



Recruitment

Case #2 (FIN2019): HOW TO ATTRACT GRADUATES TO WORK FOR ABC OY

Abstract

The case study describes the challenges with recruitment and retention of young graduates at a regional SME, ABC Oy. The case study focuses on how to attract new graduate students to the company and how ABC Oy could collaborate better with the university to increase their visibility and be an interesting company for students and graduates. In order to understand the situation, key staff in the university and the CEO and HR manager of the case study company were interviewed. A survey was also carried out with university students.

Introduction of the company and the industry

The company for this case study deals with IT services, mainly with Data Centre services and software solutions. ABC Oy is a small company employing 37 employees, of which only 8 are women. ABC Oy is a subsidiary of one of the region's oldest companies. The company's main competitors are companies that operate globally and are well-known and established. ABC Oy's turnover was 3.2 million euros at the end of 2018.

ABC Oy is based in a sparsely populated region in Northern Finland. The region's capital is the biggest town and it is from there that ABC Oy's operates. The region suffers from migration of workers to bigger cities in search of better employment opportunities and cities with larger populations and more activities.^{1,2} This continuing trend makes it difficult for companies in the region to find and retain talent.

HR in the company

The company's HR duties are carried out by one employee, who is also the HR manager. This manager co-operates with the university and participates in expos. The HR manager also informs the university about the open vacancies within the company.

Strengths and weaknesses

The company has been able to successfully acquire a positive turnover partially due to its strengths. Some of these strengths include pleasant work conditions for their staff. Employees are motivated and committed to produce positive results yearly for the company. They are given attractive staff benefits such as insurance, lunch and recreational vouchers, telephone



subscription discounts etc. Due to the company's small size, customers can easily approach the company. ABC Oy prides itself as a customer friendly company and caters products and services for their customers' need. The company can also easily tap into the talent pool available at the university. This is a major advantage for ABC Oy in the area.

There are, however, some weaknesses, which are detailed in the table below.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Customer focused	Difficulty retaining competent employees
Good work benefits	Remote location
Interesting employer	Single HR practitioner
Co-operation with university	Lack of competent employees
Pleasant work conditions	Low visibility to the populace
Steady and sound foundation (background)	Inconspicuous brand

Table 1. Strengths and weaknesses of ABC Oy. Source: own elaboration and interview

Objectives of the case study

The objective of this case study is to procure ways that ABC Oy can fully exploit an already established relationship with the university to increase the company's attractiveness amongst the students and graduates of the local university. The main objective is to use the university as a source of efficient, productive, talented individuals and to increase ABC Oy's visibility through university relations and co-operation. An additional objective is to ascertain the motivational factors for Gen Z.

Research objectives:

What are the motivational factors for Gen Z?

How to increase ABC Oy's visibility through university relations and cooperation?

Literature review

This case study is theoretically supported and based on the following journals:

Kakinuma, H. (2015). How Companies Can Attract the Talented Vietnamese Graduates? An Experimental-Designed Investigation. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 10(2), 31-40

Van der Sijdea, P., Nair, P., & During, W. (2013). Graduates' Perception of Employment in SMEs and Large Enterprises. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 4(6), 15-20.

Montana, P. J., & Petit, F. (2011). Motivating And Managing Generation X And Y On The Job While Preparing For Z: A Market Oriented Approach. *Journal of Business & Economics Research (JBER)*, 6(8), 139-148.

The Job Image

How can the job image be understood? From a students' point of view, what does this entail? Job image could be a combination of endless facts, personal experiences or goals that produce a certain public impression. Van der Sijde et al.4 argue that a job-image is composed of three aspects (Three C's) – content, company and compensation. For young graduates to be attracted to a company, conditions need to be right for them. Generation X, Y and Z do not see the need to stay at a particular task or workplace for long period of time. Their image of the company is created with information gathered from various sources, which are mainly on social media platforms or hearsay.

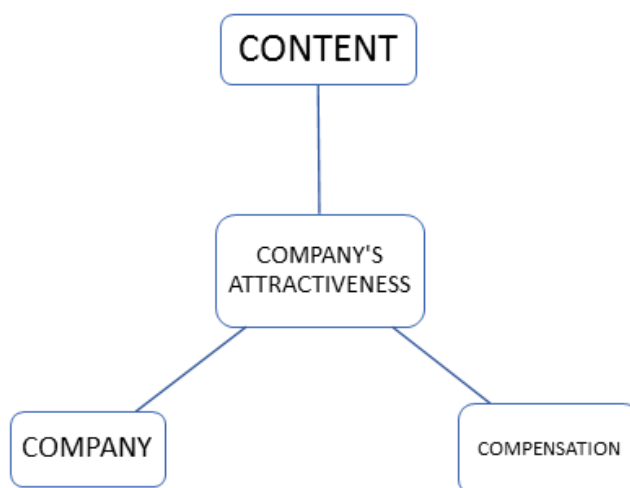


Figure 1. Three aspects of job image

The image of a company is formed through an individual's perception and preference factors such as flexible working hours and fringe-benefits. These factors could play a major role in graduates' decision-making process and the attractiveness of a company. How the company is perceived is important, for example, when recruiters or company staff approach students/graduates they will want to know how workers are treated or rewarded, how the company communicates internally and externally with the outside world. Answers to these questions will determine how well the company is perceived as a great place to work.



