fairs the firm explain what the work of an employee at the company consists of, what an ordinary day at work looks like and declares that they feel proud to be an employee at the company. Many students approach the company at labour market fairs and many of them contact the company after meeting them at the fair, according to the interviewee.

The responsible for marketing the company towards students are the HR department at the regional office together with the local offices. The company market the management opportunities for employees, as well as the company values towards new prospective employees at recruitment fairs or labour market fairs, however the interviewed is convinced that the company could probably improve their marketing of this. The values of the company are also communicated through the career pages on the firm’s website.

The firm also have a program dedicated to students graduating from high school with business as a major, and are planning to continue studying business at a university. They get the chance to work at the company a specific number of hours every semester, while studying, and are later guaranteed to receive employment at the company if they have fulfilled the requirements. This is marketed towards the high schools by internet, newspapers and through the guidance councillor at the schools. This has been very rewarding to the company.

The interviewee believe a company considered to be a good employer receives more applications than one that is not considered to be a good employer because more people will be interested in a position at that company, hence, more applications will be sent in. The interviewed believes that, if more employees would attend labour market fairs and interact with students, more students would interested in acquiring employment at the company, and more applications would be sent in. As this company is within a branch of common prospective employers for individuals with a background in business, they receive many applications from this population.

Spontaneous applications for jobs are quite common at the company, especially during the spring. When jobs are advertised the firm receives many applications, according to the interviewed. The company do not headhunt students, but rather the students have to themselves contact the company if interested in receiving employment with them. However, the interviewed states that she thinks it would be interesting to hear from students if the company should put marketing efforts at other places than the current ones, i.e. social media.

The most successful activities performed by the company are, according to the interviewee, “I think that attending labour market fairs are good. I would believe that also it would be good to
hold some type of lecture. Because, we had the CEO at the university, and the regional manager and it struck good. People were talking about it for years”. All activities including meeting students are the most rewarding ones. The interviewee says that she think the program for graduated high school business students are very rewarding as well, as the company reaches the students early in their university education.

The company has a CSR motive and have marketed this on their website but believes that they can market this more and in better ways. The interviewee believes that the CSR motive can determine if a person decide to seek employment at their company or not. An applicant do not have to have previous experiences of CSR to apply for employment at the company, rather what is most important is that the person share the same values as the company and have the right competences. The interviewee says that CSR is something that will maybe be more important in the future, but on the other hand, that it can also be a trend issue and may not be as important in the future.

**Recruitment process**

When one of the offices in the northern region needs employees the company starts with internal recruitment. The company meets or contacts all applicants from within the organisation. If no one internally can take the employment external recruitment start by placing adverts in newspapers and on the internet. When applications have been sent in a selection of appropriate possible employees is made and the company contact these people to set up a meeting. All applicants always receive a reply from the company, no matter if they are considered for a position or not. The HR department and the office needing a new employee needs to agree on who to hire. If they disagree, the HR department continues their search of a new employee.

**Company's criteria's of their employees**

One should have an educational background within business to acquire employment. The company are more interested in what education one has, but not what type of courses one have studied. One should also have the ability to take own decisions, be outgoing, enjoy meeting new people, like doing business and have a strong drive for the job. If an applicant have a bachelors, one year master or two year master degree is not of importance when applying for employment at this company. According to the interviewee, one thing that students today can work on approving is to be more humble, and not put as much emphasis on the own needs, however, this can also be a strong drive from an applicant. At times the students need to show greater humility to others needs.

**5.1.4 Company 4**

The company is a small one sector only company with about 24 employees and is located in Umeå, but are active in other parts of Sweden as well. The female interviewee is the CEO of the company and has been working at that position a few months when the interview was conducted. She has worked for the company for four years in total and has worked at positions as project manager and strategist. Interview length was about twenty minutes.

**Employer branding**

According to the interviewee, the firm is working on maintaining a good employer as “we have relatively good conditions, concerning wage, and an extra week of vacation and we are trying to
do very much for our employees to ensure they are satisfied." The enterprise has a relatively low employee turnover which proves that the employees at the company are satisfied.

The interviewee believes that it will be difficult for firms to acquire the best employees in the future because of larger competition. The enterprise has a strong position in their employer brand in Umeå currently, however the interviewed believe that the company needs to become better at communicating and maintaining a strong employer brand in the future.

Internal marketing and communication
The interviewee believes that the company is seen as a pleasant employer by the employees. The company values a strong relationship with their employees and communicate this to the employees by giving feedback. Every year the company conducts a review of the satisfaction of the employees and the results of this has been seen as satisfactory. The employees get to share their thoughts and opinions in this review and their opinions are raised, thanks to the review.

The CEO is very involved in recruitments and marketing the company as a good employer. This company have no HR or marketing department, instead these tasks are led by the CEO and the directorate. As the company is quite small, everything is communicated easily between all employees and the management. Informational meetings where all employees are gathered is something the company hold regularly.

External marketing and communication
The interviewee states that “I cannot say how it really is, but we are working on being a good employer.”, when asked how the company is seen by the public. The company do not communicate that they value the relationship with their employees towards the public. However, this is something that is maybe understood by the public as the company, when hiring a new employee, sometimes put an ad in the newspaper stating that they have a new worker and praise the qualities this person possesses.

Currently the company is not participating in any sort of recruitment or marketing activities, such as recruitment and labour market fairs, to reach future employees. This is something the interviewee believes is important for the company to initiate as it gives greater opportunities to reach talents before competitors.

The company usually has a steady flow of applications sent in. As the company is not often seeking new staff, most applications are spontaneous. “We have actually most within creative positions that are sending spontaneous applications.” The interviewed believes that a firm seen as a good employer will receive more job applications than an enterprise that is not. To the interviewed, this is self-explaining since; when a company is considered to be a good employer more people will be interested in working at the corporation, hence more people apply for work.

The company has an connection to CSR as they are environmentally certified as well as showing involvement in some smaller projects, i.e. supporting different organizations and projects. The employees often discuss CSR matters with each other and most of the staff have high ethical and moral awareness of the matter. According to the interviewed, it is important to have a CSR motive and show responsibility. The firm shows their involvement of CSR on their website and they participate in promotions of projects they part take in. The interviewed state that she thinks it is important, to some extent, for job seekers that the company they apply for a job at have a
CSR focus. However, the enterprise does not require any sort of competences regarding CSR from their applicants.

The interviewed claims that CSR will be something that more people involve purposely in the future and that it is very important that everyone claims responsibility in this matter. She believes that it is important that companies engage in CSR in dept and to ensure they have a strategy of how to adopt it within their organization.

**Recruitment process**

The recruitment process looks quite traditional, according to the interviewee. The company advertises their job openings via newspapers, websites and other types of branch specific media. The company’s social medias are also a place where it is marketed when the company is in need of new employees. The employees also market when new positions are available at the company through their personal social medias.

The company have a recruitment system where an applicant send in their résumé and the company thereafter makes a selection of people they are interested in interviewing. The company conducts at least two interviews with their applicants before deciding who will get the position. Interviews are always conducted by the CEO together with one other employee.

Occasionally the company conducts internal recruitments before searching outside of their organization for a new employee. The company also headhunt desired employees at times. Applications are received by the company both spontaneously as well as when a position has been advertised.

**Company’s criteria’s of their employees**

The interviewed states that it is very different what the company require of their employees depending on what position they have in the enterprise. Some positions need an excellent business sense, being good at marketing, setting up strategies or to establish trust towards customers, while other positions need creativity.

There are no requirements of what kind of education or how long education one should have to acquire employment at the company. “We also put much emphases on personality traits” Some positions need forwardness, extrovert stable people, with sales skills. In most positions it is important that the employee is good at co-operating with others.

The company receives many applications both from students and others. The interviewee states that most students do not have the experiences the company wants when newly graduated from the university. In most cases they are searching for employees with more working experience. For the students to be able to acquire employment at the company they should try to get as much working experience as possible before graduating from the university. However, not all employees at the company have a university graduation, some employees and former employees have worked while studying at the university or have a high school graduation.

5.2 The Quantitative study

The result given from the questions in the survey will be given in order below and explained in a short summery of text. The survey was replied by 34 business students from Umeå University. As some optional questions demanded written responses, many respondents decided not to reply
those. The first five questions in the survey were all background questions and will therefore be given in a short summarized text. All questions containing a likert scale had the scale from 1 to 5. However, some of the counterparts of the scale differ in questions. All survey questions are found in Appendix 2, as well as all means to questions with sub-questions and appropriate graphs of relevant questions.

5.2.1 Background
The background questions are shown in the results as they give the reader knowledge of the respondents’ age, gender and years of studies. However, they are not of importance to the results as the authors are not aiming at seeing correlations between variables in this study. The question of gender of the respondents showed a result with 17 women and 17 men participating, giving this study a fifty-fifty response between the genders. The respondents’ age varied, from the youngest being 20 years old to the oldest being 38 years old, but the mean of the respondents age was 24.5 years old. Four of the 34 respondents attended the 4 year Business Program with focus on Service Management, seven attended the 4 year Business Program and eight attended the 4 year Business Program with focus on Commerce and Logistics. The majority of 15 respondents attended the 4 year International Business Program.

