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Ich, Kristof Swoboda, versichere in der vorliegenden Masterarbeit nur die angeführten Quellen verwendet und die Arbeit an keiner anderen Universität als Prüfungsarbeit eingereicht zu haben.

*This master's thesis is
dedicated to Jutta and to my
family*

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List of abbreviations

COBs	Customer oriented behaviors
COBSBs	Customer-oriented boundary-spanning behaviors
EB	Employee brand
EBBs	Employee brand building behaviors
HR	Human resource
OCBs	Organizational citizenship behaviors
POS	Point of sale
PR	Public relation
R & D	Research and development
RQ	Research question
TFL	Transformational leadership
TRL	Transactional leadership
WOM	Word of mouth

1 Introduction

Internal branding literature pursues an inner perspective focusing on employees so as to force an internalization of the core brand values through such employees. Further, this branding approach aims to positively influence behavior, strengthen the brand and ensures a coordination of the behaviors of the employees according to the brand (King and Grace 2008; Punjaisri and Wilson 2011; Rafiq and Ahmed 2000). The main objectives of this approach are an optimization of service delivery and in succession the creation of a strong brand (Punjaisri and Wilson 2007). The latter described statements underline the central role of the employees in customer interaction as well as service delivery (Berry 2000).

The role of the employee has changed in an organization (Harris and de Chernatony 2001); today employees play a crucial role in delivering the brand promise (Morhart et al. 2009; Punjaisri and Wilson 2007) and represent the interface between the brand and the customer (Henkel et al. 2007). The present research has determined that employees play a key role in organizations for building up a strong service brand (Brodie et al. 2009; Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Morhart et al. 2009). Due to this key role, the variety of approaches in the present research, which designates employee brand building behaviors, is manifold (e.g. Henkel et al. 2007; Miles and Mangold 2004, Morhart et al. 2009). In order to summarize opportunities for employees to enhance the brand building process, the terminology throughout this thesis will be “employee brand building behaviors” (Miles and Mangold 2004; Morhart et al. 2009). According to Morhart et al. (2009), employee brand building behaviors can be defined as “employees’ contribution (both on and off the job) to an organization’s customer oriented branding efforts” (p.123).

Due to the fact that employee brand building behaviors are important for building up a strong brand (Morhart et al. 2009), several approaches exist in present research on how employees can engage in the brand building process and how such employee brand building behaviors can be conceptualized. Research, from a holistic point of view, providing a complete enumeration and conceptualization of opportunities for how employees can strengthen a brand, is scarce (Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Punjaisri and Wilson 2007). This master’s thesis aims to address this research gap in the internal branding literature and focuses on opportunities in which employees can

enhance the brand building process. Further, a holistic conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors should be provided.

Hence, through knowing exactly how employees can participate most efficiently in the brand building process, a strong brand can be generated. Such strong brands can enhance the overall economic performance of a company as well as ensure or maintain a competitive advantage built on perfect brand performance (Kernstock 2011).

1.1 Research Objectives

To address the outlined research gaps and consider in detail the role of the employee in the brand building process, an extensive literature review as well as two empirical studies, consisting of an analysis of in-depth interviews and a follow-up online survey, have been conducted. The aim of the thesis is to (a) provide a complete enumeration of all relevant employee brand building behaviors (EBBBs) and develop a categorization scheme for these behaviors. Further, (b) the development of a holistic and empirically proven conceptualization of such employee brand building behaviors will be outlined in this thesis. Moreover, (c) a comparison of different perceptions and views between the executive team, employees and customers concerning the research field of employee brand building behaviors, will be elaborated on. Furthermore, a detailed ranking regarding the importance of individual employee brand building behaviors to strengthen the brand should be constituted in this thesis.

In order to facilitate a substantial contribution to the present research and also to the service firm in which the study has been conducted, a number of in-depth interviews with employees, executives and customers of a well-known Austrian bank have been performed. The thesis concentrates on three different groups of respondents to illuminate the conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors from different perspectives. In this research work, the assumption is made that the main key players in the brand building process of a company are as follows:

- Employees, who are directly interacting with customers in the service delivery process and also beyond. They represent the main performer of most of the behaviors to enhance the brand building process (e.g.

Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Henkel et al. 2007; Miles and Mangold 2004; Morhart et al. 2009; Punjaisri and Wilson 2011).

- Managers, who are responsible for the implementation of a functioning internal branding process. One key task of management is to ensure the brand building process through its employees to strengthen the brand (e.g. Miles and Mangold 2004; Morhart et al. 2009; Vallaster and de Chernatony 2006).
- Customers, who are addressed with most of the brand building behaviors applied by the employees. The perception of these behaviors is substantial for a successful brand building process (e.g. Berry 2000; Burmann et al. 2003; Harris and de Chernatony 2001).

Such a segmentation of the respondents between employees, managers and customers is also conducted in other studies to gather information from an all-embracing point of view (e.g. Castro et al. 2009). For answering the research questions and providing a holistic and valid conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors, these different views on this topic are of essential meaning.

However, a follow-up online questionnaire is analyzed afterwards to finalize the conceptualization process. Based on potential outcomes, this master's thesis will provide exploratory insights into a topic, which has been infrequently debated in the existing literature from a holistic point of view (Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Morhart et al. 2009).

1.2 Structure of the thesis

The first part of this master's thesis includes an introduction, research objectives as well as the structure of this thesis. The second chapter examines the given literature extensively to provide a theoretical background and basic knowledge of the current research topic. For a better understanding of this current work, the main definitions and key terms in the existing literature will be described in detail. Hence, general information about the brand itself and in particular the internal branding process in all its manifestations will be supplied. Within chapter 2, a clear differentiation between internal branding, corporate branding and service branding is applied. In a next step, the

main part of the literature review consists of an enumeration of existing employee brand building behaviors, including a pre-categorization, which is based on a literature review. Furthermore, a theoretical overview of existing classifications of EBBBs in the theoretical literature is outlined. Moreover, existing conceptualization approaches of employee brand building behaviors are described, which are relevant for the research purpose of this thesis and are taken for subsequent analysis.

Additionally, the third part of this thesis is the empirical section, which focuses on the description of the research questions in detail. Later, the research method and the analysis process are explained extensively. In a first step of analysis, all relevant employee brand building behaviors are listed and a category scheme, which covers all behaviors, is developed. Afterwards, a holistic conceptualization of the employee brand building behaviors based on a qualitative analysis of the interviews as well as a quantitative follow-up online survey is provided. The next part is dealing with different aspects regarding the conceptualization of EBBBs between employees, managers and customers. Furthermore, a complete ranking of EBBBs is provided with regard to the importance of the individual behavior to strengthening the brand.

In chapter 4, key findings and main outcomes involving the research questions, based on the two research studies, are correlated and presented in a compact version. Here the aim is to achieve a broad impression of the outcomes of this master's thesis and how these key findings fit into the actual approaches of the current scientific literature.

The main outcomes of this study are summarized in the conclusion in a short and succinct way. More precisely, the key findings are considered in correlation with the main statements presented in the literature. Also, implications for management are outlined in this chapter. In the last part of this section, study limitations as well as suggestions for further research are elucidated.

2 Literature Review

In the literature review, firstly, the importance of the brand itself is outlined to clarify how important a strong brand is in the actual economic environment. In the next step, a delineation of internal branding, service branding and corporate branding will be provided. Afterwards, the main part of the literature review, regarding employee brand

building behaviors (EBBBs), starts with an explanation of the concept as well as a provision of existing definitions. Later, an enumeration of existing employee brand building behaviors will be described through embedding this explanation in a pre-categorization based on a literature review. Furthermore, a theoretical overview of the existing classification approaches in the scientific literature as well as an outline of the most relevant existing conceptualizations of employee brand building behaviors should be provided in this chapter. Finally, the adopted pre-categories as well as conceptualization approaches of the literature, which will be taken over for subsequent analysis, are described.

2.1 Why build up a brand - importance of brands

The literature review will start with a major conclusion stated by Kapferer (2008): “For decades the value of a company was measured in terms of buildings and land, and then its tangible assets (plant and equipment). It’s only recently that we have realized that its real value lies outside, in the minds of potential customers” (p.1). This statement significantly illustrates how important the brand and in succession the brand building process is for a company to maintain or expand an existing market position. Nowadays, several cases show that brand value is the most important asset a company has in its consolidated balance sheet. So, brand equity makes up an important part of total market capitalization (Aaker and Joachimsthaler 2000). At first, this scientific work will accurately investigate how to comprehend a brand and which aspects are relevant for the economic performance of a company.

The following Table shows the most valuable brands worldwide, which are provided here so as to develop a special sense of how much value is attached to a brand. This circumstance legitimates the intention to draft a scientific work of how employees can support the corporate brand through their behaviors. It is evident how important such an enormous value is for an organization.

Rank	Brand	Brand value 2013 ¹	% Brand value increase from 2013 vs. 2012
1	Apple	185.071	+ 1%
2	Google	113.669	+ 5%
3	IBM	112.536	- 3%
4	McDonald's	90.256	- 5%
5	Coca Cola	78.415	+ 6%

Table 1: Most valuable brands worldwide 2013 (www.millwardbrown.com, 4.7.2013)

As evident in Table 1, the most valuable global brand in the world is Apple with a brand value in 2013 of 185.071 million USD. This was obtained through a positive brand value change from 2013 versus 2012 of 1%. In 2013, the global brand Google reached second place with a brand value of 113.669 million USD, followed by IBM, McDonald's and Coca Cola (www.millwardbrown.com, 4.7.2013).

In the next paragraph, various approaches of how to define a brand will be provided. Defining a brand is not as easy as it initially seems. In the literature, many different approaches exist in defining a brand (Aaker 1991; Ambler 1992; Berry 2000; Kapferer 2008). In general, a differentiation between definitions from the consumer perspective and from the brand-owner perspective can be made. Beyond that, also brand purposes or brand characteristics can form a basis for defining a brand (Wood 2000).

More specifically, the AMA (American Marketing Association) is using the following brand definition from a company's point of view: "A name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors." Likewise, according to Ambler (1992), a brand is defined as a promise of the bundles of attributes a customer buys and the characteristics, which provide satisfaction. Such a definition therefore represents a customer orientated approach. According to the author, these attributes that constitute a brand may be real or illusory, rational or emotional, tangible or invisible. For instance, another interesting opportunity to define a brand is stated by Kapferer (2008), who states that "a brand is a name that influences buyers" (p.11). A name is loaded with the power to affect the buying decisions of customers. It is evident that not only a well sounding brand name spontaneously provokes a mental connection,

¹ In \$ millions

but that what really turns a name into a brand are saliency, differentiation, intensity and trust (Kapferer 2008). A clear definition or more a statement about strong brands has been made by Berry (2000) in mentioning that “strong brands are the surrogates when the company offers no fabric to touch, no trousers to try on, no watermelons or apples to scrutinize, no automobile to test-drive” (p.128).

The following paragraph focuses on how to establish such a leading brand in the market by finding solutions for the company in terms of how to maximize brand equity in the most prosperous way. In accordance to Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000), brand equity can be defined as “the brand assets (or liabilities) linked to a brand’s name and symbol that add to a product or service” (p.17). In the present scientific literature, opportunities establish the view that a strong brand can support the economic performance of a company. Today, companies act in mature markets with a strong established competition. Companies are not only performing well based on the product and service they are offering; crucial other dimensions have appeared as to how a company can succeed (Aaker 1991; Keller and Richey 2006). Kapferer (2008) enumerates a number of strategic opportunities available to a company to maintain an enduring competitive advantage. Brands clearly form a significant part of elevating a competitive advantage, “along with R&D, customer orientation, an efficiency culture, employee involvement and the capacity to change and react rapidly” (Kapferer 2008, p.1).

Based on a literature review, a short overview of the possibilities of how a brand can boost the economic performance of an organization will be provided (e.g. Burmann et al. 2003; De Chernatony and Riley 1999; Kapferer 2008; Keller 2001; Kroeber-Riel et al. 2009; Lovelock and Wirtz 2011; Miles and Mangold 2004; Mitchell 1999). More specifically, a strong brand justifies the higher price of a product or a service because a strong brand can evoke many associations, emotions and qualities, which promise tangible and intangible benefits to the customer. This will lead to the fact that well-established brands can increase the cash flow of a company (Kapferer 2008). Additionally, a brand also has the ability to facilitate the process of obtaining information for the customer because the perceived complexity of market offers can be reduced, which leads to lower transaction costs for the customer (Burmann et al. 2003; Kroeber-Riel et al. 2009). In addition, a well-known brand can act as a risk reducer by reducing the perceived risk of the customer in relation to product safety, technical support and service, financial risk and social risk (Burmann et al. 2003; Lovelock and

Wirtz 2011; Mitchell 1999). Furthermore, a strong brand can provide the company with the ability to stand out from the competition. For instance, through the intangibility of services, a well-positioned brand is in fact needed to support the customer evaluation process of alternatives. An effective differentiation in the market environment can be crucial for a company to generate a competitive advantage (De Chernatony and Riley 1999; Miles and Mangold 2004; Wood 2000).

In summary, it is to be said that despite a permanent growing value of brands, the brand objectives are often not achieved in a satisfying way. Fifty-three percent of 105 executive members working in marketing and sales departments of German companies have indicated that they did not reach their planned brand objectives (Zeplin 2005). Reasons for these effects are obvious. Brand managers have to face an increasing velocity of product innovations or entire brands and a higher homogenization of the quality of products and services. This will lead to the incident that product offerings become more and more replaceable in the consumer's mind (Burmann et al. 2003; Hupp 2001; Zeplin 2005). As shown in the last paragraphs, it can be said that a strong brand is crucial for the economic success of a company. For creating a strong brand, a successful and efficient brand building process through the employees of a company will become necessary. In succession, the management of a company has to know exactly which relevant behaviors for enhancing the brand building process are necessary and how they can be conceptualized. This incident legitimizes a further investigation of the research topic of the current thesis: "conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors".

2.2 Internal marketing: internal branding, corporate branding and service branding

For the common understanding of the purpose of this thesis as well as to achieve a better idea of how a brand can be built up through the employees of an organization, this section will provide some background information about branding in general and how the manifold approaches in the branding literature can be differentiated one below the other. A clear explanation of commonly used terms in the branding literature should be provided to gain a better understanding of which branding approach is primarily relevant for the research topic of this master's thesis.

Today branding as a part of corporate marketing plays an important role in service companies (e.g. Balmer and Greyser 2006; Berry 2000; Punjaisri and Wilson 2011). As explained in detail in the previous subchapter, strong brands are able to reduce the perceived risk of customers and provide the opportunity to visualize intangible products (Berry 2000; Lovelock and Wirtz 2011). Usually, this topic has been considered from a top-view point to concentrate on the perspective of the management level and brand consultants. Research on internal marketing from an employee's point of view is scarce (Punjaisri and Wilson 2011). According to Schultz and de Chernatony (2002), a growing amount of research will help companies to extensively consider their branding strategies, which will lead to more sophisticated and effective branding approaches. In this subchapter, a clear delineation of several branding approaches, according to internal branding as well as service branding, is provided.

2.2.1 Internal branding

In the beginning of this subchapter, a clear overview of how internal branding is defined and what is standing behind this term should be elucidated. Referring to the topic of this thesis - "conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors" - the internal branding approach is the most relevant. The key issue in internal branding is that here an internal focus is predominant. This branding approach directly addresses the employees of an organization and aims to internalize the core brand values and thus positively influence the behavior of employees (Harris and de Chernatony 2001; King and Grace 2008; King and Grace 2012; Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Miles and Mangold 2004; Rafiq and Ahmed 2000; Punjaisri and Wilson 2011). According to Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos (2012), internal branding literature concentrates on internal marketing efforts to enhance knowledge as well as beliefs regarding the brand. This aim can be reached through internal brand communication as well as brand specific trainings.

According to several researchers (Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Rafiq and Ahmed 2000; Wieseke et al. 2009), the notion of internal branding has been familiarized by Berry et al. (1976), who stated that "internal marketing is concerned with making available internal products (jobs) that satisfy the needs of a vital internal market (employees) while satisfying the objectives of an organization" (p.8). As well, the first definition of an Employee Brand (EB), according to Schlager et al. (2011),

came from Ambler and Barrow (1996), who defined the concept as “[...] the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment and identified with the employing company” (p.187). Adding to the pool of definitions, internal branding is defined by Miles and Mangold (2004) “as the process by which employees internalize the desired brand image and are motivated to project the image to customers and other organizational constituents” (p.68). Furthermore, according to Punjaisri and Wilson (2011), internal branding describes “the activities undertaken by an organization to ensure that the brand promise reflecting the espoused brand values that set customers’ expectations is enacted and delivered by employees” (p. 1523). In the literature, internal branding and employee branding are often used synonymously (Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Miles and Mangold 2004).

In order to gain further insight into what is standing behind the internal branding approach, the following explanation should be provided. The scholars, Rafiq and Ahmed (2000), identify the following five main elements of internal marketing based on an extensive analysis of the empirical and conceptual literature (p.454):

- (1) Employee motivation and satisfaction.
- (2) Customer orientation and customer satisfaction.
- (3) Inter-functional co-ordination and integration.
- (4) Marketing-like approach to the above.
- (5) Implementation of specific corporate or functional strategies.

More specifically, Rafiq and Ahmed (2000) illuminate that “internal marketing is a planned effort using a marketing-like approach (4) to overcome organizational resistance to change and align, motivate and inter-functionally coordinate and integrate (3) employees towards the effective implementation of corporate and functional strategies (5) in order to deliver customer satisfaction (2) through a process of creating motivated and customer orientated employees (1)” (p. 454). In addition to previous insights, many researchers state that branding internalizes mental frameworks (King and Grace 2008; Punjaisri and Wilson 2011), which support the target group in organizing existing knowledge and making available information about a certain product or organization.

Due to the fact that not only for customers, but also for employees, intangible brands are difficult to grasp, not only should the customer's perception of the brand be shaped, but also employees have to internalize brand knowledge to deliver continuously consistent service to ensure effective brand building (Henkel et al. 2007; King and Gace 2010; Punjaisri and Wilson 2007). Furthermore, branding is not only the ability to establish an emotional bond between the customers and the corporate brand; it is also an opportunity to affect the perceptions of employees (King and Grace 2008).

The next paragraphs will illustrate how important successful internal branding can be for the company and what effects on the behaviors of the employees can arise. Several research studies have proven that professional internal branding, which focuses on employees, can significantly enhance employees' brand supporting behaviors (Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Miles and Mangold 2004; Punjaisri and Wilson 2011). Harris and de Chernatony (2001) believe that employees have the opportunity to influence the economic performance of the company in a positive, but also in a negative direction, and are therefore central elements in the brand building process. In this internal marketing context, employees are often seen as internal customers, who should be satisfied through consuming the "job-products" a company offers to them. Through delivering satisfaction to the internal customer, employees are becoming motivated to achieve corporate objectives (Lings 1999; Rafiq and Ahmed 2000). Miles and Mangold (2004) describe that it is crucial for companies to know how to motivate the staff to "deliver a service experience that is consistent with both customer expectations and the brand image desired by the organization" (p. 67). However, employee branding is not only the function of satisfying the employees in a company, it goes beyond a simple need-fulfilling task. The employee branding process utilizes the complete organizational system in combination with internal marketing methods to motivate employees to protect the desired organizational image, which in succession can influence the demeanor of the employees (Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Miles and Mangold 2004; Morhart et al. 2009).

An organization, which can effectively emerge an employee brand, can benefit from a high level of service quality, customer satisfaction, repeated purchase behavior and lower employee turnover (Harris and de Chernatony 2001; Miles and Mangold 2004). Moreover, companies can create a long-lasting competitive advantage by diligent development of an employee brand (Mangold and Miles 2007). For instance, Hartline

et al. (2000) state that “in many cases, customer contact employees are the first and only representation of a service firm” (p.35). The reasons why employees play a central role in the branding process are manifold. Furthermore, internal branding positively influences the delivery of the brand promise through the employees of a company (King and Gace 2008; Punjaisri and Wilson 2011). Today, employees play a crucial role in the delivery of the brand promise and represent the interface between the brand and the customer (Harris and de Chernatony 2001; Punjaisri and Wilson 2011). The latter core statement makes clear that an employee’s performance as well as behavior on the POS can have a significant impact on the brand realization perceived through the customer (Schneider and Bowen 1985). Additionally, the best branding strategy is worth nothing when the brand promise cannot be transported through the frontline employee to the customers (King and Grace 2010; Schultz and de Chernatony 2002), which is a central aim of the internal branding literature.

In conclusion, organizations would be well advised to invest in their human capital so as to have a precursor for sustainable economic success of the company, particularly in highly competitive markets (King and Grace 2008). Employees play a crucial role in high performing companies, which have a concrete corporate branding strategy in order to have the chance to differentiate in the market from competitors with an unsophisticated branding strategy (Schultz and de Chernatony 2002). For companies, it is often not easy to find a completely correct answer for the question of how to manage employees to perform in a brand consistent way (Henkel et al. 2007). Hence, this thesis should contribute to the literature and in succession support the management in highlighting all relevant opportunities as to how an employee can engage in brand building, how these brand building behaviors can be categorized and finally provide a complete conceptualization of all pertinent EBBBs.

2.2.2 Corporate branding

This subchapter concentrates on corporate branding, which is strongly rooted among the service sector (Aaker and Joachimsthaler 2000; Balmer and Greyser 2006; Berry 2000; Pina et al. 2006; Punjaisri and Wilson 2011) and enjoys great popularity in generating favorable associations to the brand in the consumer’s mind (Einwiller and Will 2002; Eppler and Will 2001; Punjaisri and Wilson 2011) through the behavior of the employees (Punjaisri and Wilson 2011). However, it does not mean, in case of a

predominant position of corporate branding in the area of service brands, that such a branding approach is not also applicable for good-based brands. Corporate branding, within the research field of internal branding, focuses on the positive perception of the corporate brand regarding, for example, brand image through external stakeholders of an organization. To achieve this objective, this branding approach addresses employees and therefore ensures a favorable delivery of the brand promise to positively influence the perception of the customers (Punjaisri and Wilson 2011).

More precisely, Balmer and Greyser (2006) stated that “since the 1950s various concepts about corporate wide marketing have captured the imagination of scholars and practitioners (corporate identity, corporate branding, corporate image, corporate reputation and corporate communications)” (p.730). A detailed explanation of all the individual concepts cannot be comprehensively provided here, as it would exceed the frame of this thesis. The definitions of the term corporate branding in the existing literature are manifold. In order to have a better understanding, the most comprehensive definitions will be provided in this thesis. Einwiller and Will (2002), who are following the definition of Van Riel (2001), proclaim that corporate branding is “a systematically planned and implemented process of creating and maintaining favorable images and consequently a favorable reputation of the company as a whole by sending signals to all stakeholders by managing behavior, communication and symbolism” (p. 101). Additionally, to the latter delineation, another significant explanation according to Punjaisri and Wilson (2011) in reference to corporate branding can be provided in this subchapter. They explicate corporate branding as a systematic management process of behavior, communication signals and symbolism to maintain a positive reputation at several touching points with an organization’s target audience. Furthermore, Harris and de Chernatony (2001) add that corporate branding is not only a “planning perspective, which addresses the matching of external opportunities with core competencies”, but also emphasizes “the integration of the internal activities to ensure cohesion and therefore consistency in delivery” (p.441). In addition, corporate branding is more seen as a marketing communication activity as well as a strategic process, which defines the further development of a company and provides necessary orientation as to which direction the company should move to generate a competitive advantage (Punjaisri and Wilson 2011; Schultz and de Chernatony 2002).

Corporate branding is a central element of internal branding and plays a crucial role in manipulating communication efficiency in forming the image and the reputation of the whole organization (Einwiller and Will 2002) through the behaviors of employees (Punjaisri and Wilson 2011).

2.2.3 Service branding

Service branding is another branding approach, which internalizes the core brand values through service employees to tie the customer to the service in an emotional way and to deliver the brand promise to the customers in a correct way (Berry 2000). A professional and successful branding process is particularly of great importance in the area of service companies because confidence can be given to potential customers in the situation of purchasing intangible services (Berry 2000; Berry and Parasuraman 1993; Berry and Seltman 2007). Furthermore, service employees play a crucial role in establishing the brand's values in consumers' minds and hence positively affect the customer's perception of the quality of service (Berry 2000; King and Grace 2012; Vella et al. 2009). A strong brand has the ability to provide a better understanding and comprehension of services for customers and can therefore "reduce customers' perceived monetary, social and safety risk in buying services, which are difficult to evaluate prior to purchase" (Berry 2000, p. 128). Furthermore, Berry (2000) mentions that "in packaged goods, the product is the primary brand, however with services the company is the primary brand" (p.128). The impact of the brand differs especially in the service sector, caused by the intangibility of services, because it is much more difficult to package and display a banking service than a Porsche Carrera.

In the present economic cycle, manifold types of services in all conceivable manifestations are available, which aggravate the process of finding a generally accepted definition. After a long time of disagreement on how goods and services should be differentiated from each other, Vargo and Lusch (2004) represent the following opinion, which is widely accepted among scientific research: services are "the application of specialized competences (knowledge and skills) through deeds, processes and performances for the benefit of another entity or the entity itself" (p.2). In subsequent work, Lovelock and Wirtz (2011) point out that a service should be considered and defined as detached from goods. As well, especially according to Lovelock and Wirtz (2011), "services are economic activities offered by one party to

another. Often, time-based performances bring about desired results to recipients, objects, or other assets for which purchasers have responsibility. In exchange for money, time and effort, service customers expect value from access to goods, labor, professional skills, facilities, networks, and systems; but they do not normally take ownership of any of the physical elements involved” (p.37).

Branding is also crucial for services; an idea that goes against every common assumption and natural inclination that branding is only relevant for goods (Berry 2000; Berry and Parasuraman 1993). Missing tangibility of services does not implement that a branding strategy is less reasonable for offered services than goods (Berry 2000). Eppler and Will (2001) define service branding as “bundling a set of services under one brand in order to be recognized by current and potential clients as an integrated and unique offer” (p. 446). Due to the fact that services cannot be touched and are more or less invisible, a strong brand is necessary. A strong brand appears as a kind of promise for fullest satisfaction in the future for customers using a service (Berry 2000). Berry (2000) named the service performance as the main difference between service-branding and packaged-goods branding because the performances of the employees affect the brand building process in an outstanding way. This final statement is pioneering for the topic of this thesis because it underpins the importance of the research field of employee brand building behaviors.

