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Swiss holacratic organizations' strategies illustrated by their recruitment practices

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ABSTRACT

The ability to respond quickly to an increasingly changing environment is nowadays an important business imperative for organizations. Hierarchical models are reaching their limits. With a shift towards agility coupled to new employee expectations for a meaningful occupational environment, self-managing models have developed worldwide over the last decade and are getting more managerial and scholarly attention. One of these new organizational models is Holacracy, where authority is decentralized, that dynamically updates and where changes sensed in the environment are rapidly processed. Switzerland is one of the countries with the highest relative (number 1) and absolute (number 4) number of organizations using Holacracy.

In holacratic organisations where each individual has a high responsibility in fulfilling the company purpose and strategy, the recruitment process is expected to reflect more directly the company purpose and strategy than in hierarchical organisations. Through a qualitative analysis of the holacratic organizations in Switzerland, using the analysis of their digital resources and semi-structured interviews, it was possible to assess their recruiting strategy, practices and targeted candidate profiles. Among the main findings, we saw their recruiting strategies are closely related to their main strategies, and both are continuously adjusted according to tensions sensed in the environment. Another element is that most interviewed companies (small and medium) rely a lot on their network for recruiting. Lastly, we learned that individuals' qualities like self-organization, eagerness to learn, standing up for yourself, communicating well with your peers, the ability to question oneself, and sometimes having past experience in self-management models, are among the characteristics likely to help a candidate enter and thrive in a Holacracy.

Keywords: Holacracy, self-management models, organizations, strategy, recruitment

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1. CONTEXT: OVERVIEW OF HOLACRACY AND SELF-MANAGING ORGANIZATIONS

Holacracy is a self-managing organizational design that was co-founded by Brian J. Robertson in 2007 and promoted in his book released in 2015 "Holacracy: The new management system for a rapidly changing world". Holacracy is in his words "a new social technology for governing and operating an organization, defined by a set of core rules distinctly different from those of a conventionally governed organization" (Robertson, 2015, p.12). It is Robertson's culmination of his wish to create a "new, more agile and responsive organizational operating system" (Robertson, 2015, p.16). A system able to dynamically update and that has the capacity to process rapidly what he calls 'tensions': "the perception of a specific gap between current reality and a sensed potential" (Robertson, 2015, p.6), sensed by anyone in the organization in order to bring meaningful change. In his words, it would be an organization that is "evolutionary" (Robertson, 2015, p.7), where "innovation happens at the edges all the time when a change in the environment is sensed" (Laloux, 2014, p.203). For Robertson, this new system would help answer some significant challenges that organizations face today, for example, increased complexity or requirements of greater transparency. In other words, this system aims to fulfil the need for more agility and the ability to adapt in a landscape of rapid change (Robertson, 2015, p.8).

1.1. Studying the Rising Trends of Self-managing Organizations and Practices

The rise of managerial and scholarly interest for new self-managing organizations such as Holacracy (Lee & Edmonson, 2017, p.39), is occurring in a time where agility, and the ability to respond quickly to the external environment, has become a business imperative for survival in recent decades (Harraf et al. 2015, pp.675-676). Lee & Edmonson mentioned in their literature review that existing managerial hierarchies are reaching their limits and are challenged in today's unstable environment (Schell & Bischof, 2021, p.1; Lee & Edmonson, 2017, p.36). Harraf et al. put agility as a priority, as it is a "means of reaching and sustaining high performance" (Harraf et al. 2015, p.676). Schell and Bischof argue that this context "motivate companies to change their way of organizing work by changing the organizational design, reducing hierarchy and, thus, becoming more agile" (Schell & Bischof, 2021, p.1). Researchers that published in the *Harvard Business Review* think that elements of self-organization will become valuable tools for companies of all kinds. They also think that new systems using self-management aim to reconcile the organizations' needs of reliability and adaptability:

meaning reliability such as standardization, and adaptability such as the sensitivity to changing markets. Most classical managerial hierarchies today rather favour reliability (Bernstein et al. 2016).

This need of reliability and adaptability also applies to employees. Reliability is such as having a stable working environment and adaptability is such as having "leeway to adapt to changing conditions and make the right decisions in the moment" (Bernstein et al. 2016). The second element is scarcer in managerial hierarchies.

Lee and Edmonson mention in their article three trends in business and society that are challenging (rigid) managerial hierarchies (Lee & Edmonson, 2017, p.37). The first trend (also identified by the researchers Harraf et al) is the generation of a greater need of agility that is made of the accelerated flow of information, the fast paced new technological developments, and ever more changing customer needs (Lee & Edmonson 2017, p.37; Harraf et al. 2015, p.676). The second trend is the growth in knowledge-based work, requiring that "individuals at all organizational levels must contribute information and ideas for their organizations to succeed" (Lee & Edmonson, 2017, p.37). The third trend is about "viewing work and organizations as places for personal meaning" (Lee & Edmonson, 2017, p.37). It goes along with the growing interest in "improving employees experiences at work" that gained magnitude with the arrival of Millennials into the workforce, with their new expectations from their work environment (Lee & Edmonson, 2017, p.37). Such expectations are for example greater control over their work and a "meaningful work, [with] plenty of learning opportunities and career development" (Lee & Edmonson, 2017, p.37; De Hauw & De Vos, 2010, pp. 293-294). Companies today are therefore encouraged to become more responsive to their environment and thrive towards continuous development.

The trend towards more freedom to self-manage was reinforced by the rise in popularity of self-managed teams in 1970s-80s, that translated in innovations in self-management across the world such as participative management, quality circles or innovation task forces (Bernstein et al. 2016). The main breakthroughs were at the time in the manufacturing and service operation sectors (Bernstein et al. 2016). By the 1990s self-managed teams were more widely used, but were implemented only at small scale in areas that required "more adaptability than reliability" (Bernstein et al. 2016).

The urge to find a new balance between reliability and adaptability extended to an organization-wide scale, translating into an interest to shift toward something close to Adhocracy – that is "flexible, informal management structures" (Bernstein et al. 2016). For example, models such as "the networked firm", scrum technologies and participative and responsive structures like Holacracy or podularity (Bernstein et al. 2016) developed gradually from 1980s until recently.

1.2. Characteristics of self-managing organizations

According to Bernstein et al., self-managing models usually share three characteristics: the structure is made of teams, these teams design and govern themselves, and leadership is contextual (linked to roles, not individuals) (Bernstein et al. 2016). For Lee & Edmonson, the main characteristic of these less hierarchical organizations is their decentralization of authority, "severing the reporting relationship between subordinate and manager" (Lee & Edmonson, 2017, p.38). They also mention that these self-managing organizations can differ in the level of authority and control that "emanate from impersonal sources such as rules and formal roles versus from personal sources such as status, popularity or social influence" (Lee & Edmonson, 2017, p.50).

Organizations using Holacracy, or other types of self-management models, belong to the "Teal" type of organizations. The kind of organizations described as "Teal" by the author of *Reinventing Organizations* Frederic Laloux are characterized by three key aspects: self-management, wholeness and evolutionary purpose. Other features of such organizations are self-managed teams, absence of hierarchy and staff functions kept to a bare minimum. Moreover decision making is decentralized, information is made available to everyone, control mechanisms are traded with mutual trust, and there is no organization chart, nor job titles (Laloux, 2014, pp.61-98).

The number of organizations adopting self-managed designs is growing worldwide (Lee & Edmonson, 2017, p.52). Examples of companies that implemented company-wide new self-managed systems, and which received scholars' attention, are for example Morning Star, Valve, and Zappos. Getz calls these forms of organization "F-forms", characterized by employees' "complete freedom and responsibility to take action that they, not their bosses, decide are best" (Getz, 2009, p.34).

When evaluating their literature review, Bernstein et al also observed that "self-managed organizations are explicitly designed to remove impediments to day-to-day progress in everyone's work and to set colleagues up to be positive 'catalysts' for one another" (Bernstein et al. 2016). The researchers also mentioned that in self-managing models "leadership is a shared responsibility […] you end up with more formal team leaders as the number of modules increases" (Bernstein et al. 2016). In Holacracy, those are the Lead Links, further described later in this paper. The researchers also quote a former manager stating that "leadership might be even more important in a Holacracy than in a traditional management structure […] you have to lead by example and round up the troops rather than rely on authority" (Bernstein et al. 2016).

Getz describes the new type of leaders, who he deems crucial in such organizational forms, as "Liberating leaders", satisfying company members "need of being treated as intrinsically equal" (Getz, 2009, p.37). The actions of these leaders being expected to lead to self-motivated and self-directed employees, who are free to act (Getz, 2009, p.40), and are encouraged to grow their capabilities (Getz, 2009, p.42). Liberating leaders do so for example by making their colleagues feel listened to, that their opinion are valued, or by putting effort in sharing the vision of the company (Getz, 2009, p.39).

To get a first idea on how such organizational models work, you may find in the Appendix 2.1 a presentation a short description of two self-managed organizations that got a lot of attention from scholars: Morning Star and Valve. Both these companies developed their own self-management models.

The most famous and first formally structured self-managing model is Holacracy. This design received increased attention as it was pioneering as a "fully specified self-managing design", made available publicly, and was adopted in various organizations following its release (Lee & Edmonson, 2017, p.52).

1.3. About Holacracy

1.3.1. What is Holacracy

At the origin, Brian Robertson was seeking a new structure model for his former software company Ternary, breaking from the existing hierarchical structure. After several try outs with new structures that did not really worked out, Robertson and his peers stumbled across Gerard Edenburg model of "Sociocracy" (Robertson, 2006, p.5). It is a model developed in the 1970s, aimed at finding "an engineering approach to making

companies more steerable" (Eckstein & Buck, 2018, p.13). Edenburg used his parents' company Elektrotechniek in the Netherlands "as a living laboratory for trying out new management ideas" and refine his new social technology (Eckstein & Buck, 2018, p.14). Sociocracy has four "cybernetics" (i.e., science of steering and communication) principles: Circles, Double-Linking, Consent decision making, and electing people to roles and tasks by consent. These principles are built in such a way that every individual in a company is empowered. You may find in the Appendix 2.2 a short text explaining in more details what is Sociocracy. Ternary therefore developed a model that took elements of the Sociocracy, and it fused it with other key self-managed models and some innovations of their own (Robertson, 2006, p.5). Lee and Edmonson denote organization-wide systems like Holacracy as "self-managing organization". Such organizations, have as characteristic the fact that they "radically decentralize authority in a formal and systematic way throughout the organization", and they remove the hierarchical reporting relationship between managers and subordinates (Lee & Edmonson 2017, pp.39-45). I will now explain in a synthetic manner how Holacracy works.

With Holacracy, governance is regulated by a constitution: it is a "core rulebook" of rules and processes for the organization, "reign supreme", and is stated as applicable to any type of organization (Robertson, 2015, p.21). In Holacracy, authority is distributed in a dynamic way across the whole organization: the governance process occurs everywhere and by everyone throughout the system (Robertson 2006, p.4). The power and authority given to each member is connected to specific processes, named "Roles" that each individual is in charge of (Robertson, 2015, p.21). A Role can be seen as the equivalent of a position in a classical hierarchy, and an individual can fulfil several Roles. The power structure of an organization using Holacracy (named "Holarchy", Robertson, 2015, p.38) is explicit. Each Role has a clear description (in the constitution) of the domain of work, tasks, expectations it has, and the autonomy, power, authority, and responsibility that comes with it (Robertson, 2015, p.39). Members can act freely within the boundary of their Roles but should aim towards fulfilling the organization's purpose (Robertson, 2015, p.43). Such a level of responsibility also implies self-leadership (Schell & Bischof, 2021 p.8). Roles are dynamic, and their definition evolves over time according to the environment and the organization's needs (Robertson, 2015, p.45). Each Role is granted to the one best suited to carry it out, and the allocation is

done through negotiations between employees. The whole approach of the design of these roles is meant to give people "room to grow on the job" (Bernstein et al. 2016), and they are encouraged by their environment to be the driver of their own development (Robertson 2006, pp.14-15).

Lee and Edmonson mentions in their article that in self-managing organizations such as Holacracy, many decision rights formerly owned by managers are fully or partially decentralized (Lee & Edmonson 2017, p.46). Decision rights such as firm strategy, organization and work design, work and resource allocation or personnel and performance management are therefore spread across many roles detained by different persons (Lee & Edmonson, 2017, p.47). In the Appendix 1.1 you can see a Figure retrieved from Lee & Edmonson's article, showing examples of degree of decentralization of tasks in different self-managing organizations (Lee & Edmonson, 2017, p.47).

Another key element of the Holarchy is the "Circles", presented as "semi-autonomous" (Robertson, 2015, p.46). Circles can be described as teams of Roles related to each other with a common purpose, and those circles are themselves nested in groups of bigger circles, all englobed in the "Anchor circle" containing the whole organization (Robertson, 2015, p.46). The Circles' function is to coordinate members' work, fulfil the circle's aim (which is given by its higher level circle), and process tensions brought up by circle members. Processing tensions is done through two different types of meetings, with specific processes and rules: "governance meetings" (about circle structure) and "tactical meetings" (about ongoing operations). Each circle has autonomy and authority (and like Roles, they are dynamic), but has responsibilities vis à vis other circles and the organization as a whole (Robertson, 2015, pp.46-47). The power and accountabilities granted to each Circle is explicit and, like for Roles, is stated in the constitution (Robertson, 2006, p.5). All decisions that are taken in those meetings are done through Consent, like in Sociocracy. And these decisions can be revisited any time. Elections are also done through consent (Robertson, 2006, p.6).

Two key roles that have to be fulfilled in all Circles are the Lead Link and Rep Link. Both are important roles that connect lower-level circles with the circles above; for example, linking social media to marketing (Bernstein et al. 2016). The lead link is accountable for the lower-level circle's result (Robertson 2006, p.6), and has the power for example to reassign a role if someone is not a good fit for it (Bernstein et al. 2016).

The Rep Link is elected (by consent) as a representative from the lower-level circle into a higher level circle. Both role links take part in the decision making of the circles at which they are appointed (Robertson 2006, p.6).

Definitions about purpose, accountabilities or decision rights of all circles and roles can be stored in enterprise software such as GlassFrog or HolaSpirit, making those definitions easily accessible for anyone in the organization (Bernstein et al. 2016). Another key element with decision making that is subject to decentralization is how strategy is carried out in Holacracy. When assessing the more traditional organizations' strategic view, Brian Robertson stated: "corporate strategy is built on the misguided notion that we can reliably predict the future" (Robertson 2015, p.128). Future is made of unpredicted events, such as crises, innovation breakthroughs, and more. Thus, predicting everything ends up limiting the 'ability to sense and respond to reality in the present moment' (Robertson, 2015, p.128). Strategy in Holacracy is a "dynamic steering paradigm", a "constant adjustment in light of real feedback, which makes a more organic and emergent path" (Robertson 2015, p.129). To understand more clearly this paradigm, Robertson proposed the example of riding a bicycle in order to reach a specific destination (purpose), and having some broad guidelines for the trip (heuristics) to facilitate decision making (Robertson, 2015, p.129; Robertson, 2006, p.10). At every moment of the trip, the cyclist will have autonomy to make rapid specific decisions according to the environment she will face on the road to maintain her speed and equilibrium, while still aiming to reach the destination. It is a "continual process of facing reality and incorporating feedback" (Robertson, 2015, p.129). "Rather than try to predict and force a particular future, heuristic-strategies allow to find where the organization wants to go. Meaning, it is a shift from predict-and-control to sense-and-respond" (Cowan, 2020). The purpose is the big picture strategy of the whole organization, and the heuristics are the "rules of thumb" that are derived from that bigger picture to guide day-to-day actions for making decisions and setting priorities. Though it is not forbidden to use strategic planning, it is usually rules of thumbs (that are continually updated) that are used. An example of a rule of thumbs given in an article published in the *Harvard Business Review* by Bernstein et al. is that at Zappos, if employees were to choose between providing the best customer service or increasing short term profit, they should prioritize the former (Bernstein et al. 2016). According to the constitution, each operational decision made by a member of the Holacracy is

expected to be aligned with the strategy of their circle, which is put forth by the Lead Link (Robertson 2015, p.134). The strategy of a circle is defined during "strategy meetings", where all members of the circle bring relevant input in order to help the lead link articulate the circle strategy and the relevant rules of thumbs going with it (Robertson, 2015, p.135).

Brian Robertson's current company HolacracyOne, which is a coaching, consulting and training firm for organizations wishing to implement Holacracy, keeps track on its website of the spread of Holacracy worldwide ("Holacracy Success Stories," n.d.). It can be seen that around the world Holacracy is currently used in 182 organizations across 40 different countries. Most of these organizations are located in North America and Europe, mostly in rather small companies of 0-10 or 11-50 members (but some others operate with up to 51-200 members). Industries with the highest number of holacratic organizations are the sector of consulting (37 companies) and information services (21 companies) ("Holacracy Success Stories," n.d.). According to the website, in Switzerland Holacracy is currently practiced in 12 different organizations, for example Liip, Freitag or VillageOffice ("Holacracy Success Stories," n.d.).

To date, the existing managerial and scholar literature and knowledge about Holacracy are limited, as this system is only being promoted since 2015 (Schell & Bischof, 2021, p.1). However, there is a growing managerial and scholarly attention to empirical uses of Holacracy in organizations, such as for example in the company Zappos (Bernstein et al. 2016) or the company Liip (Gerhard, 2016), which I will mention in more details later.

1.3.2. Differing opinions about Holacracy and limitations of the model

Positions taken by observers who wrote about Holacracy or self-managed organizations are quite contrasting, from praising these systems that enhance flexibility and engagement, or "denouncing them as naïve social experiments that ignore how things really get done" (Bernstein et al. 2016).

It is important to note that Holacracy is not fit for everyone, or every type of organization, or every culture and like any radical organizational change is fairly difficult to implement. For example, it can be an obstacle when at a big scale (Timmerman, 2016). Harraf et al. argue that an organization's size and age can be an obstacle to becoming more agile (Harraf et al. 2015, p.676). The greater the size, the more challenging to "have timely responses that span organizational, product and geographic

boundaries"; moreover, mistakes become costlier, rendering the organization more risk adverse (Harraf et al. 2015, p.676). For example Medium, a social media company, decided to drop Holacracy after a while due to the difficulty to coordinate at scale (Bernstein et al. 2016). Bernstein et al. also mentions that this kind of way to implement direction is not suitable for all organizations; they give the example of Sirius X whose heavy investment structure implied a need for a "clear, stable, consistent, overarching strategy" (Bernstein et al. 2016). Researchers publishing at the *Harvard Business Review* pointed out that in large organizations, self-managing techniques such as Holacracy probably should be adopted only in part rather than in whole (Bernstein et al. 2016). For example, the automotive company Mercedes-Benz created Mercedes-Benz.io, a 100% subsidiary, put in place specifically to meet the challenges from digital transformation (Ackermann et al., 2021, pp.1288-1289). The decision to implement self-management designs is relevant when the environment of the organization is fast changing and requires high agility, and is to be implemented on the condition that doing so brings higher benefits than the costs to implement it (Bernstein et al. 2016). Start-ups are early adopters partly for these reasons (Bernstein et al. 2016).

The companies (such as Zappos or Liip) which shared their story of implementing Holacracy all struggled at first (Bernstein et al. 2016; Gerhard, 2016). Pursuing Holacracy is a full paradigm shift: presented with benefits such as agility, but it is still a very big endeavour (Robertson, 2015, p.156). In his book, Robertson mentions he has witnessed organizations in which it "did not stick" (but did not specify any name), and saw enough of them to identify certain patterns of resistance to the adoption (Robertson, 2015, p.167). The three patterns he mentions are the resistance from the top to give up authority, non-cooperation from the middle management, and the "stopping short syndrome" (Robertson, 2015, pp.167-171). The latter is when an organization that has adopted Holacracy ends up insidiously shifting back to its old power structure and processes (Lee & Edmonson, 2017, p.48). And those informal hierarchies that creeps back in are said to be able to potentially "threaten or contradict the formal system of decentralization" (Holacracy) that a company is trying to implement (Lee & Edmonson, 2017, p.48). It is sometimes very difficult for managers or subordinates to break with old behaviours: for managers to relinquish their power and for subordinate to step up and use their new power (Bernstein et al. 2016). To help them get over those behaviours it may require sustained trainings on how to evolve through

the new work system. However, Bernstein et al. also mentioned how "old power rules can be deeply embedded in culture and institutions and may require continual attention to unravel" (Bernstein et al. 2016); rendering even more complex the change.

The introduction of the concept of "self-leadership" can also be a big challenge for individuals: it is "difficult and requires a higher level of psychological development and interpersonal skills" (Lee & Edmonson, 2017, p.52) that not everyone has. Getz underlined the importance of the presence of "liberating leaders" in the successful implementation of F-forms (self-managing organizations) (Getz, 2009, p.45). Holacracy, or other self-management systems, are expected to render communication more efficient, but they do not guarantee smarter decisions, as it relies heavily on the member's active exertion of their power and voice, which can be tough for some people (Bernstein et al. 2016). Moreover, in Teal organizations (self-managed), employees are expected to "step up and confront colleagues who fail to uphold their commitments" (Laloux, 2014, p.114). Conflict resolution processes are therefore an important building block in self-management practices (Laloux, 2014, p.114).

Another challenge that Holacracy brings to the individual is the separation between the "personal space", "role space", "tribe space" and "organizational space" (Robertson, 2015, p.200). Robertson states this distinction "creates a healthy separation of domains that are often fused in traditional organizations" (Robertson, 2015, p.200). An individual is expected to separate the self (values, passions, identity), from the role (purpose and accountabilities), from the tribe (interactions with the other members, shared values and culture) and from the organization (interactions when working) (Robertson, 2015, p.201). Holacracy rules are made to "ensure that the focus is only on what's needed for the organization to express its purpose, given the concrete needs of its roles, not personal opinions, desires, values, goals or anything else" (Robertson, 2015, p.99). Such practice, which are likely complex to achieve, can be a penalty for individuals and create tensions among employees (Schell & Bischof, 2021, pp.6-8).

Lee and Edmonson assessed that there exist limited literature on how individuals facing a shift towards new self-managing models, such as Holacracy, are addressing such changes (e.g. change in roles), or how they could be supported in processing that change (Lee & Edmonson, pp.50-53; Schell & Bischof, 2021, p.1).

In their study, Schell and Bischof identified 4 different ways that employees, experiencing implementation of Holacracy in their company, dealt with the change.

These ways were: ignoring (denying the change), reversing (actively resisting), accepting/coping (fully adopting the system) and self-correcting (adapting the system to their needs) (Schell & Bischof, 2021, p.11).

Lee and Edmonson also point out several elements on which there is little or no proof on. For example, it is not known if self-managing organizations are capable of maintaining the same level of reliability and control as managerial hierarchies (Lee & Edmonson, 2017, p.51). Another crucial point the researchers mention is the handling of significant conflict or crisis: research suggests centralization and concentration of authority tend to occur in such situations (Lee & Edmonson, 2017, p.51), and it is not known how decentralized systems are capable to handle such events. On the contrary, Laloux in his book *Reinventing organizations*, attests of several Teal companies he studied that managed to deal with difficult crisis moments, without resorting to a re centralization of decision making at the top (Laloux, 2014, p.105).

The difficulty tied with the implementation of Holacracy can explain the existence of many organizations that are devoted to coach companies wishing to put in place the system. These coaching organizations provide for example trainings and workshops. Among them are for example Robertson's own company HolacracyOne, or the Dutch company Energized.org.

A small share of the literature I covered mentions several misconceptions around Holacracy (also applying to other self-managed organizations) that are worthy to mention. Among them can be cited the supposed elimination of differences in status (Bernstein et al. 2016): Bernstein states that even though they can be mitigated, they can still persist and have to be managed. For example former managers may try to reassert control over activities they used to supervise (Bernstein et al. 2016). This relates to the "Stopping short syndrome" that Robertson mentioned (Robertson, 2015, pp.167-171).

Another article covering misconceptions about Holacracy is Romme's article published in the *Harvard Business Review*, which mentions 3 main misconceptions that belittle the challenges of implementing Holacracy. These misconceptions are that "it is non-hierarchical", that "implementation specifics aren't important", and that "the board's functioning shouldn't be affected" (Romme, 2015). The author debunks those misconceptions as follows: Holacracy actually has a robust hierarchy (the Holarchy), the implementation should be done carefully following a holacratic process, and top management are not spared from the change and should be ready to give up part of their

power (Romme, 2015). Matt Dunsmoor, former product manager at Zappos, described the radical difference of the hierarchy in Holacracy compared to managerial organizations in the fact that Holacracy has a hierarchy of work, and not a hierarchy of people (Dunsmoor, 2020).

You may find in the Appendix 2.3 two practical examples of companies using Holacracy. The first one is Zappos, a big company based in the US which was formerly using a hierarchical organization. The second one is Liip, a medium sized company based in Switzerland, which was already using a flat hierarchy before implementing Holacracy.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Subsequent to this overview, we can conclude that Holacracy is a very peculiar organizational model functioning quite differently compared to more classical managerial organizations.

In the context of my research thesis, I have decided to focus on one aspect of Holacracy on which I found limited literature on, and which is a crucial element in achieving any organization's strategic objectives: the recruitment strategy, processes and the potentially "ideal" employee profile in the context of Holacracy. The research question of this paper is therefore: **How do the recruiting strategy, practices, and targeted employee profiles illustrate the strategies of Swiss holacratic organizations?**

It is not needed to say that recruitment is a fundamental aspect ensuring the achievement of a company's strategic objectives and performance. Effectiveness of recruitment can also be an important source of long-lasting strategic advantage, especially in a "VUCA" (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, Ambiguity) world. Organizations using Holacracy function very differently compared to managerial organizations on many levels. I assume they are therefore likely to have different recruitment processes. I also expect that there exist differences in practices among the organizations using Holacracy, as Brian Robertson did not advise any specific hiring process in his book (Robertson, 2015, p.158). He judged that each organization should develop a process that would best fit to its needs (e.g., using old hiring practices or designing new ones). Moreover since there is no 'imposed' structure when using Holacracy, any company may for example choose to have or not a specific circle for Human Resources; there could be a circle, but it could also be specific roles related to HR that are moved between circles according to the needs to hire.

Holacratic organizations may also probably be looking for specific employee characteristics that would enable the candidate to best thrive in such unique working environment. For instance, they may be looking for candidates possessing skills in several domains, who are proactive, have good interpersonal skills, or can perform self-leadership. Since each member of a holacratic organization is expected to have high responsibility and autonomy (for example in achieving the organization's strategic objectives), such organizations should be very careful when recruiting new members, and design their recruitment strategy accordingly. Holacratic organizations may also

offer differing features of job benefits (related for example to the working environment, career path, salary, performance pay, etc.), as their processes are distinct. It is also important to mention again that such an organizational environment is not fit for every individual, which may lessen the pool of potentially fitting candidates for the job.

The purpose of this thesis is therefore to look into recruiting practices, strategy and targeted candidate profiles of companies using Holacracy, and how these are related to the company's main strategy.

In the next section I will first give an overview of the strategic importance of recruitment, a broad description of the classical recruitment practices used currently, and finally assess the existing literature on recruitment in Holacracy.

2.1. Overview of the Commonly Used Recruitment and Selection Practices

2.1.1. Building a recruitment strategy

The strategies used by Human Resources in an organization to manage the people are to be in alignment with the business strategy of their company. The policies, processes and practices to manage the human resources should support the corporate strategy in achieving the organization's goals (Foot et al. 2016, p.126). Human Resources are to develop various strategies such as for example recruitment strategy, talent management strategy, diversity strategy, reward strategy, etc. that are coherent with each other and aim to "acquire, develop, and maintain an engaged workforce" (Foot et al. 2016, p.126).

As mentioned earlier, organizations today are evolving in an ever more changing environment. With the arising trend of "knowledge based work" (Lee & Edmonson 2017, p.37), these organizations are now faced with an intensified competition to acquire skilled workers and talents, requiring the development of strategies such as talent management strategy (Foot et al. 2016, p.127). Technological advancements necessitate employees having new sets of skills but also the capacity to update those skills and adapt to new working methods, while being able to identify new opportunities in the environment to help the organization achieve its strategic objectives (Foot et al. 2016, p.128). Getting the right people for the right job and with a good fit with the organization's culture can be a source of tremendous value. In the case of mis-hiring, the costs can be quite hefty, such as impacting negatively the morale, performance, retention, and productivity of other employees (Lowisz, 2019, p.11; Hortsman, 2020,

pp.25-26). Attracting the right people to fill vacancies is of crucial matters, as employees play an important role in creating and maintaining competitive advantage, and also fulfilling the strategic business objectives of organizations. It is why much attention should be given to the design, implementation and enactment of recruitment processes in order to recruit and select the right people with the right competencies in a cost-effective manner (Foot et al. 2016, p.150).

Human resource responsibilities such as resource planning are handled by the HR function, but Foot et al argue it is increasingly delegated also to (front) line managers (Foot et al. 2016, p.127), as they play a crucial role in ensuring that HR strategies are carried out effectively (Foot et al. 2016 p.127, Hutchinson & Purcell 2008). Both these actors should also monitor the organization's environment in order to be "aware of local, regional, national and global trends and be able to integrate this knowledge into their strategic plans" (Foot et al. 2016, p.128).