Four of the respondents were studying their second year at Umeå University, 16 were studying their third year and 14 of the respondents were on their fourth and final year. One of the respondents mentioned that he or she had taken a break between the third and fourth year. The respondents had also been asked to write down what year they had planned to graduate. This question had two fall-off responses as they stated they were going to graduate dates that had already passed. The majority, as many as 17, of respondents are planning to graduate year 2014. Four respondents stated that they were going to graduate year 2015, while eleven said they were about to graduate in 2013.

Question number six contained five sub-questions and the respondents were asked to rate these on the likert scale. The authors wanted to know how much time the respondents had spent thinking about these sub-questions. The result shown here are of the mean of all the sub-questions, therefore it is not possible to have any value larger than five or smaller than one. Furthermore, having a mean that is three would suggest that the respondents were somewhat neutral to the sub-question. It is shown that a majority of the respondents have spent some time thinking about their future employment as this question received the highest mean, 4.14. Not far below, was the mean representing that students think about the challenges to acquire employment and when to start looking for employment, with a mean of around 3.7 for both questions. The lowest mean received was the option of how often the respondents think about where they can meet future employers. The results are also shown in the table (Table 1) below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent do you think about...</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your future employment</td>
<td>4.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The challenge for you to acquire employment</td>
<td>3.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When you should start to look for employment</td>
<td>3.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How you look for employment</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where you can meet the future employers</td>
<td>3.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 Means of the question “To what extent do you think about...” (Lundback & Westermark, 2013)
5.2.2 Employer Brand Questions

Question seven asked the respondents what focus area they were interested to work within after graduating. They were presented with four options where they could choose more than one choice, hence, the added result of this question will be larger than the number of respondents which were 34. The results showed that 15 students were interested in finance, 13 in management, ten in accounting and nine students were interested in marketing. Hence, the most popular focus area was finance, and least popular was marketing. The respondents also had the possibility to write down other areas that they might have found interesting. These other options showed that there were interests to pursuing a career within business development, international business, logistics, sales and supply chain management.

In question eight the respondents were given eight sub-questions. The question was if the respondent would only apply to certain companies. The alternative that received the largest mean was that the students would only apply to a company which share the same values as them, however, with quite a neutral mean of 3.55 and next came companies that are in the same focus area as the respondent chose in the previous question, with a mean of 3.38. The largest disagreement from respondents were that they would only apply to a company where they know some of the employees, this alternative received a mean of 2.50. The questions of if the respondent would only apply to a company where they do not know any of the employees or have met current employees, the mean were about 2.7 for both options. As the variability of this question were about 1.05, and the means were at largest 0.55 from the neutral three, we can conclude that the students were overall quite neutral to all alternatives in this question.

Question nine asked the respondents what company / companies they would like to acquire employment at. Some of the most popular firms mentioned were audit firms like Ernst and Young, KPMG, PWC, Deloitte, Grant Thornton etc, but also Sweden’s four largest banks, retailing companies like Nike and H&M and unspecified employments at large international companies were on the list. It is important to mention that only 22 out of 34 responded to this question and one response was double question-marks, hence, the authors are unsure if the respondent did not understand the question, or if it was a choice by the respondent not to reply the question. The complete list on companies mentioned can be found in the Appendix 3.

As other questions, question number ten contains of eight sub-questions that the respondents were asked to rate on the likert scale. This rating was to what extent the respondents agree with the sub-questions about the company / companies that they had mentioned in the previous question. The most positive response this question received was a mean of 3.08 that the respondents have talked to current employees at the company which implies that most replies to this question were either neutral or negative. The lowest means was received by the alternatives if the respondents have seen any negative stories about the company on TV or heard from alumni, with the means of 1.79 and 1.88 respectively. In the questions if the respondents have seen positive stories of the company on TV or heard from alumni, the means were 2.44 and 2.41, placing these alternative second and third most positive, although still being more negative than positive. The alternatives for TV and alumni ranked very close to each other in both negative and positive stories. This implies that the respondents have heard somewhat more positive stories, than negative stories, about their desired companies from TV and alumni. In the alternatives I have seen this company at the annual job fair, or seen advertising by the company at the university, the means were 2.41 and 2.52 respectively, this shows that the students desired
companies are, to some extent, not seen at the university or at the job fair. This raises the question of where the students find their desired companies.

5.2.3 External marketing and communication

Question number eleven contains of 12 sub-questions that the respondents were asked to rate. This question were created to see to what extent the respondents have heard about this company / these companies (from question nine) through the options presented in the sub-questions. Most respondents stated that they had heard of the companies from publicity in media, with a mean of 3.23 or through advertisement from the companies, having a mean of 3.20. Other places the respondents have heard of their companies are through the university, at recruitment fairs or through social media. Many respondents strongly disagree that they have heard of the companies through previous schools, as the mean of this option is 2.02.

In question 12 the respondents were asked to rate on the likert scale, to what extent they prefer the different types of promotion that companies use. Prefer the least and prefer the most were the counterparts, and the alternatives was advertisement (commercials), publicity (media), recruitment fairs, the university, social media or other, meaning all other promotion types used that have not been specified. The respondents seemed to find most of these promotions are working well, although the promotions that stood out in the most positive way were recruitment fairs and through the university with the means 4 and 3.85 respectively. The least preferred promotional technique was according to the respondents’ advertisement, having a mean of 2.94. The respondents were somewhat neutral to the option other, something the authors believe this is due to the respondent not thinking of any promotional technique in particular, and are therefore not able to rank it high or low. In the graph below the spread of the ranking of the respondents in the different alternatives can be seen.

![Figure 3 Spread of replies on the question “To what extent do you prefer these types of promotion from a company?”](Lundback & Westermark, 2013)
In question 13 the respondents were asked, how well they thought the promotions (mentioned in question 12) worked in attracting new employees. A majority of the respondents seems to think that all of the promotion types that companies use are working well as the higher bars in the graph below, can be found, for most alternatives, to the right. The respondents believe that a promotion from a company through the university is most effective in attracting new employees, as this option has a mean of 4.20. Close comes promotions through recruitment fairs with a mean of 3.97. As in the previous question, the alternative other has received quite a neutral response, and having the lowest mean for this question, of 3.26. The authors believe this is for the same reason as they stated in previous question. Advertisement has a mean of 3.44 which is the lowest for the given alternatives (hence not counting other as an alternative).

![Figure 4: Spread of replies on the question “How well do you think the following promotions work in attracting new employees?” (Lundback & Westermark, 2013)](image)

In question 14 the respondents were asked, how well they thought the promotions (mentioned in question 12) worked in providing a positive image for a company. Promotions through the university to provide a positive image for a company was ranked 4.11, and highest. Close after came promotions through social media and recruitment fairs with 3.94 and 3.91 respectively. Lowest mean was received by advertising and other, both with the average of 3.36.

In question 15 the respondents were given a chance to voice their opinions about questions 12 to 14 concerning promotions from companies. Some of the answers that were given was that one respondent had difficulties in interpreting what was wanted from him or her to answer question 14. Another mentioned that, what answer that would be most suitable to give to these questions can be different, since the experience seems to have been that it is very different between the different banks. One respondents’ ideal employer was strongly influencing him or her with the use of advertisement and another respondent wanted to clarify that the interpretation of “others” had for this particular respondent meant internships and summer educational programs.

In question 16 the respondents were asked rate how much time they had spent on the four activities presented to them. The counterparts were in this question never and as much as possible. The activities they were asked to rate were: attending recruitment fairs, attending other events where they can meet companies that are organized by the university, attending other
events where you can meet companies that are not organized by the university and interacting with current employees of a company when attending these events. The result showed that the activity where the respondents spend most time was attending recruitment fairs, with a mean of 3.17. There are also slightly more respondents attending events to meet companies that are organized by the university, than organized by others as the means were 3.00 and 2.70 respectively. Interacting with companies also received a mean of 3.00, indicating that not all respondents attending recruitment fairs interact with the companies.

Question 17 concerns to what extent the respondents value the sub-questions that were presented to them. The responses to all sub questions in the question denote that the respondents value all of the alternatives somewhat high since the alternatives have a lowest mean of 3.67. As can be seen in the table below, the students value the satisfaction of current employees at a company highest. What are least valued are the opinions of the current employees at a company. However, the variability in this question was 0.24, implying that the respondents value all of the options closely.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent do you value...</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The chance to interact with the current employees at a company at events/fairs</td>
<td>3.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The opinions the current employees at a company have</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The satisfaction of current employees in their work</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The satisfaction of current employees in their pay, compensation and benefits</td>
<td>3.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The satisfaction of current employees in their relationships with co-workers</td>
<td>3.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The satisfaction of current employees in the relationship with their manager</td>
<td>3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The satisfaction of current employees in the job security</td>
<td>3.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 Means on the question “To what extent do you value...” (Lundback & Westermark, 2013)

Eight respondents replied the optional question 18 of what could be improved with recruitment fairs. Some suggestions were that companies should attract students by showing benefits and other type of opportunities to students and to have more banks and investment banks invited to the university. One respondent propose that companies should be more involved in preparations of the fairs and attend events connected to the fairs as dinners since this is where students get the opportunities to make a connection to the company representatives. Another student suggests that companies should put more emphasis on who to send to the fairs, as the students often feel more comfortable when the company representative is very outgoing and approaches the student. Another respondent propose that companies should cut their advertisement and instead focus on job satisfaction as job satisfaction is very appealing and students can find the company in other ways.

