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To be or not to be labelled as Talent.
Is that important?

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Abstract

This study raises one of the current problems of growing companies, which is the management of its workforce. Due to that fact, talent management has become a crucial topic not only for practitioners but also for researchers. Indeed it allows companies to detect, to develop and to keep the strategic advantage that can come from its workforce. In a nutshell, talent is lying among the workforce and should be managed in a proper way to create significant value. Talent here can be understood either as a characteristic or as people. The first step in Talent Management is the identification of Talent.

In this study aims to compile the existing works on the Talent Identification. First we give the background of Talent Identification. Then we explain what Talent Identification is and focus on its last three steps: identifying the actors and factors, explaining the method to do it and finally the communication of its results.

The result of the study are responding to two crucial needs. The first one is the establishment of a clear structure to identify the Talents within a company. The second is the need of compile the scholarly literature.

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Preface – Motivation for the study

I recently read, as personal reading, a book about successful people. What makes those people special, is that they work to achieve a goal instead of counting on their chance. It states that there is no chance, if one works on the circumstances, life will eventually provide the opportunity for success. One just have to seize it.

This book reminds me of the commitment I have towards this study. My classmates and I were provided with the opportunity of doing a research project on a topic of high importance directed by an expert on the matter. I was able to seize this "Good Luck", which provided me with a large amount of benefits.

The story of this project starts when Mrs. Eva Gallardo mentioned Talent Management during one Business Management class. By the way she talked about it I knew it was a strategic topic for the future and that it was in line with my beliefs for Human Resource Management.

I then started to do some research on my own and soon came back to Mrs Gallardo. I was willing to do my Master Thesis on a Talent Management related research question. For me it was the opportunity to go deeper in a topic that truly interest me. It also allow me to work on one of my long-identified weak point: doing a research project.

Introduction

It has been seen that stronger people management leads to a higher financial performance (BCG, 2014). For today's growth, which is equal to tomorrow's survival, companies need to focus on people. The following quotation of McKinsey (2015), shows that need for managing people and their talent is understood by the Top Management: "In a recent survey of more than 1,000 global CEOs, respondents cited human capital as their number one challenge." But to be efficient in this fast growing world, it is critical to prioritize the best assets among the workforce: Talent. But Talent alone is not enough. That is why the Talent Management is such a critical topic. Moreover a BCG group's survey reveals that the non-HR considered that, at present, companies have low capability in Talent Management (BCG, 2014). So, Talent Management is in an urgent need of actions and research, which make this project interesting.

However, Talent Management is too broad. So, in this study we are going to offer an in-depth explanation of one of its main processes: Talent Identification. Why is it so important to study about this? First, because identifying Talent within a company is strategic for increasing its competitiveness. Indeed, the development, deployment, and engagement of talents is not only necessary for the organization success but requires big investments. Companies cannot afford investing in everyone so it is forced to optimize its workforce management. And Talent Identification offers useful knowledge.

However, few researches have been done on this process and the way it is conducted in the workplace. And among those studies, some are talking about possible bad consequences to Talent Identification and its communication. (Swailes, 2013). At first, the problem seems simple: should managers communicate on someone's identified, or not, as Talent? But after reviewing a few articles it became clear that the problem was much bigger. Indeed, to do a good communication of Talent Identification, one should take into account many things such as the influence of context, or the consequences of communicating. In fact, the latter may generate expectations into employees identified as Talent. Companies should be prepared to that in order to avoid frustrations that might be detrimental to employee commitment (Dries & Gieter, 2014). So, it is recommended to do further investigation in employee reactions to talent identification (Gallardo-Gallardo, Nijs, Dries, & Gallo, 2015). Moreover, literature also lacks the further study on the effects of the specific setting on employees' behaviour.

With this study, we bring a literature review on Talent Identification which includes actors, factors, and consequences of the identification process; psychological and communication issues in the workplace. This is done to achieve our three main goals that are described in the next section. Finally we pretend to bring a conceptual map of Talent Identification to help answering the question: "how do I do a good Talent IdentificationI?" Because of the current "lack of […] conceptual development" (Gallardo et al., 2013), there is a need for bringing some guidance to future analysis.

Nomenclature

BCG	Boston Consulting Group
CSE	Core-self Evaluation
HR	Human Resource
MNE	Multinational enterprises
TI	Talent Identification
TM	Talent Management

Objectives

This study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. Why is it relevant to identify the talent within an organization?
2. What is known up until now about 'Talent Identification'?
   a. Who are the main actors in the Talent Identification process?
   b. Which factors should be taken into account in the Talent Identification process?
3. How the results from the talent identification process should be communicated?

To achieve this aim, a literature review is conducted and conceptual maps drawn.

Methodology

To achieve the objectives of this study, the methodology used is a literature review.

The first step of this method is to identify the area of the literature review. In this study only articles published in Human sciences journals were reviewed. They must all be written in English and published within the past 10 years. Then the variables, or keywords of the study have been identified. In the present case, four keywords are used throughout the study: Talent, Talent Management, psychology at the workplace and communication issues. Following O'Leary (2014) we present in a Venn diagram the interesting area of literature that guide our search. The area which is common to all the circles contains the articles of high interest for this study.

Figure 1 Venn diagram

The search has been conducted in the online databases Scopus or Web of science. As Talent can be identified both within the company workforce and outside the company, it has been decided that the study will focus only on the workforce.

To complete this review, white papers from consulting groups and the papers presented during the 5th workshop on Talent Management organised by EIASM (European Institute for Advanced Studies in Management) on October 2016 have also been analysed.

Every article has been rated for its relevancy and annotated all along the study. A table has been built with the following sections: title; authors; keywords; research questions; main findings; future

questions of interest. By keywords we understand one of the four variables described before and any synonyms or alternatives to them.

As for the annotations, each article underwent analyses of the methods and ideas it conveyed. That allowed us to know what had been done so far. The different parts from different articles were put together according to the ideas they explained or lead to. By doing this, the main concepts have been found and a conceptual map linking them has been drawn. The latter was a very useful tool to know what needed further research and where to focus on.

