Job Adverts á la 2010
A study of content, style, recommendations and students thoughts and perceptions
Acknowledgement

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Many thanks,

Kirsten Belin & Yi Hsin Wang
Abstract

This thesis is a study of Swedish job adverts published on recruitment websites. The thesis has a qualitative approach and is including three parts. The first part is an analysis of 50 job adverts to create an understanding for what a job advert looks like today, 2010. This part study resulted in a prototype of a typical Swedish job advert published on recruitment websites 2010. The second part is a literature study in order to find out what the recommendations from experts for writing job adverts are at present. This step generated a list of 21 kinds of advice that the experts recommend that one should think of when writing a job advert. The last part consists of group interviews with Swedish speaking business administration students about their thoughts and perceptions of content in job adverts. The result shows that the respondents preferred job adverts that were branded (informed the applicant of the employer). They thought that the job adverts were very stereotype and written in a cliché language. And they also preferred job adverts that contained information about what employer could offer an employee apart from the job itself (in non financial terms). It was also clear that the students were reading in and interpreting a lot meaning behind the words. As an overall conclusion the study suggests that there is food for thought when it comes to how job adverts are being written in Sweden in 2010 and that the field of effectiveness of job adverts is in serious need of more research.

Keywords: Job advert; Job advertisement; recruitment marketing; employer branding; recruitment
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1. Introduction

In times of globalization and increasing competition, finding “the right people” is crucial for any company. Michael et al. (2001, cited in Cooper et al., 2003, p.1) states that: “Talent is now a critical driver of corporate performance... a company’s ability to attract, develop and retain talent will be a major competitive advantage far in the future.” Some go as far to suggest that recruitment today could be seen as an investment that has the potential to be a tipping point for the organization’s future development and success. (FAR Förlag, 2009, p.15) With this in mind, it troubles us to find that according to statistics from Svenskt Näringsliv (Confederation of Swedish Enterprise) in the magazine Entreprenör (2010) every fifth recruitment attempt in Sweden fail. We therefore argue that the topic of reaching, selecting and recruiting the right people could, among others, be regarded as a key factor for economic growth on Sweden. This makes the topic in generally important and called for more research in the field.

1.1 Background

Our attention was brought to the subject for a discussion between us on how features of job adverts and the way they are written seem to fluctuate in different countries. Our different experiences, mainly from the United Kingdom, Sweden and Taiwan, founded a base for an interesting discussion on different styles of job adverts.

An important and interesting point to the discussion was that one of the authors, who has lived in the in the United Kingdom for a couple of years, considered the job adverts there were more attractive than the Swedish ones. Her experience was that the British job adverts had a nicer approach to potential applicants and that the job adverts were “market oriented”. By that she meant that the job adverts were trying to attract applicants to apply for a position, by telling them about the company and what the company had to offer apart from the job itself and the salary. As opposed to this she argued Swedish job adverts to be harsh, boring and almost unfriendly lists of requirements and demands. From this the questions then arose whether there could be any theory regarding how to write job adverts and if someone had studied this phenomenon.

1.2 Problem discussion

The topic of job adverts is important for many reasons. First of all, the most common way to find and recruit people is through job advertisement (FAR Förlag, 2009, p. 23). In year 2009 no less than 416 406 job adverts were posted on Arbetsförmedlingen (2010) [Online]. (Swedish public employment service website).
Secondly, an observation of statistics from Svenskt Näringsliv (Confederation of Swedish Enterprise) shows that the usage of job adverts for finding the right people has decreased during the period from 2007 to 2010. This is said to be due to the fact that job adverts today generate a too large number of applicants that does not match the companies required profile and that the ideal situation would be if the adverts could generate a small number of applicants but with the right qualifications. (Entreprenör, 2010) This statistics and statements suggest that the experienced efficiency of job adverts among recruiters is decreasing.

Thirdly, recruitment processes are rather expensive for employers (Zackrisson, 2006). SweSale (2010) [online] argues that the cost for recruiting an ordinary member of staff only in work time for a recruiter costs about 3000 Euros. This figure rises significantly if the person that is being recruited senior. In addition to this there are costs for the job advert or head hunter, costs for time for other people who need to be involved and so on. A 30 days job advert at Monster Worldwide Scandinavia AB (2010) [Online] costs about €670 and the chances are that one needs to use more than one channel for the job advert to get the desired applicant. Another example we would like to give was one that has been verbally communicated to us. A recruiter at a medium size IT consultant company told us that they had calculated the costs to be about €6000 for recruiting an ordinary member of the staff. It needs to be said that an ordinary member of staff in this case was a computer engineer and that the company was struggling to find qualified people, but €6000 can still be regarded as a considerable amount of money. The company had therefore introduced a bonus of €2000 to any member of staff who was able to convince someone with the desires competence to come and work for the company. Not finding the right people in general was also considered to be the main obstacle for growth in this company. Without being able to give a reference regarding this, due to wishes to remain anonymous from the company, we would still like to bring it up as an example of what it can be like for some employers. Even though the figures of recruitment costs we have mentioned cannot be generalized, it still is an indication on what it can be like for some business. It is therefore of great importance that this process is effective and generates the wanted result.

1.2.1 Generation Gap
Job adverts are often a significant part of a recruitment process for many companies even though its significance obviously has decreased in the past couple of years (Entreprenör, 2010). The reason for the above situation with difficulties finding the right people and a decreasing usage of job advertisement could of course have many explanations, however, some people suggest that a part of this is how job adverts in Sweden are written today (Sjöberg, 2009 cited in E24, 2010) [Online]. Another suggestion comes from Drehn (2010) [Online], who suggests that job adverts in general are poorly written and does not attract applicants to apply for a job. She also argues that the job adverts today especially does not attract the young generation. This is due to that the “Generation Y” as she calls them has a
different mindset about work than previous generations and are not attracted by the traditional motivation factors.

Also others mention this problem with a generation gap in mindset in the workforce today. Crampton and Hodge (2008) argue that we at present have four different generations in the workforce: Veterans (1929-1945), Baby Boomers (1946-1964), Generation X (1965-1980) and Generation Y (1980 and forward). These generations have different attitudes, acquire different management skills and are motivated by different things. Without going into extensive detail about these four generations (we however encourage people to read the study) we would like to show an example of their different attitudes by describing their different assumptions about why they work: Veterans work hard because they think it is the right thing to do, Baby Boomers work hard because they think they have to, Generation X tends to desire more of a balance between work and privatelife and Generation Y works to live, hence they value a private life higher than work. Generation Y is the generation that wants to have fun and live now, and they are not interested in spending their life doing something boring just for the sake of example money. This suggests that since the different generations have for example different attitudes and are motivated by different things, they could be expected to also perceive job adverts differently.

Like mentioned above Generation Y are the people born 1980 and forward and they are an increasing percentage of the workforce today. At the same time the effectiveness of job adverts is decreasing. Without arguing any connection between the two we would like to suggest that it is interesting to study what students belonging to the Generation Y, think of job adverts today.

1.3 Purpose and research questions
The purpose of the study is, firstly to find out how typical Swedish job adverts are constructed today, 2010. Secondly, we would like to examine what the advice for writing an effective job advert is according to the literature. Thirdly, find out students thoughts and perceptions of job adverts.

The research questions can be formulated as:

- How are Swedish job adverts, posted on recruitment websites, written and structured today?
- What is the advice from the literature on how to write effective job adverts?
- How are job adverts, as they are written today, perceived by students (belonging to the “Generation Y”)?
1.4 Limitations
The study targets Swedish job adverts only. Further, it also targets Swedish speaking business administration students and their perceptions and thoughts on different styles of job adverts. To narrow the research even further, the study focuses on online job adverts published on recruitment websites only, since Generation Y is the generation who grew up with the internet and use it as a natural part of their day to day life. It will therefore exclude all job adverts in newspapers, magazines, radio, TV or any other commercial channel off the internet. Due to having to draw the line somewhere the study also excludes online channels like for example social media. We would also like to clarify that we do not aim to study the content of the job itself, only the job advert and how it is written.

1.5 Definition of concept
The first question that aroused regarding the topic was – What is a job advert? There are many different kinds of adverts in the world and what is it that distinguishes the job advert from the rest?

First of all we would like to clarify what an advert is. According to Kotler and Keller (2006, p.568) the definition of advert is basically “any form of non-personal presentation and promotion of ideas, goods or services by an identified sponsor”. However, we are not entirely sure whether a job can be considered a goods, a service, nor an idea, which suggests that this definition does not really cover the whole concept of advertisement. Longman Dictionary (2010) [online] on the other hand defines it as “a picture, set of words, or a short film, which is intended to persuade people to buy a product or use a service, or that gives information about a job that is available, an event that is going to happen etc”. By this definition the job advert is included. The job advert itself is defined as “An announcement in a newspaper or magazine, informing people that a job is available” (Financial Times Lexicon, 2010) [online]. This is the best definition we could find in external sources, however, we are surprised to find that a Lexicon from Financial times does not cover job advert that are posted on the internet.

With these different definitions in mind we would like to define the concept “job advert” in this study as the following: A job advert is an advert that an organization or person posts in a medium in order to find and attract suitable people to recruit for a job.
2. Previous research
This chapter will present an overview of relevant previous research in the field.

2.1 Overview of previous research
An overhaul of the research done in the field of job advert shows that this appears to be a rather unexplored territory in the field of business administration. The number of scientific articles and studies addressing the topic of “how to create an attractive job advert” and subject of recruitment advertising and marketing is surprisingly small and most of the studies made are relatively old and made long before internet entered the scene of recruitment advertising. Even others have come to the same conclusion and requested more research in the field. (Belt & Paolillo, 1982; Mason & Belt, 1986; Ryan et al., 2000) Belt and Paolillo (1982 cited in Ryan et al., 2000, p.363) even state that “the lack of academic interest and empirical research in recruitment advertising has hindered its development and effectiveness.”

Even though the range of the research is not that extensive there are of course studies made. Belt and Paolillo (1982) present a study suggesting that the company image plays a key role in the effectiveness of the job advertisement in attracting suitable candidates and influence them to apply for the position. Strong company image significantly increased the number of applicants for a position. Tom (1971) states a similar idea and suggests that individuals choose an organization to work for based on similarity between organizational image and the individual’s self-concept. Company image should therefore play an important role.

Schreier (1983) studied people working in 10 different industry sectors and found that people in different types of industries were attracted and motivated by different things in job adverts. He called these phenomenon that people had different “ego states”. He meant that in order to attract the right people to a position the job advert needed to speak to the ego state the ideal applicant could be expected to have. The study also supported theory that states that a job advert has to be viewed though the eyes of that a job advert is a proposal of exchange between the applicants and the employer. With this result you could also argue the importance of studying different industries separately, due to the fact that they will be attracted to different things.

Another study focuses on finding out if the level of specificity regarding qualifications and requirements in job adverts would make a difference in number of applications. The result argued that the higher level of specificity the lower where the response from unqualified applicants (Mason & Belt, 1986). This means that if one would like to lower the number of applicants for a job vacancy, one needs to be very specific about the requirement. This study does however not cover whether you should be specific regarding personal traits.
Nevertheless, it states that being specific regarding the job description and qualification needs will pay off when it comes to lowering the number of unqualified applicants.