Before question 19 a short summarized text of the concept CSR was inserted, to ensure that the respondents can answer the question, as it examines the knowledge and attitudes of the students concerning CSR. The question concerned to what extent the respondent disagrees or agrees to the sub-questions. The responses from the students indicates that the students have very high knowledge of CSR as both the questions you have heard about before and you are very familiar with ranked the means 4.26 and 3.73 respectively. The respondents chose to be neutral on the question if they have more knowledge of CSR than other students, as the mean were 3.08. On the question if CSR is something that the respondents value highly in a future employer the replies gives the mean 3.58, indicating that it is somewhat important that companies adopt it. However, not many respondents would only apply to a company that focuses on CSR and sustainability, as
this option had the lowest mean, being 2.20. Furthermore, the option that CSR is something that the respondent think does not matter at all when looking for employment, received a mean of 2.73.

5.2.4 Planned behaviour
Question 22 concerns what criterions the students believe the employers value highest in their employees. The question had ten possible answers; education, working experience in any field, experiences within the field, extra curriculum activities, personality traits, drivers license, language skills, hobbies, references and others. The respondents of this survey believe that the companies value their personality traits and experience within the field highest, these options received the means 4.41 and 4.38 respectively. Ranked least important was hobbies followed by drivers license with the means 2.64 and 2.94, in the order the alternatives were written. Ranked equally important was having an education and references, with the mean 4.00. In the graph below more in-depth data can be seen of the replies of the respondents. This graph will also be found in appendix in a somewhat larger size, together with the means.

![Graph](image)

Figure 5 Spread on the replies on the question “What criterions do you think future employers value highest in new prospective employees?” (Lundback & Westermark, 2013)

In question 23 the respondents were asked to rank how well they believe they are able to fulfil the alternatives given in the previous question. The counterparts were here no chance to fulfil or high chance to fulfil. The general attitude of the respondents were that they had quite good chances to fulfil all of the criterions mentioned in the survey that the employers could or would have on them. However, what the students believed was most difficult to fulfil was to have experience within the field of the desired company, this option received a ranking of 2.79 as a mean. The students believed they had the greatest chance to fulfil the requirements of education and personality traits, with 4.32 and 4.20 as the means. These are followed closely by requirement of drivers’ license as well as language skills, both with 4.14 as the mean. Hobbies, working experience in any field and references all have a mean in the range of 3.45 to 3.70 and are hence something the respondents believe that have somewhat of a chance to fulfil.

Question 24 was constructed as a gap text with three different options where; wise, sensible and useful, could fit in. The question concerned the respondents’ believes in these options when applying for a job at the companies that had mentioned in question nine. Most students believed
it to be useful to apply to one of their desired companies mentioned earlier in the survey, this option received a mean of 4.23, followed by respondents thinking it is wise, having a mean of 3.94. The sensible option was least agreed by the respondents as it had a mean of 3.79, although still on the positive side of the scale.

Question 25 was also constructed as a gap text with six different options where; significant other, parents, best friend(s), relatives, school mate(s) and teacher(s), could fit in. The question examines the importance for surrounding people to approve the companies one chose to apply for employment at. The collected data of this question indicated that it is not very important to the respondents that the surrounding people approve the companies they chose to apply for employment at, as most means have been below three. The respondents believe that it is least important that their teachers approve the companies they chose to apply for a job at (having a mean of 1.97). Most important is it that one significant other approve the companies, however, with the mean of 3.05, denoting that it is not of great importance.

Question 26 was optional and was answered by five respondents. One of the respondents pointed out that the answers of many of the questions differ depending on what environment, industry or country one wishes to work. One respondent said he or she had difficulties understanding some of the questions, and another respondent indicated that question 24 was difficult to understand. Others stated that they thought the survey was too long and contained too many questions.
Chapter 6: Analysis

In this chapter the result will be discussed and analyzed together with the theories.

The purpose of the thesis is to examine if there is a gap between the demands employers have on their future employees, and the future employees’ perception of these companies’ demands on them. The purpose is also to examine how employers are attempting to market themselves towards students as possible future employers and how the students experience the employers marketing efforts towards them.

To investigate the above purpose it is important to examine how the companies are managing their employer brand, as it will show the reader how the companies come off towards the students and what their marketing efforts are. The students choice of employers are also of importance in this thesis, hence the theory of planned behaviour is appropriate. It is also discussed how the students are perceiving the demands made by companies on their employees, and what demands are actually demanded.

6.1 Employer Brand

The authors noticed that not all companies that took part in this study separated their employer brand from their company brand. It is common to confuse the company brand and the employer brand according to Mitchell (2008). Before questions about the companies as employers came up, some of them were talking more about them being seen as a strong brand in the eye of the consumers, rather than how they are being seen as employers.

The difference from the model of the reason a company have not separated their company brand and their employer brand could depend on what business sector the companies are active within as different sectors have a difference in employment competition, hence, the sectors with larger competition will have more applicants. It could also be due to that the interviewees did not have the same level of knowledge of the subject, this can be due to an error made by the authors of the choice of whom to interview at each company. Another reason to the confusion of a firms’ company brand and employer brand can be that the interviewees also worked for different types of companies that are of various sizes. The companies in this thesis are also not located in the same country as the participating companies in the previous studies that have been made.

The conclusion that this leads up to about the concept of employer brand is that, even though it might sound easy to separate the employer brand from the company brand in the theories, it seems more complicated in the reality. This could be since they are both concerning the view of the company although from different perspectives.

6.1.1 Step-by-step

Michington and Estis (2009) had said that for a company to have a successful employer brand they should have a clear employer brand, this is gained by following some specific steps. One reason why these companies do not have a clear employer brand could be due to that some steps have not been executed well.

The first step is to determine how employer branding is viewed within the company (Michington & Estis, 2009). This is also confirmed by the EBI as they in their survey received most replies at
having a defined employer brand, in what is most important to achieve company objectives regarding employment brand (EBI, 2009). All the companies interviewed state that their employer brand is strong and seem to be careful to obtain a view as a good and trustworthy employer. All companies have a defined employer brand however, the authors believe only one of the companies (Company 1) had a very well defined employer brand, as this company was able to answer all questions asked in the interview in a clear manner. As the authors put emphases on asking all the companies the same questions in a similar way, the authors do not believe they influenced this interviewee to reply more clearly than other companies. However, once again, it can be argued that the authors failed in finding the right person to conduct the interviews with.

Another step in the model say that the company should have defined the relationship between HR, marketing and communication and through that have a working internal communication. The EBI state in their survey of 2,025 that companies mainly have their HR department or HR department together with marketing and communications responsible for the firms employer brand (EBI, 2009, p. 20), hence the step of HR and marketing departments co-operations in the model of employer brand should be applicable at companies in real life. But is it applicable in all companies in the entire world and within all firms? EBI’s survey was performed in 12 countries worldwide, hence they should have good statistics of different business cultures in different countries (EBI, 2009, p. 20). In this thesis’ results, three of the interviewed companies thought that the internal communication worked well for them, however, Company 4 had no specific departments in charge of employer brand managing and instead had the CEO and directorate in charge. Company 2 had a weak link between the marketing and communication departments. This result does not show that there would be any large problems in their internal communication tactics, since they are aware of the shortage and are working on improving it. This company (2) is still a popular employer with satisfied employees and therefore seems to have had a good match between the staff and employer. This raises the question if this company still have a successful employer brand, and in that case, how that is possible when one of the steps is not implemented sufficiently. The authors believe this can be due to the very different sector this company is active within.

Further, the fact that not all companies have implemented all steps in the employer branding models sufficiently and all seem to still be attractive employers raises the question if employer branding really is as important as the scholars and models say it is. Furthermore, it raises the question if a company can and will survive without the involvement of a clear employer brand alongside their company brand or if the company brand is enough. In the result found in this thesis it seems like this might be the case for some of the companies.

It can also be questioned if employer branding is a planned or unplanned activity within a company. Is employer branding a natural extension of the company brand and will therefore always be a part of a company as long as the company has some kind of brand. Or is it rather completely separate from the company brand and hence something each company need to put focus on developing from scratch. The authors of this thesis believe not all companies put emphases on developing a clear employer brand and therefore that it can be an unplanned activity. They believe that a company’s reputation as being a good employer instead can come from personal encounters (as customers) with the company. It can also come from positive publicity about a company (Jobber & Fahy, 2009 p. 234). The authors believe, with their own
research as back up, that a company can survive without having a planned employer branding activity and that a company will survive by only having an established company brand. However, it is difficult to know if employer branding will have increased importance in the future. One of the interviewed (Company 2) believed it would be increasingly important because of an upcoming reduction in the labour force as from year 2017. The speculations can go on but no clear answer to why there is a pressure on companies to have a clear employer brand can be given, especially since it really does not seem to be necessary for survival or success of a business. No conclusion to this can be found in this thesis result and therefore leads to an opportunity for further studies of why this is the case.

