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This thesis dissertation is dedicated to our dear family and friends.

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Kalmar, Sweden, May 2010

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ABSTRACT

Taking into account the rapidly changing of the environment nowadays and the necessity of being different between organizations, this paper tries to show how to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage in companies, through talented people using talent management strategies.

Here is included all theoretical framework where we will explain our understanding of talent management, talented people and the creativity as a talent. This framework gives us the tools needed to be able to analyse a real talent management strategy.

During the analysis we will discover that a talent management strategy has to be fitted with the corporate strategy and with the corporate culture and also, that there are infinite ways to develop the talent management activities, it depends on the organization which develops it. For instance we are going to study two companies, Zerogrey and Google, which are very different between them but both of them have a talent management strategy.

This paper is our thesis work about “Breeding and Nurturing Talents”, where the four chapters and our empirical findings will be presented, followed by our Reference list so far. The first chapter problematizes our area of study and defines the goals and the importance of our research. The second presents the methodological process that we have used. The third chapter seeks to illustrate the main concepts guiding our theoretical development and how they are linked to our object of study. The fourth chapter is our empirical findings and analysis about two companies Zerogrey and Google. Moreover, the Reference list aims to offer an overview of the theoretical framework and the most important authors that has been selected.

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INTRODUCTION

1. Research Area

Our thesis project is about the umbrella “Breeding and Nurturing Talents”, this theme has a multitude of different aspects or view points. For this reason, we will try to delimit our study in a research question to do it possible to perform with the research methods that we will choose. We have focused our thesis on a conceptual structure based on the development of our understanding of talent management and talent people, with a special point dedicated to the creativity. We will focus our attention on the problem of companies exploiting all the imaginative potential of their employees, and we will provide some ideas to solve it through treating employees as extraordinary innovators giving them tools to develop their creativity. In our empirical findings and analysis we have studied two companies, Zerogrey and Google, which use the talent management in a very different way and that they know that their principal key asset is talented people.

We are going to write about **talent management** which is a contemporary problem, because we have observed that there is a positive relation between talent management process and business strategy to obtain the success in organizations. According to the surveys of Price Waterhouse Coopers (2009) the CEOs consider that the talent management of employees is a relevant issue to develop even in a period of crisis and also, that can be a source of a sustainable competitive advantage, where employees are the key assets.

In addition, we think in one question, why is talent management arising more and more now in the organizations? When throughout all the history, organizations always have tried to find people with talents. The answer to this question is that nowadays, companies are using talented management and talented people to obtain a source of sustainable competitive advantage for the organization. Thus, the firm obtains as a result to be always in the first position if we compare with the position of the rest of organizations, which do not use or develop talent management. Moreover, this concept is important because we are in a context characterized by the business world is highly competitive and rapidly changing.

The study of talent management is necessary, due to the lack of theoretical development area and the definition of this concept and its limits and we know that can exist different understanding of the talent management concept, but we would like to present our own understanding. According to Collings and Mellahi (2009) in a survey made in United Kingdom only a 20% of Human Resources Professionals work

with a clear idea of what talent management is, but a 51% of them do not take into account this concept, although they know that it is significant for firms.

The second main issue of our research area that we would like to study is the concept of **talented people**. With this definition we would like to stress the differences between talented and **specialized people**. Besides, we would like to relate these characteristics of talented people with our conception of a leader and also, the leadership style which promotes the existence of talented people in the organizations, which is the democratic leadership.

In this part of our research we want to note the link between talent development and the educational system. The traditional educational system was very focus on learning theories and concepts rather that developing skills as creativity and learning by doing, It means that this system created specialized people more than talented people. Nowadays, the society is aware of this lack of talents and this is reflected in the current educational system changes, one example of that is the Bologna's Plan that we will explain later. Furthermore, we consider the creativity a very relevant talent inside talented people and that is why we are going to explain this talent with more detail.

In our opinion, all these opportunities can lead employees to abuse these advantages to develop their own interests and not to contribute to fulfil the general interest of the enterprise, it means, the mission and purposes. Thus, the leader has to "control" his or her workers but without using authoritarian structures. This leadership style would undermine the work done to encourage imagination, which after all, is one of leader's aims.

The leader hence has to seek other ways to exercise "control", such as obtaining that employees share the leader's vision. Alternative manner committed and motivated them so the leader gets the loyalty of workers. It means that the leader should use all skills that characterize her or his position as communication, influence, motivation, and charisma and so on, but in a new way that involves the management of talents and the management of creative minds.

2. The Objectives of the Project

Our project contains a number of objectives, some of them more practical and others more academic because, of course, we would like to contribute with our study and our conclusions to the creation of knowledge. And also we want that our project would be useful in the real business world, for this reason, we would like to give practical

advices to companies to exploit the full potential of employees to be imaginative people. Also, with this project we want to achieve a deep understanding of the research topic. Our investigation will be based on fields of human resources and administration.

3. The Research Question

Our research areas are talent management, talented people and the creativity that we have mentioned above. The talent management helps to exploit all the potential that talented people have and they do not develop, due to maybe conditions in the company are not suitable, employees do not want or the leader do not know how to achieve it. Conditions such as flexible work, fluent communication without bureaucracy, casual business environment, team work, diversity in teams, dynamic atmosphere, delegation of decision power and so forth. This means that the organization offers plenty of development opportunities to its employees. And also it gives the freedom to think, the freedom to act, the freedom to communicate their imaginative and sometimes bold solutions. The objective of these conditions, which the organizations give to employees, is to break with the grids of acting and thinking that people develop throughout all their life in the society and to regain the imaginative and creative way of thinking of children and also the self confidence that characterize them, but relying on the knowledge of an adult. Nevertheless, these are very expensive actions not only economically but also in terms of time, therefore the company has to ensure that “the investment” reverses through the high performance of its employees.

In this sense, what kind of employee is hired in the recruitment is a factor to take into account, because he or she should not only have this creative potential, but also the employee must know how to assume responsibility. In addition, when employees are working, firms have to develop them and also retain them, it involves certain investments. Therefore, they have to take care of this inversion with the employees' retention, but we do not mean a forced retention we mean a voluntary retention, because employees have to be motivated and engaged with the organization.

Summarising all of these ideas, we will investigate the understanding of talent management and talented people and our research questions is: **how can any organization develop a talent management strategy to obtain superior results?** And we mean that this strategy is always adapted to companies needs, as we will observe in the study of two companies, Zerogrey and Google.

METHODOLOGY

The methodological approach that we have used is the **grounded theory** approach, which is *"a process that allows theory to emerge out of the research material rather than being forced out of it by the use of a predetermined idea or theory and it implies that theory is implicit in the material and can be drawn out by an iterative process of coding and comparison"* (Fisher et al., 2007, p.123).

We have used that approach because we want to create knowledge about "Breeding and Nurturing Talents" specifically about the talent management, talented people and the promotion of the creativity among employees. In addition, we want to give a new view point about this topic.

At first we have built a theoretical framework, according to Fisher (2007, p.126) this task is fitting together all the concepts like in *"a jigsaw puzzle"*. We have made it with the information that we obtained of books, academic articles to develop concepts, thus we have a strong frame for our empirical studies.

Then, we have studied two Case Studies that we have related with the framework. Finally, we have redefined the theory taking into account the relation between the theory and the empirical findings. As we have said before the two companies that we have analysed are Zerogrey and Google. We have chosen Google because it is a big firm which has a huge investment in talent management and talented people. Also they are really innovators in the field of human resources such as motivation, recruitment, development, retaining and much more. We have chosen Zerogrey, which is a small enterprise but they base their strategy on talented people also. The objective is to test if the talent management can be adapted to all kind of organizations.

According to Strauss and Corbin (2008) the grounded theory uses qualitative methods **to collect and to analyse the data**. Our topic is much related with the human behaviour and the human understanding; hence to investigate them we can not use quantitative methods. Moreover, the ambiguity of talented people does not have place in this kind of quantitative techniques. The encouragement of the creativity and the imagination in talented employees has too many social aspects, which are interrelated between them, producing the existence of different understanding of the reality; it means that this is subjective.

The process to apply this approach commences with the data collection. In this stage we have done some **interviews**, we have realized some kind of observations and also we have looked for information in several secondary sources (Strauss and Corbin, 2008).

In the case of Zerogrey we had interviews and open dialogue with four people: the CEO, Guido Meak, and also with three employees: the responsible for marketing, the programmer and the responsible for order management and customer service. And also we did direct observations in Dublin one of the head quarters of the company.

In the case of Google, we have utilized several sources of secondary information as videos and photographs, which show the working environment and the culture and the philosophy of the firm, that impulse the development of talents. In addition, we have used several academic articles, thesis and books. We have used secondary sources because Google is already a relevant company in this area and we could find a large and good quantity of information without direct contacting with the firm.

According to Strauss and Corbin (2008), the analysis of the data is the second stage where we have interpreted the data to redefine concepts that we studied in the theoretical framework looking at them since a practical point of view, such as talent management, recruitment, motivation, talent development, talented people and much more. In these step, we have looked for the information in the data cues, which address us to see how companies achieve the breeding and nurturing of the talents as creativity of their employees through talent management.

The two last steps are the **theoretical integration** where we have joined the theoretical framework with the empirical data to do the analysis of two case studies and thus, we have obtained the conclusions. Finally, we have **redefined the theory**, where concepts that we have obtained from the analysis of the data are interrelated between them and thus, we create knowledge of our subject (Strauss and Corbin, 2008).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1. TALENT MANAGEMENT

1.1. The Concept of Talent Management

In this part of the research we will give our understanding about what talent management is, which is a relatively new concept but its components have been in Human Resources and Management literature for a long time. Now we want to join all these components to shape a formal definition of the concept.

The concept of “Talent Management” stems from the concept of “war for talent”, which was first used by a group of McKinsey consultants in 1997. The concept reflects the change that was beginning in Human Resources needs and practices in response to the new competitive and dynamic environment. “War for talent” is a real war which starts between organizations to attract, develop, motivate and retain the talented employees during the 1990’s (Collings and Mellahi, 2010).

Talent Management concept has been developed during the time; in its first stage, it was a concept only related with the HR practices as recruitment and succession planning. It was a new definition or concept of the HR activities that included the prevision of the future need of workers in the company. A second stage of the concept was related with the staff needs and their progression into the organization; here the Talent Management paid more attention to the personal needs of the employees to achieve their welfare. In its third stage or conception the management of talented people was included. The actual meaning of the concept introduced the idea of key positions in the organization, which have to be identified first and later filled with talented people, the idea is to match the right person with the right job to achieve a superior performance and the motivation of that employee (Collings and Mellahi, 2010).

As we can see in the article “Turning into Talent Management” by an unknown author, there are two different conceptions about what is talent management. The first one is an exclusive definition, where the object of the talent management strategy will be only the superior people in the organization. The second one is an inclusive definition, where all employees of the organization are considered talented people and all of them are to be object of the Talent Management strategy.

Nevertheless according to Lundgren, M (2009-2010), a concept can have a number of different understandings, because it depends on what aspect or feature the individual

focuses his or her attention. That is why there could be a number of different definitions of Talent Management and a number of different ways to develop it but all of them has to share the essence of the concept which is, in our opinion, that talent management is a strategy to treat organization employees in the way that motive them to exploit all the full potential of their talents to accomplish a superior performance for the company.

We will base our explanation of the concept of talent management on the definition of Davis et al, because it is the most close to our own understanding and it is explained in a very clear and organized manner.

According to Davis et al (2007) the talent management is the set of activities related with the recruitment, development and retention of talented people who are able to achieve a superior performance in a particular company, the talent management activities should be conducted through a strategy, it means, *“a deliberate and structured corporate approach to realize the talent management”* (Davis et al, 2007, p.1). The key factor of this definition is that we are looking for a superior performance, it means, to hire people able to do the work is not enough, the talent management strategy is defined to create a talent pool in the organization which will give to the organization a sustainable competitive advantage based in its employees.

We believe that nowadays IT structures and tangible resources are available for all companies to a greater or lesser extent and to access to them is relatively easy through the inversion that is why they can provide a competitive advantage to the company but not for a long time, sooner or later, the competition can mimic the processes or products. It means that the only way to achieve a sustainable are the intangible resources as the talent of the workforce.

Talented people are not easy to manage, they form a demanding group which needs the right stimulations to exploit their big potential, they are high achievers, even they are able to run their own company, who are expecting a successful career in the organization, that is why the company has to give that to their talent employees if it wants to keep them (Davis et al 2007).

The superior performance of the workers is not accomplished by chance, the talent management requires an effort of the organization, and this effort is shaped by the investment required to the activities and also the time to plan the strategy and to execute it. According to Davis et al (2007), to see the payback and the yield of the Talent Management investment is a difficult task, because the result is hardly quantifiable, any kind of investment has risk which must be calculated to decide if the investment is profitable or not, the precise calculation of the financial risk in a Talent

Management investment is impossible. This fact makes the justification of the investment tough. The outcome is to accomplish the excellence in all areas of the organization doing it more effective in the long term, that is a qualitative result which can be seen in the profit but its influence is not direct. One way to estimate the financial risk is to look for the opportunity cost of not making the Talent Management investment, it means, to examine the consequences of not adopting the talent management strategy, overall in a long term.

One cost that we should not forget is the time; according to Collings and Mellahi (2009), the process of applying these activities takes 20% of the organizational time. This time that is not used in the operational activities, so, it costs capital, but if we look in a long time, the talent management will give to the organization more effectively in the process, more agility of the staff to learn fast and a clever workforce able to take fast, news and good decisions.

According to Davis et al (2007) there are two models or mentalities to run a company, first the "survival model or mentality" which is about to do the task good enough to deliver it in the right moment because the business world is full of deadlines, the second one, which fits more with the essence of the talent management is the "achieving mentality or model". This is about to do the things with the highest performance to get the best result, it means that the talented people find the best way to get the aim, not one way more. That is why the talent management has to be integrated in the corporate culture and be supported by all organizational members. The culture of an organization is like the personal traits of a person, it defines the way of its behaviour, hence, if we want an organization which seeks for a complete development of their employees and which nurtures and breeds their talent, its values should be overall the high appreciation and respect for the individual, the building of team spirit and leadership, the staff development, training, coaching and mentoring. The management style has to be a combination of hard skills as the aim of achieving the goals and soft skills as developing and managing people paying attention to their necessities and the best organizational structure, which has impact in the talent development strategy, is a flat and flexible structure to facilitate a high level of traffic of ideas and to make that employees take small responsibilities and thus developing their talent.