When appraising the future of their organization and assessing the corporate goals, human resources function should define what level of human resources, skills, and knowledge that would be necessary to help the organization thrive (Foot et al. 2016, p.129). In order to assess these three elements the HR function needs first to evaluate what the organization already has; by tracking the existing tasks and skills, such information normally recorded (but it is not always the case) in the job descriptions and person specifications of the organization (Foot et al. 2016 p.129). This information is stored in a human resource information system, and provides data on the internal supply of workers and individual's skill set, optionally including more personal data for each employee profile (Foot et al. 2016, p.131). If no such system exists, an alternative is the use of performance reviews (Horstman, 2020, p.41). Analysing this human resource database may also prove very useful in highlighting issues that would need to be acted upon – such as gender distribution, diversity of the workforce or age distribution – that may be important in achieving the organization's strategic goals (Foot et al. 2016, p.134). Subsequent to the assessment of the internal supply of human resources, if they prove insufficient to meet the requirements to achieve the organization's objectives (and if internal training is not a possible cost-effective option), HR functions are then to turn to the external supply of human resources.

As the competition to acquire new talents is currently very high; employers are to put in place innovative recruitment and selection strategies to better attract and acquire

suitable candidates, while at the same time staying in line with the overall strategy of the human resources (e.g. diversity, equality) and the strategy of the organization (Foot et al. 2016, p.152).

Before starting the recruitment phase, the potential pool of candidates outside the organization and their availability and composition (e.g. demographics, educational level, unemployment levels, geographical location, etc.) is to be analysed (Foot et al. 2016, pp.136-137). Moreover it is also analysed according to other elements of the organization's environment such as the economic state, which impacts the labour market or the competitive intensity (Foot et al. 2016, pp.137-138). The knowledge gathered is to help better define the recruitment strategies to be put in place. "The main objective for HRM planning is to get the right number of people with the right knowledge, skills and abilities, in the right job role at the right time in a timely and costly effective manner" (Argue, 2015, p.22).

The recruitment process can be put in charge of specific recruiters. These recruiters are assigned to specific 'hiring managers', who wish to get a vacant job filled with a suitable candidate (Mostyn, 2016, pp.23-30). The recruiter is in charge to research suitable candidates and select a list of the 'best' ones, and then give that list to the hiring manager who will make the final selection to fill the vacant job. The recruiter gathers information about the role to be fulfilled through using the job description but also by conducting an 'intake session' with the hiring manager (Mostyn, 2016, p.31). This intake session is meant to complement the job description and help design a more accurate profile of what the hiring manager is expecting (Mostyn, 2016, p.32). Topics during these intake sessions are for example what are the benefits associated with such job, does the hiring manager have a specific type of person in mind, information about past recruitments, more details about the role to fill, what will be the interview process, etc. (Mostyn, 2016, pp.34-38).

Other possible ways of sourcing candidates can be through referrals (persons suitable for the job that are recommended by employees of the recruiting organization), or using professional, personal or Alumni Networks (for example by tapping former employees for referrals) (Meister & Mulcahy 2017 pp.110-111; Geoff Smart & Street 2008, p.41).

2.1.2. Building a job description

The occurrence of a vacancy to fill can be due to several events: a former filled post is now vacant, or a new post has been created, or a former full time employee now works part-timely (Foot et al. 2016, p.153). The recruitment process that then follows to fill that vacancy occurs in stages, and would probably resemble in some way to the one recommended by the *Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development* (CIPD, 2014): defining of the role, attracting applicants, managing the application and selection process and making the appointment (Foot et al. 2016, p.153).

Defining the role to be fulfilled is about constructing a job description and defining the "person specifications/competency profiles" (Foot et al. 2016, p.153) to be possessed by the person taking over the job. Organizations with efficient human resource planning function have up to date job description and person specifications/competency profiles in their information system (Foot et al. 2016, p.153). The information contained in such system is then the basis to design appropriate job advertisement, and is to be a reference when evaluating the applicants (Foot et al. 2016, p.154). If there is no pre-existent information system containing the needed information to base on the vacant job description, then a job analysis process is to be enacted to gather the necessary information. The job analysis and writing of the job description can be performed by HR specialists from the HRM division. For an existing job the information to be collected, relates to "the activities performed, the expected outcomes of tasks and the skills required" (Foot et al. 2016, p.154). For a new job the process can be similar, but would be supported with the knowledge and judgment of management (Foot et al. 2016, p.154). Gathering information among several persons involved in and around the job (jobholder, line-manager) of interest is important in order to gather a better overview of the job requirements and mitigate potential bias of individuals (Foot et al. 2016, p.155). Information to be gathered about person specifications complementing the job description concerns elements such as the "knowledge, skills and qualities" (Foot et al. 2016, p.158) or personal attributes and behaviours, or all elements that enable to fulfil well the tasks and outcomes of the job description. Improvement of the performance while doing the job and the potential arrangement of training should also be taken into account (Foot et al. 2016, p.158). A last element needed to complement the job description is the "competency framework" (Foot et al. 2016, p.159)

which is about the core competencies (that are required from every employee) and specific competencies (related to the job)(Foot et al. 2016, p.160).

The job description resulting from the job analysis process is made of four basic elements: the job title, the reporting structure (where the job fits in the organization's structure), a statement of the purpose of the post and a description of the major duties (Foot et al. 2016, p.160). Other dimensions may be included, such as working conditions, salary level, or performance standards, years of experience, flexibility of work, promotional opportunities, etc. (Foot et al. 2016 p.157, Mostyn, 2016 pp.33-38). It should give a broad idea of what the job encompasses, and any detail about the job that may be pertinent for candidates' decision to apply or not should be included in the job description (Foot et al. 2016, p.161).

To get a better idea of what a typical structure of a job posting look like, I listed in the Appendix 2.4 the main typical elements, based on Foot's book "Introducing Human Resource Management" (Foot et al. 2016, pp.157-162).

The finalized job posting can then be advertised through numerous different channels, for example in newspaper, through recruitment agencies, in universities, internet sites, recruitment fairs, word-of-mouth, etc. (Foot et al. 2016, p.162). Where to advertise the vacant job and how much budget is allocated to the advertising will depend on several things. Among them being the characteristics (e.g., level of experience, salary level, level of education) associated with the pool of candidates that is to be targeted, the job characteristics (e.g., senior vs. junior level), or the strategic objectives (e.g., diversity or gender equality) (Foot et al. 2016, p.162).

2.1.3. Recruiting externally: Sourcing candidates and building an employer brand

When hiring externally, in order to stay ahead in the competition of talent acquisition, employers are now increasingly using information technologies strategically. The use of Internet gave numerous opportunities, such as to get to know, to reach and to attract potential applicants through new digital channels (Foot, p.144).

The recruitment means the most used currently by organizations is the 'e-recruitment' (recruiting online), and entails digital practices such as for example advertising job vacancies on websites (e.g., on own company or recruitment agencies websites, or job boards), online applications, CV databases or the tracking, screening and management of candidates (Foot et al. 2016, p.165). E-recruitment enables companies to reach a much

broader pool of candidates. Strategies to increase the visibility of the vacant job posts on the employers'/recruiters' websites include for instance the use of "search engine optimization" (SEO), which gives "high ranking placement in the search results page of a search engine [(e.g., Google, Bing, DuckDuckGo)] or job boards" (Mostyn 2016, pp.56-58).

Another way to increase the pool of candidate is by making the employer brand more visible. Raising awareness about the employer in the labour market is done by promoting the employer brand, making it visible, and instilling the interest of candidates to work under that brand. Much like for marketing strategies, promoting the employer brand involves putting in place a branding strategy, for example by differentiating from competitors through presenting a unique "employer value proposition" (Foot et al. 2016, p.141). This proposition can include "what an organization stands for, what it requires of its employees and what it has to offer as an employer" (Foot et al. 2016, p.141). What the employer can offer to attract applicants include for example career and development opportunities, specific benefit packages, salary pay, etc. Building an employer brands is valuable, and gives credibility on the labour market.

The CIPD's (CIPD, 2013) reported also an increase in the use of Social Medias such as LinkedIn, Facebook or Twitter for recruiting (CIPD, 2013a). Mostyn states it can be used for "branding, digital advertising, and sourcing candidates" (Mostyn, 2016, p.62). Meister and Mulcahy state that "mobile is becoming the dominant way to search for a new job" (Meister & Mulcahy, 2017, p.96), it is therefore of strategic interest to use such apps to source candidates.

The development of information technologies also enabled the rise of websites where employees can rate their employers, and these websites are today commonly used by job seekers to review potential employers before deciding to apply to job posts (Mostyn, 2016, p.73). The most popular of these websites is Glassdoor, where "current or past employees give reviews about their experiences working at an organization" and can give a score and post comments on their employer (Mostyn, 2016, p.73). Managing the employer rating (score and comments) on such website is therefore important when recruiting. Improving the rating can for example be done by encouraging satisfied employees to give positive reviews and write positive comments on Glassdoor (Mostyn, 2016, p.74).

Another means (which has to be paid and is less recent) of recruiter/employer marketing is the use of paid job boards. Mostyn advice to not only rely on one but to put job postings on several job boards in order to maximize the pool of potential candidates and optimize the return on investment (Mostyn, 2016, pp.75-76). Examples of the well-known job boards are Careerbuilder, Indeed, Monster, and Ziprecruiter.

Organizations can use various means to enable potential candidates to apply for job vacancies: among these means are online application forms, calling in person, attending open day interview events, sending an email, etc. (Foot et al. 2016, p.164). When applying, candidates are usually requested to provide elements giving information about them such as an application form, a CV, a letter of application, a handwritten/typed submission, or do a personal call (Foot et al. 2016, p.168). Employers or recruiters may also directly contact interesting candidates to offer them to apply for job postings. They can do so for example via text, email, or social media applications such as Linkedin (Mostyn, 2016, p.95).

2.1.4. Selection process

Upon the receptions of the applications (which are under data protection requirements), the selection process is then initiated. The selection is also to be done in a strategic manner, bearing in mind the organization's strategic goals to be achieved (Foot et al. 2016, p.171). The decisions on who should be in charge of the selection and what policies, procedures and training should be put in place to support and provide guidance to the persons in charge (Foot et al. 2016, p.171) is therefore to be done carefully. Foot et al. define the objectives of the selection process as follows: "gather as much relevant information as possible, organize and evaluate the information, [and] assess each candidate in order to forecast performance on the job and provide information to applicants so that they can decide if they wish to accept an offer of employment" (Foot et al. 2016, p.172). The most adopted selection methods according to the CIPD (CIPD, 2013b) are: interviews, psychological testing, assessment centres, and using references.

The selection technique or the set of selection techniques chosen to be implemented in an organization will depend on the organization's resources and on the strategic value (deriving competitive advantage from having a superior workforce (Foot, p.172)) that is allotted to getting the selection right.

Shortlisting, or cutting down the applications to a manageable number, is the first step in the selection process and can be done through screening the written information of applicants such as résumés or CVs, and ranking candidates with the use of an objective scoring system for example (Foot et al. 2016, pp.173-174; Horstman, 2020, pp.54-75). Phone screening after reviews of résumés is for instance a used practice (Horstman, 2020, pp.81-82). Subsequent to shortlisting, the selected applicants are further evaluated through other selection techniques such as for example interviews, psychological testing, working simulations, assessment centres or references.

Interviews, being the most used selection technique, can be conducted face to face or through other means such as telephone, or currently (due for example to more international recruitment) via video call (Foot et al. 2016, p.175; Indeed.com, 2018). Interviews are ideally to be well-structured and as objective as possible. The purpose of interviews is to assess if the candidates possess the necessary qualifications for the job, but also to evaluate the fit between the person and the culture of the organization (Mostyn, 2016, p.145). That is, checking for the P-O fit and the P-J fit (being a key aim in all selection processes). The "person-organization" (P-O) fit is the "extent to which a person and the organization share similar characteristics and/or meet each other's needs" (Sekiguchi, 2004, p.179). The "person-job" (P-J) fit "refers to the match between the abilities of a person and the demands of a job or the desires of a person and the attributes for a job" (Sekiguchi, 2004, p.179). However, Foot et al mention that many research studies established interviews as "poor predictor of future job performance", and that "poorly conducted interviews can lead to decisions with low predictive validity, […] they do not test what they are supposed to test, that is, ability to perform a job well" (Foot et al. 2016, p.176).

Evaluating the information that has been gathered through the interviews can be done through for example an agreed upon method using a scoring system, by rating the answers of the candidate's identified competencies or person specifications (Foot et al. 2016, p.187). The selection is therefore made in a methodical way and serves as a clear justification of the rejection or acceptance of the candidates (Foot et al. 2016, p.187).

Given the low validity associated with interviews, other methods can be used to complement the selection process and give more information related to the potential performance of candidates on the job. Among these other practices are for example psychological testing (to acquire information about individual abilities or traits), ability

tests (about specific mental abilities), personality tests (about personality traits likely to predict work performance) or work simulations (putting the candidate in the situation to execute a task that is actually part of the job) (Foot et al. 2016 pp.188-190).

For the final selection of the candidate best fit for a job, Foot & al advice to employ a methodical approach to evaluate the information gathered along the selection process, for example by scoring each candidate's performance, in order to rank them according to preference (Foot et al. 2016, p.196).

As an example of competencies employers may look for in candidates, in their book *Who, the A method of hiring*, Smart et al. have interviewed many CEOs and other leaders to ask them about what were in their opinion the critical competencies their hired employees had. Among them are: efficiency, honesty/integrity, intelligence, analytical skills, proactivity, persistence, etc. (Geoff Smart & Street, 2008, pp.27-30). Smart et al also completed that list of competencies "A players" should have, with elements such as flexibility, adaptability, calm under pressure, strategic thinking, creativity, work ethic, listening skills, etc. (Geoff Smart & Street, 2008, pp.27-30).

Steven Mostyn encourages recruiters to have a fast hiring process, especially when the competition for talents is intensive and the role is hard to fill (Mostyn, 2016, p.151). In order to have a competitive advantage over competitors, Mostyn states that the perfect hiring life cycle should only last five business days (Mostyn, 2016, p.151).

2.1.5. Current and future challenges in recruitment practices

In their book The Future Workplace Experience, Meister and Mulcahy state that organizations will soon face changes: for instance "workers of all generations and cultures will increasingly come to expect a workplace that mirrors their personal lives, one that is transparent, connected, personalized, and offers choices" (Meister & Mulcahy, 2017, Intro X). Understanding these disruptions that will impact the recruiting and hiring matters, and be able to address them will become necessary core competencies for human resource leaders (but also the business ones) (Meister & Mulcahy, 2017, Intro X-XI). The global talent marketplace, with increased competitiveness, will be characterized by "changing expectations, transformative technologies, and a shifting composition of the workforce" (Meister & Mulcahy, 2017, Intro XI). Life-cycle of knowledge will be shortened, and therefore employees will need to continually update their skill sets in order to stay employable (Meister & Mulcahy, 2017, Intro XVII, XXIII). Organizations can also expect changing employee expectations and needs, for example

employee that will expect a unique "employee experience" that is emotional, intellectual, physical, technological and cultural, when integrating an organization (Meister & Mulcahy, 2017, Intro XVII-XIX). Expectations may also shift towards greater flexibility and having a company and a work that is purpose-driven (Meister & Mulcahy, 2017, p.14). Active job seekers are not making up the entire share of the available workforce an organization can source employees from. "Passive job seekers" are employed workers which are not actively looking for a new job, but can be ready to change if a better opportunity where to show up to them (Meister & Mulcahy, 2017, p.95). Organizations need to also consider that share of the workforce when planning their sourcing strategy.

Organizations should prepare to be more agile in such environment of constant disruptions and review their current practices in order to stay competitive and attract talents. Another important element that requires attention is the fact that now the various generations making up the workforce have their expectations, their similarities or differences, and need to be assessed and managed successfully by developing a "generational intelligence" (Meister & Mulcahy, 2017, Intro XXIV). Requirements of greater diversity, gender equality, and inclusion, and the rising share of "gig-economy workers" (temp workers, freelancers, independent contractors, etc.) push organizations to revisit their sourcing practices (Meister & Mulcahy, 2017, Intro XXVI-XXVII).

2.2. Recruitment and Selection in Holacracy

2.2.1. Recruitment in Holacracy according to Brian Robertson

Brian Robertson described in his book that, in Holacracy, there are several general business processes that are not defined in the constitution but that are still needed by organizations; including for example the hiring process, or the compensation system (Robertson, 2015, p.158). For Robertson, these processes can be seen as "apps", that he defines as "a collection of related governance decisions […], perhaps involving one or more roles, some new accountabilities, and a policy or two, that together enacts some needed process or function" (Robertson, 2015, p.158). He posits these apps as functioning on top of an organization's "underlying operating system" (which is embodied by the constitution) (Robertson, 2015, p.158). Robertson suggest to organizations that have adopted Holacracy to evaluate the standard approaches that exists (even if they come from managerial hierarchy systems), or the approaches that

were used before the shift to Holacracy, and then assess what "apps" (approaches) meet the needs of the organization, and which ones needs to be upgraded (Robertson, 2015, p.159). Organizations may choose to develop their own systems, but they can also consider apps developed by other "Holacracy-powered" organizations that made them available to the broader community (Robertson 2015, p.160). Robertson's company HolacracyOne displays an "app store" on its website "where Holacracy practitioners can share and find general apps designed for achieving certain goals or handling common functions" (Robertson 2015, p.160). Organizations adopting these "apps" may then evolve them through processing arising tensions over time (Robertson, 2015, p.163).

During my research on what has been currently written about the potential recruitment practices used in Holacracy, I found limited information on that specific subject. However, Frederic Laloux's work Reinventing Organization provides a lot of examples of the recruiting practices observed to be generally used in Teal organizations (holacratic organizations represent a subcategory of Teal organisations).

2.2.2. Recruitment and selection practices used in self-managing organizations

Frederic Laloux observed across all the Teal organizations he studied (among which holacratic ones) that these organizations "keep staff functions to an absolute bare minimum" (Laloux, 2014, p.71), as "they understand that the economies of scale and skill resulting from staff functions are often outweighed by the diseconomies of motivation produced" (Laloux, 2014, p.71). Most organizations (not Teal) today still rely on the use of classical staff functions for two reasons according to Laloux: because staff functions provide economies of scale, which are quantifiable, and because staff functions are means that can be used by CEOs and leaders to give them "a sense of control over employees" (Laloux 2014, p.73). However, in such situation these typical staff functions "concentrate power and decision making away from the frontline" (Laloux, 2014, p.71), making people of the frontline feeling disempowered, resulting in "diseconomies of motivation" (Laloux, 2014, p.73), which are hard to quantify. Moreover, in Laloux's opinion, the "sense of control" of managers is likely an illusion: rules and procedures that make sense from the top point of view may prove counterproductive on the field, and people may just "find creative ways around them or simply ignore them" to fulfil the desired objectives (Laloux, 2014, p.73). In Teal organizations, leaders are to embrace trust: trading the predictable economies of scale for a "probably much more beneficial

unbridled motivation", and let go off the illusion of control over frontline staff through staff functions (Laloux, 2014, p.73).

In Teal organizations, people working in staff functions (such as human resources) are very few and with almost no decision making authority– they truly fit to the term "support functions", providing their services when requested by teams (Laloux, 2014, p.71). In general, Teal organizations have no human resource departments (Laloux, 2014, p.71). For example a French self-managing brass foundry named FAVI has got rid of almost all staff functions: the tasks operated previously by these departments are now performed by operators in each team (Laloux 2014, p.75).

Internal recruitment in Teal organizations can occur for example as follows. Firstly, the relevant people decide upon the creation or modification of a role, for example by discussing it in a team meeting (Laloux, 2014, p.115). A new created or vacant role may then be allotted in an organic manner: "a person emerges that team members entrust with the role", meaning a team member can voluntarily take on that role upon the consent of its peers (Laloux, 2014, p.121). Teams perform their own recruitment and selection process, be it internal or external. In addition, as they fully own the decision of whom to recruit and, as they will bear the consequences of that choice when working with the recruit every day, team members are therefore "emotionally invested in making the recruit successful" (Laloux, 2014, p.72).

The discussion process to fill a role can also be formalized. For example, one of the Teal organizations studied by Laloux put in place an internal recruitment process where "candidates are interviewed by the colleagues who will work most closely with them" (Laloux, 2014, p.122).

When a vacant role cannot be filled by someone internally, then an external recruitment process has to be put in place; in my opinion the core stages are probably similar to more classical recruitment practices, but I suspect some elements differ due to characteristics and practices of Teal organization. I will now give some elements that are likely to impact the recruitment process and the requested characteristics to be possessed by recruits in Teal organizations.

Teal organizations do not have rigid organizational charts, nor job descriptions or specific job titles. People in these organizations "are not meant to fit pre-defined jobs; their job emerges from a multitude of roles and responsibilities they pick up based on their interests, talents, and the needs of the organization" (Laloux, 2014, p.90). For

example, tasks that were formerly assigned to a manager, can find themselves scattered across many roles detained by several members of a team (Laloux, 2014, p.90). To have no job descriptions or title can be unsettling for someone that is not familiar. It "forces us to search within ourselves for a personal, meaningful way to define who we are and what we can contribute. There is no pre-set template to conform to, no pre-given label that can shape our identity" (Laloux, 2014, p.181). I suspect building a specific job offer when looking for a new recruit might therefore be more difficult to produce, compared to a very classic job description or job title. In Holacracy, roles are "evolving organically, all the time, to adapt to changes in the environment [and] in general, employees who are not used go such frequent change can find it taxing at first" (Laloux, 2014, p.120). In job offers of Teal organizations, great emphasis is probably put on the organization's practices and culture, and what kind of attitude (in addition to skills and competences) is likely to thrive in them, in order to inform best candidates of what working in such company is like. Great adaptability and a high capability of autonomy are probably expected from potential candidates in order to deal with a portfolio of different roles.

In addition to the job description, the benefits associated with a job advertised are probably not comparable with other competitors' job offerings, for several reasons. Examples of three areas where Teal organizations depart from standard management practices are about pay level, the employee incentives and the salary differences (Laloux, 2014, p.129).

The first area is about defining the level of pay of people in Teal organizations. Laloux observed in such organizations the use of peer-based processes or self-set salaries. Laloux gives the example of HolacracyOne, which uses once a year a peer based ranking method where each member of the company fills out a survey for all their colleagues, coupled with an algorithm which groups employees in a few "salary buckets" (Laloux, 2014, p.129). The highest salaries are given to those with the most experience, knowledge and the hardest workers (Laloux, 2014, p.129). In such case I suspect that if a potential candidate were to request more details on the prospected pay for the job, the answer may not be as straightforward compared to other managerial organizations with fixed pay according to a specific job position.

The second area is that in evolutionary Teal organizations, greater value is given to intrinsic over extrinsic motivators (Laloux, 2014, p.131). Giving meaning to work and let people express their talent and callings in their work take the place of individual

extrinsic motivations that could distract oneself from its inner motivation (Laloux, 2014, p.131). Therefore there may be no typical form of benefits, such as commissions, hourly wages, or bonuses, displayed in the job offers.

Lastly, most Teal organizations studied seek to narrow down the difference in compensation between top and lower salaries, by boosting the lower ones (to make sure everyone's basic needs are covered) and capping the higher ones (Laloux, 2014, p.132). The salary offered by Teal organizations may therefore not be the most competitive in their industry.

In Teal organizations, there is also no such thing as promotions. If one wishes to increase his or her pay, it is through endorsing (upon consent of his or her peers) roles with greater responsibility (Laloux, 2014, p.117). There is no such thing as higher pay according to seniority for example. In Teal organizations there is no "ladder" to climb, as there is no hierarchy. Power is not given by the top to the bottom: everyone in these kinds of organisations can be powerful, what level of power they have lies in grabbing the opportunities available to them (Laloux, 2014, pp.135-136).

Laloux observed in Teal organizations that there is also no such thing as talent management, succession planning or career planning (Laloux, 2014, p.123): "in a self-managing context, people naturally come across so many opportunities to learn and grow" that senior leaders don't need to worry about people getting the right exposure. "People who have freedom in their work are eager learners; they can be trusted to shape their own journeys" (Laloux, 2014, p.123). People naturally select the roles they choose to put in their role portfolios according to their skills, interests, and talents (Laloux, 2014, p.127).

Self-management, adaptability, autonomy and eagerness to grow and learn are probably among the person specifications that may be requested from candidates to have when they are recruited, in order to facilitate their integration in such organization. I suspect that specific on-boarding processes may also be necessary.

When it comes to the recruitment process, Laloux assesses that "Teal organizations tweak the traditional recruitment process to allow both parties a better, hopefully more truthful look at each other" (Laloux, 2014, p.174). What he means is that in more traditional organizations, which put a lot of effort to attract the best candidates (for example through building an employer brand) may, like candidates trying to conform to what they think the employer is looking for, put "a mask on" (Laloux, 2014,

p.174). In Teal organizations, the recruitment process is done by future teammates "who simply want to decide if they would want to work with the candidate on a daily basis" (Laloux 2014, p.174). These teammates are likely to be honest about their workplace, as "they will have to live with the consequences if they oversell the company to their potential new teammate" (Laloux, 2014, p.174). Attitude, in conjunction to the candidate's skills and experience is of crucial importance in assessing the fit of the person. Attitude is the most paramount, because due to the fluidity of roles, the relevance of the person's skills and experience can change, but the person's fit into the organization won't (Laloux, 2014, p.175). High emphasis is put on informing about the company values and practices during the recruitment process, so that candidates get all the necessary information to base their decision to join the company or not (Laloux, 2014, p.175). Candidates are interviewed by many teammates – up to around 10 to 12 interviews – with the final aim to answer the question: "are we meant to journey together?" (Laloux, 2014, p.175). It is a process of mutual assessment which, according to the studied Teal organizations, in addition to the selection process can take much longer than usual (Laloux, 2014, p.220). A slower growth is tolerated and a post may stay vacant for longer in order to find the right candidate fitting the role and the organization (Laloux, 2014, p.220).

Teal organizations also build an environment of trust, where frequently exchanging feedback is encouraged and embedded in the daily life of these organizations. New recruits in some organizations are trained to use Marshall Rosenberg's nonviolent communication to give feedback (Laloux, 2014, p.125). Standing up for yourself and being ready to go speak up directly to people are probably another type of characteristic looked for in potential candidates.

2.2.3. Generational cohorts and self-managing models

An aspect that is also a subject of interest in this thesis paper is the kind of employee profile that might best fit in such agile management models. On that matter Frederic Laloux mentions in his book that it is easier for younger generations, who have interacted in their youth with the Web, to wrap their mind around self-management and "get it" (Laloux, 2014, p.138).

To further evaluate that statement, I collected information giving an overview of the different generations present in the workplace, to get an idea of their characteristics and expectations, and to assess which generation might be in possession of desirable

characteristics if they were to work in a Holacracy. You may find the details about each generation in the Appendix 2.5. From what I learned, I assess that hiring individuals from "younger" generations (such as Gen Z and Y) may facilitate the integration in self-managing (such as holacratic) organizations as they are deemed to be the most active learners, are ready to engage in the workplace, have an entrepreneurial drive, have an experimental mind-set and enjoy flexibility.

However, younger generations are likely to have less experience and knowledge compared to more "older" generations (Millennials, Boomers). But these older generations require more structured learning opportunities, are new to flexible working conditions, and expect more customized benefits.

In general, the existing literature is very limited on the type of profile that is likely to "fit" in a management model such as Holacracy. To date, only the belonging to younger generations predicts some likelihood to be attracted and fit well in such organizations (Laloux, 2014, p.138; Kutalová, 2021, p.42; Guilherme, 2020, p.63).

Moreover, in self-managing organizations generally newly hired recruits will be given roles with light responsibility compared to people with greater experience in the organization (Laloux, 2014, p.117). I expect therefore that it is probably unlikely to find job offers for roles with high responsibilities open to external candidates, compared to managerial organizations where positions such as senior managers can open up for external recruitment.

Overall, the existing literature on recruiting practices employed by holacratic organizations, and the employee profile that is likely the best fit in such organizations is rather narrow. The aim/attempt of this academic thesis is therefore to collect more insights on the recruiting strategy and practices in holacratic organizations, and the type of employee profile that would be the best fit in such management model.

3. EMPIRICAL METHODOLOGY AND DATA ANALYSIS

3.1. Methodology

This paper explores the recruiting strategies, processes and 'ideal' employee profile of organizations using Holacracy. The collection and analysis of the empirical material for this study was done using a multiple case study methodology. The studied material was retrieved from 11 organizations using Holacracy in Switzerland (details about the selection are presented later on), and the information was gathered on the organizations' publicly available online resources and through the realisation of qualitative semi-structured interviews. The collected findings of this multiple case study were analysed in a cross case manner, similar to Eisenhardt's method of theory building (Eisenhardt, 2021, pp.148-152).