Thorsteinson and Highhouse (2003) studied how “goal framing” affected the attractiveness of job adverts among graduates. “Goal framing” is a concept from psychology, which refers to wording that emphasizes on the potential gain associated with performing a given act (gain framing) as opposed to “loss framing” that is focusing on the losses associated with not performing the same act. The result of the study showed that applicants are much more likely to respond to a job advert if the advert emphasizes on “gain framing”, hence what they will gain from applying. This conclusion suggests that it is important to think of a job advert as an advert promoting a vacancy to potential applicants, since it is the “gain frame” that is going to influence them to apply. In a small study made by Sjöstrand and Sjögren (2009, cited on E24, 2009) [Online] can be related to Thorsteinson and Highhouse (2003). Both the studies recommend that the job advert emphasize on what a potential applicant will gain from applying. In Sjöstrand and Sjögren’s study a job advert was rewritten to give the same information but in a more marketing oriented way. The two adverts were then tested on students to see which one they preferred. 9 out of 10 preferred the more marketing oriented rewritten job advert over the original one.

Blackman (2006) turned the attention towards the layout of print media job adverts and studied different combinations of picture, headlines and content and comes to the conclusion that the respondents preferred adverts with clear headlines followed by a short marketing description of the job and that a picture that the applicants could identify with was present in the advert. This study suggests that layout is important and that it can make a difference when publishing a job advert.

Ryan et al. (2000) studied job adverts published in the press to create a framework for analysing whether a job advert could be considered as marketing oriented or not. The study presents a list of factors that are classified as marketing characteristic. However, Ryan et al.(2000) argue that the study only should be seen as an indicator and a base for further research due to its size. This study is also concerned with job advert in print media only, but however worth mentioning in the context of previous research.

An interesting study even though it does not really involve job adverts is Jennings et al. (2003). They studied the importance of information about benefits, relative to if graduates were willing to accept a job offer or not. The study showed that traditional benefits like insurances and healthcare did not increase the likeliness for graduates’ acceptance of the job offer. Non-traditional benefits however, like for example flexible working hours, gym membership and extra vacation did on the other hand increase the acceptance rate among the respondents. This could be related to job adverts in that sense that it indicates that different benefits mentioned in job adverts can have different effects.
3. Approach
This chapter aims to explain how the study is structured.

3.1 The creation of knowledge
When designing the study we discussed the concept of how knowledge is created. Figure 3.1 shows a model from Rolfe (1995) that illustrates how knowledge is generated. This model has inspired us to the design for this study, as we already in an early stage realized that the study was going to be a constant alternating process between research and empirical studies and reflection.

![Figure 3.1. Reflective cycle (Rolfe, 1995, p.95).](image)

Rolfe (1995) meant that the generation of knowledge is created in an ongoing process, since theory create thoughts and hypothesis that are constantly being tested and put into context by every person in a given situation. We decided to use this design for our study due to the fact that we felt that this was exactly the way we would have to work in order to generate as much understanding as possible.

3.2. Structure
The study consist of three parts, two pre studies and one main study. When the whole study was first started it was not clear exactly what questions the interview study was going to answer. This was due to that fact that we wanted to keep an open mind to what the pre-studies would result in and then focus on a couple of factors and dig deeper into those. This
approach has however resulted in a little different structure of the thesis and we therefore would like to clarify how we have structured our work and this written document in order not to confuse the reader. The whole research structure and process is also outlines in figure 3.2 Study approach on the next page.

Chapter 1 Introduction is generally short. This is due to that we felt that the chapter 2 Previous research and the two pre-studies (chapter 4-5) also in one way could be regarded as further introduction to the topic and that all these chapters together form the foundation for the interview study, the main study of this thesis.

The pre-studies, Observation of Swedish job adverts and the Literature Study have been given their own chapters. Both chapters include a part explaining how the study was made and those parts could therefore be considered as method for those studies. This means that any method regarding these two pre-studies will not be mentioned in the chapter 6 Method. Hence, chapter 6 is exclusively concerned with the method of the Interview Study. The simple reason for this was that in ordered to understand the method for the interview study one needs to understand the results of the pre-studies. This means that if we would have put everything that had to do with method in one chapter it would have been very difficult to follow the red thread and logic, due to the fact that the reader would not have had any understanding for the results of the pre-studies in that stage. The pre-studies answer the first two of the research questions and are therefore part of the whole studies result.

In figure 3.2 Study approach (next page) that shows how the whole research process of this study is structured. Cognitive process can be found on the same level as the two pre-studies. This was due to the fact that we wanted to mention the process of thinking and discussion with fellow students and supervisors in the seminars. This process was especially extensive parallel with the two pre-studies and therefore deserves to be mentioned.

The interview study is presented in a normal structure including chapters like Method, Theoretical Framework, and Result of interview study, which are chapter 6-8.

The last part of the thesis consists of the chapters 9-11 are Discussion of result from the interview study, Conclusion and Reflections and suggestions for future research.

To clarify things even further, the whole approach has, like we have previously mentioned, been put into a figure 3.2 which is displayed below:
Study approach

**Introduction to the thesis**
This part is the introduction to the topic and how the thesis is structured. It involves chapter 1-3, *Introduction, Previous research and Approach.*

**Pre-studies**
These are presented in their own chapters 4-5 that also include how they were done since one needs the results of these to understand why and how the interview study was designed.

**Interview study**
This is the main empirical study and is presented in chapter 6-8, *Method, Theoretical Framework and Result of interview study.*

**Discussion and conclusion**
In this part, chapter 9-11, we discuss the results relative to theory, draw conclusions and reflect on the study in order to give suggestions for future research.

*Figure 3.2. Study approach.*
4. Pre-study 1 - Observation of Swedish job adverts

This is the first out of two pre-studies that were done to generate a better understanding for the present situation regarding Swedish job adverts. The chapter aims to explain how the pre-study was made and display the result of it. The results can be found in figure 4.1 Typical Swedish job advert and chapter 4.2 Language and wording. The findings have also been discussed and defined in order to make sense to a reader; this has been done in chapter 4.3. The results are also discussed in chapter 9 and 10.

4.1 Finding and analyzing the job adverts

The research process started with observation of Swedish job adverts on Arbetsförmedlingen (2010) [Online] (Swedish public employment service website) and Monster Worldwide Scandinavia AB (2010) [Online]. The reason for picking these two recruitment websites was that they are big, well known and that they deal with all kinds of job adverts from different industries and levels. We decided to sample the job adverts, that were going to be studied, by searching for adverts containing the word “junior”, since those adverts usually are targeting younger people and those adverts would therefore be more relevant for the interview group later. A selection was then made based on judgment sample, which mean that we consciously picked advert to get a sample that was as broad as possible. (Bryman, 2006, p.313) The number of adverts found was 79 and from these 50 where picked to be examined. The observation is very qualitative and was a way for us to gain an understanding of what job adverts, targeting younger people, on recruitment websites look like at present. We also thought it to be important to include this to paint a better picture and create a better understanding for potential international readers. We are aware that job adverts is a phenomenon that is constantly changing over time which means that this result should not be generalized and is merely an indication. In order to describe the findings we have created a simple figure of a typical Swedish job advert, which can be found on the next page. The explanation for what everything is can be found in the figure 4.1 and the figure is a prototype of what an average job advert targeting young people would look like if it would have been printed out.
4.2 Language and wording in the typical Swedish job advert

When observing Swedish job adverts posted on recruitment websites it very soon became clear that the adverts are rather similar and repetitive, almost like they would have been written by the same person. This is however partly not at all surprising, since job adverts need to contain certain elements in order to be functional at all and the websites also re-
quire a certain structure in order to make the advert searchable in its database. What was surprising to us was that the job adverts tended to be written in a very similar type of language and use the same words and expressions regardless of the content and the job it was advertised. Another point was that the job adverts tended to use words and expressions that were rather subjective and difficult to define what they meant. Without going into linguistic theories about how and why this phenomenon can have occurred we would like to present and clarify what we mean by trying to classify the words and expressions into categories. Words and phrases that could be classified in the following categories occurred over and over again.

**Repetitive words** – There is nothing wrong with these words in themselves, so far as that they are normal words in the Swedish language, but due to the repetitiveness and the overuse of them they end up as a category. An example is the word “flexible”, a normal, often justified word to use in a job advert but used to the point of exhaustion. The word gives about 2800 hits among 18 000 adverts on Arbetsförmedlingen (2010) [Online] (Swedish public employment service website), the word “positive” gives you about 2500 hits and “driven” about 1400. These are words that are so popular among writers of recruitment adverts that they become part of “a typical job advert language”.

**Metaphors** – A very common thing to be used in the job adverts we studied. The definition means “figure of speech in which a word or phrase is applied to something to which it is not literally applicable”. (Oxford Dictionary, 2010) [Online]. For example: being the “spider in the net” and be able to “keep many balls in the air”, are both metaphors in Swedish and cannot be understood nor interpreted word by word.

**“Swenglish”** – Appeared a lot in Swedish job adverts that was studied. The category covers all words that are originally English words that have not been translated, but just added to the text as they are. Examples of these are “team player”, “service minded”, “out-of-the-box-think” and “can-do-attitude”.

**Buzzwords** – Trendy industry or business related terms, abbreviations or slang. In business administration one can find for example B2B (Business-to-business), CRM (Customer relationship management) and ROI (return on investment).

**Contradictions** – We have also noticed that some personal traits requested in the adverts are complete contradictions, which makes the message very hard to interpret. For example: being an “independent team player” or a “calm and enthusiastic co-worker”.

**Self-explications** – There are a lot of self-explications in job advert and by this we mean attributes that no one in their right mind would ever state the opposite of. The likeliness of someone advertising a job requesting someone to be lazy, unstructured and antisocial is insignificant.

4.4 **Anonymity – a common phenomenon in Swedish job adverts**

Another finding when observing the job adverts was that many job adverts, 23/50 did not mention where an applicant was going to be working, it only mentions the type of industry or company. This was surprising, since a job with the same job description could potentially be
different in different companies and type of businesses and therefore appeal to different people. Without going into any details for why it could be this way we would like to address this as one of our interesting findings of the observation study.
5. Pre-study 2 - Literature study

The literature study is the second and last pre-study. This chapter aims to explain the process of how the literature study was done and what it resulted in.

5.1 Collection of ideas and advice from literature

It became rather quickly clear to us that very little research had been carried out in the topic and that the literature on this subject was limited. Internet did however provide information from experts giving advice on how to write “the perfect job advert”. These advice and their ideas were however neither consistent nor scientific and were merely recommendations from professionals, agencies and recruitment websites dealing with job advertisement daily. A selection of keywords we used were “write job advert + advice”, “perfect job advert”, “effective job advert”, “attractive job advert”, “effective recruitment advertising”, “rules for writing job adverts” and in Swedish “skriva platsannons + råd”, “bra platsannons”. The only languages literatures we searched were Swedish and English. This search resulted in 14 articles and websites and one book that were giving comprehensive advice on the subjects. These were collected to be analyzed.

5.2 Analysis of collected data and result of it

All the information we collected was analysed with the method thematic analysis. Principally this means that we read the text over and over again with the focus to detect frequent and re-occurring themes in the text (Bryman, 2006, p.405). This qualitative method was from our point of view, the most effective way to analyze the material, due to the nature of the material and we judged that the content of the data needed to analyze relative to the context it was mentioned in. The analysis resulted in 21 different themes or variables that the experts considered to be important to think of when creating a job advert. We have classified them under the following headlines:

5.2.1. Pre research

Many sources strongly recommend that pre-research is carried out before a job advert is written.