According to Davis et al (2007), that strategy has to be integrated in all levels or functions of the organization. That is a hard issue, according to Collings and Mellahi (2010), the 50% of top managers across the globe think that there is a lack of alignment between talent management strategy and the corporate strategy. That is why, talent management is not only an issue of the Human Resources Department, and the executive team is also involved. The executive team tasks in the talent management

strategy is to define which kind of talents or skills the organization is needing now or it will need in the future. This issue depends of the corporate strategy; the direction that the organization wants to follow and the objective that it wants to accomplish define the kind of people who should shape the workforce. For instance, if a company wants to increase its market share, it will have to look for people with special talents in sales or marketing and also result seeker, another example is if the company's goal is to develop new products or new processes to investigate, hence the creativity and innovation are the skills which should be searched and the right people to do that is a developer mind. Another task of the executive team in the talent management strategy is to reflect the needs of the individuals on the organizational objectives, thus the staff will work motivated and to accomplish the firm goal will lead to accomplish their own goals.

According to Davis et al (2007), The HR department has to develop all the operational activities of the Talent Management. It has to prepare an outline with the requirements of the top line, develop a plan of actions and prevision of the cost and finally it has to implement that plan. To hire a Talent Management specialist could be very useful to lead the HR professionals to carry out with the plan. The activities that HR department has to develop are related, firstly, with the recruiting of the talent pool, it involves the identification and evaluation of talented people with high potential in the organization but also in the external labour market and also to hire or to promote them. Secondly, the HP professionals have to develop the talent pool; it means to train them in the skills that the company needs for the future to exploit their full potential and to direct it entirely to improve the organization. The development of the talented people is breeding and nurturing their talents and can be conducted through training or coaching, and through formal or informal way of learning. And finally, the most important task of HR professionals is the retaining of the talented pool, because they are an inversion. The retention is not only about the salary or about economic advantage. It is also about the motivation and commitment, which is achieved with creating a good environment and culture shared for everybody.

According to Berger and Berger (2004), the function of talent management professionals can be divided in four different tasks. The first one is the forecast, which is the foresight of the possible promotion of employees, according to their income, their past experience and the talent showed, in this manner the Talent Management professional can see which employees are talented people and include them in the talent pool. The second task is to create measurement scales for the potential performance. The third one is to identify the core competences that the organization needs and fostering them in the employees, between these powers, it is possible to find the result orientation, the communication skills, the creativity, the innovation, critical

judgements, customer orientation, leadership, team work and so on. And finally the last task of the Talent Management professional is to select a coaching guide, who helps the talent pool to develop those competences and to keep their motivation. We can associate these four tasks with each of the activities of management talent as defined above, the two first are more related with the recruitment of the talent pool, the third one is part of the development of the talent pool and the fourth one is part of the development and also part of the retaining of the talent pool.

Nevertheless we think that this explanation of the Talent Management is not complete because it forgets other important activities as for example the definition of the key positions, the training, the plan of promotion of talented employees and the importance of a good work environment.

According to Davis et al (2007), there are three elements that shape the Talent Management Strategy; they are the recruiting, the development, which include the nurturing and breeding, and the retention, which is about motivation and commitment. In the following parts of the research we will explain with more detail each one.

In conclusion, Talent management is a strategy which involves all levels in an organization and it is about recruitment, development and retaining the most talented people inside the organization. The aim of the strategy is to create a talent pool with the talent potential and skills that the company needs or will need. Members of the talent pool are able to achieve a superior performance for the firm and thus to have a sustainable competitive advantage, that is why it should fit with the corporate strategy. With a right Talent Management strategy the company will become a learning company, where employees are “knowledge workers”, it means that they have the knowledge required to do a very good job, but also it means that they learn quickly and can apply that knowledge in a practical and effective way, finally they have the ability to transfer that knowledge to others in a useful and structured way. The organization will give tools to employees to do that through the Talent Management activities, because it is aware that the outcome depends largely on the competence of their employees, so the firm will take the appropriate steps to ensure their training and their potential exploitation (Davis et al, 2007).

To summarize our understanding of Talent Management, we can say that it is a part of the corporate strategy, because it is developed at the same time and with the same objective, which is the accomplishment of the mission of the organization, that is why the Talent Management is not only an issue for the HR department and it has to be integrated within all organization. The talent management does not have a fixed structure to develop; each company has to develop their own way of Talent

Management strategy to fit it in their own corporate strategy, with their own culture and structure. An important aspect to take into account is that the talent management is an investment in intangible resources; hence its possible results have to be analyzed before to start with its application. The expected outcomes are a superior performance of the workforce and a sustainable competitive advantage based on their talent. Later we will develop with more detail which the three elements of the talent management are, the recruitment, the development and the retention of the talented people.

1.2. Why is Talent Management Important?

This part of our dissertation is about why Talent Management is relevant for the companies. For us the talent management is also important because there is a lack of theoretical development area in the understanding of this concept and its limits and for this reason we would like to study it. First, talent management is a contemporary problem for managers in 21st century, as we have observed in the article Talent Management Must Mesh With Business Goals for Post-Recession Success (2010) by unknown author. We saw here that the 73% of the executives in United States of America agree on the positive relationship between talent management process and business strategy to obtain the success of the organizations. It means that companies recognize the importance of talent management integration with business strategy to get the organizational excellence. Thus, if we want to obtain this organizational excellence we have to carry out the talent management process. We should keep three factors to create and to sustain the success in the firm, the first factor is the creation of a set of career paths, and development and reward plan for the most talented people. This will ensure the high-quality in the company, it means that the organization will achieve and maintain its superiority. The second factor is the identification and development of key positions, which are the jobs critical to organizational current and future success as we have seen before, and then the replacements if there will be future voids for a small number of these key or pivotal positions. This step maintains the continuity in the organization. The last factor is the “segmentation of the talented pool into each investment category and managing the investment in each category appropriately”. It means that the organization should do a “classification of the investment in each employee based on his/her actual and/or potential for adding value to the company” (Berger, L A, Dorothy R, 2003, p.3).

Moreover, as we have seen in the surveys of Price Waterhouse Coopers (2009), the CEOs consider that the talent management of employees is a significant issue to develop even in a period of crisis. This means that the worldwide CEOs agree on the investment in talented people now and in the future to solve the crisis, taking into

account that this period of recession has different patterns and impacts in each country. For instance, Eduardo Elsztain, the President of IRSA Group, thinks that the current crisis is another in the entire crisis that Argentina has suffered and then, they do not have to be afraid of it because they know how to face it. Therefore, we think that the organizations which invest in talents will be the market leaders after the downturn.

And also we consider that Talent Management is important because more and more organizations are speaking now about it. We ask ourselves why are organizations taking more into account the talent management now? And the answer to this question is that throughout all the history the talent management has been used, because in all the organization, from Greeks till now, they always have tried to hire or select the best people for their activities, it means people who have talents. Nevertheless now they are speaking more about it because the companies have realized that the talent management can be a source of sustainable competitive advantage, which allows to be a pioneer or in the first position if they compare with organizations that do not use talent management, this means to be a successful organization.

One argument against the investment in talents could be the marketing approach (Rodríguez I, 2006, p.34), which tries to sell everything that has been produced. In this way we could believe that the organization does not have to manage talents, just the firm has to convince consumers to demand all the products that the organization offers, this activity is carried out by the marketing department. Nevertheless, the marketing department consists of people, who should have talents even if the company wants to implement the marketing approach or not, that is why the organization needs to invest in people and in their talents, because the organization needs compete people who performance well their job. Moreover, we should take into consideration that an organization has to satisfy the needs of consumers and adapt to their behaviours, so they have to invest in talented people who can discover these needs and also who, can push the market to innovate always.

Then, an adequate talent management can be a sustainable competitive advantage for firms to face the recession and the radical changes of the environment. As a result companies should have the right tools to survive in an environment like this. In a world where innovations are increasingly faster and faster, where to find fields to innovate are harder and harder, we see the importance of the investment in talents, because if companies want to escape of the high competition of the industry now they have to invest in talent management, in the full potential of people and one way to do it is through the innovation (Björling, 2010). For this reason we consider that nurturing and breeding talents is necessary for the organizations.

The business world has also rapid changes and its market is getting bigger, every time there are a larger number of companies in all the countries, which is the globalization. Then there is a highly competition that is why we can not be always efficient, thus organizations should invest in talent management to be able to innovate and to be in the first positions in the market (Björling, 2010).

The complexity of this environment leads to seek sustainable competitive advantages for the enterprise, which rest less on the product or service, but in intangible resources such as talented people, that is why they are the key asset in the organization. Therefore, the leader's task is to facilitate and promote the imaginative potential of employees and address it to achieve the renovation of the organization. We consider that the most important challenge for the organization is the maximization of the organization's human capital (Mellahi, Collings, 2009). And we know that a competitive advantage is not found, the company must make great effort to make it, empower it and bring it to the market; this means that they need to invest in the talent management to have key human capital. In addition, not all companies have competitive advantages and when they have them, not all firms have the potential to maintain these advantages (De Wit & Meyer, 2004), because the basement of the competitive advantages has to be the talented people as we will see later.

Now, we will explain some situations in which the Talent Management is an important issue for the organizations:

First, according to Davis et al. (2007), Talent Management is necessary when the companies would like to build winning teams which will be formed by talented people. The organization will use these kinds of teams to solve determinate problems or weaknesses in departments. For instance, if there is a problem in the Financial Department, the organization will build a team to solve this determinate problem and they are going to solve it, because they are competent and experienced people in this field.

Second, these authors think that when the company needs to plan for the future, it means that they can go ahead to the changes in the environment, becoming in the pioneer of the market. Also they should use Talent Management if they want to adapt well to these external changes, because they usually will consider all the possible situations in their future. Thus, the organization is going to obtain business agility and can take advantage of the emerging opportunities of the environment. In addition, an increasingly large number of firms are establishing a Talent Management Department, it means that they will need it for the future and because they think that this department is important for the successful of the enterprise (Davis et al., 2007).

Finally, as we have explained before, the environment is complex and uncertain, that is why the organizations ought to have agility and flexibility to adapt to the changes, such as in the customer behaviour, in the client spending or in the new trends of consumption (Davis et al., 2007). Furthermore, we have to take into account that there are two kinds of change: the reactive and the proactive. The reactive change happens when an organization makes changes in its practices after some threat or opportunity has already occurred. It means that the firm could not control these change before occurring. Proactive change involves actively attempting to make alterations to the work environment or work place and its practices. They are trying to avoid a potential future threat or to capitalize on a potential future opportunity. This means that the company controls the changes (www.referenceforbusiness.com).

Reactive and proactive changes cause the decrease of the confidence both within the enterprise and among consumers. Thus in the company we need a Talent Management Department formed by talented people, which allows to adapt to the changes in the environment. For example one change in the environment of a company can be a merger or an acquisition, in this situation the organization needs to be flexible to join the cultures and values of the two firms, their processes and their products and so forth. To overcome both reactive and proactive changes the organization needs to be flexible and rapidly working, and for this they need talent management to build a workforce able to face these changes.

To summarise, there is a positive relationship between business strategy and the talent management processes, because it promotes the successful of the organizations. That is why even in a period of recession, companies are investing in Talent Management, because that investment will usually allow them to be the leaders market after the downturn. Then, Talent Management can be a source of sustainable competitive advantage, where talented people are the key assets. In conclusion, according to Drucker "*successful enterprises create the conditions to allow their employees to do their best work*" (Thurm, Lublin, 2005). It means that if the organizations want to be successful, they should invest in the talent management of their workers to obtain some conditions in the company such as good environment. Thus, these employees are going to have talents, thanks to the effort of the company and they will try to do their best work, because they will be motivated and engaged with the organization mission (Snell, 2005).

1.3. Theoretical Model of Talent Management

As we have seen, Talent Management is a strategic activity of the company which is taking more importance in recent years, but there is a lack of the theoretical

development area in this field, and also there is not a clear definition about what Talent Management is.

According to Collings and Mellahi (2009) it is possible to identify four different streams of thought about the meaning of Talent Management. The first one relates talent management with Human Resources only, saying that it is the substitute of the HR strategy and limiting the focus on recruitment, leadership development and succession planning. The second stream is focused no more than on developing talent pools; it means to manage the progression of all employees through the positions in the organization and also this approach distinguish the Talent Management from the Human Resources Management. The third stream, which is the most spread out, is focused on the management of talented people, saying that the entire staff has to be formed by very talented people. These authors see some limitations to this stream, because high performers are not necessary in all organization roles, that is why the great investment required to recruit, develop and retain that kind of employees is not efficient. Furthermore, talented people have large ambitions about their career, which are impossible to fulfil for all employees in an organization because there are not manager positions for all of them. Hence they will not be motivated to implement their full potential and achieve organization goals.

For all these reasons Collings and Mellahi recognize a fourth stream of thought for talent management, which is focused first on identifying the key positions into the organization that can provide it of a sustainable competitive advantage and then developing a talent pool of high potential and high performing talented people to fill those roles. These activities would be supported by a right HR architecture (Collings and Mellahi, 2009).

The authors develop a theoretical model based on that stream which explains how their view of Talent Management can provide the firm performance through the work motivation, organizational commitment and extra role behaviour. The model is divided in three steps or tasks, which have to be done to develop an efficient Talent Management strategy. Moreover this strategy has to be integrated with the general strategy of the company identifying talents or skills needed to those key positions right now but also the talents or skills that the company will need in the future, starting to nurture members of talent pool in this way. In the figure 1 we can see the model developed by Collings and Mellahi.