As mentioned in the previous literature review, organizations are now increasingly putting effort in e-recruitment strategies in order to reach and attract candidates. The evaluation of publicly available online resources and assessing them through the lens of the commonly used e-recruitment practices enable to observe to what extent the organizations use the classical e-recruitment practices, to what extent they put effort in building their employer brand, and how their unique management model may impact these practices. It also enables the gathering of comparable data, which allows the assessment of similarities or differences between organizations.

The conducting of interviews provides empirical material that give deeper qualitative insights on each organizations' overall recruitment strategy, how it is related to the company strategy and purpose, what is the impact of Holacracy, how the recruitment processes are organized in practice, and what is the 'ideal' employee profile for these organizations.

3.2. Case entities

At the beginning of the selection process of the case entities, I gathered on HolacracyOne's database (listing the organizations using Holacracy worldwide) the names of all the Swiss organizations identified as using Holacracy, being in total 12 ("Holacracy Success Stories," n.d.). The selection of the organizations under study was limited to Switzerland, because even though they might operate in different industries they still share a similar cultural, economic, environmental, political, and legal context. According to the HolacracyOne database, Switzerland is the 4th country with the highest

number of organizations that have implemented Holacracy (12 organizations), and the three countries with the most holacratic organizations are the Netherlands (30), the U.S. (26), and Germany (22) ("Holacracy Success Stories," n.d.). However, taking into account the total number of companies in each country, Switzerland ranks number 1 (*Entrepreneuriat - Entreprises Selon Leur Taille - OCDE Data*, n.d.). No other database of companies using Holacracy specifying the country of origin of each company was found during the literature review of this paper.

The retrieved organizations were: Swisscom event & media solutions, VillageOffice, KM Management, Liip, Acceleris – The Data Mavericks, Freitag, Feinheit, Octree, Shortbread, Viamala Sportwerkstatt, Nightnurse Images and Xpreneurs.

Following a closer review of these organizations, 2 companies were discarded from the initial sample: KM Management and ACCELERIS - The data Mavericks. KM management was taken out due to its too small size (KM Knowledge Management International, n.d.), and The Data Mavericks because it seemed to no longer be active (DataMavericks.com Is for Sale, n.d.). Swisscom, despite the fact it was assessed to not be using Holacracy anymore, was kept in the sample as it still operates with a similar management model, and in order to hopefully have insights on their recruitment practices with and without Holacracy. It is also one of the few biggest companies from the sample. Loyco, a company which uses a management model that is mostly based on Holacracy, and which is also quite big in size, was also added to the sample. The final selection of the 11 holacratic organizations under study was: Swisscom event & media solutions, VillageOffice, Liip, Freitag, Feinheit, Octree, Shortbread, Viamala Sportwerkstatt, Nightnurse Images, Xpreneurs and Loyco.

Most of these organizations have quite a small scale, only three of the organizations have over 100 workers, and the rest have between 1-10 and 11-50 employees. They operate in various industries, including IT and information services, fashion, consulting, insurance or real estate. You may find on the next page a brief presentation for each of them.

Table 1: General information about case entities

Company Name	Industry	Location	Number of employees
Feinheit	Advertisement services	Zurich	11-50
Freitag	Retail Trade	Zurich	201-500
Liip	Technology, information, and internet services	Lausanne, Fribourg, Bern, Basel, etc.	51-200
Loyco	Insurance	Geneva	51-200
Nightnurse Images	Audio-visual production	Zurich	11-50
Octree	Information services/IT, Software	Genève	0-10
Shortbread	Events organization	Zurich	0-10
Swisscom Event & Media Solutions	Utilities, telecommunication, entertainment/media/art	Zurich	60
Viamala sportwerkstatt	Leisure, travel and tourism	Thusis	0-10
VillageOffice	Real Estate	Bern	0-10
Xpreneurs	Services and consulting to organizations	Basel	0-10

Sources Table 1: holacracy.org, linkedin.com

You can find in the Appendix 2.6 further details about each organization.

3.3. Validity and Reliability

It is important to mention that elements such as the size, the industry, or the organizational culture of each organization may have an impact on the recruitment practices and targeted employee profile of each organization. Moreover the fact that a company was founded with Holacracy versus having implemented it later on may also impact the studied elements.

The validity and quality of the retrieved data is also relying on what companies are choosing to display on their website, and what information or opinion interviewees are willing to share. The material from the interviews is subjective to each interviewee's background, understanding of the topic studied, and personal experience with recruitment and Holacracy.

About validity, the process and methodology of analysis put in place to answer the research question were designed and selected with care, with the support of several theory and structure in order to provide enough insights relevant to the topic under study in a coherent and structured manner.

3.4. Digital Content of Case Entities

3.4.1. Empirical methodology

The first part of the collection of empirical material on these organizations' recruitment practices covers the selected companies' digital resources. It focuses on these companies' visible "e-recruitment" practices, and how much emphasis is put on Holacracy to inform potential candidates about it. What was searched and analysed was information that are or could impact a candidate's decision to apply at a specific organization. The frame of analysis, inspired from the common recruitment practices identified in the chapter about classical recruitment practices, is as follow:

1) Breadth on digital presence:
   a) Has the company its own website and job posts page
   b) Presence on social media
   c) Existence of a profile on Glassdoor or Kununu: these websites being identified as the most popular in Switzerland – so the most likely to be reviewed by candidates
   d) Job boards: are their job postings displayed on one or several from 4 national job boards in Switzerland identified as among the ones gathering the most job offers (Indeed, jobs.ch, jobscout24, jobup.ch)

2) Activity rate and content:

    a) Own website: what information do they give about the company, do they give a lot of insight on what it is like to work in that organization, and do they mention Holacracy

    b) Social media: activity rate of the company, content of the posts, do they advertise job posts or inform about working conditions in the company, or that they use Holacracy

    c) Glassdoor/Kununu: are there a lot of reviews from existing or previous employees, what is the balance between positive and negative reviews, and are these reviews answered (showing involvement of the company in managing their employer brand)

3) Recruitment status and content of job postings

    a) Are they currently recruiting through their digital channels

If yes:

    b) What is the common information given about the organization and how it is like to work in the company, and do they set emphasis on the Holacracy structure and practices

    c) Taking example of a current job posting:

        i) What information is given about the job specifically and the working conditions on the job

        ii) What is looked for in the candidate profile: competencies and person-specifications

        iii) What are the opportunities/challenges associated with the job

        iv) What are the benefits associated with the job

        v) Is there any relevant complementary information

        vi) How is the application process, what inputs are requested from the applicants

        vii) Is there more information about the recruitment process post the reception of the candidate's application

The collected data for the breadth of online presence and activity rate of each organization are presented in Appendix 3.1, and the recruitment status and job posting analysis are in Appendix 3.2.

In order to provide some insights on how their practices might differ with organizations that do not use a holacratic organizational model, the same analysis of digital resources was conducted for a matched sample of selected non-holacratic organizations operating in the same industries as the companies of the sample. Seven companies were studied: the Swisscom group, Regus (IWG plc), Radity, Mammut Sports Group, Enigma, PlanitSwiss and Switzerland Tourism. The collected data for these organizations can be found in the Appendix 3.3 and 3.4 Putting in comparison the data from holacratic and non-holacratic organizations enables to better assess what potentially "unique" practices holacratic companies are using.

3.4.2. Cross case data analysis

From the Appendix 3.1, several observations could be made. Each of the studied organization gives information about the company on their website such as main company goals, company values, geographical locations, ongoing projects, received awards or partner companies they work with. Most also present their employees and some also give access to employee testimonies in format of text or video on how it is to work in their company, or give insights on working processes.

Out of the 11 studied organizations, all except two of them (Swisscom event & media and Viamala Sportwerkstatt) made explicit mention of the use of Holacracy (or their particular management model, such as Loyco). The organizations that did mention it range from a few words explanation to a full webpage of information about Holacracy (or their own management model) and how it impacts their working methods. Some even give access to their full Holarchy of roles on Holaspirit.

Most organizations have their own website for job postings and online applications. Except VillageOffice, the smallest organizations with 0-10 employees do not have a job postings webpage, or they only propose to send (unsolicited) applications via mail. For most small organizations it was not possible to tell clearly if they were currently recruiting or not, as they may use other means for recruitment, that are different from the classical e-recruitment means evaluated in this study.

About presence on other digital channels, all companies are present on LinkedIn, and possess at least one other well-known social media such as Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. Some are also present on less common social media such as Youtube, Pinterest, Tik-Tok or WhatsApp. Concerning these organizations' activity rate on social media, except Shortbread, all organizations are posting new content monthly to weekly.

Each company share roughly a similar content across its social media, but some variations could still be observed. Content on LinkedIn is more oriented on company events, new projects, the working life in the organization, employee welcoming or testimonies, advertising vacant jobs to be fulfilled, or Holacracy related information. Other social media like Instagram, Facebook or Twitter have more customer-oriented content (about products and/or services), and usually don't advertise about vacant posts. Less commonly used social media such as Pinterest or Tik Tok are also mostly used for customer oriented content

Few organizations, in this case Liip, Freitag and Loyco (the biggest companies from the sample), have a Glassdoor or/and a Kununu profile. Liip has the most reviews on its profile (both Glassdoor and Kununu) and shows an active management of the company profile by replying to every review. Moreover, the majority of comments are from existing employees and are positive, which can lead to think that the company may request their satisfied employees if they could post a (positive) review on the website. The other two companies do not showcase any active management, as they have fewer reviews (mostly from past employees, and negative) and they were not replied to by the company.

Only 3 companies from the sample displayed their job posts on at least one of the 4 reviewed job boards.

From this analysis, it can be observed that there is a discrepancy between the bigger and smaller organizations, for example when it comes to the number of channels used to reach and inform potential candidates, or display job postings.

Now I will provide a closer analysis of the gathered job postings from the five companies currently recruiting and that had job posts available publicly when this research was conducted. The five companies are Liip, Freitag, Feinheit, Nightnurse Images and Loyco.

All companies included in their job posts (or on their jobs webpage) information about the company: what they do, the company purpose, main company goals, and some include information about the members of the company or the company culture. Almost all organizations except Freitag made a mention to the use of Holacracy (or a similar management model), ranging from a quick mention (such as Nightnurse Images) to an extensive explanation of the management model and how it impacts the working

practices and the structure of the organization (such as Liip or Loyco). Only Freitag did not mention explicitly the use of Holacracy in its job postings or jobs webpage.

All organizations present broadly the main tasks, objectives and responsibilities associated with the job, some state with what stakeholders the person will interact with on the job, or what a typical day on the work might look like. Some companies like Liip or Feinheit also include how Holacracy more specifically impacts the job and the person, such as for example where the job is located in the structure, the working conditions, the individual's influence on governance, the interdisciplinary setting, or self-organized cooperation.

In all job postings were also displayed requirements concerning competencies and person specification criteria for a candidate to meet in order to be eligible for the job. Competencies related to the job are for example the mastering of specific software, past experience in a similar job, language requirements, knowledge on specific subjects, or educational formations. Person specifications include for example having a certain attitude traits, a specific mind-set, or have certain person characteristics. Person specifications that are shared by several organizations are for example the eagerness to learn, innovativeness, autonomy, self-management, self-motivation, or flexibility.

In the domain of opportunities and challenges presented by organizations, elements related to Holacracy and its implications are mentioned. For example, evolving in such unique working methods and culture, working across different teams, high responsibility, the need to self-manage and motivate, the promotion of self-taught learning and the many opportunities to grow offered by the management model. Many organizations make available formations and trainings to employees, again to encourage employee growth and learning.

About the benefits associated with the job, many state the attractiveness of the working conditions and environment, such as autonomy, flexibility in workload or work location, no dress code, etc. Three out of the five organizations present in their benefit fairness and transparency of salary. Liip and Loyco are the most extensive on their added benefits, citing for example the length of unpaid leave (both greater than the 5 weeks Swiss annual holidays), paternity leave, furnished technical equipment, on site employee benefits, or family allowances.

Liip is the only one to include in the job posting a link leading to a webpage containing feedback from previous recruits about the recruitment and on-boarding

process. Freitag is the only one to include testimonies from existing employees on what they expect from the new recruit when working in the job and the organization. Loyco explains briefly on its webpage where Loycocracy is described how the recruitment process is.

4 out of the 5 organizations propose an online application process, Nightnurse images being the only one requesting applications via mail. Some have a section for unsolicited applications outside their job postings, and Feinheit is the only one to state they only accepts application via their own website (even though they are also on Jobscout24). All organizations request an application form and CV, and most of them also request a letter of motivation or other documents such as portfolios, samples of past projects or a photo. Several organizations request further inputs from candidates, such as Liip asking for the candidate's reasons of wanting to join the organization. Another example is Loyco, which asks for 3 things that characterizes the candidate, what values of the company they identify to, and what motivates the candidate to work in the company. Feinheit on its side asks candidates about their salary expectations.

Liip is the only organization providing information on their recruitment process, by having a full webpage dedicated to it with testimonies from previously recruited persons, and the explanation of the full recruitment process. The company also mention that they are transparent on their objectives during the recruiting process (that is, assessing the candidate's fit into the organization and culture).

3.4.3. Comparison with non holacratic organizations

Here is a brief presentation of the organizations, and you can find further details about them in the Appendix 2.7:

Table 2: General information about non-holacratic organizations

Company name	Industry	Location	Number of employees
Enigma	Consulting in Marketing and advertisement	Geneva, Bern, Zurich	11-50
Mammut Sports Group AG	Sport products	Seon, Aargau	501-1000
Planitswiss	Events organization	Lutry	11-50
Radity	Technology and information services	Zurich	11-50
Regus / IWG plc	Commercial real estate	Zurich	10'000+
Swisscom	Technology and information services, telecommunication	Bern	10'000+
Switzerland Tourism	Tourism	Zurich	201-500

Source Table 2: linkedin.com

All organizations (except Mammut, which says very little about them) display on their website what the company does, their geographical location, main company objectives and values. Some company also make a broad presentation of their employees. Only 3 of the 7 selected organizations give some information about working practices and conditions, or make available testimonies from existing employees. Swisscom is the one giving the most insight about their company: presenting their structure, their divisions, their way of operating, what are the opportunities on the job, available trainings, working environment, or reasons why to join Swisscom.

Concerning the organizations' presence on social media, all of them are present on at least 2 main social media such as LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter or Instagram. Some also are present on less common social media like Youtube, Tik Tok or Pinterest.

5 companies out of 7 are present on Glassdoor and Kununu, only PlanitSwiss is present on none. On Glassdoor, except Radity which has an inactive profile, all organizations have reviews from existing and former employees, reviews that are positive or negative but mostly negative for many organizations. 4 out of the 5 organizations have a similar activity on Kununu. Swisscom has an overall a greater share of positive comments (from existing employees) on Glassdoor and Kununu, which could be due to the company requesting if satisfied employees could post (positive) reviews. However it showcases no active management on Glassdoor but on Kununu it is more active, by answering to many reviews.

Radity and PlanitSwiss are the only ones not present on the reviewed job boards, the other organizations being present on at least two of the job boards.

All companies were currently recruiting when conducting this study and job postings were available publicly on each company's website.

All organizations except Mammut made a broad presentation of their company, such as what they do, their main company objectives or philosophy/mind-set, geographical presence, work environment, or working practices.

About the job, all organizations list the main tasks and objectives of the job, some include for example the responsibilities associated with the job, or with what stakeholders the recruit will interact with (or report to), for example the team composition.

Technical competencies required from the candidate are, for example: years of experience in a related domain, educational level, language requirements, knowledge on specific topics, etc. 4 organizations (Swisscom, Radity, Mammut, Switzerland Tourism) also require experience in the use of agile methodologies of work.

Person specifications that were the most cited across organizations were: interpersonal skills, communication, solution oriented mind-set (or get it done attitude), proactivity, being passionate. PlanitSwiss is the only one mentioning the candidate should be eager to learn, be able to multi-task and have an entrepreneurial drive; they do not state they request experience in agile methods, but expect the candidate to be "keen to work in a dynamic environment".

When it comes to opportunities and challenges, several organizations cite their stimulating/challenging environment and projects, that offer opportunities to learn and grow a career in the company. Swisscom and Switzerland Tourism also offer trainings and encourage self-development. Specific opportunities/challenges put forward by some organizations are or example Mammut mentioning the recruit will have to work in a multi-disciplined Scrum team, and Regus states recruits can access promotion opportunities on the job.

5 organizations out of the 7 state clearly the benefits associated with the job. Regus and Radity offer competitive salary offer, Switzerland Tourism a salary in line with the market, and Swisscom offers a transparent salary system with a fair and in line with market salary. Swisscom, Regus, Enigma and Switzerland Tourism offer flexibility in working hours and/or work location. Several companies praise about their working environment or culture, or that they provide trainings on the job. Some organizations mention other types of fringe benefits such as social security, paid holidays, loyalty bonuses, family related benefits, etc.

All organizations propose an online application process, except PlanitSwiss which only accepts applications via mail. Mammut is the only one not accepting applications via recruiters. Documents requested from candidates in more than one organization are the CV, letter of motivation, salary expectations, a photo, documents on past achievements, and how the candidate learned about the job. Specific requirements from some companies are a transcript of diplomas, or references from past jobs.

3.4.4. Comparison of findings between holacratic and non-holacratic

Several observations can be made from comparing the online content of the holacratic and non holacratic organizations.

Holacratic organizations almost all give information about their management model, and how it impacts their work processes on their company website. They usually also give information on how it is like to work in such organization, through employee testimonies for example. This is consistent with what Laloux observed in Teal organizations: they put high emphasis on who they are, how they function and what they do; informing about the company values and practices is done in order to give the future applicants a lot of information on which to base their decision to apply/join or not. Non holacratic organizations never mention anything about their management

model, but several give some insights on their way of operating or what it is like to work in the company.

When evaluating the job postings from the holacratic organizations, almost all of them made a mention of Holacracy when presenting the organization, and how it impacts the work processes and the individual that is to take on the job. Non-holacratic organizations overall only provide a broad presentation of the company. However, some of these non holacratic organizations require past experience in the use of agile methodologies, which leads to think that these companies use agile methods of working, but only within teams nested in a classical hierarchical structure.

Concerning the competencies and person specification looked for in candidates, holacratic organizations usually mention characteristics such as self-organization/management, eagerness to learn, flexibility, ability to work in a multi-disciplinary environment and across several different teams. One could say it is very much related to what will help that person thrive and feel/work well in a holacratic environment. In addition to the information about the company and Holacracy, it meets the expectations I had about putting emphasis on the organization's practices, culture and what kind of attitude would best fit in such working environment.

Non holacratic organizations when it comes to competencies and person specifications usually mention characteristics such as good communication, team player mind-set, ability to deal with complex situations, being solution oriented, being passionate, or being customer oriented. One could say it is very much related to the performance on the job.

Concerning opportunities and challenges on the job, a lot of holacratic organizations mention elements that are related to their management model: self-organization, opportunities to (voluntarily) learn and grow (availability of trainings), high accountability, or collaboration across several teams. It meets what I had expected when reviewing the literature, i.e. that self-management, adaptability, and eagerness to learn/grow are probably requested from future candidates (in order to facilitate their integration in the organization). Non holacratic organizations rather mention elements such as challenging projects and work environment, opportunities to learn and grow a career, autonomy, working in agile teams. One could observe that some elements are similar between holacratic and non holacratic, the noticeable differences being that in

Holacracy the "high level of accountability" is mentioned, whereas in non Holacracy "challenging projects" (probably implying also challenging environment) are mentioned. About the benefits associated with the job, holacratic organizations usually mention elements such as flexible workload or work location, good working environment, or fairness of salary. Non-holacratic organizations usually offer market competitive salary, flexibility of working conditions, or good team culture. The difference of flexible vs. competitive salary offered in both type of organizations meet what I had expected about the "non-competitiveness" of salary in non-holacratic organizations. It also meets what Laloux had observed in Teal organizations, having their own system of compensation systems, rather based on fairness and departing from standard management practices.

Application to job postings in holacratic or non holacratic organizations is almost all the time through online application on their job posts webpage. Holacratic and non holacratic organizations usually ask for similar documents from candidates: for example the CV, letter of motivation, expected salary, documents of past projects, or how they got to know about the organization or job post. However, in addition to the commonly requested documents for application, some holacratic organizations asks for further more personal input from candidates. For example, asking for their reasons to join the organizations, why they want to work in this specific job post, or how they identify to the organization's values. Asking these complementary questions seems to meet the need of care in the recruitment process that I had posited earlier on.

Only one (holacratic) organization, Liip, gives information and is transparent on their recruitment process following the reception of the application.

3.5. Interviews

3.5.1. Methodology

In order to complement the collection of empirical data in order to help answer this paper's research question, qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted. A qualitative interview is "essentially a conversation in which the interviewer establishes a general direction for the conversation and pursues specific topics raised by the respondent" (Babbie, 2020, p. 314). The format of interview chosen was semi-structured interviews, in order to cover several topics in a structured manner for all interviews, but still leave to interviewees the freedom to develop their answers or bring up other relevant elements that could complement the retrieved data. According to the

context of the interviewed organizations, and the time they could allocate for the interview, the set of questions was adjusted while still permitting to compare the data across the different interviews. The resulting data was analysed also in a cross-case manner, by first providing a review of each separate case interview, and then presenting the similarities and differences between all case interviews.

The main topics reviewed through the interviews were about their recruitment strategy and processes, how Holacracy impacts these, and finally what in their opinion would be the 'ideal' employee profile in their organization. Additionally, for those with past experience in non-holacratic organizations, it was also asked how the previously asked elements differ from those in non-holacratic organizations. Some additional follow up questions were sometimes included during the interview to collect further relevant information. You may find further information on the interview questions in the next section. The aim was one interview per organization with a person able to give relevant answers to the research. The selection of individuals to be interviewed was targeted at members from each organization that were likely to be directly involved in recruiting processes, or that were knowledgeable on that topic, upon the availabilities of the individuals.

The interviews were requested to be in person, by video call or by phone call, to the preference of the person contacted. It was also requested if the interview could be recorded to facilitate the transcription and analysis of the interview afterwards. It was asked to interviewees if it was possible to display their company name and the name of their main roles (in relation to the topic) in the study.

All companies were contacted via email or via their online form on their website. They were contacted through their standard contact email or through a member of the company in charge of recruitment related roles, who's contact was available on their company's website. Four companies who did not respond to the first email were later on sent a kind reminder email, and two of these four companies were also contacted for a kind reminder by phone. Out of the 11 companies, 7 responded to the first email, and 6 agreed to an interview. 5 out of 6 preferred a Zoom interview, only one proposed for a face-to-face interview. You may find further details in the Appendix 3.5.

The six companies that agreed to an interview, in the order that they were interviewed, are: VillageOffice, Loyco, Feinheit, Nightnurse Images, Xpreneurs, and Liip. Moreover, to complement the findings of this study, another person was interviewed:

Paula Nordhauzen, from the Dutch company Energized.org (you may find a short presentation of the company in Appendix 2.9). She was interviewed in order to have another point of view on the covered topics, and to note also if there were any potential bias due to the geographical/cultural background of the Swiss companies. All interviewees agreed to the recording of the interview, and also accepted that their name and company name could be displayed in this thesis. The interviews lasted in general between 30 and 50 minutes. You may find below a table summarizing it.

Table 3: Overview of interviews

Organization	Interviewee	Means of interview
VillageOffice	Jennifer Schäpper-Uster	Zoom
Loyco	Stéphanie Dabrowski-Henzen	Zoom
Feinheit	Patrick Schmidt	Zoom
Nightnurse Images	Christopher Saller	Face-to-face
Xpreneurs	Patrick Scheuerer	Zoom
Liip	Annina Von Planta	Zoom
Energized.org	Paula Nordhauzen	Zoom

3.5.2. Data presentation

The structure of the interview guide was made of five main open questions, with the aim to retrieve information relevant to the study while at the same time still leaving some freedom to the interviewee to add any specific information he/she deems relevant to mention. The order or formulation of questions sometimes varied across interviews according to the content of the answers of the interviewees, in order to keep the flow of conversation natural. Other questions were sometimes added in order to encourage the interviewee to talk further about a topic.

Each interview begin with three closed answer questions in order to get some information on the profile of the interviewee: for how long they worked in their company, if it is their only experience with self-management models and what main roles they are in charge of, and which, if they have, of their roles are related to

recruitment. Below are these five questions, and you can find in the Appendix 2.8. the intentions behind them:

1) Could you describe what the main objectives of your recruitment strategy are? And how, if it is the case, would you say Holacracy impacts them?

2) Could you describe the main elements of the recruitment and selection process of your organization?

3) What are the critical personal characteristics you look for when selecting among candidates?

4) In your opinion, what would be the profile of the ideal candidate for a holacratic organization?

5) Did you work in a non holacratic company beforehand? If yes, how do you think recruiting practices and the person specifications looked for in candidates differs from the ones in holacratic organizations?

When running the interviews several other questions emerged spontaneously. For example "do you see a specific pattern in the candidates that apply to your company?" or, "what do you think attracts candidates that apply at your company?" Such questions helped to complement the retrieved information by searching for any potential insights on what kind of individuals may be applying in holacratic organizations, and if Holacracy was a decisive element in their decision to apply.

You can find on the next two pages a short presentation (in the chronological order of interviewing) of the persons that were interviewed for each company, with some of their background information related to the study.

Table 4: Short presentation of Interviewees

Interviewee	Short presentation
Jennifer Schäpper-Uster	She is currently co-founder at Flesk but was formerly working at VillageOffice before it was dismantled into two separate initiatives beginning of 2022. She participated in the founding of VillageOffice and in the decision to make it a self-organized organization using Holacracy. VillageOffice was her first experience of a Teal organizational model.
Stéphanie Dabrowski-Henzen	She has been working at Loyco since 8 years, and holds the title "Head of Talent". Before the adoption of the "Loycocracy" 4 years ago, her title was HRD. The Loycocracy was her first experience in a structured agile organizational model. The interview was in French, the extracted quotes were translated in English for the thesis.
Patrick Schmidt	He has been working at Feinheit for ten years (Feinheit exist since 15 years). When Holacracy was implemented at Feinheit in 2018, he held the role 'Implementation lead'. He is currently in charge of the role 'Holacracy Coach', but also held many other roles in online marketing. The implementation of Holacracy at Feinheit was his first encounter with such new operating system.
Christopher Saller	He is one of the founders of the company Nightnurse Images (founded in 2010). He is in charge of roles in many circles, including roles related to hiring, such as 'Talent Scout' or 'Contractor'. Before the implementation of Holacracy in 2018, the company was functioning with informal distributed authority based on a common agreement, and also tried a very structured way of work.

Patrick Scheuerer	He was co-founder of the company Xpreneurs in 2015. Among his many roles, he is in charge of several roles involved in the overall hiring process. Before the founding of Xpreneurs he has worked in several traditional organizations, small and large.
Annina Von Planta	She has been working at Liip for a little more than three years, and she is in charge of roles such as 'Scrum Master', 'People Specialist' or 'People Developer'. She is also Lead link in the recruiting circle. Liip is her first experience in a self-organized company.
Paula Nordhauzen	She has been working for over 5 years now at Energized.org, and she has worked in several other holacratic organizations beforehand. She also has experience from hierarchical settings. Among her roles she owns several related to marketing, and some related to HR matters.

3.5.3. Data Analysis

In this section I will only present a synthesis of the findings retrieved from the interviews. Relevant extracts of information that were collected from each interview were stored in separate tables for each company, and all tables can be found in the Appendix, in the chronological order of interviewing (Appendix 3.6-3.12). The findings will then be compared to the theory from the literature review in the conclusion and discussion section.

Question 1: Recruitment strategy

As we saw earlier in this paper, a recruitment strategy can be described for instance in how it relates with the company strategy and purpose, how the recruitment strategy and its objectives are designed and what they are, what are the kind of "right people" that would fit the company and be able to fulfil the strategic objectives, how are these people found and acquired, etc.

About the relationship between the company strategy and the recruitment strategy, several companies, for instance Loyco or Liip, mentioned the link to the company values, the company's philosophy, or what their company is currently focusing

on. Xpreneurs interviewee also stated they look at recruitment from a "values perspective". About the designing of the recruitment strategy, Nightnurse Images gave some details on the process. At Nightnurse Images, a role named 'Team Architect' is in charge of "lining out a plan of the personal development": assessing the numbers and the demand, and bringing an overall view onto where they are and what they need. It is also put in relation with the annual financial prediction plan (for the budgeting). Overall it results in a kind of "team strategy". The interviewee, and all others also, mentioned also the possibility of recruiting more spontaneously in their organization; and that it could come from any role or circle. Liip's interviewee went also in more details about the designing of their strategy. At Liip, the interviewee first mentioned that "strategy is not written in stone". That is, the strategy in Liip's recruiting circle is revised periodically in order to fit with the current company situation. She gave the example of the COVID crisis as a topic that impacted the recruiting strategy. She specified that Liip's recruiting strategy is structured on two focus points: "focus" and "courage". That is, focusing "on providing a great candidate experience" and courage "to recruit for potentials".