The analysis of the reviewed literature is constructed as presented in the following figure.
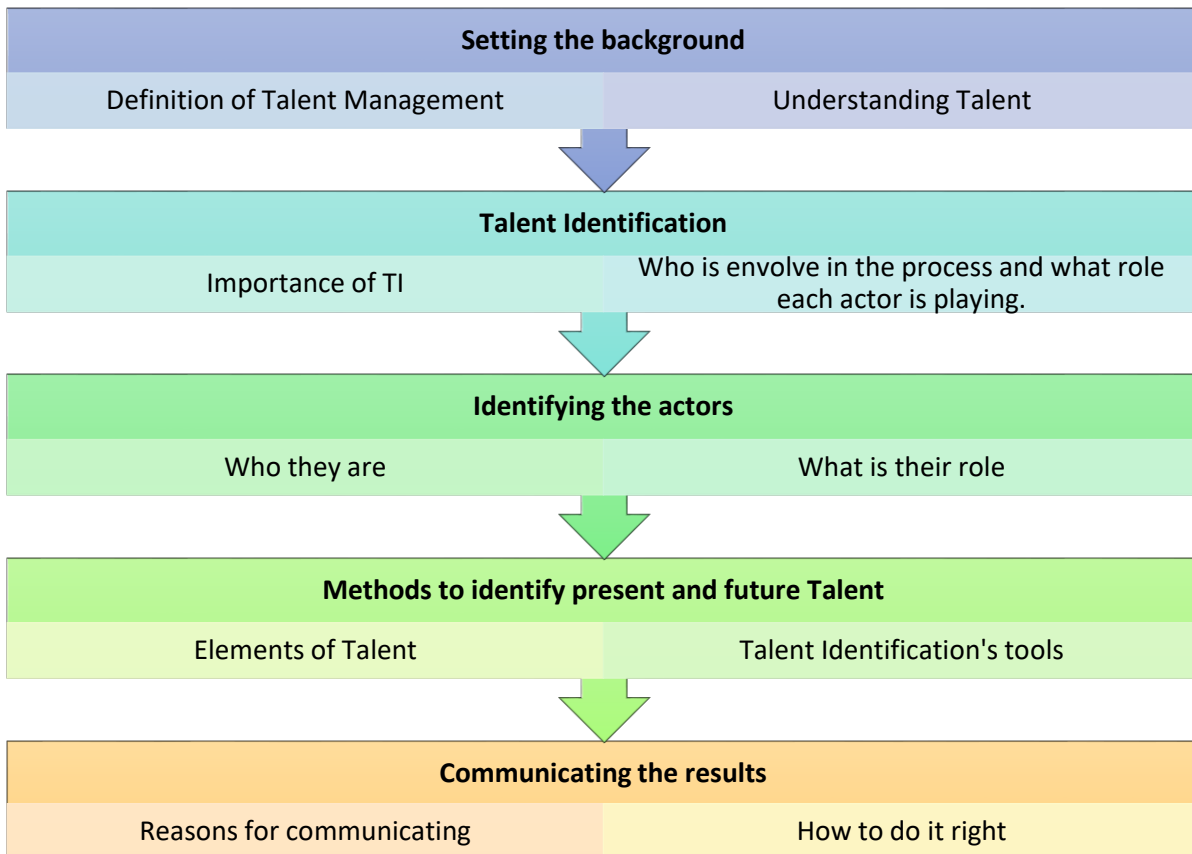

Figure 2 Master thesis overview

1. Background for Talent Identification

The present study is related to the delicate issue of differentiating the people into regular and strategic employees. Literature refers to this topic as Talent Identification (TI) and includes it in something bigger: Talent Management (TM). So, it is essential to start with a clear definition of what Talent Management and Talent are. A last thing to have in mind before going further in this report is that the whole of it is meant for everyy type of companies, from the smallest to the biggest.

a. Current conceptualization on Talent Management

Let's start from the very beginning of the Talent Management phenomenon. The birth point of TM is commonly associated to McKinsey's 1997 report the Michaels and colleagues' 2001 book, both about the War of Talent. (Swailes, 2016) The first was talking about it as a kind of natural selection of leadership, and the second was more oriented to organization being at war for executive. The authors of the 2001 book were convinced of TM being the reason why some company were outperforming others (Swailes, 2016). It seems that they were convincing also.

Indeed, since then, TM has grown important for both practitioners First (McKinsey, 2015) states that one of top 5 management practices for a healthy organization is Talent Management. Being careful with the consequences of Talent Management practices is of top importance because it influences the wellbeing of the company, which is its best competitive asset. Then, it allows companies to solve one challenge consulting groups have identified: to attract Talent and stir up loyalty. Actually, appropriated Talent Management practices make working in that company more attractive to Talents, and so, it also will make them stay and commit with it. Finally, according to a recent study of BCG (2014), the second main companies' concerns is Talent Management; the first being developing leadership skills. In the white paper of Deloitte (2016) three more characteristics are described as the future "core skills": social skills, processing skills, and cognitive skills. All the four of them should be identified. In other words, it is important to have in mind that Talent Identification is not only about Leaders/Leadership Identification. It should be done for every kind of Talent the company is looking for.

But practitioners are not the only one interested in those practices. Since the call for academic research made by Lewis & Heckman in 2006, more and more scholars are joining the research on this topic. In a recent study, Gallardo-Gallardo et al. (2015) highlight that Talent Management is an important and growing academic topic. There is a serious interest in some main subtopics including retention of talented persons, and Talent Identification (TI). And, since 2012, there has been an increasing interest from the psychology field to talent management issues at the employee level, according to Gallardo-Gallardo & Thunnissen (2016). Then Gallardo-Gallardo & Thunnissen (2016) noticed that, over the last few years, this increasing interest from the scholars can be seen all over the world, but specifically in Europe. A piece of evidence of the importance of TM in this region may be the institution of an annual conference on Talent Management sponsored by the European Institute for Advanced Studies in Management (EIASM) (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2015). But, as TM first appears in the US, its principles are issued from US-based multinational companies' context. And those may not be applicable to the European context Thunnissen et al. (2013a,b). Fortunately, questions like "Are TM principles issued

from US-based multinational companies applicable to other company contexts?" have been raised by Thunnissen et al. (2013a,b) and others. So it is expected that future researches will be more oriented to a "best fit" framing of Talent Management than it has been until now.

This change of approach to TM can be defined as one of its many challenges. In this study we consider three of them. The first challenge TM has to face is how to adapt to the needs of the current global setting. In a matter of facts, companies are in need of making this subject not only a HR issue but a global one within the company. According to practitioners, one of the main goal of the Chief Human Resource Officer is "pushing talent management capabilities and responsibilities to other parts of the organization" (Accenture, 2016). That can be done through an alliance with IT and adopting a Marketing way of thinking. (Accenture, 2016). As said before, Talent Management's goal is to fill strategic positions. So companies must sell those positions not just describe them (IBM Institute for Business Value, 2016), and the fact of being identified as Talent. Talking about IT, Talent management is an important market for IT companies such as IBM and Oracle. "In 2016, you will likely be forced to look at all of these new tools" (Deloitte, 2016). That implies a second challenge about Talent Management: the need of updating their informatics systems. Indeed, Deloitte has forecasted for 2016 that companies should continue to replace their old HR systems by cloud technology. However, succeeding in facing this challenge brings a lot of advantages: it generally is easier of use and it is a great source of information for HR because employees themselves enter their profile, feedbacks and expectations. In the end, Cloud systems, for example Oracle's, help leaders to manage all the steps of Talent Management (Oracle, 2013). The last challenge identified by doing this review is about how to manage the diversity of the current workforce. First, the fact of having different generations working together. In western countries, according to McKinsey (2015), a good Talent Management policy is required because a great share of the employees is going to retire within the following couple of decades and new workers have different expectations and a different definition of loyalty than their elders. Then, the national diversity. Western multinational firms have to give the priority it deserves to Talent Management. Indeed local Talents now prefer to work for their home national large company than for multinational ones. The latter are losing their competitive advantage on wages and current perspectives of career growth. So they have to develop new ones through Talent Management if they still want to expand overseas.