Another step in the model by Michington and Estis (2009) is about the involvement of the higher positioned employees in the process. The survey conducted by EBI (2009) shows that having engagement of management or CEO is second most important when considering how to achieve the company objectives regarding employment branding. Company 3 had no involvement at all of their CEO or management, while a majority did, or instead had a chief operating officer or manager. Looking at the step by step model and comparing it with the empirical evidence from the interviews, the result shows that the model are not in agreement with the chosen companies’ tactics. Hence, there is a small gap found in what the step-by-step approach says is the best way to act to build a strong employer brand and how companies act. The company (3) that does not have any involvement of higher positions in their representation of the company’s employer brand is a large well known company with very satisfied employees according to the interviewee. The reason this company are showing other evidence than what the model state could be either because the interviewed had not enough knowledge about the subject and hence told the authors incorrect information, thus being an error made by the authors, or that this model is not applicable in reality or at all sectors of companies.

As stated above, some of the steps in the model that is of importance to gain a strong employer brand is not fulfilled by some of the companies. Still, the empirical data shows that the companies have satisfied staff, according to the companies. They also have never been without applicants for any job openings, which would be an effect if people did not want to work at the companies and it implies that successful matching has been made when hiring employees. This might imply that the companies do have strong employer brands even though the steps of the model is not fulfilled. As the companies are successful, it can imply that a strong employer brand is simply not as important for companies to build as the scholars consider it to be. It could further imply that the companies have come off as more involved in employer branding in the interviews than they actually are. The reason of this is difficult to determine.

Although all companies aim to improve at their employment brand in the future and find it important to have a good relationship between employer and employees, supported by Mitchell (2008, p. 128) that says that the shared values of, and the relationship between a firms employer and its employees are the foundation of the internal employer brand. Hence, it will be important for the companies to get better, due to the beliefs that the competition of acquiring the best employees is getting stronger and the chances to achieve the best match is therefore also getting harder. Of this reason it is important to know how the company is perceived, both internally and externally. One example of this is that one of the companies interviewed knows that they sometimes come off as “boring and safe”, thus it is strange that they have not resolved this problem with their brands image. To wait too long could end up hurting the company brand as
well as the employer brand, since as they said in the interviews, that the applicants wants to have the possibility to grow and evolve in their careers and this was a reason to work on their external communication, but maybe also with the internal communication. As the students were asked in the survey, they did value to talk with current employees at a company and the current employees are a great way of marketing an employer brand, to show that the employees are happy. All companies agree with this, however not all agree on whom to send to the recruitment fairs.

6.1.2 Sustainable company
At present it has become more important to act sustainable, especially for companies. Figure 1 found in the theory chapter, shows that CSR is a main factor and a part of getting a sustainable employer brand. The conception of CSR is important to ensure that the fulfilment of needs today will not compromise the fulfilment of the needs in the future (WCED, 1987, p. 8). The companies in this study thought it was important to adopt and market themselves as CSR aware and sustainable companies. This highly valued matter is something that none of the companies require from their applicants to have any knowledge or experience about. Experience might be difficult to ask for, but they do not even ask for some basic knowledge. That not even the companies with sustainable certificates ask of the applicants to have knowledge might seem strange. Since they all believed that CSR will grow in importance over the years to come, this might be something that students at the least needs to have some sort of knowledge about. Since nearly all the responding students have heard about CSR, are familiar with it and value it in a future employer, this should not be an unlikely demand to make. However, as the students have a high level of information concerning CSR the question is raised where they have received it. Could it be that the subject of CSR has not only become more important for companies to adopt, but that the universities have also realized the importance of the concept and hence are including CSR in courses that does not have the main focus on sustainability. The authors believe this is the case as many universities in Sweden have started to offer courses on sustainability (VHS, 2013).

In the theories the importance of having a good employer brand is shown, but also the importance of interacting the employer brand as a main part of a sustainable company. To be able to research this goal, a first step could be to demand an education of sustainability for students and the current employees. Some of the interviewees appeared to have deeper knowledge then others about the actual work carried out by their company to contribute to sustainability. By this gap it could be discussed how well the internal and external communications about these matters have been communicated to the employees and the public. Since the result also shows that one of the interviewees (Company 3) had a personal opinion of CSR as she thought that CSR and sustainability could be a trend that comes and goes and not something that will last. A reason for this response could be due to the higher cost that comes with making changes or a lack of knowledge about CSR.

Pless (2012) argues that human resource management is an important part of sustainability and CSR in maintaining a sustainable process. He also states that there is a perception that sustainable companies take care of their current, as well as future employees better than others (Pless et al., 2012, p. 874). The interviews shows that all companies value a good relationship to their employees and that the current employees at the companies seem to be satisfied. The students that were participating in the survey stated that they do value the satisfaction of current employees at a company in their work and their relationship with the manager, hence that the company has a good relationship with their employees. This could easily be achieved by a well
made match between the company and employees. The companies interviewed would therefore be suitable companies to apply for employment at for the respondents in the survey, considering their view on the relationship between company and employee, as both of them have the same values.

Further, it can be argued to be important for a company not to get comfortable and feel that they have a safe position on the market and therefore do not feel any rush to make changes to a structure that has worked well for them for long. This is because with this lays a risk of them getting stuck in their old ways and not being able to move forward and not only weakening their position on the labour market but also in the eye of their customers or prospective employees. All this is leading to the importance of a well working internal as well as external communication to build a strong and sustainable employer brand. Aggerholm et al., (2011, p.107) argues about the importance of letting all parties of interest co-create the brand values and this will increase the trust for a company.

6.2 Marketing

In this section the results of companies marketing efforts will be analyzed. What is interesting with marketing is that it can have both subconscious (Krishna, 2011, p. 333) and conscious effects on people.

In the EBIs survey it is asked what activities the companies are undertaking to enhance their employer brand, and the most common answers were career website development, recruitment advertising or employer marketing and recruitment branding (EBI, 2009, p.23). The most popular replies received on the similar question in the interviews were personal meetings, attending labour market fairs or recruitment fairs and holding lectures on the university. Hence, it can be seen that the companies in our study did not have the same replies as the ones in the EBI survey. This can be due to the survey conducted by the EBI offered the respondents some alternatives as answers, while we in our interviews did not offer any answers for the interviewed and therefore they replied with what first came to mind and what was most obvious. Furthermore, in the EBI survey, on the question what activities that has been most successful in enhancing the employer brand several companies replied that they did not know (ibid). In the interviews conducted in this study many companies said that they did not know what activities was most successful, however they all tried to give an answer of what they personally thought was most rewarding. The answers were attending labour market fairs or having personal meetings with students. In both the EBI survey and in our interviews the first response to what was most rewarding was hence that the respondents/interviewed did not know. However, in our study the interviewed were more willing to try and give a proper answer, one of the benefits with interviews compared to surveys.

The result of the survey also showed that the students hear about most companies trough the recruitment fairs, university or publicity. Although not all the students heard about companies this way, indicated by the low means in the result. This result leaves the question, where do the students find their desired companies. In the SCB report 2011 (SCB, 2011, p. 112) it is shown that officials within banks are one of the most popular professions perused by business educates. The authors of this thesis think this might also have some connections to the fact that all respondents assumingly have a bank account and therefore also a bank. They have therefore had regular encounters with banks and the services that they provide and the four main banks in Sweden are strong brands. It could also be that the students believe that they know what working
at a bank would mean, because of the regular encounters that might have given them an idea about what banks do. It is also not uncommon for employees at firms with strong brands to give lectures to the students at Umeå University’s business programs, at various stages at the different levels of education. Through these opportunities the companies have the chance to interact with the students and spread knowledge about their firm and why they work there, as a way of influencing the students, through the method word of mouth.

The companies have many ways of influencing the students through. The three companies (1, 2 and 3) that were actively marketing themselves to students thought that the personal meeting was a great way to interact and communicate with the students. By having personal meetings with students the companies are able to market themselves towards the students through word of mouth, as they often tell positive stories of how it is to work at the company (Jobber & Fahy, 2009).

Sullivan (2007) has stated that word of mouth is a better promotional technique when marketing a company’s employer brand, than advertising is. The companies and students seem to have the same opinion on this as many companies value personal meetings and students least preferred advertisement. However, the companies seem to have different opinions on what a personal meeting is. To some it meant to invite a smaller group of students to lunch and get a chance to get to know them better, but to others it meant appearing at recruitment fairs and talk to students there. This difference in their opinions could also have something to do with why some of the companies have different opinions on what are the best marketing tools to use and how to use them. They are also aiming to reach different types of students as they are active within different sectors of the business world. The companies are not looking for the same qualities and criterions to be fulfilled by the different students that they have an interest in. So depending what area of interest a students’ has, it is good to interact with a company active within that area when the chance is given. Further, the students attitude towards publicity implies that the respondents have heard somewhat more positive stories, than negative stories, about their desired companies from TV and alumni. According to the authors this is natural as most people do not want to work at companies that have received negative publicity on TV, hence the companies the respondents chose as their desired future employers were companies that they had not received any negative publicity of.