Several companies mentioned how they base their recruitment strategy on the kind of person they wish to attract. For instance most interviewees mentioned looking for persons with a specific mind-set: persons having a similar mind-set, or that are ready to change their mind-set. About that Loyco's interviewee mentioned that for her company "it is easy to attract persons that are a bit in the same mind-set" and that therefore they are trying to "attract persons that also come from different cultures, different companies, and that also want to bring other ideas". Interviewees mentioned also that they look for persons having also the right skills; several interviewees stated that in their company, as much importance was put on skills or specific competencies as sharing the company's values. Xpreneur's interviewee mentioned they look for persons having very specific experiences, as in their company they have profiles that are very broad and interdisciplinary, requiring a lot of experience. Xpreneurs is a coaching company in Holacracy, explaining that requirement. The same goes for the company Energized: the interviewee mentioned it made recruitment a bit more difficult than in other companies. About that Xpreneurs' interviewee stated that "there are not very many people out there who actually have the profile that we need" and that they usually "have to say no to most people". In general companies mentioned they put equal importance to the organization-fit and job-fit.

Xpreneurs' and Loyco's interviewees stated that the recruitment of a person was to be assessed in the long term perspective. For Loyco, the interviewee stated they are really committed on finding "the match": having as objective "really to make sure the person stays afterwards", and to "think in the medium and long term, but not in the short term". Xpreneurs' interviewee stated that they "have to build people up over time, and it's always a long investment [and] for a small company, it's always a big commitment. We cannot take too many of those at any given time". About that element we could infer that it should be the case in all type of organizations, not only Holacracy.

To attract and reach those desired profiles, most organizations including, VillageOffice's and Liip's (the former company being very small and the latter being relatively big) interviewees, mentioned to rely on their network in order to find them, or put ads on their digital resources such as Linkedin. Feinheit's and Xpreneurs' interviewee mentioned they were open to spontaneous applications. At Xpreneurs, the interviewee stated they have also started to do targeted recruiting. The company Energized is also open to unsolicited applications but the interviewee mentioned they used their network when they were recruiting.

Holacracy plays also a role in these company's recruitment strategies. Liip's interviewee mentioned that it was important for the company to "paint a very realistic picture of what it will be like once you're a Liiper and what it will be like working in a holacratic setup". For instance she mentioned how such a model could give a lot of opportunities for individuals such as enabling to build a broad 'role portfolio' over time

Xpreneurs interviewee stated they want to make their recruitment as "authentic and transparent as possible and really give the person a real sense of what it will be like to work with us as a company". VillageOffice's interviewee stated they used to "always put out in advance [that] we're a self-organized company", and that they purposefully changed all position titles similar to the conventional titles you would find elsewhere, so "it wouldn't trigger old thinking" when recruiting.

Energized's interviewee stated how Holacracy can attract the right people: "I think you attract the right people by really showing the way you work and showing your values and be very explicit about the choices you make. And then you attract the right people. I don't expect somebody who does not like to be a bit of an entrepreneur to come to energized. That would be surprising". She also added later on in her interview that when recruiting people, "there is two sides to the story". On the one hand, when

recruiting people, "you need people who can contribute to the purpose of the organization, and that might be that you have specific roles that you need people for." On the other hand, "you find somebody who's really a good fit with the organization and culture, and then you just assume that they can contribute. But you start creating roles for them. That's also a possibility". It gives an insight on how holacratic organizations when recruiting not only wish to fill a role but really look at how the new recruit can participate in the evolution of the company.

Question 2: Recruitment processes

As mentioned earlier on in this paper, a recruitment process includes elements such as the decisional process to open a new role, the construction of the job description, the sourcing of candidates, the selection process, etc.

Across organizations, in general the need for a new member can come from any role, any team, or circle. Usually, among the interviewed company, (after the need to recruit a new person has been approved during a circle governance meeting) that role having a demand then turns to a specific role in charge of the recruitment process. At VillageOffice it was the 'Lead Link'; which then with the team assesses what were the time and knowledge capacity in the team and what was missing, and then wrote with the team the skill sets needed and created the role. At Nightnurse Images a role creates the demand and builds the hiring profile, which is then transmitted to the "Talent Scout" role, which is in a different circle and which is in charge of "the recruiting pipeline": taking care for example of putting out the ad, then evaluating and 'distilling' the candidates' applications coming in afterwards. At Loyco the role expressing a need has to state it to the role 'Talent' in his/her team which is responsible for the whole recruitment process; moreover, that role notifies the need to the role 'Planification'. At Liip, managers or HR leaders decide which positions to recruit for, but the initiative to fill a vacancy comes from the team level. At Feinheit, the recruitment process is actually spread across many different roles: "there are roles leading the meetings and the discussions, there are roles providing the job ad, putting that everywhere". At Xpreneurs the process is different: it usually starts by "becoming aware of somebody that we're interested in", or becoming aware of somebody that is interested in the company and is sending an application. Then an initial screening is done by the role 'People attractor', by setting up a first conversation, and if that role has a positive impression from the person,

then the rest of the recruitment process is taken over, and structured, by the 'Rekrutierungs-Regisseur'' (recruiting director) role.

In order to reach the potential profiles, as mentioned earlier several companies rely on their networks, but they mentioned to also rely on social media. Almost no interviewee mentioned the use of recruitment agencies; Loyco's interviewee just stated they "rarely go through by recruiting agencies".

About the selection process, all organizations mentioned putting in place several rounds of interviews (in general 2 to 3), usually with a recruiter, and always with several members of the team or colleagues that would be working with the new role. Some interviewees explained that making the candidate meet the team enables to identify better if the candidate is a good fit in the team and the organization, and that that person will also feel good there. Loyco, Xpreneurs and Liip also rely on more 'informal' interviews (rather conversations) in order to "feel if there is the match that can be made", to "get a sense of the person", to "create an environment where […] we can be very honest and open and transparent about each other". Several organizations such as Loyco, Xpreneurs, Feinheit or Liip insisted again on the fact that they want a recruitment process that is transparent and authentic, in order to really assess the fit between the person, the culture, and the team. Loyco's interviewee mentioned that they really had to be attentive to that as one new person can change the whole dynamic of a team. At Feinheit, there are even specific roles dedicated to assess the candidate's fit with Holacracy. At Nightnurse Images, during the interview Holacracy is also a big topic of discussion.

When it comes to the decision to hire a person, most organizations take that decision by consensus with the roles and team members involved in the recruiting process. In some organisations, like Loyco or Nightnurse Images, some roles hold the final decisions to hire or not someone, but they still receive input from other roles and team members involved in the recruiting process before taking the final decision.

At Loyco it is the 'Talent role' of the circle that has authority on the decision of who to recruit. At Nightnurse Images, the final decision is taken by the "Contractor" role (in charge of setting salaries, drafting contracts, on-boarding), after getting feedback from two other roles (the 'Talent Scout' and the person requesting a new recruit) that have participated with the person having the Contractor role in running the interviews. The Contractor person "kind of crosses everything that has happened" and then takes

the final decision. However, the role "circle lead" from the circle in which a new role is to be filled can refuse the selected hire.

Loyco's interviewee, when talking about how they were implicated to find "the match" when reviewing candidates, mentioned that they were ready, and ended up sometimes, to search for a long time before finding the right person (for example when looking for someone to take over part of the lead of a trustee). She also mentioned however that in domains such as HR, IT, or marketing they have less trouble finding someone, and that the recruiting process usually lasted around 2 months.

Question 3: Competencies and person specifications of candidates for their company

When describing what were the important characteristics, traits, skills, or competencies looked for in candidates when recruiting for their company, several elements were recurrent across the interviews. Firstly, as some companies also mentioned in their strategic objectives earlier on, they look for persons with a specific mind-set, a mentality, or having an open mind-set; one that fits with Holacracy and the company values.

Most companies mention that, of course, having the right skill level and experiences is important in order to do the job, but so is the human aspect. For instance at Loyco, they really want to make sure the person carries not only the right competencies/skills, but also the values that enables a cohesion with the organization and the team. Moreover, that they are committed to work in the common interest of the community and ecosystem. At Xpreneurs they want a person which is really attracted by the purpose of a role, a person that strongly resonate with the purpose of the company, and that this company purpose resonates with their own purpose. VillageOffice's interviewee also mentioned they really aimed to recruit people that were driven by purpose, and not by money. Several companies mentioned that they look for people that are joining for the organization and for the role, and that want to make the role and the organization go forward. We can see here how recruitment in Holacracy is linked to the main company purpose, and therefore the main company strategy.

Several companies also stated they want persons that want to develop themselves: to develop competencies, to be a self-learner and see the opportunities for learning. Someone desiring to evolve as a person. Xpreneurs' interviewee sees that self-development as a way to become a better 'tool' for the organization, and become also a

more "versatile and effective partner in service of the organization's purpose". Loyco's interviewee mentioned the search for meaning in work.

Some also commented they expect the person to bring a lot of energy into their role. VillageOffice's interviewee mentioned about the company members that they could have many roles, some being diametrically different; according to their skills, members could create roles they felt were needed to solve tensions. She added that in a small company, it was necessary to be able to hold many different roles, but it did not have to be the case in other types of companies. She added that Holacracy is a model in which people can, and are expected, to make change happen, learn new things, and voice their opinions. Liip's interviewee also mentioned the capability to "sell yourselves": meaning selling what you're thinking, what your standpoint is, and you have to convince others by making yourself visible. Energized's interviewee also mentioned that element of being able to work an communicate with your colleagues in such holacratic settings; even though the meeting structure helps to make everybody being heard, communication skills can still be a challenge and have to be learned, or is an advantage if one already have them. It meets what I had suspected, that standing up for yourself and going up to speak directly with people are probably another of the characteristics looked for in candidates.

Most companies stated that among the key traits/competency that they looked for in candidates were autonomy, self-organization and self-reliance. Basically being self-driven, and "not needing a lot of outside validation and guidance to become productive" (Xpreneurs' interviewee). They also mentioned the capability to hold responsibilities related to their role, being able to "be in the driver's seat every time" (Feinheit's interviewee). Liip's interviewee also mentioned that the person needed to "love challenges and be very solution oriented", being curious and open to new things, seeing the benefits from these challenges and being creative and finding solutions. Other companies also mentioned the creativity element, in addition to being innovative and bringing new ideas. Liip's interviewee also added that the capability of being strong in prioritizing is an advantage, especially in a very changing environment. Loyco's interviewee mentioned being "willing to take initiatives, and be a bit entrepreneurial in his/her role". In general we can see how the companies have to put a lot of trust in the new recruits. Nightnurse Images' interviewee put emphasis on that point on how they

have "to start with a very, very huge amount of trust into a person when taking this person".

On the more personality level, Liip's interviewee stated "empathy and humbleness": as the person will work in a team, that collaborative element is needed, and "every individual contribution will be a whole at the end. […] that's where the humbleness comes in".

The candidates' relation with Holacracy was also an important element across the interviews. Several companies stated that being interested in Holacracy, or having just read about it, was not enough. Several interviewees mentioned that part of applicants were applying because they thought Holacracy "sounds nice" or "is new", but that did not have the right skills and/or experience. As mentioned earlier several interviewee stated they looked for people with skills and experience with Holacracy or self-management models. VillageOffice's interviewee also posited that today there would be more and more experienced persons in that domain, in comparison to five years ago where they had to "bring everybody up to speed". At Feinheit however, the interviewee stated there was still "very hard to find people already with Holacracy experience" as "not so many companies do that". He mentioned that therefore they looked for "T-shaped profiles", people that acknowledge that Holacracy is the right environment for them, and that are ready and able to learn how it works.

At Nightnurse Images, they had a particular situation. The interviewee explained they had and looked for two types of people in the company: the first type is the production focused ones, passionate about their work and with an entrepreneurial drive, but they usually just participate passively to Holacracy, being "not interested in moving that structure forward". The other type of people is the ones more involved in the internal work and governance, and "taking initiative and moving things forward". He stated that it creates a balance in the team, and that it is valuable to have both.

Question 4: Profile of the "ideal" candidate for Holacracy

When asked about the profile of an "ideal" candidate for a holacratic organizations, all interviewees build upon their answer from the previous question, but added several elements. VillageOffice's interviewee mentioned a "certain maturity"; not by age but by knowing who you are as a person and having gone your own personal process. And she added then to bring that awareness of who you are into the

organization in order to help the organization go forward and not use it to help you with your private issues. Several other organizations mentioned the "ability to question oneself", and being willing to change.

Most companies mentioned again the capability to self-organize, to work independently and being responsible; "taking full responsibility for the roles that you have". VillageOffice's interviewee summed it up as "mature adults who are ready to take responsibility". Energized's interviewee stated that in Holacracy you need "proactive people", able to "continuously work on bringing intentions, […] sense what's going on and what could be improved, and make a proposal", taking up that responsibility. She mentioned additional competencies such as self-leadership, and doing "the thinking and sensing work in the organization".

Several organizations' interviewees, including Energized, stated that in their opinion any person could join a holacratic organization. Feinheit's interviewee commented that "If you are 100% okay with the purpose, everything should flow automatically. If you know how to work with Holacracy, and that's not rocket science, it's not so hard. I think there are rules, but you can learn them very easily". Loyco's interviewee mentioned that any person could join their organization, as long as they carry the right values. Xpreneurs' interviewee stated that "It's not a magic formula that's required […] that's not an elitist thing that's only reachable for some people".

Both VillageOffice's and Xpreneurs' interviewees posited that Holacracy was like playing soccer/football. Xpreneurs's interviewee commented that "the only requirements for you to learn soccer, is that you want to learn to play soccer […]If you're committed to learning, then you can become a decent soccer player; you don't have to become the world's best soccer player". He concluded upon that that you just need "to become a proficient Holacracy practitioner" and only need to be really good at it if you want to become a Holacracy coach or something similar. He explained in more depth his opinion about it later on: "I don't think people need to have an agile mind-set or something like that to work in a holacratic organization. I have seen many, say, 'normal' people flourish in holacratic organizations. And I've seen people who were really enthusiastic about a new work, you know, all these agile mind-set and so on and so forth. Some of the biggest proponents of those things I have seen fail miserably". There was another part of his interview that was also interesting: "I think many different kind of people can flourish in a self-managed environment. Many of the skills required to

flourish and to be effective in such an environment can be learned. And sometimes, so many people [...] need first to unlearn old practices, old behaviours, and relearn new ones, better ones; what's better suited for this new work environment".

Some interviewees however, mentioned elements that could make a person not able to fit well, or feel well, in such a setup like Holacracy.

Liip's interviewee mentioned that Holacracy is a very rigid, strict, setup that can be a source of struggle at the start, meaning that "you have to be comfortable in such a setup" in order to do well in it. She also added that "if prestige is important to you, you might not feel well in a holacratic setup", prestige being linked to hierarchy, and does not exist in Holacracy. She went on about that, saying that what you can get is the appreciation from you peers: from your ability to sell you standpoint, convince people, being credible in what you're doing and showing what you do. A last element she mentioned is that there is no "career-wise" progress, in Holacracy you instead get to take on additional roles, or to develop more in depth your current roles; it can also be through "creating more impact because you're more visible also outside the company", but in general she concludes it is not a "classical career where you develop hierarchically".

As a last element, VillageOffice's interviewee mentioned that one should not be "too religious" about Holacracy: there are rules, but work arounds can be made if it's not working well for the team.

Question 5: Differences between holacratic and non-holacratic settings

The last question from the main set of questions was about what differences the interviewees perceived between their previous working environment and today's in Holacracy, about recruiting strategies, processes, or targeted candidate profiles.

They first reflected on what difference they felt the most when moving to Holacracy. The difference that was cited most across interviews was about the hierarchy, the chain of command. Some interviewees such as VillageOffice's put the emphasis that in Holacracy, you work in a team: you're not working for someone like a boss, you're working with a team "as equals, working towards a goal". Loyco's interviewee put emphasis on the independence of decision making: "I don't work any differently, but today when it comes to making the decisions I am trusted", "I was able to reflect on the mission, [...] I could support for governance, I had the right to speak, the right to bring

ideas". Feinheit's interviewee mentioned the freedom: "I want a lot of freedom. I want a lot of time I can spend in my best skills". Energized's interviewee mentioned how Holacracy is a hierarchy of purposes, and not a hierarchy of people.

Based on that statement several interviewees went further by citing hierarchy as one of the reasons why many people want to leave traditional models. VillageOffice's interviewee put it this way: "a lot of people are fleeing the traditional structures" because they want to "be able to do and be proud of the work that I'm doing and to make and to do that with others like minded". Nightnurse Images' interviewee explained that "it's mostly architects that are that are joining in on that special field [(architectural visualisation)] that left architecture for a very good reason, […] they all left their field of where they come from for the same reason, that is the passion for creating images or visual experiences". He added later on: "why are people coming here? because they cannot stand the administrative parts of the architecture inside, [and] having to deal with the authorities".

Liip's interviewee on her side explained she worked in a company with flat hierarchy before coming to Liip: "The hierarchy is also very flat […] [and] the equality of roles is lived quite similar". She went on saying that her previous company was "also looking for personalities […] more important than everything is the personality, and that's exactly the same with us [at Liip]." She concluded that "comparing these two companies, I don't really see a big difference at all".

Several companies also explained a bit how different the recruiting processes and/or the evaluation of candidates differed between now and before. Loyco's interviewee explained how it was in her previous, hierarchical, company: "it was a bit particular, there were still clear values but on the other hand there was sometimes urgency in the commitment. Also perhaps a rate of absenteeism and of turnover […] that made it necessary to find people". She added later on "there was frankly still this human side that they wanted to put forward, but there was still the shareholder base who wanted profits. So there was this pressure. […] If you put too much pressure, well, more absenteeism, more turnover, so in fact, it was a bit of a line up" (of people to hire to make up for that turnover/absenteeism). When comparing typical hierarchies characterized by a lot of processes, she also commented about Loyco's recruitment process that "I try at the talent level to put the minimum of process, because I don't want to find myself trapped".

At Feinheit, the interviewee explained how it was before implementing Holacracy: "I did the recruiting, […] I tried to organize everything like a manager does, or team leader", "I had to take decisions for people who know better […] And I felt always not so comfortable in that role. […] just because I'm over you in the hierarchy, doesn't mean I know more about that specific topic". He then explained how it is now: "that's not easier than before. But when I say I have this role, I feel 100% comfortable to make these decisions the role requires and not all the decisions I'm too far away from."

Xpreneurs' interviewee answered about if they were different by: "yes and no. I mean, of course companies that run Holacracy still need to hire people, they still need a strategy. But they go about it in a very different way. So usually you don't have an HR department or something like that, but you just have like few specific roles in Holacracy […] we for example, have multiple roles involved." He added later on: "There are multiple different roles that are involved in HR processes and recruiting processes, and the same goes for strategies." He complemented his answer with: "Organizations running Holacracy or just generally self-management going about this, it's just very different, and yet it's not fundamentally different, […] the key difference is that in a conventional organisation the power structure is always static. […] And in Holacracy this power structure is very dynamic, so it's really depending on the context, you know, the situation".

Feinheit's interviewee described the difference between how candidates were evaluated before and after the implementation of Holacracy in his company. When there was hierarchy he said that "maybe before it was different, like they searched more for the person with the highest skills", adding later on "before Holacracy we would have hired someone with a skill set". When talking about now he stated that "in Holacracy, everyone is supposed to be aware of the tensions and always with the aim of the purpose and everything", "you need to be willing to evolve", and "that's what I meant with the T-shaped profile: so it's a very broad skill set, not just your, like, designing or developing [skills], but also, 'I can communicate, I can say no'". He then added that "what you look for in candidates, for example […] you look very much about the organization fit, also the skills. I'm not saying it's not less important, but you really make sure the person is really fitting in the team." Nightnurse Images' interviewee also mentioned that in very top down hierarchies like architects' offices they look more into the skills of a person. Liip's interviewee commented that "there are other companies like insurance,

these banks, where the CV and everything, all the diplomas you have succeeded, have much more weight". Energized's interviewee put it this way: "I think that in other companies where they don't work holacratic, they are more often looking for somebody who can do something specifically; like you are really great in building websites for example. Where I think in Holacracy, that's also important of course, but you also look more at the fit, the way somebody works, because if you support that energy somebody brings, they can learn and they can learn anything. […] In a non-holacratic setting they really do more of the checklist, by your experience and what you can already do, instead of looking at the human behind it".

Additional elements from interviews

Aside from the questions, each interviewee added several elements related to Holacracy or the kind of people that were in, or attracted by, Holacracy and that in my opinion were interesting to mention in this study, as they relate in a way to the topics covered.

One of these elements that were mentioned by all interviewees was the on-boarding processes they provided for new recruits. I had posited earlier that specific on-boarding processes may be necessary in holacratic organizations: my assumption was verified in the interviews. VillageOffice's interviewee stated that when recruiting a new person, there was a need to provide a lot of training workshops "to get everybody up to speed with Holacracy, and [so that] we were all speaking the same language at the same competency level". She presented that as one of the biggest challenges, especially during crises, such as the COVID one: "when new people come into the system, into the organization, how to bring them up to speed as quickly as possible", for this, "continual team work on the team building or the team maintenance is crucial". Feinheit's interviewee explained that their on-boarding process is where all the knowledge about Holacracy is transmitted. They have an on-boarding role making sure the new person is feeling well". He also added that he observed "They learn that very fast in three months." At Nightnurse Images, the interviewee explained that they "have for each Intern, Junior, Senior, entry trainings", calling them "bootcamps". These "include the production part, but then there's also modules around that would include Holacracy". He also added that those trainings are "longer the newbier you get and the seniorer you get the shorter it is". Liip's interviewee described that they had individual "education budgets", where all

Liipers have a certain amount of money or hours that he/she can invest on his/her own based on the assessment of what they need or want to focus on. She went on saying that they "also offer internal trainings especially for on-boarding". Xpreneurs' interviewee presented their on-boarding as "a very decentralized process, because there are many different roles involved in helping a new partner getting up to speed".

It can be assessed that on boarding is a crucial element when bringing a new person in a holacratic setting, as so many people are still new to Holacracy. Energized's interviewee on that matter said all these companies adopting Holacracy therefore need to put in place processes to teach people joining their organization. It can be by employing companies such as Energized that provide an "on boarding experience", or it can be (she stated for instance in bigger companies) that the companies invest in developing their own academies, where they teach new recruits about Holacracy and the company values, etc. Other types of trainings are further on provided (but are to be taken on voluntary basis) to facilitate the recruited member's evolution later on in his/her journey with the company, for instance Liip provides a lot of training opportunities, up to date with their environment. One could assess that the necessity to invest in such trainings is probably another reason why Holacracies must be so selective when recruiting new persons.

During the interviews I asked about the potential existence of some generational patterns in the candidates, or among the company members. I had posited in the literature review that probably younger generations would thrive better in such settings. On that matter, VillageOffice's interviewee stated that, due to recruiting through their network, they ended up with mostly people of their age (Gen Xers) that were willing to leave the traditional world. But she also stated her opinion on younger generations saying that as the share of younger generations is half as big as the boomers, they have "the ability to set expectations". They expect "a different kind of workplace", and they will go to companies "who have a different culture or are working on a culture". Adding that "younger generations participate in that cultural change", with the new current knowledge they are bringing. Loyco's interviewee commented that there could be "a bit a question of generation". She went on that for young generations, they "can all fit now", but for persons who have worked for a long time in a hierarchy "where everything was framed", "it is maybe a bit more difficult to put oneself in question" or to fit in such organizational model. Feinheit's interviewee on his side stated that they end

up with a lot of young people due to their line of business (marketing and advertisement); they need people with the adequate skill set, and usually those having these are the ones being native in social media (young generations). He commented however that "it is beside the Holacracy". He went on by saying that "I don't think Holacracy is a question of age", but as he reflected on the fact that some people left after the founding of Holacracy he added: "maybe if you get older, it's harder to change. Some things you learned over your whole working life, and maybe you're also not willing to change that; and that's okay." Nightnurse Image's interviewee stated that in his company, there "is differences if you hire an intern for a year, versus you hire a senior visualizer who you expect to be involved in processes to move us forward as a company". He went further saying "If you, let's say, [apply] as an intern, and you don't know about Holacracy, nobody will actually, you know, question that. And whereas you would probably think twice if you hire a senior that doesn't like, does not want to hear anything about it." Liip's interviewee stated she used to think that "to be open minded could have something to do with generation; but doesn't have to at all. I mean I know a lot of young people that are not open minded at all and I know a lot of elder people that are totally open minded". About her company she commented that "we have a lot of young people, but we absolutely do also have a lot of experienced people, and I think the mix, it's also diversity; it's diversity in personalities, in age, which makes us strong". Reflecting on it later on when talking about why people wanted to join Liip she added however: "Maybe there you have this generation element. Younger people tend to say 'I don't need a career, I don't need a boss, I don't want to become a manager, I don't want to lead people''. She went on: "then we have more experienced people that [say], 'I have had so many managers, and I have led people, I don't want to do that anymore'; 'I want to be in a setup where we're all equal, and I really want to try this out'". When stating her opinion about a potential generational factor, Energized's interviewee's mentioned that they once coached a company where there were a lot of young people: "that went really well; because it was like their first job and they were not 'programmed' yet for the other way of working". She added, however: "And on the other hand, sometimes, it's the oldest person in the room who's really the firestarter, so it's not really about [generation]". She concluded later on: "it's really about being curious".

I can conclude that even though it may be easier for younger generations to enter and evolve in such organizational model, generational belonging is not a predestined

condition to assess if an individual will be able or not to fit in Holacracy. As stated earlier on, it is about being open minded, curious, willing to learn, among others.

Another point on which I had some assumptions was about the seniority level of roles for which to recruit: I posited that maybe new recruits would likely be given roles with light responsibility, and that it would probably be unlikely to find roles with higher responsibility open to external candidates. I could infer from answers of several interviewees that actually roles with high responsibility could be opened to external recruitment, but however the candidates had to have knowledge on or experience in Holacracy, or being committed and able to learn about Holacracy.

During interviews I also asked interviewees about what attracted candidates to join their company. When it comes to attracting candidates ("talents"), hierarchical organizations may resort for example to offer a competitive salary level. In Holacracy, several companies interviewed mentioned they had their own compensation systems, but that they were maybe not considered as the most competitive on the market. One of them stated that anyway they did not want to attract people driven by money, but rather by purpose. Moreover, in Holacracy, there is no ladder to climb. On their digital resources we saw they rather sell the opportunities to learn and grow on the job. Other "attractive elements" include flexibility of working conditions, or good working environment. VillageOffice's interviewee observed that in all the persons she interviewed, these persons were looking for purpose and flexibility in their work. Loyco's interviewee commented that "If you come to Loyco, it's not necessarily to earn more wealth, but more to have a healthy professional balance, that can really also coexist with a family balance". Feinheit's interviewee briefly mentioned that "work is such an important part of everyday life; and Holacracy is quite a new thing in that mind-set". Liip's interviewee also commented on that matter: "I think what is attractive is that you create your role portfolio according to your strengths". When commenting about what kind of people were joining their organization and why, VillageOffice's interviewee mentioned that at the founding of the company, the start-up mode "definitely attracts people who are either sprinters or are like 'I wanna help build up the first part'". She added that after several years people were wanting to join VillageOffice because the company was known "not only for what we were doing, but the way we were doing it", for the "ability to work in, to make a mark, to be able to work with purpose as with more purpose and within your own purpose". Some interviewees observed that one of the

major reasons why people joined a holacratic company was that they did not want to work in hierarchical settings anymore.

A last element about which interviewees talked about was how even though Holacracy seemed attractive it was not perfect, but that it still brought positive things in their company. It comes back to the first big section of this paper about Holacracy and how it can be difficult to implement, make it work, and work in it as an individual. VillageOffice's interviewee put it this way: "just because you use Holacracy or Sociocracy as an organizational form, it doesn't mean you don't have problems […] because wherever people are, there will be tensions". For her part Loyco's interviewee commented: "It is very attractive […] but it is not perfect. There are persons that still need to be accompanied to understand that change". And both organizations, VillageOffice and Loyco, were/are doing well with the model. For the organization Nightnurse Images, which has adopted Holacracy 3 ½ years ago, the completion status is "We haven't captured it yet", further explained with: "We are working in our very highly paced developing field that needs a very [high] responsiveness. Yes, responsiveness, but also yeah, maybe let's call it out. Holacracy claiming to be agile and all of that. Maybe if you are a professional practician, yes. Right now it's rather painful for us." He mentioned how Holacracy is actually not only about processes, but also about people: "there's also the people side to it that you cannot ignore, that we ignored for since the beginning. Because we were so occupied, with, having the rest. […] When it was actually too late after 2 ½ years we noticed that we were losing people again because of that." VillageOffice's interviewee added a brief comment about the introduction of Holacracy in an existing company: "I would expect it to be much more difficult because you have people who are recruited for a different culture as opposed to starting a new company and starting with those clear game rules and recruiting with those clear guidelines". Xpreneurs' interviewee, who was asked about how it was when training other companies in implementing Holacracy, explained to me that "usually, the most intense piece of work, or the largest chunk of work, is usually just getting the early practice up and running". He went further: "So over the first one or two years usually it's really all about building up the whole Holacracy practice, basic mechanics over the first couple of months and then more and more focusing on the deeper power shift dynamics." He went on: "And then overtime, usually about one and a half years in then the companies start, they start to kind of seeing new things. The practice is starting to become natural, feel

natural and you start developing a new perspective on how to think about organizational processes and how to also this see differentiation that Holacracy brings, you know, differentiating the needs of the organization and needs of individuals and the group of individuals, the relationships between them". All these testimonies show how switching to Holacracy on an individual/human level is not straightforward and can take a lot of time, and sometimes perseverance, to adjust.