Only using its origin, importance and challenges to define what TM is, would not be precise enough to make it really understandable. At this stage of the study, a true definition is needed. The problem is that scholars haven't agreed in one unique definition. However, three perspectives of talent management are mentioned. The first, called Talent Management as a faster version of the traditional Human Resource Management. The second is oriented to talent pools (define later) and the third to the talent itself (Lewis & Heckman, 2006). Collings & Mellahi (2009) added a fourth approach consisting in starting with identifying the key roles the company wants to fill in with Talent. Based on this fourth approach and on their belief that "it is neither desirable nor appropriate" to have Talent in all positions, they offered a definition of TM. This one being now the most used in the literature. They said that TM is the set of "activities and processes that involve the systematic identification of key positions which differentially contribute to the organisation's sustainable competitive advantage, the development of a talent pool of high potential and high performing incumbents to fill these roles, and the development of a differentiated human resource architecture to facilitate filling these positions with competent incumbents and to ensure their continued commitment to the organisation" (p. 305). We are going to use this definition in this study.

b. Understanding the Talent concept

Once we know what TM is, it is necessary to understand what is meant by Talent within the workplace. By reviewing the literature, two articles (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2013; Meyers, van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013) published in a well-known special issue on TM shed light on this.

According to Gallardo-Gallardo et al. (2013), in the world of work, Talent can be approached in two different ways. First, you can define Talent as characteristics; second, Talent as people. If Talent is a characteristic, then it could be a natural ability one is born with, a mastery that comes with practice, a commitment, or a fit to the environment. The latter is about having the right person at the right place at the right time. Talent as a commitment is complementary to ability and we can think in terms of the following equation "Talent = competence × commitment × contribution". Meaning that Talent is about having high competences, high commitment and high contribution to the company. In the case that Talent refers to people, then it can be either all people or some people. For Talent as all people approach, the challenge is to have the context that allows to show they are Talents. With the Talent as some people, comes a workforce differentiation. Gallardo-Gallardo et al. (2013) define two talent pools: High performers and High potential. High performers are people who have high abilities and high achievements; they already are adding value to the company. High potential are people demonstrating they are different from average and need to be treated in a different way. They also are promising to grow faster than others (Gallardo et al., 2013).

According to (Meyers, van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013), there are five approaches to Talent. First Talent as giftedness means that Talent is innate and appears at an early age. Second, Talent is strengths. They are mostly innate and some are acquired. It is assumed that every individual possesses some of them and that there are positive effects to identification, development and use of them. Third, Talent as competencies, meta-competences. Competences are behavioural demonstration of Talent. Some can be developed by most people as knowledge and skills but others, such as abilities and personal characteristics are specific to some people. Meta-competences are desired for many job offers because they maintain their value even if radical changes in the context occur. They are the building blocks that enable individuals to adapt, learn and develop himself. To understand what they are, here are some famous examples: emotional intelligence, learning agility and general intelligence. The last two are high potential and high performance. Here they are not Talent as people but still Talent as object. Regarding high potential, it is the proof that Talent exist but has to be developed to generate visible outcomes to the company. So high performance is the display of Talent which benefits to the company without needing any further development.

As a result of facing both definitions, we can say that except for Talent as high performers/high performance, all the approaches to Talent are considering it as inputs to company's outstanding performance. Also, there are two approaches for the different definitions of Talent: inclusive, meaning it concerns all people and can be acquired, or exclusive, concerning a few people. Looking closely to both definitions, we see they meet on many points that we put into the following table.

	Inclusive approach	Exclusive approach
Giftedness Natural ability		(Meyers, van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013) (Gallardo et al., 2013)
Strengths	(Meyers, van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013)	
Mastery	(Gallardo et al., 2013)	
Competencies		(Meyers, van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013) (Gallardo et al., 2013)
High potential		(Meyers, van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013) (Gallardo et al., 2013)
High performance		(Meyers, van Woerkom, & Dries, 2013) (Gallardo et al., 2013)

Table 1 Meyers and Gallardo-Gallardo positions regarding inclusive and exclusive approach to Talent

In this study we are going to refer to Talent as the person who has specific characteristics (i.e., competencies, knowledge, and attitude) that match with those required to do an outstanding work within strategic positions. So, we are mixing the two approaches identified in the literature (i.e. object and subject approach). Likewise, we believe that each strategic position has specifics needs of Talents: Talent is tailored. Moreover, we are adopting an exclusive stance, that is, not everyone is Talent. So, why to identify those talents?

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2. Disentangling "Talent Identification"

Currently, Talent is a scarce resource in the work market, which makes its identification even more important. Competitors try to steal Talents, continuously, which makes it harder and harder for companies to keep them. Moreover, as a consequence of not managing well Talent, strategical employees may receive better job offers than what they can expect by staying in the company they are in. "Talent in high-growth fields may not need to apply for jobs at all; […] 75 percent of hires made through LinkedIn in 2014 were passive recruits." (McKinsey, 2015). This reality is known as 'the war of talent'.

However, TM is not only a question of retention but also of identification. This can be done at the level of the company and at the level of the whole the work market. As companies are struggling to identify Talent within their workforce, we decided to focus only on the assessment of the employees of a company.

So, it is now necessary to understand what the identification of internal Talent is. Unfortunately, "Talent Identification is not a clearly cut process" (Holland, 2016). However, by crossing what said (King, 2016) and (Collings, 2014), we obtained the following definition: Talent Identification is a primordial part of TM and consists in the proactive identification of incumbents with the potential to outperform while filling key positions, in order to create and develop the company's competitive advantage. Moreover, Holland (2016) used, in her work, the expression "Talent inventory" which add, to this definition, the idea of TI is about making a complete list of Talent being in stock within the company.

