

ATTRACTING YOUNG TALENTS THROUGH A
CAMPUS CREW PROGRAM.

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ABSTRACT

Bearing in mind that the Management of Talent is precisely suited to today's dynamic and competitive environment, and that three generations currently compose the organizations' workforce, the practice of "Employer Branding" arises.

Effective Employer Branding is a source of competitive advantage, increments the internalization of company values while retaining their employees. It is vital that companies distinguish themselves from competitors and develop a Strategy that attracts the top talented job seekers.

The purpose of this Master Project is to present a Strategic Plan for Company Alpha (fictional name) regarding a "Campus Crew Ambassador Program" at the Portuguese Universities. This Program is designed to improve the Company's brand awareness among University students and to attract them towards working in this leading European Bank.

Keywords: Talent Management; Employer Branding; Strategic Human Resources Management ; Millennials.

RESUMO

Considerando que a Gestão de Talentos se enquadra num ambiente de trabalho dinâmico e competitivo e que a atual força de trabalho é composta por três gerações distintas, a prática de *Employer Branding* emerge.

Uma estratégia eficaz de *Employer Branding* representa uma fonte de vantagem competitiva, potencia o aumento de internalização dos valores da empresa e contribui para a retenção dos trabalhadores. Torna-se, por isso, crucial que as empresas se distingam dos seus competidores e que desenvolvam uma Estratégia que atraia os candidatos mais talentosos.

O objetivo deste Projeto é apresentar um Plano Estratégico para a empresa *Alpha* (nome fictício) relativo à implementação de um Programa de Embaixadores (*Campus Crew Ambassador Program*) nas Universidades portuguesas. Através deste Programa, pretende-se aumentar a *brand awareness* dos estudantes universitários relativamente a esta empresa e atraí-los para a mesma.

Palavras-chave: Gestão de Talentos; Employer Branding; Gestão de Recursos Humanos; Millennials.

GLOSSARY

BCBS - Basel Committee on Banking Supervision

BP –Business Partners

BSA/AML - Bank Secrecy Act/ Anti-Money Laundering

CFTC - Commodity Futures Trading Commission

CIB - Corporate Institutional Banking

CSR - Corporate Social Responsibility

EB - Employer Branding

EBE- Employer Brand Equity

HC Bridge® Framework- Human Capital Bridge® Framework

HR- Human Resources

HRBP's - Human Resources Business Partners

HRM - Human Resource Management

IOSCO - International Organization of Securities Commissions

L&D - Learning and Development

MiFID2 - EU's second Markets in Financial Instruments Directive

PMO – Project Management Office

RBV -“Resource-based view”

SHRM - Strategic Human Resource Management

TM - Talent Management

VP - Value Proposition

Executive Summary

We live in an era of boundless, technology-driven and fast-changing business environment. In the light of the recent economic downturn and volatile market environments, Talent Management has become an imperative tool to increase a sustained competitive advantage through human capital (Meyers *et al.*, 2013). The subsistence and success of companies depend on the quality of its workforce. Firms that ensure better work attracting, developing, and retaining their talent will obtain further talented resources and will enhance their performance dramatically (Michaels *et al.*, 2001).

Accordingly, corporations find themselves with an increasing demand for executive talent, facing an intense competition from firms from every industry.

The main challenge is not only to identify and attract the talented workforce but to assure that the applicants are attracted to those firms. Being an important element of Employer Brand Equity, *employer attractiveness* corresponds to the envisioned benefits that a potential employee contemplates in working for a company (Berthon *et al.*, 2005).

Company Alpha (fictional name) is a leading provider of banking and financial services in the Eurozone and a prominent international banking institution. The group holds key positions in its two core activities: Retail, Banking and Services, comprising Domestic Markets and International Financial Services, and Corporate and Institutional Banking.

Company Alpha acts as a responsible bank and provides solutions to all its clients: individuals, community associations, entrepreneurs, small and medium enterprises, corporate clients and institutional investors. The Group helps its clients to realize their personal and professional projects through spanning financing, investment, savings and protection insurance. The Company is a leading provider of banking and financial services in Europe, being present in 73 countries and having more than 192 000 employees (Annual Report, 2018).

Company Alpha is currently the employer that is hiring the most in Portugal (about 600 employees over the last 6 months), mostly young graduates with little or no professional experience.

Bearing this need of recruitment in mind, we can verify that an Ambassadors' Campus Crew Program which is aimed at University students would be an effective means of Employer Branding and would allow to attract and recruit young talents.

In the light of the above, we propose a Strategic Plan regarding a "Campus Crew Ambassadors' Program" for the Alpha Company.

This Project is composed by 9 main chapters:

- I. A strong Literature Review, mostly based on books, scientific peer-reviewed journals (Human Resources and Marketing) and undergraduate dissertations, that explores topics such as talent, talent management, employer branding and workforce trends;

- II. A Conceptual framework of reference that includes the main points that emerged from the Literature review and must be taken into consideration for the project;

- III. An external analysis that includes the political, economic, social, technological, environmental and legal factors that have an impact on the banking industry;

- IV. An internal analysis about Company Alpha international presence and, especially, in Portugal (vision, mission, values, business performance analysis and the group results). This research is also focused on subjects related to the Human Resources Department, namely: internal organization, organizational culture, recruitment events (e.g. Campus Crew Ambassadors' Program), among other topics relevant for the dissertation. The company's report of activity and similar documents were our main source (due to anonymity reasons there are some sources which we cannot disclose);

- V. A SWOT analysis of the Alpha Group that takes into consideration both Company's strengths (e.g. vast global presence) and weaknesses (e.g. Inadequate anti-money laundering control), as well as market opportunities (e.g. New technologies are accessible at reasonable costs) and threats (e.g. Cyber threats).

- VI. The Plan Objectives, which are raising brand awareness and recruiting young graduates;

- VII. Development strategies, such as Segmentation (Millennials and Generation Z), Targeting (University students with a strong academic background) and Positioning (Company Alpha as the ideal place to jump start a career due to its international and young workplace environment and solid training given to its employees);

- VIII. Definition of implementation plans: our Strategic Plan is divided by the diverse phases of implementation and by the parties' duties and tasks. To help us implement it, we built a Chronogram with a chronological view of the different project phases;

- IX. The Requirements for implementation include both the Campus Relations Coordinator and the Ambassadors' role, duties and tasks to assure the Plan is correctly implemented from March to December 2019.

I. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. TALENT

1.1. Definition of talent

Considering that there is a “War for Talent”, it becomes crucial to clarify what “talent” means, especially in the world of work.

The term “talent” dates to the ancient world (from Greek *talanton*; Latin *talenta*) which meant “balance, a unit of weight or money” (Tansley, 2011 op. cit. Meyers, Van Woerkon and Dries, 2013). Subsequently, the meaning of talent experienced a substantial change, standing for an “inclination, disposition, will or desire”, by the 13th century. In the 14th century, a talent was then defined as a “special natural ability or aptitude”, which was probably based on figurative interpretations of the “Parable of the Talents” in the Gospel of Matthew in the New Testament (25:14-30). It conveys that talents – whether they are understood as monetary units or natural abilities- are valuable and must not be wasted. Surely, this moral still applies now (Meyers, Van Woerkon and Dries, 2013). By the nineteenth century, according to, talent was considered “embodied in the talented - hence, a person of talent and ability” (Tansley, 2011: 267), which denotes a “subject approach” (i.e., talent as people) instead of an “object” approach, i.e., talent as exceptional characteristics of individuals (Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.*, 2013).

Nowadays, there are numerous definitions of talent in the Academic Human Resource Management (HRM) literature, as shown in the table below (*cf.* Table 1).

Table 1 - Different definitions of talent in the world of work

| Source | Definition of talent |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Gagné (2000) | “superior mastery of systematically developed abilities or skills” (p. 67) |
| Williams (2000) | “describe those people who do one or other of the following: regularly demonstrate exceptional ability – and achievement – either over a range of activities and situations, or within a specialized and narrow field of expertise; consistently indicate high competence in areas of activity that strongly suggest transferable, comparable ability in situations where they have yet to be tested and proved to be highly effective, i.e. potential.”(p. 35) |
| Buckingham and Vosburgh (2001) | “Talent should refer to a person's recurring patterns of thought, feeling, or behavior that can be productively applied.” (p. 21) |
| Michaels <i>et al.</i> (2001) | “the sum of a person's abilities—his or her intrinsic gifts, skills, knowledge, experience, intelligence, judgment, attitude, character and drive. It also includes his or her ability to learn and grow.” (p. xii) |
| Tansley <i>et al.</i> (2006) | “Talent can be considered as a complex amalgam of employees' skills, knowledge, cognitive ability and potential. Employees' values and work preferences are also of major importance.” (p. 2) |
| Silzer and Dowell (2010) | “In groups, talent can refer to a pool of employees who are exceptional in their skills and abilities either in a specific technical area (such as software graphics skills) or a competency (such a consumer marketing talent), or a more general area (such as general managers or high-potential talent). And in some cases, “the talent” might refer to the entire employee population.” (pp.13–14) |
| Ulrich and Smallwod (2012) | “Talent = competence [knowledge, skills and values required for today's and tomorrows' job; right skills, right place, right job, right time] × commitment [willing to do the job] × contribution [finding meaning and purpose in their job]” (p. 60) |

Source: The author, adapted from Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.*, 2013.

It appears talent has multiple definitions (from “natural ability”, “competency”, “skills” to “high potentials”), which only demonstrates that its meaning is not consensual. Nevertheless, for academic purposes, we must adopt one.

Taking into account the many approaches to talent in the world of work, it appears that talent “consists of those individuals who can make a difference to organizational performance, either through their immediate contribution or in the longer-term by demonstrating the highest levels of potential.”(Tansley *et al.*, 2007:8). This definition encompasses all the employees that have the qualities – characteristics, motivation, aptitudes, skills and practice - to effectively perform and contribute to organizational performance.

1.2. The war for Talent

With the late 90’s globalization, increased market competition and new technological advance, companies required highly talented individuals to maintain the competitive advantage and optimum organizational performance (Chabault, Hulin and Soparnot, 2012). This way, the notion of talent, in the managerial field, first appeared in 1997, in a study conducted by a group of McKinsey consultants who coined the expression “war for talent”. Ever since, talent management (TM) has been an increasingly popular subject (Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries and González-Cruz, 2013).

The article *The War for Talent* highlighted the importance of talent to achieve organizational excellence. According to it, three vital forces are fueling the war for talent: the shift from the Industrial to the Information Age; the rising demand for high-caliber managerial talent and the increasing propensity for employees to move from one company to another (Michaels, Handfield-Jones and Axelrod, 2001).

Due to the birth of the Information Age, the importance of hard assets (such as machines, factories, and capital) weakened compared to the importance of intangible assets (like proprietary networks, brands, intellectual capital, and talent). Moreover, there is a constant demand for high-caliber managerial persons who are risk takers, global entrepreneurs, and techno-savvy managers. Companies require leaders who can leverage their business and inspire their employees. On the other side, managers now recognize the benefits of switching firms, thus having the negotiation power to leverage their expectations for their careers (Michaels *et al.*, 2001).

1.3. Talent Management

1.3.1. Definition

All over the world, organizations are facing the challenge of managing talent successfully. In the light of the recent economic downturn and volatile market environments, Talent Management (TM) has become an ever more imperative tool to increase a sustained competitive advantage through human capital (Meyers *et al.*, 2013). Firms that ensure better work attracting, developing, and retaining their talent will obtain further talented resources and will enhance their performance dramatically (Michaels *et al.*, 2001).

Consequently, the topic of TM has received a remarkable degree of practitioner and academic interest. This represents a paradigm change from the traditional Human Resource's competitive advantage literature (i.e. organizational elites, including upper-echelon literature and strategic human resource management -SHRM) towards managing the talent specifically for today's dynamic competitive situation (Collings and Mellahi, 2009).

There is a discussion regarding the conceptual boundaries of "Talent Management"- TM (Collings and Mellahi, 2009). It is complex to present the precise meaning of TM because of the misunderstanding regarding definitions: the terms "talent management", "talent strategy", "succession management" and "human resource planning" are frequently used interchangeably (Lewis and Heckman, 2006).