- Understanding the ideal applicant – The understanding for the ideal applicant is vital. This means that it is very important to do some research before starting to write a job advert. If one does not understand the ideal applicant it is very difficult to reach him/her. This is obviously a point that, for the experts, is the most central in the whole material of this literature study resulted in. Without this it is difficult to apply the other advice given. Regardless of which part of the job advert is being written this is the universal rule. (Monster Worldwide, Inc.,2010; Net Resources International, 2010; International Guild of Hospitality & Restaurant Managers Inc., 2002; PhDJobs Limited,
5.2.2. Marketing
It is with no doubt the case that “experts” tend to see job adverts in the same light as normal promotional adverts.

- **Same approach as when writing a selling advert** – this is a point that the literature is pointing out over and over again (Monster Worldwide, Inc., 2010; Net Resources International, 2010; International Guild of Hospitality & Restaurant Managers Inc., 2002; PhDJobs Limited., 2008; Bokförlaget Redaktionen, 2010a,b; Businessballs.com, 2010; Isbister, 2010) [Online]. By this the sources mean that the job advert has to “sell” the job and the employer it is advertising. Why should someone come and work for the employer posting the job advert?

- **Introduction** – is meant to catch the readers’ interest. The experts’ advice is keeping it short. (Monster Worldwide, Inc., 2010) [Online].

- **Branding** – there can be reason for why an employer wants to be anonymous in a job advert. But in general, it is much more beneficial to show the brand and identity as an employer in the job advert and it is therefore widely recommended. (Net Resources International, 2010; Bokförlaget Redaktionen, 2010a,b; Geek Evaluation, 2009a; PhDJobs Limited., 2008; Isbister 2010)[Online], (FAR Förlag. 2009, p.25). This applies especially if the employer has a strong brand (Businessballs.com 2010) [Online]. Branding the job advert also gives a much better chance to stand out and get attention (Geek Evaluation, 2009b) [Online], it also makes the job advert more interesting, since people would like to know where they are going to be working (Isbister, 2010) [Online].

- **Job title** – jobs can have many title names. This is a natural keyword, which means that it needs to be relevant. This is also very much a matter of understanding the ideal applicant. The job title that is most relevant and most appealing to that person is the one to use. (Monster Worldwide, Inc., 2010; Net Resources International, 2010; Evancarmicheal.com, 2010; Businessball.com, 2010) [Online]

- **Headline**
  - **Effectiveness** – the headline has to catch the reader’s attention, once again it is about understanding the target audience. The best headline to use is usually the job title. (Monster Worldwide, Inc., 2010; Evancarmicheal.com, 2010; Businessballs.com, 2010) [Online], (FAR Förlag. 2009, p.25) The headline can also be for-
mulated to a question, either to the reader or one that the job advert is answering (Bokförlaget Redaktionen, 2010a,b) [Online].

- **As keywords for search engines** – when posting a job advert in the internet regardless if it is on the company website or a recruitment website it needs to be searchable. What would a potential applicant most likely search for if they wanted to find a job advert like yours? (Monster Worldwide, Inc., 2010) [Online]

- **Benefits and rewards** – are good points for marketing the job advert. Benefits and rewards do not have to be financial, flexible working hour, career opportunities and in-house gym are all very much worth mentioning. (Monster Worldwide, Inc., 2010; Entrepreneur Media, Inc., 2002; Bokförlaget Redaktionen, 2010ab; Businessballs.com, 2010; International Guild of Hospitality & Restaurant Managers Inc., 2002; PhDJobs Limited., 2008; E24, 2009) [Online]

### 5.2.3. Language

Many sources mention the important of choosing the words when writing a job advert.

- **Adapt the language** – use a language that is familiar to the ideal applicant, but in general the language need to be kept simple. (Net Resources International, 2010; Businessballs.com, 2010; Monster Worldwide, Inc., 2010) [Online], (FAR Förlag, 2009, p.24)

- **Clarity** – the words and the text have to mean something. This sounds trivial, but the “experts” point it out time after time. Make sure to use wording that the ideal applicants understand. (Businessballs.com, 2010; Isbister, 2010; PhDJobs Limited., 2008; E24, 2009; Bokförlaget Redaktionen, 2010ab; Evancarmicheal.com, 2010) [Online]

- **Wording** – is a matter of choosing the words and expression to use in the job advert. The advice regarding this is not coherent, but it could be said that this is a matter of balance between using words the applicants will find familiar example buzzwords and unoriginal language (Evancarmicheal.com, 2010) [Online], and to not use the words and expressions everybody else uses (Isbister, 2010).

- **Tone** – it is important to make sure that the job advert is speaking to applicants in the “right” tone. This is mainly about wording. The tone needs to be polite and approaching. (Monster Worldwide, Inc., 2010; Bokförlaget Redaktionen, 2010a; E24, 2009) [Online]; (FAR Förlag, 2009, p.24)

- **Formal vs. informal language** – again this has to be a mix between what would be most appealing to the ideal applicants and the employer image, but the most important thing in this is that the job advert is addressing a person and not impersonal group.
Words like “you” and “your” should be used. (Businessballs.com, 2010; Monster Worldwide, Inc., 2010; Net Resources International, 2010) [Online]

5.2.4. Content
Much advice from the experts is regarding the content in job adverts.

- **Employer information** – this is a section where the “experts” clearly states the importance of being relevant. One needs to consider what a potential applicant needs to know in this stage, and what they can find out themselves. The important things are to keep it short and that those things that are being said is marketing the employer. (Drehn, 2010; Monster Worldwide, Inc., 2010; Bokförlaget Redaktionen, 2010ab; Businessballs.com, 2010; International Guild of Hospitality & Restaurant Managers Inc., 2002; Geek Evaluation, 2009a; Isbister, 2010)[Online] When it come to employer information it is also important not to forget to add basic logistic details like example location. This kind of information is very important for an applicant in order to make an assessment if it would be possible to work for an employer or not. (Monster Worldwide, Inc., 2010; Entrepreneur Media, Inc., 2002; Net Resources International, 2010; Businessballs.com, 2010; Evancarmichael.com, 2010; PhDJobs Limited., 2008; Isbister, 2010)

- **Job description** – This part needs to be detailed, but one also needs to remember that it should not be extortionate. The number of main responsibilities to pick out and add differs from two to seven main responsibilities, hence there is no clear guideline, and the point is to limit the list. (Monster Worldwide, Inc., 2010; Bokförlaget Redaktionen, 2010ab; Evancarmichael.com, 2010)[Online] It is also important to not forget to add details like example type of employment the job advert is regarding. (Businessballs.com, 2010) [Online]

- **Qualifications** – This in an important filter to lower the number of unqualified applicants. The more strict and detailed one is, the smaller the number of applicants is going to be. (Monster Worldwide, Inc., 2010; Net Resources International, 2010; Bokförlaget Redaktionen, 2010a; International Guild of Hospitality & Restaurant Managers Inc., 2002; PhDJobs Limited., 2008) [Online]; (FAR Förlag. 2009, p.25) Another advice is to outline this very clearly, by using for example bullet points (Evancarmichael.com, 2010) [Online].

- **Personal traits and attributes** – this is an area where the advice is incoherent, hence the advice differs compare who one asks. Entrepreneur Media, Inc. (2002) [Online] argues that job advert should not include any attributes describing desired personal traits what so ever, due to the fact that people are likely to lie and imitate those characteristics just to get the job, when the reality is that they don’t really possess these qualities. A job advert should instead focus on explaining the job with as much accuracy as pos-
sible. That will attract the “right people” more effectively than requesting personal traits or attributes. However, Monster Worldwide, Inc. (2010) [Online], Net Resources International (2010) [Online], Evancarmichael.com (2010) [Online], Isbister (2010) [Online], all argue that attributes describing personal traits should be used in job adverts in order to filter out the unsuitable candidates. A third suggestion is to ask the applicant to specify their personal traits in the application (FAR Förlag. 2009, p.26).

- **Application process** – obviously the job advert has to inform the applicants on how to apply. Information about what kind of documents the employer would like and if there is any specific information that is requested, has to be in this paragraph. Also some kind of contact details for a person to contact regarding questions need to be included. (Monster Worldwide, Inc., 2010; Net Resources International, 2010; International Guild of Hospitality & Restaurant Managers Inc., 2002; Bokförlaget Redaktionen, 2010ab; PhDJobs Limited, 2008; Businessballs.com, 2010; Isbister, 2010; Geek Evaluation, 2009b;) It is also very important to make this process as easy as possible (Monster Worldwide, Inc., 2010) [Online]; (FAR Förlag. 2009, p.24).

- **Salary** – this is one of the matters where the advice differs a lot, but it should also be mentioned that only one of the Swedish sources mention this at all and does then suggest to let the applicant suggest a salary in his/her application. The reason for this is that it is important to discuss salary as early as possible in the recruitment process in order not to proceed with the “wrong” candidates. (FAR Förlag. 2009, p.26) This might be a matter of cultural differences, because many international sources agree on the reason but argue that a salary should be specified by the poster of the job advert and not the applicant. These sources go further and argue that telling people about the salary is important for more reasons. First of all it is a great tool for screening unwanted applicants out since most people understand what kind of salary they expect on the level they are at. This way you will also screen out all the people who does not want to do the job for the salary and overqualified who are often just as unwanted as the unqualified. (Isbister, 2010, International Guild of Hospitality & Restaurant Managers Inc., 2002) [Online] However, most international sources agree that if one does not want to specify the salary it is at least important to give information on the salary such as if it is fixed or if it is commission bases (Entrepreneur Media, Inc., 2002; Businessballs.com, 2010; Monster Worldwide, Inc., 2010; Net Resources International, 2010). Finally, one source, PhDJobs Limited., (2008) [Online] argues that the salary should not be included as you do not want to attract people for financial reasons.

5.2.5. **Layout**

- **Design** – Making the job advert look attractive is recommended. It is also important that it is easy to read. (Net Resources International, 2010; Businessballs.com, 2010; Drehn, 2010; Isbister, 2010) [Online] A good template to use it to use the same theme
as in the organisation’s graphic profile (Bokförlaget Redaktionen, 2010a; PhDJobs Limited., 2008) [Online]; (FAR Förlag, 2009, p.25).

- **Length of text** – Keep the job advert short, is the general message (Entrepreneur Media, Inc., 2002; PhDJobs Limited., 2008; E24, 2009) [Online]. How short does however depend of who one asks. Between 500-700 words is the advice. (Monster Worldwide, Inc.,2010; Drehn, 2010) Monster Worldwide, Inc., (2010) [Online] also states that the introduction should not exceed more than 40 words.
6. Method of main study - the interview study
This chapter aims to give an overview of how the main study, hence interview study, was executed and the thoughts and reason behind it.

6.1 Search for previous research
Due to very little research in the field we had to implement two steps also in the study of previous research. The first step was mainly done through databases. The search for articles was made in the following databases: “Elin”; “ABI/Inform”; “Affärsvdata”; “Emerald”; “Jstor” and “Google Scholars”.