Summarized, it can be said that internal branding and employee branding, which are used synonymously in internal branding literature, as well as service branding, are pursuing an inner perspective focusing on the employee itself so as to force an internalization of the core brand values through the employees. These branding approaches aim to coordinate the behaviors of the employees according to the brand, optimize the service delivery and in succession create a strong brand. The corporate branding approach focuses more on the positioning of the brand name and the creation of a favorable image in the head of the customers, based on the behaviors applied through the employees.

2.3 Employee brand building behaviors

In this subchapter of the literature review, the concept and the main definitions of employee brand building behaviors (EBBBs) should be discussed first. Furthermore, the

existing EBBBs in the internal branding literature are discussed to achieve an overview of existing opportunities in terms of how employees can strengthen the brand. In addition, the next part of this subchapter focuses on the broad spectrum of existing classification approaches of EBBBs. Moreover, an overview of existing approaches related to how employee brand building behaviors can be conceptualized, is outlined in this part of the thesis. Finally, a short delineation of how the research questions can be derived from the presented concepts in the literature will be outlined.

2.3.1 Concept and definition

The present scientific literature on how employees can strengthen the organization's brand generally and also beyond customer interaction, is rather scarce (Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Morhart et al. 2009; Punjaisri and Wilson 2007). To address this research gap, this master's thesis will be conducted in such a way so as to shed more light on brand building efforts and consider in detail the role of employees in the interaction process of providing a service. Further, this thesis concentrates on a holistic conceptualization of these brand building behaviors and aims to provide a complete conceptualization approach for all relevant employee brand building behaviors.

As mentioned previously in chapter one, brands are able to support the evaluation process of alternatives for the customer by providing an identity to the offered service or good by using "the form of words, signs, symbols, or designs" (Miles and Mangold 2004, p.66). The customer has to face the challenge of distinguishing between competitive offerings (De Chernatony and Riley 1999; Miles and Mangold 2004; Wood 2000). In this connection, Miles and Mangold (2004) mention that "employees too, can reinforce, strengthen and even create a brand image for their products and organizations" (p.66), which can further support the customer's evaluation process.

In the existing internal branding literature, behaviors of how employees can support the brand building process of an organization and how they can engage in creating strong brands are summarized under the term of employee brand building behaviors (Miles and Mangold 2004; Morhart et al. 2009). However, existing terminology for describing behaviors of employees, which aims to enhance brand building efforts, is rather vague (Morhart et al. 2009). According to Morhart et al. (2009), employee brand building behaviors can be defined as "employees' contribution (both on and off the job) to an

organization's customer oriented branding efforts" (p.123). Additionally, Miles and Mangold (2004) mean by employee brand building behaviors the reinforcement, strengthening as well as the creation of a favorable brand image for products and organizations. Principally, scholars constitute employees, who are heavily engaged in building up the brand as "brand ambassadors" (Henkel et al. 2007, p.316) or "brand champions" (Morhart et al. 2009, p. 122). Employees, who act as brand builder, "make or break a brand" with their performances and can "turn a marketer-articulated brand into a customer experienced brand" (Berry 2000, p.135). Employees act as brand ambassadors 24 hours a day seven days a week through a permanent confrontation with questions from the social environment, like friends or relatives, regarding the organization as an employer as well as the quality of products or services (Henkel et al. 2007; Kernstock 2011).

In addition, Kapferer (2008) states that "brand building is not done apart; it is a result of a clear strategy and of excellence in implementation at the product, prize, place, people and communication level" (p.51). As well, the behavioral branding approach of Kernstock (2011) points out that behavioral branding contains all appropriate measures to support the development and the maintenance of the brand through purposeful behavior and personal communication. The aim of the behavioral branding approach is to strengthen the corporate brand to ensure future economic success (Kernstock 2011).

2.3.2 Employee brand building behaviors in literature

In this part of the thesis, existing employee brand building behaviors will be described individually and in detail. Therefore, an overview of existing behaviors in the internal branding literature will be presented here in order to obtain a clear overview of the already existing opportunities in the present research as to how an employee can contribute to the brand building process. In the past, the internal branding literature has tended to represent the point of view that the most important issue in the brand building process is that the frontline staff transports a consistent brand image into customer interaction (Kernstock 2011; Punjaisri and Wilson 2007). Recent developments in the internal branding literature point out that there are also behaviors that clearly go far beyond brand congruent behavior in the customer interaction as well as standardized situations of service delivery to strengthen the organizational brand (Burmans and Zeplin 2005; Hughes and Ahearne 2010; Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Morhart

et al. 2009). The latter insight provides a necessary broader view on existing employee brand building behaviors. More precisely, for subsequent analysis, a complete enumeration of EBBBs is also essential to answer the constituted research questions. In the next paragraphs, a broad overview of existing EBBBs in the branding literature is provided.

To guarantee a clear arrangement of the variety of EBBBs, individual behaviors are presented in several pre-categories, depending on the nature and the purpose of the behaviors. This pre-categorization represents a rough assignment of examples for EBBBs to pre-categories. The final categorization of the EBBBs, based on this master's thesis, is provided in the empirical part of this work.

2.3.2.2 Examples of employee brand building behaviors related to the customer

Customer orientation is a central point in building up the brand through constantly creating additional value for the consumer of a service over a longer period as well as forcing the understanding of customer needs in an outstanding way (e.g. Bettencourt and Brown 2003; Narver and Slater 1990; Hartline et al. 2000; Henkel et al. 2007; Parasuraman et al. 1985; Saxe and Weitz 1982).

More specifically, important examples of EBBBs in strengthening the brand are provided by Saxe and Weitz (1982), who mention a customer-oriented selling approach, which is described in the literature as a way of doing business, where the focus is on satisfying customer needs and trying to support customers in making their purchase decision. Furthermore, Saxe and Weitz (1982) highlight "helping customers assess their needs" and "offering products that will satisfy their needs" (p.344) as examples for employee behaviors, which are closely linked to an employee's contribution to strengthening the brand. Additionally, Narver and Slater (1990) point out that customer orientation includes the behavior of "sufficient understanding of one's target buyers to be able to create superior value for them continuously" (p. 21). For maintaining a long lasting customer relationship, this kind of added value should be implemented constantly (Narver and Slater 1990).

Also, Parasuraman et al. (1985) reveal ten dimensions, which can influence consumer's perception of a provided service. The dimensions, according to Parasuraman et al. (1985), which focus on the customer, are listed in this thesis to provide examples for

brand building behaviors. A dimension, which should be highlighted here, is access, which includes the simple approachability of the customer to the service, e.g. “convenient hours of operation” or “convenient location of service facility” (p.47). The next dimension is credibility, which focuses on trustworthiness in the interaction with the customer and focuses on satisfying customer’s needs, e.g. “personal characteristics of the contact personnel” (p.47). Also, Bettencourt and Brown (2003) point out behaviors like “courtesy, responsiveness and keeping promises” (p. 394) as important examples for building up the brand of an organization. Furthermore, a relevant dimension is understanding / knowing the customer, which concentrates on the understanding of the customer’s needs, and includes behaviors like “learning the customer’s specific requirements”, “providing individualized attention” or “recognizing the regular customers” (p.47).

Furthermore, Henkel et al. (2007) have used in their study an item to measure behavioral branding quality, e.g. “our employees are able to quickly identify individual customer needs in order to provide the best possible solution” (p. 314). This item concretizes a contribution to the companies branding efforts by the employees and therefore has to be mentioned here in the enumeration of employee brand building behaviors, based on the literature review.

2.3.2.4 Examples of employee brand building behaviors related to the brand

The next pre-category, related to the brand itself, contains examples for employee brand building behavior efforts as well as forms of positive verbal brand recommendation and representation of the brand. Specifically, the included brand building efforts aim to strengthen the brand and present the brand in a favorable light (e.g. Berry 2000; Hughes and Ahearne 2010; Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Miles and Mangold 2004; Morhart et al. 2009; Punjaisri and Wilson 2007).

More precisely, some researchers point out the importance of external representation, meaning that employees act as vocal advocates to customers as well as external partners to positively influence the organization’s image, products and services (Brief and Motowidlo 1996; Bettencourt and Brown 2003; Gilly and Wolfinbarger 1998; Hartline et al. 2000; Hughes and Ahearne 2010; Motowidlo and VanScotter 1994).

Bettencourt and Brown (2003) integrate the following items into their measurement model, which are rather similar to EBBBs related to the presentation of the brand. The researchers include examples like “tell outsiders this is a great place to work”, “generates favorable goodwill for XYZ” and “says good things about XYZ to others” (p.401). Moreover, another opportunity related to brand representation and how employees can participate in the brand building process, which underpins the central role of the employees in this case, is by acting as representatives of the organization addressing friends, family as well as (potential) customers (Gilly and Wolfinbarger 1998; Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012). For instance, Hughes and Ahearne (2010) describe brand-enhancing extra-role behaviors, which are applied by the employees of an organization. Exactly stated, these activities are related to the brand presentation and provide great benefit to the brand itself. The researchers describe various behaviors to strengthen the brand, like “personally consume the brand at home and in public settings, to make the brand available at parties / gatherings when appropriate, to recommend it to friends” (p.86). These outlined brand specific extra-role behaviors applied by the employees can strengthen the brand.

Furthermore, positive behaviors, like “speak favorably about the organization to others” (Brief and Motowidlo 1996, p.711) as well as “representing the organization favorably to outsiders” (Motowidlo and VanScotter 1994, p.475) are also important to consider concerning a complete enumeration of examples for EBBBs. Hartline et al. (2000) outline that brand representation, especially for customer-employee contact, is especially a central task in services because here the employees are the first and often the only representatives of the organization. Thus, frontline employees are responsible for creating favorable impressions of the brand in the consumer’s mind (Hartline et al. 2000; Parasuraman et al. 1985). Some of the behaviors, for example, “recommend[ing] it to friends” (Hughes and Ahearne 2010, p.86), can be seen as a preliminary stage for positive word of mouth, which is discussed later on in this section.

Another relevant example of how employees can reinforce the brand in a significant way is positive word of mouth (WOM), which is a well-discussed topic in the present literature (Berry 2000; Berry and Seltman 2007; Miles and Mangold 2004; Morhart et al. 2009). More specifically, according to Morhart et al. (2009), positive WOM is a central employee behavior aimed at building up the company’s brand. WOM is described as a credible form of advertising of the organization, the products and also the

brand among all types of customers. For instance, Morhart et al. (2009) state that “employees’ personal advocacy of the organization’s product and service brands outside the job context is a credible form of advertising for actual and potential customers” (p.123). As well, Miles and Mangold (2004) mention an increased favorable WOM communication as a consequence of a successful employee branding program. Concerning positive WOM, various relevant inputs can also be mentioned from the service branding literature (Berry 2000; Berry and Seltman 2007), which describes positive WOM as an important form of external brand communication supported by the employees to create a strong brand. Furthermore, also word of keyboard is gaining more and more importance for building up a strong brand through a credible and experience-based way of communication through employees as well as other customers (Berry 2000). According to Berry and Seltman (2007), word of keyboard is the application of favorable content regarding the brand “via the internet through blogs, message boards and personal websites” (p.200).

However, various research studies point out the importance of the communication of the central brand values in customer interaction as well as acting as a brand ambassador of the company (e.g. Burmann and Zeplin 2005; Henkel et al. 2007; Punjaisri and Wilson 2007). For instance, Henkel et al. (2007) outline in their scientific work the items “our employees verbally integrate our brand values when dealing with our customers” and “our employees act as brand ambassadors of our company” to measure behavioral branding quality. A further interesting example of how employees can contribute to the brand building process can be provided based on the study of Baumgarth and Schmidt (2010), where a part of the internal brand commitment scale is adapted from Burmann et al. (2009) as well as O’Reilly and Chatman (1986), allowing supplementary insights on this topic. In this study, the item “I am proud to tell others that I work for the company that owns this brand” (p.9) is utilized, which gives a good example of how the brand can be represented in a favorable way to outsiders through its employees. These examples of employee behaviors are closely related to the previous mentioned definition of employee brand building behaviors and therefore are described here in this thesis as possibilities for employees to enhance brand building.

2.3.2.1 Examples of employee brand building behaviors related to service

The provision of a high quality service can shape the overall perception of customers in a positive way concerning the delivered service and in succession for the whole brand (e.g. Bettencourt and Brown 2003; Heskett et al. 1997; Hartline et al. 2000; Parasuraman et al. 1985). In this pre-category, all examples of EBBBs related to the service as well as service quality are included.

For instance, Parasuraman et al. (1985) outline that service quality is not just manufactured in a factory or in a workshop and cannot be stored without a loss in value in the supermarket and afterwards be delivered to the customer. The researchers explain that service quality grows more directly from the situation of the service delivery between the frontline service employees and the customer. Employees, who engage in delivering a service in a way of outstanding quality, can positively influence the perception of customers (Zeithaml et al. 1996). The latter statements can be confirmed through a delineation of Parasuraman et al. (1985), who state that “consumers, who are aware that a firm is taking concrete steps to serve their best interests, are likely to perceive a delivered service in a more favorable way” (p.46).

Moreover, Parasuraman et al. (1985) reveal ten dimensions, which can shape consumer’s perception of a provided service. The dimensions according to Parasuraman et al. (1985), which are related to service quality, are listed here in this thesis to provide examples for brand building behaviors. The first aspect of this enumeration of employee brand building behaviors, according to Parasuraman et al. (1985), is reliability, which focuses on a consistent and right performance of the service from the first moment on as well as that the promise that the service offers to customers is met. However, examples for reliability can be “performing the service at the right time” or “accuracy in billing” (p.47). The second relevant dimension is responsiveness, which includes the ambitions of employees to deliver the service, e.g. “calling back the customer quickly” or “giving prompt service” (p.47). Additionally, competence is the next element, which focuses on the required skills and the needed performance of the employees to deliver a high quality service, e.g. “knowledge and skill of the contact personnel” (p.47). Also, communication represents the next dimension, which provides examples of how an employee can build up the brand and aims to inform the customer in an understandable way, e.g. “explaining the service itself” (p.47). The last element, according to

Parasuraman et al. (1985), which is necessary to mention in the context of employee brand building behaviors and can affect the perception of a service due to a customer, is called tangibles. Here the focus lies on physical attributes of the service delivery, e.g. “tools or equipment used to provide the service” (p.47). The latter described dimensions provide an overview of employee activities, which can influence the perception of a service positively. This useful enumeration of employee brand building behaviors creates a solid base for further analysis as well as conceptualization of EBBBs.

2.3.2.3 Examples of employee brand building behaviors related to brand consistent behavior

The next pre-category is linked to brand congruent behavior, which includes several opportunities for how employees can act in line with the brand and embody central brand values. Further, this pre-category characterizes to a full extent the communication measures, branch appearance and employee demeanor in all customer contact situations. This should be noticeable for the customers throughout the service delivery and also beyond (Baumgarth und Schmidt 2010; Henkel et al. 2007; Morhart et al. 2010).

Additionally, Baumgarth and Schmidt (2010) emphasize in their research work on brand consistent intra-role behaviors, which can be defined as “personal communication that supports branding objectives” (p.3). They introduce a new scale where the following items regarding personal conversation with customers are included to measure intra-role behaviors (p.9):

- communicate the same brand value in the long term
- to appear personally consistent with other manifestations of our branding
- to make no statements that are inconsistent with our brand communication in the media
- to emphasize the objective-technical (e.g. quality, reliability, etc.) as well as emotional-symbolic (e.g. trust, friendliness, etc.) aspects of our brand.

These stated items are closely related to employee brand building behaviors and should consequently be listed here as relevant examples for brand building efforts through the employees.

What is more, Morhart et al. (2009) also highlight brand-congruent behavior aspects to positively support the brand building process. For measuring in-role brand building behavior in their study, the researchers include items like “in customer-contact situations, I pay attention that my personal appearance is in line with our corporate brand’s appearance” (p.140) or “I adhere to our standards for brand – congruent behavior” (p.140). These items used in this study are intertwined with opportunities for how employees can enhance the brand building process. As such, these behaviors should be mentioned in this thesis to provide a complete overview of existing EBBBs.

Additionally, Henkel et al. (2007) seek to investigate the role of brand consistent employee behavior to increase the overall brand performance. For the researchers, competent services as well as friendly and open communication with customers are not sufficient for delivering brand values in a consistent way. However, the employees should furthermore communicate special key values of the brand to enforce a brand consistent perception of the service through the customers (Henkel et al. 2007). More specifically, researchers use the items “our employees live up to our brand values through gesture, when dealing with our customers”, “our employees live up to our brand values through mimics when dealing with our customers” as well as “our employees have a personal interest to be adequately dressed, when dealing with our customers” (p. 314) to measure behavioral branding quality in their study. Concerning the latter aspect, Parasuraman et al. (1985) also point out that a “clean and neat appearance of public contact personnel” (p.47) is a good example of an employee brand building behavior. The latter example to strengthen the brand is also mentioned by Bettencourt and Brown (2003), who point out personal attractiveness as an important point to build up the brand. Hence, these behaviors are well worth being mentioned here, based on the definitions regarding employee brand building behaviors provided in the previous subchapter, as good examples for opportunities as to how employees can participate in the brand building process. In detail, the latter insights can also be underpinned by several other research studies, which state that employees have a crucial role in living the brand and applying the brand promise in a consistent way to customers (de Chernatony and Segal-Horn 2003; Parasuraman et al. 1985; Punjaisri and Wilson 2007; Schultz and de Chernatony 2002). For instance, Burmann and Zeplin (2005) mention an extra-role behavior, which emphasizes positive effects on brand strength to bring the brand to life. Here Punjaisri and Wilson (2007) also convey that one important

contribution of employees to building up the brand is the transformation of “brand messages into the brand reality for customers and other stakeholders” (p.60). Furthermore, Punjaisri and Wilson (2007) state that employees should deliver the individual brand promise in a consistent way across all touching points between the customers and the brand, which can further enhance customer satisfaction, customer preference and loyalty of customers. These examples of employee behaviors are closely related to the previous mentioned definition of employee brand building behaviors, and thus are described here as possibilities for employees to enhance the brand building process.

2.3.2.5 Examples of employee brand building behaviors related to brand development

This pre-category comprises examples of how employees can contribute to the brand building process to provide helpful information to the company to increase the future brand performance and enhance the brand building process (Brief and George 1992; Brief and Motowidlo 1996; Burmann et al. 2009; Morhart et al. 2009).

For instance, Burmann et al. (2009) describe in their research work the constructs of brand citizenship behavior as well as brand commitment as possibilities for measuring internal brand management efforts to strengthen the brand significantly.² Brand citizenship behavior combines the dimensions of “willingness to help, brand enthusiasm and propensity for further development (both in terms of developing oneself and the brand)” (p.280). Likewise, Morhart et al. (2009) describe participation in brand development as an important example for participating in the brand building process for employees. Concrete examples for the latter described behaviors are “internally passing on branding-relevant customer feedback from customer touch point” as well as to “provide a company with high-quality input for its brand management” (p.123). The latter can also be underlined by Gilly and Wolfinbarger (1998), who proclaim that employees can function as effective information sources for the company in that they are in a position to gather various insights on customers and service related processes. Additionally, Morhart et al. (2009), for measuring participation on their scale, use items

² Detailed information on this conceptualization approach is available in the following subchapter of this thesis.

like “let my supervisor know of ways how we can strengthen our brand image” or “make constructive suggestions on how to improve our customers’ brand experience”, which outline indications as to how employees can participate in creating a strong brand. The latter described opportunities definitely can contribute to a successful brand building process.

In addition, several studies point out examples of employee brand building that cover the protection of the organization from harm, criticism and unanticipated hazards (Brief and George 1992; Brief and Motowidlo 1996; Hughes and Ahearne 2010; Katz & Kahn 1978; Motowidlo and Van Scotter 1994). More specifically, according to Brief and Motowidlo (1996), such activities include “act[ing] to protect the organization from unanticipated hazards” (p.711), or according to Brief and George (1992), “protecting the organization” (p.310), or, lastly, as stated by Motowidlo and VanScotter (1994) “protecting the organization from harm” (p.475). All are given examples of how employees can participate in the brand building process.

Another set of examples of EBBBs within the pre-category brand development is elucidated by Brief and George (1992), who mention the EBBB of “developing oneself, and spreading goodwill” (p. 310) or, as stated by Motowidlo and Van Scotter (1994) “undertaking self-development” (p.475) as opportunities to enhance the overall economic performance of the organization and in succession create a strong brand. However, here the authors focus on personal development through continuing education as well as further training as an example for employee brand building behaviors.

For instance, the last examples for EBBBs within this pre-category are provided by Motowidlo and Van Scotter (1994), who mention the opportunity of “making constructive suggestion” (p.310) to strengthen the brand as well as Brief and George (1992), who also point out that “offering suggestions for improvement” (p.475) can successfully enhance brand development. These activities positively influence the organization and also contribute to the brand as part of the organization.

2.3.2.6 Further examples of employee brand building behaviors

Here examples of EBBBs, which cannot be assigned to a certain topic, like customer, brand, service, brand consistency or brand development, are included. However, some

examples for brand building behaviors outside the internal branding literature are also exemplified in this pre-category.

Researchers Hughes and Ahearne (2010) describe the salesperson's brand building responsibilities, which include activities like "securing and increasing distribution, expanding shelf space, selling product displays, placing POS materials and selling promotions" (p.86). A service employee does not directly apply these kinds of behaviors in services. In this example, the course of business of a retailer is paramount. Furthermore, Hughes and Ahearne (2010) also describe brand-enhancing extra-role behaviors applied by the employees of an organization, which contribute to the brand building process through the support of other employees. Here the researchers label behaviors to strengthen the brand, like "to encourage other employees and management to focus in the brand; to confront or report colleagues for behavioral detrimental to the brand and to report competitive initiatives that threaten the brand" (p.86).

In this pre-category, some key behaviors, which should favorably be applied by executive members of an organization to strengthen the brand, can also be mentioned (e.g. Brief and George 1992; Henkel et al. 2007; Morhart et al. 2009; Punjaisri and Wilson 2007; Vallaster and de Chernatony 2006). For instance, Henkel et al. (2007) outline that those executive members have to take their time to explain the key brand values to employees in order to enable brand consistent brand communication in customer interaction to strengthen the brand. In their behavioral approach, Henkel et al. (2007) proceed based on the assumption that the better the employees understand the core brand values, the better they can strengthen the brand in direct customer interaction and beyond. In addition, Vallaster and de Chernatony (2006) point out that those executive members of an organization have a meditative role between the organization and the employees so as to ensure employee behaviors, which are in line with the brand.

Moreover, Punjaisri and Wilson (2007) take a step back and focus already on the selection of the right employees as an example of an activity to strengthen the brand. The researchers believe that the management should keep an eye on the selection of the right employees, who fit to the brand as well as its values and have already internalized the most important brand values. This is seen as an employee brand building behavior, which is most important for the executive members of a company to strengthen the company's brand. Furthermore, Morhart et al. (2009) describe a brand specific

leadership, where the researchers include brand supporting efforts accomplished by the executive members of an organization. This approach, to provide relevant brand enhancing opportunities, embraces “(1) acting as a role model and authentically ‘living’ the brand values [...], (2) articulating a compelling and differentiating brand vision and arousing personal involvement and pride in the corporate brand [...], (3) making followers rethink their jobs from the perspective of a brand community member and empowering and helping followers to interpret their corporate brand’s promise and its implication for work in their individual ways [...] and (4) teaching and coaching them to grow into their roles as brand representatives [...]” (p.123). These examples for brand enhancing opportunities can also be seen as examples for employee brand building behaviors, conducted by executive members of an organization. A further interesting example of how executive members can contribute to the brand building process can be provided in the study of Baumgarth and Schmidt (2010), where a part of the internal brand commitment scale is adapted from Burmann et al. (2009) and O’Reilly and Chatman (1986), which uses the item “our top management's commitment to the brand leads me to make an extra effort for the brand” (p.9). However, this item, which is closely linked to a brand building behavior provided by the managers of a company, should clarify that obvious commitment can strengthen the brand through motivating customers to engage in extra efforts to create a strong brand.

Furthermore, five manifestations of organization citizenship behaviors (OCBs) can be described here based on the theoretical literature of employee brand building behaviors (Bateman and Organ 1983; Brief and Motowidlo 1996; MacKenzie et al. 1993; Organ 1988; Podsakoff and MacKenzie 1997). Additionally, information about these behaviors is provided in the next subchapter. These examples for brand enhancing behaviors, summarized under the term of organizational citizenship behavior, provide valuable insights for further relevant brand building behaviors. There are various approaches to explaining the behavior dimensions of OCB (Podsakoff and MacKenzie 1997), which are not described in this master’s thesis in detail. Here one approach is described according to MacKenzie et al. (1993), who name courtesy, altruism, civic virtue, sportsmanship and conscientiousness as examples for OCBs. Courtesy is described as a discretionary behavior and stands for the minimization and the prevention of problems in every-day working life through, for example a well thought out communication of actions and events, which affect other departments within the organization. Altruism

implies helping behaviors directed at other colleagues (e.g. problem solving, offering assistance or answering a service request, exchanging sales strategies and helping new employees). Also, other research studies underline the relevance of these behaviors according to altruism, which points out that cooperation and mutual assistance among colleagues is very important for a successful brand building process (Brief and George 1992; Brief and Motowidlo 1996; Hughes and Ahearne 2010; Motowidlo and Van Scotter 1994; Podsakoff and MacKenzie 1997). Likewise, MacKenzie et al. (1993) point out civic virtue, which is built on participation in company affairs and sympathy to the company (e.g. go to meetings, which support the company, but are not prescribed, keep up with relevant changes, point out improvements within the company, etc.). Sportsmanship is the willingness and acceptance of the employees to cope with other than perfect general conditions without complaining. The last OCB described by the authors is conscientiousness, which includes discretionary behaviors that go beyond the basic requirements of the company (e.g. work overtime, answering the mobile phone for business calls during free-time, etc.). All these OCBs together have a stronger influence on the overall performance evaluation of, for example, salespeople, than the objective sales productivity. This incident gives reasons why managers pay a lot of attention to OCBs (Brief and Motowidlo 1996; MacKenzie et al. 1993).