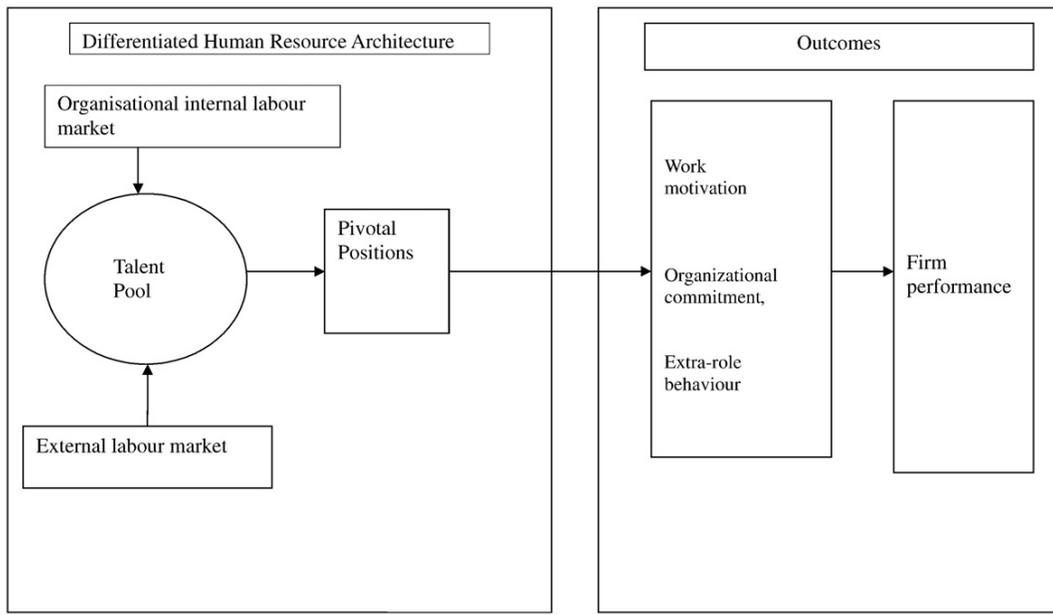


Fig. 1: Model of Collings and Mellahi (2009)

1.3.1. The Identification of the Pivotal Positions

The first step of the model is the identification of the pivotal positions in the firm, which are jobs where the quality of work is highly dependent of the employee who sits. To recognize that pivotal positions, the management team has to classify the different tasks based on the potential results to be obtained, not based on the inputs required to do the job, because in those jobs a high potential employee is needed to obtain the highest output due to the result doesn't depend of another factors like IT structure or the invest on tangible assets. That is why a pivotal position is not necessarily a top position into the organization; it can be one in the bottom line. These key or pivotal positions have something special or unique which make a difference with other competitors and they are the source of sustainable competitive advantages (Collings and Mellahi, 2009).

The identification and definition of the pivotal positions is a key factor to success in the talent management strategy. It is the started point to define which kind of employee and what kind of skills the firm needs in order to find the correct members of the talent pool. Other reason to identify the pivotal positions is the effective investment in the workforce. Recruiting, developing and retaining talented people have a high cost. That is why; the firm has to be sure that the investment will be recovered in the form of high performance and sustainable competitive advantages. This model suggests the realization of investment in talent management activities only for the

pivotal positions and to avoid the over investment in non-pivotal positions, because those are the investments which bring value to the organization. The risk of this investment is related with the difficulty involved in identify the right pivotal positions and consequences of doing it wrong (Collings and Mellahi, 2009).

1.3.2. The Development of the Talent Pool

The second steep or tasks of the Talent Management Strategy, according to the model of Collings and Mellahi (2009), is developing a talent pool. A Talent Pool is a group of high potential and high performing employees who will fill the pivotal positions, to create that, HR professionals have to identify the talented people inside the organization. In addition, not all employees are high performers, so not all employees will be members of the talent pool. It does not mean that the less performers should leave the organization, but they will not occupy any pivotal positions.

To look for inside the organization is not enough to generate the talent pool, authors recognise the potential of the external labour market to have good candidates who introduce new tendencies and new ways to work. Relating with that issue, Collings and Mellahi (2009) introduce the idea of “boundaryless careers”, which is the opposite of organizational careers and fosters the employee mobility between different companies, allowing them to develop a broad range of talents. The organizational effectiveness can be increased with that kind of career movements into a network of organizations which also help to the talented employee to be more motivated giving them new challenges and opportunities to improve.

Lastly, Collings and Mellahi (2009) show that the way to develop this talent pool is not recruiting the best people and then, create or find a place for them into the organization, because to have the best people does not ensure the success, they also have to be in the right place at the right moment. Hence a talent management strategy should be linked with the general strategy of the firm. In conclusion the process of developing a talent pool is more about, first identify the future business necessities on skills, capabilities and knowledge which are not presented in the organization currently and then develop that in talented employees of the firm or look for them in the external labour market.

1.3.3. The Creation of Human Resources Architecture

The third and last steep or task defined by Collings and Mellahi (2009) in their model is creating a differentiated Human Resources architecture, it means designing a set of Human Resources (HR) process or activities to accomplish the two other steps of the model and to improve the organisational performance and effectiveness.

There are two streams of thought about how designing the HR architecture, the first one is a general configuration of HR practices which fit in all kind of organizations and improve all of them, the second one is a particular set of HR practices for each organization to align it better with the environment, with the strategy and with the vision. Collings and Mellahi prefer this second stream because their model fosters the union between talent management strategy and corporate strategy (Collings and Mellahi, 2009).

The set of Human Resources practices are the following. Firstly, classify the different kind of employees inside the company depending on the value that they bring to the company and whether they are unique, because the high investment is going to be done in unique and valuable employees. Secondly, to fit the HR practices to the organizational context. The HR Department is responsible for seeking talents required in the pivotal positions defined by management team into the firm or recruiting them from the external labour market to create the talent pool. Finally, the last and maybe the most important HR practices are those related to retain talented employees through building motivation and commitment environment of talented employees into the organization and also through giving opportunities for development the full potential of the talent pool. To build the motivation the HR architecture has to attend to the employees' interest (Collings and Mellahi, 2009).

The key factors to the success of the Talent Management strategy are the talent employees' motivation and commitment created. That strategy has indirect and positive impact in the organizational outcomes, both financial and organizational, because a good Talent Management Strategy provides to the organization the right workers in the right position and also it provides the right work environment which provoke the high employees' performance, which leads to achieve superior outcomes and even a sustainable competitive advantage (Collings and Mellahi, 2009).

1.3.4. The Employee Performance

Collings and Mellahi (2009) explain the employee performance through a formula where the result of the employee depends on the ability, the motivation and the opportunity of the worker.

$$P= (A, M, O)$$

First of all, the Ability is the employee's potential and the talent and knowledge that the worker has. This variable is accomplished by the definition of pivotal positions and

the selection of members of the talent pool. Secondly, the Opportunity is the possibility that the organization give to the employee to contribute to the performance, challenging them to improve and to develop their skills, taking into account that talented people have high aspirations about their growth which have to be fulfil to exploit all their potential. This variable is accomplished by placing these employees in the pivotal positions which require a wider responsibility and take strategic decisions and also by giving them the opportunity to have a boundaryless careers or an organizational career. Lastly, the Motivation is the force, activities and the environment which leads the employee to work voluntarily in a certain direction and also make them feel good with that work and committed to the company. The organisational commitment is achieved when the workers are involved and identified within the organization. At this point values and the vision of the company play a major role (Collings and Mellahi, 2009).

In conclusion, we agree almost completely with this Talent Management model defined by Collings and Mellahi and we want to base our investigation on it but we would like to discuss the issue related to what happens to employees who are not classified as talented people which does not mean that they are not good employees and people with a number of needs; we believe that they don't have to be out at all of the talent management activities. The non-talented employee does not have the aspiration to take responsibilities and to be promoted, but it does not mean that the firm does not have to take care of them. Taking into account that this kind of employees performs the operational activities in the organization, we can say that they move the machine that talented people design. That is why, the organization has to keep them motivated, of course it is not necessary to do a huge investment but it is to create a good environment, a good place to work, to keep them informed about how the organization is going on, to give them part of the benefits or other kind of advantages. Nevertheless maybe a good solution is to create a pivotal position where a talented person plays the role of the leader of those employees. That person has to keep them motivated, informed, and also he has to organize the work and to influence them to achieve the objective.

1.4. The Recruitment of the Talent Pool

The recruitment of the members of the talent pool is the first task of the Talent Management Strategy. The talent pool is a group of people who has special traits and will be developed by the organization and is the source of the future senior executives. The recruitment is the moment when the organization decides in which talented people, who are intangibles resources, will invest. To minimize the risk of a wrong hiring or promoting, which can are, according to Bruzeus (2010), between 1.5 and 2

times the year salary of an employee, the team manager has to define key positions in the organization and which are talents or skills that these positions require. That is why the assessment of candidates has not to be done with lower recruitment standards that provide people only able to do a good work, which is the failure of a traditional recruitment. The organization has to select a criterion for the search and to develop a talent filter to evaluate the potential candidates (David et al., 2007).

The source of talented people can be internal; it means people who are already working into the company, or external which is the labour market. According to David et al. (2007), the best way to create the talent pool is the internal source because this allows taking advantages of the learning curve, since these employees have already the knowledge about the corporate culture, and how the business processes work, thus the time required for the adaptation of new employee is not necessary, and he or she can be incorporated directly into the new position. Another reason to prefer the internal source more than the external that the authors give in their work is the negative effect in the morale of the workforce to hire a new manager outside the organization, because it can seem that the HR professionals have not found the talent required inside the organization and also, the staff can see the new manager as a strange. For this reason the authors say that the external recruitment has to be managed carefully and it only has to be used when the talent searched is not inside the organization.

However, we see some advantages in attending to the external labour market to form the talent pool. The organization does not have to leave it just as the second option, other ways they will loose a number of very good candidates. The external source can introduce "new blood" inside the organization, it means, new ways to think and to behave which can renew the process and also it introduces a fresh approach and a new knowledge, which can be transferred to other members of the organization. The external pool is essential if the company wants to provoke a proactive change in the organization but it is also very important to be able to react in a creative way to the changes in the environment and thus to stay ahead of competition.

To be able of hire the right talented people for the key position that we have identified before, the HR professionals should design a talent filter or a criterion to do the selection. According to Davis et al. (2007), one tool to evaluate the candidates is the talent search matrix, which shows different combinations of qualitative and quantitative elements, skills or traits that show the image of the employee that the company is looking for. This matrix allows the recruiters to focus on the characteristic that are required not on the job that has to be done.

The matrix defines six elements or aspects to shape the image of the person needed, they are experience, profile, qualification, expertise, potential and quantification. These can be divided in two groups, the three first, experience, profile and qualification, are objective aspects which refer to situations of the past or the present and they are easy to measure. The three second, expertise, potential and quantification, are subjective aspects which refer to the future development of the person who the organization is seeking (Davis et al., 2007).

According to Davis et al., 2007, the explanation of elements of the matrix is the following:

- Experience: they are different experiences that the required candidate might have in team leadership, budget, and project management and so on in the last positions.
- Profile: they are the personality traits expressed in form of personal profile that are desired for the candidate, they usually are the creativity, energy, the ability to work under pressure and ambition.
- Qualification: it is the CV, it means, the academic or professional achievement, international experiences or language skills that are desired for the candidate.

Elements above mentioned are easily defined and quantifiable, and also they are easily identified in the candidates just looking at their profiles or CV, but the three followings are more difficult to identify, because it can not be seen in a paper, the recruiter has to seek them through interviewing the candidates and observing their behaviour.

- Expertise: they are personal strengths, but this time not from a personal profile. They usually are ability to hand the change, flexibility, communication skills and so on, all of them are skills or traits of a leader.
- Potential: is the level of responsibility that the candidate must aspire and should be able to manage, to be a member of the talent pool, it has to be at least a senior executive level.
- Quantification: is the level that the company is seeking in the candidate on the capability to be success in operational terms.

The matrix is not only a way to draw the ideal candidate through the definition of some parameters; it is also very useful for the management team to be aware of the current situation of the company and the potential that it has, but also to be aware of

real needs that it has in terms of talented people to accomplish the goal. (Davis et al, 2007).

Once key positions and thus the matrix are defined, the company has to start the search in the internal and external labour sources and compare the profile and the traits of the candidates with the matrix requirements. The enterprise will choose candidates who match with necessities defined in the matrix. But that is only the first step of the Talent Management process. When the company has the members of the talent pool it should start with the development of the talent of those employees. In the next part we will explain how this development is done (David et al., 2007).

To summarize the recruitment issue we have seen that the most important aspect of the recruitment of the talent pool is that the company has to know which kind of talents and skills it needs inside the organization before starting the selection process, and in our opinion, the use of internal or external recruitment depend of what the firm wants to achieve with that hire, if the managers want to start a radical change in the direction of the company or if they want to renew it, the best option is the external sources, but if the organization priorities are to obtain the best results with the current operational activities, the best option is the internal sources.

1.5. The Development of the Talent Pool

When the members of the talent pool have been selected the organization has to start with their development, to become them in perfect employees for that company. Taking into account that almost all the talent pool will be managers of that company in the future, a training to make sure that the future of the business is in the best hands, is fundamental (Davis et al., 2007).

According to Davis et al. (2007), the most of the desired talent matrix elements are present in talent pool members, but others will be obtained by formal or informal training, even those talents which are inherent in the employee should be developed to increase them and achieve their maximum potential. The aim of this step of the Talent Management Strategy is to transform the talented people in successful people.

According to Davis et al (2007), the development is only the formal and the informal training of the talent pool but we believe that it does not only involves training, but also it involves the nurturing and the breeding of the talents, which, are not a real training, it is more about giving the right tool to the talented people to help them to develop themselves. Those tools are for example an open mind environment where the traffic of ideas is very fluent, and where the top managers are open to listen all the new ideas. Other tool is a stimulating workplace, it means of course physically, with

for example, different work environments, kind colours, clean air and natural light, but also it means a team work full of diversity, diversity of professions, age diversity, gender diversity and diversity of cultures, because it fosters the creation of new ideas. According to Stevens (2010), the variety or diversity of people in the organization is very enriching, as well as the diverse team work is the best way to find the solution or new processes, and also it helps people to develop themselves and to become in the people that they want, that means the satisfaction of the employee.

The step of development of the talent pool, according to Davis et al. (2007), is the training of the talented people. It has a number of tasks which are the evaluation of competences, capabilities and potential of the talent pool, then, looking for the talent matrix deficiencies and develop a training programme to cover these deficiencies and also the evaluation of the result of the training. Talent Management Professionals should design a strategy to acquire the competences to generate superior results.