To find suitable books in the subject we used the data base “Libris”, but also online book stores like “Amazon.com” and “Google Books”. The keywords that were used were for example “job advert”, “job advertisement”, “recruitment advertising”, “recruitment marketing”, “employment branding”, “recruitment process”, and so on.

As a second step we examined the articles and books that they found, to find suitable references previous studies had used and searched for these articles in the databases mentioned above. This did however not generate the wanted results, mainly but to the fact that many articles were more than 30 years old, and we therefore asked the professional librarians at Örebro University for help. This has however put us in the position where we cannot say for sure how these articles where found, only that they were found by professional librarians. We then turned to other areas psychology, media and communications and journalism. Again we used database to find information about “copywriting”, “advertisement content” to find out what professionals in this field think about writing similar texts.

6.2 Selection of factors to study
The two pre-studies resulted in 22 factors (20 themes from the literatures study and two observation from the observation study) that could be studied. We judged that the 22 different themes would be too much to study. Three factors were therefore selected to focus on in the interview phase. The choice pretty naturally fell on three themes that were named:

Branded vs. Anonymity – a theme that in the literature study and observation was incoherent about. The literature clearly argued the benefits of branding, but the observation study showed that a lot of job adverts still are unbranded.

Language and wording – a finding from the observation of the Swedish job adverts and classified in chapter 4.2.
“What’s in it for me”- factor – a name based on copywriting’s theory that a text tells the reader what he/she has to gain from performing what the text tells him/her to do. (Maslen, 2009, p.16) Many sources examined in the literature study talked about using the same approach for a job advert as when creating a promotional advert.

We thought these three themes would be interesting, relevant and original since they, according to what we know, had not been studied before, and these themes would also be relatively uncomplicated to study systematically.

6.3 Defining the three research concepts
The first phenomenon we wanted to study was the branded and anonymous job advert and this was not considered hard to define. Either a job advert reveals to the reader which company that has posted the advert or not.

The second occurrence was the typical type of language and wording that was observed in the observational study of Swedish job adverts. The kind of words and expressions we wanted to find out the respondents thoughts and opinion about were the same ones classified into categories in chapter 4.2. As mentioned in chapter 4.3 we did struggle to define this concept as the closest definition that could be found was the word “cliché” which to us had a very negative association. We were afraid that “naming” the words might have a negative effect in the validity of the result. Instead we wanted to build on the “names” the respondents gave the type of words and expressions. Therefore we left it with calling the concept “language and wording” and decided not to go into it more specifically.

The last thing we decided to study was, what was named the “what’s in it for me”- factor. The observable fact is when an employer is trying to “market” the job to a potential applicant in order to make it sound more attractive. The definition and naming and the concept comes from copywriting theory (Maslen, 2009, p.16). We chose to name the phenomenon the same thing.

6.4 Design
This study is based on qualitative group interviews accessorized with three sets of job advert the respondents needed to read before the interview. The adverts were pairs that consisted of one original advert (were published on a recruitment website) and another one that was a changed version of the same advert, rewritten to exclude or add the variable that we were aiming for finding out the respondents opinion about. The reason for this was to give the respondents a better understanding of the phenomenon of the interviews about and to clarify what it could look in real life. The qualitative approach was judged to the most efficient by us, as the study was aimed to find out what the respondents opinion on three
different features of job adverts and also their thoughts and feelings behind that opinion (Bryman, 2006).

6.5 Construction of the job adverts
The job adverts for the experiment were created from published job adverts that we found on recruitment websites. The adverts were selected qualitatively, since they needed to have certain features that could easily be removed or added in order to not influence the content more than necessary. Only adverts targeting business administration graduates were selected, which means that the job adverts were advertising jobs were the applicants needed a degree in business administration and with very little working experience was required. This was done to make sure the respondents were familiar with and could relate to the job advertised.

Advert 1A: Advert 1B with all branding and specific information about the company removed. (Appendix 1)

Advert 1B: An original job advert with clear branding found in Arbetsförmedlingen (2010) [Online]. (Appendix 2)

Advert 2A: An original job advert found in Arbetsförmedlingen (2010) [Online] that was written with the typical language with example metaphors, “Swenglish”, buzzwords were used. (Appendix 3)

Advert 2B: Advert 2A but with all metaphors, “Swenglish” and buzzwords removed, or in case they could not be removed but exchanges for a normal traditional Swedish word or an explanation instead with common Swedish. (Appendix 4)

Advert 3A: Advert 3B, but with all information mentioning what the company offered apart from the job itself removed. (Appendix 5)

Advert 3B: An original advert found in Arbetsförmedlingen (2010) [Online] containing information about what the company can offer potential applicants a part from the job itself. These offers were of non monetary character. (Appendix 6)

6.6 Sample of respondents
The study focuses on Swedish speaking graduate students studying in Business Administration. The sample was made through judgement sample which means that the researcher actively selects the most productive sample to answer the research question (Marshall, 1996, p.2). The reason for picking the type sample this was:
The study was made in Sweden and we thought that the group interviews needed to be carried out in Swedish to avoid misunderstanding regarding the text in the job adverts they were reading. We also thought that the respondents would be able to express themselves more freely and accurate if they were allowed to do it in a language they were comfortable in. This did however exclude graduates students studying in Sweden but were none Swedish speaking.

The respondents needed to reasonably similar since they needed to have an understanding of the job adverts presented to them. We thought that this could increase the organic validity, which means that the result would be more applicable on people’s day to day life. (Bryman, 2006) If the respondents would had been very different with regards to education and personal interest and understanding of the job adverts, we thought it might have influenced the validity of the result.

Schreier’s (1983) study about how people in different industries have different “ego states” argues the importance of studying industries separately. Since people have different ego state and are attracted by different motivation factors it is important to consider this when doing research in this field.

We are aware that this type of sample is not ideal and makes the study unfit to generalize, but since the study is small, qualitative and is focused on finding out opinions and also reasons and thoughts behind those opinions, this study is not meant to generalized, and therefore we judged the sampling to be acceptable.

6.7 The interview groups
The respondents were called to the interviews in groups of three to four. They were then given a verbal short instruction on what was going to happen in the interview. The process of reading the job adverts first and then be interviewed was mentioned. They were also given the information that the job adverts they were going to read would be divided into pairs and that for example 1A and 1B would be one pair and each pair were similar. The respondents were after that handed the job advert 1A and asked to read it and make notes. When the respondents were done they were given the 1B to move on with. This procedure was repeated until all six job adverts had been read.

After the respondents had read all the job adverts the interview followed. The reason we choose to interview groups instead of individuals in the interview part was that we wanted the respondents to be able to discuss their thoughts and perceptions of the job adverts in the experience. Bryman (2006, p.324-325) mentions this as one of the benefits of group interviews and argues that this for a purpose like this interviewing groups is appropriate.

We have classified the groups that were interviewed as interview groups instead of focus groups, due to the aim of the interviews and how they were made. According to Bryman
(2006, p.324-325), an interview with a group distinguishes from an interview with a focus group in that way that a interview with a group (not focus group) does not aim to find out anything about the respondents as group members and a group interview is also put together of many different questions and topics that are to be discussed.

The number of groups was four and consisted of three to four individuals each. The number of groups was not decide on forehand, since we wanted the number to be decided by theoretical saturation, which means that you continue the study until we felt that only the same answers are repeating themselves and that nothing new is being added to the study (Bryman, 2006, p.28). It was however decided that the groups would be between four to six on forehand.

There is no recommendation on how many people that is ideal for a group interview, however, it is recommended that smaller groups are used if the interviewer think that the respondent will have a lot to say on the subject or you would like to make sure that the engagement from the respondents is high (Bryman, 2006, p.330). We decided to use very small groups of three to four people to make the participants engage as much as possible and to make sure that all the respondents would be heard during the interviews. Another reason was that the interviews were new to the concept of interviewing a group and therefore wanted to kind the size down.

6.8 Interviews

A semi structured interview guide was used for all interviews (full interview guide in Appendix 7). Semi structured interview’s means that the interviewer has a list of questions that the interview was going to cover, but he/she is however free to ask other questions that are arising during the process of the interview. These could for example be questions arising from the answers the respondents give. The questions in the interview guide also do not have to come in the same order every time. The structure is depending in what the respondents are answering. Questions are set in a form as formal and limited. (Bryman, 2006, p.301) We judged this to be the best type of interview for the purpose, due to the fact it was important to be able to follow up interesting answers from the respondents with more questions. For the interviews in this study, we used Swedish as a communicate language, since it was judged to be important for the validity that people could express themselves as freely and clearly as possible. The interviews were hosted by one of the native Swedish speaking author, who also was the main interviewer of the interviewees. Since one of the authors was not fluent Swedish speaking, she acted as an interview assistant and was present the whole time. All interviews were recorded using a MP3 recorder to prevent there was any information missed for analysis. Bryman (2006, p.328) argues that this is very important when working with group interviews, since it is very difficult to take notes from many people speaking at the same time.
6.9 Data analysis
The analysis of the data was done through thematic analysis. This means that we analysed
that interviews many times with the purpose to detect re-occurring themes in the collected
date. (Bryman, 2006, p.405) These themes then form a foundation for the results and are
presented in the chapter 8 Results of interview study. The data analysis was done a long
with the collection like in the Rolfe’s (1995) model of “reflection-in-action” presented in
paragraph 3.1, hence we did not wait to start analysing the data until all interviews were
done. This method was used since we thought that it would generate the best result, but
also to save time in the research process. What needs to be mentioned when it comes to
data analysis is that all quotes taken from the interviews and displayed in chapter 8 Result
of interview study have been translated into English by the authors. We are aware that this
is not ideal, it was however unavoidable. We have therefore been very careful in this proc-
ess, in order not to interpret anything incorrectly.

6.10 Reliability
The reliability and validity of this study should be viewed from angle of qualitative re-
search. The classic definition of reliability is therefore hard to apply. (Bryman, 2006,
p.257) We have therefore decided to use LeCompte and Goetz’s (1982 cited in Bryman,
2006, p.257) and Kirk and Millers’ (1986 cited in Bryman, 2006, p.257) understanding of
the concept reliability. They all distinguish between internal and external reliability in
qualitative research and argue that external reliability understands of to which extent the
result would be the same if the study would be replicated. When it comes to external reli-
ability in this study we are sure that the result from a method point of view would be the
same, however this concept is closely related to what quantitative research calls stability
that is referring to if the result could be argued to be stable over time. (Bryman, 2006,
p.86) That is something that is of no interest to this study as we are well aware that the
perceptions and opinions of the concepts this study aims to examine will change over time.
Internal validity of the study is assessed to be high since the only one author has been able
to listen to the interviews due to language barriers. This concept is similar to what quantita-
tive research calls “internal consistency”.