In contrast to the previous described OCBs, the research work of Podsakoff and MacKenzie (1997) points out anticitizenship behaviors, which are expected to have a negative influence on the effectiveness of an organization. According to Podsakoff and MacKenzie (1997), who build on the research work of Fisher and Locke (1992), the following forms of anticitizenship behaviors can be identified (p.146):

- defiance and resistance to authority (e.g. ignoring rules or instructions, talking back to supervisors, etc.)
- revenge / retaliation (e.g. selling company information to the competition, leaking detrimental information to the press, steal tools, etc.)
- avoidance of the work itself (e.g. doing as little work as possible, trying to look busy doing nothing, etc.)

These anticitizenship behaviors are briefly mentioned in this master's thesis to point out that there are also employee behaviors, which can negatively influence the economic

performance of an organization (Podsakoff and MacKenzie 1997). Finally, in subsequent elucidation in reference to employee brand building behaviors, the focus is on behaviors capable for positively influencing the company's brand.

2.4 Conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors

In the subchapter of this master's thesis, a theoretical background is provided explaining how employee brand building behaviors can be classified based on existing approaches in the scientific literature. Later, this part of the chapter focuses on existing conceptualization approaches of EBBBs in the literature. Here the most important efforts for how EBBBs can be conceptualized with the aim of providing relevant insights into the purpose of this thesis are provided in detail.

2.4.1 Theoretical background: classification of employee brand building behaviors

Focus here is on the theoretical background of how employee brand building behaviors can be classified. Several common approaches, based on the theory, are outlined in this subchapter in order to obtain an overview of the existing classifications of EBBBs. Subsequent elucidations regarding this issue will show that the approaches to classifying EBBBs are manifold (Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Morhart et al. 2009). However, many researchers have tried to shed more light on a classification and differentiation of employee brand building behaviors and have developed a wide range of approaches (e.g. Brief and Motowidlo 1986; Hughes and Ahearne 2010; MacKenzie et al. 1998; Morhart et al. 2009; Motowidlo and Van Scotter 1994; Organ 1988; Podsakoff et al. 1993; Podsakoff and MacKenzie 1997; Smith et al. 1983). This variety of approaches for classifying EBBBs creates the necessity for a more detailed explanation of this topic.

For instance, Motowidlo and Van Scotter (1994) point out three approaches to divide job performance, which in succession can also be equated partially with a behavior of the employees to strengthen the brand. One proclaimed segmentation of employee behaviors, which is mentioned by the authors, is between prescribed role behaviors and discretionary role behaviors. As well, the next approach to pigeonhole behaviors is the differentiation between organizational citizenship behavior, prosocial behavior and

organizational spontaneity. The third attempt to divide employee behaviors, which are related to job performance, is “the distinction between performance behaviors related to task proficiency and performance behaviors not related to task proficiency” (p.476). These approaches are described in the following paragraphs. However, according to their relevance in contributing to the topic of this thesis, the approaches are described more in detail or are just briefly outlined.

Prescribed role behaviors and discretionary role behaviors

A first basic and path-breaking segmentation of how employees can build up the brand, for example, in connection with job performance, is made by Motowidlo and Van Scotter (1994), where the scholars divide the individual behaviors of employees into (a) “joining and staying in the organization”, (b) “meeting or exceeding standards of performance prescribed by organizational roles” and (c) “innovatively and spontaneously going beyond prescribed roles to perform well” (p.475). In points (b) and (c) the authors distinguish between standard employee activities, which are part of the job description and also expected by the company and discretionary behaviors, which go beyond the defined roles of the employees and exceed the role requirements of an organization. Given possibilities to strengthen the brand, which reach beyond prescribed roles, are, for example, collaboration with colleagues, the protection of the organization from external negative influences, the optimization of organization processes, a voluntary personal development and presenting the organization in a favorable light to outsiders (Katz and Kahn 1978; Motowidlo and Van Scotter 1994). There are many other research studies focusing on the distinction between behaviors, which are role prescribed as well as expected from the company and activities, and which go beyond the role requirements and are discretionary (e.g. Bettencourt and Brown 2003; Burmann and Zeplin 2005; Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Hughes and Ahearne 2012; MacKenzie et al. 1998; Morhart et al. 2009; Podsakoff and MacKenzie 1997). Further insights concerning this approach of classifying employee brand building behaviors will be provided in a later part of the literature review.

Organizational citizenship behavior

The second approach to organize behaviors of employees, which has been outlined by Motowidlo and Van Scotter (1994), describes organizational citizenship behavior (Bateman and Organ 1983; Organ 1988; Podsakoff and MacKenzie 1997), prosocial behavior (Brief and Motowidlo 1986) and organizational spontaneity (George and Brief

1992) as closely related behaviors, that all involve cooperation and focus on helping colleagues within the organization.

More precisely, organizational citizenship behavior includes gestures of the employees, which preserve social cohesion within a company and ensure interdependence between employees, in turn leading to an efficient problem solving process within an organization (Motowidlo and Van Scotter 1994; Podsakoff and MacKenzie 1997; Podsakoff et al. 1997; Smith et al. 1983). According to Podsakoff and MacKenzie (1997), OCB supports an organization in adapting to environmental changes more efficiently and hence can positively contribute to the economic success of an organization. These gestures, which are not directly related to productivity or part of a set of prescribed tasks anchored in the job description, go beyond formal role requirements and concentrate on the enhancement of social behavior. More precisely, OCBs can be classified as extra-role behaviors and as company directed behaviors, where the organization or the people within an organization are addressed (Podsakoff and MacKenzie 1997).

Smith et al. (1983) identify two classes of organizational citizenship behavior. On the one hand, they name altruism as a type of citizenship behavior, consisting of helping behaviors directed at other colleagues, e.g. problem solving, offering assistance or answering a service request, exchange sales strategies and helping new employees (Organ 1988). Some studies mentioned by Smith et al. (1983) describe the altruistic dimension of the citizenship behavior as the “mood state that influences the probability of prosocial gestures” (p.654). The other class of citizenship behavior according to Smith et al. (1983) is generalized compliance, which is described as an “impersonal sort of conscientiousness, more of a good soldier or good citizen syndrome of doing things that are “right and proper” but for the sake of the system rather than for specific persons” (p. 662). According to Podsakoff and MacKenzie (1997), various dimensions of OCB exist in the literature, like “courtesy”, “cheerleading”, “sportsmanship”, “civic virtue”, “conscientiousness” and “peacekeeping” (p.134). Sometimes dimensions, like courtesy, altruism, cheerleading and peacekeeping, are lumped together into the dimension of “helping” (Podsakoff and MacKenzie 1997; Podsakoff et al. 1997).

Prosocial behavior

Moreover, the next approach to classifying employee behaviors regarding job performance, which is pointed out in the segmentation of Motowidlo and Van Scotter (1994), will be described. Brief and Motowidlo (1986) as related to the topic of prosocial behavior, which has many similarities to organizational citizenship behavior, are mentioned in the previous paragraph. Concerning this matter, Brief and Motowidlo (1986) describe that these activities “such as helping, sharing, donating, co- operating, and volunteering are forms of prosocial behavior. They are positive social acts carried out to produce and maintain the well-being and integrity of others“(p.710). The following broad definition of prosocial behavior is suggested by Brief and Motowidlo (1986), who state that ”prosocial organizational behavior is behavior which is (a) performed by a member of an organization, (b) directed towards an individual group, or organization with whom he or she interacts while carrying out his or her organizational role, and (c) performed with the intention of promoting the welfare of the individual, group, or organization towards which it is directed” (p.711).

In the research work of Brief and Motowidlo (1986), several distinctions are made as to how to pigeonhole prosocial behaviors. First, a differentiation between behaviors, which are organizationally helpful in supporting the achievement of company objectives and those, which are not able to move the organization closer to achieving its goals, is described in their work. A second opportunity of distinction between prosocial behaviors are between behaviors, which are role prescribed and required from the company and activities, which are formally not specified and are not clearly assigned to the employees as a job activity. These extra-role behaviors are not dedicated to increasing productivity or company effectiveness (Brief and Motowidlo 1986). The last opportunity to classify prosocial behaviors includes the objectives of whether the activity acts towards employees within the organization or directly addresses the customer of a service or a product (Brief and Motowidlo 1986). Also, Podsakoff and MacKenzie (1997) distinguish employee behaviors by whether the activity primarily addresses the organization (or people within the organization) or the customers of an organization. One further mentioned classification approach of employee behaviors is organizational spontaneity (Brief and George 1992), which is also described by Motowidlo and Van Scotter (1994). Organizational spontaneity is seen analogous in the scientific literature to the constructs of organizational citizenship behavior and prosocial

organizational behavior (Brief and George 1992; Brief and Motowidlo 1986; Motowidlo and Van Scotter 1994; Smith et al. 1983).

The last approach to separate activities regarding the job performance stated by Motowidlo and Van Scotter (1994) is the distinction between performance behaviors related to task proficiency and performance behaviors, which are not related to task proficiency. However the three approaches of Motowidlo and Van Scotter (1994) for classifying employee behaviors concerning job performance lead to the merging of a pioneering approach of classification of employee behaviors, which can positively influence an organizations brand.

Hence, a very fundamental differentiation of employee behaviors, which have the ability to positively influence the company's performance, according to Borman and Motowidlo (1997) is the distinction between task activities and contextual activities. Task performances imply activities, which contribute directly to the core business of the company, like the processing of resources into the final product or the provided service. Additional examples of task activities, like "operating a production machine in a manufacturing plant [...] or performing a surgery in a hospital", can be pointed out (Motowidlo and Van Scotter 1994, p.476). For instance, for a fire fighter, examples of task activities include performing rescue operations, conducting salvage operations or applying ventilation procedures (Borman and Motowidlo 1997). Contextual performances are described by Borman and Motowidlo (1997) as "activities, which are important because they contribute to organizational effectiveness in ways that shape the organizational, social and psychological context that serves as the catalyst for task activities and processes" (p.100). More specifically, the contextual activities include "volunteering to carry out task activities that are not formally part of the job and helping and cooperating with others in the organization to get tasks accomplished" (Borman and Motowidlo 1997, p.100). According to Motowidlo and Van Scotter (1994), contextual performances do not focus on the production of the core product itself, but rather concentrate on the whole organization with its social as well as psychological dimensions and aspects. These behaviors are described as typically discretionary in the existing literature. Task performances can vary strongly from job to job and business to business, meanwhile contextual performances are more or less similar across different jobs (Borman and Motowidlo 1997).

In more recent studies, a further theoretical classification of employee behaviors, with a strong linkage to a service company as well as its customers, describes three types of “customer oriented boundary-spanning behaviors” (COBSBs) a frontline service employee may perform (Bettencourt and Brown 2003; Bettencourt et al. 2005). Here a distinction between external representation, internal influence and service delivery can be provided. This classification approach is also described in the next subchapter in more detail

Another approach of Burmann et al. (2009), depicted here only for reasons of completeness,³ describes the importance of employee behaviors for building up and maintaining a strong brand. More specifically, Burmann et al. (2009) present a “model of a brand as an identity” (p.265) for organizing employee behaviors. This model describes the appearance of “employees’ brand commitment” and “employees’ brand citizenship behaviors” (p. 266) as essential elements of a thriving internal brand management and to classify employee brand building behaviors. For example, Burmann and Zeplin (2005) define brand commitment as “the extent of psychological attachment of employees to the brand, which influences their willingness to exert extra effort towards reaching the brand goals” (p.284), which is a main driver for brand citizenship behavior. Brand citizenship behavior includes several employee behaviors improving brand identity, which is built on the employee’s proposals to engage in behaviors that are beyond a formally defined role description of an organization (Burmann et al. 2009). According to Burmann et al. (2009), brand citizenship behavior consists of three dimensions: “willingness to help, brand enthusiasm and propensity for further development” (p. 266).

Additional research studies point out a classification approach that reaches beyond customer interaction. These studies classify the employees’ brand building behaviors as to whether they are applied within customer interaction or outside customer interaction (Bettencourt and Brown 2003; Hughes and Ahearne 2010; Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Morhart et al. 2009). Moreover, some researchers also distinguish between employee brand building behaviors, which take place on the job or off the job (Berry 2000; Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Morhart et al. 2009).

³ This approach is not generally accepted in the scientific literature

Based on the mentioned classification of Motowidlo and Van Scotter (1994), the study of Morhart et al. (2009) describes brand building endeavors that also reach beyond the contact points between the employee and the customer. In addition, they include a more extended version of classification of EBBBs in their study, which forms a base for the subsequent conceptualization process of relevant employee brand building behaviors within this master's thesis. The researchers extend the classification categories of whether an EBBB is performed in-role or extra role, which is pretty common in the given literature (e.g. Bettencourt and Brown 2003; Burmann and Zeplin 2005; Hughes and Ahearne 2012; Motowidlo and Van Scotter 1994; Podsakoff and MacKenzie 1997) in order to provide an enlarged three-way classification of employee brand building behaviors. However, the researchers outline three segments of classification, such as "retention", "in-role brand building behavior" and "extra-role brand building behavior", to classify EBBBs.

In-role brand building behaviors refer to "frontline employees meeting the standards prescribed by their organizational roles as brand representatives (either written in behavioral codices, manuals display rules and so forth or unwritten)" (p.123). For instance, for Podsakoff and MacKenzie (1997), a behavior is in-role, when "the behavior is in the job description, explicitly rewarded/punished, trained, and so forth" (p.146). Furthermore, extra-role brand building behaviors "refer to employees actions that go beyond the prescribed roles for the good of the corporate brand and are discretionary" (p.123). For instance, segment retention has the central function of maintaining a stable relationship between the employee and the corporate brand and to ensure continuity among frontline service employees. "Long lasting relationships are likely to spark feelings of closeness, affection and trust of customers towards the brand representatives, all of which add to a brand's competitive advantage" (Morhart et al. 2009, p.123).

Additionally, Hughes and Ahearne (2010) contribute to the brand building theory and come up with a classification approach of brand-specific extra-role behaviors, which may enhance the strength of the brand in the marketplace. The researchers highlight the delineation of two distinct types of extra-role brand building behaviors. They separate brand usage - which covers personal brand usage at home as well as making the brand available at parties or gatherings - and extra-role brand support - which focuses on the encouragement of colleagues to enhance brand building efforts.

As outlined in this subchapter, approaches to classifying employee brand building behaviors are manifold. The most appropriate approaches have been selected to form a basis for the subsequent conceptualization process in this master's thesis. The latter described approaches regarding whether an employee brand building behavior is applied on the job or off the job and whether the EBBB is an in-role or an extra-role activity, are chosen as the starting point of conceptualization for this master's thesis.

2.4.2 Existing conceptualization approaches of employee brand building behaviors in the literature

In the previous part of this chapter, numerous employee brand building behaviors, which have been discussed in the internal branding literature, are enumerated. In a following part, a versatile overview of existing conceptualization approaches of employee brand building behaviors will be outlined. The most important approaches of how to conceptualize EBBBs aiming to provide relevant insights on the topic of this thesis are provided here in detail.

Recent developments, as described above, in the internal branding literature, point out that there exist behaviors that go far beyond behaviors, which are only applied to strengthen the brand in the customer interaction as well as standardized situations of service delivery (Burmam and Zeplin 2005; Hughes and Ahearne 2010; Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Morhart et al. 2009). However, this master's thesis pursues the objective to provide a holistic conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors, which incorporates all possible opportunities to strengthen the brand by the employees of an organization. Therefore, also a consideration of this topic detached from customer interaction is necessary. In this subchapter, the most relevant conceptualization approaches contributing to the objectives of this master's thesis and hence are taken over for the research studies of this thesis, are described. The first two described conceptualizations are the most relevant ones for this work, thus form the starting point for subsequent analysis. The other approaches are mentioned for the sake of completeness.

Conceptualization according to Morhart et al. (2009)

According to the conceptualization approach of employee brand building behaviors according to Morhart et al. (2009), three main categories of EBBBs are labeled. As

shown in the Figure 1, this approach consists of the categories “in-role brand building behaviors”, “extra-role brand building behaviors” and “retention”. The explanations of the individual categories, besides retention, are thoroughly described in the previous subchapter.

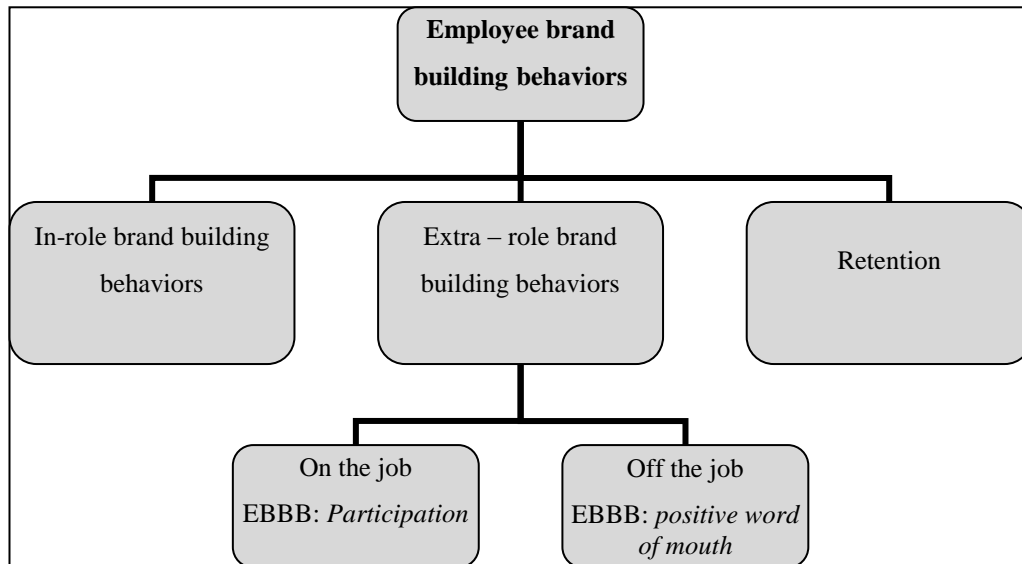


Figure 1: Conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors based on Morhart et al. (2009) (own design)

The study proclaims a conceptualization approach of employee brand building behaviors, which includes the classification of in-role brand building behaviors, extra-role brand building behaviors and retention, and moreover a segmentation of whether the behavior is performed on the job (during the working hours) or off the job (in the free time of the employee). This conceptualization model considers the topic of conceptualization of EBBBs from a more holistic point of view.

As illustrated in Figure 1, Morhart et al. (2009) conceptualize two concrete appearances of extra-role employee brand building behaviors. Firstly, they label an on the job EBBB “*participation*”, which is a branding effort focus on the active participation in the constructive development of the brand, e.g. “by internally passing on branding-relevant customer feedback from customer touch points” (p. 123). This EBBB aims at providing brand management with relevant key facts and strategic information so as to strengthen the brand. Additionally, the other extra-role brand building behavior, which is applied off the job, is “*positive word of mouth*”. According to Morhart et al. (2009), “employees’ personal advocacy of the organization’s product and service brands outside the job context is a credible form of advertising for actual and potential customers”

(p.123). The behavior of positive word of mouth (WOM) is also described in detail in scientific research. Positive word of mouth is an important opportunity for promoting a company's brand in a highly credible way, engaging in the brand building process, creating a strong brand and increasing the brand image (Bettencourt and Brown 2003; Mangold et al.1999; Morhart et al. 2009). Furthermore, positive word of mouth as a part of external brand communication can also improve brand awareness as well as brand impressions, which in succession may influence the customer's choice of service (Berry 2000). The Internet and the World Wide Web (WWW) play a more and more important role in the interaction process regarding the practice of word of mouth. Some scholars increasingly use the term, word of keyboard, together with word of mouth (Berry 2000; Mangold et al. 1999).

The category "retention" of EBBBs, outlined by Morhart et al. (2009), refers "to employees' upholding their professional relationship with the corporate brand. A service firm's ability to maintain stability in its customer-contact staff is crucial" (p.123). Such long lasting relationships may attach the customer more stably to the frontline employee, which may enhance the competitive advantage of the brand. When customers often have to face changes of the service staff, such a favorable relationship cannot be built up (Morhart et al. 2009).

Conceptualization according Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos (2012)

As illustrated in Figure 2, the more recent conceptualization approach of Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos (2012) comes up with a conceptualization model including four employee brand building behaviors. This conceptualization is one additional development of Morhart et al. (2009). Here also the segmentation - whether an EBBB is performed on the job within working hours or is done off the job outside working hours - has been carried out. Moreover, a classification of EBBBs, whether the brand enhancing effort is in-role or extra-role, is part of the provided conceptualization approach in Figure 2. This conceptualization approach is the most beneficial one for subsequent analysis in the current master's thesis. This approach is taken over from Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos (2012), as a theoretical starting point for subsequent analysis of this master's thesis in order to provide a holistic conceptualization of relevant employee brand building behaviors.

As illustrated in Figure 2, the scientists focus on following four EBBBs to engage in the brand building process:

- Customer oriented behavior
- Brand congruent behavior
- Participation in brand development
- Positive word of mouth

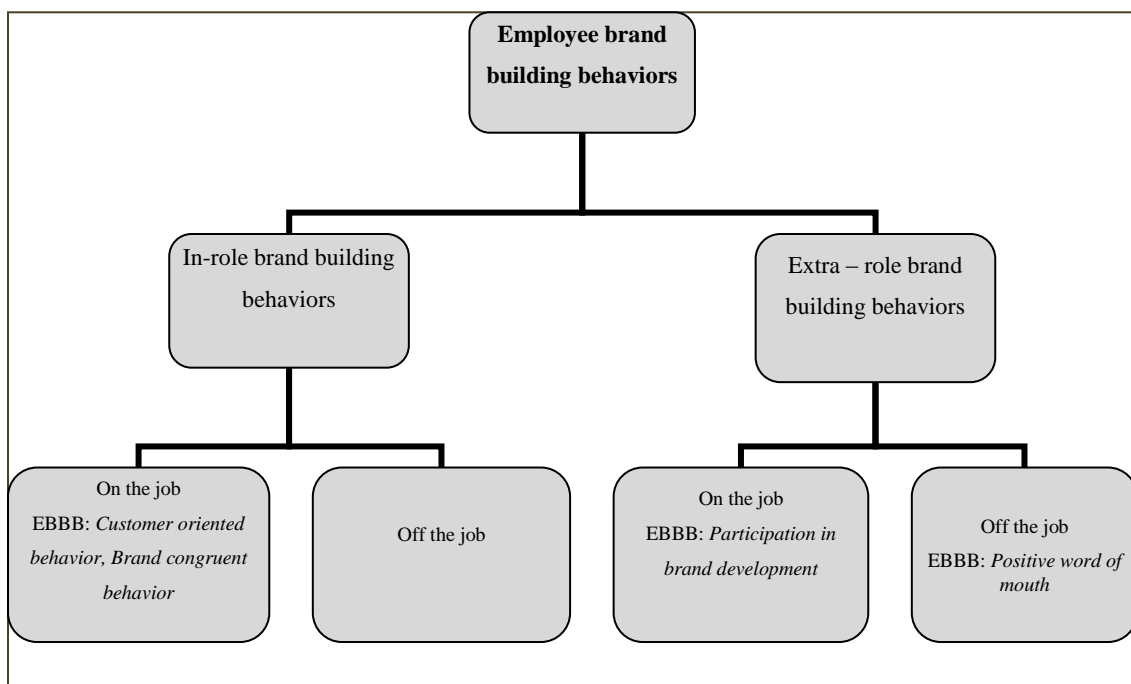


Figure 2: Conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors, based on Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos (2012) (own design)

According to Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos (2012), “customer oriented behavior” is seen as a key in-role brand building effort to strengthen the brand, which is anchored in the role prescription of the organization. Based on the named examples within this research work where this EBBB is applied, this thesis pursues with the assumption that this EBBB can be classified as an on the job activity, as Figure 2 displays.

Moreover, other research studies have also dealt with customer orientation and outline the key matters that are necessary for the satisfaction of customer needs as well as adequate service delivery, the two most important objectives of this EBBB (Hartline et al. 2000; Kurtz et al. 1976; Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Saxe and Weitz 1982;

Soutar and Ryan 2001). The literature provides a good general understanding of what can be understood under the term customer orientation, e.g. Kurtz et al. (1976) specify that "all parts of an organization are oriented towards solving customer problems and meeting the needs of the marketplace. Sales personnel no longer specialize solely in increasing sales volume; rather the prospect's real needs become the basis of the marketing plan" (p. 13). Furthermore, Saxe and Weitz (1982) describe the term as the degree to which service employees try to "help their customers make purchase decisions, that will satisfy customer needs [...] aimed at increasing long-term customer satisfaction" (p. 344). Additionally, customer orientation is "the set of beliefs that's put the customer's interests first, while not excluding those of all other stakeholders such as owners, managers and employees, in order to develop a long-term profitable enterprise" (Hartline et al. 2000, p.35). Based on a literature review, Saxe and Weitz (1982) mention examples for customer oriented behaviors, like "help customers make satisfactory purchase decisions" (p. 344), "helping customers assess their needs" (p. 344) and "offering products that will satisfy those needs" (p. 344). Narver and Slater (1990) describe customer orientation as "the sufficient understanding of one's target buyers to be able to create superior value for them continuously" (p. 21). Actual research displays the view that the central points of customer orientation are largely the identification as well as the satisfaction of customer needs and therefore the support of customers in their purchase decision (Soutar and Ryan 2001).

The next discussed employee brand building behavior, which is described in the conceptualization model of Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos (2012), is "brand congruent behavior". This EBBB is classified as an in-role brand building behavior, which is expected from the company and part of the role description of the employees. As well, the behavior is classified as an on the job behavior to contribute to the brand building process. An appreciable part of the internal branding literature is dealing with the key issue: that brand building behaviors applied by employees should be consistent with the brand values and be harmonized with the brand itself to ensure that a consistent brand image is perceived by customers (Baumgarth and Schmidt 2010; Henkel et al. 2007; Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Punjaisri and Wilson 2007). Brand congruent behavior is seen as the extent to which employee brand building behaviors are consistent with the brand image constituted by the organization (Baumgarth and Schmidt 2010; Henkel et al. 2007; Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Morhart et al.

2009). Brand congruent behavior is a well-discussed topic in the branding literature, which enables the opportunity to position the brand in the relevant set of the customer and increase brand success (Henkel et al. 2007; Punjaisri and Wilson 2007). More precisely, according to Baumgarth and Schmidt (2010), brand congruent behavior implies that employees “should be as consistent as possible with the brand identity and the expressed brand values” (p.1). All in all, after a concentration of the outlined statements, the term of brand congruent behavior represents the whole extent of which communication measures and employee demeanors in customer contact situations are consistent with the key branding attributes of an organization (Baumgarth and Schmidt 2010; Henkel et al. 2007 and Morhart et al. 2009).