According to Davis et al. (2007), there are two kind of development. Firstly, the knowledge development, it means, to equip the employee with professional and technical skills and corporate knowledge to do a specific role. The idea is to prepare the individual to the next role before to be promoted and take more responsibilities, and thus they can avoid the lost of confidence that this kind of promotions can provoke when the employee is not motivated. One type of this knowledge development, which is very usual, is when the firm pays the superior education of a talented employee; it can be an academic career or a specialized master programme. That kind of education is usually expensive, that is why the company has to ensure that the inversion on this employee is profitable, it means, it has to ensure that the employee has the capacity of learning fast and of applying the knowledge in a creative way. Moreover, the enterprise has to be sure that the employee is committed to the company and is willing to exploit the knowledge gained in improving business.

According to Davis et al. (2007), the second kind of development is about personal skills, it means, the personal characteristics which the talented worker will need during all his or her career. They are leadership, insight, focus, dedication, integrity, communication, ambition and so on.

However here is questioned the issue if this class of traits is inherent in a person or it can be developed with training. Our opinion is that everybody has some traits inherent in the personality or developed during the childhood, these traits can be developed and enhanced with training but only if they exist in the personality of a person, we believe that they can not be created from nothing.

According to Davis et al. (2007), the knowledge development and the development of personal skills can be done through formal or informal training. The formal training is the educational programs where all the time is dedicated to learn. The informal training is the coaching and mentoring arrangements, where the learning is done during the work time. There is a difference between coaching and mentoring, the first one, coaching is when an experienced manager of the department helps the talented employee, showing him or her how to do the work and mentoring is when a senior executive or experienced manager takes the role of trusted advisers who guide the talented employee transferring knowledge and also values, the mentor is the reference point to test the new ideas or assumptions of the talented employee. Although the two types of development can be made by the two types of training, normally, the knowledge development is done through formal training as courses or superior education and the development of personal skills is done through informal training because to develop this kind of skill is not useful a lesson or a course. The personal traits will rise from the relationship created between the mentor or the coach and the talented employee.

1.6. The Retention of the Talent Pool

According to Davis et al. (2007), the last and maybe the most important task or step of the talent management is the retention of the talented people inside the organization. We believe that these talented people are investments of the organization and also the key of its success; that is why the company should keep them in the organization. The retention should not be enforced through contracts or deals, it has to be voluntary, otherwise the employee will be in the organization but he or she will not exploit all the potential in accomplishing the organizational goal.

The talented people are very ambitious and they expect a high development of their career and they demand the help of the organization to achieve that development. Hence, they will stay in the firm only if the employer gives them every opportunity to develop their potential. So the retention is about motivation, commitment, career investment, career project and also rewarding, which does not mean only money (Davis et al, 2007).

The career investment program of a company shows that it is ready to invest in its staff to help them to achieve their entire development and to acquire new skills and knowledge, if the staff sees that effort of the company, they will answer with a superior performance, it is like an implicit contract between organization and talented people. The corporate investment that the enterprise can do to attract and retain talented resources are the training, the recruitment process, the internal communication, HR

infrastructures and in a talent management strategy. If a firm does this investment is because is a enterprise which takes care of their employees and it will become in a magnet for talented people who will want to work for that company (Davis et al, 2007).

According to Davis et al (2007), building a corporate loyalty is a very effective way to retain the talent pool, but the loyalty in a long term is not related with high salaries and a good financial package, maybe it works in a short term but in a long term the talented people are looking for something more and also to maintain a program of very high salaries and extensive benefits is not possible for a long time. however when we say that the salary is not a tool for retain the talented people, we do not want to say that it is not important, the firm has to pay for the talented people because they are very valuable and all companies want to hire them, that is why the organization has to maintain the level of its salaries reflecting the general market conditions.

The loyalty is achieved when the firm builds a brand soul, it means, the characteristic of the organization, the real essence, the vision, the passion and the culture, which includes values and the way of operating. This brand soul is shared for all members in the organization, creating a feeling of union, it means, they feel that they are the part of a whole and that they understand completely the company. Furthermore the brand soul can be a good tool to attract new talents, because the talented people want to work in a talented organization. The brand soul is an image or a picture of the essence of the company which shows the firm to the environment (Davis et al, 2007).

We want to note that sometimes an employee will stay into the company just because is a specific firm, which has a good image or because it realizes a very interesting activity which can gives him or her a specific skill, knowledge or even reputation. When that happens, it is because the organization has built a powerful brand soul. This can help to the company to attract the most talented people without making a great investment in the recruitment, development and overall in the retention.

The next tool to retain the talent pool is the promotion processes; they have to be open and transparent, because the promotion based on a personal relationship destroys the morale of their employees. However a promotion process based on meritocracy, it means when the promotion processes is based on employee's achievements and on the potential that he or she shows, can increase the employee's commitment and also his or her self confidence and motivation. The reason of this rise of the motivation and commitment is that they see that their effort is taken into account by the organization and it can be rewarded if they show a superior performance. Hence, a formal promotion panel or board can build the trust of the workforce. The career plans are also much related with the promotion processes and it can be also a great tool to retain the talent pool, but the key is to full the promises that the company does when

the employee is hired to avoid the disillusionment of the employee. The career plans shows to the employee that this firm can give the development that he or she is looking for the talent (Davis et al., 2007).

The most important tool or aspect for retaining the talent pool is the motivation. That is the key for the success in the talent management strategy because the level of effort that the employee will do is equal to the “reward”, which is not only money, so the motivation has to be sustained. The motivation can be achieved through all the actions mentioned above, but also through others as realistic objective setting, culture of continual learning, paying attention to the ideas that the employee presents and fostering the creativity. There are four factors which foster the motivation and we can order them in base on the importance that talented people give to them, they are the recognition, the opportunity, the job satisfaction and the last one is the money. Therefore we can say that the key motivator is the recognition, it shows the necessity of all people to gain a reputation and to feel valuable because it reaffirm to them what they are. The reason for the recognition will be situated in the first place is that if a talented person gets it, to achieve the rest of the motivation factors, they are opportunity, job satisfaction and money will be easier (Davis et al., 2007).

2. TALENTED PEOPLE

Above we have explained about talent management from the company's management view, it means how the talent management treated talented people and now, we are going to consider talented people from the employees' view. It means that we would like to explain what talented people is for us, the talents that employees should have to be this kind of people and how they develop these talents during all their life and specifically in the working life.

2.1. Definition of Talented People

Before starting with the definition of talent people, we want to define what the talent is for us. According to Davis et al. (2007) talent is a special attitude, faculty or a high mental ability. Another definition that we would like to emphasize is according to Cheese, Thomas and Craig (2008, p.9) *"talent has become a precious resource fought over by competitors in a global war of talent"*. It means that as we will explain later all the organizations need talents in the individuals because they are key assets to obtain added value. As we can see also in a quotation of Drucker *"Central to his philosophy was the belief that highly skilled people are an organization's most valuable resource"* (Drucker & Maciariello, 2005).

Now with the definition of talented people, we would like to stress the differences between talented and specialized people, because the limits between these two concepts are not clearly defined. We consider that specialized people are who have a vast knowledge about a precise activity or subject; they are professionals in their field, while talented people should have another personal features. They are a small group who has demonstrated superior achievements, has inspired others and who embodies the core competencies and values of the company (Berger & Dorothy, 2003). Moreover, talented people are always socially and emotionally competent. For example they can work efficiently and effectively in a team if we compare them with specialized people, the last ones sometimes can work well in a team group but not always, because talented people have a set of talents that specialized people usually do not have them. It is the same that as we have seen in class, a leader can or could always be an expert, but an expert always can not be a leader, it means that talented people can be always specialized people, but specialized people always can not be talented people. Thus, we think that an organization always needs talented people and we are going to argue this concept with a quotation of Bill Gates, *"take our twenty best people away from us and I can tell you that Microsoft would be an unimportant company"* (Berger, Dorothy, 2003, p.4), it means that a company consist of people, who have talents but they need a small group of people with more skills or talents to achieve the goals of the

organization and without them the organization can not achieve them. Therefore, the firms should identify, select, develop and retain these talented people (Berger, Dorothy, 2003).

To summarise talented people are a group of individuals, who has demonstrated superior achievements, has inspired others and who embodies the values of the organization (Berger & Dorothy, 2003) and who has personal features, which allow them to have socially and emotionally competence. Then, the company needs to know which the signs of the talents in the people are to find talented people.

2.2. Which are the Signs of the Talents?

Here, according to Davis et al. (2007), we will draft some features to find talents in the individuals, for this reason companies should look for them to obtain talented people.

First, the capability in the role, it means that a person who has this ability can deliver his/her work or activity with superior results in any allocated role. This is the difference between talented and specialized people, because the last one can obtain good results but only in their role, while talented people can obtain superior outcomes in all the roles. Talented people sometimes use a structured approach to solve the problems that could appear in their roles. This approach consists of the nature value of the achievement, the identification of its key points, which sometimes can be organised in a performance matrix. Then, they determinate in a plan how to achieve the solution of problems and finally, they implement the plan.

Second, the ability to handle change, it means that people with talents see the changes as opportunities and not as threats, which are moments to demonstrate their competencies and capabilities to embrace the changes and to improve the organization. They are able to overcome bad situations and learning valuable lessons, it means they can manage the failures (Davis et al., 2007).

Third, the capacity for learning, talented people are able to learn new skills and to manage them constantly. These individuals are curious, because they are always looking for new ways to solve problems or doing things; it means that they are always expanding their knowledge. In addition, they can apply their knowledge to determinate problems quickly and also, they have the ability to absorb rapidly the new concepts (Davis et al., 2007).

Finally, they have the personality of a leader. The leader is a person who has the power to influence in the people to do as he/she wants, and also he/she facilitates the success of all their activities and who plays many roles. According to Caroselli (2000),

these roles can be visionary, problem-solver and reason ability, team-builder, manager, communicator, power distributor, liaison, planner and so forth.

We believe that as a visionary, a leader has a clear idea of him/her objective for the future. As a problem-solver a leader must have a balance between creativity and knowledge. But a leader is nothing without good followers, so a very important role is to be team-builder, in this process the leader achieves that the team members are committed to working together, the way is sharing the vision, involving whole team and persuading the members to embrace it, letting them know what is expected of them. One very important issue is that into the team there are different personalities, and its combination can be very difficult, a leader has to understand the personalities of team members and he or she has to align the different task with different personalities making the best combinations. The best team is a diverse team, with creative and logical people, and where conflicts are a tool to find the solution. Of course a leader has to develop the manager task, but also manage himself to avoid the stress, we mean, avoid the mental, emotional and physical exhaustion. And also, a leader has to manage the followers' emotions, it is the emotional intelligence, the skill is to transmit energy to motivate and create a feeling of unity within the firm. Finally, we consider that the formal and informal communication is one of the most important skills of a leader; a good communication talent allows the leader to make clear his or her vision, transferring energy to the staff to perform their work and motivate them, persuading people and capture their attention. The communication generates personal relationship in the workplace.

All the opportunities, that the company gives to employees for training, developing, and much more, can deal employees to abuse these advantages to develop their own interests and not to contribute to follow the general interest of the enterprise, it means, the mission and purposes. Thus, the leader has to "control" his or her workers but without using authoritarian structures. This leadership style would undermine the work done to encourage for example the imagination and the motivation of the employees. According to Mintzberg (2009) the motivation and the commitment of employees are very significant aspects to contribute to the generation of ideas for the improvement of the firm, taking into account all the views of workers.

The leader hence has to seek other ways to exercise "control", such as obtaining that employees share the leader's vision. Alternative manner committed and motivated them so the leader obtains the loyalty of workers. It means that the leader should use all skills that characterize her or his position as communication, influence, motivation, charisma and so on, but in a new way that involve the management of talents.

Summarising our ideas, we would like to stress that there are different ways of the manifestation of the talents and for us the most important are: the continuous accomplishment of superior results, the management of the external changes, the capacity of learning constantly and the personality skills. Then when companies can see these kinds of signs in people we could say that they are talented people.

2.3. Self Actualization

An important concept for our thesis is Maslow's Pyramid of needs, which we have used as a source of psychology. It is a relevant concept for the talent management, because the potential development of individuals is a necessity to accomplish the self actualization. An organization with talent management strategy helps to their employees to cover that need, for this reason when a firm is planning its talent management strategy has to be aware of that necessity and also it can align employees' interests with company's interest to create added value. It is a theory proposed by Abraham Maslow in his work: A Theory of Human Motivation (1943). Maslow formulated in his theory a hierarchy of human needs and he argues that as the most basic needs met (bottom of the pyramid), human needs and desires develop high (top of the pyramid) as we can see in the following figure.



Fig.2.: An interpretation of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Maslow, 1970).

The main idea is that the higher needs occupy our attention only when they have satisfied the lower needs of the pyramid. It means that everyone is born with the perceived need to experience self-actualization, which is developed if the individual has satisfied the other needs of the pyramid, for this reason, individuals have the

desire to develop their full potential, to become more and more what one is. For instance, one person may have the strong desire to become an ideal parent and in another it may be expressed in being the best in his/her job or being the best athlete.

Therefore, according Maslow (1998) everyone needs to nurture and develop their talents to obtain the self-actualization such as learning, creativity, fairness, responsibility and justice, because they are in the person's nature. The arguments of this author are important because it raises issues as responsibility (esteem) and the necessity of personal development (self-actualization). Nevertheless at the same time we should take into consideration that there are differences between self-actualized person's needs and the personality traits.

Nevertheless, inside talented people as we have considered before there are several categories. We think that all individuals have talents but there are some individuals who have more talents than others, for this reason the organization needs to know who the most talented people are to invest more in them than in the rest. It means that the companies should invest in the appropriate people the appropriate amount of resources, because this kind of practises to identify, select, develop and retain talented people are extremely expensive and they should spend more capital in the people who will give more added value to the company. In addition, these actions are very expensive actions in terms of time also; therefore the company has to ensure that "the investment" reverses through the high performance of its employees.

To conclude, all humans are born with the need of self-actualization, this means that people have the desire to develop their full potential to become what they want in their life. Therefore, the desires to have talents and to become talented people are inside the person's nature. Nevertheless, companies are conscious of that not all people get the same performance because they have different kind of talents, that is why they need to know who the most valuable employees are to invest more capital in them without wasting the money.

2.4. The Educational System

In this part of our research we want to emphasize the link between talent development and the education system. The traditional educational system, both at the school and at the university, was not focus on developing the full potential of people. This system was very focus on learning theories and concepts rather that developing skills as creativity, oratory, team working and learning by doing, it means that this system created specialized people more than talented people. We know that it is different in the diverse countries, but we are taking into account the traditional school some years ago in Spain for example.