The result shows a gap in what promotion and marketing tools that are liked by the companies and liked by the students. The students value the opportunity to interact with companies highly and prefer recruitment fairs and other types of promotions made through the university, while the companies often prefer personal meetings such as lunches with prospective future employees. This shows a gap that might be due to that the authors had themselves chosen what alternatives to give the students in the question of what promotional techniques they preferred, and missed some of the alternatives that were mentioned by the companies in the interviews and therefore the students never got these as an option. Therefore it is difficult for the authors to exclude the likeliness of that the students might have chosen these alternatives if they had been presented to them. If the authors would have held the interviews before releasing the survey to the students, this could have been prevented as the authors would have had time to realise the promotional techniques used by companies that was not brought up in the survey.

Further, recruitment and labour market fairs are not liked by some of the companies. The authors believe the reason the students prefer marketing through the university or recruitment fairs is
because this require less effort from the students to meet the companies, however it require larger efforts from the companies, which implies a matching problem and that it is difficult to find a marketing tool that provides an optimal matching process for all parties. As stated in the results, one of the companies did not value recruitment fairs highly as there are too many students in circulation to get to know anyone. The authors believe the companies should value all opportunities to meet students highly, as many students do not have the time to seek out companies to interact with themselves. If companies value more personal contacts with the students the companies can create more events for students to attend, with only their own company, and market it through the university, as this was most liked by the students.

When comparing this study’s results with what the students in the survey conducted by Jaidi et al., (2011) thought, it showed that not all students found recruitments fairs to be a good way of promotion and offer them a chance to interact with future employers’. As mentioned, the students participating in this study rather liked the recruitments fairs and instead thought that advertisements was not a good promotion type used by the companies, this is supported by Sullivan (2007). This opens the opportunity to speculate in the causes for this result. Could it be that the companies in Umeå are better skilled and have more knowledge about participating on these fairs or have greater knowledge of who to send to the recruitment fares, or do the students get more out of the events as they are more willing to take contact with the companies? The result of the interviews shows that it is not the employees with the highest position within the companies that are the people that the students meet on events like the recruitment fairs. Instead it is often newly graduated employees that have been trained within the company on what to say and want to do. However, the problems with recruitment fairs is that the students could be there only to retrieve free gifts or the message the firms are trying to send could be misunderstood through word of mouth (Jobber & Fahy, 2009, p.174). It is during lectures that the student could have a better chance of meeting staff in higher positions within a company, however the chance to interact with the company’s lecturer is usually slim as most business classes at Umeå University have many students.

The results from the quantitative study show on the question of how often the respondents think about where they can meet future employers, a quite low mean. The authors believe this is due to many students focusing on applying to jobs, rather than meeting employers and networking. Further, the students say they value the chance to attend recruitment fairs quite highly, which also is one of the four approaches to word of mouth that Jobber and Fahy (2009, p. 174) writes about. As a result of this, the students might put in more effort to interact with the companies. However, on the question of how much time the students spend actually attending recruitment fairs and talking to current employees at the companies, the result shows a mean of three on the five numbered likert scale, indicating that the students spend some time both attending and interacting, but not an immense amount on either. Some indications are provided in the result, since the students’ values have been measured, but all information on the exact time they spend and changes they would like to see to increase this time is not present in the result. It is therefore not possible for the authors to draw an accurate conclusion of this query.

As stated above, the students did prefer promotions from a company through the university or recruitment fairs, implying that it is important for companies to have on campus presence. Jaidi et al.,s (2011) explanation to on campus presence is “Perceived on-campus presence refers to all opportunities for organizations to present their name and activities to the students on a campus
(e.g., sponsoring of campus events, design of specific case studies, job presentations made on-campus by employees), as they are perceived by the students.” (Jaidi et al., 2011 p.140). However, when asked to what extent the student had heard about the company through different promotional techniques, the highest mean was received by the options advertisement and publicity. This difference can be referred to by considering that the students first heard about the firms’ company brand, while the students prefer the employer brand to be communicated through other promotional types. However, it still shows that the companies are and have been using advertisement and publicity to a large extent to market themselves and that these are the companies the students are interested in working at in the future. This might be because advertisement is any paid form of “non-personal communication” (Jobber & Fahy, 2009, p. 343) hence, the company still has control over the message that is sent to the students. Furthermore, publicity is something that is more difficult to control by the company although it will not cost them money. If it has a positive message the company has a lot to gain from it. As written in the theory about a comparing publicity to advisement, then it might be more credible to hear something from media then getting information through advertisement (ibid, p. 234)

Further, promotions made through the university, meaning lectures and other activities that are organized by the university, was the promotion type that got the highest mean, and therefore being the most popular one. Does this have something to do with the fact the university has the best and the easiest access to all their admitted students? They have access to the students’ through their email, they know what classes they take and therefore where they are assumed to be during parts of the day, and what types of companies they are likely to be interested in as future employees. They can also influence them on their web-page and the university has other types of means to make sure that all students take part in specific lectures or activities by e.g. making them mandatory.

Since all the other promotional activities are mostly optional (not mandatory by the university) the companies might have trouble in getting all students to participate and might therefore never meet some students at all and also loses an opportunity for a match between a company and a student to occur. The students are also familiar with the location and the university itself. They therefore might know what to expect and what is expected from them in return, which they might not do about the other promotional types. This leads to a difference in how the students perceive the promotional activities and how the companies see these activities. Even if the students do attend recruitment fairs (that was not liked by the students in Jaidi et al.s study (2011)) and events organized by the university, it is only to some extent. The result from the survey indicates that the students think the promotional activities organised by the university works fine, according to the mean, but it cannot be working well enough, since a large amount is not attending these events organized by the university. Most of the companies also think that the recruitment fairs works well, but then again they only see the students that do attend and from that they will not know what the other students that do not attend think. Another interesting aspect is why the students do not attend events not organized by the university to a greater extent? The students could feel they need more and better information, or that they need to make some type of effort. It is clear improvements could be made to enable an easier match between a company and student.

These activities are offered to the students to provide them with help in the currently difficult employment climate i.e. large unemployment rate amongst young adults (SCB, 2012), and guide them towards an employment after their graduation. Hence, when the company does get the
chance to have a personal contact with a student it will bring the student more insight in what courses he or she should apply to if he or she is aiming at pursuing a specific employment, as seen in our results especially from Company 1. This raises the question of how important it is to have a personal contact at or a connection to a company when applying for a job there and would it be as easy to apply without any contacts?

Is it more important with contacts from the view of the company, since they assumingly could get information about how they are perceived as well as how to better communicate their information and find suitable candidates for future employments? As discussed earlier the companies’ value the contacts with the student and it will therefore also be easier to find employment for a student with connections. As the students value the contact with the companies, it can be seen, from the students’ view, to be very helpful when companies are helping and guiding the student to choose the best suited courses, summer jobs or extracurricular activities, to fit the companies’ conditions. This can be very good as it gives the student some insight in the industry and therefore also he or she will get an idea if this is the career path to pursue. As mentioned in the theory chapter Collins and Stevens (2002) writes that a reason why companies use marketing tools is due to that many characteristics that is demanded on an employment are unknown or unknowable to an inexperienced job seeker, which presents them with difficulties in comparing the available employment options (Collins & Stevens, 2002, p.1124).

Another factor to why some companies’ vision of personal contact differs could be that two of the companies’ (2 and 3) first aim at having an internal recruitment and does not, therefore, have the same need to employ. Further, Company 4 does not have a large hiring need at all. When a position is advertised to the public, through job agencies and media, which could be costly but is controlled by the company (Jobber & Fahy, 2009, p. 343), these companies still feel that they have a lot of applicants, so they might never see the need to broaden their interpretation of personal contact to more than on-campus presence. All companies agreed on the importance of starting to interact with the students at an early stage in their education. Some even started as early as in the age 14, which might lead to the discussion of when it is too early to start and what would be the optimal and most ethical age, if there is one. Further, it raises the issue of whether or not it is ethical to start marketing the company towards children in that low age.

Although most students have not heard about the companies through personal contacts or family the one opinion that matters the most, since it got the highest mean, was that the significant other approves of the companies one chooses to apply for employment at. This result indicates that not all external factors are important and will provide an influence on the students’ intentions to pursue a job, instead family and close friends can have an impact on the choice of where to apply.

6.2.1 Theory of planned behaviour

In the theory of planned behaviour it is said that if a student had strong intentions he or she would pursue this intention, the stronger the intention is the higher likeliness of following through with the behaviour is (Ajzen, 1991, p.181). If applying this theory to this result it would bring the conclusion that some of the students are indecisive and do not have strong intentions to actually pursue a career within the area of interest that they had at the time they took the survey. As the result showed the students are open to influences from many directions from the companies, but values on-campus presence the highest from all the promotional types that are offered to them. This is a clear reason to why companies keep trying to influence the students at all levels of their
education from different activities, as a way of keeping them on the right track and not lose interest.