The interviewees however also stated some positive things they observed Holacracy brought in their company. Feinheit's interviewee put it this way: "It's a game changer for a lot of things. […] It makes everything much more efficient. […]And I also think people are, feel, more comfortable in their work space. Nightnurse Images' interviewee observed that "Since we adopted Holacracy, the number of years people are staying in this company is actually significantly increased. It used to be not more than three years. […] Holacracy provided something […] that made people stay, that made people, yeah, like individuals be more involved. There are specific personalities [that] do identify more, do see more perspective in the whole company". On his side, Xpreneurs' interviewee sees Holacracy as "a very powerful catalyst for personal development". He also stated later on: "It's just so much better on every level than any conventional way of organizing and collaborating." He went on: "Because you just have so many more pathways, you have such so many more distinctions that you can make to kind of keep things sane and productive, and to keep relationships sane and productive". These are some elements that give insights on why individuals, on a personal level, might want to join, and stay, in a Holacracy.

As a last element of findings, comparing the interview with Energized with the Swiss ones, I assessed her answers tend to be quite similar to the ones given by the Swiss interviewees. One could infer therefore that recruiting and targeted employee profile may be disconnected to the cultural/geographical background of a company.

4. DISCUSSION

This master thesis tried to uncover what were the recruitment strategy, practices and targeted employee profile of holacratic companies and how these illustrated their main organizational strategy. The data collected by the analysis of digital resources and the conducting of qualitative semi-structured interviews on 11 Swiss holacratic organizations enabled to provide many insights answering this paper's research question.

Summary of findings

Even though Brian Robertson gave complete freedom to all Holacracy-powered organizations to define their own recruitment-related practices, we could still observe many similarities between the interviewed organizations. Moreover as expected in the literature review, some core stages are similar to recruitment practices of hierarchical organizations, but there is still an influence from the holacratic model. There are also some similarities (and some differences) with the Teal organizations observed by Laloux.

From the interviews with the holacratic organizations, we saw that their recruitment strategy was designed in relation to the company purpose and company current strategy. It was also explained how several roles were involved in the planning and designing of the recruitment strategy; some of these persons having also roles related to the designing of the main company strategy/purpose. To note that the number of HR-related role is few, similarly to other teal organizations observed by Laloux. In holacratic organizations, every role is supposed to sense potential tensions in the environment, and bring these tensions to meetings in order to find solutions, as a team (this element is embedded in the model, it is not a finding). We can assess that the recruitment strategy, like the company strategy, is therefore continuously adapted to the companies' environment and the company's current needs (and both strategies are closely related).

In the interviewed holacratic organizations, we saw how it is important to find persons matching with the company values and with a specific mind-set, in addition to the right skills and/or experiences. They give equal importance to the person's organizational and job fit: they look at the person as a whole.

Most of the interviewees (even one of the biggest companies of the interviewed sample Liip) said they relied a lot on their network for recruiting, in order to find 'like-minded' persons.

As I had expected, and similar to what Laloux observed in other Teal organizations, we saw that all interviewed companies described how they aimed to be as transparent as possible when communicating about Holacracy. It was observed in their digital resources and job postings, and how it differed from non-holacratic organizations, which made no explicit mention on the type of management model or organizational work processes they used (or what it was like to work in their company). We also observed how transparency is also an important element across the whole recruitment process of the interviewed organizations in general.

We learned from the interviews that in general many roles are involved in the recruitment process, and not only persons with HR related roles. We saw how it could be a role in each team, or one role in one circle, or a circle of roles related to HR. Recruiting can be planned according to the company needs to meet strategic objectives, or can be spontaneously requested from any role in any circle in order to solve a tension sensed. This is similar to what Laloux observed in other Teal organizations, where the need to recruit a new person can emerge at the team level for instance. We saw that a demand for a new person needs to be reported to a specific role(s) in charge of structuring the recruitment process (e.g. Talent role). The person requesting a new person, in addition to other team members and/or colleagues then participate actively to the recruitment process (along with the HR related role) for instance by writing the new job description and participating in interviewing the candidates. A little difference from what Laloux had observed in Teal organizations, where teams had the full responsibility to carry out the recruitment process is that in Holacracy teams are also highly involved but the HR-related role(s) is still playing an important part in supporting the process.

In addition to target recruiting through their network, we saw that the only other means to recruit candidates that were mentioned by interviewees were social media. No interviewee mentioned to rely a lot on other types of means. Indeed we also observed in the analysis of digital resources how very few holacratic organizations had their job ads on job boards; and how in general the channels to reach and inform candidates about job ads were selective. This tendency of narrow selection of channels (for both smaller

and bigger sample companies) was an element that I did not expect, nor read about during the literature review.

About the elements used to attract candidates, we saw how salary or compensation was not presented as one, and companies rather focused on intrinsic motivators like purpose. That is a common element with other Teal organizations in general. On their digital resources we saw the holacratic companies rather sell the opportunities to learn and grow on the job. Other "attractive elements" include flexibility of working conditions, or good working environment. Several interviewees stated what attracted candidates to apply to their company: among these was purpose, flexibility, a healthy professional-life balance, or the creation of your own role portfolio. We learned from interviewees that one of the major reasons why people joined a holacratic company was that they were fleeing from hierarchical settings. Holacracy (or dislike/negative experience of hierarchical organisations) is therefore an attraction factor in itself.

When it comes to selection, we learned that all interviewed organizations only rely on interviews, usually 2 or 3 rounds, and include several to many team members in addition to an HR-related role(s) to run these interviews. Interviewees stated that they aimed through these interviews to really get to know the candidate as a person and assess, in addition to evaluate their skills to fulfil the role, if they really fit in the company, team, and Holacracy. Several interviewee put emphasis also on how the fact that they hire not only for one role, but hire a person that will be able to develop a role portfolio overtime, according to their strengths and interests. Making sure that these strengths and interests are aligned with the company purpose (and strategy), and that these will help the company move forward is important when selecting. The use of interviews, the participation of team members (and/or colleagues), the assessment of the candidate's fit (in role, team, company) and development of role portfolio over time, are elements that were also observed by Laloux in Teal organizations. The only difference is the number of rounds of interviews, as Laloux saw some having up to 12 rounds.

From some of the interviews, we learned that the decision to recruit is taken by consensus among all the persons that participated in the recruitment process. This is similar to the Teal organizations observed by Laloux, where HR functions have no decisional power. However, the other interviewed companies (small and big) put the

final decision in the hands of a specific role that gets the input from all the other persons/roles involved in the recruitment process. To note these persons making the decision usually have in addition several other roles enabling him/her to have a broad view on the recruitment at job, team, and company scale.

We learned from some interviewed holacratic companies how they are really keen on finding "the match" and are ready to wait long until they find the right person with the right mind-set and/or the right experience. The long time-length of recruitment was also observed in other Teal organizations by Laloux.

When asked about what they look for in candidates, interviewees cited that they looked for persons with matching values (with the company's), that were attracted by/resonating with the company purpose and role purpose, that had the will to develop the company and themselves; that is willing to keep learning, bringing energy to the role and bringing the company forward. They also stated the ability to voice one's opinion (ability to sell your standpoint, being visible), being autonomous, self-organized/driven; but also being creative, innovative, bringing new ideas, being solution oriented, taking initiatives, being able to prioritize, etc. Several of the stated elements meet what I had expected earlier on in the literature review about Holacracy. In general one could assess that these characteristics relate not only to how they will do in the role, but also in the team, in Holacracy, basically in the company as a whole. These are all qualities searched for that showcase that the company look for person they can trust, and that the new person will be able to fulfil its duties and being an active participant in the company's evolution, without anyone watching over him/her.

In holacratic organizations that were founded with Holacracy (and those founded with Holacracy and consulting in Holacracy), we saw that interviewees stated they searched for candidates that not only know about or like Holacracy, but that have some experience with it (or with teal). But we learned how such profiles are still rare today. For the other interviewed holacratic companies, operating in industries (such as IT or digital related) having specific skills requirements and/or changing environment, they said they could not afford to be that strict (about having holacratic experience) when recruiting. Past holacratic experience would be welcome, but is not necessary, as they have (all interviewed company have) special on boarding trainings for teaching Holacracy to new members. As I had expected the on boarding element is crucial in holacratic organizations. The interviewed companies look for persons that have the

necessary skills, that fit the company culture and values, and that are ready, and capable, to learn the practice of Holacracy (Feinheit's interviewee mentioned T-shaped profiles). No specific mention about on-boarding in Holacracy or Teal organizations was found during the literature review.

When asked about an "ideal candidate profile" for Holacracy in general, we saw the interviewees' answers were similar to what their company looked for in candidates. But were added elements such as maturity (having gone your own personal process), or being ready to question oneself (to change, evolve, not stay on your achievements). The maturity element was not expected nor read about during the literature review. Another unexpected finding was that several organizations when recruiting could target different types of profiles. The company Nightnurse Images, which is still in the process of mastering Holacracy, is recruiting two types of people. One type are people that are passionate about their work, getting the business going but that may not be interested about the management model, and also people that are more interested in making the company grow internally with Holacracy. At Energized and Liip, they recruit person to fulfil roles, but also can recruit persons they deem to have a high potential in the company and create roles for them. This element of different profiles was not mentioned in Laloux's book.

Another of the unexpected findings of this study was that we learned how, in general, interviewees deemed that anyone can join a Holacracy, as long as the person is open minded, shares the purpose and values, and is ready to learn and embrace Holacracy. Xpreneurs' interviewee mentioned how he believed anyone could "flourish" in Holacracy, subsequent to the process of unlearning old practices and behaviours, and then relearning the new holacratic ones. We found out from interviews also how generational belonging was no obstacle to entering a Holacracy; as though it was seen by some interviewees that it is easier to younger generations to embrace the model, the interviewee's organizations have people from all ages, and do not see age as a criteria of selection when recruiting.

We also found out from the interviews what could make one "not fit" in a Holacracy; for instance being attached to hierarchy-related elements like routine, or a boss telling you what to do, prestige, expectations of career prospects (climbing a ladder),or non-readiness to abide by the strict holacratic rules. Some interviewees also mentioned how just liking the idea of Holacracy, or agile mind-set or else, was not

enough and could not define one's fit in a Holacracy. These elements were not mentioned in the literature review, probably because they just make sense.

About the differences in recruitment processes with and without Holacracy, we saw for instance that hierarchical organizations may require from HR functions fast recruiting cycle due to high turnover rate and absenteeism created by pressure from sales revenue. We also saw from the interviews how the sharing of decisional power is different: very spread (and dynamic) among many roles in Holacracy, and very concentrated in hierarchical settings in the hands of one or few leaders (not always having the right capability/knowledge to decide). Another main difference felt by interviewees was the likelihood of hierarchical organizations to recruit by focusing rather on the job-fit; in comparison to the interviewed holacratic organizations where job-fit and company-fit were of equal weight. The slow recruitment process and the equal assessment of job/company fit were elements also observed by Laloux.

Contribution to the existing literature

These findings enable to get deeper insights on how is going recruitment in holacratic organizations. Putting them in perspective with what has been described in the literature review about the recruiting practices in Teal organizations, as though most practices are related (it makes sense as Holacracy is also Teal), this paper study enables to see in much more details the holacratic specific ones. This paper contributes to the literature by also enabling to uncover elements not mentioned in Frederic Laloux's book; for instance it sheds light on what qualities may be looked for in candidates when a Holacracy-powered company is recruiting. It gives insights also on how the line of business, strategical matters and Holacracy (and the fact that it was founded or not with such model) could have a simultaneous effect on the recruitment imperatives and processes of such companies. It also adds some insights on what attracts people to join Holacracy, and what helps a person to fit, or not, in such model.

Practical Implications

This paper can be of interest to anyone wishing to get insights on how recruitment strategies and practices go on about in Holacracy-powered organizations, what kind of profile they might look for when recruiting, and how these elements relate to the main company purpose and strategy. This study can also be of interest to anyone

pondering over applying to a company with such kind of organizational model, and wishing to know if they have some of the qualities likely to facilitate their integration, and well-being, in such model.

Opportunities for further research

The framework of analysis and findings of this study could be interesting to use in getting insights in other specific types of self-management models; seeing how they differ from or are similar to the Holacracy one according to their recruitment strategy, practices and targeted candidate profile and how these relate to the main company strategy. It would also be interesting to get more insights on the candidates', and members' side (in Holacracy or other type Teal type model); on their motivations to join Holacracy, why they like working in it, and why they feel that they fit well in such working environment. There is a paper published at the INSEAD by Michael Lee about what kind of person could be enjoying working in such environment. In a field study to observe how decentralization impacted the individuals' work experience, he observed that "decentralization improved the work experience of employees with high job-related ability and employees with strong a priori preferences for working in a decentralized structure".

Further research could also be conducted in relation to the cultural/geographical dimension that I mentioned at the end of the findings. In his book *Culture's Consequences,* G. Hofstede mentions how organizations are bound by national cultures. He considers that organizational culture is about the mental programming and values of the leaders, and the practices in which the leaders' values translate, applied by employees (which differs mainly according to industry and locational of headquarters) (Hofstede, 2001, pp. 373–394). One could wonder if the adoption of Holacracy is enhanced in specific cultural/geographical background. For example one could infer that organizations with management models distributing authority like Holacracy are more likely to be found in countries with preference for low power distance (relates to the system of dominance, hierarchy). Bearing in mind which countries have the highest number of organizations (that is the Netherlands, US, Germany, and Switzerland), it would be interesting to conduct further research to see if there are common cultural traits which could be related to the adoption of Holacracy. As a matter of fact Switzerland, Germany and the Netherlands are ranking in the same area where

organizations prefer limited "power distance" and average "uncertainty avoidance" (Hofstede, p.152). Similarly persons having grown up with such cultural background might then be likely to share these holacratic organizations' type of mind-set, and then be more likely to be able to fit in such model.

Limitations

Due to a limit of time and a limited number of pages, some elements were not further developed or included. For instance it would have been interesting to also request an interview with the non-holacratic organizations of the matching sample to compare the findings; and ask about their opinion on Holacracy or self-management models in general. Another interesting element would have been to contact Mercedes Benz.io, the subsidiary of Mercedes Benz, to have an interview and ask about the reasons why the company decided to build that subsidiary with Holacracy, the differences in recruitment methods and targeted employee profiles, etc.

It is also worth to note that several findings from the interviews of this study may be biased due to the size of the organizations: most are very small (0-10) and the 'biggest' are average sized (51-200), which may have an influence on several of their practices. For instance, the fact that they all tend to rely on their network to recruit new members, or why their recruitment can be somewhat 'spontaneous'.

5. CONCLUSION

In general, all the findings from this study highlights that Holacracy is not only about new working processes, but about critical human qualities. Each member of a Holacracy has great responsibilities linked to their roles, and the company is counting on them to sense tensions in the environment, bring up these tensions in meetings and find solutions. There is no boss or higher authority watching over them, telling individuals what to do or taking crucial decisions. In this paper we observed that recruiting someone in a Holacracy is a careful process where they don't only look for someone to fill the role, but a human that fits the role, the team and the company as a whole. We uncovered from the interviews how having the skills to do the job is not enough to join a Holacracy: sharing a mind-set, the company purpose, being eager to learn and grow, being able to self-organize, being "mature" and communicate well are several among other things that are important (to have or to learn) in order to fit and feel well in such organizational model. These elements help to join, but we also learned that ultimately anyone can learn to work in a Holacracy, and it is not reserved to a selected few. It is more a matter of fit: if it fits or not the individual personally. We also saw how the involvement in the recruitment process and selection is not limited to HR related roles but to many persons who will be working with the recruit afterwards. However we also saw that the decisional power of the final decision fluctuated according to the interviewed companies between consensus among the team or a HR related role that participated in the whole recruitment process, and had broader information from the team or company level.

This paper gives a broad overview of the recruitment strategy and process, and the kind of person holacratic organizations are looking for. It enables to see how Holacracy impacts these elements, but also give insights on the kind of people currently working in these organizations, why they joined, and what makes them stay in such management model.

As a last word, referring to the literature review and the findings, one could say organizations operating with Holacracy (and all 'Teal' types of organizations) are already ready for the "Future workplace experience" described by Meister and Mulcahy. Firstly, Holacracy meet employees' expectations of flexibility, transparency, and offer opportunities and purpose. Secondly, its members are already expected to continually learn and upgrade their skills and sense tensions in the environment; they are therefore

agile in environments that are constantly disrupted. It highlights once more how holacratic organizations' members are precious in helping their company thrive in an ever more changing environment.

Moreover, the interviews indicate that many people applying to holacratic organizations are willing to go away from (or not enter in) hierarchical settings. The holacratic organizational model and what it entails may well be attracting the "Gen Zers talents" that hierarchical organizations are starting to compete for. Therefore it may come out as no surprise why self-managed or Teal-type organizational models are currently getting growing managerial and scholarly interest.

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APPENDIX 1 - Figures

Appendix 1.1: Patterns of decentralized authority at self-managing organizations
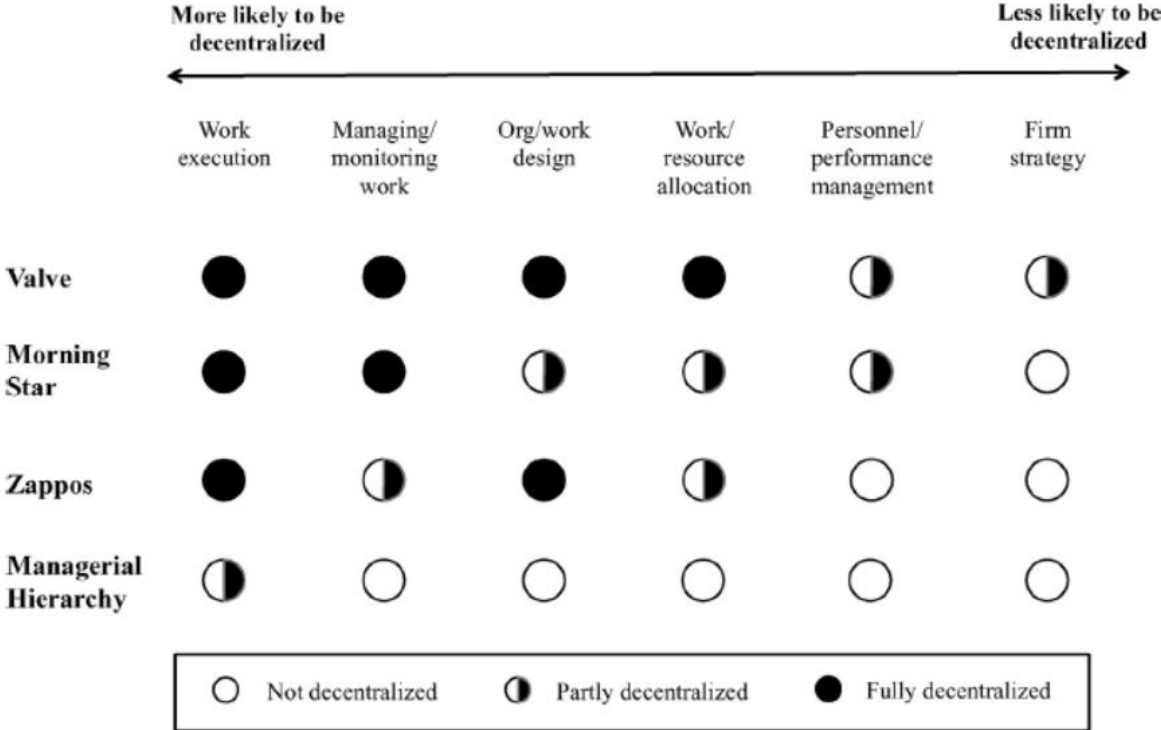
Source: Lee & Edmonson 2017, p.47

APPENDIX 2 – Complementary information

Appendix 2.1: Examples of companies with their own self-management model

Morning Star, a tomato processing company, has developed its own form of self-management including a radical decentralization (Lee & Edmonson 2017, p.38). Employees interact according to formal bilateral agreements, "CLOU" (colleague letters of understanding), they define themselves. These CLOUs define 'responsibilities, activities and overall goals and contain highly detailed metrics for evaluating performance" (Bernstein et al. 2016). They are like contracts containing an employee's commitments to the organization, revised yearly, but that can be changed at any time according to the employee's work requirements or evolving skills and interests (Bernstein et al. 2016). These CLOU's are stored on an internal server accessible by anyone in the company, enhancing transparency and cross team integration (Bernstein et al. 2016).

Valve, a developer of video games and gaming platform, uses a system where each employee is fully autonomous and free to allocate his or her time to projects they are passionate about or that they deem valuable to customers (Bernstein et al. 2016). For each project is formed a 'cabal', which is a team of motivated employees who set themselves to carry the project, investigate a problem, or find innovative ideas (Bernstein et al. 2016).

Appendix 2.2: About Sociocracy

In Sociocracy, a circle is "a parliament of people who are working in the system that delivers value to the customer [...] make policy decisions that guide their own day to day operations. They meet in traditional operational meetings to coordinate those day to day operations" (Eckstein & Buck, 2018, p.14). These circles have for objective to develop themselves according to their aim. The circles are connected through Double-Linking: circle members elect a representative who has to sit in the higher circle and participate to its policy decisions (Eckstein & Buck, 2018, p.15). Decision making in meetings are by consent: one "consents" (it is not about agreeing or voting) to a decision if there is "no reasoned or paramount objection to a policy proposal" (Eckstein & Buck, 2018, p.15). All members of the meetings have an equivalent voice. Circle members also have to give their consent for electing a member to major roles or responsibilities.

Appendix 2.3: Implementing Holacracy, stories of Zappos and Liip

The company Zappos, which is Amazon-owned, is an organization that adopted Holacracy and which received a lot of managerial and scholarly attention. It was the CEO Tony Hsieh (also author of the book 'Getting Things Done') that decided to introduce Holacracy. He did so in the organization in 2015, while the company was facing competitive pressure in a shifting market and decreasing productivity per employee (Bernstein et al. 2016; Lee & Edmonson, 2017 p.38). As though the new system put in place pleased a share of employees who felt more empowered, others struggled to go along. Among these some judged there was little change in the working process, that it lacked clarity on matters like compensation, or that the new system hindered the decisional process (Bernstein et al. 2016). A couple of months after the implementation the organization offered severance packages to employees wishing to leave; 18% left, and among them 6% citing Holacracy as a reason for their departure (Bernstein et al. 2016). Bernstein et al. see real challenges in putting in place such a system wholesale, and Zappos is still coping with it. The researchers specify that the "role proliferation" (the fact that employees can endorse many different roles) induced by Holacracy created three kinds of complexity linked to human capital (Bernstein et al. 2016). The first relates to the complication of doing the work, due to the difficulty to juggle between all the different goals, tasks, meetings, etc. bound to their different roles adding up. Zappos had to limit the number of roles per employee through a point allocation system called People Point (Bernstein et al. 2016). The second one is the complex matter of compensation for the roles, and roles portfolios of employees. Zappos is still experimenting with compensation according to 'skill badges' that employees can acquire (Bernstein et al. 2016). The third complex element is hiring, internally or externally. It is worth to note that there is no specific hiring process for Holacracy, and companies are free to decide on that matter (Robertson 2015, p.158). Zappos developed a 'Role Marketplace to facilitate the filling of roles (Bernstein et al. 2016). Bernstein et al. also mentions that Zappos saw its year on year 2015 operating profit increase, but concede it is hard to tell to what extent Holacracy participated (or not) in this improvement (Bernstein et al. 2016).

As second example of a company that faced some struggle in the implementation **is the Swiss company Liip**, which operates in web and mobile application development. They share on their website the story of their journey to implement Holacracy (Gerhard, 2016). Having experienced in the past several models of flat hierarchies that reached their limit due to the increased complexity and scale of the organization, they decided to try out Holacracy by the end of 2015. After an initial hype, they faced some disappointment. After running a survey across the company through which everyone could comment on Holacracy, as though they received positive feedback, they also got negative ones that could not be ignored. The new system was perceived as too "bureaucratic", "cold" and "impersonal" compared to the previous flat hierarchy system. There was also a culture shock: Holacracy makes a clear distinction between personal space and role space. Adopting Holacracy requires a "shift to impersonal forms of authority vested in formally defined roles and responsibilities" (Lee & Edmonson, 2017, p.50). It was a shock for Liip as these two spaces used to be fused, and social networks were part of the internal culture. Nonetheless, Holacracy enabled greater transparency, a flexible structure, set clear expectations for each role, and shortened decision making overall. Liip acknowledges that the implementation was difficult and that other measures were necessary to be taken in order to satisfy the members of the company but also that Holacracy still helped to improve some aspects of the organization's structure and processes (Gerhard, 2016).

Appendix 2.4: Typical structure of a Job description

1. The organization's name and information about the organization

2. The job title

3. Major duties of the job

4. Competencies required

5. Person specification criteria: Knowledge, skills, personal qualities

6. Opportunities (e.g., career prospects) & challenges (e.g., dealing with complex projects)

7. Selling features of the job: benefits associated with the job, salary, available trainings

8. Policy statement of important issues (e.g., about equal opportunities)

9. How to apply

Appendix 2.5: Generational features

Researchers that published their study on next generation leadership in a VUCA world in the 'International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development' (IJTSRD) (Kukreja & Kalkaji, 2019) observed that **Gen Z** (1994-2009) employees are perceived by other generations in the workplace as having a greater entrepreneurial and innovative drive and are true 'digital natives'. The researchers also observed Gen Z were characterized as being most concerned about boosting their people management (Kukreja & Kalkaji, 2019). Meister and Mulcahy state Gen Z have as key abilities: "super tech savvy, embrace diversity, [and] globally connected" (Meister & Mulcahy, 2017, p.144). The researchers also identified that Gen Zers are "keen to learn, be mentored, and engage deeply in the workplace" (Meister & Mulcahy, 2017, p.144). But Gen Zers, unlike Millennials, are "more realistic with their career pursuits and are even more entrepreneurial, with a passion for being ambitious and high achieving" (Meister & Mulcahy, 2017, p.144). Gen Zers are active and goal-oriented learners, appreciating "on-demand learning" (with high preference for mobile learning) and developing "actionable how-to skills" (Meister & Mulcahy, 2017, p.145). Meister and Mulcahy also assess Gen Zers to have an experimental mind-set (Meister & Mulcahy, 2017, p.146).

The generation of **Millennials** (1982-1993, Gen Y, the largest generational cohort in the workplace currently) are assessed as wishing to "collaborate and co-create with their employer, and this translates into creating a product, a new service, and even the workplace experience" (Meister & Mulcahy 2017, p.148). In their workplace experience, they want to be allowed to contribute their input and learn from each other (Meister & Mulcahy 2017, p.148). Millennials acknowledge they evolve in a competitive landscape for jobs, and rely on learning from one another and mentoring relationships in order to accelerate their career development (Meister & Mulcahy, 2017, p.148). When it comes to their work expectations,

Millennials want a "purposeful work, flexibility to work where, when, and how they want, and access continuous on-demand learning"; they also wish to experience global opportunities at a young age (Meister & Mulcahy, 2017, p.149).

Gen Xers (1965-1981), according to Meister and Mulachy, have as key abilities that they are independent, pragmatic, and self-reliant (Meister & Mulcahy, 2017, p.144). They are deemed as developing an interest in workplace flexibility. It is also a generation juggling between the demands of their growing family and their needs of career development; they are looking for structured development opportunities and customization of benefits (Meister & Mulcahy, 2017, pp.154-155).

The oldest generation present in the workplace are **Boomers** (1945-1964), and have as key abilities "strong work ethic, equal rights generation, optimistic" (Meister & Mulcahy, 2017, p.144). They are "the most experienced generational cohort in the workplace", and "the challenge for employers is how to leverage their knowledge and experience while providing them ways to continue to contribute in the workplace" (Meister & Mulcahy, 2017, p.156). As though Boomers may be thought of "being stuck in their ways and resistant to change", Meister and Mulcahy learned from several studies that boomers can be "highly adaptable workers and respond particularly well to opt-in learning opportunities and temporary in-house job rotations" (Meister & Mulcahy 2017, p.156). The boomers generation wants and sometimes needs to work longer for their career, and therefore are ready to apply to new jobs in order to keep on working (Meister & Mulcahy, 2017, p.158).