Nowadays, the society is aware of this lack of talents and this is reflected in the current educational system changes, one example of that is the Bologna's Plan. It is a deal between different Ministers of Education of Europe to create the European Higher Education Area, which tries to do a convergence process of University studies throughout Europe. For instance, from now all the University degrees will last four years in the whole Europe, for this reason, all bachelors will have the same value in the different countries of EU which will allows the free circulation of knowledge. Then, with these shifts, European Union tries to change the way to learn of the students giving them more freedom to think, more freedom to act, more freedom to communicate their imaginative and sometimes bold solutions of problems. Exploiting all the potential of the students and also, teaching and giving them excellent conditions to apply in their future jobs. Conditions such as flexible work, fluent verbal and non-verbal communication, team work, diversity in teams, practical work, oral examinations, more presentations and so forth. This means that the school and the University will offer from now plenty of development opportunities to its students to foster talents as creativity and imagination (www.queesbolonia.es).

To summarise, the traditional educational system was fomenting specialized people but now the society is aware of the importance to be a talented people and for this, the actual educational system are trying to promote actions to foster the appearance of talents as creativity in the students and one of this initiatives can be the example of Bologna's Plan.

Also, we have seen the importance of talented people for the company before, because they are the key assets and now we would like to consider inside the talents of these individuals, that for us one of the most relevant talents is the creativity.

3. CREATIVITY

The specific topic that we will research in this part of our thesis is the nurturing of talents as creativity and imagination, exploiting all the potential that people have and they do not develop due to maybe conditions in the company are not suitable, employees do not want to do it or the leader does not know how to achieve it. Conditions such as fluent communication without bureaucracy, flexibility, casual business environment, team work, diversity in teams, dynamic atmosphere, delegation of decision power and so forth. This means that the organization offers plenty of development opportunities to its employees to develop and train their talents. The objective of all of these conditions, is to break with grids of acting and thinking that people develop throughout all their life in the society and to gain the imaginative and creative way of thinking of children and also the self confidence that characterize them, but relying on the knowledge of an adult. But now, let us start with the concept of creativity.

3.1. Definition of Creativity

According to Lumsdaine & Binks (2007) the word creativity has two origins, Latin and Greek. In Latin, creativity comes from “creare” to make and in Greek, creativity is derived from “kreinein” to fulfil. The first view means that creativity enables us to create something new, the development of new products or/and processes which will displace old versions. In the second view means that creativity allows the use of our imagination to create new horizons of what we do and what we believe about our full potential, the fulfilling of our individual bases.

Another definition that we want to take into account is according to Nilsson (2010) that the creativity is the ability to use the imagination to transcend traditional ideas, rules, patterns, relationships, or the like, and to create meaningful new ideas, forms and methods. In the talent management activities to treat key employees as extraordinary innovators is fundamental giving them tools to develop their creativity. In the search of talented people, leaders have to look for entrepreneurial minds. It means that talented individuals should have entrepreneurial minds, but not in the sense of creating a new business, but in the sense that the entrepreneurs are creators, empathizers, pattern recognizers and meaning makers (Nilsson, 2010). Then, if companies need people with talents as creativity, they should know the sources of the creativity to implement them in their employees.

3.2. Creativity Sources

Formerly, it was believed that creativity could come from sources such as the divine inspiration, serendipity, contrived luck or determinism, but nowadays we will use that the creativity comes from the learning processes. Anyway, according to Lumsdaine & Binks (2007), we are going to explain traditional and new sources of creativity in the following lines.

First, the divine inspiration view means that the creativity is derived from God or higher-order thinking. Second, the serendipity view means that the creativity is the accidental outcome of a fortuitous coincidence of thoughts and events. Third, the contrived luck view means that the creativity is a natural result from greater conditions. Forth, the determinism view means that the creativity is forced via determinism to solve a particular problem, so creativity has to occur.

Finally, the learning processes are the view that we will utilize as the source of creativity. It means that the high levels of creativity come from the application of some processes, which influence in our way of thinking and behaving. Thus, they teach us to be more creative.

3.3. The Relationship between Creativity and Innovation

According to Lumsdaine & Martin (2007) the Herrmann Dominance Instrument has four specialized thinking clusters in the brain. One of them (the upper right) is related with the creative thinking capabilities such as visual skills, big pictures, taking risks, being spontaneous and much more (www.athenaonline.com). The creator, Herrmann saw that the creativity is a dynamic activity that involves conscious and subconscious mental processing in generating and idea and making something happens as a result; but the creativity does not occur in isolation, it needs the person's mind, ideas and inventions. Moreover, we usually use the creativity for solving problems in different ways, but also it is necessary for the innovation. The organizations sometimes utilize the words creativity and innovation with the same meaning. Nevertheless, there are some differences between these two concepts. We know already what creativity is and now we will explain the concept of innovation that is the practical application of the creativity in an organization, which usually requires a team. To allow the innovation, the good communication of ideas in all the directions is necessary and crucial inside the companies. Another difference between these concepts is that creativity is usually in the beginning of the process to create something and the innovation happens much later. Innovation is much safe because it is when the product or process is established. Managers often prefer to use the word innovation instead of creativity,

because sometimes creativity has some negative connotations such as the possibility of failing (Lumsdaine & Binks, 2007).

To conclude the creativity and the innovation do not have the same meaning. The creativity enables us to make something new and the innovation is the practical way of the creativity, it means that the innovation is the next step of the creativity.

3.4. Skills of Creative People

They are curious, because they are always inventing new ways of doing things or solving problems or improving existing products or services. For this, they need to be updated, observing new and traditional trends, comparing them and looking for all the opportunities that they can find in the environment. They are people who have realized that to be successful in a project, firstly they should be passionate in their work, they should take risks so they do not have to be afraid of making mistakes and also, they have to improve it with small and continuous steps. They use the creative thinking to solve conflicts and also they know the importance to acquire and to have this kind of skills to success in the rapidly changing and innovative world in these times (Lumsdaine & Binks, 2007).

Here we can think that is easy to be a creative person but sometimes there are some barriers to the creativity.

3.5. Barriers to Creativity

All humans know that we are born with the talent of the creativity, but when we are in the school or at home or in our daily live we usually establish some barriers to our creativity. According to Lumsdaine & Binks (2007), we will explain three types of barriers to this talent: false assumptions, learned habits and emotions.

First, we consider false assumptions: the belief that the normal behaviour is that people are not creative and the attitude of playing for children is frivolous. The first is not true, because it is demonstrated that all humans have a huge potential to be creative, but we do not know and we do not use it. The second assumption is false also and it is imposed in the business sector, in the schools and also between the parents. The play is a very significant aspect for our cognitive development, then, children have to play in their lives. Between the business world, we have seen in some European Initiatives such us "Creativity, Innovation, People. A selection of European good practices" and in the Manifesto of "European Ambassadors for Creativity and Innovation" (2009) that the organizations are trying to promote the learning through creativity. To get this, organizations are investing in new ways of learning processes

for their employees, because all the people have the right to use their creativity talent. These initiatives consider that creativity and innovation can move organizations forward toward prosperity, but organizations need to take responsibility for how they are used. Today, they must be mobilised in favour of a fair society with respect for nature and for the health and well-being of people worldwide. Then, to create a more creative and innovative Europe, they present these initiatives, which set out their priorities and their recommendations to find a way out of the current stalemate in this period of crisis (ec.europa.eu).

In addition, we saw in this document that the diversity is an important concept that has to be applied in the organizations, due to the sharing of knowledge between groups of different cultures flourishes the creativity, because they contain different understandings of the same concept.

Second, the learned habits are other barriers to the creativity. When we are doing a test we usually think that there is only one right answer, but it depends on the formulation of the question or the criteria to respond the question, it means that can be more correct solutions. For this reason we should look for alternatives to compare with which we think is “the right answer” to know which the best is. For example, when children do not know how they can do something they are always trying to invent new ways of doing, but adults insist that the kids have to learn the same way of doing things that all of the society. Another habit is when we look at a problem in isolation. Before trying to find answers for a problem, we should take into account if this problem forms part of a larger problem, in this case we can not consider the problem alone, and it means that the context is important. Thus, talented people should have a wide point of view because if not it will be a barrier to creative thinking, becoming specialized people or experts instead of people with talents. The last habit that we consider a barrier to the creativity is when we follow the rules. Are always the rules really necessary or helpful? We believe that the rules are necessary in the company to control the employees, the results and so on, nevertheless they do not have to impede the creative thinking, and then rules are necessary when they have a right purpose to exist. These kinds of habit barriers can be solved if we consider the different ways to solve the problem, if we look for them in a huge context and if we analyse the purpose of the rules (Lumsdaine & Binks, 2007).

Finally, the third barriers to the creativity can be the emotions. We are going to speak about two types of emotions or attitudes: negative thinking and risk-avoidance. The negative thinking is based on paying our attention only in the bad personal skills rather in good features. The risk-avoidance means that all people have the fear of failure, which impedes the creative thinking. To break with these emotional barriers, companies should encourage their employees with positive feedbacks when they give

creative ideas and also, employees should know that the failure is another step to learn and to improve every day and to obtain a future success (Lumsdaine & Binks, 2007).

To summarize, there are some barriers to creativity from people in the school, parents till in the business sector. These barriers are the feeling that people are not creative, the belief that there is only one right answer to solve the conflicts, to analyze the problems isolated and the negative thinking and risk-avoidance between much more. Then, companies have to overcome this kind of barriers to foster the creativity of their employees because they need it due to they are talented people.

3.6. Leadership Style to Foment the Creativity

According Woods (2005), the democratic leadership is one style of leadership where creativity and imagination of employees are encouraged. This leadership style is one of the most important key concepts related with talent management to know how leaders deal with key workers, it means with talented people, because here the communication in all the directions is very important, which allows the improvement of the company, their products or services, their processes and also of the development of employees. Nevertheless, a leader has to manage his or her employees, that is why he or she should retain these creative and dynamics minds, for this reason one of our questions is how they do that, to answer this we have deepened later in the cases of Google and Zerogrey. These organizations stimulate the breeding and the nurturing of creativity. On the one hand, we have studied the case of Google looking for the information by Internet in the several investigations or documents written about this company, several academic articles and some thesis. On the other hand, we have studied the case of Zerogrey, which is becoming bigger and bigger. In this part of our investigation we have included our empirical studies that we have obtained of Zerogrey, because we visited its headquarter in Dublin (Ireland) and we did some interviews with the CEO of the firm and also with three employees as we will show now.

4. EMPIRICAL FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Our empirical finding and analysis are about two companies, which are Zerogrey and Google. They are very different organizations but both are related with our thesis of breeding and nurturing talents. They are different because Zerogrey is a small company with 20 employees, while Google is a huge company with more than 10.000 employees worldwide (www.google.com/corporate/execs.html). Nevertheless they are similar because both, Google and Zerogrey base their operational activities on the innovation and the development of new technologies that is why, they depend completely of the performance of the workforce. They are developing a talent management strategy, each one in a different scale according with the size of the business; however both companies apply that strategy to contract the best individuals, and this means talented people. They are constantly recruiting, training, developing and retaining that kind of people, who are dynamics, youth, hard working, curious, passionate in their work and much more. Our aim is to demonstrate that to have a good talent management strategy has nothing to do with the size of the company and that each organization can develop it according with their necessities.

Our empirical work is based on primary and secondary sources. In Zerogrey, we did some interviews with three employees and the CEO of the company and in Google we obtained the information by Internet and academic articles. It means that we have used primary sources in the case of Zerogrey such as interviews and dialogues and we have utilized secondary sources such as academic articles, web pages, thesis and books in the case of Google and also, in the case of Zerogrey.

4.1. Empirical Study: ZEROGREY

4.1.1. Description of Zerogrey

The company Zerogrey is a young company dedicated to perform the e-commerce of their customers. They build and run online stores for corporations all over the world. Zerogrey offers to firms the whole set of technologies and services needed to carry out E-commerce and indeed carries out E-commerce in their place: servers, systems, warehouses, payments, returns, frauds, legal, contact center, promotion, and so forth. They have branches in Italy, Spain, Ireland and the United States of America. Zerogrey is a partner for a large number of organizations operating internationally in different markets. Their approach brings services and technology together to solve all problems that the set up of the online channel could create.

We will explain the main activities of Zerogrey, its situation of the Dublin's office and finally, the relationship between Zerogrey and both the talent management and

talented people. Let us start with the four pillars of Zerogrey to explain its main activities, which are E-Commerce Technologies, Data Analysis, E-selling operations and their Logistics.

1) E-Commerce technologies

Zerogrey develops its own E-commerce engine to maximise online sales on stores of companies. Their complete E-commerce platform is built by a team of international software developers managed by their head engineers. Zerogrey technology is international and draws on the experience gained during years of E-commerce activity in complex markets such as Europe and the USA. Cultural and operational aspects such as different currencies, multi-lingual descriptions, localization of contents and of partners are crucial for the international success of an E-store. Their experience with companies working in many product and service sectors and on projects of small to large dimensions pushed their developers to design a flexible system able to host and retail products and services with and without options, to ship from many warehouse, to channel sales into selected markets at specific sales conditions and so on.

The most important of the E-store with Zerogrey will be based on their proprietary technology. The organization that hires this serve, speaks directly with whom created the technology and daily develops it, it guaranties a fast and effective future flexibility if the online market changes.

2) Data analysis

The direct E-commerce on the final consumer is a source of data on preferences, habits, and characteristics of the typical client of the brand or of the product. It produces a data-set in constant evolution useful for many types of segmentation and analysis.

Zerogrey has to manage the dates such as the history of orders and the demand expansion path, which are property of the costumers and which can be observe directly by the clients in real time in every moment.

Moreover, they are responsible for the reporting for the Sales Manager or the Marketing Department of the organizations. Zerogrey offers specific instruments to control the outcomes of the E-commerce activity and to analyse them. For example: Number of visits, average duration of sessions, number of fulfilled orders, chosen payment methods and much more.

3) E-selling: operations

Zerogrey provides commercial and technical services towards the activation of E-commerce projects selling to costumers and to partners. After the assessment the objectives of the enterprise which hires the E-commerce, Zerogrey takes care of all technological aspects connected to the online store. Depending on the company's goals, Zerogrey can do all E-commerce operations or just a part of them. Zerogrey will do everything that direction of the organization does not want to do, who chooses all strategic aspects.