With the right perception, students are naturally interested and attracted to work for a company. What are the ways companies can affect this perception, and how can student form a right perception about the company? One good way would be during workshops, company representatives openly approach students to participate in fun games or puzzles, which are geared to spark their curiosity about the company. These representatives could also make themselves available so that these students can easily form these images of what sort of people they would be working with at the company.⁴

Gen Z & Motivational Factors

How can we define Gen Z? What are some characteristics that people from this generation possess? What could be some motivating factors that will attract them to a job and make them stay?

Montana et al.⁵ explains Gen X as people born within the years 1965 to 1977, while Gen Y are individuals born from 1978 to 1994. Individuals from Gen Y are both into the world of technology and are quick to acquire knowledge in the use of new tools and technologies. This makes them highly qualified for jobs related to digital and IT technologies. Gen Y have lived with the job losses their parents experienced at the hands of individuals from Gen X, and are willing to undergo changes to their careers more than people from the previous group – Gen X.

Generation Z can also be simply referred to as the connected generation – Gen C. Where the C denotes connection, content, community-oriented or computing-oriented. They are those born after 1996 into a highly developed technological periods of the late 20th century and early 21st century. They use words and expressions not known to previous generations. They are always connected and are comfortable with virtual forms or socialisation. They are mostly environment-conscious, impatient, continuously changing and looking for new challenges and will easily change jobs compared to previous generations, X and Y.⁵

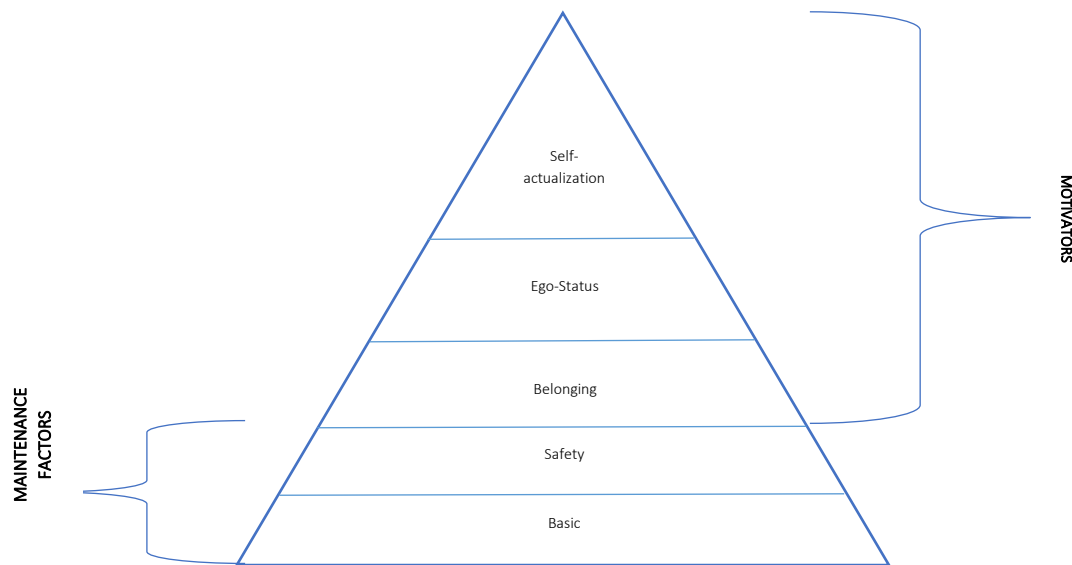


Figure 2. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, Herzberg's Motivators and Maintenance Factors

Looking at Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Herzberg's Motivators, it could be concluded that, from the bottom, the first and second levels in the hierarchy, *basic* and *safety*, reflect individual survival needs. The third level upwards are motivators that reflect how an individual interacts with the environment. The *Belonging* motivator explains how an individual wants to be accepted and feel appreciated by the people he or she is interacting with on daily basis. Then *Ego-the status* motivator shows how an individual is able to contribute within a group in order to receive recognition. Finally, the last level in the hierarchy, *self-actualization* is when an individual can feel or experience self-development, growth or fulfilment through the effort delivered within the group.⁵

Motivation develops when a job is challenging and there is the possibility to gain a sense of recognition, development, responsibility, advancement and growth. Maintenance factors are important for the formation of feelings of satisfaction. If any of the two lower levels are not met, it is difficult to proceed to the upper levels in the hierarchy. Hence, satisfaction on both maintenance and motivation needs are crucial. Motivation of an employee is affected by personal circumstances in life, experiences, age and external environmental factors.⁵ Based on these needs, as well as the characteristics of individuals belonging to Gen Z, it is possible to conclude that Gen Z are motivated by transparency, flexibility and personal freedom.

Due to their continuous need for information, they would like to be heard and want to be in the know about issues. This mean that they would want their superiors to listen to their ideas and value opinions given to the company. Their characteristics could mean that they would want independence at work and want immediate recognition. Being the connected generation, they would also want to stay connected while at work. This means that they would want to use their smartphones, tablets and internet-connected devices at work or integrated



to their work lives. Gen Z individuals are mostly environment conscious. This could mean that they value employment in organisations that demonstrates genuine interest in conserving nature, are connected with the community and demonstrate social responsibility.