In the following figure, we highlight the key points that require specific attention during the process.
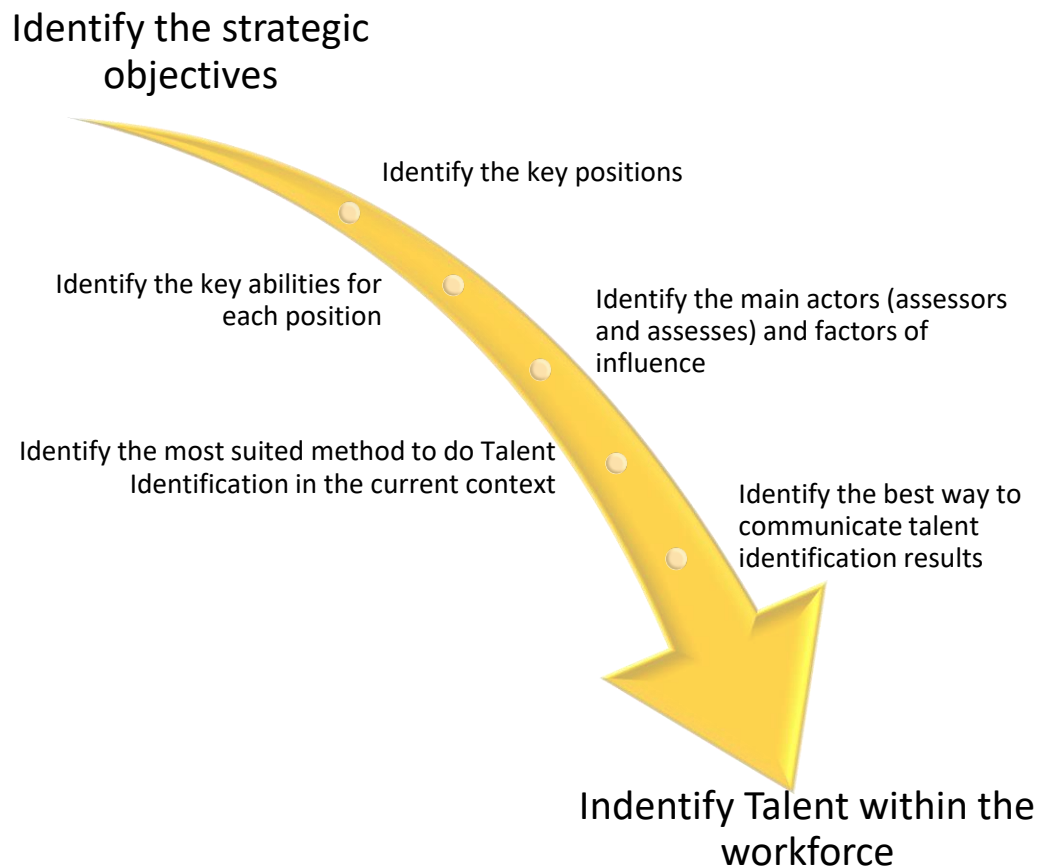
Identify the strategic objectives

Identify the key positions

Identify the key abilities for each position

Identify the main actors (assessors and assesses) and factors of influence

Identify the most suited method to do Talent Identification in the current context

Identify the best way to communicate talent identification results

Indentify Talent within the workforce

Figure 3 What to identify while doing Talent Identification process?

First, one should identify what the strategic objectives of the company are, what the company wants to achieve.

Then, identify the key positions which will facilitate their fulfilment. They are not necessarily linked to Leadership because, as Collings (2014) says "there are positions that are as important, if not more important than leadership ones in determining the success or failure of the organisation". The key positions are defined as having higher impact on company outcomes (Advanced Workforce Strategies, 2016). The identification is based on two considerations: first value creation and its impact on the company, second its strategic impact on the outcomes. A third one can be considered: critical capability. It consists in what make the company different from its competitors. In the end, the value of these consideration would be defined by the company needs in the current context.

The following step to Talent Identification is, for each key position, to identify the key abilities (Talent as object) required for making it strategic. Talent as characteristics. As for regular job offer, here is at issue to define what is looked for in order to fill the position, what is mandatory and to what extend the lack of talent in one skill can be tolerated.

Next, is identifying the method to identify these Talents. The latter should be in line with the company culture. So it is a work of introspection. In a matter of facts, if the behaviour is in line with the culture of the company, it will be perceived in a better way from the workforce.

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In this study we are going to deep into the last three stages of this process: main actors and factors involved in the process, practices known for Talent Identification, and practices and consequences of communicating the results of talent identification process.

a. Who are the main actors involved

In the Talent Identification process, there are two categories of actors: the assessors and the assesses. The assessors are part of the Talent Management team. The assesses may be include part of the workforce, all it, or the whole work market. In this study we consider only internal participants.

The assessors
First there is the Human Resource department. Its role is to manage Talent Management practices. Spreading the importance of such practices, training the line managers to Talent Identification are part of their activities. Talent Management tends to be a more global issue for companies. Indeed Accenture (2016) states that Chief Human Resource Officer must make Talent Management part of other departments work.

Then come the Top managers, whose role is to define the Talent mindset which correspond to the perception of others as Talent. It is based on the growth and static views of individual. King (2016). What Top managers do is to picture Talent, according to them. So, for example, if someone doesn't correspond to this image, he will be considered as non-Talent.

Finally the line managers, because of their proximity to the workforce, are most suited to do the rating. It is taken for granted that they also are the ones to communicate. But as King (2016) pointed out, they may not be comfortable with the rating or with the disclosure. If so, there are not the most adequate actor for these activities. For this reason it is important to identify the good assessors prior assessing any member of the workforce. Then to deploy talent, the role of the manager is to create opportunities and motivation.

The assesses
In this category of actors there are three subcategories: High performers, high potentials (both being talent pools) and non-identified as Talent.

In some cases, the previous subcategories may not include the entirety of the workforce. Actually, to fill key positions in a company, one should show he/she is highly committed to the company success, agrees with the company's actions and beliefs and is willing to do more for the company's success. A company cannot afford to have someone who is not prioritising the company's wellbeing even if this person has the desired abilities. When this preselection is done, it is sure that selected people will bring benefits to the company if they have the required Talent.

To sum up, in this study, we consider that the actors can be divided into two different categories: assessors and assesses. Within each category, there are different actors with different roles. They are gathered in the following figure.

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b. Which factors affect the Talent Identification process?

i. Contextual factors

In every study, the context has a great influence. In the present case, it influences Talent Identification from its design to its application. Moreover, Studying these micro-context factors could bring an answer to the questions "How to detect if my company's social context is favourable to talent identification communication?" and "In my company's context, will communicating talent identification empower talent or suppress it?" (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2015).

We are aware of the fact that not all the possible contextual factors would be explained, but due to the feasibility of the study, we focus on those we consider more important. Among those, we define an external factor, the market's situation, and three internal ones, culture, relation between actors, and diversity.

Culture, at corporate level

Corporate culture is define as the way a company works; how things are done there. All practices, including Talent Identification are largely influence by it. Next come some factors literature offers for this kind of companies' culture. The first of them is the institutional distance between the assesses and the decision maker (Mäkelä, Björkman, & Ehrnrooth, 2010).this factor allow us to answer to questions about how communication between top managers and the rest of the employees is done, if there is possibilities for discussions on the decisions made. It also tells how transparent executives' actions can be.

The second, is about confronting cultures due to mergers and acquisitions. According to the article (Holland, 2016), the process is dynamic and is done in an environment which is not favourable to taking your time and giving your full attention. Both being essential to manage this critical activity, this factor is then sensitive. In this particular context, company is in need to find its new identity and to update its vision of what Talent is. Those are likely to be distinct to cultures and visions of what talent is of the previous two independent companies. So it influence a lot Talent Identification as high potentials and high performers in the context of two separated companies may not be considered talented for the needs of the new integrated company.