4) Logistics

The logistic is the last important pillar for Zerogrey to guarantee its successful. Normally, consumers' expectations are much higher than those of professional customers that is why the companies need to check constantly their online operations if they want their success durable in time. Sometimes, most customers by Internet buy as they follow an immediate impulse and immediately they want to be informed on their order fulfilment status. The delivery and the information must flow fast, while their store service must be transparent as far as possible, it means that Zerogrey takes care of their users.

4.1.2. The Location: The Digital Depot

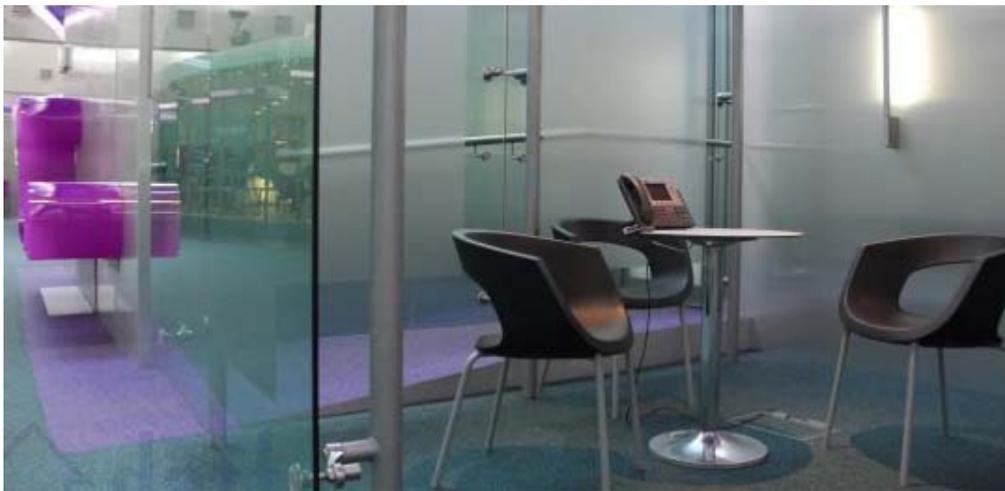
The headquarter of Zerogrey, which we have visited, is in the South of Dublin city. It is located in The Digital Depot, in the hearth of Digital Hub, which is an international centre of excellence for digital media firms, research and learning. It was developed as a joint initiative of Dublin City Council, Enterprise Ireland and The Digital Hub Development Agency. They have adapted the building of a factory of 1950 to make this centre, where they maintain the original exterior, together with some of the original internal features. This was a huge investment made to create an innovative and high specification environment for digital firms in Ireland (www.digitaldepot.ie).



Pic. 1: View of the adapted building of The Digital Depot (www.digitaldepot.ie).

The Digital Depot brand is increasingly recognized beyond Ireland, due to the accomplishments of the digital content and technology companies doing business from

there and also it is allowing their fast growing. These enterprises are part of a network of approximately 100 and their core areas are: entertainment, education, corporate and public service sectors inside this industry. The profile of these firms is small and like-minded digital media enterprises and some examples of them are Amazon, Ballywire Media Ltd, Cambridge Animation Systems and Zerogrey, to name a few. The Digital Hub allows them the shared utilization of some facilities for all the companies located there and when these firms grow, they do not have to move out. Some of these facilities are: a modern ICT infrastructure, parking, mail boxes, meeting rooms, cafeteria, networking events, fully-furnished office space and much more, as we can see in the following pictures (www.property.ie):



Pic.2: One of the meeting room shared (www.property.ie).



Pic.3: Cafeteria and corridor of Digital Depot (www.property.ie).

It means that The Digital Depot contributes to firms with support services that they need when they want to start their business, which promotes the birth of entrepreneurship, from the point of view of running their own business till the birth of entrepreneurial, innovative and forward-thinking minds in the employees of these enterprises. We have also several examples in Spain of this kind of centre to stimulate this environment in determinate regions of our country, but in this case when firms grow they have to move out (descargas.cervantesvirtual.com).

Our opinion of this centre is that they encourage spaces to meet the demands of the digital sector, with flexible arrangements for the companies, shared facilities as we have mentioned above including a fully fitted presentation room, a cafeteria providing a central social area within the building where people from companies can meet informally and exchange ideas. We used a meeting room but also we did two interviews in the cafeteria, which allows us to observe the environment, which was casual, informal, high-tech and youth working environment.

And also the firms of The Digital Hub are participating in a CEO forum and leads-generation network, and gaining access to business advice clinics, industry events and a directory of preferred suppliers and they can get some discounts because they are part of this centre (www.digitaldepot.ie).

4.1.3. The Analysis of Zerogrey's Talent Management Strategy

We have done observations in its headquarter in Dublin and we have maintained informal dialogues with employees who work there, we also interviewed the CEO of the company, Guido Meak.

The objective of this empirical analysis is to discover how a small and innovative company uses the talent management to improve its performance. It means how managers of the company recruit, develop and retain the talented people who are in the organization. Taking into account that Zerogrey is a small firm, which is formed by twenty employees approximately; it does not have a formal Talent Management Strategy, also they do not have a Human Resource Department but they develop the talent management activities in small-scale, obtaining successful results.

Below we will relate the findings obtained during the observations, dialogues and interviews with employees of Zerogrey. During the dialogues we were focus on to know how employees feel working in that organization, and also we were focus on which is

their vision about the management style. During the interview with Guido Meak we were focus on what he understands about Talent Management and what activities Zerogrey is doing in this field taking into account the necessities and the size of the company. Firstly, we were talking about our own first impressions when we went to visit the office of the company. Secondly, we will explain the management style that they have in the company and how they accomplish higher performance of their employees. That explanation is based on the employee performance formula ($P = (A, M, O)$) that we saw in the model of Collings & Mellahi (2009). Finally, in the next section, we will describe the talented people that we identify inside the company.

First of all, we would like to note that when we were speaking with the CEO of Zerogrey about what he understands about the concept of talent management he said to us that he had never heard about that concept, nevertheless when we ask him about how he develops the three elements (recruitment, development and retention), he let us to know that in Zerogrey has a very good talent management strategy, due to the organization is aware of the necessity of talented people to develop its operational activities, and also its values its employees and motivate them to achieve their maximum potential development, and that is the essence of the Talent Management.

As we have seen before the Zerogrey headquarter of Dublin is located in the Digital Depot building. The office is only one room where five employees work together; it means that they work in the same space. The five employees are from different nationalities, they are from U.S.A, Poland, Germany, France and Ireland, different cultures and different fields of specialization that is why there is a high degree of diversification into the organization. They all are very young, and the environment that we observe was familiar, for example they do not wear formal clothes, and they maintain an informal relationship. We think that this kind of environment fosters the creativity and innovation through the easy exchange of ideas.

The management style of Zerogrey is very flexible and democratic. This means that the managers give to the employees the freedom to do the task in the way that the employee chooses. The performance is measured by the result, not by the process. An employee, who is in charge of programming tasks and who develops the software to operate the business on the Internet, said to us that he feels free to realize the work in his way, improving it as much as he wants and introducing his ideas in the task. That kind of flexibility leads to a higher performance of the employee and a higher quality of the task. This flexibility is not total, for example, they have a work schedule that they have to fulfil in the office. Nevertheless, employees see that schedule as a good point to separate their work life and their personal life, an employee who is in charge of the logistic, order management and customer services said to us that he would not like to

work at home because he prefers having that time to spend with his family or his friends and to relax.

One of the most original points that we saw in the management style of Zerogrey is about the control of the manager to employees, it is original because it almost does not exist in a direct way. Zerogrey managers are not all the time in the Dublin headquarter, due to they have another principal office in Turin and they have to travel very often to visit their customers. Guido Meak, the CEO of Zerogrey, told us that he does not do almost any control because each employee knows what he or she has to do. He told to us that he does not want to be like a jail guard. According to all Zerogrey employees, they do not see their supervisors more than 3 or 4 times during all the year. That is why employees has the freedom that we mentioned earlier, but also it means that they assume the responsibility to do the work without direct supervision, hence the capacity of assume their own responsibility is a personal trait that Zerogrey is looking for in their employees.

Due to the managers are not in the office during most of the time, the communication is a very important issue in the organization. In Zerogrey the communication is mainly through email and Skype and they do not establish periodic formal meetings but the communication is open and in all directions. That is another of the most original points of the management style of this company. The Skype programme gives to organizational members the facility to have direct communication at any time without any cost. Employees may ask or communicate a new idea to their supervisor, who usually is not in the office, at any time without the need of a formal meeting.

Hence we can say that Zerogrey use new technologies to have a high level of communication in all directions without the need of a great investment of capital and of time. That has the advantage to facilitate the processes of decision, to promote the exchange of ideas, which leads to better results in the organization. Furthermore this style of communication has advantages related with the workforce, it increases the motivation of employees, who feel heard and valued and also it promotes their learning through the exchange of knowledge. Nevertheless some employees felt a bit strange in the beginning when they had to speak by Skype with people that they did not know personally and the efficiency of the communication improves when they met personally, we think that this is due to the lack of confidence that exist when the partners have never spoken face to face.

Regarding to the communication between members of the office of Dublin, we observed that the informal atmosphere and the fact that they all work in the same space or room facilitate the rapid communication. During the development of a project each member has a job related to their specialty but all tasks are related, therefore to

know how is going the work of others is essential to integrate all the tasks and achieve a successful outcome.

Now we will explain how Zerogrey develops the three main activities of the talent management, the recruitment, the development and the retention of the talent people:

4.1.3.1. The Recruitment Activities of Zerogrey

During the interview to the CEO of the company, we spoke about how the recruitment is done in the company, Guido Meak said to us that they do not have a formal process of selection because they hire 2 or 3 people per year, that is why they do not need to invest in the development of a formal process, he notes that the most important issue when they are looking for a new employee is to define before what Zerogrey needs, hence, managers design the profile of the person who will fulfil the job, and also they define the talents or skills that they need to achieve a higher performance in that position. After the definition of the Zerogrey necessities, they start to look for people directly publishing the job offer on internet, mainly in their web site, they do not outsource this task because two reasons, the first one is that they do not want to spend capital on this and the second one is that they prefer making the decision directly due to they know if the candidate will fit in the corporate culture and in the work style.

Zerogrey seeks business people, marketing people, programmers and public relations people, because those are the areas where they work, but that profile is only for the specialized knowledge. The company pays more attention to look for talent as skills as facility in mathematics, languages, people who can maintain a good relationship with the customers and also personal skills to work in a team and to assume responsibilities, they are looking for developers and creative people to survive in the environment of constant change which is the business in the Internet market. The employee responsible of the programming task told us that Internet is like a baby, there are too many ways to do business that are yet to be explored, that is why companies that work in the sector should have a developer workforce to explore that ways before the competition.

Due to the enterprise is small, employees are considered members of the talent pool, that is why in their recruitment, Zerogrey managers look for talented people when they hire workers, they specially look for the diversity and young people who have the energy and fresh ideas to accomplish a higher performance. Nevertheless also the diversity is determined by future projects that the company has to develop. Zerogrey, although is a small company, has a truly international client base, therefore, the company seeks employees of nationality where they will develop their next projects,

because these people, not only know the language, they also know the culture and characteristics of that market. This behaviour is an example of the talent management activities of Zerogrey. As we have seen before, the first task of an organization to create the talent pool is to define the key positions and the talent needs to fulfil those before starting the recruitment process.

The recruitment process is through a small technical test, to ensure that candidates have the necessary knowledge and personal interviews with the CEO, Guido Meak. These interviews are the most important part of the process because, as we have seen before in Zerogrey mainly they look for defined personal traits which only can be detected by a personal contact, not in a test. One employee spoke with us about his recruitment process, he said that it was overall a personal interview with Mr. Meak, during the interview they had an informal dialogue to see if the personality of the employee would fit in the company and if he had the searched traits. The reason because the organization has this structure in its recruitment process is that they are looking for talented people and not for specialised people.

4.1.3.2. The Development Activities of Zerogrey

The second main activity of the Talent Management, as we mention above, is the development of the talent pool. It means how Zerogrey managers develop the talent and the capabilities of its employees to exploit their full potential. In Zerogrey we observed two kinds of development, the formal and the informal development.

The first one is a formal training that employees have when they start to work in the organization. This training is to learn how the company works. According to Guido Meak in Zerogrey employees can foster their skills or knowledge doing development courses; it means formal development, such as language courses, program courses and also courses to recycle the knowledge. That kind of recycle courses are essential in the field where Zerogrey works. The CEO says to us that they, the company, put the money and the time for those courses because they know that their workforce is the most important sustainable competitive advantage, that is why they have to develop their talents to avoid that employees become obsolete. Nevertheless according to Guido Meak they do not have a formal structure for the development activities of talent management; he says that employees do those courses when they need it.

The second kind of the development of the talent pool is more interesting for employees. It is an informal training which is developed during all the time that they are working in the organization. This informal training helps the employee to develop new skills and it is developed through two ways. Firstly, the fact that the workers have the freedom to do the tasks provides a kind of auto development because they do not

have a close task; they have a task that needs to think and to discover a new ways to develop it. The second way is a kind of mentoring, but the mentor is not an experienced manager who teaches the new employee. In this case, mentors are all employees, because they exchange knowledge between them all the time and thus they develop new skills and talents. The diversity of the workforce provides them of a lot of different abilities which are shared by the team work and the communication system that they have in the company. This kind of informal training becomes the company in a learning organization where the knowledge flows and is exchanged through all the company.

4.1.3.3. The Retention Activities of Zerogrey

Finally, the last main activity of the Talent Management is the retention of the talented people into the firm. The retaining is accomplished by the motivation of the workers and by the brand soul that Zerogrey has built. During the interview with Mr. Meak he said to us that the main factor for the loyalty and for the motivation of their employees are the happiness, he said that they are trying always to keep their employees happy because is the only way to retain them, but the happiness is accomplished through many actions which we could see in the Dublin office such as the familiar workspace, the opportunity to grow with the company, the security and the recognition of their work.