Students will want to work in an environment in which they feel comfortable. For a company to stay attractive to students, students must feel that the compensation provided by the company is compelling enough than tempting offers from other companies. Compensation should not only be in monetary form, and job security is also a very crucial factor in cementing attractiveness. There should be opportunities for development, as well as paths to advancement and possibilities of promotion.³

During the interviews it was determined that ABC Oy had difficulties attracting younger talent or retaining existing workers. The reason for this could be related to interest in the level of work, international orientation, and opportunities for career development as observed by Van der Sijde et al.⁴ The authors concluded from the comparison between business and non-business graduates, that business graduates preferred working for an SME, whereas non-business, preferred large companies. Could this also be one of the reasons that non-business graduates from the university are attracted to other large companies?

Methodology

The foundation of this case study is the analysis of the company and literature review. Analysis of the present situation of the company and the university was carried out via interviews and questionnaires. Collection of quantitative data were collected by questionnaire and qualitative interview questions were sent to key staff members within the university. Important data were received from the HR manager of the company and the CEO. Their information was crucial for this case study as it provides deep insights into the inner-workings of the company and its relationship with the university.

Findings and analysis - Interview with ABC Oy representatives

The university and ABC Oy has an ongoing relationship that allows the company to access talent directly from the university. ABC Oy is, presently, only co-operating with the university. The cooperation between both institutions has been fruitful and productive. They are both interested in developing their collaboration, with workshops and seminars where their knowledge can be shared bidirectionally. ABC Oy has not had any need to broaden their network to other universities, and the university has everything to offer the company. Recruitment of fresh talent has been made possible through this cooperation. The majority of these employed graduates are from either engineering fields or a business-data processing field. There have also been students from the university completing internships or summer jobs at the company. The company is naturally seen as a possible place for students when searching for an internship.



ABC Oy has a contact person who is working with the university on open vacancies. It is challenging to recruit graduates for the software developing tasks, because usually candidates are required to have prior experience of such a task. There is no specific person appointed by the university to work with SMEs to strategically position their students in companies. Heads of departments and in some cases, teachers, work with these companies whenever needed. This relationship is regularly checked, for example, during thesis work, internship and projects. Non-official face-to-face meetings take place and emails are exchanged to maintain the relationship.

Social media is the most important recruiting tool for ABC Oy. Most of the employees have found ABC Oy through social media. It has been determined that social media is the easiest way to reach potential workers. Traditional advertisements through newspapers are not used. There are other competitors in the region involved in the same line of business as ABC Oy. An unattractive company will make it easy for employees to change workplaces and move to a competitor. For ABC Oy to improve their image and position themselves as a great workplace for potential graduates, the company is involved in some employer branding. ABC Oy aim to be the employer or partner where people find it desirable to work. Current workers recommend ABC Oy to their friends and people they know that might be interested in working for the company.

Interview with the university teachers

The university is committed to annual curriculum updates meet the skills need of local companies. This update is done in collaboration with SMEs, and in this case, with ABC Oy via meetings and discussions before the course is implemented. For example, the university planned to have AI education in collaboration with companies. Some other needs of the company are also met during student internships or project work at ABC Oy. The university has made sure their students' profile perfectly match the basic needs of ABC Oy.

From a member of staff interviewed, we could conclude that the university is continuously organising workshops and seminars that allow SMEs and large companies to meet with students. An example of these is the Expeditus Novus seminar, which gives students exposure to opportunities in these companies. It is unknown, however, if the school imposes strict guidelines concerning the content of these company presentations so that their students actually benefit from these seminars and workshops. The university, however, make sure that these workshops or seminars provide critical knowledge and information (both current and future-proof) needed by their students. We were told, that representatives of ABC Oy usually have something to offer students during these visits.

One of the respondents mentioned that some SMEs in the area contact the university teachers directly to source competent talent from within the school. The interviewees gave conflicting responses when asked if there is a plan in place to make graduates attractive to SMEs. One respondent said there was not a concrete plan in place, but there will have to be a plan to improve the attractiveness of graduates from the university. They added that this is just on a regional level, but also nationally, so that larger companies can find talent from the university. Another respondent emphasised the modernity and quality of education offered at the



university. There is, however, no plan for local SMEs, but the university targets all companies and makes sure their students are attractive to companies via the quality of education received at the university.

In Kajaani, there are exceptional possibilities to study and explore the field of data analytics in practice. ABC Oy and the university would like to develop and improve on their relationship further regarding this aspect of data analytics. They are already developing projects that will assist in its facilitation.

Survey analysis

To gather data for this case study, a survey was carried out both physically and electronically among some students of the university. There were 114 responses in total collected for the survey and analysis was done based on these responses. An electronic survey was sent to students via email and the majority of the targeted students replied – about 95%. Amongst the respondents to the survey there were 34 females (29.82 %), 80 males (69.30 %) and 1 respondent (0.88 %) who identifies as other.

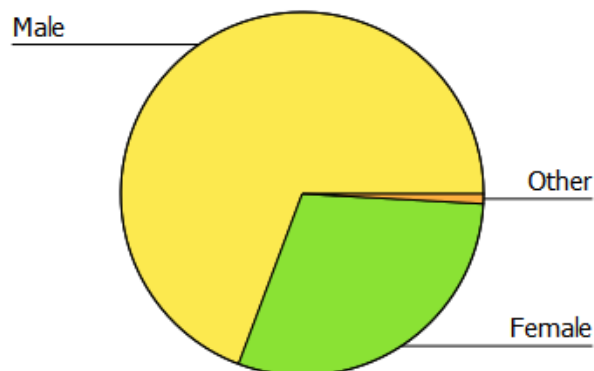


Figure 3. Gender representation of students

All responses came from bachelor's degree students; 31 of them were English programme students and 83 were from Finnish degree programmes. The majority of the respondents are non-business degree students, about 64 (56.14%), and 50 (43.86%) are business degree majors students.