Notwithstanding this criticism, there were identified three distinct streams of thought regarding TM (Lewis and Heckman, 2006). First, those who solely replace the label "Human Resource Management" (HRM) for "TM": TM is an assembly of emblematic human resource department practices, functions, activities or specialist areas like recruiting, selection, development, career and succession management (Lewis and Heckman, 2006). A second strand of "succession management" or "human resource planning" literature focuses on the notion of "talent pools", defined as a set of processes planned to guarantee an acceptable flow of employees into jobs, through the organization (Kesler, 2002 op.cit. Lewis and Heckman, 2006). Finally, the third perspective on TM concentrates on the management of highly competent employees, without consideration for organizational boundaries or specific positions (Lewis and Heckman, 2006).

It argues that all roles inside the organization should be filled with “A performers” and accentuates the management of “C players”, or constantly poor performers, out of the organization (Collings *et al.*, 2009).

All things considered, TM can be defined as the “ *activities and processes that involve systematic identification of key positions which differentially contribute to the organization’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 organization*” (Collings *et al.*, 2009: 304).

1.3.2. Strategic Talent Management

Though it remains one of the most fascinating areas of HRM, talent management is also at the nexus of strategic management. Certainly, achieving the best fit amongst employees, executive leadership and organization strategy implies a long-term perspective. Moreover, management of talent must be in line with the firm’s strategic capabilities (Joyce and Slocum, 2012).

Regarding a strategic approach to talent management, there are two streams of research: a “Resource-based view” (RBV) perspective, advocated by Barney (1991, 2001); and the “HC (Human Capital) Bridge® Framework” proposed by Boudreau and Ramstad (2005).

The RBV perspective is rooted in the industrial organization management and economic literature. It explores the importance of talent when it comes to producing firm-wide or process specific outcomes (Lewis and Heckman, 2006). Indeed, the companies that develop valuable, rare and difficult to imitate resources increase their competitive advantage (Barney, 1991, 2001)¹. Even though talent can be considered a valuable, rare, and hard-to-imitate resource, it’s not always clear how to differentiate between the contributions of technology versus people.

¹ “[A] firm’s resources and capabilities include all the financial, physical, human, and organizational assets used by a firm to develop, manufacture, and deliver products or services to its customers” (Barney, 1995:50). The value, rarity, and imitability of resources may vary over time (Lewis and Heckman, 2006).

On the other hand, through their individuals, firms obtain skills, grow a culture, social networks, and an organizational structure that manages those skills, which makes it challenging for competitors to duplicate (Lewis and Heckman, 2006).

Most of the RBV studies concentrate on the degree to which organizations have developed human resource-based practices or processes, which represents the prevailing theory underlying strategic HRM. Consequently, it becomes challenging to enunciate the procedures behind the link between the practices and the organization's performance. Furthermore, the talented are omitted from the model (Lewis and Heckman, 2006). Boudreau and Ramstad (2005) bridge this gap by outlining a model of Strategic Management of Talent that integrates principles of Strategy, Economics, HR, Finance, and Marketing. They note that HR needs to develop a “decision science” that enhances decisions that influence or depend on talented resources in human capital, wherever they are made: *talentship* (Boudreau and Ramstad, 2005).

The HC Bridge® Framework (*cf.* Table 2) is based on three anchor points—impact effectiveness, and efficiency—that are common to all business decision sciences. It outlines the decisions made at three independent levels of analysis that are affected by the structural tools, practices, and resources (Lewis and Heckman, 2006). First, *impact* pertains to the strategic impact of changing a talent pool, i.e., how it affects the organization's capability to attain key strategic goals (Lewis and Heckman, 2006). Essential to this concept is “talent segmentation”: it describes the logical differentiation of talent pools by their importance to strategic success (Boudreau and Ramstad, 2005). Following, *effectiveness* refers to the results of HR policies and practices on human capacity (a combination of capability, opportunity, and motivation) and the corresponding aligned activities of the target talent pools (Boudreau and Ramstad, 2005b). Its measures would be the targeting development of a capability or process (Lewis and Heckman, 2006). Lastly, *efficiency* focuses on which resources deliver HR practices. Typical indicators would be the number of persons trained per training session; cost per hire; time to fill vacancies and ratio of HR staff to total employees (Boudreau and Ramstad, 2005b).

Table 2 – HC Bridge® Decision Framework

| Anchor Points | Linking Elements |
|-----------------------------|--|
| <i>Impact</i> | Sustainable Strategic Success Resources & Processes |
| <i>Effectiveness</i> | Talent Pools & Structures Aligned Actions Human Capacity |
| <i>Efficiency</i> | Policies & Practices Investments |

Source: Boudreau and Ramstad, 2005.

To sum up, the talent decision science not only improves certain HR decisions and plans but also develops, promotes and imparts a consistent logical point of view (Boudreau and Ramstad, 2005a). By delineating the dynamics that link talent resources to strategic success, Boudreau and Ramstad (2005) have significantly contributed to the talent discussion.

1.3.3. Talent Management Process

After learning from the Strategic HRM literature that well-developed practices ensure an effect on organizational results, we shall design a theory (or principles) to guide when or which organizational pools should be targeted. To that end, we have combined the Conceptual Framework of a Talent Management Hierarchy (Lewis and Heckman, 2006:149) with the HR TM Practices (Chabault *et al.*, 2012:303). Table 3 shows our own proposed TM Process.

Table 3 - Strategic TM Process

| TM Component | Relevant questions |
|---|---|
| 1st: Strategy and Sustainable Competitive Advantage | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What market opportunities exist? - Which organizational resources yield advantage? |
| 2nd: Strategy implications for Talent | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Where will improvements in talent quality drive strategic gains? - Where will improvements in talent drive strategic gains? |
| 3rd: Talent Pool Strategy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do we position countless talent pools? • What combination of performers (A vs B vs C) do we need? • What compensation policy should we adopt (above/below/at market)? • Which pools should be linked in career ladders? |
| 4th: TM Systems | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How do we implement talent pool strategies across the company? • Competency architectures • Enterprise-wide data systems |
| 5th: Talent Practices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Which practices efficiently meet our talent goals and can be captured by our systems? • <u>Attraction</u>: develop an attractive and legitimate reputation as a good employer. • <u>Recruitment</u>: Remunerate talent; offer good career development which is challenging, rewarding and fulfilling. • <u>Identification</u>: Instill a culture of success; reward exceptional competencies; 360- Degree Feedback. • <u>Development</u>: Offer individual professional career development; invest in quality work conditions and ensure daily recognition and reward; take an interest in individual employees, coaching; mentoring; set targets for results and responsibilities, continuous monitoring and evaluation. • <u>Retention</u>: Understand motivational factors. |

Source: The author, 2017 – adapted from Lewis and Heckman, 2006 and Chabault *et al.*, 2012

Starting with the outcomes of interest to major companies (namely, share/ stock price, profitability, and industry peer comparisons), strategy and sustainable competitive advantage, organizations can take advantage of *talentship* for identification of strategic implications for talent and, consequently, for talent segmentation. Once talent pools are acknowledged and segmented, talent pool strategies can be developed, e.g., depending on a pivotal (or not) talent pool, it will be applied a diverse strategic approach regarding compensation, performance management, job design, and other TM practices (Lewis and Heckman, 2006). Lastly in the hierarchy, are the TM systems (specifically, the core competency architecture or enterprise software systems) and the talent practices (attraction, recruitment, identification, development, and retention).

2. EMPLOYER BRANDING

2.1. *Origins and definition*

A brand is essential “*a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or combination of them which is intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors*” (Kotler, 1991:442 op.cit. Keller, 1993).

The subject of *employer branding* (EB) has recently arisen in the business world as a strategy used by companies to recruit and retain the greatest individuals in an ever-growing *war for talent*. The application of branding efforts to HRM has been termed “employer branding” (Backaus and Tikoo, 2004). Nonetheless, it also refers to marketing and strategic management (Figurska and Matuska, 2013). Undoubtedly, human capital enhances the firm value, “leads to competitive advantage, helps employees internalize company values and assists in employee retention” (Backaus and Tikoo, 2004: 501).

The first definition of the topic distinguished EB as “the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company” (Ambler and Barrow, 1996:187). The succeeding definitions are presented below (*cf.* Table 4).

Table 4 – Different definitions of EB

| Source | Definition of EB |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Sullivan (2004) | “A targeted long-term strategy to manage awareness and perceptions of employees and related stakeholders with regards to a particular firm”. |
| Backaus and Tikoo (2004) | “[...] the process of building an identifiable and unique employer identity” (p. 502). |
| Jenner and Taylor (2008) | “The efforts of the organization in communicating internal and external stakeholders of what it makes it both desirable and distinctive employer” (p.7). |
| Martin (2008) | “Attracting talented people to the organization and ensuring that both existing and potential employees will identify with the company (its brand and mission) and deliver the desired by the company results” (p.19). |
| Edwards (2010) | “[...] an activity where principles of marketing, in particular, the <i>science of branding</i> , are applied to HR activities in relation to current and potential employees.” (p.6) |
| Rampl and Kenning (2014) | “The concept of employer branding addresses the proactive management of an organisation’s image as an employer, as perceived by current and potential employees, and, to a lesser degree, by the public.” (p.219) |

Source: The author, 2017 – adapted from Figurska and Matuska, 2013

All things considered, “*the employer branding establishes the identity of the firm as an employer. It encompasses the firm’s values, systems, policies, and behaviors toward the objectives of attracting, motivating and retaining the firm’s current and potential employees*” (Dell *et al.*, 2001:10). This suggests that, by deliberately designing an EB aimed at the employee, companies are telling individuals what they can assume when joining them and determine whether they are a good fit for it.

2.2. Employer Branding Process

Having the HR practitioner literature into account, we propose a three-step EB process that starts with the development of an employer value proposition, followed by its external and internal marketing (Backaus and Tikoo, 2004).

Firstly, bearing in mind the organization's culture, management style, attributes of the workers, prevailing employment image, and impressions of product or service quality, the firm develops the *Value Proposition* (VP) that will be incorporated in the brand (Backaus and Tikoo, 2004). Before all else, the VP must vary from organization to organization and is precisely designed to attract and retain the firm's target group (Pinto, 2016).

Succeeding the development of the EVP, the firm advertises it to its targeted prospective employees, recruiting and other interested agencies. Although *external marketing* of the EB is built primarily to appeal to the target population, it is also conveying the product or corporate brands. Hence, the EB must be aligned with other branding efforts of the firm. In addition, the *external marketing* of the EP establishes the firm as an employer of choice and thereby enables it to attract the most talented workers (Backaus and Tikoo, 2004).

The final step of the EB process is the *internal marketing* of the EVP which generates a workforce that other companies find challenging to copy. In fact, exposing the employees consistently to the EVP will mold the organizational culture around the corporate objectives (Pinto, 2016). Also, *internal marketing* is essential since it conveys the brand promise made to recruits (Backaus and Tikoo, 2004).

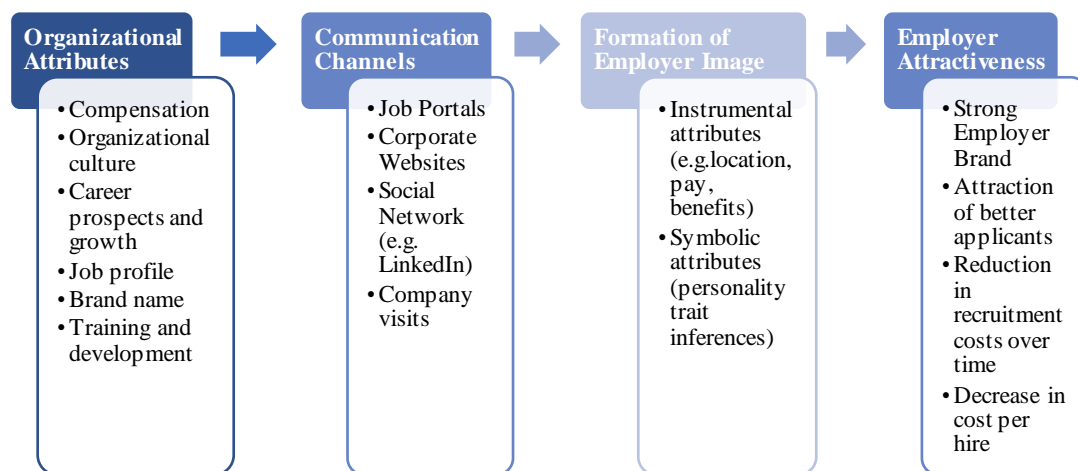
The communication channels for internal and external marketing place the brand propositions in the minds of the potential and current employees, which leads to employer attractiveness. Consequently, channel selection must be strategically chosen to reach the target audience and proactively managed since, in today's digital era, prospective candidates can search for information on Google, job boards, social networks and similar sources (Chhabra and Sharma, 2014).