Third, the organization's beliefs in the value of their people. Next to this idea is the concept of human capital. Collings (2014) defines human capital as following: "value–generating potential of employee knowledge, skills and abilities". Contribution to company performance, and by extension company context, changes with the value of this capital. This factor, very changeable, is to be considered at an individual level but including social factors (Nahapiet, 2011). We note that there are three different social capitals: structural social capital, cognitive social capital and relational social capital. The structural social capital is built from the historical foundations of culture and institutions within society, it gives structure and stability to social transactions. In a multinational company context, it is important to know how knowledge sharing and coordination of subsidiaries is done. The factor of influence in cultural element is identified as structural social capital by Collings (2014). As regards the cognitive social capital, it basically focuses on the development of shared value and norms within the organization. According to Collings (2014), it favours culture definition and evolution. Indeed this social capital includes shared values, attitudes, and beliefs; and if it has a high value, predisposes people towards mutually beneficial collective action. Finally, the relational social capital of a company sets the context of the relation between one another individuals build over time. (Collings, 2014). It influences

in the culture by defining the characteristics of social exchanges and the inclusion, or not, of trust in these exchanges

Relationships between actors.

In our study, all the actors are within the company and are interacting one with the others, creating a network of communication. These relations come with some factors of importance while considering TI.

In (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005) there is a definition of what the social exchange relationship is in the work place. It reveals some factors such as trust and perceived support. Concerning trust, there are two types to take into account: trust in supervisor and trust in organization. The first is linked to interactional justice and performance; and the second to perceive justice on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. It is then important to study the level of trust within the company because it influences on the perception of justice which can be critical while designating some people as Talent. Then they refer to perceived support differentiating organizational focus from supervisory focus. The latter being more oriented to job performance and rating. This can influence the relations between employees and supervisors or organization. Actually, employees are more likely to exchange commitment for support and those who feel they are supported are more supportive. So it is necessary to know who is trusted and likely to receive cooperation from the workforce to identify who will communicate about TI results.

Then, from the position of the employee within the network (Mäkelä, Björkman, & Ehrnrooth, 2010) we can who communicate what kind of information to him. This helps to determine who is more adequate to communicate about TI's results. Then, a come a close concept: homophily between this employee and the decision maker (Mäkelä, Björkman, & Ehrnrooth, 2010). It is similar to the first one in the fact that it participates to define who the right persons to get involved into the communication of the results are. By involved persons, we mean the one who actually does communicate, and the fact that the decision maker name can be mentioned together with the decision.

Finally, the Psychological Contract is a very important factor of the relationship of employees with employers. It specifically defines expectations of inputs and outcome from each other. For Talent Identification, it is necessary to know well the expectations because there is a risk of psychological contract breach (King, 2016). This occurs when the facts do not meet with the expectations and causes frustration for both employers and employees.

Diversity

The changeability of expectations among the workforce is even more critical now because of its increasing diversity. For the feasibility of this study, the latter comes down to generational diversity and diversity due to internationalization. We remind that the objective of TM is to develop Talent so they are of benefit to the company's performance and competitiveness without losing the current workforce outcomes. This is the reason why it is necessary to take the workforce (Talent or not) differences into account.

First, all companies are affected by internationalization if they are to grow in this globalized world. This makes them hiring people from different origin and culture. Knowing them is essential to deal with identification of the way to treat them.

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At the level of multinational enterprises, according to literature, employee mobility is a key element global Talent strategies. It refers as well to long-term mobility as to short-term ones. It implies that we should consider inpatriates, expatriates, and locals. Expatiates are going from parent country to subsidiaries, inpatriates form subsidiaries to headquarters. Finally, along with the mobile employees are the local employees that don't want to or cannot leave their country or their city. Workforce mobility, and particularly of talent pool members, is a powerful tool to leverage the internal knowledge and innovation (Collings, 2014). This article also states that global mobility enhances corporate integration. Also, it helps top management to keep an eye on the key resources and positions and favours the spread of a common corporate culture. So the mobile elements of the workforce cannot be treated in the same way as others because they are no regular employees. Actually, the organization is already taking advantage of them, Talent or not. Then, their relation to the organization and others should be different.

Finally, practitioners are concerned with the generational diversity of the workforce. Indeed, according to (McKinsey, 2015), 30 percent of the actual workforce could retire within a couple of decades and the new generation of workers, have a different concept of what loyalty to a company is and different expectations. They then need to be considered in different ways for TM processes.

Labour market's situation

As we said, western companies are facing a problem: many are likely to retire soon. Moreover, in emerging economies countries, local companies can compete with western firms in terms of what they can bring to Talent. (McKinsey, 2015) They all try to capture Talent for their own sake. At present, they are looking for people with the same kind of abilities. Actually, the BCG survey's results show that developing Leadership is the top priority in every considered sector (BCG, 2014). As there are not enough Talent for all of them, they are facing what literature calls war of Talent.

For fighting this war there are "weapons" providers such as IBM who create new tools to attract and retain Talent in a company. (IBM Corporation, 2016) shows the importance of updating the way to find Talent among the workforce of the competitors. For this reason, the labour market context influences the level of protectionism of the company, and by that, its context.

To conclude with the contextual factors, we would say that even if our description of them is not exhaustive, there are many of them and they influence a lot on TM practices. All of them, including TI, should be in line with internal and external context of the organization in order to be efficient.

ii. Psychological factors

As we said before, some important factors concern the company's beliefs in their employees and the social relationships. But as Inkson (2008) states: humans are not regular resources. One cannot talk about people without talking about psychology. This is the reason why we are now considering psychological factors in the workplace. In this study, we only talk about factors at an individual level. Indeed, it doesn't seem relevant to study psychology in group because Talent is an individual. However we think that it would interesting to study them in a more in-depth study on psychology in the workplace. As stated earlier in this study, the actors of TI can be divided into two categories: assessors and assesses. The psychological factors of individuals in this two categories are to be identified in order to know what influence TI process.

Firstly, assesses. A factor to take into account is the possible reaction to being labelled Talent. There are two opposite psychological consequences to take into account according to Dries (2013): the "self-fulling prophecies" effect and the crown prince syndrome. In the first case, there are two types of effects: the Pygmalion effect (increasing self-confidence and role commitment), and the success syndrome (success is as much due to employee's talent as to company's investment in the development of his/her career) (Dries, 2013). The crown prince syndrome, for its part, is a negative effect of talent identification. Employees, because they know they are recognised as Talent, stop working for deserving this status. Indeed, this label make them overestimate their uniqueness and their internal employability. So, the first being positive, assessors should look for this and avoid the second one. Then, another psychological factor of labelled talented employees is the fear to lose the privileges that come with the title. We can amalgamate this with reluctance to changes. By privileges is meant workers' perception of a "capital gain" on Characteristics they find important in their jobs. Indeed, because of the labelling, Talents develop the feeling that their situation would be worse if they change company (Dries & Gieter, 2014). So, fear of losing privileges help Talent retention. In addition to privileges, the article (Dries & Gieter, 2014) talks about the feeling of being adequately rewarded. This is a very difficult to handle factor because it depends a lot on another psychological factor: the perception of self and others. Literature refers to it by CSE or Core-Self Evaluation (King, 2016). Someone with high CSE tends to be positive, self-confident, and efficacious and believes in his/her self-agency. In the contrary, low CSE come along with low self-confidence and little beliefs in own abilities. In a nutshell, it is important to point out these factors because rewarding someone more than he thinks he deserves is as bad as rewarding him less than he thinks he is worth. For this reason it is important to know how one perceived oneself and the assessors.