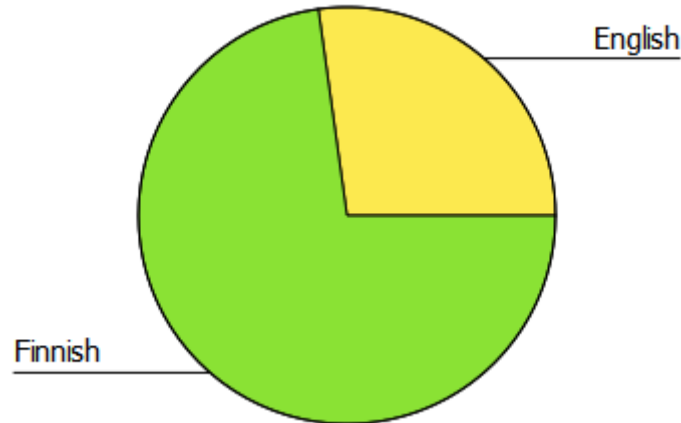


Figure 4. Language instruction of respondents' studies

The survey revealed that about 69.3% (79 respondents) were not from Kainuu region and about 63% (72) of them have heard of the company, ABC Oy.

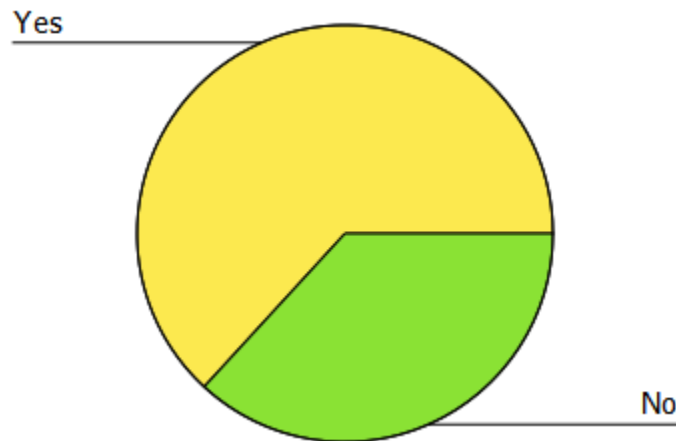


Figure 5. Knowledge of ABC Oy

Despite the revelation from the results, more than half of the respondents are not from the Kainuu region. It was good to observe that 63 (55.3%) of them would still like to work in the region. There were 30 (26.3%) who were unsure and 21 (18.4%) who stated they would not want to work in Kainuu.

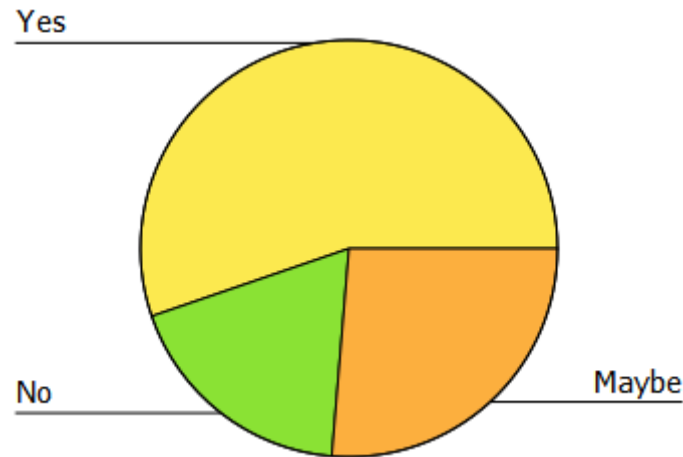


Figure 6. Representation of the respondents' interest to work in Kainuu region

Some of the reasons stated for not wanting to stay and work in Kainuu are as follows:

- Lack of interesting job opportunities
- Need to work and live in home country
- Family somewhere else
- Lack of English-speaking jobs
- Need to be in bigger city
- Metropolitan area is more attractive

The survey was designed to understand respondents' job image and expectations. It was revealed that the majority of the survey respondents would want to work in small and medium sized companies. About 38% (43 respondents) would like to work in a company of less than 20 employees, while 49% (56 respondents) would prefer to work in companies with more than 20 but less than 100 employees.

Only 7.89% (9 respondents) would want to work for companies with 100-249 employees. The remaining 6 respondents (5.26%) would like to work in companies with over 250 employees. The survey checked for employment channels that the respondents might want to use in search of jobs.

The results from the survey showed that many of our respondents who would like to work in Kainuu use electronic agencies and word of mouth when searching for a job. About 63% of those who wanted to work in the region said that they use electronic agencies such as monster.fi, ovi.fi etc. and 59% use word of mouth during a job search. Another channel for a job search is social media, which accounted for about 51% of the respondents.



Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Electronic agencies: monster.fi, ovi.fi, mol.fi, others [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Electronic agencies: monster.fi, ovi.fi, mol.fi, others		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	40,00 63,49%	23,00 36,51%	63,00 100,00%
No	13,00 61,90%	8,00 38,10%	21,00 100,00%
Maybe	21,00 70,00%	9,00 30,00%	30,00 100,00%
Total	74,00 64,91%	40,00 35,09%	114,00 100,00%

Table 2. Use of electronic agency among those who would like to work in Kainuu

Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Word of mouth (Friends and relatives) [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Word of mouth (Friends and relatives)		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	37,00 58,73%	26,00 41,27%	63,00 100,00%
No	16,00 76,19%	5,00 23,81%	21,00 100,00%
Maybe	18,00 60,00%	12,00 40,00%	30,00 100,00%
Total	71,00 62,28%	43,00 37,72%	114,00 100,00%

Table 3. Word of mouth result among those who would like to work in Kainuu

Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Social media: LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Social media: LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	32,00 50,79%	31,00 49,21%	63,00 100,00%
No	13,00 61,90%	8,00 38,10%	21,00 100,00%
Maybe	21,00 70,00%	9,00 30,00%	30,00 100,00%
Total	66,00 57,89%	48,00 42,11%	114,00 100,00%

Table 4. Social media usage among those who would like to work in Kainuu



Would you like to work in Kainuu? * University, i.e. KAMK [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	University, i.e. KAMK		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	21,00 33,33%	42,00 66,67%	63,00 100,00%
No	6,00 28,57%	15,00 71,43%	21,00 100,00%
Maybe	9,00 30,00%	21,00 70,00%	30,00 100,00%
Total	36,00 31,58%	78,00 68,42%	114,00 100,00%

Table 5. Job search through the university among those who would like to work in Kainuu

Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Employment agency (Työvoimatoimisto) [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Employment agency (Työvoimatoimisto)		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	19,00 30,16%	44,00 69,84%	63,00 100,00%
No	9,00 42,86%	12,00 57,14%	21,00 100,00%
Maybe	7,00 23,33%	23,00 76,67%	30,00 100,00%
Total	35,00 30,70%	79,00 69,30%	114,00 100,00%

Table 6. Job search through employment agency among those who would like to work in Kainuu

Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Newspapers [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Newspapers		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	9,00 14,29%	54,00 85,71%	63,00 100,00%
No	4,00 19,05%	17,00 80,95%	21,00 100,00%
Maybe	6,00 20,00%	24,00 80,00%	30,00 100,00%
Total	19,00 16,67%	95,00 83,33%	114,00 100,00%

Table 7. Job search via newspapers among those who would like to work in Kainuu



Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Physical agencies such as SIHTI [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Physical agencies such as SIHTI		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	6,00 9,52%	57,00 90,48%	63,00 100,00%
No	2,00 9,52%	19,00 90,48%	21,00 100,00%
Maybe	3,00 10,00%	27,00 90,00%	30,00 100,00%
Total	11,00 9,65%	103,00 90,35%	114,00 100,00%

Table 8. Job search through local and physical agencies among those who would like to work in Kainuu

Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Others [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Others		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	3,00 4,92%	58,00 95,08%	61,00 100,00%
No	1,00 4,76%	20,00 95,24%	21,00 100,00%
Maybe	3,00 10,00%	27,00 90,00%	30,00 100,00%
Total	7,00 6,25%	105,00 93,75%	112,00 100,00%

Table 9. Other channels of job search among those who would like to work in Kainuu

These results could give a general understanding of important channels companies in the region and especially, the case study company, ABC Oy could target to attract prospective talent to the company.

For ABC Oy to effectively attract students, the survey also helped understand those factors that could expose students more to SMEs in the area. It also reveals what factors respondents consider important and what kind of opportunities they expect the potential employers offers to them. The survey provided options for these factors, in significance order from 1-5; where 1 is not at all important and 5 means very important.

Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Work conditions, nice colleagues [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Work conditions, nice colleagues					Total
	Not at all important	Partly not important	important	Partly important	Very important	
Yes	1,00 1,61%	,00 ,00%	4,00 6,45%	18,00 29,03%	39,00 62,90%	62,00 100,00%
No	,00 ,00%	1,00 4,76%	,00 ,00%	6,00 28,57%	14,00 66,67%	21,00 100,00%
Maybe	1,00 3,33%	1,00 3,33%	,00 ,00%	7,00 23,33%	21,00 70,00%	30,00 100,00%
Total	2,00 1,77%	2,00 1,77%	4,00 3,54%	31,00 27,43%	74,00 65,49%	113,00 100,00%

Table 10. Work condition as a motivational factor among those who would like to work in Kainuu



Based on this survey, work conditions and nice colleagues are considered as a very important factor for those who would like to work in Kainuu – over 60% who would want to work in Kainuu chose this as very important factor. Freedom at work, creative space, job content and opportunities for career growth was also revealed as very important factors by around 30% of survey respondents.

Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Freedom, creative space [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Freedom, creative space					Total
	Not at all important	partly not important	important	partly important	very important	
Yes	1,00 1,61%	8,00 12,90%	11,00 17,74%	28,00 45,16%	14,00 22,58%	62,00 100,00%
No	,00 ,00%	3,00 4,76%	1,00 1,54%	12,00 19,05%	5,00 7,91%	21,00 33,33%
Maybe	,00 ,00%	1,00 1,61%	3,00 4,76%	11,00 17,74%	15,00 23,81%	30,00 48,38%
Total	1,00 ,88%	12,00 10,62%	15,00 13,27%	51,00 45,13%	34,00 30,09%	113,00 100,00%

Table 11. Freedom and creative space as a motivational factor among those who would like to work in Kainuu

Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Actual content of the work [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Actual content of the work					Total
	Not at all important	Partly not important	important	Partly important	Very important	
Yes	1,00 1,64%	3,00 4,92%	9,00 14,75%	29,00 47,54%	19,00 31,15%	61,00 100,00%
No	,00 ,00%	1,00 1,64%	4,00 6,37%	9,00 14,75%	7,00 11,54%	21,00 33,33%
Maybe	,00 ,00%	,00 ,00%	5,00 7,91%	16,00 25,81%	9,00 14,75%	30,00 48,38%
Total	1,00 ,89%	4,00 3,57%	18,00 16,07%	54,00 48,21%	35,00 31,25%	112,00 100,00%

Table 12. Actual content of work as a motivational factor among those who would like to work in Kainuu

Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Training opportunities [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Training opportunities					Total
	Not at all important	Partly not important	important	Partly important	Very important	
Yes	3,00 4,84%	4,00 6,45%	18,00 29,03%	27,00 43,55%	10,00 16,13%	62,00 100,00%
No	1,00 1,64%	4,00 6,45%	4,00 6,45%	10,00 16,13%	2,00 3,23%	21,00 33,33%
Maybe	,00 ,00%	,00 ,00%	4,00 6,45%	17,00 27,47%	9,00 14,35%	30,00 48,38%
Total	4,00 3,54%	8,00 7,08%	26,00 23,01%	54,00 47,79%	21,00 18,58%	113,00 100,00%

Table 13. Training opportunities as a motivational factor among those who would like to work in Kainuu

Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Opportunities for growth, career [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Opportunities for growth, career					Total
	Not at all important	Partly not important	Important	Partly not important	Very important	
Yes	2,00 3,23%	3,00 4,84%	15,00 24,19%	28,00 45,16%	14,00 22,58%	62,00 100,00%
No	,00 ,00%	1,00 1,64%	6,00 9,52%	9,00 14,35%	5,00 7,91%	21,00 33,33%
Maybe	,00 ,00%	4,00 6,45%	3,00 4,84%	7,00 11,54%	16,00 25,81%	30,00 48,38%
Total	2,00 1,77%	8,00 7,08%	24,00 21,24%	44,00 38,94%	35,00 30,97%	113,00 100,00%

Table 14. Opportunities for growth as a motivational factor among those who would like to work in Kainuu



According to respondents, opportunities for training and creating a career are considered as important factors.

Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Salary [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Salary				Total
	Partly not important	important	Partly important	Very important	
Yes	9,00 14,52%	21,00 33,87%	22,00 35,48%	10,00 16,13%	62,00 100,00%
No	1,00 4,76%	6,00 28,57%	9,00 42,86%	5,00 23,81%	21,00 100,00%
Maybe	3,00 10,00%	5,00 16,67%	12,00 40,00%	10,00 33,33%	30,00 100,00%
Total	13,00 11,50%	32,00 28,32%	43,00 38,05%	25,00 22,12%	113,00 100,00%

Table 15. Salary as a motivational factor among those who would like to work in Kainuu

Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Flexible Contract [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Flexible Contract					Total
	Not at all important	Partly not important	important	Partly important	Very important	
Yes	1,00 1,61%	11,00 17,74%	23,00 37,10%	23,00 37,10%	4,00 6,45%	62,00 100,00%
No	,00 ,00%	2,00 9,52%	8,00 38,10%	7,00 33,33%	4,00 19,05%	21,00 100,00%
Maybe	1,00 3,33%	,00 ,00%	9,00 30,00%	15,00 50,00%	5,00 16,67%	30,00 100,00%
Total	2,00 1,77%	13,00 11,50%	40,00 35,40%	45,00 39,82%	13,00 11,50%	113,00 100,00%

Table 16. Flexible contract as a motivational factor among those who would like to work in Kainuu

Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Flexible working hours [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Flexible working hours					Total
	Not at all important	Partly not important	important	Partly important	Very important	
Yes	3,00 4,84%	10,00 16,13%	19,00 30,65%	24,00 38,71%	6,00 9,68%	62,00 100,00%
No	,00 ,00%	4,00 19,05%	9,00 42,86%	3,00 14,29%	5,00 23,81%	21,00 100,00%
Maybe	,00 ,00%	3,00 10,00%	5,00 16,67%	15,00 50,00%	7,00 23,33%	30,00 100,00%
Total	3,00 2,65%	17,00 15,04%	33,00 29,20%	42,00 37,17%	18,00 15,93%	113,00 100,00%

Table 17. Flexible working hours as a motivational factor among those who would like to work in Kainuu

Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Change, non-routine activities [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Change, non-routine activities					Total
	Not important at all	partly not important	important	partly important	very important	
Yes	6,00 9,68%	10,00 16,13%	18,00 29,03%	21,00 33,87%	7,00 11,29%	62,00 100,00%
No	,00 ,00%	5,00 25,00%	8,00 40,00%	6,00 30,00%	1,00 5,00%	20,00 100,00%
Maybe	,00 ,00%	3,00 10,00%	10,00 33,33%	13,00 43,33%	4,00 13,33%	30,00 100,00%
Total	6,00 5,36%	18,00 16,07%	36,00 32,14%	40,00 35,71%	12,00 10,71%	112,00 100,00%

Table 18. Change, non-routine activities as a motivational factor among those who would like to work in Kainuu

Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Internationally oriented work [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Internationally oriented work					Total
	Not at all important	Partly not important	important	Partly important	Very important	
Yes	5,00 8,06%	17,00 27,42%	15,00 24,19%	16,00 25,81%	9,00 14,52%	62,00 100,00%
No	2,00 9,52%	5,00 23,81%	4,00 19,05%	9,00 42,86%	1,00 4,76%	21,00 100,00%
Maybe	2,00 6,67%	4,00 13,33%	5,00 16,67%	13,00 43,33%	6,00 20,00%	30,00 100,00%
Total	9,00 7,96%	26,00 23,01%	24,00 21,24%	38,00 33,63%	16,00 14,16%	113,00 100,00%