Appendix 2.6: Short presentation of holacratic companies

Feinheit
Feinheit AG is an owner-managed marketing and communication agency existing since 2006. They support their customers in integrated communication, online marketing, political campaigns and the development and implementation of digitization strategies. It is made up of 33 employees and operates with Holacracy since 2018.
Source: feinheit.ch

Freitag
Freitag was founded in the 1993 by Daniel and Markus Freitag, and recycles used truck tarps into unique models of highly functional bags. Based in Zurich and with over 100 employees, Freitag adopted Holacracy in 2016 and uses it ever since.
Source: Freitag.ch

Liip

Founded from the merging of two companies in 2007, Liip AG specializes in the creation of web solutions and has over 200 members working in 6 different offices: Lausanne, Fribourg, Bern, Basel, Zurich and St Gallen. The company decided to implement Holacracy in 2015 and still operates with it today.

Source: liip.ch

Loyco

Loyco is a company proposing a range of integrated administrative and financial services to organizations: they specialize in human resources, insurance, accounting, taxation, and risk management. They built their own organizational model, the "Loycocracy", which is based on collective intelligence and is strongly inspired by Holacracy.

Source: loyco.ch

Nightnurse Images

Nightnurse Images is an architectural visualization studio, based in Zurich. In addition to 2 other offices based in New York and Buenos Aires, they make up a team of 30 people. The company was founded in 2010. Was found no specific date of adoption of Holacracy, but they testify on their website to be currently using it..

Source: nightnurse.ch

Octree

Octree is a "Lean startup studio" which provides services in developing mobile applications. It was founded in 2016 and operates with Holacracy ever since.

Source: octree.ch

Shortbread

Shortbread is a company that organizes community events, striving to develop relationship and exchange between local and international professionals interested in good Service Design and Leadership practices. It was founded in 2020 and operates with Holacracy.

Source: shortbread.ch

Swisscom Event & Media Solutions

One among many of the services branches of the big Swisscom group, the event and media solutions section has for core business the organization of digital events. It is an SME that has

been active for 10 years, is made up of 60 employees, and it achieves over 2'600 projects per year. The SEM attempted to implement Holacracy in 2017, but one year later decided to shift towards building its own version of "operating system": "SEM 2.0." However, it seems the whole Swisscom group is currently using agile methods of work, but it is not known whether it is SEM that is used at the company scaler or not.

Source: Swisscom.ch

Viamala sportwerkstatt

This company specializes in the retail and rental of sportswear and equipment with the offering of related customer services. The company was founded in 2011. On their digital resources no specific mention of the use of a holacratic design is displayed.

Source: viamalasportwerkstatt.ch

VillageOffice

This company was committed to building up a national network of VillageOffice coworking spaces, putting in contact municipalities, companies, real estate owners and co-workers. Founded in 2016, it has opened 82 co-working space in Switzerland. Since beginning of 2022, its activities were separated in two independent initiatives: CommunityOffice and Flesk. VillageOffice had been using Holacracy since its founding.

Source: villageoffice.ch

Xpreneurs

Xpreneurs proposes services in accompanying organizations making a transformation of their structures and processes towards greater clarity and personal responsibility. For example they propose formations on Holacracy – they have been certified by HolacracyOne. They teach Holacracy, however they function with their own self-management model which is in constant evolution (they present their company like a "laboratory of new forms of cooperation").

Source: xpreneurs.ch

Appendix 2.7: Short presentation of non-holacratic companies

Enigma

Enigma gathers a team of strategists, designers, branding specialists, business model experts or service designers proposing consulting services in marketing and advertisement to organizations.

Source: enigma.swiss

Mammut Sports Group AG

Mammut is a Swiss Multinational mountaineering and trekking company that was founded by Kaspar Tanner in 1862. It is currently a subsidiary of Telemos Capital.

Source: mammut.ch

PlanitSwiss

PlanitSwiss is a full-service hospitality solutions provider that specializes in the planning and execution of tailor-made corporate, public and exclusive events. It is headquartered in Switzerland but has offices and operates all around the world. It is an international event agency.

Source: planitswiss.com

Radity

Radity is a company developing digital products and build web and mobile applications. It was founded in 2008.

Source: radity.com

Regus / IWG plc

IWG plc is a multinational organization that helps businesses to find and create workspaces for their people, and was founded in 1989. They currently own an extensive worldwide network of locations, enabling companies of all sizes to work wherever and however they need. It was formerly named Regus Group plc, and it has a HQ in Zurich.

Source: regus.com, iwgplc.com

Swisscom group

The Swisscom group was founded in 1998 and is currently one of the leading telecoms and IT companies serving the Swiss market. In the course of 2021 around 18'900 members realized a sales revenue of CHF 11'183 millions. It is owned at 51% by the Swiss Confederation.

Source: Swisscom.ch

Switzerland Tourism

Switzerland Tourism is the national marketing and sales organization for Switzerland. The HQ is in Zurich and the company operates in 26 countries.

Source: myswitzerland.com

Appendix 2.8: Explanation of interview questions

The first question is meant to introduce the topic of recruitment in general, by asking "**Could you describe what the main objectives of your recruitment strategy are? And how, if it is the case, would you say Holacracy impacts them?**" This question enables to get the interviewee's subjective description of the overview of the purpose, objectives, and importance of recruitment in their company, and how they assess Holacracy impacts these elements.

The second question "**Could you describe the main elements of the recruitment and selection process of your organization?**" enables to understand what the stages of the interviewee's company recruitment process are, and assess also how Holacracy impacts it. It also enables to already get some insights on what the company (in the interviewee's opinion) is looking for when recruiting and selecting candidates.

The third question "**What are the critical personal characteristics you look for when selecting among candidates?**" is aimed to have an understanding of the interviewee's subjective assessment of what characteristics they value most when evaluating candidates for their company. It also encourages the interviewee to assess what he/she thinks helps them or their peers to evolve in their company, and in Holacracy.

The fourth question "**In your opinion, what would be the profile of the ideal candidate for a holacratic organization?**" is aimed to have an understanding of the interviewee's subjective assessment of what characteristics they deem the most important in order to thrive in a holacratic organization. It encourages them to build further upon the previous question, and assess what he/she thinks helped them and their peers to adopt and then to use Holacracy.

The last question was "**Did you work in a non holacratic company beforehand? If yes, how do you think recruiting practices and the person specifications looked for in candidates differs from the ones in holacratic organizations?**" This question encourages the interviewee to reflect on their own experience and describe what the greatest differences they felt and observed in general and in the recruitment domain when switching to a Holacracy.

Appendix 2.9.: presentation of the company Energized.org

Company: **Energized.org**
Industry: Management consulting
Location: Netherlands
Number of employees: 11-50

Brief description:
Energized.org is an organization that also provides services in coaching organizations wishing to implement Holacracy. It was founded in 2015 by Diederick Janse (the first to introduce Holacracy in the Netherlands) and Koen Bunders (Web). It operates mostly in the Netherlands but also offer their services internationally.
Source: Energized.org, linkedin.com

APPENDIX 3 – Tables

Appendix 3.1: Data collection of digital material for holacratic organizations, breadth of digital presence and activity rate

Company	Feinheit[1]	FREITAG[2]	Liip[3]	Loyco[4]	Nightnurse Images[5]	Octree[6]
Information about the organization, Holacracy or work conditions on own website	Presentation of what the company does, current activity of the organization, the workforce and their competencies A few words about about the organization's work life and the use of Holacracy Also present their projects with partnerships	Sharing of the company's history since its founding, make available their manifesto and company values There is a full webpage presenting Holacracy and how it impacts the company functioning and everyday working conditions of employees	Presentation of what the company does, its "avant-garde" edge, the valued and what awards the company received High emphasis on how they function and the use of Holacracy, what it is, and what was the journey to implement it Also information on working conditions, and what has been written in other media about Liip Also present their partner companies	Shares the company vision, describes their organizational model the "Loycocracy" Also share their values (pleasure, plasticity, collective intelligence, inspiration), their Bcorp certification (part of the B Corp community of businesses sharing the same values worldwide, certifies the organization has a positive social, environmental and economic impact). Presentation of the "Loycomates", all the employees of the organization	Presentation of the company, what they do, their story and their geographical locations Short presentation of the company structure, broad working conditions (e.g. interactions between teams located in different geographical locations) and mention of the use of Holacracy	Presentation on what the company does, their claims, how they work, and there is a full page of information about the use of Holacracy and how it functions Also present their partner companies
Jobs posts page on own website	Own job postings and unsollicited applications webpage	Own job postings webpage	Own job postings webpage	Own job posting website	Separate job posting blog "THE REMEDY"	No job postings webpage
Social Media	Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Youtube	LinkedIn, Instagram, Facebook, Youtube, Pinterest	Twitter, Instagram, Tik-Tok, LinkedIn	Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram	Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn, Instagram	LinkedIn, Twitter
Activity on Social Medias	Overall high activity across social media LinkedIn: weekly posts, mostly about news concerning the company, new projects or the welcoming of new recruits and job posts Similar content on other social media, more about their current projects and employees, no job posts (or hiring campaign)	Overall high activity across social media LinkedIn: Sustained activity rate roughly once every month, mostly to advertise job posts or talk about how their company function – focus on this app to build employer brand Other social media more targeted towards customers	Overall high activity across social media LinkedIn: posts every few days, engaging their community, advertises actively their vacant posts, informs about their organization, culture, way of working Similar activity on other social medias	Facebook: Almost daily activity, a lot of information about their and new working practices, talk about activities and events of the company Twitter: Similar content to Facebook, but more emphasis put on their company events (e.g., conferences) LinkedIn: similar activity to Facebook, but also includes testimonies from existing employees Instagram: similar content, but more customer oriented	Overall high activity across social media LinkedIn: daily post, advertisement about job posts, advertise services and products Same content on other social media	LinkedIn: Monthly activity about ongoing projects, not much about working life, or jobs Same content on Twitter
Employer review websites	None	Glassdoor & Kununu	Glassdoor & Kununu	Glassdoor	None	None
Activity on employer review websites	/	Glassdoor: no visible management of employer reviews, comments all from former employees mostly not happy with the brand, no answer from the company Same for Kununu	Glassdoor: Around a dozen of reviews from current overall satisfied employees, and each has been answered by the company - active management of the company profile, and satisfied employees must be encouraged to share their experience on the website Kununu: similar situation	Almost inactive, only 1-2 comments, profile is not actively managed	/	/
Job boards presence	Jobscout24	Jobs.ch, jobup.ch, jobscout24	Jobs.ch, jobup.ch, jobscout24, Indeed	None	None	None

Company	Swisscom Event & Media Solutions[8]	Viamala sportwerkstatt[9]	VillageOffice[10]	Xpreneurs[11]
Information about the organization, Holacracy or work conditions on own website	Information about what the company does, where it is located, number of employees and the number of yearly projects On their website is presented the employees and is also displayed videos of employee testimonies of whata typical day in their work look like, what they like most in their jobs and what are the most important characteristics for their job No mention of their particular organizational model	Testimonies from current employees about how it is like working in the company, what they do, but no mention of Holacracy Also presentation of their partner companies	Presentation of the company's commitments and main goals, and achieved projects Give access to testimonies and stories from employees Mention of using Holacracy and a bit on how it works Also present their partner companies	Presentation of what the company does (Holacracy coaching, and what is Holacracy), its ongoing projects and events and the justification of their existence Full webpage presenting how the company functions, about their unique and evolving management model Also presentation of their partner companies
Jobs posts page on own website	Own job postings webpage	No job postings webpage	Own job postings webpage	No own job postings website
Social Media	LinkedIn, the other social medias are only the ones of the	Whatsapp, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Youtube, LinkedIn	Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Youtube	LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Insta
Activity on Social Medias	LinkedIn: Monthly activity, insights about work conditions and jobs employees have, advertise job openings, but also other news about the company (conferences, guests, some advertisement, etc.)	LinkedIn: monthly activity, but more active on other social media In general content is customer oriented	Sustained activity (monthly) and roughly same content across social medias (except youtube which has videos on specific topics), about the company, news, and engaging their community Past advertisement for a past vacant job is displayed across several social media	LinkedIn: Almost daily activity rate, focus on services provided by the company or related information Same content on Facebook Instagram: Lower activity, more about customer feedback on the company's services Twitter is a mix of both
Employer review websites	Only Swisscom group	None	None	None
Activity on employer review websites	/	/	/	/
Job boards presence	General Swisscom recruitment	None	None	None

Sources Appendix 3.1:

1. feinheit.ch, linkedin.com, facebook.com, Instagram.com glassdoor.ch jobscout24.ch
2. Freitag.ch, linkedin.com, facebook.com, Instagram.com, youtube.com, pinterest.com, glassdoor.ch, kununu.com, jobs.ch, jobup.ch, jobscout24.ch
3. liip.ch, linkedin.com, twitter.com, Instagram.com, tiktok.com, glassdoor.ch, kununu.com, jobup.ch, jobscout24.ch, jobs.ch
4. loyco.ch, linkedin.com, facebook.com, twitter.com, Instagram.com, glassdoor.ch
5. nightnurse.ch, linkedin.com, Instagram.com, facebook.com, twitter.com, pinterest.com, blog.nightnurse.ch, cgarchitect.com
6. octree.ch, linkedin.com, twitter.com
7. shortbread.ch, linkedin.com, twitter.com
8. Swisscom.ch, linkedin.com, smart-up.work
9. viamalasportwerkstatt.ch, linkedin.com, facebook.com, Instagram.com, twitter.com, youtube.com, youtube.com
10. villageoffice.ch, linkedin.com, facebook.com, twitter.com, youtube.com
11. xpreneurs.co, linkedin.com, twitter.com, facebook.com, Instagram.com

Appendix 3.2: Data collection of digital material for holacratic organizations, Job postings

Company name	Feinheit AG[1]	FREITAG[2]	Liip AG[3]
Job title	Experienced Frontend developer	Holistic Product Designer	Drupal Architect
Information about the organization	Insights on what it is like to work at Feinheit Information about the company structure, and emphasis on the peculiarities of working processes associated with Holacracy Specific organization traditions (culture)	Information about the company history, current state of the organization (products, geographical presence) Qualities associated with the brand (real, unique, authentic) Company vision (turned towards the future, acting in a sustainable manner) No mention of Holacracy on job posting	High emphasis on the use of Holacracy and how it impacts the work processes Company purpose, working practices Company culture Transparency on what it is like to work at Liip
Information about the job	Broad presentation of tasks and responsibilities on the job Information of what a typical day on the job is like, and the impact of Holacracy on it, e.g.: individual's influence on governance, collaboration across teams, interdisciplinary and self-organized cooperation	Breadth of responsibility Description of a sample of tasks to be performed on the job With what stakeholders in and out the organization the recruit would be working with Details about working condition	Description of a typical day of work in the job Where the job is located in the company 's Holarchy, what is the working setting With what stakeholders in and out the recruit will interact with Typical tasks on the job Responsibilities associated with the job
Competencies required and Person specification criteria	Experience in related domain Adept knowledge on various domains related to the job Concrete competencies in softwares Personal characteristics: curiosity and desire to learn, analytical-conceptual thinking, strong initiative, solution oriented, innovative	Requirements of knowledge, competencies, intrinsic motivation, years of experience in similar profession (at least 3), educational level, skills with specific softwares and language requirements Looked for employee characteristics, examples: sense of responsiblity, helpful, innovative mindset, ability to work autonomously and interdisciplinary, flexibility, eagerness to learn	Competencies in the use of specific softwares Experience in domains related to the job Language requirements
Opportunities / Challenges	Promotion of self-taught learning Self-organization Availability of trainings	High responsiblity Collaboration with people across different teams	Professional trainings on the job by expert - importance of vocational training Unique working methods (due to Holacracy): working in self-organized teams Different culture in each offices of the company High accountability
Benefits associated with the job	Flexible working hours Choice of work location Overtime can be noted/compensated	No information found	Flexible workload Fair & transparent pay The Liip culture An office Furnished technical equipment Paternity leave Up to 3 months unpaid leave/year Family allowance On site employee wellbeing services
Complementary information	/	Comments from existing employees in what they expect from new recruits	Give feedback from previous recruits, information about the recruitment process and following onboarding process
Application	Online Application CV, Letter of motivation, statement of starting date and salary expectations, work samples of past projects Open for unsollicited applications Do not accept applications through other means than their own website	Online application Application form, LinkedIn profile, letter of motivation, CV, other documents Inquiry on how the candidate got to know about the company Open to unsollicited applications	Online application Resume/CV, Cover letter, reasons for joining Liip, examples of previous works
Information about the recruitment process	/	/	Teams are the ones deciding on opening a new post Examination of application and answer First round of interview with a team member and a recruiter Second round of interviews with potential colleagues, "speed dating" discussions with many existing employees Personnalized Salary proposal Candidate accepts or declines the offer No dress code Transparency on the objectives of the recruiting process (assess the candidate's fit in the organization and culture)

Company name	Loyco[4]	Nightnurse Images AG[5]
Job title	Payroll and HR Administration Manager	Senior CGI Artist/Project Lead
Information about the organization	Emphasis put on their "Loycocracy" management model and gives a lot of information about it, depicts it as offering an environment conductive to professional and personal development based on strong values and characterized by benignity, they propose to the candidate to become a "Loycomate". They present also their social commitments, such as integration favorising diversity, inclusion and equality, commitment to training young people, active participation in conferences, etc. Their manifesto is also included. They also state their main company goals.	Information about the members of the company, their motivations and skills Quick mention of the use of Holacracy
Information about the job	Presentation of main tasks	/
Competencies required and Person specification criteria	Educational formation requirements, years of experience in related domain, good knowledge in certain areas, language requirements, ability to use particular software, interest in the job's domain of work Dynamic attitude	Language level Years of experience Specific knowledge and competencies Person specifications: team player, self-motivated and proactive Willingness to move to Zurich
Opportunities / Challenges	Formative projects as opportunities to develop knowledge Integration in a team of around 20 persons Work in several locations	Self management environment (Holacracy) Opportunities to grow and develop
Benefits associated with the job	Dynamic environment, management model based on responsibilisation (loycocracy), benign performance. They give also details about their attractive working conditions: flexible working hours and work location, 6weeks holidays, paternity leave, fair compensation, no dress code, frequent social events	Attractive working environment Full support training Fair salary
Complementary information	/	/
Application	Online application Photo of the person or something she/he really likes, description of 3 things the company should know about the person (that characterize her/him), description of what permits her/him to identify to Loyco's values, what motivates her/him to work at Loyco and the specific job post, and the person should add her/his CV and other documents They are also open to unsollicited applications	Application via email CV and portfolio
Information about the recruitment process	On their information page about Loycocracy they mention that representatives from operational circles (teams) are in charge to conduct the recruitment process: selection of candidates, interviews (that can be with the help from another team member), and final selection	Can be seen in their Holarchy (displayed on GlassFrog) the roles in charge of the recruitment and what they do: the role 'Talent Scout' receives and answers applications, runs interviews, evaluates them and finally proposes the selected candidates to the Lead links of the affected circles and to the 'contractor' (another role which makes the employment contracts)

Sources Appendix 3.2:

1.feinheit.ch
2. Freitag.ch, recruitingapp-2801.umantis.com
3. blog.nightnurse.ch
4. liip.ch,
5. loyco.ch

Appendix 3.3: Data collection of digital material for Non-holacratic organizations, breadth of digital presence and activity rate

Company	Enigma[1]	Mammut Sports Group[2]	PlanitSwiss[3]	Radity[4]
Information about the organization, Holacracy or work conditions on own website	A lot of information about what the organization does, their credo, their performance strategy system, presentation of members of the company working in different domains, no specific information about what it is like to work in that company Also presentation of partner companies (which are reknowned brands)	Very little information about the organization itself, its functioning or working conditions Mentioning partnership with popular athletes	A lot about what the organization does for its customers, some details about working conditions such as "Passionate, motivated & multilingual team", presents the company's core values (PLACE: Passionate, Listen, Anticipate, Communicate, Eco) still giving some insight on how they may function, company vision and mission, describes main stages of the process of fulfilling a project for a customer, and some factors about the workforce of the company. Presentation of the team	A lot of information about the company objectives, values and services, quick presentation of their workforce "the raditians" and their competencies
Jobs posts page on own website	Own job postings webpage	Own job postings webpage	Own job postings webpage	Own job postings webpage
Social Media	Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, Youtube	Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, Youtube, Strava, Pinterest	Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter	LinkedIn, Twitter, Youtube
Activity on Social Medias	LinkedIn: Low activity rate, about events in the organizations or impacting the organization, also advertises job postings Facebook: High activity, about company events, life in the company, organizational structure, vacant jobs, consumer content, etc. Instagram: More about services the company provide and projects (more customer oriented content), also gives some insight from employees working at the company (what they work on at the moment for example) Twitter: similar to Facebook Youtube: about their services	Overall high activity rate LinkedIn: Information about the achievements of the company, partnerships with professional athletes and customer oriented content, but also displays job postings Instagram, Facebook, Youtube: similar content, more customer (and products) oriented	Overall high activity across social media LinkedIn: about events organized by the organization and organization achievements and ongoing projects, but also advertises about their hiring campaigns Instagram: customer oriented content, about their services Facebook: similar to linkedIn with some customer oriented content, but do not advertise hiring campaigns Twitter: similar to Facebook but with more customer content	Overall low activity rate across social media LinkedIn: Low activity but mostly focused on vacant posts they are looking for hires for Similar activity on Twitter Youtube about how they work and what they do
Employer review websites	Glassdoor & Kununu	Glassdoor & Kununu	None	Glassdoor
Activity on employer review websites	Glassdoor: a lot of reviews, good and bad, but no visible management of these reviews Kununu: similar as Glassdoor	Glassdoor: reviews from past and existent employees (mostly unhappy ones), no visible active management from the brand Kununu: similar situation as Glassdoor	/	No reviews, inactive
Job boards presence	jobs.ch, jobup.ch, jobscout24, Indeed	jobs.ch, jobup.ch, jobscout24, Indeed	None	None

Company	Regus/IWG plc[5]	Swisscom Group[6]	Switzerland Tourism[7]
Information about the organization, Holacracy or work conditions on own website	A lot of information about what the organization does and where it is located, but few information on what it is like to work in the organization	A lot of information about the company, its structure and different divisions, their way of operating, opportunities on the job, trainings, working environment, why join Swisscom, etc.	Full page about what the company does, the values and culture of the organization, and testimonies from employees working for the company
Jobs posts page on own website	Own job postings webpage	Own job postings webpage	Own job postings webpage
Social Media	Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter	Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Youtube, Instagram, Tik Tok	Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Twitter, Youtube, Tik Tok, Pinterest
Activity on Social Medias	Overall high activity rate across social media LinkedIn: news about general work trends, their new projects, or events organized by the company, they also advertise their vacant job posts, and give also information about the worklife in the company Facebook, Twitter: similar content to LinkedIn, and advertise a bit on their open positions Instagram: more customers oriented	Overall high activity rate across social media LinkedIn: Daily/Weekly posts, about new recruits, what it is like to work at Swisscom, trainings, but also achievements and events of the company concerning the workforce or the industry Other social media: customer oriented, about products and services	Overall high activity across social media LinkedIn: about new recruits, partner companies, organized company events, open job positions Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Youtube: customer oriented content
Employer review websites	Glassdoor & Kununu	Glassdoor & Kununu	Glassdoor & Kununu
Activity on employer review websites	Glassdoor and Kununu:A lot of comments from existing and former employees, mostly negative, no visible active management of the reviews	Glassdoor: A lot of comments from current employees, more positive reviews overall, however no visible management of the profile (not answering comments) Kununu: also a lot of reviews, however here active management with someone from the company answering a lot of reviews	Glassdoor: very few comments, mostly negative and from past employees, no visible management of the profile Kununu: More comments than Glassdoor, positive and negative reviews from past and current employees, no visible management
Job boards presence	jobs.ch, jobup.ch, jobscout24, indeed	jobs.ch, jobup.ch, jobscout24, Indeed	jobs.ch, jobup.ch, jobscout24

Sources Appendix 3.3:

1. enigma.swiss, linkedin.com, facebook.com, Instagram.com, twitter.com, youtube.com, glassdoor.ch, kununu.com, jobs.ch, jobup.ch, jobscout24.ch, indeed.com
2. mammut.com, linkedin.com, facebook.com, Instagram.com, twitter.com, youtube.com, pinterest.com, strava.com, glassdoor.ch, kununu.com, jobs.ch, jobup.ch, jobscout24.ch, indeed.com
3. planitswiss.com, linkedin.com, facebook.com, Instagram.com, twitter.com
4. radity.com, linkedin.com, twitter.com, youtube.com, glassdoor.ch
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7. myswitzerland.com, linkedin.com, facebook.com, Instagram.com, twitter.com, pinterest.com, tiktok.com, glassdoor.ch, kununu.com, , jobs.ch, jobup.ch, jobscout24.ch

Appendix 3.4: Data collection of digital material for Non-holacratic organizations, Job postings

Company name	Enigma[1]	Mammut Sports Group[2]	PlanitSwiss[3]	Radity[4]
Job title	Digital product manager	Digital Product Owner	Project manager	Python Software Engineer
Information about the organization	Presentation of the organization's philosophy (their WHY: new worlds, new rules, new ways), company mission and main goals	/	Presentation of the organization and their activities, geographical presence and expertise	Presentation of teams mindset
Information about the job	Main tasks and objectives of the job, responsibilities, with whom the recruit will interact with	Main tasks, key roles, with whom to interact, what software to use	States to who the recruit will have to report to (location in the organization's structure), major roles/duties and tasks of the job, responsibilities	Main tasks of the job and who the recruit will work with, team composition
Competencies required and Person specification criteria	Knowledge of best practices and key success factors in the job's domain, years of experience in related domain in similar type of agencies or teams, presentation of successful past projects, language requirements, required attitude (self-control, staying alert to opportunities, proactivity, curiousness, passion)	Specific attitude (excited about projects, intrigued to influence customer behaviours, solution oriented, proactive and responsive), past experience in related domains, understanding and experience of working with agile development practices, ability to engage with various stakeholders, knowledge of best practices in specific areas, language requirements, passionate about moutains/sports	Attitude: goal-oriented, resilient, keen to work in a dynamic environment, independent, entrepreneurial acumen, service-oriented personality, eagerness to learn Required values to be held: entrepreneurial drive, organization, customer oriented, ethical behaviour, environmental respect Language requirements, set of required skills: analytical, specific knowledge, communication, presentation, facilitation, multi-tasking, reactivity, interpersonal, project management Years of experience	Good communication, analytical skills, conscientiousness, years of experience with specific software, language requirements, team player mindset, experience in agile methodologies, "get it done" attitude
Opportunities / Challenges	/	Work in a multi-disciplined scrum-team	"Inspiring, stimulating environment" that will help the recruit to develop and build its career, work in a team and autonomously, able to travel upon project requirement	Exciting and challenging projects, high performing peers, opportunities to learn and grow a career
Benefits associated with the job	Friendly and supportive team culture, projects for renowned brands, high working location flexibility, Enigma retreats, distributed governance, (online) team activities	/	/	Market competitive salary, good team atmosphere (supportive, motivated, friendly), global startup environment, paid holidays
Complementary information	/	/	/	/
Application	Online application: CV, desired salary, own achievements (blog, portfolio, etc.), how the candidate learned about the job, past experience, ability to work remotely, swiss permit	Online application: do not accept applications from recruiters, photo, CV, letter of motivation, other types of documents, how the candidate got to know about them	By email: CV, references, photo	Online application: CV, adding a message
Information about the recruitment process	/	/	/	/

Company name	Regus/IWG plc[5]	Swisscom Group[6]	Switzerland Tourism[7]
Job title	Area sales manager	Project Manager	Product owner
Information about the organization	Information about the organization, its objectives, its clients, its work environment generating productivity and connections within a business community Presents its working practices as flexible, productivity oriented, efficient and agile, and offering a happier and healthier way of working	Presentation of the work environment: modern, flexible	Geographical presence of the company, main company goals
Information about the job	Main tasks and objectives of the job	Description of main tasks and with who the candidate will interact in the job Presentation of "Themes": main tasks and requirements on working practices Also presentation of the team and what they do	About what the recruit will be in control of, main roles, tasks and responsibilities
Competencies required and Person specification criteria	Interpersonal skills, passionate, teamplayer, practical solution seller taking hands-on approach, language requirement	Proposes a "skill check": The candidate can assess if he/she meets the criteria from the job by filling out a questionnaire. Categories: i) Professional profile: years of experience in related domain, diplomas, certification to have used agile methods before ii) What distinguish the candidate: capabilities to deal with complex situations on the job and with peers, language check, knowledge on specific topics, the right attitude (trustworthy, good communication and presenting skills)	Higher education, proven experience in specific domains (e.g. management and planning of projects with agile or hybrid methodologies) Years of experience Attitude: customer-oriented, solution-oriented, assertiveness High knowledge requirements Abilities: problem-solving, autonomy, taking intiatives Skills: communication Language requirements
Opportunities / Challenges	Promotion opportunities	A lot of formations/trainings available (internally and externally), encouraging self-development	"Motivating challenges" and "exciting activities", varied work in the digital environment, opportunities to help shape things with the corresponding personal responsibility, independent work in an agile team, international career, internal training offers
Benefits associated with the job	Competitive salary package with commissions, global mobility, structured training and development programme, "bright and inspiring" work environment,	Transparent salary system, fair and market-compliant salary, flexible working conditions, fringe benefits, culture of communication, social security benefits, etc.	Place of work in a central location in Zurich, flexible working hours, vacation days, unpaid leave, salary in line with market, loyalty bonuses, pension fund, above-average benefits in the event of accident/illness, financial contribution for early retirement, support for external training and further education, free tickets from tourism partners and other perks, family related benefits (maternity/paternity leave, child allowances), work environment (employee events, modern office spaces, digital equipments for work, in-office facilities)
Complementary information	/	/	/
Application	Online application: CV, annual required salary, references	Online: CV and LinkedIn profile	Online: Europass, salary expectations, photo, letter of motivation, CV, transcript, diplomas, other documents, how the candidate found out about the job advertisement
Information about the recruitment process	/	/	/