The results from the survey showed that many students have their desired companies within accounting or auditing firms, banks or other large national as well as international corporations. All of these companies have somewhat large and well known company brands, suggesting that the students are mostly interested in acquiring employment at large well known firms. However, on another question in the survey the result indicated that the students would not only apply to companies that are well known to them as the mean of that question were 3.17, and is therefore quite neutral on the likert scale. The question also brought up if the respondents would only apply to a company that is unknown to them, as this option had a slightly lower mean, hence, it is indicated that most students are interested in applying for employment at both well known companies as well as unknown companies, however, in choosing which they prefer most, the respondents are leaning towards well known companies. What is instead of more importance when selecting a company to apply to is that the company is active in their focus area of choice. In the article written by Jaidi et al., (2011) the authors say “that individuals are more likely to choose the job that they have invested the most time and effort in pursuing as, based on the theory of planned behavior, this likely is the job about which they have the most positive attitude.” (Jaidi et al., 2011, p.138). This implies that the students have more positive attitudes about the companies that are within the same focus area of their choice, which could be due to all the external or internal influences that they have been exposed to.

When asked what focus area one was interested in after graduating the results showed quite clearly that finance was the most popular direction and accounting was the next to the least popular and this is supported by the SCB report where it is stated that officials within banks are the most popular profession (finance) together with market analysis and brokers (SCB, 2011, p.112). Though, the students that graduated in 2008 had a different opinion, as 31% of them had chosen accounting as the most popular direction of business administration (Civilekonomerna, 2012, p.11). The reason of this difference can be that more jobs were available within accounting then, or that is was a larger trend to study accounting. However, when looking at the list of what companies students are interested in pursuing it can be seen that auditing firms are about equally popular as e.g. banks or other types of businesses within the finance branch. One reason many people are interested in working for audit firms though their focus area is finance could be as auditing is the profession that is easiest to acquire a job at in the near future (SACO, 2011, p.40) and the students are wishing to start their career at auditing firms to later work within the field of finance, when they have gained more experience. The underlying reason of students choosing to acquire employment at a different focus area than their desired could be due to the large unemployment rate, especially high for people in the ages 15 to 24 (SCB, 2012). In the report conducted by Civilekonomerna – Three years after graduation, it can be seen that most former students, as many as 36%, are working with economic functions, accounting or budgeting after these three years (Civilekonomerna, 2012, p.28). As it was more popular to study accounting at that time, it can be argued that the result is not odd, however, it could also be argued that accounting and such occupations are where the most jobs are available for newly graduates, thus strengthening the belief of the reasons why students seek employment in that field even though they have another focus area.
That the result shows that a majority of the students think about their future and the challenges they might have, could be partly due to how the financial climate is in the world at present time. The increasing numbers of unemployed young adults around the world might be worrying to some, since some students might be attempting to pursue their career abroad.

6.2.2 Criterions
The authors of the thesis have earlier explained their difficulties in finding sources for the criterions companies with a business focus (marketing, management, accounting, finance) are searching for in new employees. It has also been difficult to find what students believe are criterions that companies value. Hence, the analyses will merely be based on the results this thesis has given.

Students believe it to be important in the view of the companies, that they have work experience within the field that they want to work within and to have certain personality traits. The firms stated that the most important conditions on their employees were to have experience within the field and personality traits such as being outgoing and be able to make own decisions. Hence the students had quite good knowledge of what was asked of them. Some companies also stated that it is important to have a certain education or degree, the students believed this to be somewhat important as well, but did not see any problems of fulfilling this requirement. The students did not see any larger difficulties in fulfilling the personality traits the companies might require of them either. However, the results show that the students have low belief in fulfilling the criteria of having working experience within the field. This raises the question of why it is difficult for students to gain the working experience needed. Could it be due to that some businesses, like smaller accounting firms close or scale down during the summer, which is the time it is most suitable for students to gain working experience, when their main clients close down during the industrial holiday? Or it could be due to that there is higher competition to find a suitable part-time job in a town with a university.

The companies stated some important features that the authors of the thesis failed to give the students as alternatives in the survey. Some of these important criterions were leadership skills, high grades and a well written CV and personal letter. To write a good CV or personal letter is a skill that one of the companies thought the students at Umeå University lacked. A wish from the company was that the students would be offered classes in this to get a chance to improve. The lack of knowledge from the students about matters like, how to write a good CV or personal letter and what courses to choose could be factors the students wished to be uncovered with their interaction with companies, to ensure they have the criterions the companies value and enable for a match to take place.

The question remains of who is in charge of fixing the gaps the authors have discussed throughout the analysis chapter. Is it the companies, the students or the university’s responsibility? The authors believe that all parties must take responsibility to make the best out of the challenges they are faced with. As one example, in the case of the lack of courses that provides the students with skills to write good résumés, the authors believe that if the university was made aware of this problem, they could be of great help to many inexperienced job seekers. This is something that both the students and especially company 1, which mentioned this lack of skill, could bring up to the university’s attention. Further, the authors believe that the university could include more internships and help each student to find a suitable internship. However, this requires effort from the companies as they all need to be open to receiving interns and give the
interns assignments that will strengthen the students appeal to companies when graduated. Further, this will solve the previously discussed problem of students feeling that they cannot live up to the demands companies have on them, and the companies (4) will not feel that the students seldom have the experience they are looking for. According to this the authors do not believe that one of these parties’ are more responsible or entitled to make the changes needed than any other. Some changes might be difficult for the students to make but they can still raise awareness about the issues and changes that they would like to see.

6.3 Conclusions
The result shows that the companies and students value and want to interact with one another. The companies seem to have different interpretations of the meaning of personal meeting leading to that they do not have the same perceptions about what promotion types are the best ones to use to retain a personal meeting with the students. Some companies wanted to start to have contact with the students as early as from the age of 14. The result also showed that the companies and students both have the same perception about what qualities and criterions that is of important for the students to fulfil if applying for a job in the future. Although the students did not have all the same alternatives of the criterions that the companies found important and it was therefore a slight difference presented in the results.

Furthermore, the companies are not looking for the same qualities and criterions to be fulfilled by the different students that they are interested in. It is also depending on what area of interest a students’ has. It is always good to interact with a company active within that area when the chance is given. This, most students do and they prefer to go to activities that are organized by the university and recruitment fairs. Although, not all the companies seemed to have the same enthusiasm about recruitment fairs as other companies, and instead preferred personal meetings, which the authors believes to lead back to the difference in the interpretation of the meaning of a personal meeting.

The result also showed that it does not seem very important for companies to be able to fulfil all the steps in the step-by-step models, since the companies all consider themselves as attractive employers and has no problems in retaining and attracting future employees. Therefore there might be no need for a company to have a clear employer brand that is separated from the company brand, since they have showed that they can survive without it.

The conclusions of this thesis are, from the research questions:

1. What are the companies demands (criterions) of competences and skills on their future employees and how are the employers attempting to market themselves to attract new employees?

2. How well aware of the demands (criterions) of competences and skills businesses are demanding on their employees, are the students and how do the students perceive the companies employment marketing efforts towards them?

1. The companies are attempting to attract new employees by mainly attending recruitment and labour market fairs, holding lectures or being engaged in student run organizations. The most successful has according to the companies been personal meetings with
students. The demands companies have on the students are mainly that they should have working experience within the field and possess some specific personality traits as being able to take action and decisions themselves.

2. The students are well aware of the demands that are put on them as most students believe what is of most importance to employers are the experiences and the personality traits. However, the students feel they have large difficulties in acquiring the experience within the field the company operates. The students like promotions from the companies best when they are directed through the university or recruitment fairs and labour market fairs. However, they do not like when companies market themselves through advertisements, towards them.

These conclusion leads to the authors of this thesis recommending that improvements could be made to the activities that got lower means in the research, like advertisement. But also since not all the students are attending the most popular activities these have room for possible improvements. What the students and companies would like to change is something that would need further investigation, since that was not the purpose to find out in this thesis. It is also a recommendation to the students to get more work experience, this could be made through extra curriculum activities or through co-operations with the university to enhance the chances for students to find an internship. Further, the companies need to make it easier for the students to achieve this, as it will also provide the students with another view of the companies and might help in providing them with a stronger and clearer employer brand in the eyes of the students. It also help in the matching process since the students will have a clearer view of what the different employments mean and it would make it easier for the students to decide upon what career path that would suit them.

Due to that one of the interviewees wished for the university to help the students by offering courses on how to write a good CV, this will also be a recommendation. There are lectures on this provided by different student unions at the university, however, this excludes the students that are not active in these or have not paid attention to what is offered. So therefore it could be a great idea for the university itself to start a course in this. Both the companies and the university need to emphasize the importance of sustainability and knowledge in these matters. If the companies were demanding to be provided with already educated future employees that will help them to achieve a sustainable organization and employer brand in the future the students have to be prepared for that. As it looks from the result the companies are not asking for the qualities, but since they all believe for it to grow in importance this might change.

Hence, the recommendation for the students is to continue attending all sorts of events where they can meet companies and make sure to bring up difficulties they have in finding employment so that the university can help in this. The companies can first and foremost make it easier for students to gain experience at their company. They can, as previously mentioned accept interns or take in part-time workers or holiday workers that are students. The university can take more responsibility in helping students become attractive employees, by helping them get good internships and by offering courses in writing résumés and concerning CSR and sustainability. Further, they could offer more practical courses as a complement to the theoretical ones.
6.4 Further studies

Many of the scholars used in this thesis are agreeing on that more studies should be made on what students think and how they perceive things. As can be read this analysis provides a lot of opportunities for further studies. Especially interesting would be more research regarding how students chose employment and what criterions companies value in their employees, as very little research has been made in these areas. Further studies could also concern whether or not it is important to have a strong employer brand, and if it is important for all companies.