As illustrated in Figure 2, one of the extra-role brand building behaviors described in the conceptualization of Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos (2012) is “participation in brand development”. This behavior is, according to the previous conceptualization approach of the EBBB “participation” by Morhart et al. (2009), an on the job activity to enhance brand building. “Employees, who actively participate in brand development (e.g. by internally passing on branding-relevant customer feedback from customer touching points) provide a company with high-quality input for its brand management” (Morhart et al. 2009, p.123).

The last EBBB in the conceptualization, which is described in Figure 2, is “positive word of mouth”. This opportunity to strengthen the brand is seen as an extra-role behavior, which is not part of the role description of the employees and therefore is discretionary. Furthermore, this EBBB is applied off the job, in the free time of employees. However, this brand building behavior is already described in detail in the course of the previous conceptualization of Morhart et al. (2009).

Further approaches to conceptualize employee brand building behaviors

As seen in the Figure 3, Borman and Motowidlo (1997) call attention to the distinction between task activities and contextual activities. Task performances imply activities, which contribute directly to the core business of the company, meanwhile contextual activities contribute to organizational effectiveness in ways that shape the organizational, social and psychological context, serving as the catalyst for task activities.

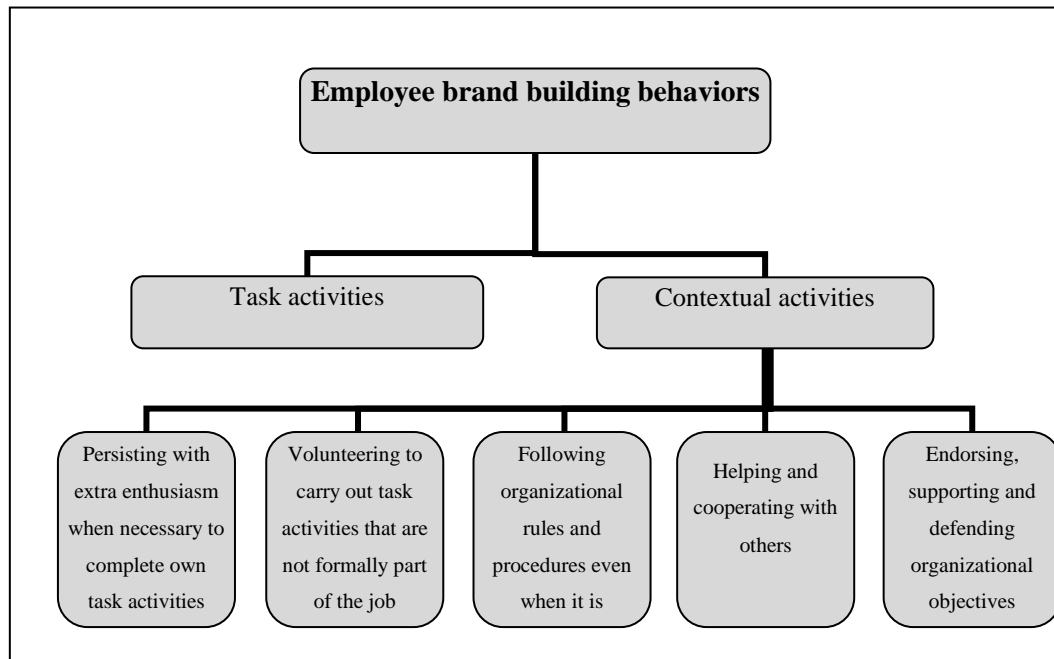


Figure 3: Conceptualization of EBBBs according to Borman and Motowidlo (1997) (own design)

Borman and Motowidlo (1997) provide a taxonomy with five categories of contextual performances, which include many previous described aspects, like the support of other colleagues, organizational citizenship behavior (Organ 1988) and prosocial organizational behavior (Brief and Motowidlo 1986; George and Brief 1992):

- Persisting with extra enthusiasm when necessary to complete own task activities successfully
- Volunteering to carry out task activities that are not formally part of the job
- Following organizational rules and procedures even when it is personally inconvenient
- Helping and cooperating with others
- Endorsing, supporting and defending organizational objectives

Furthermore, as elucidated in Figure 4, in more recent studies a supplemental theoretical conceptualization of employee behaviors describes three types of “customer oriented boundary-spanning behaviors (COBSBs) a frontline service employee may perform” (Bettencourt and Brown 2003; Bettencourt et al. 2005). Here a distinction between external representation, internal influence and service delivery can be provided. The

main dimensions of how customer linking behaviors can be classified will be described subsequently.

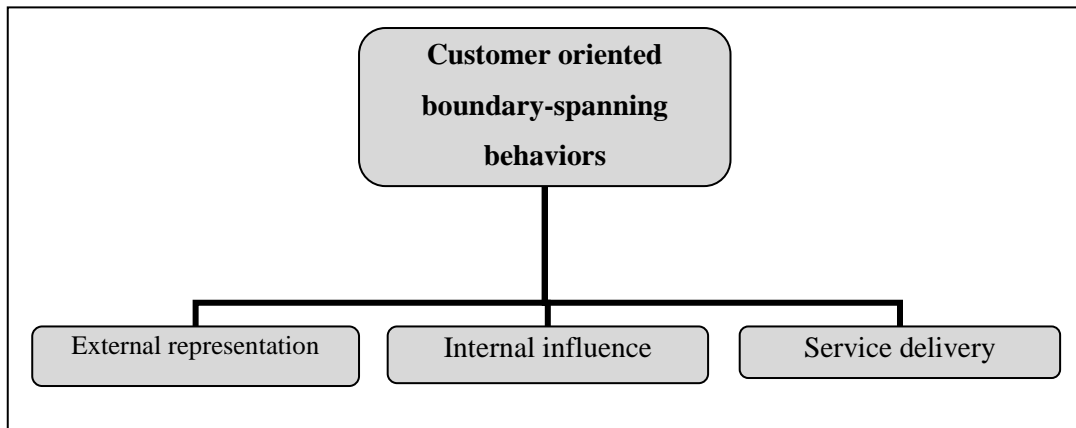


Figure 4: Conceptualization of customer oriented boundary-spanning behaviors according to Bettencourt and Brown (2003) and Bettencourt et al. (2005) (own design)

External representation focuses on the representation of the organization to external stakeholders and aims to strengthen the image of the firm (Bettencourt and Brown 2003; Bowen and Schneider 1985). The internal influence concentrates on the identification of customer needs and possible improvements in service delivery through the service employee (Bettencourt and Brown 2003; Zeithaml et al. 1988). Service delivery includes the fulfillment of quality standards in customer interaction to satisfy the customer and provide a high quality service (Bettencourt and Brown 2003). However, Bettencourt et al. (2005) describe extra-role behaviors as actions that “include employees taking individual initiative in communications with the firm and the co-workers to improve the service delivery and employees being vocal advocates to outsiders of the organization’s image, goods and services” (p.155). Regarding the previous described dimensions of COBSBs, that some behaviors tend to be more role prescribed and others tend more to be extra-role, can be mentioned. In accordance to Bettencourt and Brown (2003), behaviors, which are related to the delivery of a service “are likely to be relatively more role prescribed due to their frequent specification in job description, training materials and performance evaluation forms” (p. 395). Hence, they are usually described as in-role behaviors in the theoretical literature.

The last conceptualization, which is described in this master’s thesis, is employee behavior typology according to Podsakoff and MacKenzie (1997), as illustrated in Figure 5.

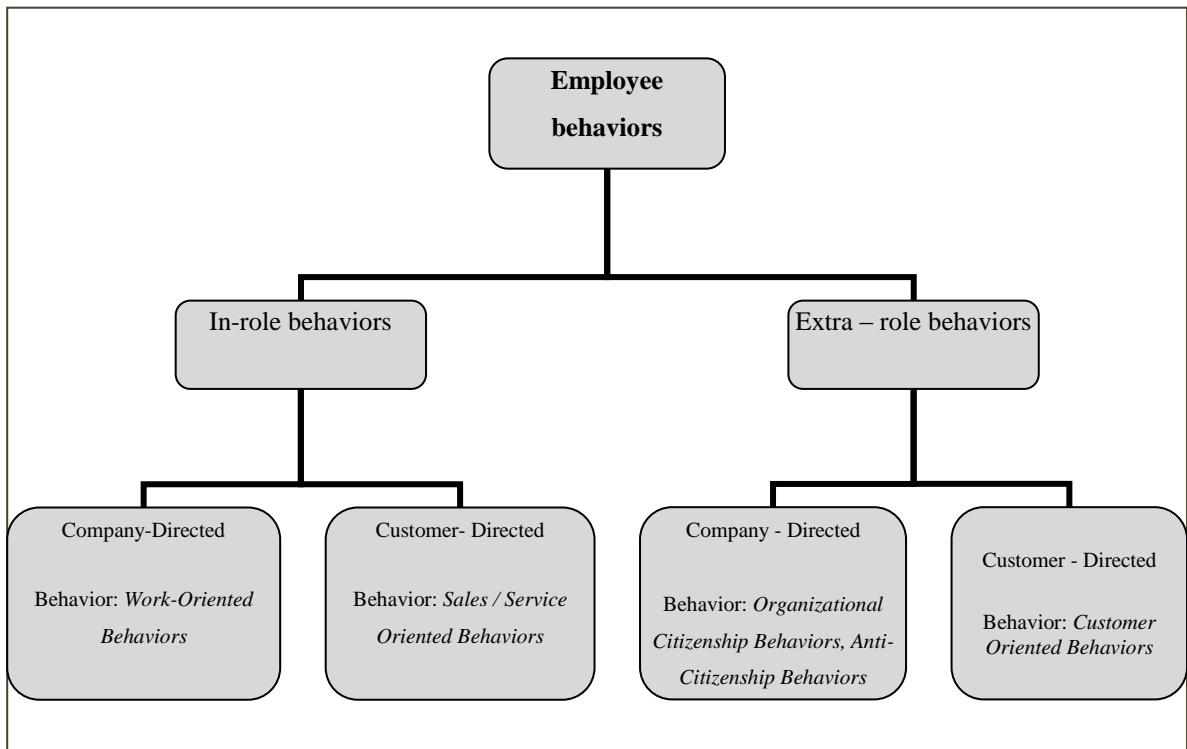


Figure 5: Conceptualization of employee behavior according to Podsakoff and MacKenzie (1997) (own design)

Here the researchers distinguish between in-role and extra-role behaviors as well as whether the activity primarily addresses the organization (or people within the organization) or the customers of an organization. According to Podsakoff and MacKenzie (1997), “work-oriented behaviors” and “sales / service oriented behaviors” (p.147) are described as in-role behaviors. “Work oriented behaviors” are directed more in the direction of the company; meanwhile “sales / service oriented behaviors” address more the customers of an organization. These in-role behaviors can positively influence the effectiveness of the organization due to their relation to the job performance. Moreover, “organizational citizenship behaviors”, “anti-citizenship behaviors” and “customer oriented behavior” (p.147) are seen as extra-role behaviors, which are not focusing on the organizational performance primarily. Here all mentioned behaviors have been described in the previous subchapters thoroughly. “Organizational citizenship behaviors” and “anti-citizenship behaviors” are labeled as directed to the company; in the interim, “customer oriented behaviors” are more focused on the customer.

Finally, after a broad literature review, it is to proclaim that there are several useful first attempts to conceptualize employee brand building behaviors, but a holistic and comprehensive conceptualization of EBBBs has not yet been presented. The

conceptualization approaches of EBBBs according to Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos (2012) as well as Morhart et al. (2009) provide a useful basis for subsequent qualitative and quantitative analysis to answer the defined research questions of this master's thesis.

2.4.3 Adopted concepts from the literature for subsequent analysis

In the previous subchapters, an enumeration of existing employee brand building behaviors embedded in a pre-categorization based on a literature review as well as a theoretical overview of the existing classification approaches in the scientific literature has been provided. Additionally, also an outline of the thesis' most relevant existing conceptualization approaches of EBBBs has been constituted. This knowledge is important for the subsequent qualitative as well as quantitative analysis.

For the enumeration and categorization of existing employee brand building behaviors, which covers the research question (RQ) 1a, five of the identified pre-categories based on the internal branding literature are taken. These five pre-categories form the basis for a categorization and in succession enable a correct assignment in the qualitative analysis of the individual EBBBs to the different categories. The following five pre-categories, which have been derived from the existing internal branding literature and will be used in subsequent analysis, are shown in Table 2:

Pre – category based on literature review	Designation in subsequent analysis	Research studies
EBBBs related to the customer	Customer orientation	(e.g. Hartline et al. 2000; Narver and Slater 1990; Saxe and Weitz 1982; Soutar and Ryan 2001)
EBBBs related to the brand	Brand representation	(e.g. Berry 2000; Hughes and Ahearne 2010; Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Miles and Mangold 2004; Morhart et al. 2009; Punjaisri and Wilson 2007)

EBBBs related to service	Service orientation	(e.g. Berry 2000, Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012, Oliveira and Roth 2012; Berry et al. 1994; Heskett et al. 1997 and Lytle and Timmerman 2006)
EBBBs related to a brand consistent behavior	Brand congruent behavior	(e.g. Baumgarth and Schmidt 2010, Henkel et al. 2007 and Morhart et al. 2010)
EBBBs related to brand development	Brand support and development behaviors	(e.g. Morhart et al. 2009, Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012, Baumgarth and Schmidt 2010)

Table 2: Categories for subsequent analysis based on the literature review

In Table 2, not all categories, which are finally used in the subsequent analysis, are contained. These categories form a starting point for a category scheme and can be further adapted. Through an iterative process, new categories can be added and other categories can be omitted.

For additional classification and conceptualization of the relevant employee brand building behaviors, the existing conceptual approaches of Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos (2012) as well as Morhart et al. (2009) are taken as a starting point for subsequent analysis. Here the classification scheme of whether an EBBB is performed on the job or off the job and the distinction between in-role and extra-role behaviors seems to be most appropriate for the purpose of this master's thesis. However, to answer RQ 1b and RQ 1c, a holistic conceptualization of all relevant employee brand building behaviors should be provided. Regarding a ranking concerning the importance of individual EBBBs, for answering RQ 2a and RQ 2b, not enough useful information, which can be integrated in subsequent analysis to provide useful insights, has been identified based on a literature review.

3 Empirical study

In this chapter, the empirical study is described in detail. First, the chapter starts with an overview of the methodology and the research objectives of this scientific work. Later, the five research questions of this thesis are described. The next part of the empirical study is a full description of the two-study research design, which starts with an

explanation of the qualitative analysis process. Afterwards, the research design of the quantitative analysis is described. The last part of this chapter consists of the findings. In the first instance, all relevant employee brand building behaviors (EBBBs), which have been identified in the qualitative study, are described in detail. Also, a categorization scheme is provided as to how these EBBBs can be categorized in a useful manner. Additionally, a holistic conceptualization of all relevant EBBBs can be exposed in this chapter. In the last part of this chapter, the main differences in the conceptualization of EBBBs between employees, executive members and customers, are highlighted. Afterwards, a complete ranking concerning the importance of the individual employee brand building behaviors will be delivered.

3.1 Methodology and research objectives

This master's thesis is trying to close the research gap mentioned in chapter 1 by pointing out a complete list of employee brand building behaviors and developing a holistic conceptualization of these EBBBs. First, a qualitative research study is conducted to identify all relevant opportunities as to how an employee can support the brand building process. In order to be able to make a substantial contribution concerning a classification and a holistic conceptualization of brand building behaviors, 27 in-depth interviews with employees, manager and customers of a well-known Austrian bank have been conducted. In a second research step, the outcomes of the conducted interviews are substantiated through a follow-up online survey. Here the same group of respondents filled in an online questionnaire, which is described in detail in the Appendixes, in an attempt to provide a complete conceptualization of EBBBs. Further, the research work should also throw light on differences in the conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors between executive members, customers and employees. Moreover, an evaluation as to whether EBBBs in general are important for a company as well as a complete ranking of all relevant EBBBs regarding the importance of the behaviors to enhance the brand building process, is provided in this chapter. Based on gained outcomes, this master's thesis should provide exploratory insights into a topic, which has so far been only minimally debated in the existing literature. In regard to the outcomes, eventually a basis for prospective research can be created and research propositions can be derived.

3.2 Research questions

The aim of the current thesis is to answer five research questions. The first block of research questions concentrates on the enumeration of all relevant behaviors to strengthen the brand as well as the conceptualization of these employee brand building behaviors. A second block of research questions is focusing on the importance of employee brand building behaviors.

Conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors:

RQ 1a: What are relevant employee brand building behaviors for strengthening a brand?

RQ 1b: Can a holistic conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors be found?

RQ 1c: What are the main different points of view regarding the conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors between managers, employees and customers?

Importance of employee brand building behaviors:

RQ 2a: Is it important for companies to have employees who support the brand building process?

RQ 2b: Can the behaviors be arranged according to the importance of the individual employee brand building behaviors?

3.3 Research design

In order to close the existing research gap in the present literature, a two-study research design (qualitative – quantitative research) according to Srnka and Koeszegi (2007) has been conducted. This research design has been chosen to dispel the lack of knowledge in present academic research and to provide an overall concept of existing employee brand building behaviors. To gain fundamental insights into this academic research field as well as to answer the previous defined research questions, qualitative research as a first step seems to be the most appropriate possibility. Many examples can be pointed out where a combination of quantitative and qualitative research illustrates complementary benefits (Srnka and Koeszegi 2007). According to Jarratt (1996), “a

combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches will therefore combine discovery and verification, understanding and prediction, validity and reliability within the research design” (p.7). Qualitative research methods appear more intrusive and are more unstructured than a quantitative research approach. They will mainly find their dedication in situations when research is exploratory in nature and the research field is not well known by the researcher (Jarratt 1996).

The first step of the two-study research design is qualitative analysis - which forms the basis for subsequent analysis procedures - to provide a complete list of all relevant EBBBs (RQ 1a). The qualitative analysis also helps to provide information regarding the different points of view of employees, customers and managers in relation to the conceptualization of EBBBs (RQ 1c). As well, the qualitative analysis also provides outcomes, which are necessary to answer the research question regarding the importance of having employees who engage in the brand building process (RQ 2a). Beyond, the analysis also creates the basis for the ranking of the EBBBs in order of which behavior is the most important opportunity for enhancing the brand building process (RQ 2b).

Later, in a second research step, a quantitative follow-up online questionnaire via Unipark.de has been conducted to provide a valid and holistic conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors (RQ 1b). Moreover, the quantitative analysis provides extra information regarding the different points of view of employees, clients and managers regarding the conceptualization of EBBBs (RQ 1c). Gaining additional information regarding the importance of EBBBs so as to provide a ranking of which behaviors are most important to support the brand building process, is also an objective of the quantitative analysis (RQ 2b).

The whole qualitative analysis of the current thesis, which is divided into seven sub-processes, follows the general proposed guidelines of a qualitative survey according to Bortz and Döring (2006). The first sub-process is the preparation of the content, where the survey topic is defined, theoretical considerations are made, respondents and the right survey techniques are selected and interview questions are phrased as well as arranged in the form of a discussion guide. The second sub-process includes the assembly of the interview material (voice recorder, etc.) and the arrangement of several appointments with the respondents. The next step is the beginning of the interviews,

where first a pleasant and stimulating research environment is offered to the respondents before the interview starts. Furthermore, a reduction of psychological barriers of talking in front of a voice recorder is very helpful. Also the technical equipment should be checked before the interview is started. In the step of implementing and recording the interview, the main task of the interviewer is the control and supervising process of the in-depth interview procedure. The interviewer has to have the ability to find pursuing questions, which lead the interviewee to the topic of interest at any time to maximize the relevant output of the respondent. The next sub-process according to Bortz and Döring (2006) is how to say good-bye. Here the interviewer should provide a business card, information material about the research project and access to relevant outcomes of the study.

The analysis process is related to Srnka and Koeszegi (2007) and Mayring (2008). Srnka and Koeszegi (2007) suggest a five-stage analysis process to answer the previous defined research questions. The first stage represents material sourcing, including the process of collecting material, followed by stage two, the transcription of the interviews to bring verbal data into a written form. The third stage is the unitization, which means the separation of the material into units of coding to form a solid base for subsequent analysis. The next step, described by the authors, is categorization by developing a category scheme, which finally leads to stage five. This stage will provide in an ideal manner a “systematic assignment of codes (numbers) to units based on the category scheme” (Srnka and Koeszegi 2007, p.37).

3.3.1 Qualitative analysis process⁴

In this part of the empirical study, the qualitative analysis process, which is applied in the current scientific work, is described in detail. To create a solid basis for subsequent analysis, 27 semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted. The interviewer had the possibility to tailor the interview situation individually to every respondent in order to generate relevant output for the analysis. The aspect to provide answers to all research questions of the master’s thesis so as to generate a valid and reliable data set is very important. To guarantee an objective qualitative analysis process in order to get objective results regarding a holistic conceptualization of all relevant EBBBs, the

⁴ Stages of the qualitative analysis process according to Srnka and Koeszegi (2007, p. 35).

present thesis strictly follows the blueprint of Srnka and Koeszegi (2007) for systematically analyzing qualitative material and also the rigorous guidelines of the qualitative content analysis of Mayring (2008).

3.3.1.1 Sample description

In total, 27 respondents participated within the qualitative analysis. The criteria involved in selecting the participants for this qualitative study were a convenient sample. Fifteen employees and five executives of a well-known Austrian banking institute as well as seven customers of any Austrian bank were asked. To obtain valid data, seven of the 15 employees chosen were currently active banking advisors and were directly in contact with customers on a daily basis. The remaining eight employees are working in various central departments (marketing department, branch marketing department, advertising department, IT project management, channel development, new business marketing, target group marketing commerce, sponsoring, etc.) throughout the well-known Austrian bank. Each of them was a back-office expert, who frequently interacted with external partners and also had contact to customers. Further, two of the eight back-office experts were customer advisors in recent years, so they were also used to customer interaction. The seven customers were all clients of a major Austrian bank capable of remembering or imagining typical banking advice and were able to provide helpful answers to the defined interview questions. To minimize the bias of a certain branch management or branch specific brand building behaviors, the respondents were all from different branches all over Vienna and lower Austria.

The average duration of the in-depth interviews is 29.55 minutes.⁵ For the interview settings, often the branch directly or the respective department was chosen as the location to conduct the interviews. In accordance with Bortz and Döring (2006), possible interference factors can be minimized because of the familiar surroundings. The customers were interviewed at their home or in an adequate cafeteria.

3.3.1.2 Interview / discussion guide (stage 1)

A typical qualitative in-depth interview consists of open questions, which provide the respondent with the liberty to answer the question in an acceptable manner. The challenge for the interviewer is to get as much information out of the conversation as

⁵ corresponding to 29 minutes and 32 seconds

possible so as to answer all the proposed research questions. In a one-on-one interview, the interviewer has prepared a set of well-selected questions based on an extensive literature review. Therefore, the interview guidelines will support the interviewer to proceed through all questions and to give the interview structure. The interview language is German because it is the mother tongue of all respondents. The used interview guidelines are provided in the Appendixes of this master's thesis. Specially adapted interview guidelines were used for employees, executive members and also customers. This would be necessary to answer the research questions in an objective as well as valid way to maximize the output of the in-depth interviews.

3.3.1.3 Transcription of the data (stage 2)

In this step of the qualitative analysis process, according to Srnka and Koeszegi (2007), the verbal statements of the respondents are converted into a written form for supplementary analysis (Srnka and Koeszegi 2007). In this thesis the transcription was conducted in German to avoid misinterpretations based on language translation.

3.3.1.4 Unitization (stage 3)

According to Srnka and Koeszegi (2007), the third stage of the qualitative analysis process is unitization, where units of analysis are defined and the collected material from all interviews is split up into coding units. Srnka and Koeszegi (2007) state that many scientists prefer a separation of the transcript into text chunks to start their analysis; others work with smaller units, such as thought units, as a foundation for further analysis. "If data are available in the form of word associations or short statements, they usually can directly be used as units of analysis, provided that these units are useful for the purposes of the research project" (Srnka and Koeszegi 2007, p.36). In accordance to the latter statement, in this thesis such units of analysis will be used to develop a categorization of EBBBs. Through asking precise questions (as can be seen in the provided interview guidelines in the Appendixes) concerning the individual types of employee brand building behaviors, the respondents have been able to answer in adequately small statements, which clearly and unambiguously are identified as individual employee brand building behaviors. For the purpose of answering the research questions and providing deeper insight regarding the different points of view of employees, executive members and customers as well as due to the unstructured and

multifaceted results gained from qualitative research, a systematic analysis process is more than necessary (Mayring 2008).

3.3.1.5 Categorization and developing a category scheme – preliminary coding (stage 4)

The fourth step in the qualitative analysis process includes the categorization of individual employee brand building behaviors and the development of a category scheme. The development of a category scheme is a central task in the process of qualitative analysis. At first, categories have been defined on the basis of extensive literature research and have further been developed by the collected interview material. This process passes through the same stages several times in the form of a reiterative process and also includes a steady recheck of the defined categories to provide a valid categorization scheme (Mayring 2008). Srnka and Koeszegi (2007) suggest “a deductive-inductive procedure” because it combines the advantages of both approaches. Starting with the categories identified in the literature, the category scheme “can be adapted in reiterative steps to the specific research problem or content of data” (p. 37). The current master’s thesis is following this suggestion in detail to provide a precise category scheme and to enhance the validity of the gathered results.

The following categories, as outlined in Table 3, are derived from the present scientific research and provide a solid starting point for subsequent assignment of the units of analysis to individual categories as well as the adaptation or extension of provided categories. Detailed information regarding individual categories is provided in chapter 2. The category of employee support behaviors has been derived from the analysis of the conducted in-depth interviews.