Organizations that appeal to more qualified candidates have a larger pool of applicants to select from, thus resulting in a greater advantage for the company's selection system (Turban, 2001). In addition, a constant delivery of the brand promises induces trust and loyalty, guaranteeing a steady stream of candidates.

It also preserves both high commitment and performance among employees and, in the long run, an organizational effectiveness since it promotes the organization's credibility through employees (Espírito Santo, 2016).

Furthermore, some of the benefits to companies with strong EB are “*reduced cost of employee acquisition, improved employee relations, increased employee retention and offering lower salaries for comparable staff to firms with weaker employer brands*” (Figurska and Matuska, 2013:51).

Figure 1 - Employer Branding Process



Source: The author, 2017 - Adapted from Chhabra and Sharma, 2014 and Lievens and Slaughter, 2016.

2.3. Employer Brand Equity

The concept of *brand equity* delivers a complementary theoretical framework for understanding EB.

Regarding Marketing, brand equity remains “a set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand that add to or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or to that firm's customers” (Aaker, 1991 op. cit. Backaus and Tikoo, 2004).

In the EB context, brand equity highlights the effect of brand knowledge on prospective and current employees with regards to the perceived value of working for that company (Collins and Kanar, 2013 op. cit. Alshathry *et al.*, 2017).

Even though EBE propels potential candidates to apply, each one of them will respond in a different way to similar recruitment and selection, due to the underlying EBE associated with these organizations (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). Moreover, the main purpose of EBE is to induce interest from prospective employees in integrating the firms, whereas the goal for the current ones is to guarantee that they continue experiencing the value of belongingness (Alshathry *et al.*, 2017).

Following an HR approach, EBE involves three elements: first, the extent of knowledge an individual has about an employer (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004); second, the way he/she evaluates the employer based on that knowledge, including employment-related and non-related associations (Collins and Kanar, 2013 op. cit. Alshathry *et al.*, 2017); and finally, what experience the individual has or perceives with that EB (Ambler and Barrow, 1996), whether their contribution to the employer is appreciated and well rewarded (Alshathry *et al.*, 2017).

Taking into consideration marketing's brand equity models, four features remain appropriate to build an EBE: familiarity with EB; EB associations; experience with the employer and loyalty to the employer (Alshathry *et al.*, 2017).

Familiarity with the EB reflects the level of knowledge and awareness of an employer, surpassing simple recognition of, or capacity to recall, a company's designation (Alshathry *et al.*, 2017). It implies great investment in time and efforts to undertake an employment decision, which requires a larger amount of information to lower the perceived risks (Wilden *et al.*, 2010).

On the other hand, EB associations consist of thoughts and ideas linked in memory to a company. When these associations are present and solid, they may have substantial influence over other ones. Also, it might cover the underlying meaning of an EB (potential) employees, affecting its attractiveness (Alshathry *et al.*, 2017).

The third element of EBE (experience with the employer) is essential in the employment relationship. It usually occurs inside the organization through interactions with the company, as employment offerings are provided and benefits are swapped (Alshathry *et al.*, 2017).

Employer branding influences organization culture and identity that, in turn, contribute to EB loyalty (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). EB loyalty is only applicable for the current employees, being developed by their general attitudes towards the employer, namely, attaching self, preserving the relationship and/or feeling of

belonging (Alshathry et al., 2017). It also contributes to increase employee productivity (Backaus and Tikoo, 2004).

2.4. Employer Attractiveness

Nowadays, not only companies select their employees, but also the employees themselves choose the companies. Therefore, it is imperative to remind that EB is meant to attract potential job applicants to the firm and to provide orientation during the selection process. A strong EB leads to a position of “Employer of Choice”, and becomes a quality indicator to the employment market (Wilden *et al.*, 2010). In this regard, *employer attractiveness* (an important element of EBE) corresponds to the envisioned benefits that a potential employee contemplates in working for a company (Berthon *et al.*, 2005).

An organization’s employer image mirrors a unification of mental representations, associations and specific attributes that a person associates with the firm as a place to work (Lievens and Slaughter, 2016). Furthermore, when it comes to recruitment, we must distinguish between instrumental and symbolic attributes.

Instrumental attributes concern the job seekers’ associations about the tangible characteristics of the organization that have utilitarian value, such as location, wage, perks, or progression (Lievens and Slaughter, 2016).

Notwithstanding, *symbolic attributes* are also relevant since they refer to the subjective and intangible attributes relative to a company. These symbolic attributes are also known as organization personality trait inferences, i.e., the “set of human personality characteristics perceived to be associated with an organization” and that stems from perceptions of people who are familiar with it (Slaughter *et al.* 2004).

In the light of the above, we can assume organizational attractiveness is influenced by applicant’s perceptions of job or organizational characteristics, namely: wage; prospects for progression; location; career development; organizational structure; company’s reputation and identity congruence (Lievens *et al.*, 2005). Nevertheless, trait inferences about organizations have a greater weight than job attributes when foreseeing a company’s attractiveness (Lievens and Highhouse, 2003). In fact, individuals are differently attracted to firms depending on their own interests, needs, preferences, and personality (Lievens and Highhouse, 2003).

Considering brand characteristics might influence potential employees, the scarce, inconsistent or inaccurate beliefs about a prospective employer may result in a perception of greater risk in joining a certain firm. Accordingly, it may lead to an elimination of that firm from the employees' preferences and to the choice of another one that offers lower risks - frequently, a competitor (Espírito Santo, 2016).

On the other hand, aside from the source of information², both information costs and the perceived risks of the job decrease the employer attractiveness (Pinto, 2016), which means that recruiting organizations must have the information available to potential workers (Wilden *et al.*, 2010).

All things considered, companies who build a steady EB and make it a vital part of their HRM strategy, can expect to succeed in the war for talent.

2.5. Workforce Trends

Generations are a group of individuals born within a specified timeframe that “*share common experiences in the social and historical process at a similar stage of life predisposing them for a common mode of thought and experience and a common mode of behavior*” (Jeffries and Hunte, 2003 op.cit. Engelman, 2009).

A final step to understand the importance of EB for modern organizations implies a brief analysis of the generations which compose today's workforce: *Baby Boomers* (born from 1946 to 1960); *Generation X* (born from 1960 to 1980); *Millennials* or *Generation Y* (born from 1980 to 1995); *Generation Z* - born from 1995 -2010³ (Bencsik *et al.*, 2016).

Baby Boomers grew up in a post-war era, having experienced “the first man on the moon, the civil rights movement, the women's movement, the assassinations of public figures, student activism, and the anti-war movement” (Jeffries & Hunte, 2003: 43 op.cit. Engelman, 2009). Facing these unexpected changes in the world at such young and impressionable age, led to the belief that a strong work ethic, hardworking, commitment and loyalty will originate a financial, professional and personal success (Engelman, 2009).

² The word-of-mouth can have a substantial impact in organizational attractiveness, despite job seekers being exposed to recruitment advertising (Hoye and Lievens, 2007 op.cit. Pinto, 2016).

³ “It is difficult to terminate the groups of each generation precisely, but the time-lanes in the borders mean certain common territories. Therefore, the generations are not sharply divided, but their characteristic features are adequate for the whole age-group in general.” (Bencsik *et al.*, 2016: 92).

Driven by perks, status and position, *Boomers* can be portrayed as work-centric, autonomous, goal-oriented and competitive (Wiedmer, 2015). Furthermore, they have reached noteworthy positions of responsibility and authority due to their beliefs in the hierarchical structure (Wiedmer, 2015).

Nowadays, the oldest *Baby Boomers* are either retired or considering it, and will consequently leave a tremendous gap in the labor force (Wiedmer, 2015).

As *Generation X* grew up, the traditional vision of family transformed dramatically due to the introduction of both parents working outside the home and earning an independent income, and a noteworthy growth of single parent homes (Engelman, 2009). Since this generation has perceived economic prosperity followed by corporate downsizing, they decided to take control of their own careers and lives. They have invested on technical and entrepreneurial skills, bringing a new work ethic that surpasses a more balanced and less work-focused workplace (Engelman, 2009), not working long periods of time for monetary rewards (Wiedmer, 2015). At work, *Generation X* is efficient, fast-paced, expects change and demands flexibility in rules and workplace procedures. This is a highly educated, dynamic and family oriented *Generation* (Wiedmer, 2015).

The *Millennials* or *Generation Y* will be acknowledged for how they responded to the recession and economic crises, namely through social protest; return to the parents' houses; postponement of difficult decisions (e.g. marriage, home purchase, own business) and socially responsible volunteering (Espírito Santo, 2016). This generation is also identified as "Digital Natives" (Prensky, 2001 op. cit. Espírito Santo, 2016) because they were born during the "Internet Age", having the power to influence through social network and produce new technologies (Espírito Santo, 2016).

At work, *Generation Y* demand regular job/career fluctuations, work-life balance, autonomy, flexibility, training and mentoring (Wiedmer, 2015). Goal-oriented, yearning opportunities and responsibility, concerned about self-development and progress are other relevant personal career development attributes (Maxwell and Broadbridge, 2016). Moreover, they believe that their education, instead of the years of experience, will rush their evolution in the initial phases of their careers (Espírito Santo, 2016).

Engaging in several jobs with various career paths, this generation is shifting from traditional employment to self-employment. In addition, the “one job, one career” mindset no longer stands due to their search for happiness in both professional and personal life (Wiedmer, 2015). The concept of accomplishment, career and money represents a top priority (Bencsik *et al.*, 2016).

Driven by technology, the *Millennials* anticipate multitasking and embracing projects with innovative ideas, being drawn to companies with technological improvements that have transformed the way of doing business worldwide. As imminent business leaders, they will shape into businesses typical *Millennials* traits, namely data, speed and execution (Wiedmer, 2015).

Generation Z is the latest generation to arrive in the workforce and will be leading the world in many decades (Wiedmer, 2015).

Gen Z has the characteristics of a “net generation” since they were born in an extremely advanced digital era (Bencsik *et al.*, 2016). Therefore, even though most traits that will describe this generation have yet to emerge, we can already link them with a lifetime use of technology (Wiedmer, 2015).

Generation Z (1995-2000 birthdates) is now entering the workforce, and they are portrayed as tech-savvy; socially connected to their peers by social media; with IQ scores higher than preceding generations and commonly tolerating diverse populations (Wiedmer, 2015). Furthermore, they will become a different kind of professionals: instead of 40-hours per week cubicle employees, they will be self-employed contractors with great flexibility, solving problems with a specific expertise (Wiedmer, 2015).

In the light of the above, we can verify that each generation has its own values, inspirations and attitudes.

In order to successfully identify, retain and lead valuable multigenerational human capital, employers must distinctively communicate with every generation; accommodate employee differences and be flexible regarding leadership styles, respecting workers' initiative and skills (Wiedmer, 2015).

II. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF REFERENCE

Table 5 - Conceptual Framework of Reference

| Theme | Description |
|--------------------------|--|
| Talent | <p>The term “talent” dates to the ancient world (from Greek <i>talanton</i>; Latin <i>talenta</i>) which meant “balance, a unit of weight or money” (Tansley, 2011 op. cit. Meyers, Van Woerkon and Dries, 2013). Nowadays, there are several definitions of talent in the HRM literature: from “natural ability”, “competency”, “skills” to “high potentials”. Even though its meaning is not consistent, it seems consensual that talent “consists of those individuals who can make a difference to organizational performance, either through their immediate contribution or in the longer-term by demonstrating the highest levels of potential.” (Tansley <i>et al.</i>, 2007:8).</p> |
| War for talent | <p>With the late 90’s globalization, increased market competition and new technological advance, companies required highly talented individuals to maintain the competitive advantage and optimum organizational performance (Chabault <i>et al.</i>, 2012). In 1997, a study conducted by a group of McKinsey consultants coined the expression “war for talent” to describe the demand for talented employees that exceeded the supply.</p> |
| Talent Management | <p>In the light of the recent economic downturn and volatile market environments, Talent Management (TM) has become an ever more imperative tool to increase a sustained competitive advantage through human capital (Meyers <i>et al.</i>, 2013). Firms that ensure a better work attracting, developing, and retaining their talent will obtain further talented resources and will enhance their performance dramatically (Michaels <i>et al.</i>, 2001).</p> <p>There are three streams of thought regarding TM: first, those who solely replace the label “HRM” for “TM”; a second strand of “succession management” or “human resource planning” literature focuses on the notion of “talent pools”; a third perspective on TM concentrates on the management of highly competent employees, without</p> |

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| | <p>consideration for organizational boundaries or specific positions (Lewis and Heckman, 2006).</p> <p>All things considered, TM can be defined as the “<i>activities and processes that involve systematic identification of key positions which differentially contribute to the organization’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 organization</i>” (Collings <i>et al.</i>, 2009: 304).</p> |
| <p>Strategic Talent Management</p> | <p>Concerning how talent decisions are made, two lines of research present a truly strategic methodology of TM: a “Resource-based view” (RBV) perspective, advocated by Barney (1991, 2001); and the “HC (Human Capital) Bridge® Framework” proposed by Boudreau and Ramstad (2005).</p> <p>According to a RBV perspective, sustained competitive advantage increases in organizations that develop rare, valuable, and difficult to imitate resources. Even though talent is clearly implied in this model, individuals are omitted from this model (Lewis and Heckman, 2006). The HC Bridge® Framework fills this gap by gathering the strategic management of talent resources with the theoretical backgrounds that drive strategic decisions in finance and marketing. Indeed, HR must develop a “decision science” that influences or depends on talented human capital: <i>talentship</i> (Boudreau and Ramstad, 2005).</p> <p>The HC Bridge Decision Framework underlines decisions at three independent levels of analysis: <i>impact</i> (“How much will strategic success increase by improving the quality or availability of a particular talent pool?”) ; <i>effectiveness</i> (“How much do HR programs and processes affect the capacity and actions of employees in each talent pool?”) and <i>efficiency</i> (“ How much HR program and process activity do we get for our investments – such as time and money- in HR programs, practices, and functions?”) (Boudreau and Ramstad, 2005).</p> |
| <p>Talent Management Process</p> | <p>We propose our own TM Process, based on a combination of the Conceptual Framework of a Talent Management</p> |

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|---|--|
| | <p>Hierarchy (Lewis and Heckman, 2006:149) with the HR TM Practices (Chabault <i>et al.</i>, 2012:303).</p> <p>Starting with the outcomes of interest to major companies, strategy and sustainable competitive advantage, <i>talentship</i> might be employed to identify the strategic implications for talent and, consequently, for talent segmentation. Once talent pools are acknowledged and segmented, distinct talent pool strategies can be settled, as regards to compensation, performance management, job design, and other TM practices (Lewis and Heckman, 2006). Finishing the hierarchy, are the TM systems (i.e. the core competency architecture or enterprise software systems) and the talent practices, such as attraction, recruitment, identification, development and retention (Chabault <i>et al.</i>, 2012).</p> |
| <p>Employer Branding</p> | <p>The concept of EB was introduced in 1996 by Tim Ambler and Simon Barrow, who described it as “<i>the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company</i>”. Through the years, EB has become a crucial strategic tool to face the “War for talent”, when it comes to attracting and retaining talents to companies.</p> <p>Even though there are numerous definitions of EB, it appears to us that the most intuitive and complete one is the following: “<i>the employer branding establishes the identity of the firm as an employer. It encompasses the firm’s values, systems, policies, and behaviors toward the objectives of attracting, motivating and retaining the firm’s current and potential employees</i>” (Dell <i>et al.</i>, 2001:10). By consciously designing an EB aimed at the employee, firms are conveying to individuals what they can assume once they join them and decide if they are a good fit for it.</p> |
| <p>Employer Branding Process</p> | <p>The three-step EB process starts with the development of a Value Proposition (VP) followed by its External and Internal Marketing (Backaus and Tikoo, 2004).</p> <p>First, the firm develops the VP that will be incorporated in the brand that conveys the organization’s culture, management style, qualities of the employees, prevailing employment image, and impressions of product or service quality (Backaus and Tikoo, 2004). Subsequently, the firm addresses the VP to its targeted potential employees, such as students, graduates, active professionals or other</p> |

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| | <p>stakeholders. Finally, the internal marketing is addressed to existing and leaving workers, being a part of a well-defined organizational culture (Figurska and Matuska, 2013).</p> |
| <p>Employer brand equity</p> | <p>In the EB context, brand equity refers to the effect of brand knowledge on prospective and current employees concerning the perceived value of working for that organization (Collins and Kanar, 2013 op. cit. Alshathry <i>et al.</i>, 2017).</p> <p>Following an HR approach, EBE involves three elements: first, the extent of knowledge an individual has about an employer (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004); second, the way he/she evaluates the employer based on that knowledge (Collins and Kanar, 2013 op. cit. Alshathry <i>et al.</i>, 2017); and lastly, what experience the individual has or perceives with that EB (Ambler and Barrow, 1996).</p> <p>In addition, four characteristics build a EBE: familiarity with EB; EB associations; experience with the employer and loyalty to the employer (Alshathry <i>et al.</i>, 2017).</p> |
| <p>Employer Attractiveness</p> | <p>Being an important element of Employer Brand Equity, <i>employer attractiveness</i> corresponds to the envisioned benefits that a potential employee contemplates in working for a company (Berthon <i>et al.</i>, 2005).</p> <p>An organization's employer image is a merger of mental representations, associations and specific attributes that a person associates with the firm as a place to work (Lievens and Slaughter, 2016). Moreover, when it comes to recruitment, the instrumental attributes describe the company in terms of its objective and concrete attributes (e.g. wage, bonuses); opposed to the symbolic attributes that define the organization regarding its subjective and intangible attributes (Lievens and Highhouse, 2003).</p> |
| <p>Workforce Trends</p> | <p>Generations are a group of individuals born within a specified timeframe that "<i>share common experiences in the social and historical process at a similar stage of life predisposing them for a common mode of thought and experience and a common mode of behavior</i>" (Jeffries & Hunte, 2003 op.cit. Engelman, 2009). The generations that compose today's workforce are <i>Baby Boomers</i> (born from 1946 to 1960); <i>Generation X</i> (born from 1960 to 1980);</p> |

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| | <p><i>Millennials</i> or <i>Generation Y</i> (born from 1980 to 1995); <i>Generation Z</i> - born from 1995 to 2010 (Bencsik <i>et al.</i>, 2016).</p> <p>When it comes to Workplace values:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- <i>Baby Boomers</i> are driven, idealistic, social, formal, avoid conflict and follow protocol (“Top 10 characteristics of the four generations”, 2012);- <i>Generation X</i> are fast-paced, independent, confident, loyal to staff leader, challenge the <i>status quo</i> and value personal time (“Top 10 characteristics of the four generations”, 2012; Lewis and Wescott, 2017) ;- <i>Millennials</i> are task oriented, individualistic, ambivalent to authority, multitask through multi-media, resist rules, expect feedback, value work/life balance (“Top 10 characteristics of the four generations”, 2012; Lewis and Wescott, 2017) ;- <i>Generation Z</i> are tech savvy, socially connected to their peers by social media, with IQ scores higher than preceding generations, they will likely be self-employed contractors with great flexibility, solving problems with a specific expertise (Wiedmer, 2015). |
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Source: The Author, 2017

III. EXTERNAL ANALYSIS

1.1. Political and Economic Factors

London is a strategic hub for the Alpha Group's Global Markets international business, including credit markets, rates, lending, equity and commodity derivatives (Nikolaeva, 2017).

The banking sector is vulnerable to a bigger giant: the Government. Some examples of this susceptibility include labor laws, trade restrictions, rates and political stability (Frue, 2017).

In June 2016, the British citizen voted to exit the European Union and the departure is scheduled for the 29th March of 2019, at 11 pm (UK time). This political decision has placed Europe's main financial market into a state of great uncertainty ("Top 10 Regulatory challenges", 2017).

Against predictions of immediate doom, the UK economy has grown about 1.8% in 2016 (second only to Germany's 1.9%) and kept growing at almost the same rate in 2017. Even though after June 2016 inflation rose, it stabilized at 2.5%. Moreover, the unemployment rate (4.2% in 2018) is continuously falling. (Hunt and Wheeler, 2018).

Because of the Brexit, the Alpha Company is redeploying its London employees to new positions in the city, instead of moving them to Paris (Clarke, 2018)

The banking industry and the economy are tangled: the state of the economy affects the amount of capital banks have access to (Frue, 2017).

After a long period of restrained growth, the global economy has finally strengthened due to the stimulation of investment and trade, solid business, consumer confidence, and recovering labor market indicators ("World Economic Situation and Prospects - Monthly Briefing", March 2018).

When it comes to the banking sector in emerging economies, financing costs and spreads remain moderately low, underpinned by the recovery of capital flows, cross-border lending and higher commodity rates.

Considering that in the most developed economies inflation is at low levels, it is expected a prompter withdrawal of monetary incentive. However, this does not necessarily imply constriction on investment conditions in the short-term.

As a matter of fact, according to the “ World Economic Situation and Prospects Monthly Briefing, No. 112, 1 March 2018 ” ,“ *the spreads of corporate over government bond yields - a measure of the premium that firms pay over “risk-free” interest rates - remain at very low levels; bank lending surveys point to easier or stable lending conditions for most categories of borrowers and stable demand for credit; while rising wages will underpin strong household consumption. This is expected to support steady investment growth in developed economies this year.*” (“World Economic Situation and Prospects - Monthly Briefing”, March 2018).

1.2. Legal Factors

After the recent international financial crisis, we are assisting a constant and coordinated universal response to regulation. Banks must ensure compliance with Codes of Conduct, anti-money laundering, financial crime, insider trading and other market manipulations.

Since the International Organization of Securities Commissions (IOSCO) and Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (BCBS) issued stable and foreseeable regulatory frameworks, banks are managing to anticipate regulatory response over the medium term and alter business models accordingly.

Examples of regulatory obligations include the Bank Secrecy Act/ Anti-Money Laundering (BSA/AML); Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC) and the EU’s second Markets in Financial Instruments Directive (MiFID2), (“Top 10 Regulatory challenges”, 2017).

On the other hand, cybersecurity has grown into a very tangible regulatory risk, with rising volume and sophistication (“Top 10 Regulatory challenges”, 2017).

Cyber threats include access to confidential information, installation of ransomware, unauthorized payments, espionage and disruption of online systems (“Navigating the year ahead – 2018 banking regulatory outlook”, 2017).

These damaging attacks not only have an impact on operations, core processes and company’s reputation but ultimately undercut the society’s confidence in the safety of the financial service industry (“Navigating the year ahead – 2018 banking regulatory outlook”, 2017).

The Alpha Group has a negative historical related to the application of monetary sanctions and fines due to Compliance violations.

In 2014, the Group agreed to plead guilty to the violation of two U.S. laws by processing billions of dollars of transactions through the American financial system on behalf of Sudanese, Iranian and Cuban entities (which were subject to economic sanctions). It was the first time a financial institution had been convicted and sentenced for this kind of violation.

Other similar cases of payment of sanctions and fines include the sale of underwritten bonds on behalf of a bankrupted telecommunications enterprise (2005); erroneous claims under the Agriculture Department's Supplier Credit Guarantee Program (2015) and assistance of clients evading U.S. taxes (2015).

1.3. Social and Cultural Factors

Cultural influences, such as buying behaviors and needs, impact how society perceive and use banking applications. Consumers turn to banks for advice and assistance regarding loans, investments, savings accounts, credit cards, etc. (Frue, 2017).

The financial sector, traditionally known for its male-dominated culture, is focusing on promoting diversity. Gender balance provides access to the full talent pool; an improved and heterogeneous decision-making process; enhancement of quality customer service due to better representation and a stronger economy (Wyman, 2016).

Under pressure from stakeholders, government law, lobbying forces, and workers, banks are improving the perception of women in banking, wages and extent of managerial responsibility (“Women in Finance: career evolution and bonuses”, n.d.).

Undoubtedly, there has been a remarkable effort and investment in attracting and recruiting more women to financial services and to top positions. However, progress remains slow (Wyman, 2016). In fact, both women and men enter the financial services industry with the same level of ambition and retain it the first professional years. Nevertheless, in mid-career, women are less willing to sacrifice their private lives, ending up lowering their career ambitions (Wyman, 2016). Faced with this challenge, the Alpha Group is hosting events exclusively for women interested in the financial sector, sharing with them the knowledge and networking to enter the segment.