The reliability of the result is judged to be secured. All interviews were recorded and care-
fully analyzed by the Swedish speaking author. Bryman (2006, p.328) stresses the impor-
tance of recording group interviews for the sake of the reliability. He means that it is too
difficult to get all relevant data, otherwise which we completely agree on. It could be ar-
gued that pre pressure could be a negative factor in group interviews, which we have taken
into consideration. The positive factor of the possibility of getting the discussion between
the respondents as they were bringing up different angels on the topic were however
judged to weigh up the negative ones like the risk pre pressure. We think that the climate
for discussion has been good in all groups and that the respondents did find the topic interesting and fun to talk about. Since the topic is not that sensitive, it could also be argued that pre pressure and frequency of lying can be expected to be low. To make sure that the interviewer did understand what the respondents meant during the interviews the interviewer used verbal “respondent validation” during the interviews. Respondent validation means that the researcher asks the respondents if he/she has understood the respondent correctly, by asking them to confirm the notes and interpretations the researcher has done are correct according to the respondent. (Bryman, 2006, p.259)

6.11 Validity
The study was decided to have a qualitative approach to increase the validity in general, since we judged that a qualitative approach would bring higher validity, due to the nature of the research question. The sets of job adverts, the respondents had to read before the interviews were designed and used to increase the concepts validity. This means that the study really measures what it is meant to measure, example that the respondents understand what the interviewer is referring to when asking the questions. (Bryman, 2006) Since the topic can be difficult to relate to and answer questions about on no further notice, we wanted to make sure that the respondents understood the questions during the interviews. This was the reason for presenting them with examples of job adverts of what the questions were addressing. Also the sampling was in a way designed to increase the validity. We thought that the respondents would be able to answer more accurately if they had an understanding and could relate to the job adverts presented to them and they therefore needed to have an understanding of fairly the same jobs in order for us to be able to create good examples of job adverts. We also argue that this strengthens the organic validity, hence if the result is applicable to people day to day life (Bryman, 2006, p.465).
7. Theoretical Framework
This chapter aims to give an overview of the theory that is needed to understand job adverts.

7.1 Exchange theory
One of the founders of social exchange theory, Homans (1958), stated that social behaviour is an exchange of material and non-material value, but also symbols of approval or prestige. He meant that people who give value to others try to get the same value from them, and people who get value from others are under pressure to give the same value back. Bagozzi (1975) took Homans’ (1958) theory a bit further and meant that different behaviours tended to occur in different exchange constellations. Bagozzi argued that the exchange relationships between two parts, that is that case with job adverts, tends and needs to involve a great deal of attempt to maintain equality, since “the breach of the rule of equality quickly leads to emotional reactions”. Attempts to gain advantage at the expense of the other should therefore be minimized. This is important to consider when analyzing an exchange situation between two parts like the situation with a job adverts.

7.2 The AIDA-Model
Many sources recommend using the same approach for creating a job advert as when creating a promotional advertisement with the purpose to sell something (Bokförlaget Redaktionen, 2010a,b; Businessballs.com, 2010; Drehn, 2010; Evancarmichael.com, 2010; Entrepreneur Media, Inc., 2002; Geek Evaluation, 2009a,b; International Guild of Hospitality & Restaurant Managers Inc., 2002; Isbister, H., 2010; MacKenzie-Cummins, 2010; Monster Worldwide, Inc., 2010; PhDJobs Limited, 2008; E24, 2009) [Online]; (Ryan et al., 2000; Jennings et al, 2003). One of the most famous models to implement on the process of creating an advert is the AIDA-model (Kotler & Keller, 2005; Maslen, 2009). Initially founded by Strong (1925), it is explaining four steps of influence people in the process of making someone buy something. AIDA is a simple acronym which refers to the four steps Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action. Being one of the most common models for advertising it is also the recommended to use for job adverts. (Businessballs.com, 2010; PhDJobs Limited, 2008; Geek Evaluation.com, 2010b) [Online]

![Figure 7.1. The AIDA model (Strong, 1925)](image-url)
Maslen (2009, p.52-71) goes into detail on how to apply the AIDA-model when writing the text to an advert. The main tool for creating Attention is the headline. When it comes to job adverts and especially job adverts published on the internet (like this thesis focuses on) this is crucial since these words in the headline often automatically become keywords when published on the web. They therefore need to be compatible with the words a potential applicants most likely would type in into the search engines when searching on the internet (Nazar, 2009, p.8-10). Maslen (2009, p.53-54) stresses that four times as many people read one’s headline compare to the number read the rest of the text, which shows the importance of the right headline. He also argues that scientific research shows that the most successful headline when it comes to advertising is one that combines news, benefits and awakens curiosity. Second step, Interest, is created by adding what he calls the “What’s in it for me” – factor, hence what the reader is going to win by doing as the advert is telling them to do. The relate this to job adverts, Thorsteinsson and Highhouses’ (2003) “goal framing” theory, which stated that it is important to tell the applicants what they are going to gain from applying is very much relevant. The next step, Desire is created by, what Maslen calls, “bringing the product to life”. This means that you have to make the reader really feel what it will be like having the product or do what you want them to do. (Maslen, 2009, p.64) To transfer this to perspective of job adverts it means that you have to give the potential applicants a feel for what working for your company really will be like. To make people take Action, making it clear and simple is a key (Maslen, 2009, p.70). Applied on job adverts this means that the process for applying has to be simple and the instructions have to be clear.

7.3 Branded job adverts vs. Anonymous job adverts

Geek Evaluation (2009b) [Online] argues the importance of not neglecting the company’s brand name since “it is your greatest assets when it comes to attracting and it gives you better chance of shining through the clutter of all the companies out there”. Isbister (2010) [Online] argues that the applicants would like to know who they are going to be working for and therefore recommend branding of job adverts Businessballs.com (2010) [Online] argues if the organization is known and has a good reputation among the targeted readers then show the organization or brand name prominently. The study of Belt and Paolillo (1982) that shows that a high image increases the number of applicants support these ideas and add the importance of company image to the discussion about branded and anonymous job adverts. Also the theory from Tom (1971) states a similar idea and suggests that individuals choose an organization to work for based on similarity between organizational image and the individual’s self-concept. Company image should therefore play an important role for attracting applicants.
7.4 Usage of buzzwords, cliché and unoriginal language

Regarding the language and wording in job adverts there is contradictory advice on the matter. Maslen (2009, p.110-111) means that in all types of copywriting it is important that you are extremely cautious about using metaphors, words, expressions and buzzwords that you used to seeing in print. He argues that if you are used to seeing these words and expressions then so is the reader (everybody else). That means that these words are cliché. Clichés will, as he says “kill the text” and communicate “I am too lazy to think of an original idea so I used this hackneyed phrase because it was easy for me”. This type of language can on the other hand, he continues, be very effective if it is used in the right way. The key to this is “originality”. What you however must avoid at all cost is worn-out language: words and phrases so tattered by overuse that they impress nobody.

Isbister (2010) [Online] agrees and argues that this type of language should not be used. The reason for this, she states the example of buzzwords and metaphors do not tend to translate to anything particular, and that is important to use criteria that mean something when you write a job advert. However, Evancarmichael.com (2010) [Online] recommends that companies use buzzwords, buzz-expressions and writes the following: “Use buzzwords to attract attention – if you’re placing somebody in a busy department, words like ‘motivated’ or ‘team player’ might be used, or ‘management skills’ if you need them to oversee other staff members.”

To further create an understanding for meaning of language we would like to argue a theory from linguistics. Under the linguistic field, semantics is the study the meaning in languages. Meaning is divided into two vital types: linguistic meaning and speaker meaning. An expression of the linguistic meaning is simply the meaning(s) of the expression in the language. On the contrary, the expression of the speaker meaning can differ from the linguistic meaning, and it depends on the expression from the speaker if it is literally or non-literally.

If the speaker expresses literally meaning, the person means exactly what these words mean, at this moment, there is no big difference between speaker’s meaning and linguistic meaning. However, if the speakers speak non–literally, there is some other meaning else behind what they say. Therefore, it is necessary to describe the meanings of the words in order to transfer the correct information in communication. (Akmajian et al., 1995, p.213-232) To apply this theory on job adverts it could be said that there is a risk in using for example metaphors, since they do not express meaning literally, hence linguistic meaning.

7.5 Personal traits and the “ideal candidate”

Another area where the advice is incoherent is regarding whether the “ideal applicants’ profile” which includes personal traits and features should be mentioned in a job advert. Entrepreneur Media, Inc. (2002) [Online] argues that job advert should not include any
attributes describing desired personal traits what so ever, due to the fact that people are likely to lie and imitate those characteristics to get to an interview, when the reality is that they do not really possess these qualities. A job advert should instead focus on explaining the job with as much accuracy as possible that will attract the “right people” more effectively than requesting personal traits or attributes. This advice finds support in copywriting theory that argues the rule of “show, don’t tell”. This means that you should try and paint a picture in the reader’s mind instead of telling them what to think. (Maslen, 2009, p.48-51) When applying the theory to job adverts it means that by describing a job as accurately as possible you are painting a picture in the applicants’ mind that they easily can recognize if they like or not, instead of asking for required attributes that they subjectively have to assess if they possess or not. However, Monster Worldwide, Inc. (2010) [Online], Net Resources International (2010) [Online], Evancarmichael.com (2010) [Online], Isbister (2010) [Online], all argue that attributes describing personal traits should be used in job adverts in order to filter out the unsuitable the candidates. Both ideas find support in the study made by Mason and Belt (1986) that are suggesting that the more specific a job advert is the more unqualified candidates are screened out. Both theories suggest that you need to be specific but in different ways.

7.6 Marketing the job to the applicant
A large number of sources argue that a job advert needs to market the job to potential applicants (Thorsteinson & Highhouse, 2003; Schreier, 1983); (Entrepreneur Media, Inc, 2010; E24, 2009) [Online]. Bokförlaget Redaktionen, (2010b) [Online] suggests that by not marketing the job to potential applicants, one risks attracting those who have nothing to lose (hence, not the best people). Sjöstrand and Sjögren (cited on E24, 2009) [Online] also very clearly states that a common mistake among writers of job adverts is that the job advert become a list of demands and requirements. This is hardly ever attractive and will not appeal to the very best.

Maslen (2009, p.16-17) stresses what he calls the most important rule in advertising – the “what’s in it for me” – factor. In order to write a really good marketing text “you always have to put yourself in the position of the reader and connect to them in the frequency ‘what’s in it for them’”. He argues this to be the most common mistake in copywriting and that adverts too often are communicating on the frequency “what we (as senders) are interested in”. To apply this to job adverts, it could be said that it is a key factor that the writer understands the kind of person the company is looking to attract. What is the ideal applicant attracted to? Who is this person? What does he/she want more/less of in their life? How does the ideal candidate see him/her self? This theory is supported by Schreier’s (1983) that came to the conclusion as mentioned before that people in different industries had different “ego states‘ and therefore were attracted and motivated by different thing in job adverts. Since the thesis is focused on students who normally do not have jobs and are “comfortable where they are” this might be less significant in this study, but we think that
This theory is important since it contributes to create a mindset regarding job adverts. Schreier (1983) did not study students in his research but Drehn (2010) [Online] argues in an article, that when advertising jobs to the young generation it’s even more important to market the job or vacancy in job advert. She means that the young generation, due to the time they have been brought up in, is very much concerned with personal motivation factors, hence they are used to thinking of offers as “give and take” situations and therefore expect to be offered something more than just the obvious features.