The workforce is not the only source of psychological factors. The assessors also are. The first factor to talk about is their judgement of intuitive judgment. Many practitioners believe that talent identification doesn't require formal assessment nor formal definition of what is Talent (Tulgan, 2001). Dries (2013) explains that this belief is due to an overestimation of intuitive judgement. Assessors are biased by a general impression they have on people's assessment, valorise experience and have a tendency to interpret new information in base of what they already know. In line with this, there is a second factor, their reluctance to make managers' implicit models on people and what is Talent change. It biases the assessment by making it subjective. The methods and training they receive can influence it. Indeed, they tend to reduce subjectivity and implicit biases (King, 2016). Assessors CSE also influence the quality of talent potential assessment. Finally, an important factor to take into account in assessors' psychology is their feelings about rating their employees and disclosing its results. They may call into question its fairness and accuracy and not be comfortable with its communication (King, 2016). It is necessary to be aware of it because this state of mind may reduce both the quality the communication the assessment.

In conclusion, in the literature there are two sorts of psychological factors: the one affecting the quality of assessment and communication of its results; the other is related to the post-communication effects on people behaviour. In this study we assume that the first is proper to assessors and the other to assesses. This report lack the psychological factors at play related to the non-identified Talent part force. This is partly due to the fact that there is few information about them in the literature, at least for now.

c. Doing Talent Identification process

First of all, literature noticed that, even if intuition is still at play in practice, organizations start to recognise the need for formal processes in TI. (Holland, 2016). However, scholars are mainly oriented to multinational enterprises (MNE), to the detriment of smaller companies (Holland,2016; Mäkelä et al., 2010; Nijs, Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries, & Sels, 2014). The process has to steps: first performance evaluation, second managerial decision (Mäkelä et al., 2010). In this study we focus on the first one, the evaluation of the workforce. However, we are not limiting the evaluation to the only performance: we also include the evaluation of potential. Indeed, companies need to know who can be outperforming in different roles (meaning key roles) in the future. (Nijs, Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries, & Sels, 2014).

A recent article state that Talent is made up of abilities and affective components and both are two be evaluate in the TI process (Nijs, Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries, & Sels, 2014). First, the abilities. Nijs, Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries, & Sels (2014) remind that they are a combination of innate abilities and developed skills. To identify them, there is a wide range of ability tests which are frequently combined with subjective judgments belonging to colleagues or superiors for example. To the end of evaluating this subjective part, there are rating scales and nomination forms. Then, concerning the affective component, the goal is to evaluate what interest and what motivate the employee. For evaluating this personal factor, self-report questionnaires are used. In this part of the identification process, the important thing is to know what the employee values. Actually, this knowledge can make the development of Talent easier.

To conclude, we presented what is evaluated in the Talent Identification process. The results of it is analysed by managers who take the final decision on who is Talent. The next step is to communicate about those decisions.

d. Communicating the results of the TI process

Previously, we define what TI is and what the factors to take into account for doing it are. All of this has to be taken into account while doing this process. When its results are obtained it is necessary to think of their communication.

What are the reasons for communicating the results? The Literature defines four reasons. First, it is about planning succession in key position. Indeed, it is of capital important as practitioners detected that employees, in a soon future, are likely to leave the company. This is due to them retiring or to their lack of loyalty to the company. Preparing the succession in strategical position must be done as soon and as well as possible in order to protect the company's competitiveness. Second, in the globalized current world, all types of companies are concern by internationalization. Collings (2014) states that knowing the he is part of a talent pool makes an employee more willing to undertake development activities such as international assignment. Knowing that talent pool members are strategic resources, having them committed into such critical tasks as development activities benefits to the company, for sure. The third is in line with the two first. King (2016) said that disclosure of the result can have as a consequence "employee's retention and engagement to future critical roles". Finally, companies expect that Talent have the following attitudes: "commitment to increasing performance demands, to building competencies that are valuable for their employers, and to actively support its strategic priorities; identification with the focal unit; and lower turnover intent" (Bjorkman,

Ehrnrooth, Makela, Smale, & Sumelius, 2013). They found that it is the perception of being identified as Talent that makes employees more inclined to adopt these attitudes.

Because of this latter paper's statement that insinuate that perception of being identified is enough to obtain the advantages of communication, it seems that communicating about TI's results is not necessary. Furthermore, some authors consider that the disclosure of TI's results has a potential negative impact on employees (Swailes, 2013).

For example, Dries, in her paper (Dries, 2013) said that one possible outcome of open communication is frustration and dissatisfaction among non-identified as Talent employees. This leads us to the question of how to communicate. Actually, it is open communication that has a negative impact. And fortunately, there is alternative to it. But if one communication strategy can have negative consequences in some contexts, it is not the only thing to take into account at the time of defining the best way for TI results communication. The following step of this study is then to explain how to make it fit the company culture, or at least to make employees think so. It is also about making it relevant.

Now we know what motivate the communication and why assessors should be careful while considering the open communication of the results. The next step is to define the best way to communicate. In this study we consider three parameters: first, who does the communication, then to whom, and finally how he should proceed. Indeed, Talent is influenced by the interactions between assessors and assesses. This and the other factors should be taken into account to determine the best practice to identify Talent in one company context.

i. Choosing the best communicator

The question of who should communicate the results is to be approach taking into account the psychological and contextual factors previously defined. Cropanzano & Mitchell (2005) proposed a figure crossing transaction and relationship in social exchange. Both of them being whether social or economic. In our case, the communication of TI's results is more about strategic than economic transaction. We can then adapt their matrix as follow:
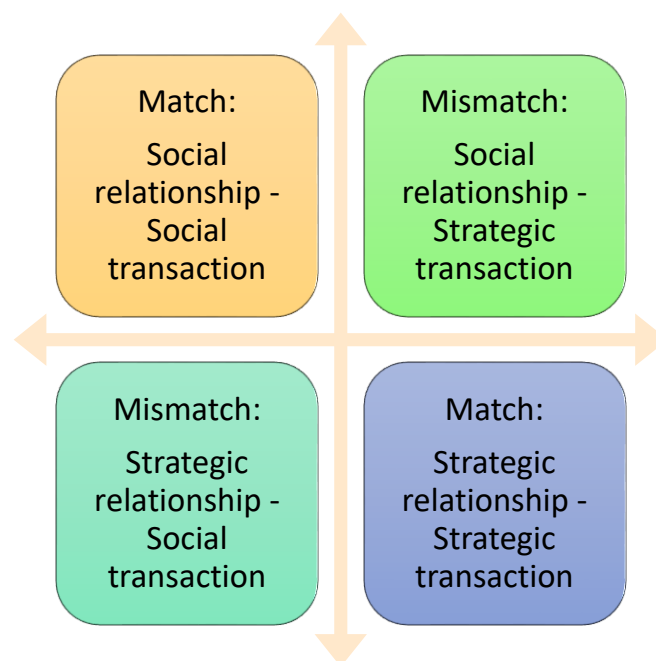