1.4. Technological Factors

Strategic placement of technology in the financial sector can assume various forms: from client onboarding, centralization of customer due diligence to detecting advanced suspicious activity monitoring, reporting and fraud schemes. Leverage and investment in technologies and expertise increase operational efficiencies and consistency. (“Navigating the year ahead – 2018 banking regulatory outlook”, 2017).

In February 2017, the Alpha Group announced it was going to invest 3 billion euros in Digital Transformation. Examples of this investment include the online platform that has unlocked a new sales channel for the Company; application of Virtual Reality (VR) technology on its different businesses, including Retail Banking, Real Estate and Insurance; mobile banking for the Group ‘s retail banking customers and partnership and investment on Fintechs.

1.5. Environmental Factors

When it comes to the environment, there is a global concern from both consumers and the Government for the reduction of companies’ carbon footprint. At the end of 2017, the Group announced that it had become carbon neutral by reducing direct CO² emissions (through the promotion of energy efficiency at the Bank’s buildings and by enhancing its workers’ business travel); consuming low-carbon electricity and counterweighing CO² emissions that can’t be reduced. In addition, the four pillars of the Alpha’s Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) strategy are:

- *The Economy* (financing the economy in an ethical manner);
- *Our People* (developing and engaging its people responsibly);
- *The Community* (being a positive agent for change);
- *The Environment* (combating climate change).

IV. INTERNAL ANALYSIS ⁴

1. The Alpha Group

Company Alpha (fictional name) is a leading provider of banking and financial services in the Eurozone and a prominent international banking institution. The group holds key positions in its two core activities: Retail, Banking and Services, comprising Domestic Markets and International Financial Services, and Corporate and Institutional Banking.

Company Alpha acts as a responsible bank and provides solutions to all its clients: individuals, community associations, entrepreneurs, small and medium enterprises, corporate clients and institutional investors. The Group helps its clients to realize their personal and professional projects through spanning financing, investment, savings and protection insurance. The Company is a leading provider of banking and financial services in Europe, being present in 73 countries and having more than 192 000 employees (Annual Report, 2018).

The Company's *vision* is becoming a reference among European banks with a global reach, the preferred long-term partner to its clients, and a contributor to responsible and sustainable global development (Company's website).

The Company's *mission* is to become "*the bank for a changing world*". Striving for a positive impact on its stakeholders and on society, its highly committed teams will deliver first-class service and solutions to its clients through its integrated model. Company Alpha wants to be among the most trustworthy players in its industry, by anchoring further its values and ethics in its everyday behaviors (Company's website).

Finally, regarding the Company's *values*, Group Alpha is organized around Four Strengths (Stability, Expertise, Responsibility and Good Place To Work) and Four Driving Forces, namely: Agility, Client Satisfaction, Compliance Culture and Openness (The Group Code of Conduct, 2018).

The *Strengths* are considered the cornerstones of the Group which allow maintaining the integrated universal banking model and top-ranking positions in the future (The Group Code of Conduct, 2018). There is *Stability* because the Company

⁴ To protect the anonymity of Company Alpha, we have excluded some references where the real name of the Company was referenced.

leans on its solid long-term oriented management, diversified and integrated business model and international footprint. The Group builds upon its culture of *Responsibility* and integrity to ever better serve the interest of its customers. Moreover, the Company trusts on its *Expertise* (recognized and expanding knowledge of its teams) and fosters a *Good Place To Work* through a stimulating workplace where people are treated fairly and with respect (The Group Code of Conduct, 2018).

The *Four Driving Forces* represent the areas that the employees must always develop to succeed in their challenges and to build the future of the Group (The Group Code of Conduct, 2018). They are the following:

- *Agility* (behaving more simply, embracing useful information and digital transformation);
- *Compliance Culture* (promoting clear rules to foster a strong culture of compliance and ethics);
- *Client Satisfaction* (being the customers' and clients' preferred choice through active listening and close work);
- *Openness* (encouraging open-minded attitudes towards its stakeholders).

2. Business Performance Analysis

2.1. The Group Results in 2017

The 2017 Alpha Group's Annual Report takes into consideration indicators such as revenues, operating expenses, cost of risk, operating income, pre-tax income and net income attributable to equity holders (*cfr.* Table 6 and Figure 1).

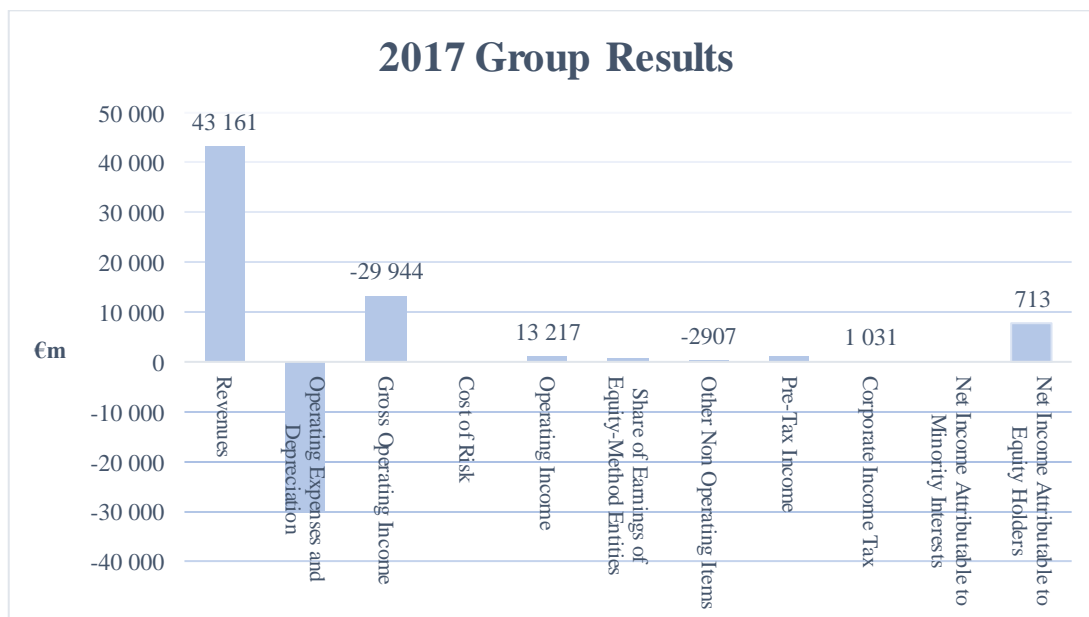
Table 6 - 2017 Group Results, € m

| <i>€m</i> | Group |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|
| Revenues | 43 161 |
| Operating Expenses and Depreciation | -29 944 |
| Gross Operating Income | 13 217 |
| Cost of Risk | -2907 |
| Operating Income | 1 031 |

| | |
|--|--------------|
| Share of Earnings of Equity-Method Entities | 713 |
| Other Non - Operating Items | 287 |
| Pre-Tax Income | 1 131 |
| Corporate Income Tax | -3103 |
| Net Income Attributable to Minority Interests | -448 |
| Net Income Attributable to Equity Holders | 7 759 |

Source: The Author, 2018 - Adapted from the 2017's Group Annual Report.

Chart 1 - 2017 Group Results



Source: The Author, 2018 - Adapted from the 2017's Group Annual Report.

Sustained by a steady European growth, the Group's business activity has vigorously developed, despite both the uninspiring market environment and interest rate.

In 2017, revenues equaled 43 161 million euros (down by 0.6%, comparing to 2016). On the other hand, the Group's operating expenses totaled 29 944 million euros (up by 1.9%, compared to 2016), including the exceptional impact of acquisitions' restructuring and transformation costs (2017 Alpha Group's Annual Report).

Regarding the Group's gross operating income (13 217 million euros), it was down by 5.8%. Nevertheless, the cost of risk was down again (-10.9%) at 2 907 million euros (2017 Alpha Group's Annual Report).

Finally, the Net income attributable to equity holders was 7 759 million euros (up by 0.7%, compared to 2016). Moreover, the return on equity was 8.9% and the net earnings per share were at €6.05 (2017 Alpha Group's Annual Report).

2.2. Core Business Revenues per year

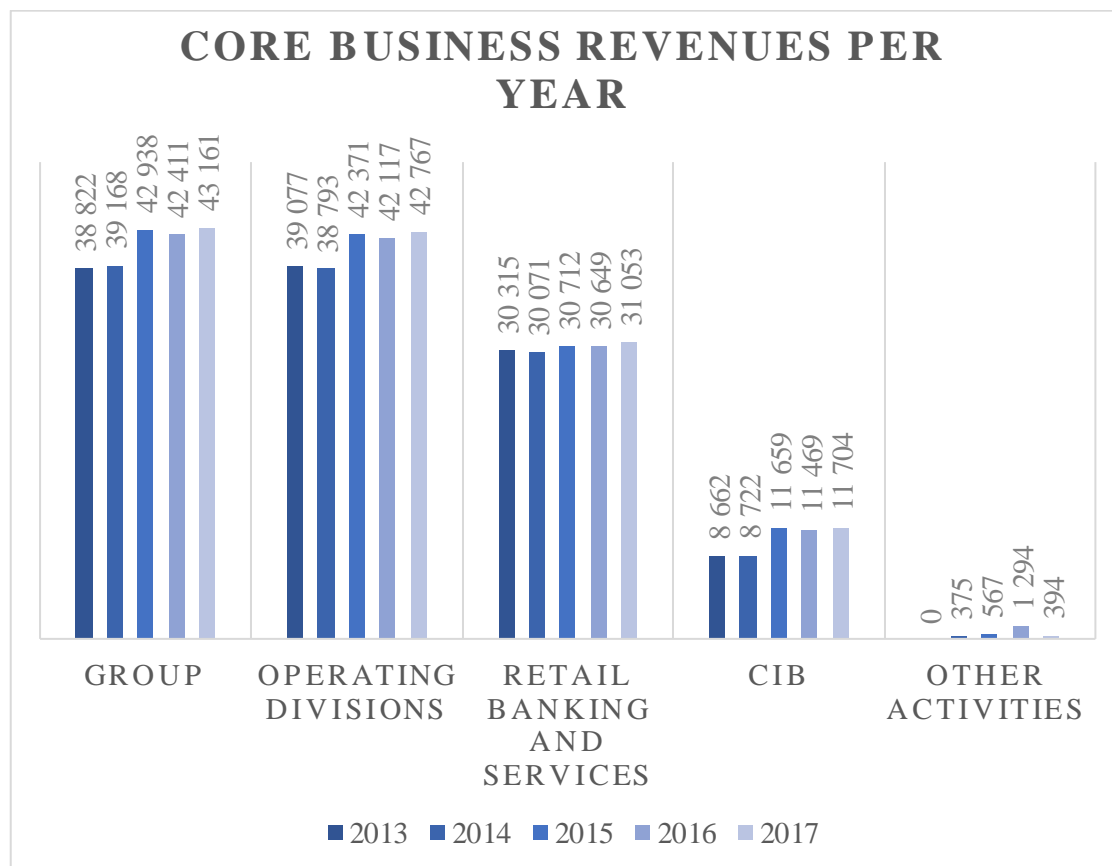
It now becomes crucial to analyze the Revenues of the Alpha Group throughout the years, starting in the 2013 and finishing on the 2017 (i.e. a 5-year analysis). Both Table 7 and Figure 4 show its growth.

Table 7 - Core Business Revenues per year (€ m)

| Core Businesses | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
|------------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Retail Banking and Services* | 30 315 | 30 071 | 30 712 | 30 649 | 31 053 |
| CIB | 8 662 | 8 722 | 11 659 | 11 469 | 11 704 |
| Operating Divisions | 39 077 | 38 793 | 42 371 | 42 117 | 42 767 |
| Other Activities | -255 | 375 | 567 | 1 294 | 394 |
| Group | 38 822 | 39 168 | 42 938 | 42 411 | 43 161 |

Source: The Author, 2018 - Adapted from Group Annual Reports.

Chart 2 - Core Business Revenues per year (€ m)



Source: The Author, 2018 - Adapted from Group Annual Reports.

As shown above, the revenues of the Alpha Group are divided by core businesses, namely: *Retail Banking and Services* (it comprises Domestic Markets and International Financial Services); *CIB* (it includes Corporate Banking, Global Markets and Securities Services); *Operating Divisions* (it encompasses both the *Retail Banking and Services* and the *CIB* revenues) and *Other Activities* (Alpha Group's Annual Reports).