In advertising in general it is important to focus on benefits and less on features. Features are important because people want to make rational decisions, but “Benefits are what makes the sales happen”. (Maslen, 2009, p.34-35) To transfer this to job advert we argue that this stresses the important of highlighting the “what’s in it for me” – factor in order to attract the best people. Bokförlaget Redaktionen (2010b) [Online] argues that the best people in most cases already have jobs and they are not very likely to be interested in changing their jobs on bad conditions. If, you however give them a really interesting opportunity they might be willing to consider it. Research in innovation management shows that the factor of the gain has to be three times as big as the factor of the loss in order to change behaviour in consumers. (Gourville, 2005) That is an interesting equation, and certainly food for thought when it comes to convincing someone who is already employed to change his/her behaviour and apply for a new job. We are aware that this theory does not offer a perfect fit to the problem of the phenomenon job adverts, but argue that it has a point and when it comes to make people change behaviour, in this case changing a job.
8. Results of interview study
This chapter aims to present the findings of the interviews.

8.1 Branded job adverts vs. anonymous job Advert
To make it as clear as possible we would like to remind you that 1A was the anonymous job advert and 1B was the original branded one (Full versions in appendix 1 and 2), 14/15 respondents preferred the branded job advert which was 1B, 1/15 was indifferent. This makes it clear that the branded advert was preferred by the respondents.

8.1.1 Would like to know who to work for
The most dominate reason the respondents gave for preferring the branded job advert was that it was more specific, offered them more information and that they thought it was important to know where they would be applying for a job.

“I like B [1B] best, because I like that it tells you what company it is... it feels more interesting then, I think at least... I would like to know where I am going to be working...”

“...I mean, you would like to know where you are applying for a job... I think that is important... I mean, I would like to know where I am going to work...”

“I prefer the second one [1B] because it is more specific...”

8.1.2 The importance of values, personal interest and image
The respondents clearly preferred to know where they were going to be working and the reason for why they wanted to know this was:

- Values – it was important to be able to stand for and share the same values with an employer.

“I wouldn’t be able to work for a company that does not stand for the same values as I do...”

“I find it important that I can identify with the company’s [employer’s] values...”

“I would like to know where I am going to work... I mean I don’t want just a job, I want something where I share and is driven because the people are in a certain way and we share the same values... or I can stand for what the company dose and produces.”

This is a point supporting the theory by Tom (1971) who stated that individuals choose an organization to work for based on similarity between organizational image and the individual self-concept.
- Interest – the respondents thought that they needed to have some kind of interest in the job since they thought it was a big part of their life and also in order to do a good job.

“...you have to be interested in it [the job] somehow...it is such a big part of your life...”

“I would prefer B [1B] because it focuses on the product... I think that if I have a feel for the product I can be a driven salesperson... but I am not a driven sales person just for the sake of it, that is why I would prefer B [1B].”

“In many cases I think that the industry and the company is more important than the job it self... if you have a specific interest it is of course much more rewarding to work even if you have less interesting work tasks...”

- Image – Some respondents were very clear that the image of the company was important.

“I like the B one [1B] better, and the reason for that is that...I would like to know... I would like to know what kind of image the company has...”

“I would choose B [1B] because it gives me a feel for the status of the company... you know what company it is so you can find out the status...”

This result regarding the importance of image supports the study made by Belt and Paolillo (1982) that showed that a strong company image increases the number of applicants.

8.1.3 Suspicion and negative associations with anonymous job adverts
The whole phenomenon of non branded anonymous job adverts was in general looked upon with suspicion in a negative way.

“...if you choose to not use the company name in the advert there is a [negative] reason behind that...”

“...I think that it is a company that is trying to hide that it is a damn bad place to work...”

“I get the feeling that you do this [be anonymous] because you have a weak brand, but I don’t really know...”

One respondent did however suggest that the recruiter could choose to be anonymous for a positive reason.

“It could actually be that it is a very well known and established company and that they don’t want to be seen recruiting... they want to be more discreet that they are getting someone...”

The results regarding branded and anonymous advert is showing that the students prefer the branded adverts. It is also as clear that the reason for this is that they prefer to know where they are going to be working when they are applying for a job. This result suggests that the advice given by Net Resources International (2010) [Online], Bokförlaget Reda-
8.2 Language and Wording

2A was an original job advert written with the “typical” words and expressions defined in chapter 4.2. In 2B the “typical” words and expressions had been removed or rewritten to more day-to-day Swedish (full version in appendix 3 and 4). 13/15 respondents preferred the job advert 2B, 1 respondent preferred the job advert 2A and 1 was indifferent.

8.2.1. The typical job advert language

The respondents quickly spotted the advert 2A to be the original due to the kind of language it was written in. This indicates that also the respondents were aware of the typical wording we had spotted in the first pre-study:

“...it feels like a typical ‘offer’ from a company... it has that kind of language...”

“...it is the same ‘blurb’ they write in all job adverts...”

“It always says this [in job adverts]...”

“These words are classic for job adverts”

“Here we find the classic words [in 2A] self-driven, responsible and coordinated...”

8.2.2 Frustration with “clichés” in 2A and positive reactions with 2B

The respondents did however have different perception of the type of language. A significant majority thought of it to be negative and classified the type of language as clichés.

“It is clichés... the usual words everyone uses [in job adverts]”

“...it is classic job advert clichés, ‘many balls in the air’, ‘spider in the net’, right? Or I think so at least...”

“Words like dynamic environment... yes, I think so too [these words are clichés]... what is that [dynamic environment]?

“I would call the words buzzwords...a nicer word for cliché maybe...”

The wording in 2A (13/15 respondents was considered to be cliché) did also seem to bring out a lot of emotions among the respondents who disliked the wording and the they expressed a frustration with job adverts written this way.
“I would not use those words, I think they are so cliché... it sounds so B when you use those words... it does not mean anything to me... everybody writes like that... that is what all employers are asking for...”

“Cliché is really something not positive, especially today when you really need to stand out of the crowd.”

“[laugh]...and I don’t like that one... ‘the spider in the net’... it is like the worst one I know... it is so much better when it says ‘central coordinating role’... I like that one.”

“...I am so tired of these expressions [in 2A]’’

“‘Übermench’ I wrote on this one [2A]...when you use all these kind of words in a job advert, they [the words] are kind of ‘killing themselves, because there is no one who is like this...’”

“...I still feel like these type of words... when you don’t have anything real, proper to say...” “...you don’t really know what these words mean anymore...all jobs require this [the same personal traits]... are there really jobs that doesn’t?’”

The respondents likewise had a lot of thoughts and opinions about language in 2B, that they regarded to be more personal and inviting.

“... 2B speaks more to ME in some way... 2A is more like it is speaking to someone kind of ‘all’ [that might apply for the job]...”

“...it [2B] feels more wieldy... in A [2A] you get all these demands... you are going to have to handle this, this and that... but I B [2B] it is more like it is telling you about what you am going to work with, and what kind of person that will be suitable for the job...even if they say the same thing really... they are still different”

“...in B [2B] it says... I mean... what the job really comprises... ‘contact with people internal and external’ and that whole bit...the other is all about what is required of me, but I don’t get any understanding for why... it is better get an understanding of the job...”

To related this result to theory we would like to suggest that these findings supports Maslen’s (2009) theory as he argues that using cliché “kills the text” and that it should never be used, since it will give a negative and poor impression. Also Isbister’s (2010) [Online] theory about the risk of using for example buzzwords is supported. She argues that since these words and expressions quite often do not translate into anything particular there is a risk of using them for sake of the clarity in the text. Linguistic theory on clarity and the loss of clarity in a text argues that it is always a risk when using metaphors that does not translate literally into meaning and that this opens for misunderstandings (Akma-jian et al., 1995, p.213-232).
8.2.3 Laziness and lack of effort

Another finding was that the respondents thought that the type of wording in 2A communicated to them that the person who had written the text had not really put much effort or thought into it.

“...it feels like someone has put much more thought into this one [2B]... it is no template someone has just used... that’s why it is more personal...”

“...it feels like, that you [the writer] have not put any effort into the writing... you [the writer] have used words that cover a lot...”

“It feels like you [the writer] have used a standard template...”

This finding goes well together with Maslen (2009) and his theory from copywriting that is clearly stating that one of the risks of using unoriginal language, hence cliché, is that it is communicating a feeling of laziness to the reader.

8.2.4 Lying about personal traits?

In some interview groups thoughts were raised regarding whether they would be willing to lie about having the attributes and personal traits mentioned in the job adverts and many respondents admitted that they would, when asked they also argued that this probably was a quite common behaviour among people in general.

“...I feel like that when they put it like this [like in 2A] when they are saying like this, you feel that of course I am like this, course I can handle this job, even if I feel that I am not like an enterprising person kind of, but who wants to admit that right? Of course I am enterprising and proactive and so on...”

“I don’t know really... if I really wanted the job, wouldn’t you do that [lie]...I think I would...”

“...I would not do it, but I think that many people would...”

This result indicates that Entreprenur Media, Inc. (2002) [Online] might have a point when they are saying that it is better to explain the job, what the person is going to be doing and what is required for it as accurate as possible, instead of giving away exactly what you are looking for regarding personal traits.

8.2.5 Different opinions regarding language and wording

It is however worth mentioning that Even though an overwhelming majority (13/15) classified the words and expression as cliché, two respondents labelled them very differently and were described as “academic word” and “words describing personal traits”. One of the even expressed liking for the choice of wording.
“I would say that A [2A] and its wording is good, because I like those, not kind of day to day words, but more academic words... and it puts some kind of imprint on the whole job advert... for me it [these type of words] is increasing the credibility...”

“...oh ...I don’t know really... I suppose they are describing personal traits?”

This indicated that there are different opinions and personal taste on this matter.

8.3 “What’s in it for me” – factor
Job advert 3A had had all paragraphs that could be considered as a “what’s in it for me”-factor removed, hence all information about what the employer offered apart from the job itself had been taken out. 3B was the original and did clearly mention information regarding what the employer offered an applicant apart from the job itself (in non-financial terms) 13/15 respondents preferred the 3B job advert, with the “what’s in it for me”-factor. 2/15 chose the 3A job advert.

8.3.1 Negative perceptions about job advert 3A
A majority of the respondents argued that they perceived 3A was more negative than 3B job advert.

“Well, 3A can scare people away... there is nothing... there are only demands... it is more inviting 3B, softer...”

“The first one [3A] I feel is more arrogant, this one [pointing at 3B] is more about the exchange...”

“3B has a more positive approach to the applicant...”

8.3.2 Adding the “what’s in it for me”- factor changes the tone in the job advert
The respondents thought that the tone in the job advert changed a lot with if the “what’s in it for me”- factor was in it or not. 3B was considered to be much more polite.

“...I feel like I [as a person] am being seen, sort of... [regarding 3B]”

“...this one [3B] is speaking directly to my heart...of course I would like to apply for a job...when they are speaking to me like this [telling me about what they can offer me]...you don't want just a job, you want to have fun at work.”

 “[3B] is not just looking to fill a vacancy, they are looking for something more... a co-worker... they are willing to invest in you”

“The first one [3A] I feel is more arrogant, this one [3B] is more about the exchange...”

“It is nothing concrete really, but if they mention this [the ‘what’s in it for me’ -factor] then they are thinking of it and find it important for their staff... and that feels like a nicer tone...”
“...this one [3B] is speaking directly to my heart... of course I would like to apply for a job... when they are speaking to me like this [telling me about what they can offer me]...you don’t want just a job, you want to have fun at work”

Regarding the “what’s in it for me”-factor, a clear majority of the respondents thought that the “what’s in it for me”-factor made the job advert more attractive. That indicates that Maslen’s (2009) theory of the importance of telling the reader what is in it for them in order to catch their interest (second step in the AIDA-model). Also Thorsteinson and Highhouse’s (2003) study about goal framing in job adverts and the importance of focusing on what an applicant would gain from applying in order to make him/her apply for the job, is supported by this.