Sources Appendix 3.4:

1. enigmaswiss.bamboohr.com
2. mammut.com, recruitingapp-2862.umantis.com
3. planitswiss.com
4. radity.com
5. careers.iwgplc.com
6. Swisscom.ch, jobs.swisscom.ch
7. myswitzerland.com, stnet.ch, apply.refline.ch

Appendix 3.5: Contact means and answers from companies

Company	Contact Means	Answer
Feinheit	Standard contact mail, forwarded to a member that could answer my questions	Positive answer for Zoom interview
Freitag	Standard contact mail, online form, mail to HR department	Standard contact redirected to HR, no answer from HR
Liip	Contacted a member in charge of recruitment	Positive answer for Zoom interview
Loyco	Contacted one of the members which forwarded my request to someone in charge of recruitment	Positive answer for Zoom interview
Nightnurse Images	Contacted one of the founders in charge of recruitment	Positive answer for face-to-face interview
Octree	Standard contact mail, kind reminder via phone	Negative answer when I called them, mentioned they would maybe contact me back later if they had time but they did not
Shortbread	Standard contact mail	No answer
Swisscom event & media solutions	Standard contact mail, online form, mail to HR department	Answer for online form and HR department that they do not have anyone who was involved in the Holacracy experiment in the company anymore
Viamala Sportwerkstatt	Standard contact mail, online form, kind reminder via phone	No answer from standard contact and online form. Via phone: "they will answer your mail if they are interested."
VillageOffice	Contacted via mail a former member now working at Flesk	Positive answer for Zoom interview
Xpreneurs	Standard contact mail, got redirected to a member that could answer my questions	Positive answer for Zoom interview

Appendix 3.6: Extracts from Interview with VillageOffice

Questions	Extracts from data
Q1: Recruiting Strategy	"We recruit within our network or within people who have a similar mind-set or are interested in the mind-set" "We would always put out in advance we're a self-organized company along Holacracy principles, teal, putting out what our purpose is and what motivates us and then add what this role would be." "Qualification means you trigger traditional thinking [...] We used different names so that it wouldn't trigger old thinking."
Q2:Rectruiting process	"I was lead link so the actual recruiting process or the interviewing was then on me. But the need for a new role that came from the team that come from the circles that come from daily business." "[...] we reached the point [where] we're like, OK, we're at our limit. One from time capacity and know how we were just not the right people. We didn't have the skill set that we needed and so we're like OK. Well what is it missed? What are we missing?" "[...]we need to get specific, and so we started writing what were the skill sets that we were missing and we needed. So then it created this role [...] IT lead or IT wizard and then we started looking." "I'll go look for someone and share [...] this profile. That's where we then went to our network and LinkedIn and posted it and then the first interviews were then conducted by me and then if it was someone who I felt it was [right], we go to the next step and we tied in some additional members who would be working with that role."
Q3: Crucial candidate characteristics looked for when hiring	"I always looked for highly skilled people in that specific set, but their motivation and the way they were thinking was also very important [...] it was equally important" "[...] 'you're not that good but you like Holacracy so we will take you.' We did that in some cases just because of sort of like early fans in our project. And it turned out to be... You need the skills like. [...] in a small company you don't have a lot of other people to pick up the slack so you don't have someone dusting in the background going: 'oh, she's not that good but she likes holacracy'. That doesn't work either." "There were quite a few people who wanted to be holacratic because it sounded nice [...] it was sexy. It was new. They wanted to work that way, but just couldn't because their personalities were not like that." "Those were times where [...] we had to off board, we had to, you know, separate. But we had discussions [...] always very with a lot of wholeness and a lot of transparency." "[...] there's quite a few people that are within, you know, do teal camps or self organized so they come with a different set of knowledge. They come more experienced in this in the idea as opposed to five years ago where it was like 'I read about Holacracy' [...] so you had to bring up everybody up to speed, whereas I think now today the recruiting would be easier in that sense. People would already come with a certain holacratic, or teal skill set. Self-organized skill set." VillageOffice was not aiming to attract participants driven by money, but rather by purpose: "We all had the same salary [...] we did have our own compensation plan, but it just wasn't based on the same criteria like [traditional ones] [...]If we find someone who's only about willing to work for us because they are able to earn their same base salary as they did in the other finance world, then they're wrong for us, because then they're going to leave as soon as they have an opportunity to work for a company that pays more. So it's really the purpose aspect." Holacracy is a model in which people can, and are expected, to voice their opinions, make change happen, and learn new things
Q4: Description of ideal candidate for Holacracy	"I think it requires a certain maturity and that doesn't mean I don't mean by age, but a maturity of knowing who you are as a person having gone [...] your own process like personal process as to how you want to work and how you want to work with people and so that any kind of baggage you has have as a person." "We did have a tendency with it, some people ended up using us almost as a self-help group. Because it's very so: 'What's your tension today?' And so it, I mean, you might be having an issue one week, but it can't always be about the same person, about the same tensions. So that, have you done your homework and are able to bring awareness of who you are into the organization to help the organization forward and not use the organization to help you with your private issues." "The precursor [in a self-organized organization] is that you can self-organize yourself so that, there's nobody going 'so how you working on that deadline? Are you getting ahead?' There's checkins, but it expects that you take full responsibility for the roles that you have because there's nobody holding your hand to say 'Come on, let's go'. It requires mature adults who are ready to take responsibility." "Just not to be too religious about it [Holacracy]" ,"[...] it's like we're playing football. We have football rules. We're going to do holacracy, we have holacratic rules but at the same time not to say if that's not working for the team, [...] there's not the whole Holacracy police who's gonna say 'ohh stop you can't do that'. Doing work arounds just because one element of holacracy is not working doesn't mean holacracy is bad. We ended up doing lots of tweaks."
Q5: Differences in recruiting practices and targeted employee profile before and after Holacracy	"That chain of command that it wasn't 'Oh I'm working for you", it is you're working with us. [...] And of course we work as a team. But work as equals, working towards a goal." "[...]some the outer world was, is, still looking for the boss and the person, the one person who makes all the decisions and leads everybody[...] the big difference that it's not at the end of the day someone's like, 'OK, you guys in team wanted this, but I've still decided it that we're gonna do it differently'. And that's something I often experienced in other companies where it's either very, Patriarchal, which was benevolent. I mean, this Patriarch that I worked for was great, but at the end of the day we would all be working on things and at the end of the day, he was like 'no, I decided otherwise.' and sort of negate the work that we've done." "[...] that start up mode it definitely attracts people who are either sprinters who are like 'I wanna help build up the first part.' It was mostly within our network, and after about three years people were calling on us because our organization was known [...] not only for what we were doing, but the way we were doing it. [...] There was a lot from the reputation, but the ability to work in, to make a mark, to be able to work with purpose as with more purpose and within your own purpose. That was actually a main driver." "[...] a lot of people are fleeing the traditional structures because they're like 'I don't care. I want to be able to do and be proud of the work that I'm doing and to make and to do that with others like minded'."

Other information related to Holacracy	Used Holacracy (functioning with Teal) since the foundation
	Members could have roles that were diametrically different, according to their skills: members created roles they felt were needed to solve tensions and discussed them with the teams in meetings. As they were a small company, it was necessary to be able to handle many different roles, but the interviewee stated it can be that it is not always the case
	When talking about introducing Holacracy in an existing company "I would expect it to be much more difficult because you have people who are recruited for a different culture as opposed to starting a new company and starting with those clear game rules and recruiting with those clear guidelines. I think those are things to keep in mind."
	When recruiting new people, there is a need to provide a lot of training workshops "to get everybody up to speed with holacracy, and we were all speaking the same language at the same competency level". However when the company was hit by crises such as recently the Corona, cut in investments had to be made and new members could only learn by doing – creating "a hierarchy of experience or of knowledge on how to work, holacracy, and I think that's the biggest challenge when new people come into the system, into the organization, how to bring them up to speed as quickly as possible and that continual team work on the team building or the team maintenance is crucial"
	When talking about the different generations in VillageOffice, the interviewee mentioned that due to the recruitment process through their network they ended up with mostly people from their age (Gen Xers), willing to leave the traditional world. About the younger generations, the interviewee stated that, as the share of younger generations is half as big as the boomers, they have "the ability to set expectations". They expect "a different kind of workplace", and they will go to companies "who have a different culture or are working on a culture". In the interviewee's opinion younger generations participate in that cultural change, through the new current knowledge they bring with them.
	The interviewee observed in all the persons she interviewed that they want purpose and flexibility in their work. She also thinks it is going to become stronger, there will be a lot of movement, and many companies will need to change in order to stay in the game.
	When mentioning the persons wanting to join Holacracy because it "sounded nice", the interviewee also mentions that Holacracy is not perfect "[...] just because you use Holacracy or Sociocracy as an organizational form, it doesn't mean you don't have problems [...] because wherever people are, there will be tensions."
	Importance of explaining that there is no "Chief" (CEO, CFO, etc., hierarchical signal) in the company: use of the concept and word "Lead", which is very different and needs to be explained, to prevent triggering of traditional thinking

Appendix 3.7: Extracts from Interview with Loyco

Questions	Extracts from data
Q1: Recruiting Strategy	"When we founded Loyco we also founded values. In fact, we base the recruitment as much on the competencies 'art skills' and specific competencies, we need professional competencies to serve our clients, but we also put as much importance on the values that we want to convey within the organization." "The challenge now, in the projects of the talent team, is also to be able to […], since it is easy to attract persons that are a bit in the same mind-set, we also want to be able to attract persons that also come from different cultures, different companies… and that also want to bring other ideas to maybe make the governance evolve in a different manner because finally we have the tendency to attract the same profiles." "In general we always take the time to say 'No, we recruit no one if we don't have the match'. Because the objective, really, is to make sure the person stays afterwards. […] It is really dependent of our philosophy and our Constitution." "The objective, it's really to think in the medium and long term, but not in the short term."
Q2:Rectruiting process	"[…] recruitments are done in a rather very open way within the framework of exchanges, to put the candidates at ease. Really in fact, to meet with 2 people or 3 people in an authentic way because ultimately the objective is really at the time of recruitment to be able to identify the person within the team in which he/she will mainly have roles, and [that he/she will] feel good too." "Several members of the team are meeting with the candidate […] they will also have a consensus then say 'Oh, yes there is the person who we want to collaborate with'" "There will also be exchanges really, more informal, to really feel if there is the match that can be made" "Sometimes when there is a team, which is of nine, then we recruit the tenth person… Finally, that tenth person will also change the dynamic, and that also we have to be attentive to that." "About the attraction of talents, the fact that we are now in a different organization, well today we have no trouble recruiting […] it enables really to facilitate recruitment because, in fact also, the persons want to discover a new type of organization" "I am more in charge of support […] I am coordinating the talent team. The goal is more to inspire, to bring each members of the team to take competencies, then in each operational team, there is someone that holds the role 'talent' and that has authority on the decision of who to recruit. It is him/her that is bearing, in fact, the whole process, from the moment there is a need that is identified in the team. " "There is also the role 'planification', there is a moment that [I say]: 'Listen, I don't have enough people anymore to be able to manage well the number of clients that we have.' […] They identify us in planification as talent that has a need, and after that talent is going to produce the job ad and put it on the website." "We have a tendency for the moment to relay a lot on social media, which is sufficient. We rarely go through by recruiting agencies." "[…] that 'talent' role in the team […] following the size of the team and the turnover or the need of growth at the level of customers, he/she does that in the order of five, ten, fifteen percent maximum […] meaning his/her role do not take one hundred percent." "It's also him [the talent role] who will select the candidates that correspond, according to the identification of the need, and that will run and organize the interviews. With, in general, there is a second interview and, sometimes according to the need, there is again a third interview." "It is the 'talent' role of the team that has authority on the decision." "Sometimes, there is no time to do everything, then I am there, we help a bit, we help each other. […]I do not necessarily participate to all interviews, but sometimes it is something I enjoy doing. […] It is not by authority, it is more to guarantee that at the level of the vision, values and constitution we stay in line." "The process itself, it's not that which takes time, it's more according to the applications we receive at once, it can, well, we're not going to recruit someone who did not convince [us]." "Once the person has passed the trial period, well, we will also do everything to support him/her in terms of skills and evolution so that, well, it works." "[…] in teams that hire the most, that is really accident or illness management, sourcing HR management, […] I would say the process in total takes two months." "There are jobs such as HR or IT and marketing where we have a tendency to have no trouble [finding someone]." "Even if sometimes maybe at the operational level we are a bit short, […]sometimes we searched for a long time: for example, someone to take over a bit the lead of the trustee at Lausanne. We took so much time to find, because […] for a person, to be associated rapidly in the trustee […] really has to bear these values. At this point, it's a little more complex."
Q3: Crucial candidate characteristics looked for when hiring	"In terms of sustainability, that is also a notion that was there at the start, but now we insist on it […] for us it is as much important that the persons are also carrying a message and an intention – to be able to collaborate in that sense." "The first thing was to be based not only on specific competencies, but also on values, on a cohesion [that] when the person integrate a team, he/she can identify" "[…]in relation to the role, [a person] who will firstly… that is a job he/she want to evolve, on which he/she wants to work on, that he/she do not join Loyco only for the roles, [but] for the organization in itself. But also because he/she wants to develop his/her competencies in the job he/she chose." "There is a notion of autonomy and also of independence on the responsibilities we hold in the roles. We also have the juniors that are accompanied." "There is something rather important to identify, is that if the person will still enjoy to take responsibilities, to be creative, to be willing to take initiatives […] and finally to be a bit entrepreneurial in his/her own role, even if sometimes it takes time." "Also to be carrying this intention of telling oneself: 'I am joining an organization […] I am the one hundred and tenth person, and I will also change that dynamic and I will be myself bearer of that change and bearer of that message that Loyco brought to a certain point" "That he/she also has a desire to develop and then to guarantee the different frameworks of the Constitution and values." "Persons that want to innovate […] it have to be persons that also like innovation, that like new ideas. […] There is also that character trait, that desire to always be in motion." "Performance is important but so is the human aspect. Sustainability also, meaning that you have to have questioned yourself a little bit." "It is necessary that there is this search for meaning in work that is part of the sustainability." "It is really necessary to accept that in fact one is commited to work in the common interest of the community, of the ecosystem."

Q4: Description of ideal candidate for Holacracy	"It is rare, [but] it happens that we lay off, but it's really more the person that leaves, because he/she feels that [...] the organization does not suit them or that they want to do something else after a certain number of years." "I find that, in fact, any profile could fit, any person could join us. If he/she carries these values there" "I still find it, well, the ability to work independently, to take responsibility, to evolve and then, really to question oneself. Because you no longer have a feedback given by a boss, you don't have that relationship where you have to please the boss." "It is a bit a question of generation. It is clear that, there is persons since it's been 20 years of experience, it's clear that sometimes it is maybe a bit more difficult to put oneself in question." "There is a bit this ability, of putting oneself in question, of wanting to develop competencies" "You still have to see that you can't stay on your achievements in fact." "Your generation [(of the interviewer, Gen Z)] [...] you can all fit now [in a model such as Loyco's]. For generations where they lived in hierarchies where everything was framed, it is also complicated [(because there is no more process)]"
Q5: Differences in recruiting practices and targeted employee profile before and after Holacracy	"I worked in retail trade [...] at Manor. [...] They were a big company [...] I was able to learn about all the HR structure, it was a lot of things." "It was very hierarchical [...] I was also from another generation at the time, also as a woman, [...] I was accepting authority I did not have much trouble [with it]. [...] It still allowed me to build myself [...] I acquired a lot of competencies." "In a structure like Manor, potentially, we [HR] were more on the side of the employer" "If an HR is to come to work in a SME, I think it is still rich to work in a larger company [beforehand]" "For the differences, it is the independence on the decision. [...]when I came to Loyco, I said to myself 'Oh yeah, well, I don't work any differently, but today when it comes to making decisions I am trusted.' And if I make a mistake, they don't come and slap my fingers. We try to give each other feedback, saying that this is also something that is in our Constitution and above all we all work hand in hand. When we are in a [hierarchical] structure there is a lot of pressure in relation to sales revenue." "I was able to gain confidence thanks to the structure [at Loyco]" "At Manor, which was a bit particular, there were still clear values but on the other hand there was sometimes urgency in the commitment. Also perhaps a rate of absenteeism and of turnover [...] that made it necessary to find people. It was necessary to accompany. And then we just had to apply the directives." "There was still a notion of values that must be carried [...] There was still frankly this human side that they wanted to put forward, but there was still the shareholder base who wanted profits. So there was this pressure. You can put all the values in the world, but if you put too much pressure, well, more absenteeism, more turnover, so in fact, it was a bit of a line up." "While coming to Loyco, all at once, I was able to reflect on the mission [...] I could support for governance. I had the right to speak, the right to bring ideas: for example, I want to work on diversity, [...] inclusion of diversity. I have a lot of autonomy." (About Loyco) "It's important to recruit the right people so that afterwards they can really have a freedom of action." "I try at the talent level to put the minimum of process because I don't want to find myself trapped"
Other information related to Holacracy	The interviewee described that they built the Loycocracy based on Holacracy and other agile models – they wanted to create "a model that looked like us", and which was deemed as more fit for a SME like Loyco. An example of difference between Holacracy and Loycocracy the interviewee gave is that in the latter there is only a "first link" (instead of two in Holacracy), they only have coordinators (equivalent to "lead link" in Holacracy) in each teams. The interviewee explained that Loycocracy is made of teams divided in two main categories: "operational" and "support". In each team, the coordinator is the one that attributes the roles to each member, but these latter are free to refuse a role. "If you come to Loyco, it's not necessarily to earn more wealth, but more to have an healthy professional balance, that can really also coexist with a family balance" "We will also be listening to more personalized needs, because there is as much persons that like to do telecommuting, and others not." "There are conditions that are rather advantageous but not only based on financial performance." (About working at Loyco) "It is very attractive [...] but it is not perfect. There are persons that still need to be accompanied to understand that change. The intention is to truly be the company of tomorrow in sustainability. [...] we have the B corp certification: that is very demanding." "We more have this problem of over commitment because the people are over doing so you have to find the right balance" At Loyco "personal financial objectives are not excessive. Because we have a grid [of salary] that is lower, the highest salary is one over 4 so we do not distribute bonuses."

Appendix 3.8: Extracts from Interview with Feinheit

Questions	Extracts from data
Q1: Recruiting Strategy	"We're at the moment 37 people. We don't do recruiting on a weekly basis; maybe four or five people come every year to us. So the recruiting is very punctual. And we search skills like developers or marketers. And when we recruit, now, we search for people that are, how should I say, that can imagine to work in such a system. "
Q2:Rectruiting process	"We have a lot of roles that have accountabilities, concerning the recruiting, there are roles leading the meetings and the discussions, there are roles providing the job ad, putting that everywhere, where someone interesting could see that. We have roles to check your Holacracy fit in the recruiting process. We have two or three meetings before we decide that's the right person or not. That's not a lot of time, and we can't check somebody before, give them a job on their Holacracy skills. I mean, most of the people joining us have to learn that in the on-boarding process." "They meet the team, and all the structure in the operating system. So we check: "does it feel right for you? Does it sound good for you? Are you used to hierarchy, but you want to change, or you want to stay in hierarchy, so maybe we're not the right company for you."
Q3: Crucial candidate characteristics looked for when hiring	"At first, they don't need to have the experience from another company, because that's very hard to find people already with Holacracy experience. Not so many companies do that." "But we have some check questions: are they willing to self-organize themselves? Are they willing to take the responsibility for their roles? 'Cause, that's key. So if we have people who want to work with us, but they want to work, wait for orders, you're not the right person for our fit, we call that T shaped profile." (T-shaped skills refer to a special type of qualities that make an employee valuable. A T-shaped individual possesses excellent knowledge of and skills in specific areas and is good at working with others in a collaborative way.) "Maybe you have experience in your developing, for example, skills. We need, we sell, but also besides of that skills you need to have a mind-set that fits with Holacracy." "I can say after three months, a lot of people are quite professional with Holacracy. They know how to use the system. [...] I think giving this knowledge is the main thing, and it works at Feinheit." "Everyone who joins Feinheit, has to do some kind of change of mind. You know, the mind-set. 'I have a boss, and if I'm not able to make a decision I go one step higher in hierarchy'. The person is the one who decides that's not a thing anymore with Holacracy." "Sometimes, in theory, it [[Holacracy]] sounds very easy and good. And in the practical field, you see, [...] I have a role and people are expecting me to fill this role with energy, it's written down. [...] If I want to change my role, I can do it anytime. [...] So I have to be in the driver's seat every time. [...] So that's the main thing I think, where you also have to see is that is the right environment for me to work like that." "So I think people [...] who wait for work, who don't see the work, don't see the opportunities, who can't think for the purpose of the organization as a whole, are not the right fit for the company. But I would say you can learn that. So you don't have to have that from day one. [...] That's something you can learn, but you have to be willing to learn and you have to be open for a new kind of work together."
Q4: Description of ideal candidate for Holacracy	"Holacracy is basically purpose driven organization and if you are 100%, okay with the purpose, everything else should flow, like, automatically. So, if you know how to work with Holacracy, and that's not rocket Science, it's not so hard. I think there are rules, but you can learn them very easily. In the end, if you have the mind-set, to be willing to change, [...] that's a big opportunity for every person" "Theoretically, it's a system for every working person, so I think the problem is at the top. With the feeling 'Oh sh*t I can lose power', that's the key element."
Q5: Differences in recruiting practices and targeted employee profile before and after Holacracy	"All my workplaces before Feinheit, and also Feinheit before December 2018 [...], was in a way hierarchical, so there was always someone up to me. There was always, you know, a system that had team leaders or CEOs." "I was a team leader before. [...] Before we started with Holacracy, I had the online marketing team, and I was responsible for the whole team. So I did the recruiting, I had an opening for everything. And I tried to organize everything like a manager does, or team leader. [...] All the team leaders we were the operational chiefs of the company, so I was used also to achieve position." "I had to take decisions for people who know better, but it was my job to take the decision. And I felt always not so comfortable in that role. [...] I thought 'I'm not the right person to do that. So just because I'm over you in the hierarchy, doesn't mean I know more about that specific topic." "I want a lot of freedom. I want a lot of time I can spend in my best skills. You know, before that [(before Holacracy)], I had to do a lot of work I was not 100% comfortable with, that's different now. I mean, I have also very responsible roles now. [...] That's not easier than before. But when I say I have this role, I feel 100% comfortable to make these decisions the role requires and not all the decisions I'm too far away from." "In Holacracy, everyone is supposed to be aware of the tensions and always with the aim of the purpose and everything. So, like, between before and now in Holacracy, what you look for in candidates, for example [...] you look very much about the organization fit, also the skills. I'm not saying it's not less important, but you really make sure the person is really fitting in the team. And maybe before it was different like they searched more for the person with the highest skills." "Maybe before Holacracy we would have hired someone with a skill set. 'He's just a very good developer, but he can't communicate, he can't take part of a team work, he can't make decisions, he has to ask for everything.' So that's now part of the skill set, you need to have, or you need to be willing to evolve this for yourself. So yeah, that changed a lot." "That's what I meant with the 'T shaped' profile: so it's a very broad skill set, not just your, like, designing or developing, but also, 'I can communicate, I can say no'. That's a very important thing [...] I have all the rights to say no, every time."

Other information related to Holacracy	"After that [[(the recruitment)]], when a person starts in our company, we have an on-boarding process where all the knowledge, all the rules holacracy provides… They learn that very fast in three months. So yes, that's a key element in the on-boarding process when someone joins." "The on-boarding role keeps an eye on how is the feeling for that person: how is she or he evolving in the system, we have a lot of checkpoint meetings […] to make sure no one is swimming alone in an ocean and have no idea or can't swim." "We do require a lot of young people, because the skills like ,say, social media, someone over fifty is not native with social media, and you see a difference in skill set, when you hire someone with twenty-five. […] That's what the company does, so that's beside the Holacracy." "I don't think Holacracy is a question of age. But there were two or three persons who started Holacracy with us, they were at Feinheit before we had Holacracy, and they left because they remarked in the process 'that's not the right fit thing for me'. So I don't know if there is a connection, a direct link. But maybe if you get older, it's harder to change. Some things you learned over your whole working life, and maybe you're also not willing to change that; and that's okay." About Holacracy "It's a game changer for a lot of things […], it makes everything much more efficient. So that's unbelievable. I hadn't expected that before we started. And now I can say, after three and a half years, it's so much more efficient. And I also think people are, feel, more comfortable in their work space. So because they know 'I'm responsible for that, but not for that'. And it's clear, it's transparent. That's one of the best things with Holacracy." "Work is such an important part of everyday life. And Holacracy is quite a new thing in that mind-set. Because, when I started getting into Holacracy, they told me, most of the companies in Switzerland and in Europe work like in the types of industrialization, you know, two-hundred-and-fifty years ago. […] And I think we're much wider, in our personal mind-sets and in society, and it's not adequate anymore to work like in 1850."

Appendix 3.9: Extracts from Interview with Nightnurse Images

Questions	Extracts from data
Q1: Recruiting Strategy	"There is a role called 'Team Architect', who is kind of lining out a plan of the personal development that we have. Looking at our numbers and the demand, so that we a bit more overall view onto where we're at and what we need. It kind of makes a suggestion of who to take in." "That kind of goes into budgeting because [when] we are doing the annual prediction plan, financial prediction plan, every role can or should kind of throw it all in what they think is necessary to invest. [...] There's kind of a team strategy outlined that then is pursued. "The other way of stating demand is supposed to [...] come from the circles, from the production circles themselves... Or it doesn't matter which circle, but from the roles that are actually, yeah, basically stating demand for new capacities. And they also are in charge of describing and outlining the profile of the person" "We are eighty percent productive, like visualizers [...] and twenty percent are administrative workers. So the demand for that segment or role part is significantly less. So we are, at the moment, we really feel like [...] it's mostly about the productive parts."
Q2:Rectruiting process	"The role creates, states, the demand and comes up with this hiring profile that they or he or she takes, or is needed to achieve that. And then this demand is stated to the 'Talent Scout' role, which is in a different circle, that is in charge of the recruiting pipeline, meaning all the applications that come in, [...] and also kind of putting out ads belonging to that role. It is doing that and this role also evaluates and distills the candidates, and proposes to the circle, to that demanding role, basically." "This takes place in a three phase process. The first phase being the first interview with Talent scouts, kind of inviting the fitting profilers, and the second interview is then after proposing it to the demanding role with that role themselves. [...] Both roles are kind of giving their recommendation to the contractor, which is phase three. The contractor role being in charge of having to set salaries, having to draft a contract and get the person on board, [...] basically like putting the signature on the on the paper." "At the moment the last decision lies with the contractor who is [...] present in those interviews, but not as contractor, kind of because he holds both roles. He holds the knowledge [...], he kind of crosses everything that has happened." "Therefore you have two roles recommending from that distilled pool of profiles, [...] and that's left with the contractor who has to decide who to take." "[...] one of those roles, the circle lead who is actually supposed to actually fill roles with the new hire can actually say 'hey this is not working for me'"
Q3: Crucial candidate characteristics looked for when hiring	"That's really difficult, because, there is two different kind of people in here and I mean that from the day we adopted Holacracy. There is the workers that actually do not care about the structure, they follow it, they have nothing against it and they are playing by the rules, but they are not interested in moving that structure forward. But what they are interested in is the job that is their passion. OK. They do that well and they like doing that and from an organizational perspective, or entrepreneurial perspective, these are really good to have people, right. They are pulling the ones that are really involved in more internal work being in governance. So from that perspective, I think it's really valuable to have both." "It depends on what you are searching for because you need to have a certain balance in the team. [...] You want to have both, [...] you need to have production focus and you need ,you want, people who are invested, who are taking initiative, moving things forward, and so on. And this personality thing is something that is very intangible." (Referring to the recruiting process, the interviewee being one of the persons in charge of the role Talent Scout) "You're looking at each candidate from different angles. Mostly my part is to kind of look at it from the whole, accuracy side because, coming from the productive world, having a very focused view on someone. 'Can he do that? How does he do that? Will he help me in my project like that?' These kinds of things like very practical approaches." "Holacracy is always a huge topic in every interview because it is something that people need to be aware [of], firstly, and secondly they need to, yeah, make their or at least state their mind about how they see that. And for instance it's always good if someone already knows that we're running on that because they are following up on us on social media, because they studied a bit on the on the website. All of these things are helping to get your foot in the door." "So like, 'do you know about Holacracy?' and people say, that's the most common answer: 'yeah, I read something and I'm not sure if I really got it right'. And then I mostly ask 'can you just try and phrase it in your words? Because there's no wrong and no right: it's just it's a different animal probably than you know, but like what would you say?' And then that's already like firing up the conversation and getting us into the groove of telling them what through our eyes the whole Holacracy practice is. And then it comes to the whole philosophy behind it and how we how we live it or want to live it." "That kind of mentality, meaning being self-organized, being responsible, showing that responsibility no matter what. You can take the day off if you want, but you need to communicate with the client, you need to organize with the client, manage yourself empty of work. [...] In the interviews, we have to start using that philosophy, start with a very huge amount of trust into a person. [...] If all goes well, you kind of, you know, take your development in this company and kind of take it from there and get feedback, following thee principles. [...] Being responsible and managing according to these principles is key."