Table 19. Internationally oriented work as a motivational factor among those who would like to work in Kainuu

Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Responsibility, management level position [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Responsibility, management level position					Total
	Not at all important	Partly not important	important	Partly important	Very important	
Yes	15,00 24,19%	15,00 24,19%	19,00 30,65%	10,00 16,13%	3,00 4,84%	62,00 100,00%
No	4,00 20,00%	5,00 25,00%	2,00 10,00%	5,00 25,00%	4,00 20,00%	20,00 100,00%
Maybe	4,00 13,33%	6,00 20,00%	7,00 23,33%	12,00 40,00%	1,00 3,33%	30,00 100,00%
Total	23,00 20,54%	26,00 23,21%	28,00 25,00%	27,00 24,11%	8,00 7,14%	112,00 100,00%

Table 20. Responsibility, management position as a motivational factor among those who would like to work in Kainuu

Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Academic level of work [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Academic level of work					Total
	Not at all important	Partly not important	Important	Partly important	Very important	
Yes	10,00 16,13%	24,00 38,71%	17,00 27,42%	10,00 16,13%	1,00 1,61%	62,00 100,00%
No	2,00 9,52%	8,00 38,10%	8,00 38,10%	3,00 14,29%	,00 0,00%	21,00 100,00%
Maybe	1,00 3,33%	10,00 33,33%	10,00 33,33%	7,00 23,33%	2,00 6,67%	30,00 100,00%
Total	13,00 11,50%	42,00 37,17%	35,00 30,97%	20,00 17,70%	3,00 2,65%	113,00 100,00%

Table 21. Academic level of work as a motivational factor among those who would like to work in Kainuu

We wanted to know what kind of actions would make SMEs in the local region attractive and how they could improve their profile and visibility. The survey results gave a general understanding of crucial channels that companies in the region and especially, the case study company, ABC Oy could use to improve their visibility and attract prospective talent.

Respondents could give more than one answer and the survey revealed that, out of those that would work in Kainuu, about 42% believe that a summer job is an effective way of knowing SMEs in the region. Over half of these respondents (about 52%) believe that visiting the SMEs and 42% believe having a representative or speaker from the SMEs visit the university is an effective way of improving relationships between the students and the SMEs.



Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Summer Job [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Summer Job		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	26,00 41,94%	36,00 58,06%	62,00 100,00%
No	15,00 71,43%	6,00 28,57%	21,00 100,00%
Maybe	22,00 73,33%	8,00 26,67%	30,00 100,00%
Total	63,00 55,75%	50,00 44,25%	113,00 100,00%

Table 22. Summer job as a way to know SMEs among those who would like to work in Kainuu

Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Visit the SME [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Visit the SME		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	32,00 51,61%	30,00 48,39%	62,00 100,00%
No	12,00 57,14%	9,00 42,86%	21,00 100,00%
Maybe	17,00 56,67%	13,00 43,33%	30,00 100,00%
Total	61,00 53,98%	52,00 46,02%	113,00 100,00%

Table 23. Visits to SMEs as a way to know SMEs among those who would like to work in Kainuu

Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Visiting speaker from SME [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Visiting speaker from SME		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	26,00 41,94%	36,00 58,06%	62,00 100,00%
No	11,00 52,38%	10,00 47,62%	21,00 100,00%
Maybe	11,00 36,67%	19,00 63,33%	30,00 100,00%
Total	48,00 42,48%	65,00 57,52%	113,00 100,00%

Table 24. Visiting speakers from SMEs as a way to know SMEs among those who would like to work in Kainuu



Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Business project through a course [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Business project through a course		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	20,00 32,26%	42,00 67,74%	62,00 100,00%
No	4,00 19,05%	17,00 80,95%	21,00 100,00%
Maybe	10,00 33,33%	20,00 66,67%	30,00 100,00%
Total	34,00 30,09%	79,00 69,91%	113,00 100,00%

Table 25. Business project via a course as a way to know SMEs among those who would like to work in Kainuu

Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Workshops held by SME [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Workshops held by SME		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	16,00 25,81%	46,00 74,19%	62,00 100,00%
No	5,00 23,81%	16,00 76,19%	21,00 100,00%
Maybe	8,00 27,59%	21,00 72,41%	29,00 100,00%
Total	29,00 25,89%	83,00 74,11%	112,00 100,00%

Table 26. Workshops held by SMEs as a way to know SMEs among those who would like to work in Kainuu

Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Thesis Topic [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Thesis Topic		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	11,00 17,74%	51,00 82,26%	62,00 100,00%
No	5,00 23,81%	16,00 76,19%	21,00 100,00%
Maybe	9,00 30,00%	21,00 70,00%	30,00 100,00%
Total	25,00 22,12%	88,00 77,88%	113,00 100,00%

Table 27. Thesis work as a way to know SMEs among those who would like to work in Kainuu



Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Networking activities e.g. Social Friday [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Networking activities e.g. Social Friday		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	11,00 17,74%	51,00 82,26%	62,00 100,00%
No	4,00 19,05%	17,00 80,95%	21,00 100,00%
Maybe	8,00 26,67%	22,00 73,33%	30,00 100,00%
Total	23,00 20,35%	90,00 79,65%	113,00 100,00%

Table 28. Networking activities as a way to know SMEs among those who would like to work in Kainuu

Would you like to work in Kainuu? * Co-create outputs e.g. jointly write articles, newsletter [count, row %].