The 2013's revenues (down by 0.6%, compared to 2012) reflect the challenging economic environment at that time, at 38 822 million euros (2013 Alpha Group's Annual Report).

In 2014, the revenues of the Operating Divisions rose by 1.9% (in comparison with 2013), at 38 793 million euros (2014 Alpha Group's Annual Report).

In a context of European economic recovery, the revenues in 2015 equaled 42 938 million euros, which represented a rise of 9.6 %, comparing to 2014's revenues (2015 Alpha Group's Annual Report).

In 2016, there was still a rise in income, with revenues totaling 43 411 million euros, (up by 1.1% compared to 2015), regardless of the low interest rate (2016 Alpha Group's Annual Report).

Lastly, the revenues in 2017 were 43 161 million euros (down by 0.6% compared to 2016), which denotes the good business growth (2017 Alpha Group's Annual Report).

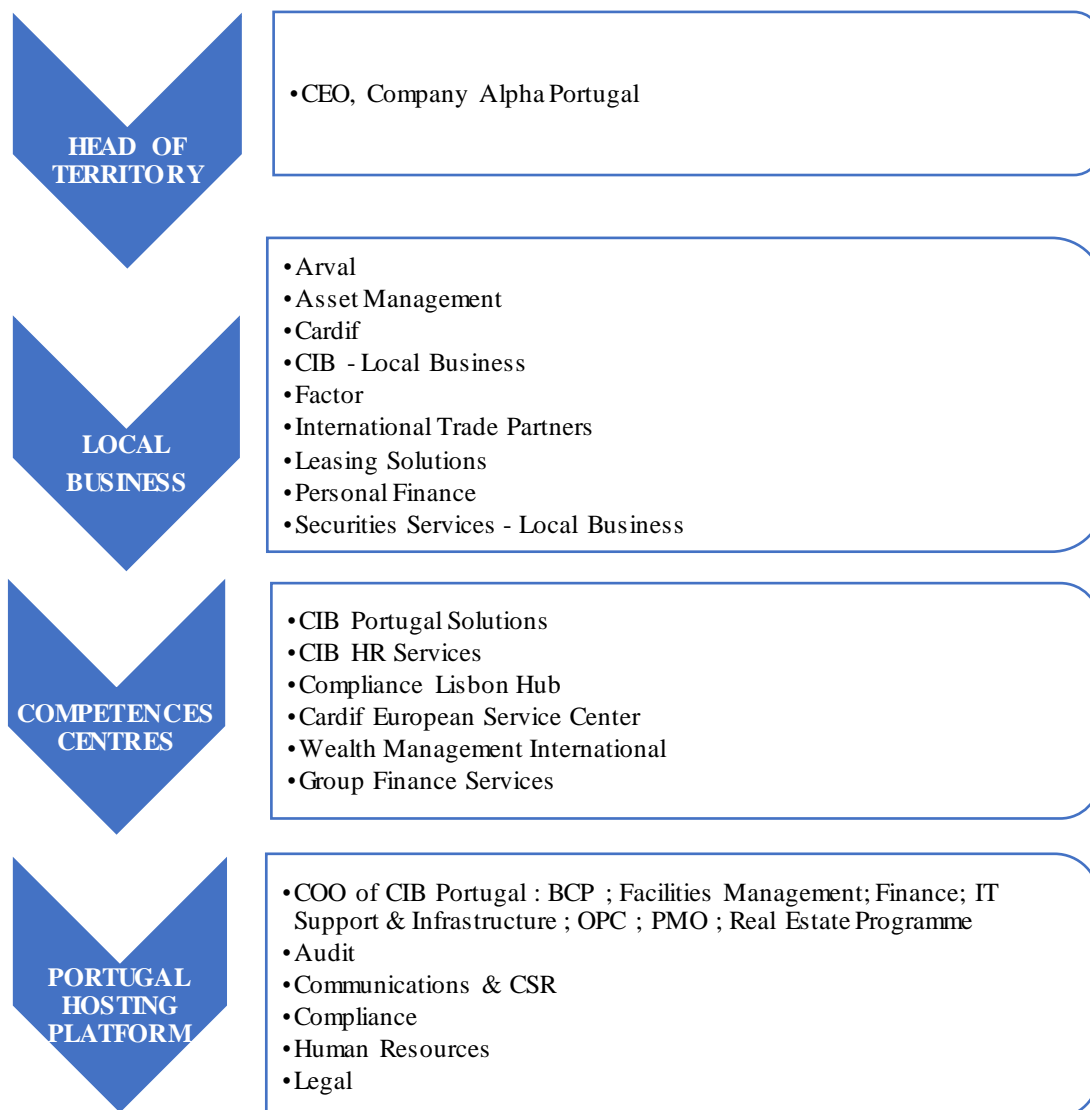
All things considered, and especially through the analysis of Figure 2, we can verify that there was a continuous and solid growth in the Alpha Group's revenues, from 2013 to 2017.

3. Presence in Portugal

Present in Portugal since 1985, Company Alpha was the first foreign bank to operate in Portugal and, over the last three decades, it has been gradually consolidating its presence in the Portuguese market. It is mostly oriented towards multinationals, financial institutions and institutional investors.

Over the last four years, the Alpha Group has quickly expanded its operations in Portugal: in 2010, there were 826 employees and they are more than 5 000, nowadays. Through a nearshoring strategy, Lisbon has become the home of a diversity of new shared services and research divisions that are devoted to the bank's Europe, Middle-East and Africa activities, offering a wide range of integrated financial solutions to support its clients in their businesses. The Alpha Group is also present in Portugal through competences centers, which provide diversified high-value services on behalf of other company's locations.

Figure 2 - Company's Organization in Portugal



Source: Corporate Brochure, figures as at 31 December 2017.

○ **Local business:** present in Portugal since 1985, the Group currently has nine business activities working directly for the Portuguese market, having gradually become market leaders in their areas.

○ **Competence Centers:** started in 2008 with the implementation of Securities Services Lisbon International Operations center, the services business has been progressively extended to other areas of the Group, currently grounded in six competences Centres.

○ ***Portugal Hosting Platform:*** serving directly CIB and the whole Group in Portugal, this platform formed by transversal functions provides a more consistent and value-added service to clients, employees and the business, whilst ensuring the proper welcoming of new activities to Portugal.

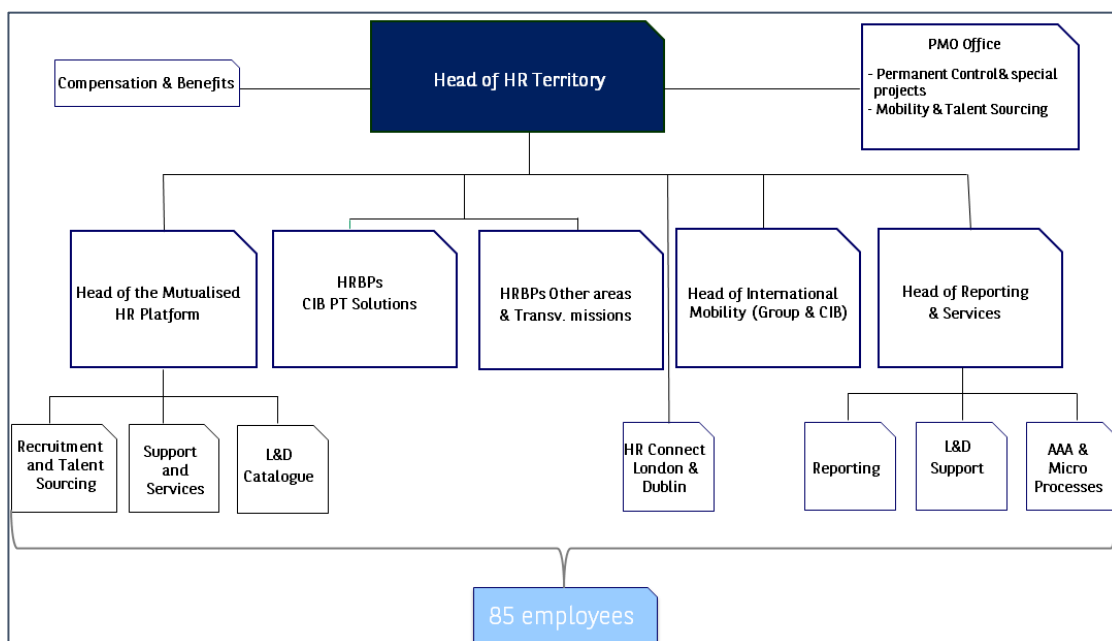
3.1. Human Resources Department

The HR department *mission* is to build a solid HR set-up to service the entire Company Alpha platform by: accompanying the growth of CIB Portugal Solutions and other Competences Centers in Portugal (recruitment and talent sourcing, onboarding of newcomers, manage expatriates) and managing employees' expectations and career aspirations (talent management, training design, succession planning, mobility enhancement, diversity awareness). Additionally, HR aims at developing a CIB HR European Hub servicing all locations in Europe on a specific set of HR services (Reporting, Internal Mobility matters, and Learning and Development Support).

The Human Resources Department is distributed through eight main divisions (as it shows on figure 4): Compensations and Benefits; PMO Office; Mutualized HR Platform; HRBPs CIB Portugal Solutions; HRBPs' other areas and transversal missions; HR Connect London and Dublin; International Mobility and Reporting and Services.

Below, we will examine the different divisions that compose the HR department in a little more detail.

Figure 3 - Human Resources Department Structure



Source: Corporate Brochure, figures as at 31 December 2017.

3.2. Human Resources Business Partners

The HR Business Partners (BPs) are a team of solution providers on HR related topics, building the bridge between HR and internal clients within their respective scope by : focusing on employees’ career management, acting as key players in employees’ mobility within the organization ; building solid partnerships with the management of their respective scopes to share short and long-term HR strategy, enabling a fully aligned HR support; and promoting HR initiatives suitable to their businesses/scopes – talent identification, training initiatives, diversity actions, GPS focus (Corporate Brochure, 2017).

3.2.1. PMO and Reward

In charge of all HR specific projects, ranging from permanent control to HR2020 strategic projects. The team also supports HR Business Partners and managers in compensation matters, including the annual Compensation Review Process.

3.2.2. HR Mutualized Platforms

The HR Mutualized Platforms cover areas that are extended to all employees, starting with their recruitment, then with their training and development, all combined with a key service support.

- **Talent Sourcing**: currently estimating nearly 30 recruitments per month in the upcoming two years, a solid team of recruitment professionals is now gathered to support the business ambitions of Company Alpha in Portugal.

- **Learning and Development (L&D)**: develops and promotes training initiatives tailored to the specific needs of our growing platform, allowing employees to further develop their technical and soft skills.

- **Support and Services**: a dedicated team providing key service support to employees around all pre and post payroll processes which entail onboarding requirements, benefits enrollment and administration, accepting and responding to all employees queries.

3.2.3. CIB HR European Hub in Lisbon

- **Reporting and Services**: up and running since the end of 2015, this team's mission is threefold: monitoring the Global CIB and Portugal headcount; administrating globally the major CIB HR processes and tools, and providing support to the People development and Change central team.

3.2.4. Learning and development (L & D)

- **L&D Catalogue**: supervises the training offer to Paris, London, Brussels and Lisbon platforms, performing the link between business requirements and market products;

- **L&D Support:** global support and training on tool functionalities to CIB My Learning Key users worldwide; the first level of support for different locations such as Paris, London, Brussels, Lisbon and NAR; and an e-learning factory developing modules for internal clients.

- **International Mobility:** defines Group policies, manages relationships with main Group providers, providing operational support on specific expatriation cases. Takes care of all HR matters related to CIB Paris outbound expatriates in all locations, as well as Lisbon inbound and outbound expatriates.

- **London/Dublin HR connect:** this team provides all HR administrative support to the London and Dublin HR team and employees.

4. Campus Crew Program

Faced with an increasing need to attract and recruit young talents, Company Alpha launched in the 2nd semester of the academic year of 2015/16, a Campus Crew Ambassador's Program. It brought together students and graduates from 5 Portuguese Universities, namely ISCTE, ISEG, NOVA School of Business and Economics, Católica Lisbon School and IST. There were created five teams, each consisting of four members – two internal and two external ambassadors. In addition, each team would have a workgroup coordinator (a Company's employee).