Pre – category based on literature review	Designation in subsequent analysis	
EBBs related to the customer	Customer orientation	e.g. Hartline et al. 2000; Narver and Slater 1990; Saxe and Weitz 1982; Soutar and Ryan 2001)

EBBBs related to the brand	Brand representation	e.g. Berry 2000; Hughes and Ahearne 2010; Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Miles and Mangold 2004; Morhart et al. 2009; Punjaisri and Wilson 2007
EBBBs related to service	Service orientation	(e.g. Berry 2000, Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012, Oliveira and Roth 2012; Berry et al. 1994; Heskett et al. 1997 and Lytle and Timmerman 2006)
EBBBs related to brand consistent behavior	Brand congruent behaviors	(e.g. Baumgarth and Schmidt 2010, Henkel et al. 2007 and Morhart et al. 2010)
EBBBs related to brand development	Brand support and development behaviors	(e.g. Morhart et al. 2009, Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012, Baumgarth and Schmidt 2010)
/	Employee support behaviors	Derived from the analysis of the conducted in depth interviews

Table 3: Pre-categories based on the scientific research + derived category from the qualitative analysis

3.3.1.6 Coding – Assigning category codes to text units (stage 5)

The fifth stage of the qualitative analysis process is the assignment of category codes to text units, which is called coding in scientific research work. The present master's thesis follows the principle that "coding means the systematic assignment of codes (numbers) to units based on the category scheme. According to Srnka and Koeszegi (2007), "category definitions and key anchors serve rules that can ensure consistent coding" (p.37). The current thesis follows this recommendation and provides clear definitions for every individual category.

In a first step of analysis, a list of all relevant mentioned employee brand building behaviors has been created. Based on this complete list of EBBBs, an assignment of the individual behaviors to the categories based on the existing suggestions in the scientific literature and also based on apparent similarities of behaviors was elaborated. In the following categories, also unaided and aided EBBBs are enclosed. Mostly unaided mentions are contained. When concrete examples and situations concerning the named EBBB have been remembered, also aided mentions are included in the defined categories. This procedure was decided during the interview phase based on the fact that

when a back-office expert of the marketing department (comment of the author: this was the interviewer in that case) is asking a banking advisor if a certain behavior is important to support the brand building process and also if this behavior is practiced by the employee – the answer would always be yes. So this would bring no added value for gaining objective insights into how to enhance the employee brand building process. Thus the interviews mainly focused on unaided mentions of brand building behaviors.

3.3.2 Quantitative analysis process

In this part of the empirical study, the quantitative analysis process is described in detail. This research step consists of a follow-up online questionnaire conducted with the same sample of the qualitative study. A clear description of how the online questionnaire was built up and an overview of which questions are embedded in the survey can be found in the Appendixes. Not all of 27 respondents participated in the quantitative online survey. One completely filled in questionnaire had to be removed because throughout the whole questionnaire, the same answering possibilities were chosen. One respondent did not return the questionnaire at all.

Figures 6, 7 and 8 show various important descriptive statistics about the respondent category, the age of the interviewee and the gender of the respondents to get a better overview of how the sample of the quantitative study is composed:⁶

⁶ The sample of the qualitative analysis is the same, here only 2 respondents more have participated in the qualitative study

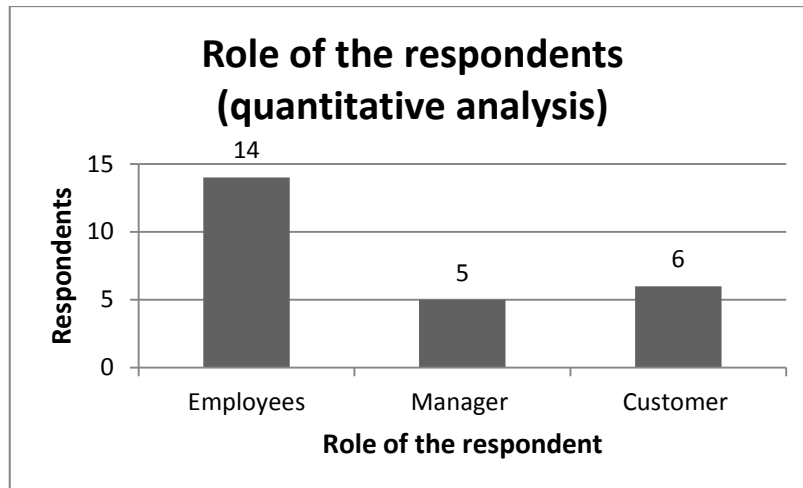


Figure 6: Question if the respondent is an employee, executive member or customer

Figure 6 shows the distribution of the respondents, whether they are an employee, an executive member or a customer. The sample consists of 14 employees, five executive members and six customers, who have participated in the follow-up online survey.

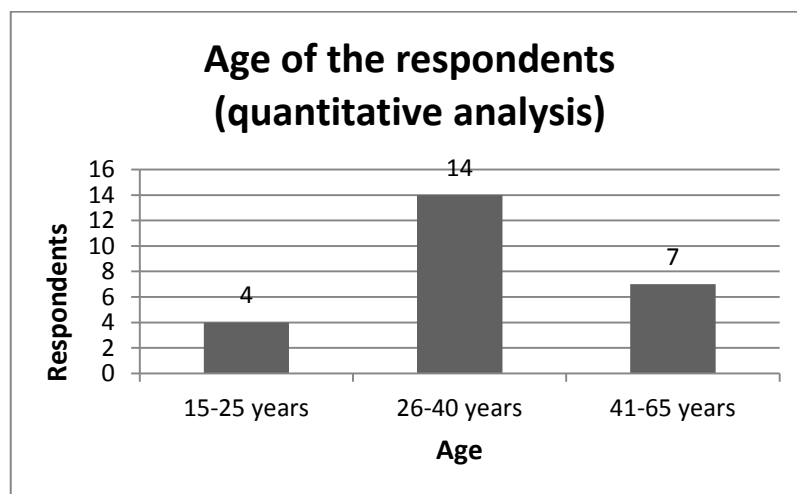


Figure 7: Age of the respondents (quantitative analysis)

Figure 7 illustrates the predominant age structure in the sample of the quantitative study. Here four respondents are between 15 – 25 years old, 14 respondents are between 26 – 40 years old and seven respondents are between 41 – 65 years old. Due to the fact that mostly employees and executives of the well-known Austrian banking institute were asked, a clear peak in the middle age category (26 – 40 years old), which represents the most typical working age, can be recognized.

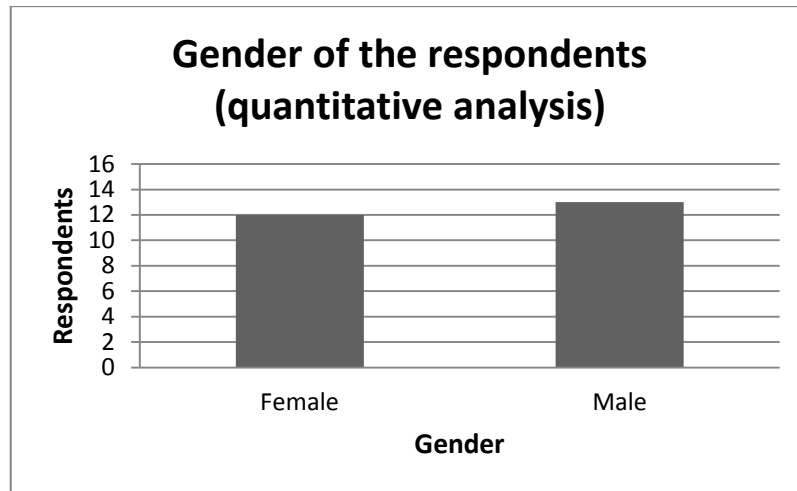


Figure 8: Gender of the respondents (quantitative analysis)

Figure 8 shows the gender of the respondents as the last descriptive key figure in this part of the chapter. Here 12 women and 13 men participated in the online survey.

Summarized, the descriptive statistics illustrate the composition of the sample in a compact version. The questionnaire addresses employees as well as executive members and customers of a well-known Austrian bank. The sample size of the follow-up questionnaire is pretty small, with 25 respondents, and therefore the quantitative study does not provide general valid results, but rather expert insights. One improvement, which should be mentioned here for prospective research, is to increase the sample size to generate universal results. Here various future research studies are necessary.

3.4 Findings

In this subchapter, the main outcomes of the qualitative and quantitative analysis are presented. Firstly, the thesis will provide some insight into how the individual groups of respondents would define employee brand building behaviors. Later, an enumeration of all relevant EBBBs is made available to see how many different employee brand building behaviors have been mentioned by the respondents based on the in depth interviews. In a next step, a conceptualization of the individual employee brand building behaviors is provided. In the last part of this subchapter, the main differences in the conceptualization of the EBBBs between employees, executive members as well as customers are highlighted. Furthermore, a complete ranking regarding the importance of individual behaviors is outlined.

3.4.1 Definition of employee brand building behaviors

Here in the Tables 4, 5 and 6, a brief overview of how employees, executive members and customers define employee brand building behaviors, is provided. Different approaches and how this term is defined and interpreted among the respondents, clarifies how this term is seen in general. ⁷

Employees		
Respondent	Original illustration converted into English	Original illustration (German)
E1	...namely how the brand is communicated to the public to create a consistent picture in the heads of the customers to recognize the brand as a brand to increase the recognition value.	...nämlich die Art und Weise, wie die Marke nach außen hin getragen wird, damit alles ein konsistentes Bild abgibt und damit die Marke auch als Marke erkannt werden kann...
E6	Treat customers in the same way you would like to be treated, including simple things, like friendliness, being accommodating, competency, customer-friendly processes.	...wie würde ich es gerne haben in einer Bank behandelt zu werden und das sind die einfachen Dinge...das ist Freundlichkeit, das ist Entgegenkommen, das ist Wertschätzung, das ist Kompetenz und das ist rasche Abwicklung...
E7	Values of the company conveyed in a form of the brand should be represented by the employee in the personal environment.	..., dass ich Werte, die mir das Unternehmen vermittelt nach außen trage in meinen Freundes- und Bekanntenkreis...
E8	Represent the brand to the outside world, not only during appointments in the working context, but also in the private environment.	Das nach außen Tragen der Marke von Mitarbeitern...nicht nur bei Terminen...sondern auch im Freundeskreis...
E10	The employee is the bank and represents it ...live the brand.	Dass ich die Bank bin ... und dann glaube ich, dass das fast logisch ist, dass der sagt, er ist von der XXX Bank
E4	There is a difference between sales and operation (sales more represent the brand to the outside during customer interaction and in the operation it is a little bit different because of the lack of customer interaction).	...da gibt es einen Unterschied zwischen dem Vertrieb und dem Betrieb. Vertrieb ist für mich, dass ich die Marke nach außen hin sehr stark repräsentiere und damit auch ein Aushängeschild bin für die Marke. ...im Betrieb ist es sicher ein bisschen etwas anderes, wenn man nicht direkt mit dem Kunden zu tun hat.
E2	Live standards of quality (predefined of the company) ...offer the best service, represent the company in a positive way, do personal advertising...“see further than the end of	...unsere Qualitätsstandards zu leben...um den Kunden das beste Service zu bieten...das Unternehmen im besten Licht repräsentieren, Werbung mache und freiwillig mehr tun...über

⁷ The most relevant statements to answer the scientific questions have been listed in this master's thesis. Not relevant remarks have been left out.

	their nose”.	den Tellerrand hinausblicken.
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Table 4: Definition EBBBs (Employees)

Managers		
Respondent	Original illustration converted into English	Original illustration
M1	Live the brand ... and represent the brand in the private environment.	„...dass jeder das Leben sollte, dass jeder auch privat die Marke unterstützen, repräsentieren sollte.“
M3	Acting for the purpose of brand values and the company, set a good example to the outside in line with brand values – like competent appearance, reliability, build a foundation of trust, behaviors that pay in the brand.	„...ich würde mir darunter vorstellen ein Handeln im Sinne der Werte im Sinne des Unternehmens und positive Beispielgebung nach außen hin im Sinne der Markenprägungen...“
M2	A brand exudes values, which allow the customer to feel the brand...the values or the brand promises have to be internalized, lived and owned by the employees.	„Eine Marke versprüht eine gewisse Werthaltung und über diese...fühlt man nun die Marke. Und die Mitarbeiter müssen nun entweder diese Werthaltungen verinnerlichen und leben, oder sie müssen diese Werthaltungen besitzen.“
M4	From my point of view, that means, when the brand stands for humanly competent, we have to think about how we can manage that employees also act humanly and appear competent.	„...also aus meiner Sicht ist es halt so, wenn es heißt menschlich kompetent, dann müssen wir uns überlegen, wie wir es schaffen dass Mitarbeiter besonders menschlich auftreten und besonders kompetent auftreten.“
M5	From my point of view, here all possibilities are included... an employee has to transport the brand values, to live them and so strengthen the brand. In very simple terms, to do everything to strengthen the brand.	...da würde für mich hineinzählen, was ein Mitarbeiter für Möglichkeiten hat, um die Markenwerte zu vermitteln, zu leben und dadurch...die Marke gestärkt werden kann. Einfach gesagt alles zu machen, was die Marke im Endeffekt stärken kann.

Table 5: Definition EBBBs (Managers)

Customers		
Respondent	Original illustration converted into English	Original illustration
C3	The employee should transport the brand well to the outside ...present the brand in a favorable way through providing a high quality service and a positive brand	... der Mitarbeiter soll die Marke gut nach außen transportieren, dass die Marke gut überkommt...durch hohe Serviceleistung, durch gutes Auftreten und durch das

	representation, etc.	Erscheinungsbild...
C1	How they transport the brand of the bank... how they present/ behave to outsiders...the degree of integration of brand presentation in customer interaction and how they engage and identify with the brand.	...wie sich die Mitarbeiter nach außen hin verhalten...wie die Mitarbeiter die Marke transportieren...und sie auch in die Kundengespräche integrieren...und wie weit sie sich halt auch in die Marke einbringen oder identifizieren...
C2	Strengthen the brand in the mind of the customer ... creating sympathy by providing hints about product innovations and advantages of bank products.	...beim persönlichen Gespräch mit meinem Bankberater, dass ich von ihm regelmäßig Tipps über Produktinnovationen und Vorteile ...bekomme und der somit probiert die Marke bei mir im Gedächtnis zu stärken...

Table 6: Definition EBBBs (Customers)

As a conclusion of this survey, it can be stated that the individual respondents have various opinions on how the term *employee brand building behaviors* should be defined. A central point for several respondents is the embodiment of the core brand values (E7, E8, M3, M2, M4, M5, C1). Another important element of the provided definitions is the representation of the brand itself; that the brand is represented in a positive way in the professional context as well as in the private context. Here it is important for the interviewees that a consistent picture of the brand is transported and so the brand building process can be enhanced (E1, E7, E8, E2, M1, C3, C1). Another central element is that the term employee brand building behaviors is seen as an umbrella term for all possibilities and opportunities an employee can apply to build up and strengthen the brand (C1, M5, M3).

3.4.2 Enumeration of relevant employee brand building behaviors and categorization

In this subchapter, an enumeration of all relevant EBBBs is provided. The identified employee brand building behaviors are assigned to the respective categories. In total, based on the qualitative analysis, 38 relevant opportunities to enhance the brand building process can be identified. In a first enumeration, 48 EBBBs have been mentioned in Tables 8 to 13. When a certain behavior was mentioned less than three times in the conducted interviews, the EBBB has been removed from the list due to a lack of relevance. The final enumeration of relevant EBBBs consists of 38 behaviors, which are assigned to six different categories presented in the following table:

Number	Category	Definition
1	Customer orientation	This category focuses on the satisfaction of customer needs, honest interaction with the clients and contains behaviors, which maintain a long-term customer relationship.
2	Brand representation	This category includes all efforts and forms of positive verbal brand recommendation and representation of the brand intended to strengthen the brand and present the brand in a favorable light.
3	Service orientation	The main focus of this category is to create customer value (e.g. service quality) through guaranteeing perfect service delivery by the employees and making a differentiation from competitors possible.
4	Brand congruent behavior	This category includes several opportunities for how employees can act in line with the brand and embody central brand values.
5	Brand support and development behaviors	The behaviors within this category represent the opportunities of how an employee can participate in the brand development process to provide helpful information to the company to increase future brand performance and enhance the brand building process.
6	Employee support behaviors	This category includes all demeanors of how employees can support their colleagues in building up the brand and facilitate to contributing to the brand building process.

Table 7: Overview EBBBs categories

3.4.2.1 Category 1 – Customer orientation

The first category *customer orientation* has been primarily derived from the scientific literature. As discussed in a previous subchapter, a deductive-inductive approach is pursued within this thesis. This category is a well-discussed topic in the present scientific literature (e.g. Hartline et al. 2000; Narver and Slater 1990; Saxe and Weitz 1982; Soutar and Ryan 2001). The theoretical background is provided in detail in the literature review (chapter 2) and also in Table 2.

After an extended analysis of the interviews and assignment of particular EBBBs to categories, it can be stated that a strict separation between the categories of *customer*

orientation and *service orientation* (is mentioned later on as category 3) is very difficult. There are several overlaps in the theory as well as a certain degree of fuzziness in the provided definitions found in the literature. The present research provides an unclear and vague point of view regarding differentiation between both categories (Kurtz et al. 1976; Parasuraman et al. 1985; Saxe and Weitz 1982; Soutar and Ryan 2001). According to Parasuraman et al. (1985), for example, behaviors like providing extended access to banking services as well as showing credibility in customer interaction can be assigned to service quality. Contrary to the latter point of view, extended service hours as well as honest and credible communication within customer interaction can otherwise be categorized as *customer orientation* because the latter described employee behaviors meet the needs of the marketplace and also satisfy customers' needs (Kurtz et al. 1976; Saxe and Weitz 1982; Soutar and Ryan 2001).

In the current thesis, behaviors, which are directly connected to the customer and do not mandatorily influence service quality (e.g. flexibility in customer appointments or honesty and trustworthiness in customer interaction, etc.), are assigned to the category *customer orientation*. Here it might be argued that, e.g. employees offer extended service hours because the customer need is identified and the customer nowadays expects flexible customer advice. When despite everything, customer advice during extended service hours is not competent and does not follow several quality standards, this incident can nevertheless be harmful to service quality. Based on the latter realizations, the previously mentioned behaviors have a stronger tendency to influence the satisfaction of customer needs than service quality. Also, the insight gained from the conducted interviews with employees, supports the latter described assignment procedure of EBBBs. It can be argued that in the well-known Austrian bank, where the study was conducted, the extended service hours as well as honesty and trustworthiness in customer interaction are central parts of the brand promise "In jeder Beziehung zählen die Menschen" and are therefore directly linked to the issue of satisfying customer needs.

Category 1⁸ : Customer orientation

These EBBBs include a “sufficient understanding of one’s target buyers to be able to create superior value” (Narver and Slater 1990, p. 21) and the effort of “trying to help their customers make purchase decisions, that will satisfy customer needs [...] aimed at increasing long-term customer satisfaction.” (Saxe and Weitz 1982, p. 344). Here the focus is on satisfying customer needs as well as orientation on changing customer needs and attempts to over exceed customers’ expectations (Hartline et al. 2000; Narver and Slater 1990; Saxe and Weitz 1982).

Employee brand building behaviors (characteristics)	Illustrations
Live customer orientation and fulfill customers’ needs (E1, E4, E6, E9, E12, E3; M1, M3, M2, C2, C4, C5, C6, M5, E14, E15, C6)	<p>“Ich denke aus Kundensicht sollte es wichtig sein, dass man seine Wünsche unkompliziert befriedigt findet.”(E1); ...herausfinden, was der Kunde genau möchte... (E4); „...auf den Kunden eingehen und fragen, was seine Bedürfnisse sind...“(E6); „...im Kundenverkehr, im Kundenkontakt, bin ich der Meinung, dass man ganz individuell und flexibel auf die Bedürfnisse der Kunden eingehen muss.“(E9); „...dass der Kunde spürt, die Bank meint es ernst in Richtung Bedürfnisse erfragen und nicht da was zu verkaufen.“ (E12); „Wenn der Mitarbeiter zur Stärkung der Marke beiträgt und ...sagt, ok setzen wir uns zusammen ich nehme mir Zeit für dich, wenn ich vermittele ich bin für dich da, ich setze mich für dich ein.“ (E3); „Ich sage schon, dass man auf die Kundenwünsche eingeht ...“(M1); ...seine Kundenorientierung...“(M3); „...einen Überblick zu haben was jeder Kunde mag und dass er halt mit den Kunden, die zu ihm kommen wollen in die Filiale und mit ihnen persönliche Gespräche führt, dass er ...telefoniert...oder per E-Mail..., dass man trotz dieser vielen Informationstechniken, die da ja dahinter sind...einen Überblick behält über die menschlichen Aspekte und wie der Kunde tickt.“ (M2); „...solange ich zufrieden bin und meine Bedürfnisse gedeckt werden...“(C2); „...und eben ein Gefühl haben den Kunden und anbieten was man braucht...dass man individuell behandelt wird“(C4); „...da ich ja noch studiere hat mein Bankberater versucht auf die speziellen Bedürfnisse als Student einzugehen...“(C5); „Sie wusste, dass ich jetzt zum Studieren anfangen und hat mir ein Studentenkonto angeboten...“(C6); „Also ganz wichtig ist einmal, dass sich der Betreuer auf den Kunden fokussiert und sich nach den Bedürfnissen orientiert...und überhaupt versucht zu definieren und herauszufinden...das ist ein ganz zentraler Punkt.“ (M5); „...dass man auf die Leute eingehen muss...dass die jetzt das Gefühl haben, man ist für einen da...“(E14); „...wie kann ich mich auf die Bedürfnisse der Kunden dabei eingehen...die Fragen die dann vielleicht beim User auftauchen werden beantworten.“ (E15); „...und noch mehr auf die individuellen Bedürfnisse eingehen...dass man das Produkt an ihn so gut wie möglich anpasst“(C6);</p>
Flexibility in customer appointments (E2, E3, E9, E10, M1, M3, C1, C4, C5, C6, M5, C7)	<p>“Wir sind die Erste Bank. Wir sind jederzeit erreichbar, Beratungszeiten von 7-19 Uhr...wir gehen auch direkt zum Kunden“ (E2); „...wenn der Kunde...gerne später kommen möchte, dann ist der Faktor Zeit ganz wichtig, d.h. nehme ich mir hierfür variable Beratungszeiten und ...sprich die Beratungsqualität wird erhöht.“ (E3); „Das kann heißen auch die Beratungszeiten jetzt nicht starr einzuhalten, sondern wenn der Kunde halt nur ...außerhalb der Öffnungszeiten Zeit hat, dann muss man sich genauso treffen können...oder das in anderen Räumlichkeiten zu machen...“(E9); „...dem Kunde...die Möglichkeit zu geben auch außerhalb der altbekannten Beratungszeiten zur Verfügung zu stehen.“ (E10); „...wir bieten auch Beratungszeiten von 7-19 Uhr an, nach telefonischer Vereinbarung...“(M1); „dann die Erreichbarkeit auch außerhalb der Öffnungszeiten erreichbar zu sein...“(M3); „...dass man jederzeit verfügbar ist, also für mich ist ein guter Bankberater einfach da ist wenn man etwas braucht... dass sie den Kunden persönliche Beratungsgespräche zu flexiblen Zeiten anbieten (C1); „Die Kundenberatung, die Erreichbarkeit, dass die Mitarbeiter erreichbar sind. Dass man den</p>

⁸ The respondents, who all have mentioned this behavior, are named in brackets. M = managers, E = employees and C = customers. The figures represent the number of the respondent.