Would you like to work in Kainuu?	Co-create outputs e.g. jointly write articles, newsletter		Total
	Yes	No	
Yes	4,00 6,45%	58,00 93,55%	62,00 100,00%
No	1,00 4,76%	20,00 95,24%	21,00 100,00%
Maybe	2,00 6,67%	28,00 93,33%	30,00 100,00%
Total	7,00 6,19%	106,00 93,81%	113,00 100,00%

Table 29. Co-creation as a way to know SMEs among those who would like to work in Kainuu

Proposed tools

According to interviews with staff of ABC Oy and the university teachers it was decided that most benefits for attracting young graduates will come by continuing the improvement of the following matters:

- Development of workshops, because both parties are getting benefit of knowledge and tools of each other. Especially AI technology projects.
 - For getting the best out of the graduate workshop with ABC Oy, a checklist for every participant:
 - Be open to questions.
 - Listen to what everyone else has to say.
 - Be respectful of different opinions as everyone can benefit from the opportunity to share their ideas.
 - Introduce your problems honestly, because graduates often are good problem-solvers.
 - Graduates are often full of energy so give them space to work on their own for a while with a problem that you have given. You may be surprised with the outcome.



- Guest lecturing by employees of ABC Oy, to improve awareness of ABC Oy and building networks to students:
 - Phase 1: Interview volunteer guest lecturers from ABC Oy - most benefits would be obtained from managerial or supervisor-level staff working with HR issues on daily basis.
 - Phase 2: Survey students regarding the types of optional courses that would benefit them and that ABC Oy lecturers could add value to.
 - Phase 3: If not possible to arrange an optional course, then add a guest lecturer(s) onto an existing course related to the work of ABC Oy.
 - Phase 4: Arrange lectures by ABC Oy guest lecturer .
 - Phase 5: Interview the students and lecturers involved in the programme and develop the next season accordingly.
 - Checklist for HR:
 - Interview volunteer staff members to give guest lectures in the university.
 - Discuss with managers and supervisors about the possibilities that volunteers can offer.
 - Discuss the resources that can be used for conducting joint lectures or optional courses in the university
 - Make a short check list for volunteers, so that they can recognise the talent and skills that would benefit the business the most.
 - Provide and arrange the course, having guest lecturers in collaboration with the university.
 - After the course, arrange a group discussion if possible, or gather feedback from both students and lecturers so that the next season can be developed to benefit both parties.
- Creating an educational programme inside ABC Oy, to offer possibilities for employee development through different tasks or responsibilities. By doing this, employees are more committed to their employer and are less likely to consider offers from other companies. Young graduates can see also see the value of this programme so are less likely to move to a bigger city for work.
 - Discuss with managers and supervisors if there is a need for management training, mentoring or what the biggest challenges are that need to be overcome.
 - Continue discussions about the practical arrangements of the training sessions themselves, e.g. what kind of resources they require. Can they be arranged by own staff or is it necessary to ask for help from a external training company?
 - It is beneficial to circulate tasks so that teams know what others are doing and, if they are lacking resources, they can help each other.



- Is there something that teams could learn from each other, in terms of team spirit or handling certain matters?
- When you are aware of the needs, benefits and the resources that are required, discuss with managers the personnel that would benefit from this the most and who would have the most knowledge or other skills to share.
- Ask for volunteers to participate in this training, according to previous discussion with managers.
- Arrange the training that suits your needs best via internal or external resources.
- Gather feedback from the trainee(s) afterwards.
- Discuss benefits with managers.
- If the process seems to be working, broaden it according to required needs and available resources.
- Introduce this training programme while recruiting.
- Make sure that you introduce all of the possible self-training opportunities while recruiting (incl. two hours of working time for training and learning business-related skills).

Conclusion

ABC Oy is facing the challenge that graduates want to move to the bigger cities after they graduate from university. Therefore, it is challenging to find graduates to work for the company. It is also challenging to get workers to Kajaani from elsewhere in Finland, possibly because of its location or the attractiveness of the city. ABC Oy cannot really change the fact that potential workers may not find Kajaani an attractive place to live and work. However, ABC Oy can focus on enhancing its employer brand to attract potential workers and graduates to come work for and stay with the company. The company could make effective use of social media and increase its presence on business and employment-oriented websites, such as LinkedIn.

Current workers are also getting job offers from some other companies and possibly from another cities, so they might decide to leave ABC Oy. It has been determined that even offering some changes to tasks, will not convince workers to stay if they have decided to change their workplace. Also, if the worker's spouse is not able to find a suitable job in Kajaani, it is very likely the worker will leave the company for another city. ABC Oy should concentrate more on employees' general wellbeing and make it easier for employees to express their wishes and needs to the company.

It is good to share the awareness of the ABC Oy among the students even if ABC Oy does not see the importance of regular local people being aware of what they are doing. This local awareness is part of employer branding and it is important so that current employees of ABC Oy can be proud of what they are doing when local people around them know what kind of services their company is offering and for whom. ABC Oy could also get exposure by



collaborating with services where the younger generation spend most of their time, for example, music streaming services, gaming platforms, nationwide hackathon events etc.

ABC Oy could increase the collaboration with the university in such a way that students could assist with software development tasks during their studies. Thus, students would gain some practical knowledge of the company and its working environment before entering the workplace full-time.

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