Further, this study could be implemented in other parts of Sweden that contains a university to see a similarity or difference to the result presented in this thesis results, or it could be conducted within more and different industries of businesses and educations. Further the study could be conducted in a town that contains no university and compare the difference in the result given from a town with a university.

As this study did not examine any correlations between different variables, it could also be of interest for further research. One example of this could be to examine in what age a person believe different criterions is most important, and what kind of marketing works best for different ages. It can also be interesting to include questions to the companies of how many students or newly graduated they have employed and within what field they are working.

When and at what age it would be best to start recruiting students and guide them in their educational choice and career path is also a topic for further studies that also contains the ethical dilemma of what is an appropriate age.
**Reference list**


Minchington B and Estis R; http://www.ere.net/2009/05/18/6-steps-to-an-employer-brand-strategy/ [Found 2012-09-14]


Appendix 1

Questions in the qualitative interviews

1. Personal information of interviewee:
   - Name
   - Position within company
   - Years of employment at company
   - Branch the company works within
   - Number of employees at the company

2. What does the recruitment process look like?

3. What are the most important traits your company are searching for when recruiting?
   - What are the most important traits your company are searching for when recruiting within business or marketing departments?
   - Do you feel that students today lack some traits you value or is there any other way they can improve?

4. How do you see your company compared to competitors within the same branch?
   - Weaker or stronger than competitors?

5. How do you believe the company are perceived as an employer by the employees and the public?
   - Better or worse than competitors?

6. Does the company value a good relationship to its employees? How is this communicated towards the employees and the public?

7. How does the company market itself towards current employees and when recruiting?

8. How are you working with these questions?
   - Someone that is in charge within these departments?

9. How would you say the relationship between the Human Resources and marketing department are at present?

10. How involved are the management and CEO in the communications with employees and the public regarding the view on the company and the labour relations?

11. What does the labour relationship appear to look like between the company and its employees?

12. Do you believe a company considered to be a good employer will receive more job applications than a company that is not considered to be a good employer. To a company that have a good relationship to its employees.
   - Why do you believe this, if that is the case?
- Does the company have a steady flow of applications from applicants?
- Even if no jobs are advertised?
- If yes, what do you believe is the reason of this?

13. Does the company use any sort of recruitment activities and/or marketing activities when approaching prospective future employees?

14. Does the company have any involvement of Corporate Social Responsibility and/or any other form of environment or sustainability focus / certificates?
- If yes, what are they and how important do the company believe they are?
- Are they marketed in any way?
- Does the interviewee believe it is something a job applicant values?
- Does the interviewee believe this influence who applies or how many applications your company receives?
- What type of competences of ethics / sustainability or CSR are the company looking for, if any.
- What do you believe the future looks like, considering CSR and sustainability? Is it something that will have greater or less importance?

15. What do you believe the future looks like, considering your recruitments and employer brand? Will it be harder competition? Is this anything the company will focus more or less on? Will it have greater or less importance?

16. Is there any other opinions the interviewee would like to bring up regarding recruitments, employer brand or CSR?
Appendix 2

Questions in the quantitative questionnaire

1. Gender
2. Age
3. What program are you studying?
4. What year are you studying?
5. What year are you planning to graduate?
6. To what extent do you think about... (On a scale of 1 Never – 5 All the time)
   - Your future employment
   - The challenge for you to acquire employment
   - When you should start to look for employment
   - How you look for employment
   - Where you can meet the future employers
7. What focus area are you interested in after graduating? (More than one choice is allowed)
   - Finance
   - Accounting
   - Marketing
   - Management
8. To what extent do you agree that you would only apply to a company... (On a scale of 1 Strongly Disagree – 5 Strongly Agree)
   - That is within the same focus area from the previous question
   - That you heard of
   - That is well known to you
   - That is unknown to you
   - That share the same values as you
   - Where you know some of the employees
   - Where you do not know any of the employees
   - Where you have met current employees
9. What company / companies would you like to acquire employment at? This question is recommended because some of the following mandatory questions are based on it.
10. To what extent do you agree with these statements about the company/ companies that you mentioned in the previous question? (On a scale of 1 Strongly Disagree – 5 Strongly Agree)
    - I have seen advertising for jobs at this organization in the school
    - I have seen this organization at the annual job fair
- I have talked to current employees at this organization
- I have seen positive stories about this organization on TV
- I have heard positive stories about this company from alumni, students' from previous years
- I have seen negative stories about this organization on TV
- I have heard negative stories about this company from alumni

11. To what extent did you hear about this company / these companies through... (On a scale of 1 Strongly Disagree – 5 Strongly Agree)
   - Advertisement (commercials)
   - Close friends
   - Close family
   - Remote friends
   - Remote family
   - Publicity (media)
   - Recruitment fairs
   - University
   - Previous schools
   - Social media
   - Previous employer
   - Other

12. To what extent do you prefer these types of promotion from a company? (On a scale of 1 Prefer the least – 5 Prefer the most)
   - Advertisement (commercials)
   - Publicity (media)
   - Recruitment fairs
   - University
   - Social media
   - Other
13. How well do you think the following promotions work in attracting new employees? (On a scale of 1 Do not work at all – 5 Works very well)
- Advertisement (commercials)
- Publicity (media)
- Recruitment fairs
- University
- Social media
- Other

14. How well do you think the following promotions works in providing a positive image for a company? (On a scale of 1 Not at all – 5 Works very well)
- Advertisement (commercials)
- Publicity (media)
- Recruitment fairs
- University
- Social media
- Other

15. Do you have any comments in relation to the answers you gave to the questions 12-14?

16. To what extent do you spend time... (On a scale of 1 Never – 5 As much as possible)
- Attending recruitment fairs
- Attending other events where you can meet companies, that are organized by the university
- Attending other events where you can meet companies, that are not organized by the university
- Interacting with the current employees at a company while attending these events/fairs

17. To what extent do you value... (On a scale of 1 Not at all – 5 Highly)
- The chance to interact with the current employees at a company at events/fairs
- The opinions the current employees at a company have
- The satisfaction of current employees in their work
- The satisfaction of current employees in their pay, compensation and benefits
- The satisfaction of current employees in their relationships with co-workers
- The satisfaction of current employees in the relationship with their manager
- The satisfaction of current employees in the job security

18. What do you think could be improved with the recruitment fairs and how could the advertisement from companies be enhanced?
Category, explanation: The next few questions are about sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)

The World Business Council for Sustainable Development’s definition of CSR is:

"Corporate Social Responsibility is the continuing commitment by business to contribute to economic development while improving the quality of life of the workforce and their families as well as of the community and society at large."

19. To what extent do you agree that sustainability and CSR is something that... (On a scale of 1
Strongly Disagree – 5 Strongly Agree)
- You have heard about before
- You are very familiar with
- You have more knowledge of than other students
- You value highly in a future employer
- You value when applying for employment at a company
- You value and chose to mainly interact with companies with a CSR focus at events/fairs
- You value and would only apply for employment at a company that focuses on these things
- Does not matter at all to you when looking for employment

22. What criterion's do you think future employers value highest in new prospective employees?
(On a scale of 1 Do not value – 5 Value highly)
- Education
- Working experience (in any field)
- Experience within the field
- Extra curriculum activities
- Personality traits (for example punctuality or trustworthiness)
- Drivers license
- Language skills
- Hobbies
- References
- Other
23. To what extent do you as a student think you have a chance to fulfill these? (On a scale of 1 No chance to fulfill – 5 High chance to fulfill)
   - Education
   - Working experience (in any field)
   - Experience within the field
   - Extra curriculum activities
   - Personality traits (for example punctuality or trustworthiness)
   - Drivers license
   - Language skills
   - Hobbies
   - References
   - Other

24. To what extent do you believe it would be... to apply for your first employment at the company / companies you have mentioned as potential employer(s) in question 9? (On a scale of 1 Strongly disagree – 5 Strongly agree)
   - Sensible
   - Wise
   - Useful

25. To what extent do you believe it to be important that your... approves the companies you choose to apply for employment at? (On a scale of 1 Strongly disagree – 5 Strongly agree)
   - Significant other
   - Parents
   - Best friend(s)
   - Relatives
   - School mate(s)
   - Teacher(s)

26. Do you have any opinions that you would like to add to this survey?
Appendix 3

Quantitative Results

3 - What program are you studying?

- 4 year Business Program
- 4 year International Business Program
- 4 year Business Program with focus on Commerce and Logistics
- 4 year Business Program with focus on Service Management

4 - What year are you studying?

Year studying

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Extra info: One respondent is on a break between year 3 & 4.
F5. What year are you planning to graduate?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>May 2014</th>
<th>June 2013</th>
<th>June 2014</th>
<th>June 2014</th>
<th>June 2014</th>
<th>June 2014</th>
<th>June 2014</th>
<th>June 2014</th>
<th>June 2014</th>
<th>June 2014</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Fall off 2 for responses January 2012 & June 2012.

Whole data set:
6 - To what extent do you think about...