	<p>Kontakt hat...24 Stunden Service praktisch.“ (C4); „...und ja war auch bei der Terminvereinbarung sehr flexibel...(C5); „Also ich habe jetzt noch nicht so oft solche Temingespräche ausgemacht, aber wenn ich mir welche ausmachen würde, würde ich mir das schon wünschen...“ (C6); „Der Betreuer sollte sich auf jeden Fall auch zeitlich nach dem Kunden richten, da...dass hier flexibel Termine vereinbart werden können.“ (M5); „Die Flexibilität in der Terminauswahl ist sicher manchmal ein Problem...da kann man sich schon danach richten...“ (C7);</p>
<p>Flexibility in customer issues (M1, M3, C1, C4, E14, C7)</p>	<p>„...und dass man bei der Sparkasse relativ flexibel ist. Wir helfen wirklich weiter...ich glaube, dass andere Banken viel strenger sind...mit uns kann man reden“ (M1); „Also immer mehr Werte für Kunden generieren, ...im Sinne des Kunden handeln...das Private auch immer wieder mit dem Beruflichen verbinden und umgekehrt“ (M3); „...das man mit den Leuten umgehen kann, dass man sich auf gewisse Situationen einstellen kann und wandelbar ist – also jetzt in Bezug auf den Kunden und das Kundengespräch.“ (C1); „...also so, dass man auf jede Frage reagieren kann...dass es auf jede Frage eine Antwort gibt.“ (C4); „...wo ich finde, dass man halt individuell reagieren muss einfach ja – es gibt Leute ...die freuen sich ...wenn man dann über so familiäre Sachen spricht, andere erwarten sich von einem Bankbetreuer was völlig anderes und will mit dem nur über das Geld reden...“ (E14); „...für Kleinigkeiten gibt es Email und Telefon...“ (C7);</p>
<p>Open, natural, friendly and honest communication in the interaction with customers and extern partners (E2, E4, E6, E11, E12, E13, E9, C4, C5, C1, C2, E14, E15)</p>	<p>„Ich spreche auch konkrete Problemfälle an, ich spreche alles offen an, es hilft nicht etwas kleinzureden und das gefällt den meisten“(E2); „...dass man einen guten Umgangston kennt und weiß wie man mit dem Kunden umgeht.“ (E4); „Ehrlichkeit ist wichtig ... freundlich, kompetent, auf den anderen eingehen“ (E4); „...wenn man überhaupt auf die Frage eingeht, je nach dem was die Kunden wollen...“ (E6); „...es geht darum, wenn ich in der Filiale sitz und er Kunde kommt rein und fragt eine Kleinigkeit, dass ich halt lächle und nicht einfach, was will der von mir, sondern ...versuche einen positiven Eindruck zu machen und die Kunden glücklich zu machen.“ (E11); „...desto ehrlicher ich meine Eigeninteressen kommuniziere, desto besser ist die langfristige Kundenbeziehung (E12); „Naja da würde für mich auch zählen, wie ich generell mit Leuten umgehe...dann ist das ja auch schon eine Verhaltensweise, die der Erste Bank in dem Sinne zugutekommt.“ (E13); „ein inkompetenter Betreuer kann durch sein Verhalten...weil er unhöflich ist, kann er natürlich Kunden ...verärgern und das färbt natürlich auf das Unternehmen ab.“ (E9); „...das Wichtigste ist in dem Fall...wie mit dem Kunden umgegangen wird.“ (C4); „...dass auch vom Mitarbeiter, ich sag jetzt sein Auftreten sollte insofern sein, dass er ...konsequent und vertrauenswürdig rüberkommt...“ (C5); „Das ist definitiv freundlicher Umgang mit Kunden...“ (C1); „...da sehe ich schon einen direkten Zusammenhang, weil vor allem der Kundenbetreuer sollte gut mir Leuten umgehen können.“ (C2); „...da geht es um grundlegende Sachen, wie man sich gibt, wie man sich benimmt oder ganz banale Dinge...so klassisch die Umgangsformen.“ (E14); „...das sind eigentlich die Basics die eigentlich jeder Kundenbetreuer machen sollte, das ist respektvoller Umgang mit Kunden...“ (E15)</p>
<p>Exclude the personal mood in customer conversation (E8; E12)</p>	<p>„Für mich ist eigentlich ein guter Berater, der sich nicht verstellt, wenn er wirklich der Mensch ist der er ist.“ (E8); „Und egal wie es mir persönlich geht, dass ich versuche das eben am Kunden auszuschalten...“ (E12);</p>
<p>Building up and maintain customer networks to ensure a close long-lasting customer relationship and live the customer relationship (E3, E4, E5, E7, E9, E10, M1, M3, C2, M5, C7)</p>	<p>„Ich habe zum Beispiel sehr gute Freunde, bei denen war ich Trauzeugen, die sind in einem anderen Sektor Schweizer Franken finanziert...und der hatte die und die Fragen...da haben wir eine Stunde darüber geredet“ (E3); „dieses Menschliche; diese Beziehung irgendwie einfließen zu lassen, dass der jetzt das Gefühl hat da sitzt kein Banker, sondern ein Mensch“ (E4); „...das entwickelt sich...und irgendwann wird ein Abschluss daraus“ (E5); „Dass man Bindung einfach betreibt, denn das ist für den Kunden schon eine wichtige Geschichte!“ (E7); „...den persönlichen Kontakt einfach aufzubauen und zu intensivieren. (E9); das Leben mit dem Kunden, mit der Kundenbeziehung...“ (E10); „Meiner Meinung nach braucht man auch ein sehr gutes Netzwerk, dass man die Vereine und Kunden auch kennt und man dann privat auch Präsenz zeigt.“ (M1); „...Verlässlichkeit...eine Vertrauensbasis schaffen...“ (M3); „...da kommt dann wieder dazu, wenn man die Leute schon kennt und die man irgendwie privat trifft, also quasi die Beziehung zu den Menschen ...“ (C2); „dass hier eine langfristige Bindung zum Kunden aufgebaut werden kann...damit dieser sagt, wow das ist eine Bank die kümmern sich um mich...“ (M5); „...gerade bei einer Bank, die ja auch mitentscheidend ist für Lebensschritte...ist vor allem die persönliche Ansprache ganz wichtig, z.B.: ich kriege seit...ich 10 Jahre bin, jedes Jahr eine Geburtstagskarte von meiner Raiffeisenkassa...und</p>

	das ist etwas was einen persönlich an die Marke auch bindet.“ (C7);
Consciously applied body language (E6)	„...das ist auch ein Kriterium, denn ob ich mit verschränkten Händen dasitze....sind alles Faktoren, die beeinflussen.“ (E6);
Know the customer and become familiar with the customer (E7, E9, E12, M2, M4, C1)	„..., dass man auch einen persönlichen Kontakt zum Betreuer hat. Dass man nicht reinkommt zu einem Termin und dass der vorbeigeht, weil er mich nicht kennt.“(E7); „...wenn ich den gegenüber kenne, kann ich dann ganz anders auf die Bedürfnisse und Wünsche des Gegenüber eingehen.“(E9); „Es ist glaube ich wichtiger, wenn man ernsthaft jemanden beraten will, dass man auch weiß jetzt seine privaten Bedürfnisse, seine privaten Sorgen...“ (E12); „Ich würde sagen der gute Kellner, das ist so das Beispiel. Wenn du reinkommst und der Kellner sagt schon aha Cafe Latte mit Süßstoff? – Ich würde sagen einfach den Kunden kennen, trotz Verkaufsdruck, trotz aller Technologien...“ (M2); „Den Kunden zu kennen, ihm das Gefühl zu geben, man ist nicht eine Nummer, sondern man geht auf die Situation ein.“ (M4); „...ist die Bankbetreuung sehr persönlich, also das gefällt mir halt ganz gut auch zur Stärkung der Marke an sich...“ (C1);
Get to know new people and potential customers (E10)	“...mit sehr vielen Leuten in Kontakt kommen, die ich vorher nicht gekannt habe.” (E10)
Positive basic attitude (E11, E5)	„Also eine positive Einstellung kann ich einmal generell haben...zum Tag, zum Leben, zur Marke, zum Produkt...“ (E11); „Einfach die innere Einstellung, ich kann das Unternehmen nach außen hin nur gut vertreten, wenn ich zu dem Unternehmen stehe.“ (E5);
Help customers in the free time and answering customer enquiries (E13, E3, M3, C1, C4, M5)	“...wenn es dann um Fragestellungen geht, welche Konditionen bieten wir gerade an ...kann ich mich da entweder schlau machen oder einen Berater empfehlen.” (E13); „Es kommt sehr wohl das Gespräch...du bist ja in dem Sektor, wie siehst du das? – dann sage ich, du im Zuge meiner Tätigkeit oder meiner Beratung habe ich dieses Funktionsgebiet, wo ich mich dann auch einlese...(E3); „Also wenn man zur Bank gefragt wird im privaten Umfeld, da genauso zu agieren wie wenn man geschäftlich handeln würde.“ (M3); „...wenn ihn jemand fragen würde in seiner Freizeit, was seine Tätigkeit als Bankberater betrifft, würde er sich dafür sicher auch gern kurz Zeit nehmen...“ (C1); “...es werden keine Angebote gelegt...außer bei Nachfrage natürlich...das ist schon positiv natürlich...” (C4); “...oder er könnte auch Fragen von Bekannten und Freunden bezüglich bankrelevanten Themen oder Produkten beantworten umso auch die Marke stärken zu können...” (M5);

Table 8: Category 1 - Customer orientation

In this subchapter, after the category-specific tables, the individual behaviors of each category are described in detail so as to get a general understanding of what is standing behind the individual behaviors. This would be a prerequisite to understanding the hereinafter-shown categorization of all relevant EBBBs as well as the further provided conceptualization. The abbreviations in the brackets behind the explanation of the individual EBBB represent the respondents that mentioned this point in the in-depth interviews.

The first behavior of *customer orientation and fulfill customer needs* is dealing with the identification (E4, E6, E12, M2, M3, C4, C6, M5) and the fulfillment of customer needs and customer wishes (E1, C2, C5, E15). Here the focus is on grasping an idea of what

the customer really needs, likes and expects in the provision of banking services. In some cases, the approach of advising the customer in a personal conversation with, for example, a banking advisor, or via means of electronic communication, such as email or other channels provided by the banking institute, is most appropriate (M2). An existing product or a particular service performance often does not meet the customer's expectation or cannot fulfill his or her needs, which makes a modification of the existing solutions necessary (C6). Also, the appropriate satisfaction of needs for special target groups or phases of life, e.g. for students, is very important. Additionally, this activity includes an individual and flexible satisfaction of customer needs (E9, C4) and conveys the feeling that employees are there for and care about the customers (E3, E14).

The next behavior of the category of *customer orientation*, which seeks to build up the brand successfully, is the activity of *flexibility in customer appointments*. This especially includes that customer advisors and, as a consequence, the whole bank should be accessible to customers at any time (E2, C1, C7), e.g. for the asked banking institute, this means from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Also, the offer of variable consulting hours surpassing standard opening hours is part of this EBBB to strengthen the brand (E2, E3, E9, E10, M1, M3, C4, C5). Further, this behavior also includes the willingness of the customer advisor to offer flexible arrangements to the customer, e.g. to provide the opportunity to consult the customer at home (E2, E9). Based on this, the consultation hours and the place of consultation should be adapted to customer needs so as, to build up and strengthen the brand (M5).

The third behavior is *flexibility in customer issues*, where the focus is on flexibility regarding client matters (M1), e.g. to try to act in the customer's interest (M3, E14) and adapt to the individual situation or adapt to a change in customer needs as well as to react flexibly to every customer request (C1, C4). Also, the flexibility of the customer advisor plays a crucial role, e.g. when solving a problem on a physical level; however, is not possible that the customer advisor offers the channels of email or telephone to solve the problem of the client or provide a customer with advice (C7).

Open, natural, friendly and honest communication in the interaction with customers and extern partners is the next EBBB for building up the corporate brand. The central issue of this activity is to communicate openly with the customer and external partners about concrete problem situations (E2). Important in this case are good manners and a good

conversational tone in interaction with customers (E4, C4, E14). Beyond, important points are friendliness, respectful treatment and honest communication with the customer (E4, E12, C5, C1, E15), e.g. when the customer is entering the branch, the customer advisor shows a nice smile and also conveys a general positive impression (E11, E9).

Exclude the personal mood in the customer conversation represents the attention of employees to exclude a personal mood in customer interaction, e.g. that a bad personal mood should not be projected on to customers as well as acting professional at all times (E12). One additional important part of this behavior is the “being-totally-himself” of the employee, to represent only real values and not fictitious ones (E8).

The following EBBB of this category is *building up and maintain customer networks, to ensure a close long-lasting customer relationship and live the customer relationship*, which includes keeping human aspects alive in customer interaction so as to build up a strong relationship with the customer (E4, E10, E7). Employees also try within this behavior to enhance the maintenance and intensification of personal contact with clients (E9) in order to build up a confidence level between the customer and the bank through the behavior of the employees (M3, M5). Here personal appreciations play a crucial role in building up the brand because a bank often supports customers over a long period of time during changing life situations. In this case, e.g. congratulations for birthdays can enhance the relationship between the banking institute and the customer (C7). This behavior is also responsible for a strong network consisting of several different interest groups, e.g. to know the important clubs and associations of customers and show presence, also when necessary, during free time (M1, C2).

The next behavior for supporting the brand building process is *consciously applied body language*, where control of the language, which is applied to customers, is crucial, e.g. do not interlock your hands, etc., in customer interaction (E6).

Know the customer and become familiar with the customer is the next important EBBB to support the corporate brand in the category of *customer orientation*. This opportunity to strengthen the brand includes all activities, which help one to get to know a customer as well as possible, e.g. not that a customer enters the branch for a consultation appointment and the customer advisor does not accordingly welcome the customer

because he does not recognize him right away (E7). Within this behavior, a central point is information procurement, e.g. the customer advisor has information on the private cares of the customer or knows in advance how a specific client takes his or her coffee. This kind of customer knowledge forms the base for customer oriented banking advice and a successful brand building process (E12, M2, M4, E9).

A further activity to support the brand building process is *get to know some new people and potential new customers*, where the employee's task is to get in touch with new people and therefore has the opportunity to convince potential new customers of the brand (E10). The next opportunity to enhance brand building is a *positive basic attitude*, where employees show a general positive attitude towards the brand as well as towards their products (E11, E5).

The last EBBB in this category - *help customers in the free time and answering customer enquiries* - is also seen as a very important opportunity to strengthen the brand. Here employees answer questions about the actual offerings or special products during free time (E13, C1, C4). The employees have to act in a professional way and answer such questions so as to build up the brand (M3).

3.4.2.2 Category 2 – Brand representation

The second category *brand representation* has also been primarily derived from the scientific literature. Many research studies focus on this topic in the present scientific literature (e.g. Hartline et al. 2000; Narver and Slater 1990; Saxe and Weitz 1982; Soutar and Ryan 2001). A theoretical background is provided in detail in the literature review (chapter 2) and also in Table 2 of this thesis.

Category 2⁹ : Brand representation

The brand building efforts included in this category seek to strengthen the brand and to present the brand in a favorable light. All possibilities to promote the brand and enhance the advertising presence of the brand are taken into consideration to transport the brand values and build up the brand (e.g. Berry 2000; Hughes and Ahearne 2010; Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Miles and Mangold 2004; Morhart et al. 2009; Punjaisri and Wilson 2007).

Employee brand building behaviors (characteristics)	Illustrations
Positive verbal recommendation and representation of the brand (E1, E3, E4, E5, E8, E6, M3, C3, C6, M5, E15)	<p>„...jedoch hinsichtlich Mundpropaganda ist klar, dass man die Marke als Mitarbeiter nach außen hin auch außerhalb der Arbeitszeit repräsentiert und tragen sollte (E1); „...das Wichtigste zur Stärkung der Unternehmensmarke die Angestellten im Unternehmen sind. Denn wenn die das nicht nach außen vertreten oder die Arbeit positiv nach außen tragen, nach außen hin kommunizieren kann es nicht zu einer Stärkung kommen.“ (E3); „... , dass ich die Marke nach außen hin sehr stark repräsentiere und damit auch ein Aushängeschild bin für die Marke.“ (E4); „Ich habe laufend die Möglichkeit die Marke durch mein Verhalten und tätigem Agieren nach außen hin zu vertreten.“ (E4); „... das ist das Thema, wo man die Marke wirklich stärken kann, dass man eben im privaten Bereich auch über das Bankgeschäft spricht auf persönlicher Ebene“ (E5); „Das nach außen tragen der Marke von Mitarbeitern, quasi nicht nur bei Terminen, den externen Agenturen...sondern auch im Freundeskreis... das Markenbild Erste Bank noch immer in einem positiven Rahmen darstellen zu können“ (E8); „Hier und da schon ..dass ich aus Interessensgründen erwähnt habe wofür unsere Marke steht.“ (E6); „...nicht negativ darüber reden“ (M3); „Naja im Prinzip soll der Mitarbeiter die Marke gut nach außen transportieren, dass die Marke gut rüberkommt.“ (C3); „...ahm oder einfach so im Bekanntenkreis, dass sie hinter der Marke steht und sie vertritt.“ (C6); „also als Führungskraft verkörpert man auf jeden Fall auch in der Freizeit die Marke und repräsentiert somit auch das Unternehmen...man...spricht natürlich über das Unternehmen oder den Beruf. Somit vertritt man auch die Marke.“ (M5); „Naja nachdem ich bei Werbung digital bin, repräsentieren wir bei fast allem was wir tun die Marke, bzw. in allem, das fängt an beim Corporate Design...dass das eben die Werte widerspiegelt.“ (E15);</p>
Positive word of mouth regarding the products, the service and the company (E1, E11, E2, E4, E12, E13, M2, C1, E14, E11, C2, C3, E15)	<p>“...deswegen versuche ich das Unternehmen in ein gutes Licht zu rücken...” (E1); Dass ich einfach mit der Einstellung ins Kundengespräch gehe, dass ich sage, dass was wir anbieten ist eine tolle Sache.” (E11); „...ich arbeite richtlinienkonform und darüber hinaus noch einmal das Unternehmen im besten Licht repräsentiere, Werbung mache, ...“ (E2); „Ansonsten spreche ich in meinem Freundeskreis darüber, dass ich mich sehr wohl fühle und ...somit finde ich als Arbeitgeber die Erste Bank sehr attraktiv.(E4); „...da versuche ich immer hervorzukehren als Retailbank, dass wir die guten sind von den Banken, was da gemeint sind in den Medien.“ (E12); „Für mich sind das alle die ganzen Tätigkeiten, die man halt macht um die Erste Bank in irgendeiner Weise zu bewerben...” (E13) ...wenn man über sein Unternehmen schimpft ...wird das ganz einfach ein negatives Bild verbreiten, wenn du aber versuchst die Markenwerte, die dein Unternehmen hat zu kommunizieren und verständlich zu machen...gerade in unserem Bereich... kann man vielleicht trotzdem die Position des Unternehmens irgendwie darstellen...” (M2); „...sie betonen, dass die Produkte ihrer Bank eben sehr gut sind...vielleicht den Kunden über Neuigkeiten informieren... „...ich bin darüber aufgeklärt worden, welche Vorteile die Bank hat in Bezug auf andere Institute...” (C1);“ (C1); „...mit den externen Partnern, diese Kanäle die man da halt bespielt hat, wo man mit Leuten zu tun hat, dass man ...da bestmöglich die Bank repräsentiert...” (E14); „Die positiven Erlebnisse in der Bank. Wir haben ein gutes Sozialsystem, was uns die Bank alles bietet, ...“ (E11); „...indem er das Level selbst trägt, immer Werbung macht für sein eigenes Unternehmen...” (C2); „...dass</p>

⁹ Respondents, who all mentioned this behavior, are named in brackets. M = managers, E = employees and C = customers. The figures represent the number of the respondent.

	man vielleicht Vorteile herausarbeitet.“ (C3); „...also wenn man jetzt nicht über seinen Arbeitgeber herzieht, sondern auch da immer im Hinterkopf behält, sobald jemand weiß, dass man bei der Erste Bank ist, repräsentiert man automatisch immer, ob man will oder nicht immer das Unternehmen.“ (E15);
Positive word of keyboard (E2, E4, E7, E13, M2, M5)	“...z.B.: Sparefroh auf Reise...Social media Formate nutzen, z.B.: neues Büro posten...das sind andere Wege um die Marke zu stärken.“ (E2); „Ja ich habe bereits letztes einen Facebookeintrag gemacht wo jemand eine negative Erfahrung gemacht hat mit der Bank Austria...und da habe ich gepostet, dass bei der Erste Bank das nicht passiert wäre.“ (E4); „...es gehört dazu, dass man auf Facebook ... die Postings liked, oder dass man die Seite selber liked...“ (E7); „...das wäre zum Beispiel wenn ich auf Facebook irgendetwas poste im Sinne der Erste Bank, das wäre eine Verhaltensweise für mich.“ (E13); „Naja ich glaube, dass man eine gewisse Verantwortung hat. Ja ich meine – sagen wir so, wenn ich einen Freund habe ja auf Facebook...und mit dem Bier trinken gehe, aber auf Facebook rede ich deppert über ihn, dann stimmt da etwas nicht.“ (M2); „...ein wichtiges Thema ist, das Spreaden von Inhalten wie zum Beispiel auf Facebook, dass man hier Inhalte teilt und somit zur Verbindung markenrelevanter Aussagen, die natürlich positiver Natur sein sollten fördert.“ (M5);
Mentioning the brand name (E1, E2, E9, C1, C3, C6)	“Konkret stärkt man die Marke doch mit jedem Telefonat, in dem man die Marke nennt, mit jedem Email, das man schreibt, in dem die Marke platziert ist, mit jeder Aussendung, die man macht wo auch die Marke mitschwimmt.” (E1); „...es sollten vielleicht auch Nichtkunden ein gutes Bild von uns bekommen, z.B.: bei privaten Gesprächen, dass ich die Erste Bank erwähne,...“ (E2); „Naja ganz einfach, dass wenn ich im Gespräch mit Bekannten, Verwandten, Freunden, dass man das Unternehmen überhaupt einmal ins Gespräch bringt...“ (E9); „...sie auch immer wieder den Banknamen erwähnen...“ (C1); „...aber was mir jetzt dazu einfällt, dass der Mitarbeiter die Marke im Gespräch relativ oft erwähnt...“ (C3); „Wenn ich jetzt nur vom Beratungsgespräch wegreflektiere, war da im Einleitungssatz schon einmal drin, wir von Raiffeisen...“ (C6)
Sponsoring of and participation in events and social projects (E1, E7, E13, E3, E5, M1, M3, M2, M4, C1, C2, C3, C4, M5, C7)	“Wichtig ist es einfach, diese Brand Awareness zu haben, in den Köpfen zu bleiben. Genau darunter fällt für mich alles von Sponsoring bis zu öffentlichen Themen die man unterstützt, um in einem guten Licht aufzutreten.“ (E1); „...durch die Sponsoringgeschichten, die ich mache schaue ich natürlich auch bei Veranstaltungen, dass die Marke möglichst gut vertreten ist.“(E7); „...aber auch und jetzt zu meinem konkreten Fall, wenn ich ein Erste Bank Transparent aufhänge bei meiner Laufveranstaltung...(E13); „Teilnehmen an Kundenveranstaltungen etc. ist so dass es bei uns so gehandelt wird, dass immer eine Person von einem gewissen Aufgabenbereich versucht an solchen Kundenveranstaltungen...teilzunehmen.“ (E3); „Die zweite Sparkasse ist etwas, da halte ich sehr viel davon, das ist ein sehr wichtiges Thema und es sind auch einige dieser Leute...haben zurückgefunden und sind wirklich gute Kunden geworden bei der Erste Bank.“ (E5); „...wenn man den Tennisclub sponsert, jeder verbindet dann auch: Ah das ist ja der von der Sparkasse...“ (M1); „Teilnahme an freiwillige Projekten ist wichtig ja, wird auch von mir gelebt!“ (M1); Ja so etwas wie Erste Bank unterwegs oder so...zahlt auch in die Marke ein...es ist halt auch ein sichtbares Zeichen das hinausgehen, das Zum-Kunden-Gehen“ (M3); „Ja sicher, wenn ich das in meiner Marke habe als Item, macht das sicher Sinn. Besser als ich mache mit an irgendwelchen Autorennen was auch immer oder bin nebenbei Groupier im Casino.“ (M2); „Wenn ich in meiner Freizeit ahm keine Ahnung irgendwo freiwillig bei irgendeinem Laufevent mitarbeite, mit dem Erste Bank T-Shirt an, dann ist das Freiwilligkeit.“ (M4); „...dadurch das doch etliche Events...wo meine Hausbank etwas sponsert...ist es mir schon aufgefallen, dass der Mitarbeiter auch in der eigentlichen Freizeit vor Ort sind und aktiv daran teilnehmen...“ (C1); „...er könnte auf jeden Fall einmal im sozialen Bereich ...in der Filiale im Bezirk stärker vertreten sein...“ (C2); „Ja da würde mir einfallen bei sportlichen Events, Kulturevents wo die Sparkasse da irgendwie vertreten ist...jetzt zum Beispiel der Vienna Nightrun...“ (C3); „...ein Auftritt auf bestimmten Veranstaltungen in Form von Sponsoring natürlich auch...oder irgendwelche soziale Projekte...das ist was, was der Bank selbst einen guten Gewinn gibt.“ (C4); „...wie die Marke gut transportiert werden kann oder gefördert werden kann, zum Beispiel wenn man soziale Events sponsern kann.“ (M5); „...bei uns die Raiffeisenkassa, die ist jetzt sehr viel auch unterwegs bei Kinderveranstaltungen, stellen Sie die Hüpfburg zur Verfügung...die Raiffeisen-Go-Karts sind am Sicherheitstag da...man beginnt bei den Kleinsten.“ (C7);

<p>Showing the brand in free time (E3, E7, E13, E11, M1, M4, C2, C3, M5, E15)</p>	<p>„...sprich ich als Mitarbeiter, wenn ich jetzt rennen gehe, habe ich ein Laufleiberl von der Erste Bank an!“ (E3); „Ich gehe selber, wenn ich laufen gehe mit unserem Leiberl laufen.“(E7); „Ja und da kommt halt einfach zu tragen, dass ich sage ok ich trage in meiner Freizeit gerne im Fitnessstudio die Running-Shirts von der Erste Bank.“ (E13); „Also...beim Business Run...wie groß das der Einsatz der Mitarbeiter war und die meisten auch brav im Erste Bank T-Shirt ...“ (E11); „Oder ich habe auch kein Problem, wenn ich mit einem Sparkassenleiberl herumrenne in meiner Freizeit.“ (M1); „Wenn ich in meiner Freizeit ahm keine Ahnung irgendwo freiwillig bei irgendeinem Laufevent mitarbeite, mit dem Erste Bank T-Shirt an, dann ist das Freiwilligkeit.“ (M4); „...kann durch einen kleinen Anstecker sein oder auf das Outfit bezogen, kann auch im sportlichen Bereich durchaus mit dem Logo der Erste Bank sein.“ (C2); Da fällt mir jetzt zum Beispiel der Vienna Nightrun ein, wo viele Mitarbeiter freiwillig mitlaufen können...diesen Lauf mit einem Pullover und dem Logo drauf laufen können.“ (C3); „...sicherlich kann auch der Mitarbeiter wenn er am Abend ins Fitnesscenter geht, ein Erste Bank T-Shirt tragen...“(M5); „...dass man Fanartikel hat...gebrandete Pullover oder sonstige Sachen, also ein bisschen werblich...“ (E15);</p>
<p>Motivate customers to recommend the brand (E3)</p>	<p>“Diese Weiterempfehlung mache ich eigentlich bewusst – sprich durch Visitenkarten, sprich nach dem Beratungsgespräch noch einmal anzusprechen z.B.: wenn Sie jemanden der etwas benötigt...dann bitte Kontakt aufnehmen mit mir...“ (E3);</p>
<p>Represent the brand on customer events (E3, E5, E11, E12, E2, M1, C2, C6, C7)</p>	<p>“...dann wäre die Präsenz sehr wichtig, dann wäre er viel auf Kundenveranstaltungen anzutreffen...” (E3); Es gibt bei uns diese Investmentcircles, das sind Kundenveranstaltungen, ...da gilt es dann einfach die Kunden auch anzusprechen auf diversen Veranstaltungen.” (E5); „Wir haben viele Werbeveranstaltungen vom Premiumplus über verschiedene Produktsachen, wo man einfach präsent sein sollte.“ (E11); „Cashual Days mit T-shirt Erste Bank...wo wir dann draußen unterwegs sind, wo wir auch auf der Straße präsent sind, Geschenke austeilten.“ (E12); „Definitiv. Zielgruppenmarketing z.B.: Veranstaltungen, die abends stattfinden wie Branchentalks, Messeaussteller...da mache ich gerne mit.“ (E2); „...einfach Präsenz zeigen bei Kundenveranstaltungen...“ (M1); „Ja das stimmt, im Rahmen des letzten Postfestes...sind wir da privat in das Gespräch gekommen...dass ich über die Marke Post Infos bekommen habe und Vorteile...für mich an mich herangetragen wurden.“ (C2); „Ja vermutlich eben solche Veranstaltungen, Events, wo sie dann auch präsent ist...“ (C6); „...es ist oft so, eben bei solchen Veranstaltungen, dann auch wirklich so, dass der Kundenberater auch vor Ort ist, ja. Ob der dann aktiv verkauft oder einfach nur vor Ort ist, das ist auf jeden Fall etwas Bindendes.“ (C7);</p>
<p>Show the brand values to the outside – to externals (E7, E11, M3, M4)</p>	<p>“... , dass ich Werte, die mir das Unternehmen vermittelt nach außen trage in meinen Freundes – und Bekanntenkreis.” (E7); „Ich kann nur das gleiche sagen wie ich vorher gesagt habe, dort auch transportieren, im Bekanntenkreis, im Verwandtenkreis und dort auch einfach authentisch auftreten.“ (E11); „...auch die Werte, die vermittelt werden dann auch im privaten Umfeld mittragen...“ (M3); „...weil jeder von uns...hat einen Vertrag unterschrieben mit dem Unternehmen und da gehört auch dazu, dass man die Werte des Unternehmens einfach mit nach außen trägt.“ (M4);</p>
<p>Distribute giveaways, goodies and advertising materials (E7, E11, E6, E10, C3, C6)</p>	<p>“Zusätzlich ist das bei uns ganz nett, weil wir viele Werbegeschenke haben, wie zum Beispiel vom Sparefroh her, die ich verteile in meinem Bekanntenkreis...” (E7); „...wo wir dann draußen unterwegs sind wieder demnächst, wo wir auch auf der Straße präsent sind, Geschenke austeilten...” (E11); “Die zur Verfügung stehenden Werbemittel benützen, z.B.: Topseller, Produktblätter herzeigen, die wir anbieten und Hervorheben der Vorteile...so Goodies dem mitgekommenen Kind ein Sparefrohmaxerl geben.” (E6); „aber beispielsweise bei der Pfarre wo ich auch aktiv bin, ja, die mit einem kleinen Beitrag auch zu unterstützen – sei es jetzt mit Weltspartagsgeschenken etc. es ist nämlich dann so, dass das sehr positiv von den Kunden anerkannt wird.“ (E10); „Gut er könnte mir vielleicht einen Kugelschreiber anbieten oder irgendwelche Sparkassenbuttons oder irgendwas wo das Logo drauf ist.“ (C3); „...sie hat mir einen Folder gegeben für den Raiffeisenklub, wo es um die ganzen Events und so geht...“ (C6);</p>
<p>Acquire new customers in the free time (E13, M3, C1, C5, E2)</p>	<p>“...dass ich irgendeine Empfehlung mache, das kann sein, dass ich ein Email weiterleite wo Werberprämie dabei ist oder dass man versucht Produkte zu verkaufen, direkt oder indirekt...“ (E13); „Naja ich sehe das im Freundeskreis...da ist ein klassischer Vertriebler und ich sehe halt wie der eigentlich im Freundeskreis agiert und so eigentlich das Geschäft macht dann.“ (E13); „...und auch Neukunden zu gewinnen für die Bank...“ (M3); „...dass der Kundenbetreuer zum Beispiel in seiner Freizeit irgendwelche Freizeitaktivitäten macht...im Zuge von Gesprächen mit Freunden, Bekannten oder Leuten die er ...neu</p>

	kennen lernt...und die Vorzüge ...der Bank widerspiegelt.“ (C1); „Er könnte seine Bank in den Vordergrund bringen...dass halt die Bank für den Kunden gut ist und dass man da halt gut beraten wird beim Bankwechsel...(C5); „Ich ging zu s´Oliver am Graben, weil ich etwas umtauschen wollte, da kam ich mit denen ins Gespräch und wollten schon meine Visitenkarte haben, wegen Bankwechsel...ich glaube, dass das im Privatbereich ständig vorkommt.“ (E2);
Talk about advertising (E11, M2)	„Wir haben einmal die Werbung gehabt...wo wir Fonds beworben haben und es war dann irgendwie so, die Rita hat die geheißßen und die hat dann im Autobus wenn die an Fonds gedacht hat, fast einen Orgasmus bekommen...da wird man dann auch angesprochen von den Kunden.“ (E11); „Oder wenn jemand sagt, was habt ihr da für eine depperte Werbung – wenn ich erklären kann was die Werbung bewirkt ...da werden die Leute verstehen...“ (M2);