As we could see in the Dublin office, the motivation is based on the work environment, for example, in Zerogrey the employees maintain a good relationship doing team building activities as a cake break every Friday, when they talk about how their work is going in an informal way and also they do some activities outside of the work time such as dinners or going out to watch some shows. All these activities are financed by the company. Another factor of the motivation, as employees said to us, is the security; it means the economic security that is provided by having a job, overall in the current downturn. Nevertheless, in Zerogrey, an important part of the workforce is people who are doing internships. That people do not have any economical reward. That is why; the money is not the main motivational factor for them, there are other factors as the experience provided, the skills acquired and the opportunity to do the work that they like. An employee said to us that the main motivational factor for him is that he loves what he is doing, and Zerogrey gives to him that opportunity.

However, factors as money, good environment and the opportunity to do the work that they like can be accomplished by other companies in the competition, that is why, Zerogrey has to offer something more to retain their inversion in the talented people. This something more is the brand soul, which according to Davis et al. (2007), is the characteristic of the organization, the real essence, the vision, the passion and the

culture, which includes the values and the way of operating. Employees interviewed feel that they are working for a great company, which does something very interesting and innovative, and they want to be part of this. One relevant feature of this brand soul is that the company is a young organization which is in a growth process, and workers can see how the firm becomes in an important enterprise from just an idea through their work.

4.1.3.4. The Conclusion of the Talent Management of Zerogrey

To conclude the explanation of the Talent Management activities of Zerogrey we will explain how the performance of the employee is achieved based on the formula developed by Collings & Mellahi (2009) in their model, according to them the employee performance depends on the Ability, the Motivation and the Opportunity, ($P=(A, M, O)$). In Zerogrey the Ability to do the work, it means the knowledge and the talent, is searched during the interviews and it is developed through the formal and informal training, which provides the workforce of specific skills that can not be developed in other company. The Motivation to exploit in the company all the potential is accomplished by the diversity, the team activities, the good and informal work environment, the fact that employees like the work that they make and also by the brand soul, which is unique, and it makes the workforce loyal. The Opportunity of develop themselves is given to employees through the freedom to work, and the freedom to think due to the working way is very flexible. Zerogrey provides to the employee the opportunity of applying his or her ideas in the task.

4.1.4. The Talented People and the Creativity in Zerogrey

We consider that Zerogrey individuals are talented people, because when we were there, we could see some of the signs of talents that we have mentioned in our theoretical framework. We could observe that they are talented people, but sometimes they are also specialized people. Nevertheless, as we have seen before, there are some differences between specialized and talented people and we have realized of that in a practical way. They are specialized people because they have a vast knowledge in their determinate field. For instance, we were speaking with the responsible for marketing, programming, order management and customer services and we could see their large knowledge but also, that they are talented people because they have personal features necessary for the enterprise. Nevertheless, with this we do not mean that all talented employees of Zerogrey are specialized people. If we consider one of the definitions of talented people that we have used in our framework according to Berger & Dorothy (2003) we will explain the three dimensions of this definition in Zerogrey employees. First, they want to do their work in the best way every time and also, they are able to inspire to people in internships and finally, they embody Zerogrey values, for example

one of their traditions is the cake break on Fridays as we have mentioned above. If we consider the signs of the talents we could explain that they are often looking for superior results in their roles. Moreover, they have the capacity of learning, a determinate personality and they can manage the changes. We were speaking with Guido Meak the CEO of Zerogrey and he told us that in the actual crisis there are a lot of companies which “*are dying*” but “*Zerogrey is living really good*”, because they consider the crisis as changes and opportunities to improve the company. And also, they have the ability for the development of a good communication, they are curious and they are responsible in their work, because they do not need that their boss is behind them all the time. In fact they told us that they can see the Zerogrey CEO three or four times in the year and in the Dublin's office there were no managers in this moment, it means that they have freedom to act and to work. And also, they are rapidly workers, for example the developer programmer had to do a project in three days and he made it in two hours. In general, the main talents that we note in them are languages, the way of treating different clients, maths, and computer knowledge and personality skills as we have mentioned before.

We would like to explain some talents in every employee that we consider relevant for the successful of this company, but before we are going to explain the Zerogrey's roots explained by the CEO of the firm, Guido Meak who is one of the four founders. The company started in Barcelona in 1999, like a multi brand shop, because they wanted to run a business with the same idea of E-bay. Nevertheless, in 2000 they found a shared necessity for all the brands with which they were working, that is why they re-founded Zerogrey in Italy but with the common idea of running online shops. Slowly, they commenced to do deals with some corporations and in a few years they started to build the online stores for them. But they were thinking that they should offer something to allow them to differentiate from the competitors and they chose their software that was built by a team of international software developers managed by their head engineers, it means the software was developed by talented people. Now, we will explain some of the talents of the Zerogrey's employees that we consider relevant.

We had a dialogue with the responsible for order management and customer services, Michael. He was teacher during six years before. And as we could observe he is organized and formal. Talented people sometimes use a structured approach to solve the problems that could appear in their roles and one example of that is Michael. He knows the achievement that he has to do, he looks for problems to solve and then, he determinates in a plan how to achieve the solution of these problems and finally, he implements the plan.

Nevertheless, he is a person who considers the motivation a key factor for the successful in the company and for the welfare employee. He said to us that as a

teacher, he had to try to be the best teacher, to motivate their students to encourage that they give their best and that they were looking for a promising future. In conclusion, they need to know the satisfaction to learn. And he considers that he has to motivate employees to develop their talents now in Zerogrey like he had to do as a teacher.

In addition, we were speaking with the developer programmer, Darek. He is the responsible to manage defaults, integration tools, systems, warehouses, payments, returns and so forth. He is in the company more or less from the beginning, for this reason here we can see his loyalty maybe because he is motivated. In his personal skills we could observe that he is curious, imaginative and creative. He is always trying to look for new ways of doing things in his projects and also he makes movies, pictures in his free time and he has his own web site. He is the typical person who is learning by doing, for instance he told us that he learned English speaking with people and with the integration into the culture of Ireland, not joining with people from his origin country, Poland. And also, he considered that people need to have passion for their job, "*they should love what they are doing*" to try to learn from it every time, to improve it and to do it with the best result. He considers that in Zerogrey, they are looking for people with personal capabilities, it means for "great people" as he said. He did not have to pass huge technical examinations to be hired in this enterprise. This means that in Zerogrey they consider people as individuals with talents who are key assets of their firm; they do not consider people as a "machine" or a "piece of furniture" in the company. We consider that he was an informal person and with the most social competence in this office.

Finally, other of our informal dialogues was with the responsible of marketing, Robert. He works with the email marketing, affiliation marketing, advertisements, conferences, sales in the shops, graphics and so on. We could observe that he was the shiest person in this office, but he was speaking with us about that the team work is very important for him, which could be a paradox. He can work together with their colleagues, which is very enriching and also if he needs help they can give it, because all people have time for their partners, with this we can see the loyalty between colleagues. Nevertheless he said to us, that in the beginning it was unusual to speak a lot of time by Skype, but overall because he was speaking with unknown people for him and it was improving when he met these people. Despite all of this, he told us that in Zerogrey we will see a really large communication thanks to the network Skype and that he is completely free to communicate his new ideas in every moment.

If we take into account the three dialogues with the employees and the interview with Guido the CEO, they told us that the team work is a fundamental tool in Zerogrey, which is characterized by the positive attitude and the diversity. They are working in a

small room with five tables, where we could see the good, young, casual and high-tech working environment that characterized The Digital Depot, where they are.

4.2. Empirical Study: GOOGLE

4.2.1. Description of Google

Google is a company which organizes the world's information and makes it universally accessible and useful. The Google founders are Larry Page and Sergey Brin. They designed a new way of doing online searches that was born at the residence of students from Stanford University and quickly spread to information seekers all over the world. Google is now noticed as the most important search engine in the world, easy to use and free service. People can find information in many languages, check stock quotes, view maps, searching millions of images and so forth. They also offer ways to access all this information without having to go to Google homepage. The Google Toolbar lets people perform a Google search from anywhere on the web. And for those times when individuals are away from their computer, Google can be used from various wireless platforms and from mobile phones also (static.googleusercontent.com).

Google has become one of the best known brands in the world almost entirely through the free publicity that make them satisfied with the users. If we consider Google as a business, the company generates revenue by offering advertisers the ability to advertise online, in a measurable and affordable, with ads relevant to the information presented on a given page. In this way, the ads are useful and effective for the user to the advertiser. They believe that when someone has paid to put a message in front of you should know, as differentiate ads from search results or other content of a page. They do not sell the positions of the search results (static.googleusercontent.com).

"Gúgol" ("googol" in English) is a mathematical term used to refer to a 1 followed by 100 zeros. The pun Google does with its name reflects the firm's mission to organize the huge amount of information available on the web (static.googleusercontent.com).

4.2.2. Google: The Talent Management Excellence

Today Google is a huge enterprise, it shares some features with other big and successful companies, but it is not an usual company. Google is growing but it retains the "small company feel" in the workspace, it makes Google unique, because its Talent Management Strategy is which defines the way of its work. It means that Google pays attention to the workforce and to what they want to say with an environment of trust,

because the Google founders and managers know that the “Googlers”, which is the nick name that their employees have, are the engine of the company. Hence, Google is an example of the excellence in Talent Management Strategy and it has a HR department which is a very important part of the company, this department is managed by Laszlo Bock, and it is responsible for attracting, recruiting, developing and retaining Googlers. There are more than 10.000 employees who are led by professionals with the best experience (www.google.com/jobs/lifeatgoogle).

Google aligns its Talent Management Strategy with its culture, mission and vision, it means that Google HR professionals recruit and hire only people able to accomplish the mission following the Google culture (Prosser, 2008). In all its offices around the world they hire people who are committed with “creating the perfect search”, which is the vision of Google (www.google.com). As we have seen before in the explanation of the concept of Talent Management, the convergence of the corporate culture and strategy with the Talent Management strategy is the key of the success for a company which has as a main resource its workforce. According to Brooks & Saltzman (2009), the Talent Management has to be reflected in the corporate strategy, it has to be linked to the core business, and that is exactly what Google does, the authors said that this is the reason because Google is immune to the downturn. We can say that the Google activities depend completely of its Googlers and not of any tangible resource.

We believe that in Google, the concept of talent management is global; it means that they consider that all their employees are talented people, and all of them are the subject of Talent Management activities, they say that Google is a “*good company everywhere you look*” (www.google.com), so the managers believe that the talent is in everywhere. We believe that the reason of this conception of the Talent Management concept is because the Google operational activities are really complex, there is not a routine at all on those, they are based on new ideas and innovative projects. They can only be done by talented people.

Google wants to be “*boldly to go where no one has gone before*” (www.google.com), it means that the organization needs that its employees see each situation as a challenge, that they solve the problems with creativity to get an innovative solution and also Google gives to them the opportunity to investigate in some idea that they consider interesting. Hence challenge, creativity, opportunity and innovation are Google key words, these characteristics can be accomplished only through the Googlers who are the main source of sustainable competitive advantage (www.google.com).

One feature that Google look for the diversity in its workforce, they look for talents in very different fields and with very different backgrounds, and also they want diversity of gender, age, nationality, culture and so on due to Google products is a tool which is used in all the world, by people from very different cultures and with very different search methods, that is why it has to be created by all the world (www.google.com).

As we have seen in the development of the concept of talent management, this strategy has three elements differentiated. They are the recruitment, the development and the retention of the talented people. All of them lead the organization to achieve superior results from its employees and also to make them accomplish their own objectives.

The talent management Strategy of Google is maybe the most renowned in the business world because Google makes a great effort of time and capital, which means taking a big risk, but nevertheless is resounding success. The investment done by Google is recovered through the successful results that are received from employees. The factors that Google managers consider key for that success are the right selection of the worker; it means the recruitment, and the other factor is the commitment of all Googlers with “achieving the perfect search”, which is the vision of Google. It means that all employees feel that they are a part of a whole and all of them share the corporate culture and that they are loyal to Google. This commitment and loyalty is much related with the strong brand soul that Google has (www.google.com/jobs/lifeatgoogle).

4.2.2.1. The Recruitment Activities of Google

Google is in continuous growth, hence the company is hiring people constantly, and more than 100 hires are made each week. Nevertheless, each one is signed by Larry Page, one of the founders of Google; it shows how the important the recruitment is for Google. The organization wants to be sure that always they choose the right person to become a Googler, they only recruit high potential and culturally compatible staff, i.e. 100% talent. That is why senior managers invest 30% of their work time on making interviews to the candidates. Google receives more than 250 applications for each job offer, each contract requires at least four interviews and numerous technical tests, it is a very long selection process and very hard for the candidates, but it ensures the best choice. An evidence of this is that Google never fires people (Willock, 2007).

In the web site of Google we can find work offers which are available in offices around the world, and applying to them is very simple, the candidate has just to send the CV to the office where he or she wants to work. That simplicity in the application proves that Google seeks the talent in every place and also it look for the diversity in its workforce. In the web site also we can see how Google define it self like a place to

work, they say that is the best place to work, and in their web site also, they explain how they work and what kind of people they need, they are dynamic and creative people. We believe that this information has two objectives; the first one is to attract the possible candidates with its strong brand soul, about which we will speak later in the retention, and the second one is to note which is the profile that they are looking for, thus people who do not fit in that profile will not apply to the job.

4.2.2.2. The Development Activities of Google

The development of employees' talents can be an attraction factor if it is developed in the Google way. An employee of Google will improve their skill and also he or she will get talents that he or she can not get in the competition and also we do not have to forget the prestige that a Googler has just because he or she is working in that company.

We saw in an article "Turning into Talent Management" of prodiverse.net in 2007 by unknown author that the development of "new Googlers" or "Nooglers" starts the first day of work in the organization, in that moment a mentor, a colleague, is assigned to the new employee, the mentor teaches him or her how they work and helps the Noogler in the adaptation to the new culture, and also the new worker tests all their ideas or projects with the mentor. The author of the article notes the difference between formation, that we can say that is the formal training in courses, and the development, which means to give the tools and the time to learn, and we can associate them with the informal training, like mentoring and coaching. Hence the real development of talents as creativity or leadership can be done only by this kind of training.

According to Ringo et al. (2008), the learning approach of Google is "*learn fast, fail fast*" (Ringo et al, 2008), it is the approach of the experimentation, where the Googlers test the ideas with the colleagues and they get the feedback also from them.