1 - Never  5 - All the time

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent do you think about...</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your future employment</td>
<td>4.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The challenge for you to acquire employment</td>
<td>3.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>When you should start to look for employment</td>
<td>3.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How you look for employment</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where you can meet the future employers</td>
<td>3.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7 - What focus area are you interested in after graduating?

[Bar chart showing the number of responses for different focus areas: Accounting, Finance, Management, Marketing. The chart indicates the number of responses for each focus area with green and red bars representing 'Yes' and 'No' responses respectively.]
8 - To what extent do you agree that you would only apply to a company...

1 – Strongly disagree 5 – Strongly agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>That is within the same focus area from the previous question</td>
<td>3.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That you heard of</td>
<td>3.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That is well known to you</td>
<td>3.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That is unknown to you</td>
<td>2.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>That share the same values as you</td>
<td>3.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where you know some of the employees</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where you do not know any of the employees</td>
<td>2.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where you have met current employees</td>
<td>2.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F9 - What company / companies would you like to acquire employment at?

“PwC”
“Depending, my preferences are not that specific. I'm open for almost everything from: The government, SMEs, MNC, EU etc.”
“International company”
“Åhléns”
“Langley Travel, ABB, Utrikesdepartementet”
"SEB, NORDEA, SWEDBANK, HANDELSBANKEN, JOMORGAN”
"Ericsson, SEB, Nordea, Swedbank, Handelsbanken”
“Catella Corporate Finance”
“KPMG, PwC”
“Audit firms like Ernst and Young, KPMG, PWC, Deloitte, Grant Thornton etc.”
“H&M, Nike,”
“large international cooperations”
“Handelsbanken PWC Academic work WASA Credit”
“Ramböll, PwC, KPMG, Accenture, Capgemeni etc”
“Nike, Puma Addidas”
“Doesn't matter too much as long as ai get a job, you can't be too picky with your first job because it's the one that can hand you future references.”
“Media-saturn”
“Goldmann Sachs, H&M”
“International trade company”
“??”
“P&G, Google, Opera.”
“Vattenfall, Nike, “
“...”
“McKinsey & Company; KPMG; Boston Consulting Group; Merrill Lynch; JP Morgan Chase; Wells Fargo & Co; Baring Vostok Capital Partners; Goldman Sachs; Morgan Stanley; Deutsche Bank; Credit Suisse; SwedBank, Nordea, SEB; UBS; HSBC; Earnst & Y; PWC; Deloitte. and fuck it may be I'll start my own company!”
10 - To what extent do you agree with these statements about the company / companies that you mentioned in the previous question?

1 – Strongly disagree  5 – Strongly agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have seen advertising for jobs at this organization in the school</td>
<td>2.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have seen this organization at the annual job fair</td>
<td>2.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have talked to current employees at this organization</td>
<td>3.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have seen positive stories about this organization on TV</td>
<td>2.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have heard positive stories about this company from alumni</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have seen negative stories about this organization on TV</td>
<td>1.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have heard negative stories about this company from alumni</td>
<td>1.88</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11 - To what extent did you hear about this company / these companies through...

1 – Strongly disagree  5 – Strongly agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Promotion</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advertisement (commercials)</td>
<td>3.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close friends</td>
<td>2.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close family</td>
<td>2.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote friends</td>
<td>2.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remote family</td>
<td>2.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publicity (media)</td>
<td>3.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment fairs</td>
<td>2.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>2.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous schools</td>
<td>2.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>2.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previous employer</td>
<td>2.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2.82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12 - To what extent do you prefer these types of promotion from a company?

1 – Prefer the least  5 – Prefer the most

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Promotion</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advertisement (commercials)</td>
<td>2.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publicity (media)</td>
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<td>Recruitment fairs</td>
<td>3.85</td>
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<td>University</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>3.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

13 - How well do you think the following promotions work in attracting new employees?
How well do you think the following promotions work in attracting new employees?  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Promotion</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advertisement (commercials)</td>
<td>3.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publicity (media)</td>
<td>3.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment fairs</td>
<td>3.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>4.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>3.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

14 - How well do you think the following promotions works in providing a positive image for a company?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Promotion</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advertisement (commercials)</td>
<td>3.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Publicity (media)</td>
<td>3.82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment fairs</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University</td>
<td>4.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social media</td>
<td>3.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15 - Do you have any comments in relation to the answers you gave to the questions 12-14?

“To be honest i really do not understand the last question. I had difficulties to interpret what you like me to answer..?”

“Very different between banks”

“??”

“My ideal employment are strongly influencing me with ad.”

“By other I meant most of the time internships and summer educational programs where students have chance to see what their future work will look like and able to see work from inside. I do believe that this sis the most convenient way of developing new employees from students. Plus I have found my c”
16 - To what extent do you spend time...

1 – Never  5 – As much as possible

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent do you spend time...</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attending recruitment fairs</td>
<td>3.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending other events where you can meet companies, that are organised by the university</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending other events where you can meet companies, that are not organised by the university</td>
<td>2.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interacting with the current employees at a company while attending these events/fairs</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17 - To what extent do you value...

1 – Not at all  5 – Highly

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent do you value...</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The chance to interact with the current employees at a company at events/fairs</td>
<td>3.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The opinions the current employees at a company have</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The satisfaction of current employees in their work</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The satisfaction of current employees in their pay, compensation and benefits</td>
<td>3.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The satisfaction of current employees in their relationships with co-workers</td>
<td>3.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The satisfaction of current employees in the relationship with their manager</td>
<td>3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The satisfaction of current employees in the job security</td>
<td>3.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

18 - What do you think could be improved with the recruitment fairs and how could the advertisement from companies be enhanced?

“Attract by use opportunities and benefits by engage to the organization.”
“More banks/investment banks to Umeå Uni!!!”
“I dont have that much experience from the fairs. I think it will be useful when my graduation is approaching”
“I think that the companies need to be better involved in the preparation of the recruitment fairs and attend the events around the fair, such as dinners etc. Those are the times that it is easier for the students to talk to the company representatives and actually make a connection.”
“Some companies need to consider more thoroughly WHO the send to the fairs to represent their company. A passive person who just stands behind a table awaiting the students to approach him or her with questions is not a good choice. An outgoing person who will take the fist step is more appropriate.”
“They could have more specific reasons for coming not only, apply on the webpage if your are interested more like, if you are interested at working with us why don't we step back and have a little interview.. make it easier to be hired and to feel like attending these fairs actually gives contacts”
“More free pens and candy... not”
“?”
“Cut the advertisement and focus on efficiency and job satisfaction. I have found all companies from my list by reading scientific literature, business magazines' stories and most important by their income numbers(market success). Plus job satisfaction is really appealing factor.”
19 - To what extent do you agree that sustainability and CSR is something that...

1 – Strongly disagree      5 – Strongly agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You have heard about before</td>
<td>4.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You are very familiar with</td>
<td>3.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You have more knowledge of than other students</td>
<td>3.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You value highly in a future employer</td>
<td>3.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You value when applying for employment at a company</td>
<td>3.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You value and chose to mainly interact with companies with a CSR focus at events/fairs</td>
<td>2.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You value and would only apply for employment at a company that focuses on these things</td>
<td>2.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does not matter at all to you when looking for employment</td>
<td>2.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

22 - What criterion's do you think future employers value highest in new prospective employees?

1 – Do not value      5 – Value highest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What criterion's do you think future employers value highest in new prospective employees?</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working experience (in any field)</td>
<td>4.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience within the field</td>
<td>4.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra curriculum activities</td>
<td>3.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality traits</td>
<td>4.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drivers license</td>
<td>2.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language skills</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hobbies</td>
<td>2.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>3.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
22 - What criterion's do you think future employers value highest in new prospective employees?
23 - To what extent do you as a student think you have a chance to fulfill these?

1 – No chance to fulfil  5 – High chance to fulfil

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent do you as a student think you have a chance to fulfill these?</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>4.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working experience (in any field)</td>
<td>3.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experience within the field</td>
<td>2.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra curriculum activities</td>
<td>3.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality traits</td>
<td>4.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drivers license</td>
<td>4.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language skills</td>
<td>4.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hobbies</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>3.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

24 - To what extent do you believe it would be... to apply for your first employment at the company / companies you have mentioned as potential employer(s) in question 9?

1 – Strongly disagree  5 – Strongly agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent do you believe it would be... to apply for your first employment at the company / companies you have mentioned as potential employer(s) in question 9?</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sensible</td>
<td>3.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wise</td>
<td>3.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Useful</td>
<td>4.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

25 - To what extent do you believe it to be important that your... approves the companies you choose to apply for employment at?

1 – Strongly disagree  5 – Strongly agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>To what extent do you believe it to be important that your... approves the companies you choose to apply for employment at?</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Significant other</td>
<td>3.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>2.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Best friend(s)</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatives</td>
<td>2.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School mate(s)</td>
<td>2.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher(s)</td>
<td>1.97</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
26 - Do you have any opinions that you would like to add to this survey?

“Once again, i have difficulties interpreting the questions.“
“I think you answer very different in which enviroment you want to work in and also in which country/ specific industry.”
"I don't understand question N#24!”
“Too long.”
“less questions in every question..... “