Table 9: Category 2 - Brand representation

The first behavior in the second category *brand representation* is *positive verbal recommendation and representation of the brand*. This EBBB concentrates on the positive representation and verbal recommendation of the brand to the outside within regular working hours and also beyond (E1, E3, E4, E5, E15, M5, C6). The employees act as a figurehead for the brand, which should be presented in a favorable light to all external interest groups (E4, C3) and represent what the brand is standing for (E6). All opportunities to promote the brand are taken into consideration by employees to build up the brand effectively.

Positive word of mouth regarding the products, the service and the company represents the attention of the employees to present the company in a favorable light and to advertise the whole organization in every situation (E1, E12, E13, E14, M2, C2). Additional, positive mentions of the provided products and services are crucial for a successful brand building process (C1). Within this EBBB, employees promote the company as a good employer in the direct business environment and especially during the free time of employees (E4, E11, E15).

A further activity to support the brand building process is *positive word of keyboard*, which goes hand-in-hand with the previous discussed behavior *positive word of mouth regarding the products, the service and the company*. Here the task of employees is to recommend and promote the brand as well as the company via social media platforms, where the organization is represented (E2, E4, E13, M2). Within this behavior, employees “like” the Facebook fan page of the own organization and do postings to spread the messages of the company and support the corporate brand (E7, M5).

The following EBBB - *mentioning the brand name* - includes the intention of the employees to mention the brand name in different situations or stages during customer

interaction. This activity can be applied in every email, in every mailing, etc., where the brand can be transported (E1, C1, C3, C6). Beyond, employees also mention the brand name in conversations with friends and relatives (E9).

The next particular EBBB - *sponsoring of and participation in events and social projects* - seeks to represent the brand at events and social projects via sponsoring the event or employees' participation in social projects (E1, E7, M1, M2, M5, C1, C4, C7). Also, part of this behavior is that employees use possibilities to promote the brand at events, like, for example, to hang up a transparent, etc. (E13). For enhancing the perceived social responsibility of the company and to build up the brand representatives of the company, it is important to participate in social, sport and cultural events to represent the brand as well as the company on such occasions (E3, E5, M1, C1, C3, C4).

Another possibility to strengthen the brand is *showing the brand in free time*. Here employees present the brand during free time activities, like running or going to the gym, for example, with a branded T-shirt (E3, E7, E13, M1, C2, C3, M5), by wearing a pin or advertising with event materials (E15, C2).

Another relevant opportunity for how employees can contribute to the brand building process is to *motivate customers to recommend the brand*, which implies that in the event that the customer is satisfied with the banking institute and the service performance, employees distribute business cards to motivate customers to recommend the brand to others (E3).

A further activity to support the brand building process is to *represent the brand on customer events*, which goes hand-in-hand with the previous discussed behavior *sponsoring of and participation in events and social projects*. However, here the focus is more on internal events especially made for customers, which strongly have informational purposes and where new products are presented. In this case, the presence of customer advisors also is crucial for building up the corporate brand (E3, E5, E11, E2, M1, C6, C7).

Show the brand values to the outside – to externals concentrates on the transportation of the brand values as well as the values of the organization to externals even in a private context (E7, M3). Every employee, who has signed a contract with an employer, has a

sort of obligation to transport the core values and therefore to strengthen the brand (M4).

The following EBBB of this category is *distribute giveaways, goodies and advertising materials*, which contains the distribution of advertising materials and giveaways to customers and also to friends or relatives, for example, a figure of “Sparefroh” (E7, E6, C3, C6). Also, to distribute giveaways through employees at events as well as customer events is an efficient possibility for supporting the brand building process (E11). This can also be applied during the free time of the customer advisor, where, for example, presents of the “World Savings Day” can be distributed at private events (E10).

The behavior of *acquire new customers in the free time* denotes that employees are trying to acquire new customers via recommendation or to contract any products in their respective circle of friends during free time (E13, M3, C1, C5, E2).

The last behavior in the category of *brand representation* is *talk about the advertising*, which focuses on coming together in conversation about the actual advertising campaign with potential new customers. Based on this, employees can start a conversation and therefore try to transport the brand values and promote the brand, services and company (E11, M2).

3.4.2.3 Category 3 – Service orientation

The third category - *service orientation* - is also to a large extent derived from the scientific literature. As already mentioned, this master’s thesis pursues a deductive-inductive approach; therefore, an initial set of pre-categories has been built as a starting point for a future creation of categories. The theoretical background is provided in detail in the literature review (chapter 2) and also in Table 2.

In the literature, *service orientation* is in general defined as “an organization-wide embracement of a basic set of relatively enduring organizational policies, practices and procedures, which intend to support service-giving behaviors that create and deliver service excellence” (Lytle and Timmerman 2006, p.136). The main focus of a service oriented organization together with its frontline employees as well as back office experts is creating customer value, e.g. service quality, in the market to benefit from a positive effect on the overall company performance in service delivery and also to differentiate from its competitors (e.g. Berry et al. 1994; Hartline et al. 2000; Heskett et

al. 1997; Oliveira and Roth 2012). Further insights regarding the scientific literature are illustrated in the literature review in chapter 2.

As already mentioned in this subchapter regarding category 1, based on qualitative analysis, a clear differentiation between the categories of *customer orientation* and *service orientation* is difficult. There are several dimensions, e.g. access to the customer advisor, credibility in banking advice and understanding the customers, which, according to Parasuraman et al. (1985), are definitely a part of service orientation. In this thesis, the approach is pursued that these behaviors are in tendency more relevant for satisfying customer needs and therefore are assigned to the category of *customer orientation* (Saxe and Weitz 1982; Soutar and Ryan 2001).

Category 3¹⁰: Service orientation	
<p><i>Service orientation</i> in general is defined as “an organization-wide embracement of a basic set of relatively enduring organizational policies, practices and procedures intend to support service-giving behaviors that create and deliver service excellence” (Lytle and Timmerman 2006, p.136). The main focus of a service-oriented organization together with its employees is creating customer value (e.g. service quality) in the market to benefit from a positive effect on the overall company performance and also to differentiate from its competitors (Oliveira and Roth 2012; Berry et al. 1994; Heskett et al. 1997).</p>	
<p>Employee brand building behaviors (characteristics)</p>	<p>Illustrations</p>
<p>Competent customer advice (E1, E3, E7, E8, E9, E10, E11, E13, M3, M4, C1, C2, C3, C6, M5, E14, E15, C7)</p>	<p>„Absolut genau. Es ist das Gesamtbild, welches dahinter steht, woran die Marke aufgehängt ist. Wenn die Leistung schlecht ist, wird die Marke auch die schlechten Emotionen mit einher nehmen.“ (E1); „...ich kann viel machen über die Dienstleistungs- und Beratungsqualität.“ (E3); „Dann ist noch wichtig, dass er kompetent ist, dass er das mich Passende anbietet.“ (E7); „Also ich glaub punkten kannst du markenmäßig mit Kompetenz ...“ (E8); „ein inkompetenter Kunde kann durch sein Verhalten... kann natürlich Kunden vergrämen...und das färbt auf das Unternehmen ab.“ (E9); „Die Wahrheit kann ich ja nur von dem erzählen, eine Story erzählen ...wo ich eine Ahnung habe...und dieses Weitergeben von Wissen ist nicht deswegen weil ich etwas verkaufen muss ..weil ich glaube, dass es dem Gegenüber, sprich meinem Kunden etwas bringt – aber das ist genau das was der Kunde eigentlich will.“ (E10); „die fachliche Kompetenz wird von der Führungskraft vorausgesetzt.“ (E11); „Naja der hat die Möglichkeiten, dass er sein Umfeld bei guten Aktionen leichter ansprechen kann, weil er ja weiß was gerade aktuell ist oder er kann sich auch vielleicht besser informieren, weil er mehr am Marktgeschehen ist. (E13); „Vermittlung von Fachkompetenz, sozialer aber auch fachlicher Kompetenz“ (M3); „...müssen wir uns überlegen, wie wir das schaffen, dass Mitarbeiter ...besonders</p>

¹⁰ In brackets, the respondents, who all have mentioned this behavior, M...stands for managers, E...stands for employees and C...stands for customers, are named. The figures represent the number of the respondent.

	<p>kompetent auftreten...da muss man sich eigentlich durch Kompetenz noch abheben vom Wettbewerb.“ (M4); „...Kompetenz setze ich jetzt einmal voraus.“ (C1); „...sofern er die Kompetenz aufweist, dass er seinen Job gut macht...“ (C2); „Genau, kompetente Beratung, gutes Service zählt natürlich auch dazu, dass man die Marke gut nach außen transportiert...“ (C3); „Also das Wichtigste ist, kompetenter Auftritt...“ (C6); „...darum sollen die anderen Dinge, wie Servicequalität an sich passen...“(M5); „...natürlich ist es erstrebenswert, dass sich die Bankbetreuer so gut wie möglich auskennen.“ (E14); „...möglichst kompetent natürlich wie gesagt...offen kommunizieren und sagen, da haben wir Spezialisten...“ (E15); „Ganz sicher...Kompetenz...der Mitarbeiter muss auf jeden Fall 100% geschult sein...weil er kann mir nicht etwas verkaufen wo ich ihn dann etwas frage und er sagt, ah muss ich einmal nachfragen.“ (C7).</p>
After customer consultation service (E1)	<p>“...ist es natürlich toll, wenn ich eine gewisse Nachbetreuung bekomme, wenn der Betreuer pro aktiv auf mich zugeht, wenn es zum Beispiel bei meinem Konto etwas gibt.” (E1);</p>
Perfect all-round service (E1, E4, E7, E8, E9, E11, E13, M2, M4, C1, M5, E15)	<p>„Die Servicierung ist natürlich ein Pluspunkt...gerade im Dienstleistungsbereich ist Service etwas, womit man sich vom Wettbewerb abheben kann.“ (E1); „Im Beratungsgespräch selbst würde ich schon Richtlinien als gut empfinden, dass man weiß wie verhalte ich mich richtig, ich begrüße, dann biete ich einen Platz an, dann frage ich das und jenes...frage ob er etwas zu trinken haben möchte.“ (E4); „Also da gilt für mich einmal das Grundprinzip andere Leute schon einmal zu servieren – da zählt schon einmal dazu wie man sich am Telefon verhält...dass ich jetzt nicht Leute 3 Tage auf ein Antwortmail warten lasse...es gibt ja auch diese Geschichten mit Terminen ausmachen usw, dass das auch persönlich funktioniert...“ (E7); „Sicher gibt es gewisse Maßnahmen, der bekommt halt seinen Kaffee zum Betreuungsgespräch dazu oder ein Glas Leitungswasser, aber beim Premiumservice bekommt er halt vielleicht ein Safterl dazu...“ (E8); „Also da geht es um so einfache Dinge wie Termintreue oder wie Disziplin...“ (E9); „Er kann natürlich gerade im Kundengespräch vom Kaffee anbieten, wir machen das dann mit Schokolade dazulegen...das sind oft so Kleinigkeiten wo wir Incentives, Geschenke mitgeben, wo ein Kugelschreiber drin ist oder die Visitenkarte ein bisschen schöner verpackt ist.“ (E11); „Naja da würde für mich auch zählen wie ich generell mit Leuten umgehe...mit Drittfirmen in Kontakt trete und da entsprechend auftrete...das ist ein Partner auf den kann man sich verlassen und das ist schon eine Verhaltensweise, die der Erste Bank in dem Sinne zugutekommt.“ (E13); „Ja ich kann natürlich schon einige Dinge verordnen z.B.: wen man zu grüßen hat, einen Kunden bis zu Tür begleitet und dort verabschiedet, das kann man natürlich verordnen, das kann man auch schulen“ (M2); „...wie ich den Kunden begrüße, wie ich ihn beim Eingang abhole, wie ich mich auf ein Meeting vorbereite...wie ich persönliche Dinge anspreche?“ (M4); „...regelmäßig bei den Kunden melden ...regelmäßig den Kunden Updates geben über...Änderungen an den Kontokosten etc...auch mit den Kunden persönlich darüber reden...“ (C1); „...aber auch das ganze „Drumherum“ wie einen Kaffee angeboten bekommen, nette Begrüßung, eine nette Verabschiedung, ...all das gehört zu einem guten Service dazu...“ (M5); „...in der alltäglichen Kommunikation, also wenn man im beruflichen wenn man ein Email schreibt, wenn man mit Kollegen redet, aber auch im Privaten...“ (E15);</p>
Provide a high quality service and live quality standards (E2, E3 E11, E9, M2, M4, M1, M3, C3, M5)	<p>„Ich glaube schon unsere Qualitätsstandards zu leben, wie sie uns vorgegeben werden um den Kunden das beste Service zu bieten.“ (E2); „...denn die Konditionen sind ja vorgegeben im Groben, ich habe natürlich eine Maßbreite, aber ich kann nur durch Servicequalitäten und Beratungsqualitäten mich hervorheben (E3); „Wir haben unsere eigenen ...Hauptpunkte punkto Kundenbetreuung für uns erfunden, die wir versuchen zu leben (E11); „...ein hohes Maß an Qualität bei der Erfüllung meiner Aufgabe...dass ich den Filialmitarbeiter sprich den Kunden dadurch entlaste.“ (E9); „Ein gewisses Niederschreiben der Positionierung sollte man machen durch Mitarbeiterschulung – aber nicht alle wie Avatare alles gleich machen, das Menschliche sollte schon da sein, aber gewisse Regeln sollten da sein.“ (M2); „...es ist dann schon wichtig, dass man den Leuten auch einen Rahmen vorgibt...dass wir auch versuchen...genau auf die Themen einzugehen, die unsere Marke auch unterstützen.“ (M4); „...dass man dem Kunden nicht irgendein Produkt verkaufen will, sondern wirklich auf die Bedürfnisse eingeht ...“ (M1); „...also immer mehr Werte für Kunden generieren...besondere Serviceleistungen definieren...“ (M3); „Gutes Service beginnt schon einmal da...dass man sich ausdrücken kann, hohe kommunikative Kompetenzen aufweist...“ (C3); „...und solche Qualitätsstandards</p>

	sollten definitiv eingehalten werden, damit hier alles passt.“ (M5);
Optimal process of the service (E3, E5, C6, M5)	“...da müssen gewisse Abwicklungsabläufe sitzen, ..., dass man es wirklich für den Kunden so abwickelt, dass der Kunde keine Probleme hat.” (E3); „Ich denke, grundsätzlich, wenn man auf die Fragen eingeht, je nachdem was die Kunden und Filialbetreuer, die bei uns anrufen ...dass man korrekt und richtig wiedergeben kann.“ (E5); „...also dass er jetzt zum Beispiel beim Kontoabschließen nicht ewig lange braucht um welche Unterlagen zu suchen...dass er schnell arbeitet...“ (C6); ...dass da alles passt und reibungslos abläuft, damit der Kunde möglichst einfach und rasch zu seiner Info kommt.“ (M5);
Excessive product knowledge and economic know how (E5, E7, E11, C4, M2)	„Man muss sich damit identifizieren und das ist der Punkt, wo wir oder der Mitarbeiter stark punkten können, indem man sich wirklich mit den Produkten auseinandersetzt und einfach seine Produkte auswendig kennt.“ (E5); „...das würde ich als Fachkenntnis einstufen...“ (E7); „Dinge die man selber auch wissen muss vorher und wenn Fragen kommen, dass man wirklich sehr sehr authentisch und sehr offensiv beantwortet.“ (E11); „Ein sicheres Anbieten von Angeboten...dass eben viel Wissen hinter den Angeboten steckt und das hervorheben von Konditionen.“ (C4); „...oder auch kein Verständnis, man muss ja jetzt nicht nur schlecht reden, wenn ich nicht verstehe, warum wir jetzt niedrige Zinsen haben oder wenn ich jetzt nicht verstehe wenn jemand bei uns keinen Kredit bekommt bei Überschuldung und die Haushaltsrechnung es nicht zulässt ...und man kann darauf keine Antwort geben...wegen dem Nichtverstehen, dann ist das einfach schlecht.“ (M2);
Effective handling and quick processing of customer enquiries (E2, E5, E9, C2)	“Schnelligkeit, Zuverlässigkeit, ich versuche sofort zu handeln und zu tun und dem Kunden sofort eine Antwort zu geben, nichts unbeantwortet lassen, auch bei Kritik...” (E2); “...das ist Kompetenz und das ist rasche Abwicklung, wo ich dem Kunden seine Wünsche rasch erledige...” (E5); ...das heißt ein hohes Maß an Qualität bei der Erfüllung meiner Aufgaben und so schnell als möglich...(E9); „...dass meine Anliegen kompetent und schnell umgesetzt worden sind...“ (C2);
Get and use customer information (E7, E11, E12, M2, M4)	“Dass man sich auf den Termin einfach vorbereitet.” (E7); “Wir versuchen sehr viel von unseren Kunden zu bekommen, Informationen und natürlich auch diese Informationen zu dokumentieren.” (E11); „Das ist ein Punkt zur Stärkung der Marke, ganz wichtig, Informationen nicht als Privateigentum zu sehen ...das festzuhalten auch wenn ich es selber vielleicht schon weiß...der nächste der mein Backup übernimmt, ist sehr wichtig, dass er das auch weiß.“ (E12); „Ich gehe zum Beispiel sogar soweit, das mag schon übertrieben sein, ja, weißt ich nehme jeden Termin so wichtig, dass ich mich ein, zwei Minuten zurückziehe vorher und ich mich total briefe auf die ersten zehn, zwanzig Sekunden.“ (E12); „...dass man ganz einfach auch trotz dieser vielen Informationstechniken, die da ja dahinter sind, der Kundendatenbank einen Überblick behält über die menschlichen Aspekte und wie der Kunde tickt.“ (M2);); „...wenn ich weiß, der ist Rapidfan, dass ich ihn einlade auf ein Rapidmatch, oder wenn ich weiß er hat sich gerade ein Grundstück gekauft und Haus gebaut, dass man ihm einen Baum zum Pflanzen für die Einweihung schenkt – also so Kleinigkeiten.“ (E11); „dass jemand menschlich, besonders menschlich war, vielleicht auf die persönliche Situation stärker eingeht, dass wenn ich ein Gespräch habe, nicht darüber rede, das ältere Kind und das jüngere Kind, sondern dass ich frage wie heißen denn die Kinder und dass ich den Namen verwende, oder so Akzente setzen...persönliche Informationen im System einspeichern, damit auch im nächsten Gespräch wieder darauf Bezug nehmen kann (M4);
Use available tools and information materials (E4, E5, E11, E12, M1, M3, M4, M5, C6, C1)	„...dann dementsprechend kompetent beraten, gerne auch Zusätzliches anbieten...ihn mit Unterlagen ausstatten...“ (E4); ...es gibt zentrale Unterstützungsmöglichkeiten, da geht es einfach darum, diese Instrumente einfach zu nutzen und diese im Kundengespräch einfach einsetzen.“ (E5) „Also Möglichkeiten eben mit dem Finanzcheck ...es ist alles zur Verfügung gestellt und auch so oft als möglich auch wirklich einzusetzen und auch so leben wie wir das geschult haben...(E11); „...auch im Medium Finanzcheck ist ja genauso gedacht, dass ich dort Wünsche, Anregungen echt definiere...und da sind wir halt dran momentan das auf breiter Front zu machen.“ (E12); „...sondern wirklich auf die Bedürfnisse eingeht und einen ganzheitlichen Finanzcheck macht. „ (M1); „...auch natürlich wo es geht auf den Unterlagen und auf den sämtlichen zum Kunden gerichteten Informationsmaterialien immer wieder die Erste Bank kompetent mitzunehmen.“ (M3); „...wie kann ich auch das Thema Modernität in mein Handeln übersetzen...dass ich neue Medien einsetze, dass ich Kunden das netbanking näher bringe...“ (M4); „...vielleicht noch Infomaterial

	mitgeben...“ (M5); „ja...gleichzeitig während dem Gespräch noch eine Broschüre, wo ganz oben draufsteht: Wir sind Raiffeisen...“ (C6); „Also ich habe definitiv Informationsmaterial bekommen...“ (C1);
Offering products and make special offers (C4, C5)	„...ein pro-aktives Anbieten von Angeboten...und auch immer wieder mit Angeboten kommen...“ (C4); „Schon gezeigt, dass das...die beste Verzinsung am Markt ist von dem Produkt zum Beispiel was sie anbieten können.“ (C5);

Table 10: Category 3 - *Service Orientation*

The first behavior in the third category of *service orientation* is to guarantee *competent customer advice*. Here employees deliver high quality customer advice (E3, E8, M4, C2, C3, C6, E15, C7) and provide the customer with the products best suited to their needs (E7). When a service employee is incompetent in interaction with the customer, he or she will disaffect the customer, which makes a successful brand building process impossible (E9). The customer needs and expects competent advice as to how the customer can best invest money. Also, very important in strengthening the brand within this behavior is professional competence and the knowledge of the customer advisor of which product fits exactly to the customer (E14).

One additional behavior in the in-depth interviews is *after customer consultation service*, where the banking advisor provides supplementary information after banking advice (E1).

The next employee brand building behavior - *perfect all-round service* - contains the servicing process in a broader dimension than previously described. Here not only the consulting situation with the provision of the banking advice is taken into consideration, but also the servicing process as a whole, e.g. to follow the guidelines on how to greet the customer, to offer him or her a seat, ask the customer if he or she wants something to drink, provide chocolate or a small present, etc. (E4, E8, E11, M2, M4, M5). Another very important issue within the behavior of *perfect all-round service* is also the perfect way of making a telephone call and how to arrange an appointment with the customer (E7, E9, E13, E15). Beyond, the customer advisor can provide updates about changes in the interest environment or on new products, etc. (C1).

The following EBBB – *provide a high quality service and live quality standards* - includes the intention of the employees to follow the internal given quality standards, which guarantee a steady improvement of the provided service and to ensure that the service meets the requirements regarding the brand and customer expectations (E2, E11,

M4, M3, M5). Also, important in supporting the brand building process is the correct application of conditions for the respective target group (E3). This EBBB also contains attendance in training courses to maintain a high quality level (M2).

Optimal process of the service is also an important activity related to how employees can strengthen the corporate brand. This EBBB focuses on the optimal process of the service provision that every individual process stage is delivered in the right manner and the whole process is a smooth procedure for the customer, without any problems (E3). As well, the processes, e.g. the process of opening an account, should be quick and straightforward for the customer (C6, M5).