The External Ambassadors (the students) were assigned with the representation and promotion of the Company, autonomous organization of events and assistance in pinpointing keen students.

The representation and promotion of the Alpha Company implied participation in university events and on-campus fairs and respective diffusion on campus. In addition, the ambassadors were invited to independently organize events, such as workshops, meetings and lectures with employees who were former students from these universities, among other actions that they would consider appropriate.

Finally, the external ambassadors would play a key role in pinpointing keen students which meant not only establishing a contact with them but also collecting resume and cover letter of potential candidates.

On the other hand, the Internal Ambassadors (the Company's employees) were responsible for the link between External Ambassadors and the Company by establishing a permanent contact with the first, providing support and answering to possible questions. Moreover, the Internal Ambassadors would also represent and promote the brand by attending the events organized.

This way, all the teams would have to first develop and present a Communication plan and then discussed it with the persons in Company Alpha that were responsible for Universities Relations (Senior Project Support department) and Campus Crew Recruitment (HR Department). Throughout the second semester of the 2015/16 year and the entire academic year of 2016/2017, the teams would have to implement their communication plans in the respective Universities. The most successful communication plan would be awarded at the end of the school year. The Ambassadors at ISEG were the winning crew, having received a Gift Card and the possibility to spend a morning with two departments at Company Alpha (job shadowing).

The Campus Crew Program was not considered successful, failing to promote the brand among college students and, consequently, to attract them to work at Alpha Group. Some of the factors that can explain this failure are miscommunication and lack of initiative from the internal and external ambassadors; organizational problems, namely, absence of an Ambassadors' coordinator and poor use of communication channels. As a result, the Ambassadors' Program was not launched in the academic year of 2017/18.

Recognizing the importance and powerful marketing tool that an Ambassador's Program constitutes, we intend to propose a new approach to this subject.

V. SWOT ANALYSIS

In this chapter, we will conduct a SWOT analysis of the Alpha Group, by taking into consideration both Company's internal positive (strengths) and negative (weaknesses) points, as well as market opportunities and threats.

Table 8 – SWOT Analysis

| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Vast Global Presence ○ Outstanding Performance in New Markets ○ Solid brand name and virtuous financial position ○ Talented workforce ○ High level of Customer Satisfaction ○ Strong CSR policies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Weak system and controls ○ Inadequate anti-money laundering control ○ Sanctions and fines ○ High employee turnover |
| Opportunities | Threats |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New technologies are accessible at reasonable costs ○ Mobile banking is expanding ○ New customers from the online channel ○ Economic growth ○ New Environmental Rules | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Intense competition in the financial industry ○ Cyber threats ○ The rise of Fintech Firms ○ Ever- changing liability laws ○ Downside risks to global growth |

Source: The Author, 2018.

Strengths

○ Vast Global Presence

The Alpha Bank is present in 73 countries, being a European Group with an international reach and one of the biggest Bank across the world: approximately, it has 149 844 employees in Europe; 20 294 employees in America; 17 384 employees in the Asia Pacific; 9 973 employees in Africa and 517 employees in Middle-East (as at June 2018).

The Alpha Group has domestic retail operations in France, Italy, Belgium, and Luxembourg and is advancing into Germany (especially with its digital banking). In addition, its international financial services include lending in the United States of America, Latin America and Asia and expert business (namely, consumer finance, asset and wealth management and insurance).

○ Outstanding Performance in New Markets

Under the ambition of generating a genuinely European Banking Group with a global purpose, the Alpha Company has enhanced its European presence. Accordingly, the Alpha Company has built expertise at successfully entering new markets (e.g. Turkey in 2005; Italy in 2006; Belgium and Luxembourg in 200; and Germany in 2014). This careful expansion has not only enabled the Bank to create a new revenue stream but also to diversify its economic cycle risk.

○ Solid brand name and virtuous financial position

Among other awards recognition, recently the Alpha Company has been named “World’s Best Bank for Corporates” and “Best Digital Bank in Western Europe” for 2017 by *Euromoney*, the top financial publication. In 2018, the Group was recognized as the “Best Bank for Trade Finance” by Global Finance.

In 2018, the Alpha Company received, for the fifth year in a row, the “Top Employer Europe” certification for seven countries, namely: Belgium, France, Italy,

Luxembourg, Poland, Turkey, and Spain. This award recognizes the quality of the Human Resources policies.

○ **Talented workforce**

Benefiting from an international working place environment and culture, the employees are not limited to a single position, office or country. There is a full range of opportunities within the banking services. Consequently, over half of the employees move to new positions every three years.

The Group has highly skilled and motivated employees, investing a lot in successful training, learning and development programs. Every employee is fluent in English (the official professional language) and more than 90% has a bachelor's degree or higher.

There are over 4 000 e-learning modules in seven languages; 4 training centers (in France, Italy, Turkey, and Singapore) and approximately 145 000 employees have benefited from, at least, one training program.

○ **High level of Customer Satisfaction**

The customer satisfaction is one of the Group's four driving forces. Through its dedicated Customer Relationship Management department, Alpha has been capable to accomplish a high level of customer satisfaction.

Over the last years, the Bank's customer satisfaction measures have been showing signs of growing strength. In addition, the press and consumer associations have acknowledged its market position in competitive pricing and quality. The Group's policy on quality is based on three main approaches:

- Continuous improvement in customer satisfaction;
- The use of quality as a tool for development;
- Mobilization of all workers to achieve these goals.

The Group has positioned itself as a leader in ISO 9001 Certification (an internationally recognized Quality Management System) in Banking, Insurance and IT Services.

- **Strong CSR policies**

The four pillars of the Alpha's CSR strategy are *The Economy* (financing the economy in an ethical manner); *Our People* (developing and engaging its people responsibly); *The Community* (being a positive agent for change) and *The Environment* (combating climate change).

In 2018, the Alpha Group appeared, for the fourth year running, on the list of the 'Global 100 Most Sustainable Corporations', being emphasized its positive impact on both society and environment and its efforts to promote gender equality. In 2017, the Alpha Group was listed in the "2017 Dow Jones Sustainability Indexes World and Europe". The Group has mostly well performed in "Risk Management" and "Climate Strategy", in favor of energy transition. Moreover, the Group has significantly enhanced its scores in the fields of "Respect of Human Rights", "Health and Safety of Employees" and "Code of Conduct".

Weaknesses

- **Weak system and controls**

According to the Federal Reserve Bank, the Alpha Group's Forex Traders manipulated prices, using the Bank's electronic chatrooms. Consequently, in 2017, the Fed ordered the Bank to improve its internal controls and procedures and the Bank paid \$246 million to resolve these allegations.

- **Inadequate anti-money laundering control**

The Alpha Group has a negative historical related to a series of inadequacies in its requirements for preventing money laundering and financing of terrorism. As a result, the French bank has been fined in 2017 by the French Prudential Supervision and Resolution Authority (ACPR).

- **Sanctions and fines**

In 2005, due to the sale of underwritten bonds on behalf of a bankrupted telecommunications enterprise, Company Alpha agreed to pay hundreds of millions of dollars'portion of a settlement imposed to three other banks.

Back in 2014, the United States of America Authorities fined the Alpha Group due to its violation of U.S. economic sanctions against Iran, Sudan and Cuba, from 2004 to 2012. The Bank was on trial for five years and obliged to pay a record financial penalty.

In 2015, the U.S. Justice Department recuperated almost a hundred million dollars from the Bank since apparently it had presented erroneous claims under the Agriculture Department's Supplier Credit Guarantee Program.

Also, in 2015, the Group (in Suisse) was accused of assisting clients evading U.S. taxes and consequently paid a penalty.

- **High employee turnover**

When compared to other companies in the industry, Alpha Group has a greater turnover rate. As a result, the Group invests more than its competitors on the training and development of its workforces (accordingly with internal sources from the Alpha Group).

Opportunities

- **New technologies are accessible at reasonable costs**

In February 2017, the Alpha Group announced it was going to invest 3 billion euros in Digital Transformation.

As Alpha goes ahead with its digital transformation, Virtual Reality (VR) technology is already applied to its different businesses, including Retail Banking, Real Estate and Insurance. Its customers can integrate VR techniques into their banking operations, such as account management and decision-making.

- **Mobile banking is expanding**

Mobile banking is an increasing tendency between users. Since February 2017, the Alpha Group 's retail banking customers can purchase in-store goods through their smartphone, using a contactless service. In addition, there is also an all-in-one mobile payment app that concentrates all the customer's cards, coupons and loyalty cards, being generated a QR code for each transaction.

- **New customers from the online channel**

The great investment conducted on the online platform has unlocked a new sales channel for the Company. In the years to come, the Alpha Group can leverage this prospect by deepening its knowledge of customer's behaviors and addressing their needs through big data analytics.

- **Economic growth**

The world economy has strengthened. In 2017, global economic growth reached 3 % (the highest growth rate since 2011) and growth is expected to remain steady for 2018.

Consequently, consumption is increasing and there will be more requirements for loan availability.

- **New Environmental Rules**

The global concern about environmental policies constitutes a great opportunity for Alpha to leverage its advantage in new technology and increase market share in the new product category. At the end of 2017, the Group announced that it had become carbon neutral by reducing direct CO² emissions (through the promotion of energy efficiency at the Bank's buildings and by enhancing its workers' business travel); consuming low-carbon electricity and counterweighing CO² emissions that can't be reduced.

Threats

- **Intense competition in the financial industry**

There is strong rivalry among the financial industry. Alpha Group is competing with money center banks, institutional asset management firms and financial planners (e.g. Deutsche Bank).

- **Cyber threats**

Considering investment banks are crucial to societal operations, a cyber-attack would not only financially affect them and those whose funds they hold (“Top Cyber Security Threat for the Banking Industry in 2017”, 2017) but also would originate a reputational damage (Burden, 2018). Therefore, Alpha Company must significantly invest in the development of its digital infrastructure to strengthen its cybersecurity (Burden, 2018).

- **The rise of Fintech Firms**

Fintech firms are entering the financial industry and directly competing with banks through big data analysis and customized client service. The Alpha Group has been gradually investing in Fintechs (e.g. through partnerships or capital acquisition) to take advantage of its innovative solutions.

- **Ever-changing liability laws**

Considering liability laws are different in every country, Alpha may be exposed to numerous responsibility claims due to a change in the countries’ policies.

- **Downside risks to global growth**

Even though there is an economic improvement in short-term predictions, there are downside risks to global growth which might derail it.

Along with the high and rising levels of household and corporate debt, key risks include: *“the build-up of trade tensions among major economies; increasing geopolitical tensions and greater uncertainty about the path of monetary policy adjustment in developed economies”* (“World Economic Situation and Prospects - Monthly Briefing”, June 2018).

VI. PLAN OBJECTIVES

Company Alpha is currently the employer that is hiring the highest number of employees in Portugal (about 1000 employees in the last year), mostly young graduates with little or no professional experience. Considering this recruitment need and the challenges the Company encounters in finding the right profile, a successful Ambassadors Campus Crew Program would be an effective means to attract and recruit the right candidates.

An Ambassadors Campus Crew Program represents a way for a Company to establish and maintain its brand presence among university students. Through this Program, firms select Ambassadors (i.e. students) currently enrolled in college to represent the Company at the University Campus.

An Ambassadors Program in Universities is a growing trend in Portugal and a powerful marketing tool. As a matter of fact, the Ambassadors:

- Raise the brand awareness;
- Provide information about the brand (in this case, about the Company);
- Promote the Company's events (e.g. job fairs and workshops);
- Identify the Top talented students;
- Spread the current job opportunities.

Hence, an Ambassadors' Program would raise the Company's Alpha brand awareness among the University students and attract them into working at the Group.

VII. DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

Segmentation

An Ambassadors Campus Crew Program is aimed at University students, which can be enrolled at a Bachelor, Masters or PhD Degrees.

According to the Literature Review, we can segment the population by generations. Generations are a group of individuals born within a specified timeframe that “*share common experiences in the social and historical process at a similar stage of life predisposing them for a common mode of thought and experience and a common mode of behavior*” (Jeffries and Hunte, 2003 op.cit. Engelman, 2009).

For finding young candidates for the Alpha Company, we will assume that the generations which are currently enrolled at the University are the *Millennials* or *Generation Y* - born from 1980 to 1995 - and the *Generation Z* - born from 1995 - 2010 (Bencsik *et al.*, 2016).