8.3.3 Exchange relationship between employer and employee
Some respondents thought that the importance of the “what’s in it for me”-factor in a job adverts it increased with the number of demands and requirements it expressed.

“...especially in a job advert like this, that has so many demands and is constantly pointing out what they expect and want from you, then it is even more important that they can offer me something more than just a salary... if I am going to give them so much time, I think they need to show me what they can offer me in return.”

“... if I am going to give them so much time, I think they need to show me what they can offer me in return.”

The fact that the respondents thought that the importance of the “what’s in it for me”-factor increase with the numbers of demands and requirement the job advert expressed, indicates that the students were striving for equality and a win-win situation in their relationship with a future employer. This can be related to the social exchange theory (Homans, 1958) that argues that people who are giving something expect the same value back and vice versa. The students where obviously regarded the relationship with an employer as an exchange relationship. This would mean that it is important to think off this when you are creating a job advert.

8.3.4 The “what’s in it for me”-factor makes a good impression
Some respondents also mentioned that the job advert was the first impression of a potential future employer. And it was clear that they thought that a job advert communicated something beyond the actual words.

“[3B] talks about, not only what I have to do for them, but also what they offer me... it feels like a good start... a good first impression...”

“[3B] is not just looking to fill a vacancy, they are looking for something more... a co-worker... they are willing to invest in you”
“It is nothing concrete really, but if they mention this [the “what’s in it for me”-factors] then they are thinking of it and find it important for their staff...”

This result shows once again how much a reader in reading in between the lines

8.3.5 Different opinion on the “what’s in it for me”-factor
The two respondent who did think negatively on the “what’s in it for me”-factor, thought it was strange and almost unprofessional to write in that way.

“...but on the other hand... um... job advert... hum... it feels like the wrong focus maybe, when it says ‘we offer you’... as employer you don’t offer things... it feels like you want to bribe people...or not bribe maybe, but I feel... I feel like they are desperate to find someone...I feel like...I am going to work... I am going to work 40 hours a week sort of... I am going to work and that’s my goal sort of. I don’t think this plays a big role to me... these thing with like working environment and so... yes of course the environment matters, but I take for granted that the environment will be good...it does not have to be mentioned.”

“It is more unbiased and impartial to not use those arguments...”

8.3.6 The "what’s in it for me"-factor not Swedish?
One respondent added that he thought that the job advert without “what’s in it for me”-factor were typical Swedish job advert.

“3A is typical Swedish... ‘What we offer you’ does not feel Swedish at all...”
9. Discussion and conclusions

The purpose of the study was, firstly to find out how typical Swedish job adverts are constructed today, 2010. Secondly, we wanted to find out what the advice for writing an effective job advert is according to the literature. Thirdly, find out business administration students thoughts and perceptions of job adverts.

Regarding the first question we consider it to be answered. First of all we think that the first pre-study showed that job advert posted on recruitment websites are rather similar. This could be due to the fact that the websites require a certain structure and that a job advert could be said to need to contain certain elements in order to be functional at all. We therefore suggest that this is something pretty natural. The fact that more than half of the job adverts we analyzed was anonymous was however a more surprising result and that they tend to be written in a “typical job advert language” and use extremely repetitive and unoriginal language was also less expected.

The summary of the advice from the litterateur (pre-study two) shows that there is room for extensive research in the field of recruitment marketing and job adverts. This is due to the relatively large incoherence in some areas. One of these is the whether one should mentions personal traits or not and be specific in what you are asking for regarding a certain personality. The overall advice is however to use the same approach for writing job advert as one uses for a normal advert. The AIDA-model (Strong, 1925) is very much relevant also for job advert. Using the same approach as one uses for normal promotional adverts would as we see it also mean that you give the job of formulating the job advert to the marketing or PR department once the HR people are done with the content. It is hard to say how much more information we could have found on this matter if we would have kept going, but from our point of view we belive that a saturation has been reached and we therefore consider the question as a mission accomplished.

When it comes to our third question and what the students think of Swedish job advert and how they are written and structured, we feel like we have not been able to cover the whole spectrum of elements to answer the question fully. This part of the study was built on the two pre-studies and we quickly realized that in order to make a comprehensive study we needed to cover too many variables. The three variables we choose to study and test on our respondents, were as previously mentioned picked because we thought that they would be the most topical given our two pre-studies. Regarding these three variables it is clear that the students were not impressed by Swedish job adverts.

The respondents did not like job adverts that were anonymous, since they wanted to know where they would be working. They even had very negative perceptions and associations regarding the anonymity. The conclusion from this is that, not only does people dislike anonymity, they also read in negative associations between the lines when an job advert is unbranded. Since pre-study one (chapter 4) showed that 23/50 job adverts were anonymous...
and pre-study two (chapter 5) showed that the advice from experts was to brand the job advert, this result is as we see it an important one. It is hard to say what this actually means in reality, but it is absolutely food for thought and open for up for a discussion.

The respondents’ thoughts and perceptions about language and wording in the job adverts also gave an interesting result. First of all it was clear that the respondents also were aware that job advert are written in a “typical language”. It was also clear that they did not like this type of language and wording and that it communicated something very negative to them. They liked the job advert that had been re-formulated in normal day-to-day Swedish, since they considered it to be more personal and friendly. On the other hand there were two respondents who did not mid the “typical language”, a fact that need to be mentioned. This shows that people have different opinions on this matter. The conclusion one can draw from our study is however that you have to be careful with unoriginal language and buzzwords, since they can be perceived in a very negative way by people. The advice regarding this was incoherent in the literature and therefore we are happy to make a small contribution on this matter.

The “what’s in it for me”-factor was also perceived positively by the respondents and it was clear that they regarded the relationship with an employer as an exchange relationship. An interesting comment came from a respondent who thought that the “what’s in it for me”-factor was very un-Swedish, which suggests that he had not read many job adverts that contained this type of information in Sweden. What however probably was the most interesting about the results about the “what’s in it for me”-factor was what the respondents were reading in between the lines and how the thought that it completely changed the tone and the impression of the potential employer. This is interesting since it is only a small detail that has been changed, a couple of sentences. Since pre-study two also showed that the advice from experts was to add a “what’s in it for me”-factor it gives even more food for thought for Swedish recruiters. The conclusion we draw from this is that adding a “what’s in it for me”-factor if only by a few sentences could potentially improve your job advert a lot.
10. Reflections and suggestions for future research

This study has tried to bring some light into the field of job adverts, how they are written and constructed according to experts, and how some job adverts in present time are perceived by students. However, we feel like that this study has actually raised more questions than it has answered. Since the research in the field cannot be regarded as extensive and this study is far too small to be generalized we think that our biggest contribution is that we have created a foundation for future research.

The interesting questions that are arising after this study is: Why are Swedish job adverts written the way they are? Regardless of if this study’s result confirms the theory, there is a large amount of job adverts out there that are published without branding, with lots of words and expressions that a crushing majority of our respondents negatively regarded as cliché and without any thing that could be classified as a “what’s in it for me” - factor. Is it a conscious choice to write job adverts like this or is it just a way it always been done and therefore is a matter of ignorance? A part of a cultural heritage or tradition? Could it be a difference in attitude between generations having different expectations on employment? These questions have been looping in our heads for weeks now and we are really struggling to find a satisfying answer. How effective is a typical Swedish job advert of or year 2010? As mentioned in the introduction the usage of job advertising in general is going down. Is it due to decreasing efficiency? And in that case could this be turned around? How much could the effectiveness of job adverts actually be improved if they would be written in a more marketing friendly way, maybe by professional copywriters? Would they be more attractive for the right sort of applicants? This study can unfortunately not answer any of these questions and we are just going to have to leave this to future research, we can only argue that our result indicates that it might be time to discuss how job adverts are being written in Sweden and that there might be room for improvements.

Many thoughts have crossed our minds in the past couple of weeks when we have read somewhere between 100 to 150 job adverts. One thing is that we have started to wonder if there is one type of person that is being hired in Sweden today? “The flexible, dynamic, structured, organized, super social, extrovert, service minded, driven, self-motivation, independent team player, that loves to be ‘the spider in the net’ and can ‘keep a million balls in the air’ at the same time. Preferably with a can-do-attitude and out-of-the-box-thinking.” It is like recruiters in general have lost themselves in a utopia of finding the perfect person or hero that is going to come in to save the company. And maybe because of the fact that everybody is asking so (too) much the words and expressions have got washed-out and lost their meaning. We argue that it is nothing wrong in expressing the fact that you are looking for people who can make a difference, because good people can, but this kind of “übertench” (as one of our respondents called it) is maybe a bit unrealistic and unsensible. And this study gives a hint of what is it communicating to the reader?
However, we actually do think that recruiters know this, but the question still remain: why do they still use these types of wording?

When doing the literature study many questions also did arise. The advice differed quite a lot when it can to some areas. One of these was the one regarding salary and if it should be specified in the job advert or not. That advice differs is of course pretty natural when it is relying on experts advice, however, what was interesting was that the Swedish sources, with one exception, became completely “silent” and “ignored” the topic completely. This is an interesting observation. Adding salary or at least a salary range in the job advert was so natural for many of the international sources, and the most Swedish did not even bring it up for discussion and the only source that did suggested putting the proposal for a salary on the applicant. Why? We think that this is another foundation for future research. Swedish job adverts hardly ever mention a specified salary or a salary range. We are wondering if they could have something to gain or lose by doing that. The British job adverts almost always mention a salary range. An Interesting culture difference that could be worth studying.

Another point we would like to raise is the discussion about job adverts as copy text. We cannot help to have noticed that none of the books in copywriting that was read and examined in this study mentioned job advert. One book (Hansen, 2004) does devote one comprehensive chapter to every possible kind of text you can send out as an organization, but not once is the job advert mentioned. This has caused us to believe that job adverts are basically not regarded as copy text by professionals.

During the study we could also not help to have noticed the extremely dominant role of the recruitment companies in this business. We even would like to question whether the recruitment companies are taking too much space in the job adverts on behalf of their clients? To be fair every job advert posted somewhere is a free marketing channel for them. This might be completely okay and agreed with the clients, but we cannot help wondering why the clients do not want to use this channel for marketing, they are after all paying for it. Job adverts are read by customers and potential customers and why give away a chance to show the world what a great company and employer you are? We do not want to place an opinion on this, merely just bring it up for discussion. Regarding recruitment companies and their role, we would also like to bring up another observation for discussion. How much information does an applicant actually need about the recruitment company when the job advert is looking for a consultant to be placed full time at a client? We have come across quite a few job adverts mention one sentence about the client where the applicant is going to be working full time, and one, or possibly even two, long paragraphs about the recruitment company. It is understandable that the applicant needs to know about the recruitment company and that you can find out all the information about the employer online, but to be fair, you can also find all the information you need about the recruitment company online as well. (And since it takes a couple of hours to register in many recruit-
ment companies’ databases in order to apply for a job, people are very likely find out all about them whether they want to or not.) We do not want to place an opinion, since we feel like we do not have enough understanding for this phenomenon, but we would like to raise the question of the balance and the focus in the job adverts. After all, both this study and theories support that people would like to know where they are going to be working and that would in this case be the client, even though your salary is being paid via a recruitment company.