Figure 3 Type of relationship and type of transaction in social exchange

Communicating who is Talent, being a strategic transaction, we focus our attention on the right half of the figure. Now, the challenge is about knowing, according to contextual factors, what type of relationship would bring the most positive effect. According to what is said in (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005), it seems that social relationship is preferable if there is a good social exchange with the immediate superior. Indeed it would increase trust between each. Moreover the employee would be more likely to put goodwill and helpfulness in developing himself as Talent. Actually, it would be as returning the favour of being identified to his superior. He trusted his employee and the latter brings proof that he was right to trust him. Not doing so would be a kind of betrayal that could damage the relationship, and, as it is expected in this kind of situation, none of them want that. On the contrary, if the employee as better social relationship with the organization, it would be desirable to opt for a strategic relationship to do TI communication. Indeed, if the employee is more oriented to career development and being important to the organization, he would be more receptive to this kind of communication. So, in conclusion, choosing the good actor to do the communication is in part about finding who can make the employee receptive to being Talent.

The problem is that designating the appropriate communicator based only on the relationship he has with the employees is an error. Psychological factors should be also taken into account. That means to consider the impact communicating have on him. First, it is important to know the fillings of the communicator regarding the rating and disclosure of results. Independently of the company requiring or not the disclosure, he may not feel comfortable with possessing the information and communicating it. Employees will perceive it if he is not and it will cause uneasiness regarding anything related to Talent. Finally, he may not be the line manager, who is designated by literature as doing the rating. If it is so, it could solve the problem of the subjectivity of the assessors. Indeed, line managers may be too close to their employees to be objectives. (King, 2016) However, there is a risk that the communicator may not agree with the results. He could cast doubt on their fairness and accuracy.

Because employees reaction are influenced by their perception of fairness in talent identification process (Bjorkman, Ehrnrooth, Makela, Smale, & Sumelius, 2013), the organization should be careful with this matter. Indeed, it influences on both the choice of the communicator and on the choice of who is to be told what the results are. Literature actually implies that, in some contexts, it could be better for the company sake not to communicate to everyone.

ii. Communicating to everyone or to some people

There are then two possible choices: to communicate to everyone, or to communicate to some people. It is important to have in mind that both are risky. In one hand, with communicating to all, there is a possibility of losing the non-Talent employees' commitment. Indeed announcing openly the results have the power to generate competitive climate. Which can be demeaning for a large part of the workforce (Bjorkman, Ehrnrooth, Makela, Smale, & Sumelius, 2013). Indeed, some may not be ready to compete because they have other commitments outside the company. Others may not be willing to compete because it is not compatible with their personality. However, Bjorkman, Ethrnrooth, Makela, Smale, & Sumelius (2013) state that if the employees perceive that both the identification process and communication as fair and transparent it is good to communicate every employee. Because, according to them, it may create a "continuous tournament" concerning who is viewed to be a Talent. In other words, competitiveness may be good in some cases. In the other hand, communicating to some people (Talent and Top Managers), may bring other problems. Indeed, communicating only to Talent or only to top management, mean not being transparent with everyone. If it is not in line with the company culture it can have very bad consequences to the company. Moreover, it could also be harmful in respect to social relationships. There is, actually, a risk that non-

Talents feel betrayed by for "not letting them into the secret". But considering a company in which Top managers are distant, it may be good to communicate only to them. Indeed it would probably be accepted. Actually it is their job to do planning at strategic level, and TM practices are about achieving strategic objective. In addition to that, it may be interesting to play on information asymmetry in the workplace. It consists in the fact that top managers possess information about what should theoretically be done and for what purpose; and employees know only the reality of how it is done. Even if literatures describe it as a bad thing (King, 2016), it would make sense to escalate the information asymmetry. Actually, it is judged a bad thing because there is no feedback to the higher level. This feedback would help middle managers to correct the current practices so they are in line with top managers' objectives. To conclude, the organization should identify what are the most likely reactions in their current context to define to whom should be done the communication.

iii.   Adapting the communication strategy to the corporate context

Choosing who are involved in the communication process is already defining some means to do it. One last mean we want to talk about in this study is the communication strategy. The literature talks about two different ones. First is open communication. It is good to do it because being transparent about high potential programs is good for perceptions of fairness. Moreover, Dries (2013) reminds that the information will leak sooner or later. Also not knowing clearly the results stir up annoyance in assesses. In any case, it is better to prevent employees from having false expectancies and feeling that the company failed in fulfilling them. However, in some contexts, it is preferable to do strategic ambiguity. The first definition of it is: "those instances where individuals use ambiguity purposefully to accomplish their goals." (Eisenberg, 1984). Denis et al. (2011) state that to do strategic ambiguity, one should use equivocal language (vague words or complete removal of certain details); postponement of controversial issues (to maintain commitment); Preservation of rights to participate in the future (suggest to give all participants reassurance of equal rights) and equivocal commitment (letting a chance for reciprocal ambiguity). This strategy has its advantages and its drawbacks. First, it allowed an informal identificaiton. It is a good think if differiating the workforce is not in line with the company culture. Then it would not frustrate the non-identified Talent that are confident in their own value. But there is one drawback pointed out by Scandelius & Cohen (2016). It is unethical when it is aimed to create false perception or preferential treatment. So, because of its complexity and its drawback, this strategy is to be used carefully.

To conclude with the communication process in the workplace, it is important to keep in mind two facts. First, what is said is not as important as what employees perceive of it. Employee's perceptions is a tricky topic. And it largely depends on the company context and on people themselves. So the key is to make them think what the company need them to think. Second, is that it should always be done in line with the company culture. There is no universal good practice to communicate about TI, all are good as long as there are consistent with the current context. Incoherence may be devastating for TM practices and the company in general.

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3. Conclusion

a. Relevancy of studying TI

The first we can say to conclude this study is that to understand the importance of Talent Identification within the organization, it is essential to start with understanding Talent Management and Talent. Even if the three concepts lack a clear definition, they are of major importance for companies, practitioners and scholars. We saw that TM practices help companies to manage more strategically their workforce by giving key roles to Talents and the other positions should be filled with regular employees. This consequently leads to competitive advantage. Collings and Mellahi introduced their definition of TM by revealing the importance of knowing what the pivotal-position are. In other words, the reason why TM practices are done.

Then we flowed to the definition of Talent. After studying the literature it appears to us that defining Talent using only one approach is too restrictive. Talent is a person that is performing highly or promising to perform highly in a near future and who have required characteristics for a position. We identified that it is important not to forget the reason why the company assesses its employees. And We go further in this study by saying that achieving strategic objectives is the reason for investing in those positions. So, objectives should be identified clearly first.