Millennials are task-oriented, individualistic, ambivalent to authority, multitask through multi-media, resist rules, expect feedback, value work/life balance (“Top 10 characteristics of the four generations”, 2012; Lewis and Wescott, 2017). Driven by technology, the *Millennials* anticipate multitasking and embracing projects with innovative ideas, being drawn to companies with technological improvements that have transformed the way of doing business worldwide. As imminent business leaders, they will shape into businesses typical *Millennials* traits, namely data, speed and execution (Wiedmer, 2015).

Gen Z has the characteristics of a “net generation” since they were born in an extremely advanced digital era (Bencsik *et al.*, 2016). Therefore, even though most traits that will describe this generation have yet to emerge, we can already link them with a lifetime use of technology (Wiedmer, 2015).

Generation Z are tech-savvy, socially connected to their peers by social media, with IQ scores higher than preceding generations, they will likely be self-employed contractors with great flexibility, solving problems with a specific expertise (Wiedmer, 2015).

Target

In the light of the above, our target will be:

- University students, aged 18 or over, enrolled at one of the following Universities: Católica Lisbon Business and Economics, Faculdade de Ciências da Universidade de Lisboa (FCUL), Instituto Superior Técnico (IST), ISCTE Business School, ISEG – Lisbon School of Economics and Management and NOVA School Business and Economics
- Fluent in English (mandatory) and another language (plus)
- Solid academic background (from any field of studies)
- Interest for the banking/financial area
- Erasmus or any other international experience
- Involvement in social activities (e.g. volunteering)
- Participation in academic associations (e.g. Student's Associations)
- Participation in extra-curricular activities (e.g. sports, competitions)
- Professional experience (e.g. Summer internships)

Positioning

As seen before, organizational attractiveness is influenced by applicant's perceptions of job or organizational characteristics, namely: wage; prospects for progression; location; career development; organizational structure; company's reputation and identity congruence (Lievens *et al.*, 2005). Hence, our Ambassador's Campus Crew Program must differentiate itself from its competitors and Company Alpha position itself as:

- Great place to jump start a career due to solid training and professional development opportunities;
- Care for their employees, by showing them respect, promoting equal opportunities, acknowledging performance and developing their talents and skills;

Attracting Young Talents

- The diversity of profiles within the Group, which represents a source of creativity and increases the general performance;
- Fun, multicultural and young (average age of 35 years-old) workplace environment;
- International mindset (professional contact with people from different countries);
- Support of the employee's career path through a dedicated department on HR;
- Promotes mobility across business lines and geography with a wide range of career opportunities across the Group;
- Privileged locations, near public transportation and services.

○ **Initial Phase**

Alpha Group's Design team will be responsible for designing the promotion materials material (one poster and one brochure) advertising our Ambassador's Program. Considering these materials are targeted at University's students, we believe our message should be professional (we are representing a financial institution) and direct (the student must immediately realize what we are proposing).

By the end of the first week of January, the design of the promotion must be completed.

On the second week of January, the promotion channels must be addressed.

○ **Promotion Phase**

Starting on the last week of January and until the second week of February, the promotion of our Ambassadors' Program at the Universities must take place, through the following promotion channels:

- Universities' social media pages (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn);
- Student's Associations' social media pages;
- Universities' career offices and respective websites;
- Posters and brochures (that will be posted and distributed across the Universities);
- Career Forums (they usually take place on February).

○ **Selection Phase**

On February (the first three weeks), the candidates will have to do an online registration, where they will submit:

- their CV and
- 2 minutes' Video Pitch, explaining why they should become the Company's Alpha Ambassadors.

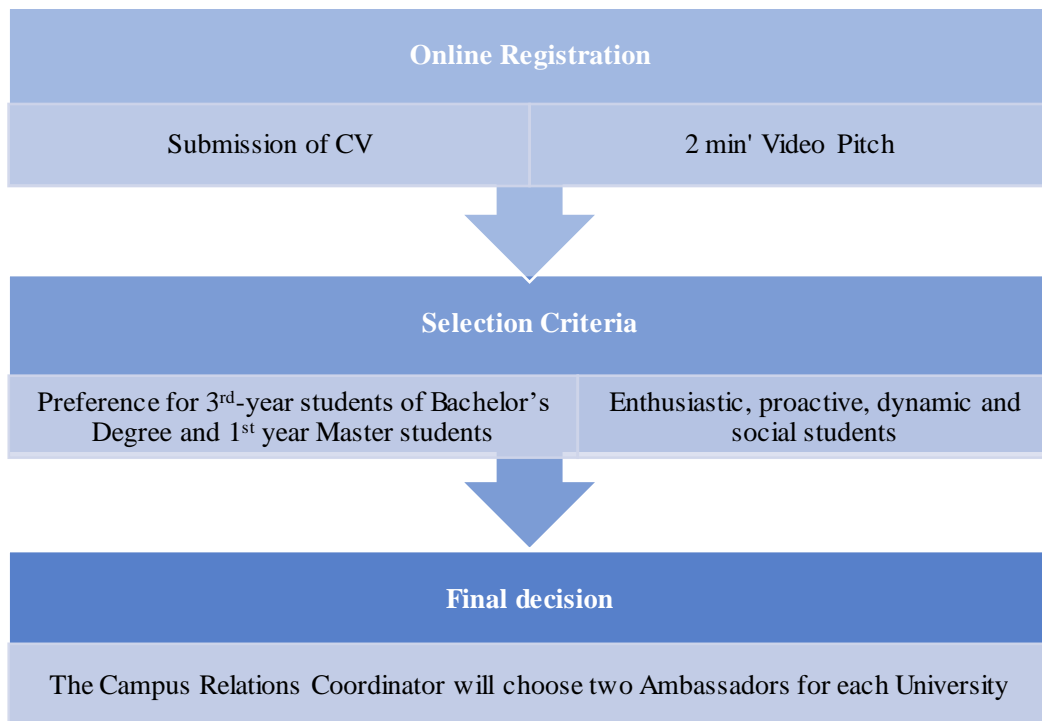
Since we are looking for enthusiastic, proactive, dynamic and social students, a Pitch will be a virtuous way for the Company Alpha to assess those traits, without having to physically contact with the candidates.

It will also be given preference for 3rd-year students of Bachelor’s Degree and 1st year Master students.

We believe that, at this age, these students are not only more interested in having a closer contact with the business world but also have a contact with a greater number of students.

Based on this online assessment, the Campus Relations Coordinator will choose two Ambassadors for each University. The final decision must be communicated until the end of February.

Figure 4 – The Selection Process of the Ambassadors



Source: The Author, 2018.

○ **Pre- Launching Phase: Ambassadors’ training**

Company Alpha has an “External Communications” department (in each country) that is fully dedicated to assuring the Groups’ communication is aligned with the company’s values and strategy. Similarly, it is very important that the Ambassadors convey the right information about the Company to other students.

This way, the Ambassadors will spend a day of training at Company Alpha, on the first week of March. It will be an opportunity for them to:

- Get to know more about the Company's history, values, missions;
- Have a direct contact with Managers and employees from recruiting teams;
- Do a guided tour of the recruiting teams' floors;
- Get to experience the Group's work environment;
- Receive Company goodies (e.g. lanyards, notebooks, pens).

The Ambassadors will also be asked to sign an Agreement, where they commit themselves to be the Company's Alpha Ambassadors for 9 months (from March to December 2019).

In addition, this day is meant for the Ambassadors to feel like they are also part of the Company that they are representing. It is our belief that such feeling is vital for the Ambassadors to be motivated and fully dedicated to the Program.

○ **Launching Phase**

The Program kick – off will be in the 2nd week of March. We have chosen this date to assure the classes of the second semester from all universities would already have started.

○ **Company Events**

There will be organized some events dedicated to University students, such as:

- 2 Open Days: the 1st week of April and the 2nd week of November;
- 2 Business Breakfasts: the 1st week of May and the 1st week of December;
- 1 Presentation/lecture/ Workshop about an interesting theme: the 1st week of October.

Our goal is to have one event occurring every month of classes (April, May, October, November, and December). Moreover, the Ambassadors will have to post on Social Media about each event two weeks before its due date.

○ **Evaluation and Control Phase**

The Campus Ambassadors must write brief reports almost every month (March, April, May, October, November and December) to be sent to the Campus Crew Coordinator.

In January 2020, it's scheduled a final meeting with the Ambassadors and the Campus Crew Coordinator. The objective is to do a wrap-up of last year's Program, evaluating its impact on students (e.g., the number of students that attended the Company's events and the number of CVs that were collected). It is also important to identify both the positive and the negative aspects concerning the Program, as well as suggestions to improve it for the next year.

During this meeting, the Ambassadors will also receive a report with an evaluation of their performance and Certificate of Participation.

IX. REQUIREMENTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

○ **Campus Relations Coordinator: role and tasks**

The “Campus Relations Coordinator” is a person, within the HR department of Company Alpha, that is fully dedicated to our Program. He/She will be the person of contact with the Ambassadors, liaising the relations between Company Alpha and Universities.

The Campus Relations Coordinator will be responsible for:

- Establishing contact with Universities, asking them to promote the Ambassadors’ Program;

- The selection process of the Ambassadors;

- Organizing the Ambassadors’ training day at the Alpha Group installations in Lisbon;

- Constant contact with the Ambassadors, providing support and answering all the questions the Ambassadors may have;

- Monitor the Ambassadors activities (by reading the monthly reports);

- Organize the events dedicated to University students, such as Open Days, Business Breakfasts, presentations/lectures about interesting themes, workshops, Universities’ Job Fairs;

- Make sure the Communication Plan is observed (if needed, send kind reminders to the Ambassadors);

- In January 2020, organize a meeting with the Ambassadors giving them a report with an evaluation of their performance (strengths and weaknesses) and Certificate of Participation.

○ **Campus Ambassadors: role, tasks, benefits**

Two students of each University will be selected to become the Company’s Alpha Ambassadors. Their main duties and tasks include:

- Representing the Alpha Group at the University;

- Promoting and attending the Company's events on campus, such as open days, business breakfasts, presentations/lectures about interesting themes, workshops, campus fair. The promotion shall occur before and after the events (e.g. share photos and synthesis for each event). The main communication channels will be social media (personal LinkedIn pages) and, especially, word of mouth context. The goal is to reach the greatest number of students;

- Diffusion of the Company's job offers that are especially suited to the student's profile (either Business or Engineering);

- Compose brief monthly reports to be sent to the "Campus Relations Coordinator", that must include the "print" of online publications, follow-up on the Company's events (the participating students' opinions), ideas for next events, recommendations and other subjects that may be deemed relevant;

- Assist in pinpoint good students, building relations with them and collecting the CVs of potential candidates;

- Identify the most popular and influential students and invite them for an Open Day at Company Alpha. The goal is for these students to talk about that experience with their colleagues and maybe even share photos of that event.

Regarding the Ambassadors' benefits, they include:

- Direct contact and networking with the Company Alpha professionals;
- Participation in the Company Events, which will enable them to acquire new competencies and soft-skills (e.g. through the workshops);
- Job shadowing with teams of their preference;
- Fnac's Gift cards (150€) at the end of each semester;
- Certificate of Participation;
- The Best Team will be awarded a summer internship at Company Alpha.

X. PROJECT LIMITATIONS

Our Project main goal is to launch an Ambassadors Campus Crew Program, targeted at University students, for Company Alpha.

Faced with an increasing need to attract and recruit young talents, the Company had already launched in the 2nd semester of the academic year of 2015/16, a Campus Crew Ambassador's Program. However, it was not considered successful since it failed to promote the brand among University students and, therefore, to attract them to work at Alpha Group.

Hence, we can verify that Company Alpha had a very clear idea of the Project to be implemented. Consequently, we did not identify the need to collect primary information (e.g. through a survey) and this represents a formal limitation.

Also, taking into consideration the Company's scale and size and that there's already an annual budget for the Human Resources' department dedicated to this kind of initiatives, we have decided not to undertake a Financial Analysis. Moreover, the return on this Project cannot be easily measured since it's related to recruitment, talent attraction, training and engagement with the company's values.

Finally, to protect the anonymity of Company Alpha we have excluded some references where the real name of the Company Alpha was mentioned.

XI. REFERENCES

Note to the reader: To protect the anonymity of Company Alpha, we have excluded some references where the real name of the Company was mentioned.

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