During the interviews we did also discern a pattern worth mentioning for future research. We would like to suggest that it could be the case that perceptions of job adverts could be affected by your cultural heritage. We noticed that the respondents from a non Swedish background responded very differently to some questions in relation to the others. Since our study cannot argue any such results we would merely like to mention this for future research.

As a final word we would like to say that this study has caused us to open our eyes to the world of job adverts and we will probably never read them or look at them in the same way again. It has been an interesting study and we would regard the thesis to have fulfilled its mission. Now we can only say that we are looking forward to read about future research in this field and hope that those studies can answer the all the questions this one has raised.
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Appendix 1 – Job advert 1A

Driven Junior Säljare

I NEED U NEED AB
Stockholm, 1 plats

INEED söker för kunds räkning en driven säljare av livsmedel.

Företaget är ett anrikt familjeföretag i livsmedelsbranschen och har flera internationellt kända varumärken i sin portfölj. Företaget har ett kompromisslösst fokus på kvalitet och arbetar med kvalitetsprodukter på ett långsiktigt och innovativt sätt som innebär att man värnar om kunder, varumärkesägare.

INEED söker nu, för denna kund räkning, en hungrig säljare för rekrytering. Kunden har precis tagit fram ett nytt och spännande koncept där du som säljare kommer att ha en väldigt betydelsefull roll.

Tjänsten som säljare innebär uppsökande försäljning genom canvas besök samt förvaltning av befintliga kundrelationer. Du kommer att jobba med en av deras mest kända och uppskattade produkter. Då detta är en ny roll i företaget kommer du ha mycket ansvar och din framgång som säljare avgörs helt av ditt driv och din personlighet. Du kommer att arbeta mot kunder i hela Storstockholm.

Vi söker nu dig som är född säljare och ser affärer i allt du företar dig. För att passa i denna roll krävs att du är en naturlig närverkare samt är orädd, initiativtagande och flexibel. Givetvis är du väldigt duktig på att både lyssna och förstå vad dina kunder behöver. Rollen ställer stora krav på ditt affärsmannaskap då du i många fall kommer fatta snabba beslut ute hos kunden.

Ett krav är att du har tidigare säljefarenhet samt körkort.

Din lön består av en fast och en rörlig del där dina resultat är avgörande. Tillsättnings sker så snart vi har hittat rätt person för tjänsten.

Välkommen med din ansökan till email.
Appendix 2 – Job advert 1B

Junior och driven säljare till Arvid Nordquist

I NEED U NEED AB
Stockholm, 1 plats

INEED söker för Arvid Nordquist räkning en driven säljare av Classic kaffe.

1884 öppnade Arvid Nordquist en butik som försåg Stockholrnarna med delikatesser, kaffe och viner. Sedan dess har familjeföretaget utvecklats till ett nordiskt handelshus som arbetar med internationellt kända varumärken inom mat och dryck inkl vin och öl från hela världen. Däribland deras eget Classic kaffe som med kompromisslös fokus på kvalitet tillverkas i deras rosteri i Solna. Arvid Nordquist arbetar med kvalitetsprodukter på ett långsiktigt och innovativt sätt som värnar om kunder, varumärkesägare och miljö. Se mer på www.arvidnordquist.se

Vi söker nu en hungrig säljare för rekrytering till Arvid Nordquist. Företaget har precis tagit fram ett nytt och spännande koncept där du som säljare kommer att ha en väldigt betydelsefull roll.

Tjänsten som säljare innebär uppsökande försäljning genom canvas besök samt förvaltning av befintliga kundrelationer. Du kommer att jobba med en av deras mest kända och uppskattade produkter, Classic kaffe. Då detta är en ny roll i företaget kommer du ha mycket ansvar och din framgång som säljare avgörs helt av ditt driv och din personlighet. Du kommer att arbeta mot kunder i hela Storstockholm.

Vi söker nu dig som är född säljare och ser affärer i allt du företar dig. För att passa i denna roll krävs att du är en naturlig nätverkare samt är orädd, initiativtagande och flexibel. Givetvis är du väldigt duktig på att både lyssna och förstå vad dina kunder behöver. Rollen ställer stora krav på ditt affärsmannaskap då du i många fall kommer fatta snabba beslut ute hos kunden.

Ett krav är att du har tidigare säljerfarenhet samt körkort.

Din lön består av en fast och en rörlig del där dina resultat är avgörande. Tillsättning sker så snart vi har hittat rätt person för tjänsten.

Välkommen med din ansökan till e-mail.
Appendix 3 – Job advert 2A

Galderma Nordic AB söker driven Sales & Marketing Coordinator

First Reserve AB
Stockholm, 1 plats

Är Du självgående, ansvarstagande och trivs med att koordinera? Då kan vi erbjuda dig ett stimulerande och utåtriktat arbete i en dynamisk miljö.

Om företaget

I den nordiska regionen marknadsför vi receptbelagda läkemedel för behandling av akne, rosacea, psoriasis, nagelsvamp, fotdynamisk terapi, corrective & aesthetic dermatology. Vi marknadsför även receptfria läkemedel och hudvårdprodukter via apotek.

I denna rekrytering samarbetar Galderma Nordic med First Reserve.

Beskrivning av tjänsten

Vem är du?
Vi tror att Du har minst 2 års erfarenhet av liknande arbetsuppgifter, gärna från internationell verksamhet. Har Du dessutom erfarenhet från läkemedelsbranschen är det meriterande.

Som person trivs Du i rollen som spindel i nätet. Du är initiativrik, har förmågan att driva projekt självstänktigt, är flexibel och ansvarstagande. Du har är duktig på att koordinera och hålla många bollar i luften. Du är även servicemined och har en mycket god social förmåga samtidigt som Du kan agera med pondus när det behövs. Du trivs i en dynamisk miljö och att arbeta i ett högt tempo.

Ansökan
Urval och intervjuer sker löpande – skicka därför din ansökan så snart som möjligt. Har du frågor om tjänsten är du välkommen att kontakta Name Surname på telefon 08-XXX

Du hittar också mer information om bolaget på website.

Välkommen med din ansökan!
Galderma Nordic AB söker Sales & Marketing Coordinator

First Reserve AB
Stockholm, 1 plats

Tycker du om att koordinera och se till att saker blir gjorda? Då kan vi erbjuda dig ett roligt och utåtriktat jobb på en omväxlande arbetsplats.

Om företaget

I den nordiska regionen marknadsför vi receptbelagda läkemedel för behandling av akne, rosacea, psoriasis, nagelsvamp, fotodynamisk terapi, corrective & aesthetic dermatology. Vi marknadsför även receptfria läkemedel och hudvårdsprodukter via apotek.

I denna rekrytering samarbetar Galderma Nordic med First Reserve.

Beskrivning av tjänsten

Vem är du?
Vi tror att du har minst 2 års erfarenhet av liknande arbetsuppgifter, gärna från internationell verksamhet. Har Du dessutom erfarenhet från läkemedelsbranschen är det meriterande.

Du trivas med att jobba tillsammans med andra i en central koordinerande roll. Du tycker om att lägga fram förslag på lösningar och vill ha ett jobb med många olika sorts arbetsuppgifter och där ingen dag är den andra lik. Är Du en person som helst vill göra en sak i taget och som blir stressad av när det händer mycket, kommer Du inte trivas hos oss. Eftersom jobbet innebär mycket kontakt med människor både internt och externt är det viktigt att Du tycker om att träffa nya människor och att Du känner dig bekväm med att balansera många kraftar och viljor.

Ansökan
Urval och intervjuer sker löpande — skicka därför din ansökan så snart som möjligt. Har du frågor om tjänsten är du välkommen att kontakta Name Surname på telefon 08-XXX.

Du hittar också mer information om bolaget på website.

Välkommen med din ansökan!
Appendix 5 – Job advert 3A

Engagerad Junior Riskanalytiker

Klarna AB
Stockholm, 1 plats


DRIVEN RISKANALYTIKER

Vad vill du?

Vad vill vi?


Vi på Klarna vet att vi kan ge dig en krävande och tuff arbetsplats med utmanande arbetsuppgifter. Vi förväntar oss att du vill jobba hårt och alltid ge 100%.

Kan du ge oss det vi söker?

Vi tycker om dig som
•Har Civilekonomutbildning/Industriell ekonomiutbildning/annan ekonomisk högskoleutbildning
•Har goda kunskaper i Excel, samt resten av Officepaketet
•Är metodisk och strukturerad problemlösare
•Andra meriter som vittnar om ett starkt driv och engagemang

Vi tycker extra mycket om dig som
•Har entreprenöriella erfarenheter
•Har djupa och avancerade Excelkunskaper
•Erfarenhet från bank eller liknande verksamhet

Vi kallar till intervjuer löpande.
Skicka in din ansökan idag.
Ansökan görs via website.
Kontaktperson
Name Surname, 070 – XXX
Appendix 6 – Job advert 3B

Engagerad Junior Riskanalytiker

Klarna AB
Stockholm, 1 plats


DRIVEN RISKANALYTIKER

Vad vill du?

Vad vill vi?


Vi på Klarna vet att vi kan ge dig en krävande och tuff arbetsplats med utmanande arbetsuppgifter. Vi förväntar oss att du vill jobba hårt och alltid ge 100%. I utbyte erbjuder vi en stimulerande arbetsplats med varierande uppgifter och en genuin arbetsglädje.

Kan du ge oss det vi söker?

Vi erbjuder dig
En stimulerande arbetsplats och arbetsuppgifter
Gedigna utvecklings möjligheter
Trevliga arbetskamrater och en god stämning
Möjlighet till vidareutbildning och utveckling

Vi tycker om dig som
•Har Civilekonomutbildning/Industriell ekonomiutbildning/annan ekonomisk högskoleutbildning
•Har goda kunskaper i Excel, samt resten av Officepaketet
•Är metodisk och strukturerad problemlösare
•Andra meriter som vittnar om ett starkt driv och engagemang

Vi tycker extra mycket om dig som
•Har entreprenöriella erfarenheter
• Har djupa och avancerade Excelkunskaper
• Erfarenhet från bank eller liknande verksamhet

Vi kallar till intervjuer löpande.
Skicka in din ansökan idag.
Ansökan görs via website.

Kontaktperson
Name Surname, 070 – XXX
Appendix 7 – Interview questions

Branding

- Branded job advert vs. anonymous branded job advert
- Do you notice any difference in the ads?
- Which one do you prefer? Why?
- Does it matter to you if you know which company or who you are going to work for?
  - Why or why not?
- What do you think the company choose to be anonymous or post an anonymous ad?
- What does the anonymity of the advert communicate to you?

Language and wording

- Do you notice any difference in the ads?
- Which one do you prefer? Why?
- What do you think about using this kind of wording?
- What would you call this kind of words?
- What do you think these words mean? What do they communicate to you?
- How does these type of wording affect your associations with the employer?

“What’s in it for me” – factors

- Do you notice any difference of in these ads?
- Which one do you prefer? Why?
- What are your thoughts on these ads?
- Is it important to you that an employer is telling you what they can offer you apart from the job and the salary itself?