Q4: Description of ideal candidate for Holacracy	"This is basically why this whole Holacracy practice is so suitable for us. Because we were never the ones that were looking onto someone fingers and saying, 'hey, do that again, that's not working'. […] We did not care about that. What we cared about was, there's this project. You cannot fail that. You do you, but you do it right. As long as there's no complaint, you're good." "That kind of mentality, meaning being self-organized, being responsible, showing that responsibility no matter what. You can take the day off if you want, but you need to communicate with the client, you need to organize with the client. Manage yourself empty of work accordingly so that the client is actually coming back. […]We have to start with a very, very huge amount of trust into a person when taking this person in. […] So we give you that trust."
Q5: Differences in recruiting practices and targeted employee profile before and after Holacracy	"Architecture and architectural visualization are like very much related, but they are also very different like in terms of what they do. I think architects do look in something different, like skill wise, technically speaking. And it was a very top down hierarchy there […] but it was like very clear who was telling you what to do and when and how and how long and so on. So yeah, that is the main difference here. Nobody is telling you to stay longer, nobody is telling you to make that client happier than you did, but you get a feedback afterwards." "I truly believe that [people find purpose at Nightnurse Images], because it's also probably very unique here because it's a highly specialized field that we're working […]it's mostly architects that are that are joining in on that special field that left architecture for a very good reason, and that is mostly the common ground that we have […] they all left their field of where they come from for the same reason that is the passion for creating images or visual experiences." "Why are people coming here? Because they cannot stand the administrative parts of the architecture inside, having to deal with the authorities. And you know, like all this stuff, I can say that from my perspective that hasn't been taught in university. You only do the fun stuff, you get to design stuff, you get to create stuff and then putting it to paper then showing it. […] You are the creator of that little world that you think, or that you made up in your mind. Whereas you're getting into the architects' office and you're having to deal with clients, hate what you do and you have to challenge the authorities to convince them. […] That's the reason why I left after three years"
Other information related to Holacracy	The company was looking for a new organizational model due to increased number of employees, development of bottlenecks at the top, and many people leaving due to the initial organizational model. "We increasingly had more employees, to the point that we had to give up, us being the bottlenecks having to distribute or, like, give authority and responsibility to others which led to people leaving because they were completely overwhelmed with what we gave them." When asked if some people are applying to Nightnurse Images because it is Holacracy powered: "There has been only one so far. […] She really was into it and she was a creative mind, would have been cool, but didn't work out." "[There] is a difference if you hire an intern for a year, versus you hire a senior visualizer who you expect to be involved in processes to move us forward as a company and to contribute to a development that is needed. […] If you let's say [apply] as an intern, and you don't know about Holacracy. Nobody will actually, you know, question that. And whereas you would probably think twice if you hire a senior that doesn't like, does not want to hear anything about it." About what kind of people were at Nightnurse Images: "I mean, you can look around" (Most people in the office were rather young or middle aged) "Since we adopted Holacracy, the number of years people are staying in this company is actually significantly increased. It used to be not more than three years. […] Holacracy provided something. […] that made people stay, that made people, yeah, like individuals be more involved. There are specific personalities [that] do identify more, do see more perspective in the whole company." About trainings "We have for each Intern, Junior, Senior, entry trainings: we call them bootcamps. They include the production part, but then there's also modules around that would include Holacracy. […] you have to kind of arrange your modules and you have a mentor assigned, a 'mentor role' that is kind of accompanying you alongside this entry phase. And it's longer the newbier you get and the seniorer you get the shorter it is." About their experience with Holacracy "We are still in the process of even writing this governance, you know, like kind of living it. We haven't captured it yet. […] We are already living it, and it's already this habitus of everyone knowing when to show up to what and forward. […] Also the fact that the demand is kind of stated. You know, through for different roles and also articulated with a profile. I see that as a cool enrichment of what is really missing and what fit you find to actually fill that void that you have." "We are working in our very highly paced developing field that needs a very [high] responsiveness. Yes, responsiveness, but also yeah, maybe let's call it out. Holacracy claiming to be agile and all of that. Maybe if you are a professional practician, yes. Right now it's rather painful for us. […] I think we are in only three and a half years now. Yeah, it's still quite new. […] We are still not there, so we are really in the in the game of like wrapping our mind around it." "The organizational part, the Pure Holacracy part, we get. We have we have version 5, Constitution 5. It's all good works, but there's also the people side to it that you cannot ignore, that we ignored for since the beginning. Because we were so occupied, with, having the rest. Just that. When it was actually too late after 2 1/2 years we noticed that we were losing people again because of that. And so we had to address that. […] We kind of started addressing it." "It's a highly painful process. I can say that and I'm really proud of everyone who is still with us bearing and, yeah, and not giving up." "To be honest, I know that we, like, we restructured, we are trying to address these outside influences, better and more. And Holacracy helps us with it. And meetings are so much more efficient, right. […] So yes and no. There is highly efficient stuff coming with Holacracy, but there's also highly complex stuff coming with Holacracy that you need to deal with that is keeping you from dealing with the stuff that you actually should be dealing with."

Appendix 3.10: Extracts from Interview with Xpreneurs

Questions	Extracts from data
Q1: Recruiting Strategy	"Actually we we're just starting now targeted recruiting. Until now we always kind of laid back a bit and just looked at the spontaneous application that we're getting. And we're getting, I don't know, maybe I would say one or two a month usually." "Usually we have to say no to most people because, and I would say 90% of the cases, people are very interested in what we're doing, and they're looking to move into this field. But usually they don't have a lot of experience yet, so it's more like a career switch and it seems it's a direction that they would like to, you know, that they would grow into. But they don't have any significant work experience in that field." "We are trying to, you know, to also build up new people because for the very simple reason that there are not very many people out there who actually have the profile already that we need. So, because it's a very broad profile, it's very interdisciplinary and it requires a lot of very specific experiences that not very people have and so very often. We just have to build people up over time and it's always a long investment of course. So yeah, for a small company it's always a big commitment. And we cannot take on too many of those at any given time." "I think part of our recruitment process, we're looking at it from a really values perspective. To let the whole thing be as authentic and as transparent as possible and really gives the person a real sense of what it will be like to work with us as a company which is part of the team. And also we're not trying to hide any, let's say, well, things that that are maybe sometimes not going, you know, perfectly right. Things that are strong that we're struggling with currently."
Q2: Rectruiting process	"Basically the whole thing starts by us becoming aware of somebody that we're interested in or somebody is becoming aware of, you know, becoming interested in us and sending us, let's say, an initiative. You know, just an application. And then basically what we do first is that this role of 'people attractor' are doing like an initial screening. Maybe just doing a very, let's say, an initial matching process to kind of get a sense. Well, does this person have the requisite experience? What's their motivation? , and so on and so forth, maybe even setting up a first conversation. Very often we do an early first conversation just to get a sense of the person, right. And then, whenever the 'people attractor', the role, says 'well, I see a lot of potential'… so, the goal of this stage of the process is that both parties get a strong sense that, OK, actually we're interested enough to really start a formal recruiting process. We really look at, you know, the different facets in more in more details and look at, well, what are the salary requirements? How are we working in detail? What roles would they be willing and able to fill? And like all these questions and so that's that whole process is basically led by the recruiter role." "How we do this and what we're looking for and how the process is structured is again defined by a role called 'Rekrutierungs-Regisseur', or recruiting director basically, so this role is responsible for, is accountable to kind of define the process of how we go about recruiting, providing all the necessary templates. And, well, everything that's you know, the structure and the processes that are necessary to do a good recruiting process." "Once this process is over and we decide to hire the person, then there are two more roles involved. So one of them is called 'Partnership agreements' or partnerships 'einbarung'. That's basically the role who codifies the agreement. The contract the company has with the individual, right. So that is basically to formalize everything that has been decided in the recruitment process and just finalizing this in a written agreement and documenting this agreement and so on and so forth. And then the whole process is handed over to the on-boarding role, who's then responsible for, well, leading the on-boarding process and setting up the on-boarding process. "I have got to the point where I'm not under any illusions. […] I mean, the whole recruiting process is pretty much a bit like a theatre, right? Yeah, like we're playing, we're putting on the show and I guess what we're trying to do is actually to create an environment where we don't feel like we have to put on the show, but where we can be very honest and open and transparent about each other. And you know what we need and what we expect and what we think we can bring and then really just be honest with each other. If we get a sense like, well, is this something that we're mutually excited about that we would really like to make happen, right, and not to put on a performance, because in my experience that doesn't help either party. Because if you pretend then it's not the truth. It will come out sooner or later and then there's disillusionment. It doesn't matter on which side, and that usually doesn't lead to a good place."
Q3: Crucial candidate characteristics looked for when hiring	"I think a person will do well with us if they're very self-driven, if they have a high degree of self-reliance. Basically, not needing a lot of outside validation and guidance to kind of, you know, become productive." "We're looking for people who really are attracted by the purpose of a role and kind of want to do a good job and send a lot of energy. Just bringing that to life and leading that you know and I think generally of course it's very important to say that they strongly resonate with the purpose of our company." "It's just how does this resonate with their own purpose? And then of course we also look at, the skills and experiences but another thing that we're also looking for, because that's also a key element to be successful at Xpreneurs, is a strong desire to develop as a person. So we have a lot of deliberately developmental practices, so where we actually, you know, spend time and have processes and special meeting formats where it's all about getting into a deeper understanding of who I am and what I want to bring into the world and how I relate to others and what I'm triggered by and what causes problems for me and how I can basically find better ways of dealing with that. […]We're really, deeply convinced that by doing this work I become a better, let's say, a better tool for the organization as well, I will become a much more useful and versatile and effective partner in service of the organization's purpose"
Q4: Description of ideal candidate for Holacracy	"It's not a magic formula that's required in the sense that only it's not a very, let's say, elitist thing that's only reachable for some people, it's very much like playing soccer. The only real requirements for you to learn soccer is that you want to learn to play soccer, right. If you're committed to learning, then you can become a decent soccer player. You don't have to become the world's best soccer player. And also that's not a requirement for us. You just need to become a proficient, Holacracy practitioner, depending on what roles you are playing. Of course, if you want to become a coach or something like that, then probably it makes sense that you want to become really good at it, but not every one of us has a coach role so it really also depends on your profile." "I don't think that people need to have an agile mind-set or something like that to work in a holacratic

	organisation. I have seen many, you knowlike very, say, 'normal' people flourish in holacracy organisations, and I've seen people who were really enthusiastic about new work and you know all these yeah, agile mind-set and so on and so forth. Some of the biggest proponents of those things I have seen fail miserably. So very often they have very weird understandings of what it actually means to be agile or to have an agile mind-set. Very often I get a sense that those are more projections of like, just, their own personal preferences." "I think many, many different kinds of people can flourish in a self managed environment. Many of the skills required to to flourish, and to be effective., in such an environment, can be learned. And sometimes yeah, so many people must learn them, need to learn them when they first start working in an organisation. They need to 1st unlearn old practises, old behaviours and relearn new ones, better ones. Well, what's better suited for this new work environment. But that's the great thing about human beings, we are incredibly adaptative."
Q5: Differences in recruiting practices and targeted employee profile before and after Holacracy	"I did work for a couple of traditional conventional organisations before some smaller consulting companies, but also large enterprise companies with many thousands of employees." "Whether the recruiting practises, strategy and the well the candidate specifications differ, yes and no. I mean, of course you know companies that run Holacracy still need to hire people. They still need a strategy, but it's just they go about it in a very different way. So it's usually you don't have an HR department or something like that, but you just have like a few specific roles in Holacracy [...]We for example, have multiple roles involved in recruiting new partners" "So there are multiple different roles that are involved in HR processes and recruiting processes, and the same goes for strategies. So the way we go about strategies is that we have a specific role in the anchor circle that defines the process of how we figure out a strategy." "Organisations running Holacracy or just generally self management go about this. It's just very different, and yet it's not fundamentally different, because the thing is, you still have roles who make decisions. It's not that everybody gets a say in everything. That's a common misunderstanding. The key difference is that in a conventional organisation the power structure is always static. You know the CEO is always the CEO, it always has the last say in every decision. No matter what it is right, they can always trump a hiring decision or any other decision. And in Holacracy, this power structure is very dynamic, so it's really depending on the context. You know, the situation. In one situation, one role might be in the lead, or it might have the authority to make a decision and then in another situation another role might have the lead." "So leadership is much more dynamic. It's shared, but shared doesn't mean that it's the same for everybody, it's really depending on the roles."
Other information related to Holacracy	"We think organizations should become places of deliberately developmental work, right? Uh, because we think they're a hugely an important lever to kind of to help in humanities, elevation of human consciousness. And that's actually so the whole Holacracy practice is for us is also a means to an end. [...]Because it's a very powerful practice to help you, without actually talking much about it, but it's a very powerful catalyst for personal development. If you read the Constitution, it doesn't say anything about people, developments, and you know the growth of individuals, but it tends to have that effect on many people and most people who have a mature practicing, have developed the mature practice." About on-boarding And then again is a very let's say, a decentralized process, because there are many different roles involved in helping a new partner, you know, getting up to speed, so depending on what roles they will fill. Of course they will have on boarding sessions with roles they might take over or, you know, with people who used to have the roles who stepped away from them. " About training other companies to implement Holacracy on people and recruitment matters "It's very different. So usually, the most intense piece of work, or the largest chunk of work, is usually just getting the early practice up and running. This again, it's a question of maturity. So many companies, if they start their Holacracy journey, or their self-management journey, they're not even aware that these issues, these topics will become very important. Or they have a very, let's say, a very low resolution perspective of what all of that means, which is perfectly normal because whenever you enter a new field you don't understand yet what important pieces are and what they mean and how they work together and so on. So over the first one or two years usually it's really all about building up the whole Holacracy practice, basic mechanics over the first couple of months and then more and more focusing on the deeper power shift dynamics. And then overtime, usually about one and a half years in then the companies start, they start to kind of seeing new things. The practice is starting to become natural, feel natural and you start developing a new perspective on how to think about organizational processes and how to also see this differentiation that Holacracy brings, you know, differentiating the needs of the organization and needs of individuals and the group of individuals, the relationships between them. After this time usually people start having a good enough capacity to differentiate those and to hold differentiated dimensions and then starting to reintegrate them again in a differentiated way." "It's the only way I can now imagine myself working. [...] It's just so much better on every level than any conventional way of organizing and collaborating. Because you just have so many more pathways, you have such so many more distinctions that you can make to kind of keep things sane and productive, and to keep relationships sane and productive and not to have this these things intermingled all the time and not having to continuously engage in, I don't know, in politics and in all these weird, as you know, dynamics that are going on in conventional organisations, not because people enjoy it or they want it but just because the structure doesn't allow for much else." "It's hard to even start comparing the two. But yeah, that's for me, that's like the difference in really, these ways of working. But that's also, you know, I think the appreciation and the understanding of how deep and how powerful this shift really is. It also comes over time, so the more you learn, the longer you practice it, the deeper the recognition and the appreciation for it grows. Actually it doesn't get less. It gets more over time because you continuously discover new aspects, new facets, new distinctions that you can make. And of course in the early stages, often it's just a simple tool to make things better in a very undifferentiated way. [...] [then it grows] into this more deeper awareness and appreciation of the practice, but that's usually something, it's an acquired taste for most people. Holacracy is an acquired taste."

Appendix 3.11: Extracts from Interview with Liip

Questions	Extracts from data
Q1: Recruiting Strategy	"I have to say that strategy is not written in stone. So what I do in the recruiting circle, I have now already written like the second strategy because we revise it, or at least I do that as a lead link I try to revise it from time to time to really ensure that it's about the topics we're really focusing on and they could of course change, especially during COVID time. And we saw a change when it comes to 'where do people work? Where do we recruit people from?' And this whole remote work topic got bigger of course. But in general, at the moment the strategy has like 2 focus points: one is 'focus' and one is 'courage'. And this is also in line with like the whole Liip strategy. So I really try to ensure that recruiting is in line with what we are focusing on as a company, with the topic 'focus', on providing a great candidate experience. And the focus 'courage' is recruit for potentials. So that we not only recruit once we have an open role or an open position, but if we meet with… the personality we try more and more to recruit people out of our networks. Without having an open role, but maybe we create a role or maybe we see, 'oh, you could be an added value in this circle or in that role'. So we have these two 'focus' and 'courage' and the link to Holacracy is in the sense that you have a lot of opportunities as a self-organized company. You started one role and once you're here you create like a role portfolio. You start somewhere, then you get an additional role and it's always a strength based thing." "There is where Holacracy plays into the topic that we as a recruiting circle try to be or try to paint a very realistic picture of what it will be like once you're a Liiper and what it will be like working in a holacratic setup. It's not that we're Holacracy and we have a very specific goal in the recruiting circle that's not the case. It's more on a meta level that we really try to, and have a realistic job preview and also try to explain what are challenges in such a setup and what does it mean for your personality, working in this company. What do you have to bring with us or with you to succeed and to feel well in such a setup."
Q2: Rectruiting process	The whole recruiting process is stated on their website (Recruiting@Liip – Ce Qui T'attend Si Tu Postules Chez Nous · Blog · Liip, n.d.), see Appendix 3.5 for their recruiting process. "Transparency is an absolute key thing and what we're doing with our website and what we're doing with every interaction we have with people. We always provide a maximum of transparency."
Q3: Crucial candidate characteristics looked for when hiring	"There are a lot of traits I would say, but there are some really important ones. One for sure is to have an open mind-set. To love challenges and to be very solution oriented because you encounter many, many, situations where you see a challenge and it's a mind-set thing to see the challenge. But to very quickly also see a solution or to not get disappointed by all those challenges, but seeing the benefit of OK, it allows me to always be creative and finding solutions. And you have to be quite strong in prioritizing. That's again, this focus topic, because I'm in different roles, in the exchange with customers, in this very agile environment. And you could end up with ten different urgent topics at the same time. So prioritizing, if you're if you're good at prioritizing, that's for sure a benefit, or that's for sure an advantage. It's also great if you're a self-learner, if you like to see opportunities in learning. Because we have changing tools, we have changing clients. We have the composition in circles [that] change, so everything is like a learning experience." "Someone that really loves routine, has, might have difficulties in such a setup so it's a lot about mind-set, I would say. Curiosity, be open for something new. […] But also on a personality level, things like empathy, or humbleness. Because it's never only about yourself, it's always a team. It always has a collaborative element. So OK, it's your contribution, but it's always done within a team, so every individual contribution will be a whole at the end. […] that's where the humbleness comes in. It's always OK, let's do it together and everyone contributes and it's a collective intelligence that we can use." "You have to be able a little bit to sell yourselves. Which means, as we don't have a hierarchy, it's not your hierarchical position that allows you to decide things. But it is out of your role, so sometimes you really have to sell what you're thinking or what your standpoint is. […] You have to convince the others. […] So if you're good at making yourself visible, you're it's easier for you."
Q4: Description of ideal candidate for Holacracy	"Holacracy as a setup is very rigid. […] The setup is really very strict. You have those meetings and it's very clearly stated who is doing what, and at the beginning I was struggling a little bit with that rigidity. But then I found out the reason why this is so rigid is that it is self-organization. If there would be like no rules, it would be chaos. […] I think you have to like that. I think you have to feel comfortable in such as setup." "Besides that I would say the traits I told you before would be the same. Because that's how we work." (reference to question 3) "If prestige is important to you, you might not feel well in a holacratic setup because it's not about prestige. And prestige is often accompanied, or is often linked, to a hierarchy. So if you're like used to 'OK, I start here and then I Progress hierarchically and I I gain prestige'. That's you won't find up here." "If you're able to sell your standpoint, if you're able to convince people, if you're credible in what you're doing and showing what you do, it's more about that, and then you gain the credibility from your colleagues and that is where you feel the appreciation. It's not the prestigious element that counts." "If you're keen on like really see the progress career wise, it doesn't happen. It happens more via additional roles or via developing in-depth in a role either being broader or being more an expert in a role, so these are like the two ways to develop. Or creating more impact because you're more visible also outside the company, whatever, but it's not this classical career where you develop hierarchically. It's different."

Q5: Differences in recruiting practices and targeted employee profile before and after Holacracy	"I was at IKEA before for 17 years. And of course IKEA is not self-organized, but what I have to say that the hierarchy is also very flat. There was hierarchy when I worked there, but as it is a Swedish company, the equality of roles is lived quite similar." "I have to say IKEA is quite avant-garde there as being such a big company, a global company operating worldwide. IKEA is also looking for personalities. Of course, you scan a CV and sometimes we have requirements for a position, but more important than everything is the personality, and that's exactly the same with us [at Liip]. […]Comparing these two companies, I don't really see a big difference at all." "Of course there are other companies like insurance, these banks, where the CV and everything, all the diplomas you have succeeded have much more weight." "But these two companies [(IKEA, Liip)] I could see almost no difference, and also in the recruiting process. What I really like at Liip is that many roles are involved. Many people are involved in the recruitment." "At the beginning, you meet like a small group of people, but you end up in a speed dating where you really get in touch with many people of your future team. And at IKEA it was quite similar, the setup was a little bit different, but usually as a candidate, you should meet the people you will work with too, because it gives you an impression. […]And for us, as an employer, it's also important that the people know or get to know the future Circle members."
Other information related to Holacracy	About the candidates applying at Liip "I would say 90% or 80% of the candidates, they visit the website. They know a little bit about Holacracy. They know a little bit about self organization. They know about our principles and it's maybe a certain kind of people that applies at Liip." "I made the experience also in my former company, that to be open minded could have something to do with generation but doesn't have to at all. I mean I know a lot of young people that are not open minded at all and I know a lot of elder people that are totally open minded. And the average age [at Liip] is 34, so of course we have a lot of young people, but we absolutely do also have a lot of experienced people, and I think the mix, it's also diversity. It's diversity in personalities, in age, which makes us strong. So I would never, if I see a CV with someone that is 50 years and older, I would always say that's interesting. I would never say 'Umm. That might be someone that is too old'." About what attracts candidate to apply at Liip "Maybe there you have this generation element. Younger people tend to say 'I don't need a career, I don't need a boss, I don't want to become a manager, I don't want to lead people'. That might be a generational thing, and then we have more experienced people that, 'I have had so many managers, and I have led people, I don't want to do that anymore'. 'I want to be in a setup where we're all equal, and I really want to try this out'. […] Some have had it and don't want it anymore and others haven't, or others don't even want to step into such a setup." "Also I think what is attractive is that you create your role portfolio according to your strengths. This is really nice, because sometimes in like more traditional setups you have these functions and sometimes you try to do a little more, but it's not always acknowledged, whatever. And in the holacratic setup you have your roles really according to your strengths. So you can be sure, I contribute wherever I can and I try to do the best for the company. So it's like a different perspective." About trainings "We have an individual education budget which means that every Liiper has an amount of money or and an amount of hours that you can invest on your own so you can decide what do I need, where do I want to focus on, and I have the responsibility to do so. […] We also offer internal trainings especially for on-boarding." "But also if we see that, for example, new technologies are getting more important or tools, or… something that we provide, for example, is a feedback training because we realize that if you have no more managers, it's a lot more important that every individual knows how to communicate and knows how to give feedback, receive feedback. So we put the focus there so it's always, if we see what is challenging in the way we work together, let's support people in offering something. And most of the times we don't offer it ourselves, but we have like a provider, to really have the expertise from someone who does this. […]It's most of the time easier and also cheaper in a way if we invite an expert that trains us."

Appendix 3.12: Extracts from Interview with Energized.org

Questions	Extracts from data
Q1: Recruiting Strategy	"There's two sides of the story. If you recruit people, you need people who can contribute to the purpose of the organization, and that might be that you have specific roles that you need people for. Or you find somebody who's really a good fit with the organization and culture, and then you just assume that they can contribute, but you start creating holes for them, that's also a possibility." "Right now we are open but not actively looking." "We are open and since we have kind of a different structure, so we all are feelancers, and Energized is a cooperation. So there's not one owner, we are all owners and that requires a bit more from new people. So or they become owners as well, or they don't and we find a new structure to work together. But I guess that is a bit more difficult than with other companies"
Q2:Rectruiting process	"I guess what they do in the process before it's just really be clear what is expected of them of the new people. This is the way we work, and this requires something from you and we will help you. We will support you when you get here. And that's about it, because there are so many people new to Holacracy. That you can't really predict if they will really love it or not."
Q3: Crucial candidate characteristics for working in a holacratic organization	"In Holacracy you really need proactive people. If people rather would go to their job and just do what they've been told to do, it wouldn't work with Energized because we're just a small company, but imagine a bigger company. It could work, but Holacracy requires that you continuously work on bringing tensions and so you sense what's going on and what could be improved. And then you make a proposal to improve it, and so it requires this noticing of what's going on and making proposals. So if people are not willing to take up that responsibility, then it's not really a match for Energized or probably not for Holacracy." "It requires this self-leadership of just looking at your roles and looking at the purpose of the company. Just looking at what is needed right now. So that is a bit of a different mind-set then." "It's not required per se but of course, makes life easier if you are able to switch a lot [among roles]." "But Holacracy has a meeting structure that really helps to have everybody being heard. So that makes communication skills easier already. And then again, because of Holacracy, because you work from your roles, you can approach other roles, being really clear that this is about work because you divide work and the more personal side […] So that's something you have to learn to talk that way, and you have to still get used a little bit to. Because it's different and then it's always a bit awkward, but once you are used to it, it makes work really easier. And then again, communication, yes, important" "You need to energize your roles by yourself, so you decide. And on the other hand, you have to cooperate with your colleagues and aligning on the higher purpose so that of course does require that you work together as well. That's a pitfall for many people, they think 'I have my roles, I'll just go'. And kind of forget to really collaborate and then you have people who feel as if they can't collaborate so this is now' I have to do everything by myself', but that's never true and an accountability is just something that you are expected to take care of, but you don't have to do everything yourself. So the communication, I think communication is a challenge for everybody." "I think everybody can learn." "It's really about being curious."
Q5: Differences in recruiting practices and targeted employee profile before and after Holacracy	"You work in a hierarchy of people, we have a hierarchy of purposes. There's this company purpose breakdown in purposes of the roles. If you work in a hierarchy of people, so with bosses, it's both tempting and for some people comfortable too to rely on those bosses to do the thinking and sensing work in the organization." "It's different from the way we've been working ever since the Industrial Revolution. But once you're in, it's not that crazy anymore. And is it for everybody? Well, everybody can learn. I guess some people just really want a boss and, well, that's up to them." "Sometimes you get a lot of freedom in your role even when you have a boss, depends on the boss as well of course, but in the end you are not the one deciding. So you can go a long way, and then somebody else says 'oh stop, that's not how I see it'. And that's not really motivating." "A difference in recruitment. Well, maybe it's a bit of an assumption, I think that in other companies where they don't work holacratic, they are more often looking for somebody who can do something specifically. Like, you are really great in building websites for example. Whereas I think in Holacracy that's also important, of course, but you also look more at the fit, the way somebody works. Because if you support that energy somebody brings, they can learn and they can learn anything. So I guess in a non holacratic company they really do more the checklist by your experience and what you can already really do, instead of looking at the human behind it, and whether it's a fit yes or no."
Other information related to Holacracy	About on-boarding "So most of us are Holacracy coaches, which makes it easier because what other companies encounter is that they have to learn people about how does this work, how do you work in our Holacracy environment. And we didn't really have. That because everybody who was new already knew how to do it. And what we do for our clients is called an on-boarding experience where people from different companies can join and do, well, kind of a small online academy together where they learn the basics from Holacracy." "The bigger companies develop their own academies so they just really invest when new people come in. They go through this whole system of maybe even half a year where they both learn about Holacracy but also about company values, et cetera. So they really take time to let people in, but that's of course the on-boarding part where people are already in." About the kind of people attracted by Holacracy/Energized "So what you attract are the people who are already curious and who are already looking for it. And it's because since it's about coaching and going to others, again, yes it's a bit of a hypothesis, but I think you attract the right people by really showing the way you work and showing your values and be very explicit about the choices you make. And then you attract the right people. I don't expect somebody who does not like to be a bit of an entrepreneur to come to Energized. That would be surprising." About generational factor "So we had one company where there were really a lot of young people, and that went really well. Because it was like their first job and they were not 'programmed' yet for the other way of working. And on the other hand sometimes it's the oldest person in the room who's really the firestarter, so it's not really about [age]."