Knowing all of this leads us to the conclusion that TI is very important to be studied because it makes is the base for the other TM practices, it is larger than what it seems at first sight, and there is still a lot of room for future studies.

b. Defining Talent Identification

Defining Talent Identification, has been done through the identification of the actors and factors taking part into it and how the identification is made.

First we categorised the actors into being assessors or assesses and we stated that each of them had a definite role to play. By doing this study, we realised that identifying the assessors was a kind of Talent Identification. Indeed, to be sure that TI process will have a god impact on the workforce, we first need to identify people whose characteristics are ideal for their role. In this study, we focused on the roles of doing the rating and of doing the communication. In the literature the first of those roles falls to the line managers. First, literature amalgamates the person doing the rating and the one doing the communication. However nothing says that it must be so. Differentiating those two roles, it is important to take into account the relation between both actors and how the numerous factors influence it. Indeed, a bad relation between them can have disastrous consequences on assesses.

Then we focus on Talents, among assesses. However, we think it is important to also study the employees that are not identified as Talent. As we implied that it is conceivable not to assess all the workforce, there is material to discuss on what filters can be applied on the target population for Talent Identification. Actually, having a natural ability or achieving mastery in a key skill, without high

commitment is not of use for the company. Can we then call it Talent if it doesn't bring value to the company? Following the same kind of idea, if there is not a good fit between the people and the position, sooner or later, there would be more negative consequences to the identification of talent than good ones. People identified as Talent are to fulfil key positions. They will have to be related to many people. Perceptions the others have of "labelled Talent's" abilities is as important as the abilities themselves. People being unwilling to collaborate because they don't believe in the rightfulness of Talent can be disastrous.

Another thing that can have very bad consequences for the company is not doing the TI in line with the company culture. In this study we enunciated the most important factors we identified in the literature and put them into two categories: psychological factors and contextual factors. Both categories are strongly linked to people because so are TM and TI. We feel like the psychological factors that we took inventory of for assessors, are impacting the quality of the assessment while the ones for assesses impact the reaction to TI.

c. Communicating about Talent Identification

The first result we have about communicating is the following table. It sums up the reviewed risks, benefits and obstacles of communication.

Risks	Benefits	Obstacles
Drop of motivation in non-Talent employees	Increase in motivation in Talent	Managers' lack of formation on Talent Management and Talent Identification
Unfairness in treatment	Talent retention (withhold from accepting outside job offer)	Assessors may not be comfortable with the rating and/or the disclosure of its results
Peer jealousy	Stimulation of those with overachieving and perfectionism tendency	"I know Talent when I see it"
Psychological contract breach	Feeling of fairly rewarded enhance employees perception of the company	Information asymmetry
Crown prince syndrome,	Self-fulfilment prophecies	Fear of creating arrogance and frustration
Too competitive climate	Continuous tournament for being labelled as talented with true expectances to be rewarded next time	
Bad communication strategy's use or choice		

Table 2 Risks/Benefits/obstacle of communicating about Talent Identification according to the literature

Communication is a topic as sensitive as Talent Identification. When assessors are sure about making of their results, there is still the communication to do. And it is also largely influenced by the factors we identified. To do it right, the organization has to define who will communicate, to whom and using which communication strategy. We define that the selection of the communicators is done applying two criterions: first, he should agree with the results, their accuracy and fairness; second, his relationship with the assesses should be conductive to good employee's reaction.

The following step was to know to whom to communicate. We saw in this paper that communication can be done to everyone, which is more transparent and more ethic, but can create a competitive climate that can be whether good or bad depending on the corporate context and employees' other commitments (ie. Family, other activities). However, there is the option to communicate only to some people but it can cause gossips among the workforce and that Talents start to isolate themselves.

d. Practical implications

This work offers the following conceptual map in order to guide manager in the Talent Identification process.
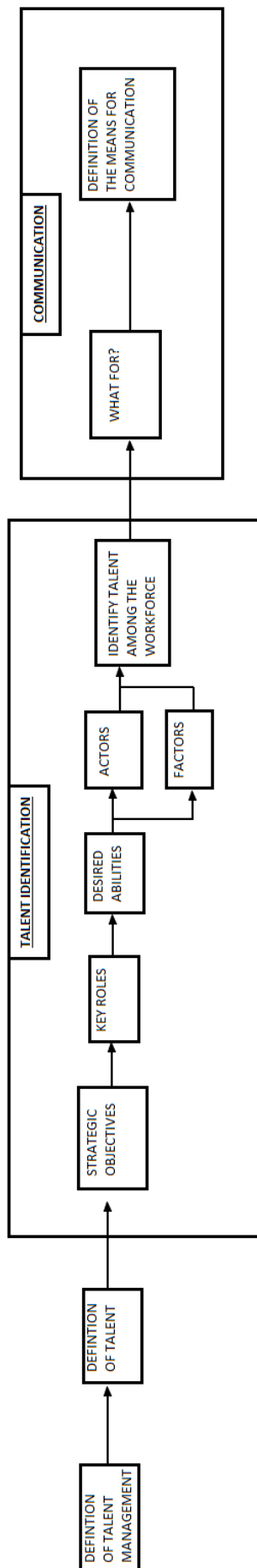
Figure 4 Conceptual Map

e.   Future avenues of research

In this study we noticed four topics that deserve further study. First, being identified as Talent, is not an end per se. The problem is that some people seem not to understand that and stop making efforts. Being labelled as a High Potential means being identified as different from average. Not better than average. Can making the status of Talent ephemeral bring a solution to this problem? Would it bring bad competitiveness?

Second, even if an employee is currently high performing, it doesn't mean that he is suited for any of the key roles of the company. We think being such an employee implies two things: first, he is in the best position for him; second the position suit him but he is seeking for more, because he sees he is high performing. As a consequence we think important to study the fact what ambition have high performers.

Third, Talent are not the only object of interest among the workforce. Indeed, the still frequently used 'performance-potential' matrices for Talent Identification is a proof that there are employees that can turn into Talent in the future. We think that the non-Talent pool should be divided into two others: those who are not yet showing enough potential or performance to be labelled Talent now, but that can be oriented to become Talent before the following assessment; and the others. Differentiating non-Talent can be useful to prepare the following assessment.

This notion leads us to the fourth and last topic we want to talk about: including past Talent assessments as a new contextual factors. Indeed, TI should be done every time that there is a new need for filling a key position with Talent. Moreover, context influences TM but it is reciprocal. According to us it is primordial to study the impact of apply TM practices to a company.

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Budget

Description	Unit		€/unit	Total Cost
Material				
Paper	102	sheets	0,01 €	0,71 €
Ink	1	PA	6,00 €	6,00 €
Bookbinding	1	u	20,00 €	20,00 €
Printing	1	u	5,10 €	5,10 €
Staff cost				
Engineer	360	h	40,00 €	14 400,00 €
Supervisor	35	h	90,00 €	3 150,00 €
Others				
Electricity	1	PA	55 €	55 €
			TOTAL BEFORE VAT	**17 636,81 €**

VAT (21%)	3 703,73 €

TOTAL AFTER VAT	**21 340,54 €**

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