According to Willock (2007), the time that the Googlers spend working is divided in three activities. They spend the 70% of the time in the daily work, another 20% in the project work, developing different new assignments in multidisciplinary teams and the last 10% of the time in whatever they want, it means that they can spend that time enjoying the great facilities of Google offices, relaxing, or also working in personal projects with new ideas, because the Googlers do not have to ask any manager if they want to develop something new, they can make a team and work on it in that time and if they conclude that the project has to be done, it will be done. That shows how the managers trust on their employees. We believe that this 10% of free investigation time

is the best training for develop the talent, but the person has to be dynamic and curious to use it in the productive way.

We would like to note how much the important is the workspace to the development of the talented people in Google. The company invests a huge capital in the design of their offices. As we have seen in a lot of pictures the Google workspace looks as a place to play, because they believe that *“work and play are not mutually exclusive”* (www.google.com/jobs/lifeatgoogle). It means that the best way to develop their talent is having fun at the same time, as we can see in the pictures, the have very different spaces to the team work and the structure of the offices are very open and with strong colours and so on. All those things foster the creativity and the motivation to learn from workers, they think that to give the employees all this staff is not a waste of capital because it makes that employees deliver a high performance.



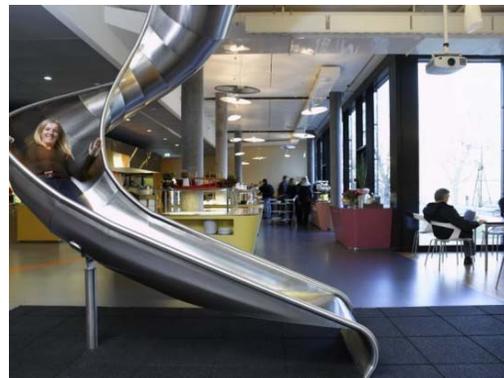
Pic.4: Google offices in Zurich (www.athome.kimvallee.com)



Pic. 5: Google Australian Headquarters in Sidney (www.google.es)

4.2.2.3. The Retention Activities of Google

The most famous aspect of the retention of the talent people of Google is all the advantages that the Googlers have such as a funny, fantastic and inspiring workspace with massage room, games room, free food, a doctor and a dentist, running tracks and so on and also they have a great compensation package. The Googlers get a number of support for their development, this support is related with playing and having fun but also they have the opportunity to develop the professional skills and to foster their creativity. Google philosophy is that the appreciation is the best way to motivate; they say in its web site *"we love our employees, and we want them to know it"* (www.google.com/jobs/lifeatgoogle). The Noogler starts to enjoy of this kind of trait since his or her first day working in Google, that day they have a meeting with the managers and a new mentor as we have said before in the development section, and also they have a small party in their desk with balloons, gifts, t-shirts and so on (Willock, 2007).



Pic. 6, 7, 8. Google offices all over the world (www.prweaver.com) and (www.google.es)

We are sure that these kinds of benefits are really motivators, but the talented people have large aspirations and only that is not enough. According to Prosser (2008), the Google's Vice President of people operation Laszlo Bock that the motivation is much more than that. The motivation depends on others aspects such as a definite

organizational brand; it means the brand soul, and a clear communication system. To fulfil the aspirations of talented Googlers the organization offer career paths, recognition programmes and a feedback of their performance and coaching to improve it, that aspect of the motivation is very linked with the talent development activities due to we believe that the opportunity to develop the talents and to get new skills is also a factor of retention for the talented and dynamic people.

Other factor for the retention of employees is the coincidence of the personal objectives with the corporate objectives, in Google, the employees can develop any project that they consider interesting, for instance, a blind employee has developed a Google search engine for blind people, with this project the blind employee accomplish his objective of facilitate his live and Google expands its scope of users to a new group (www.google.com/jobs/lifeatgoogle).

Another motivational factor which is related with an ethical component is that in Google employees work in a positive project, which helps the society to have a more comfortable life. According to Ringo et al. (2008), the managers say *"we empower them to change the world"*. It means that Googlers have the opportunity to improve the world, and this feeling is a powerful motivational factor and Google uses it, making to known to all employees the importance of the work that they are doing, and the great and positive impact that it has in the society.

Finally we would like to note the powerful factor of retention and attraction that Google has, just because it is Google, it is the brand soul, which as we explained in the concept of talent management before. The brand soul is the image that the organization has, and is the culture and its way of working. Google knows how influential is its image and they show it in the web site, there we can see videos of the Googlers explaining how they work and how happy and motivated they are working there.

In conclusion we can say that the retention strategy of Google is an example to follow because according to Willock, 2007 only the 3% of employees leave the work in Google. They exploit all their potential with creativity and taking the initiative of their work. They feel very lucky because they are working for Google and the outcomes are that they develop the work in the best possible way; do not conform to do it good enough.

4.2.2.4. In Conclusion, an Example of Talent Management Strategy

In Google, they make a great investment in the talent management strategy, it means in the recruitment, which is a formal process very long, but it ensures the right choice. It means also the development, which is empowered by the workspace, the way of working in teams, and overall by the distribution of the working time, that 10% of the

free investigation time proved to the Googlers of an auto development. Finally, the retention, Google spent a huge capital in the motivation of their employees, but it is an investment because they receive, as a pay-back, the higher performance that it is reflected in the Google result. The motivation is based on to cover all the necessities that the Googlers can have and about giving them the opportunity to grow, but also it is based on the prestige that they have just because they are working at Google. Moreover they have a high degree of loyalty because almost any employee leaves the company.

4.2.3. Talented People in Google, the Googlers

People who work in this company are called Googlers. We think that with this name they have created the feeling of the unity or the big family in their employees, obtaining the loyalty, the encouragement and the motivation in the work of them (www.perfil.com).

They are specialized people because they are dedicated to the search, it is their field. Google has one of the biggest research groups in the world exclusively dedicated to solving search problems, for this reason they know what they do well and how they can improve it. Their desire to improve the search experience helps them to apply their learned concepts to new products and services; it means that they apply their ample knowledge and their new concepts in their work. And also they are talented people because they have determinate talents, for example they are creative and imaginative, because they are often seeking unexplored areas of information to innovate and thus provide costumers access to more information (www.google.es). In addition, they are always innovating as we could observe in the article Internet Search Engine Update by Notess (2005) when they launched a new database, which allowed covering over 100 English-language news sources such as The New York Times and it was updated hourly. Also, in the same moment they introduced another specialty search for Microsoft related sites and they changed their ranking of the ads that appear on the right of search results. It means that they are always looking for new ways to solve problems or to adapt themselves to the changes in the environment or to manage them. These are some of the signs of the talents that we have explained in our framework (Davis et al., 2007). For example all the walls of the Google's buildings have blackboards because nobody knows when they could have a new and good idea; it means that they are promoting the employee's imagination all the time. Their products are built on the principle of openness and are designed to promote innovation and creativity across the web (www.google.es).

Another sign of the talents is that they always want to obtain superior outcomes in their work or projects. They set themselves objectives that they know they can not yet

reach, as they are aware that if they forced themselves to get them, they can obtain better results than expected. Through innovation, they try to take things that work and improve them in unexpected ways. For instance, when one of their engineers saw that the search worked well to introduce spelled words, he asked how it will work with misspelled word processing. That led him to create a spell checker intuitive and more useful. Even if people do not know exactly what they want, the fact is that they will find an answer on the Web. Therefore Google intends to anticipate the needs that have not yet expressed for their users around the world. They are always looking for new areas where they can make a difference in their products and services. Ultimately, they have constant dissatisfaction with the way things are becomes which is the driving force behind all their work; it means that they are not satisfied with excellent results.

Talented people of Google are socially and emotionally competence. For instance, they can work in teams with excellent outcomes. Their teams are formed by dynamics people with excellent social abilities as we have mentioned above, who are working in a enormous range of online and mobile products, creating new characteristics for the global market and improving existing products in the European market. Google is an international company that is why they need the diversity in their team works and in their offices. In fact, one of their goals is to offer all their products and applications in all the possible languages as they can do. Thus they are able to provide a huge variety and quality of services, even in the remotest parts of the world. They know that the information does not have limits and it is in all the places all over the world.

4.2.4. How Can They Get Their Creativity?

They think that the work should be a challenge but also a fun. They believe that the genius and creativity can be given more often in an appropriate corporate culture than in an authoritarian culture, as we have explained before that the democratic leadership is the type of leadership style which promotes the creativity in companies. They foster team achievements and they are proud of the individual successes that contribute to the overall success of the firm. And also, they are empathizing employees, who are energetic and passionate, people of diverse backgrounds with creative approaches to work, play and life. Nevertheless their environment is informal, for this reason the ideas can arise in the cafeteria, in a team meeting or in the gym, discussed, analyzed and put into practice and sometimes they may become the launch pad for a new project. Thus they are promoting entrepreneurial minds in their employees also, because they are creators and meaning makers of their work (Nilsson, 2010). Speaking about the environment, we saw in an article of Elmundo.es by unknown author that the magazine 'Fortune' devoted to Google as the best place to

work in USA, it means that they try to maintain a good environment in their work to motivate employees (www.elmundo.es, 2007). Employees not only have great jobs, but great lives.

4.3. Conclusions and Comparisons between Zerogrey and Google

After the analysis of Google and Zerogrey, which are companies very different between them, we conclude that the Talent Management Strategy can be done in any organization to obtain a superior performance of employees and thus, to gain a sustainable competitive advantage, which is the main objective of the Talent Management.

The way of apply the talent management in the organization can be completely different, because, as we have seen in the analysis of those companies, it has to be according to the necessities of the organization. The concept of talent management is very flexible and can be adapted and understood in many different ways to fit in all organizations. It is not only a strategy for big companies. In Zerogrey, they do not spend a huge amount of capital in that strategy, but it is because they do not need it, they are a firm of 20 employees. Google is a big firm all over the world, and the inversion that they do in talent management is also immense. Nevertheless, both companies know that they have pay attention to the recruitment, the development and the retention of the talent pool.

The talent management strategy of Zerogrey is very informal, it is a company without HR department, and hence the responsible of the development of the strategy is the CEO, Guido Meak. The talent management strategy of Google is a formal strategy developed by a large HR department.

Comparing the recruiting activities of both companies, Zerogrey hires just 2 or 3 employees per year, and the management team does that through some personal interviews, but the selection starts after the definition of the position which needs to be fulfilled, the process is not formalized. Google hires a lot of people each year, that is why, they have a very formal and a long selection process through a lot of technical tests and a huge number of interviews with different members of the HR Departments and with different managers. However, the objective of both process is the same, it is

to find the person who fits better in the organization and who can add value to the company. One aspect in which Google and Zerogrey match is in the seek for the diversity in their workforce, due to both their business are global, hence they have to be developed by people for all the world to be able to get the market ability and to recognize all the necessities that all kind of customers could have.

Comparing the development activities of both enterprises, we have the same conclusion that in the retaining, Zerogrey development is smaller than Google development, but both base it on the informal training as mentoring and auto development, the first one does it giving to employees the freedom to develop the project in the way that the employee wants and Google does it giving to employees the 10% of the work time free to develop their own projects. Hence we can say that both organizations foster the creativity and inventiveness of employees.

Comparing the retention activities of both companies, Zerogrey does not do a large investment in the employees' motivation but they are loyal and transparent with them, they provide to employees with the opportunity to do the work that they want and with the opportunity to grow, the happiness is the main motivational factor. Google does a large investment in the workspace to the wellness of Googlers, but that is only one part of the motivation factor, the company gives also great opportunities to grow and develop their talents. Nevertheless although the size of the investment is different, both firms base their motivation factors on the happiness of their employees.

If we compare the work environment of Zerogrey and Google, we could say that in the first company they have a strict schedule and a small room for employees, while in the second firm they have a flexible schedule and also, with diversity of environments to the team work and funny and ample spaces. And Google, employees can choose their work, for this reason they can change of work and their place to do it frequently. Nevertheless, both companies foster a motivation, hard-working, high-tech and youth environment, where workers are encouraged to work there.

In conclusion, the talent management activity is not an issue of capital invested, it is about be aware of how the important is the workforce for the outcome of the organization and try to exploit the full potential of the talented people and also trying to have happy, loyal and motivated employees. That is the case of these two different enterprises both knows that talented people are essential to obtain a sustainable competitive advantage but also, to know how manage that people is essential overall, in the fields where the activities are developed by the creativity.

To be aware of that fact has been the objective of our project, it means to know what talent management is, why it is now more relevant and which kind of advantage it can

provide and also, to know how recognize talented people to attract them into the organization. Finally, our last aim has been to demonstrate that talent management in every organization, the key is to fit the corporate strategy with the talent management strategy.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

In the conclusion we have summarised where we have focused our thesis, but that is not everything that can be said about talent management, talented people and overall about creativity. In the last part of this dissertation we would like to note some more aspects which can be studied in the future.

These aspects are the three followings: the relationship between the creativity and the freedom, the fact that the companies do not know how to find the right talented people that they need and finally, one suggestion for the empirical study. As we have seen we have studied two successful organizations, which use the talent management but we consider also interested the study of a company which does not utilize that strategy to see if it is successful or not and to know how this strategy can be implemented.

First, our opinion about the relation between the creativity and freedom is that without freedom the creativity is impossible, but that freedom has limits. It means the existence of deadlines, tasks, objectives and so forth in the organization is necessary to start the process of the creativity. Without them a talented person does not have the motivation or the reason to be creative, with this we would like to say that all individuals need a purpose to be creative. Nevertheless, the freedom has to be completely in the way to do or to accomplish the objective; it means the talented person has to be free to get to the end of race, through the way that he or she considers the best one, without rigid steps or routines.

Second, we would like to deep into the fact that very often enterprises do not know how to find the correct talented people, because they do not know how to identify firstly, what they need and secondly, they do not know how to look for it. We consider that it could be possible to link that fact with the high unemployment that all the countries have currently.

OUR EXPERIENCE

The development of this work has been an experience to learn new concepts and also to develop new skills such as, team work, leading ourselves, being professional in the deadlines, contacting with real organizations and so forth, that is why we can say that we have not only learned new knowledge about talent management, talented people

and creativity but also, we have learned talents that we can use future professional life.

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On 1 January 2010 Växjö University and the University of Kalmar merged to form Linnaeus University. This new university is the product of a will to improve the quality, enhance the appeal and boost the development potential of teaching and research, at the same time as it plays a prominent role in working closely together with local society. Linnaeus University offers an attractive knowledge environment characterised by high quality and a competitive portfolio of skills.

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