Another relevant opportunity for how employees can contribute to the brand building process is *excessive product knowledge and economic know how*, which implies that employees know the company products inside out and deal with products in an extensive way (E5, E7). In the case of customer requests, the employees have to internalize financial know how to provide a professional answer (E11). The latter is crucial for ensuring the provision of the right product offering (C4) and further for successful brand building support. Another very important part of this EBBB is that employees are able to convey some economic background information, e.g. in the case a customer does not receive financing, he or she can provide information on the legal situation and present restrictions of the Financial Market Authorities (FMA). This basic information will generate an understanding of the problem on the customer side and thus can support the brand in a sustainable way (M2).

An additional activity to support the brand building process is the *effective handling and quick processing of customer enquiries*, which goes hand-in-hand with the previous discussed behavior of *optimal process of the service*. Here the task of the employee is to guarantee speed in combination with an extensive amount of reliability when dealing with customer enquiries. At this juncture, employees should act immediately and try to find a solution for the customer as well as satisfy the customer's wishes as quickly as possible (E2, E5, E9, C2).

The next particular EBBB - *get and use customer information* - is seeking to acquire and use all relevant and available information from the customer (E11, M2). Also, a very important point for supporting brand building is the rigorous documentation of the

obtained information to ensure, in case of employee turnover, that this kind of information is not lost (E12). The detailed information, especially product information, how many products the customer has and which services were used by the customer in the past, are very important facts for tailoring any upcoming customer advice. Therefore, the service employee has the opportunity to prepare for meetings in an extensive way and to generate a perfect service situation for the customer, which positively affects the brand building process. Here the customer advisor can easily create a “wow-experience” for the customer when he exactly knows what was discussed in the last meeting (E12, E7).

The EBBB of *use available tools and information materials* represents the attention of employees to use all available tools and instruments, which are centrally provided by the banking institute to improve the service provision in the customer interaction (E5, E11), e.g. conduct a finance check, where relevant customer requirements can be identified and documented directly (E11, E12, M1). Also, the aspect of modernity, which is probably important for the positioning of the brand, is fulfilled through the usage of several tools (M4). Further, this EBBB includes also the provision of relevant information materials (M3, M5), which not only have the objective of the improvement of the level of information directed at the customer, but also are also important advertising media to transport the corporate brand in a positive way.

The last EBBB in the category of *service orientation* is *offering products and make special offers*. Within this activity, employees concentrate on a pro-active offering of products. In the ideal case, they have the opportunity to make special offers to over-exceed the expectations of customers and hence use the chance to strengthen the corporate brand (C4, C5).

3.4.2.4 Category 4 – Brand congruent behavior

The following category brand congruent behavior was primarily derived from the literature and therefore has represented a part of the predefined categories. The theoretical background is provided in detail in the literature review (chapter 2) and also in Table 2.

Category 4¹¹ Brand congruent behavior

Brand congruent behavior includes several opportunities for how employees can act in line with the brand and embody central brand values. Further, this category represents the whole extent of which communication measures, branch appearance and employee demeanor in all customer contact situations are consistent with the key branding attributes of an organization. This should be noticeable for customers during service delivery and also beyond. (Baumgarth und Schmidt 2010; Henkel et al. 2007; Morhart et al. 2010).

Employee brand building behaviors (characteristics)	Illustrations
Live the brand and the brand values (also in the free time) (E6, E10, E3, E8, E9, E11, E13, E14, M2, M4, C3, C5, C6, M5, C7)	<p>„Wenn wir jetzt 3 Werte haben, Tradition, Vertrauen, Beziehung oder auch Ehrlichkeit, dass man sich beim Kunden auch so repräsentiert...und natürlich Kompetenz...“ (E6); „...ich glaube der entscheidende Punkt ist, dass man die Beziehungsebene zum Kunden über den Produktabschluss auch lebt.“ (E10); „Grundsätzlich ist es so, dass ...die Erste Bank gewisse Grundstücke vorgibt...und dann von den Sparkassengruppe in den Grundzügen übernommen werden.“ (E3); „...d.h. es ist schon ein Prozess den du auch selbst mitmachst...du lebst das einfach mit und ...du lebst die Marke mit wenn du lang dabei bist.“ (E8); „Ich glaube, dass wir nur dann eine junge dynamische Marke sein können in unserem Unternehmen, wenn der Kundenbetreuer das auch durch sein persönliches Verhalten widerspiegelt.“ (E9); „...denn es gibt spark7, das ist jung, dynamisch – ah dementsprechend sollte ich natürlich das auch versuchen, ein Jugendbetreuer sollte auch jung und dynamisch sein.“ (E11); „Naja das würde ich jetzt so interpretieren...dass der Mitarbeiter jetzt nicht in irgendeiner Weise ungut auffallen sollte, er sollte ein gewisses sprachliches Niveau haben und ein freundliches Wesen in dem Sinne sein.“ (E13); „...dass man sich einfach so gibt oder so agiert wie man das halt für die Marke oder für die Arbeit am besten erachtet.“ (E14); „Naja man muss natürlich als Führungskraft wenn man jetzt zum Beispiel: In jeder Beziehung zählen die Menschen, als Claim hat, dann sollte man diesen Claim auch leben.“ (M2); „Sicher das Verhalten... auch im Privatleben wie man sich gegenüber seinem Arbeitgeber oder der Marke für die man tätig ist äußert, verbreitet sich natürlich im Privatleben.“ (M2); „...aus meiner Sicht ist es halt so, wenn es heißt menschlich kompetent, dann müssen wir uns überlegen, wie wir es schaffen, dass Mitarbeiter besonders menschlich auftreten und besonders kompetent auftreten...“ (M4); „...er sollte die Markenkonsistenz glaubwürdig rüberbringen, also er muss meiner Meinung dann auch selbst an die Marke glauben und eine gute Meinung zu dieser Marke gebildet haben...“ (C3) „Naja, dass er sich eben der Marke entsprechend verhält...welche Werte und dass er die halt dann lebt...sowohl in der Arbeit als wie auch im privaten Umfeld“ (C5); „Also wahrscheinlich dass man die Werte vertritt die eben dieser Marke entsprechen, so stell ich mir das jetzt circa vor...wenn man versucht, das irgendwie wiederzugeben.“ (C6); „dass hier auch der Mitarbeiter die Marke lebt, dass wenn er jetzt die Marke Erste Bank verkörpert, er diese Beziehung zum Kunden...lebt.“ (M5); „...das heißt...wenn du ein grundmotiviertes Personal, Mitarbeiter hast, die sich selbst identifizieren können mit der Marke, die Marke leben, dann ist das einfach das A und O.“ (C7);</p>

¹¹ In brackets are named the respondents, who all have mentioned this behavior, M...stands for managers, E...stands for employees and C...stands for customers. The figures represent the number of the respondent.

<p>Brand consistent customer appearance (E1, E4, E5, E6, E11, E12, E13, E14, M1, E3, M3, M4, C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, E14, C7)</p>	<p>„Das fängt für mich beim Auftreten an, denn bevor man miteinander redet, sieht man sich ja – das Auftreten sollte konsistent sein, sollte abgestimmt sein.“ (E1); „...da gibt es glaube ich ein paar Punkte, die ich aber ganz gut finde, und es ist schon sehr wichtig, dass man einheitlich auftritt, zumal wenn der Auftritt sehr gut durchdacht ist und sehr passend ist.“ (E4); „Es ist natürlich das Auftreten wichtig, wie Sie richtig sagen, wenn ich da ungepflegt und mit der abgerissenen Hose hinkomme, dann nimmt mir das sicherlich keiner ab.“ (E5); „...dass man sich beim Kunden auch so repräsentiert, z.B.: legere Kleidung würde nicht reinpassen, wäre zu wenig souverän.“ (E6); „...es soll gepflegt wirken natürlich. Ich kann jetzt nicht dort stehen wie ein Sandler...es soll ein gepflegtes Auftreten sein.“ (E11); „...ich spiele mich viel damit, also wo ich nicht immer so auf super gesackelt ganz bewusst herumlaufe, also wo ich ganz bewusst Tage einlege wo ich zum Kunden komme und wo ich denke es passt...wo ich bewusst in Jeans auftrete und fast schon übertrieben casual bin.“ (E12); „Da hat man natürlich...vom typischen Banker mit Anzug und Krawatte...das klassische Bild, das trifft aber im Vertrieb noch mehr zu...da wird mehr Wert gelegt auf ein ordentliches Auftreten.“ (E13); „...gepflegtes Aussehen sprich, dass man eine dementsprechende Frisur hat, geputzte Schuhe...“ (M1); „...ja das ist schon wichtig. Also gerade von einem Bankmitarbeiter erwartet man sich ja auch ein dementsprechendes Äußeres und gepflegtes Erscheinungsbild.“ (E3); „...wenn ich irgendwo in einen Shop reingehe...sei es in einem Kleidungsgeschäft, wenn dann die Leute alle gleich ausschauen zum Beispiel schwarz gekleidet sind und man sofort erkennt, wer ist jetzt Kunde und wer gehört zum Unternehmen!“ (M4); „Ja definitiv, die sind immer dementsprechend gekleidet und repräsentieren die Marke eigentlich ganz gut.“ (C1); „...das heißt kein sprunghaftes Verhalten, souveränes Auftreten...“ (C2); „Na gut, da soll auf jeden Fall einmal das Erscheinungsbild passen zu einer Bank, dass man sich entsprechend kleidet, vielleicht in Anzug...“ (C3); „...dass man natürlich der Marke entsprechend den Auftritt des Betreuers erwartet ist klar...gepflegt, das reicht aber auch schon.“ (C4); „Ja doch würde ich schon sagen, auf jeden Fall – also ein Bankbetreuer muss eine gewisse äußerliche Erscheinung sein, vom Kopf her...“ (C5); „...dass sie eben im Anzug erscheinen oder schön in der Kleidung. Das Auftreten halt seriös wirken soll...“ (C6); „da spielt dann sicherlich auch noch das optische Erscheinungsbild des Betreuers eine wichtige Rolle, das sollte auf jeden Fall gepflegt uns seriös sein...“ (E5); „...in Österreich ist es immer so gewesen, das gehört dazu. Wenn jemand den Anzug nicht anhat, dann ist das irgendwie komisch...und das strahlt natürlich auch ein bisschen etwas aus.“ (E14); „Er muss ein gepflegtes Äußeres haben...ob der jetzt elegant oder casual gestylt ist ist nicht mehr so tragisch...er muss einfach die Marke repräsentieren können.“ (C7);</p>
<p>Brand consistent process of customer advice (E4, E7, E9, E13, M1, M3, M2, M4, C1, C2, C4, M5)</p>	<p>“...ich bilde mir ein, dass es gerade im Betreuerbereich ein paar so Richtlinien gibt...wie das Gespräch ablaufen sollte...” (E4); “Das Verhalten etwa wie man reagiert auf Anfragen, die jetzt telefonisch oder per Mail hereinkommen ...Rückrufe ja.” (E7); „Es muss ja nicht immer mit Kundenbetreuer sein, deshalb sage ich ja wichtig, aber es gibt noch andere Zugänge zur Bank und die müssen genauso der Marke entsprechen...Internet, netbanking, Anwendungen...“ (E9); „...ich als Kunde wäre angefressen, wenn derjenige von dem ich etwas will mich nicht zurückruft, wenn ich eine Nachricht hinterlassen habe...“ (E13); „Freundlichkeit...auf alle Fälle. Ich finde der erste Eindruck ist sehr wichtig, wenn ich dann auch nicht begrüßt werde, wenn ich bei der Türe hereinkomme, dann macht das kein gutes Bild.“ (M1); „Ja ich glaube, die sind schön im Qualitätscheck abgebildet, ... es geht um die fachlich soziale Kompetenz...bis hin zur Atmosphäre in der Filiale.“ (M3); „...man müsste in die Richtung denken, dass der Kunde ein Erlebnis haben sollte...wenn er mit uns in Kontakt tritt, dieses Erlebnis sollte an allen Kontaktpunkten einmal ähnlich sein...“ (M2); „...auch so Dinge wie zum Beispiel...das einheitliche, dass nicht irgendein Kugelschreiber am Tisch liegt, sondern dass ein Erste Kugelschreiber verwendet wird, dass ein Erste Bank Notizbuch verwendet wird, dass die Bilder die an der Wand hängen nicht irgendwelche Bilder sind...“ (M4); „Wenn ich jetzt in ein Geschäft reingehe, und ich habe dort einen Kundenbetreuer, der absolut unmotiviert ist und unsympathisch ist...die Mitarbeiter spiegeln und repräsentieren die Marke der Bank...“ (C1); „...seine Meinung durchgehend gleich bleibt...und das fundiert durch Wissen und Kompetenz ...dass das ein Produkt ist, dem man vertrauen kann.“ (C2); „...die Form der Beratung, etwas Professionelles...“ (C4); „Das würde jetzt in unserem Fall heißen ahm, dass der ganze Beratungsablauf der Erste Bank entspricht...also die Qualität bei allem stimmt sowohl im Beratungsgespräch...dass eben die Beratung kompetent ist, die Werbemittel passen...“ (M5);</p>

Uniform branch appearance (E4, E7, M3, M4, M5)	“Markenkonsistent auch, dass der Filialauftritt einheitlich stattfindet, sodass ich die Bankfiliale als Erste Bankfiliale identifizieren kann...(E4); „...da würde ich dazuzählen, dass jedes Mal, wenn man reinkommt in die Filiale beispielsweise, dass man nicht ständig mit unterschiedlichen Reizen konfrontiert wird...wie auch immer es da drinnen aussieht, muss schon gleich und konsistent sein.“ (E7); „...es geht von der fachlichen sozialen Kompetenz bis hin zur Atmosphäre in der Filiale.“ (M3); „...jeder Kunde der zu uns reinkommt, der betritt einen Markentouchpoint... mit dem Kunden dort ...konsistent die Marke erleben sollen...“ (M4); „Dem Kunden sollte ein durchgängig konsistentes Bild in der Filiale geboten werden. Einen gewissen Standard den sich der Kunde einfach erwartet wenn er in eine Erste Filiale geht und sich dort beraten lassen will...“ (M5);
Help to carry corporate identity (E1, E10, E9, M4, C3)	“die Art und Weise, wie die Marke nach außen getragen wird, damit alles ein konsistentes Bild abgibt und damit die Marke auch als Marke erkannt werden kann.” (E1); „Aber die Marke bin ich irgendwo, das ist so, ja.“ (E10); „...zuerst einmal brauchst die Einstellung, die Einstellung zum Unternehmen ist wichtig... es muss dir einfach Spaß machen in dem Unternehmen zu arbeiten und du musst von dem überzeugt sein von der Strategie...von den Werten des Unternehmens.“ (E9); „...eine gewisse Identifikation gehört auch dazu.“ (M4); „...muss er auch selber dran glauben und selber sich mit der Marke gut identifizieren können...“ (C3);

Table 11: Category 4 - Brand congruent behavior

The first behavior in the category of *brand congruent behavior* is *live the brand and the brand values (also in the free time)*, which focuses on the issue of employees living the brand (E8, E9, M5, M2, C5, C7) and embodying the central brand values, e.g. core values, like tradition, relationship to the customer as well as honesty (E6, E13, E14, C5, C6). For example, as stated, “In jeder Beziehung zählen die Menschen”, the customer advisor has to live this brand promise (M4). How the individual employees live the brand values and behave in customer interaction is very crucial for positioning the brand in customers’ minds and also for the brand building process (E9, E11). Here it is also very important to live the relationship to customers beyond product deals (E10) and that employees internalize important guidelines of the headquarters (E3). Furthermore, executive members are playing an important role within the implementation of this brand building activity because they act as role models (M2).

The following employee brand building behavior of *brand consistent customer appearance* focuses on brand consistent appearance of the banking advisor in customer interaction (E1, E6, E12, E14 C1, C2, C5). When the appearance of the customer advisor is uniform and follows several important guidelines, e.g. a well-groomed appearance and suitable clothing (E5, E11, E3, C3, C4), this behavior has a great potential to strengthen the brand (E4). For many customers, a typical bank advisor has a formal dark suit with a nice tie, appropriate hairstyle and clean shoes (E5, E13, M1, C6). In the past, customer advisors represented this rather classic image, but today this picture is changing steadily (E13). Uniformity is also an important point within this

EBBB because when coming into a branch or a shop, and all sales people have the same appearance, it is much easier for a customer to identify who can help or who cares about customer questions (M4).

The behavior of *brand consistent process of customer advice* focuses on the objective that the whole process of customer advice is consistent over all branches and follows the same guidelines (E4, M2). A complete and consistent picture of how service employees of a certain bank communicate with their customers, how a customer appointment takes place and how customer enquiries are processed (M4, M5, C2, C4), should be recognized by the customer. Also very important within this behavior to build up the brand is that other channels, like netbanking, service center and other applications, follow the same standards and guidelines of meeting customer expectations (E9, M5).

The next activity to support the brand building process is a *uniform branch appearance*, which focuses on an overall brand consistent branch appearance. The objective is that the customer easily recognizes that he is in a certain banking institute (E4, M5) and is exposed to the same stimuli across all bank branches (E7). Further, all customer touching points are consistent and guarantee a consistent brand experience across all branches of a certain banking institute (M4).

Help to carry corporate identity is the next behavior in the category of brand congruent behavior, which indicates in what way a consistent picture of the brand, is incorporated by the employees (E1). Within this behavior, the customer advisors embody the brand values and become apart of them (E10). The latter point in combination with a strong personal identification with the brand enhances the brand support process (M4, C3). The employees are standing behind the brand, identify themselves with the brand values and feel as if they are a part of the company (E1, E10, M4, C3).

3.4.2.5 Category 5 – Brand support and development behaviors

The category of *brand support and development behaviors* delivers additional employee brand building behaviors, which contribute to a complete enumeration of relevant activities as to how employees can participate in the brand building process. This category was principally derived from the existing literature and has formed a part of the predefined categories. The theoretical background is provided in detail in the

literature review (chapter 2) and also in the Table 2. This category concentrates on the opportunities an employee has to participate in the brand development process and provide helpful information, which can be processed by the company to enhance the brand building process.

Category 5¹² : Brand support and development behaviors		
<p>This category represents the opportunities an employee has to participate in the brand development process so as to provide helpful information for the company in order to increase future brand performance and enhance the brand building process (Brief and George 1992; Brief and Motowidlo 1996; Burmann et al. 2009; Morhart et al. 2009).</p>		
Employee brand building behaviors (characteristics)	brand behaviors	Illustrations
Brand development activities (E3, E4, E5, E8, E12, E7, M2, M4, M5)		<p>“...es hängt ja mit meinem Aufgabenprofil zusammen, da ich ja Marketing mache und damit unterstütze ich ja auch den Werbeauftritt nach außen...in dem ich Vorschläge mache für ein Wording im Mailing...wie der Auftritt nach außen sein kann!“ (E4); ...was ich eingemeldet habe...unter dem Namen Profis forschen...für jede Filialdirektion, was vielleicht gar nicht so schlecht ist, wenn man ein Dienstauto hat, wo man nach außen hin sieht, aha Erste Bank unterwegs für Sie oder auf dem Weg zum Kunden.“ (E5); „Aber sicher wenn wir mit komplett neuen Agenturen zusammenarbeiten, in Briefings...wofür unsere Marke steht und was wir vermitteln...das ist schon unser Standardding.“ (E8); „...du lebst die Marke mit wenn du lang dabei bist und entwickelst diese Kultur der Marke auch irgendwie weiter.“ (E8); „...wo ich bei diversen Aktivitätenplanungen dabei bin, wo ich mich einbringen kann. dass mitdenken gefragt ist...dass du das einmeldest, wenn du Ideen hast.“ (E12); „Das finde ich total wichtig, nur so kann sich eine Organisation weiterentwickeln...ich persönlich versuche das auch laufend...“ (E7); „...auch über den Tellerrand schauen. Also nicht schwarz, nicht weiß sondern einfach etwas dazwischen zulassen und im Sinne des Kunden zu handeln.“ (E3); „Man kann natürlich gerade im Marketing, je wenn ein Mitarbeiter mit irgendeiner Idee mit irgendetwas kommt, ja nur ganz einfach die Frage stellen: Zahlt das in die Marke ein? – das immer wieder Bewusstmachen und versuchen den Karren wieder auf die Markenstraße zu stellen.“ (M2); „...das ist eigentlich schon eine große Verantwortung, die dann jeder Mitarbeiter dann auch trägt...zu überlegen je nach dem in welchem Tätigkeitsbereich ich bin, wie kann jetzt der Markenkern übertragen werden auf meine Tätigkeit?“ (M4); „dass auch eine Weiterentwicklung der Marke sehr wichtig ist, dass man versucht die eigene Meinung einzubringen und über den Tellerrand sieht...wenn irgendwo im Markenaufbau Optimierungspotential gibt etc.“ (M5);</p>
Defend the brand from negative press and correct misconceptions (E1, E2, E4, E5, E8, E9, E10, E11, E12, E13, M1, M3, M2, M4, C1, C2, C5, M5,		<p>Ja, sehe ich absolut als Stärkung der Marke, denn nur gemeinsam ist man stark, ich bin mir sicher, dass viele Kollegen und Kolleginnen hier eigene Meinungen haben, die sie natürlich kundtun wollen und werden.“ (E1); „Über die Medien z.B.: die Kunden kommen mit Anfragen z.B.: Abstufung Rating, da muss man den Druck aus dem Gespräch herausnehmen...man muss sich informieren, man muss wissen wovon man spricht um solche Sachen zu entkräften.“ (E2); „Wenn sich so eine Situation ergeben sollte und ich durch mein profundes Wissen weiß, dass dem nicht so ist, dann bin ich auf</p>

¹² In brackets are named the respondents, who all have mentioned this behavior, M...stands for managers, E...stands for employees and C...stands for customers. The figures represent the number of the respondent.

E15)	<p>jeden Fall jemand, der für meinem Arbeitgeber spricht.“ (E4); „...der Kunde hat gestern in der Zeitung gelesen oder im „Zeit im Bild“ gehört ...und ist total verunsichert...und da ist ein bisschen über den Tellerrand hinauszuschauen gefragt.“ (E5); „Man muss halt die Leute schon aufmerksam machen, in den Zeitungen stehen so viele Sachen...und ich als solches sollte das natürlich auch positiv sehen, weil ich ja an diese Marke glaube...und da versuche ich natürlich auch den Leuten, die mich darauf ansprechen Hilfe zu bieten.“ (E8); „...es geht um das Markenbild, dass der genau weiß ok ich habe meine zehn Sätze oder 5 Argumente, das könnte dann auch Schlimmeres zur Markenschädigung verhindern oder in anderer Weise die Marke stärken.“ (E5); „Oft ist es ja auch so, dass wir als Bankmitarbeiter ein bisschen einen anderen Informationsstand haben als wie Medien – das heißt ich kann da schon gewisse Unwahrheiten...dementieren oder erklären.“ (E9); „...wenn die Bank ...medial negativ erscheint, sei es jetzt der korrigierte Quartalsbericht im November ...dann ist das schon wieder eine Aussage wo ich beim Kunden das wieder herunterholen muss.“ (E10); „Wenn ich die Backgrounds habe und wenn ich mich damit auskenne und ich sage, ok das haben wir aufgrund dessen gemacht...“ (E11); „weil Banken jetzt prinzipiell vom Ruf her gelitten haben und da versuche ich immer hervorzukehren als Retailbank, dass man die guten sind von den Banken was da oft gemeint sind in den Medien.“ (E12); „oja wo die Ankündigung war, dass wir zum ersten Mal ein negatives Ergebnis haben...und da versucht man schon irgendwie dagegen zu wirken.“ (E13); „Ja natürlich, wenn es ungerechtfertigt ist, dann würde ich aktiv auf die Kunden zugehen, dass das nicht nur von einer Seite beleuchtet wird- das ist wichtig.“ (M1); „...so Medienberichterstattungen und jetzt vor allem in Krisenzeiten...wie sich das auf die Marke auswirkt...und da ist natürlich auch sehr der Mitarbeiter gefordert...“ (M3); „Es ist auch wichtig das Verständnis zu erzeugen, warum etwas so ist, ...wir hören jetzt eigentlich immer...die Banken sind so schlecht...da hat man einiges zu erklären und auch geradezubiegen. Ich glaube es hat jeder von den Auftrag das Markenbild, ich will jetzt nicht sagen ins rechte Licht wieder zu setzen, das Markenbild zu schärfen und zu erklären. Zumindest einen Teil davon.“ (M2); „Ja also ich finde die Verantwortung die dann jeder auch trägt ist, dass... man schon versucht auch eben in der Situation auch Fürsprecher des Unternehmens zu sein.“ (M4); „Ja finde ich auch sehr wichtig, weil gerade in den Medien gerade viel Negatives publiziert wird...wenn sich der Mitarbeiter für seine Marke einsetzt...ist das...gut für die Marke.“ (C1); „...ja durchaus ...das ist durchaus wichtig ...das Vertrauen der Menschen zu schaffen, geht nur über den persönlichen Zugang...“ (C2); „Naja da könnte er halt mit Freunden zusammensitzen, in Diskussion über Banken, Finanzkrise...da eben positive Argumente bringen, was seine Bank eben betrifft und da ein bisschen gegenargumentieren.“ (C5); „...hier sollte definitiv der Mitarbeiter als Fürsprecher agieren, damit es hier zu keiner Schädigung...der Marke...kommen kann, das ist meines Erachtens sehr wichtig.“ (M5); „Das auf jeden Fall. Da sollte man immer auf fachlicher Ebene sagen, aus meinem Wissenstand, da muss man natürlich immer aufpassen, dass man auch wirklich nur Informationen verwendet, die auch öffentlich zugänglich sind...und natürlich, dass man diese Sachen auch weiß...“ (E15);</p>
Ask for customer feedback (E2, E3, E5, E7, M1, M3, C1, C3, C4, C6)	<p>„Man lädt den Kunden oft ein und fragt ihn, wie passt es jetzt? Was gefällt Ihnen und was eher nicht? Aus dem zieht man die Konsequenzen für die Zukunft.“ (E2); „Ich sehe das aktive Fragen auch sehr wichtig. Ich persönlich mache es nach jedem Beratungsgespräch mit der Frage...Ist das Gespräch für Sie so in Ordnung?“ (E3); „Es wird absolut gelebt. Es ist auch so, dass es in den Gesprächen das Mystery Shopping auch gibt, wo wir sofort Feedback bekommen wie sich die Mitarbeiter im Kundengespräch verhalten. „ (E5); „Das wird ja von uns sowieso und der internen Kommunikation sehr stark gefördert, wie die Erste-Nachrichten usw...“ (E7); „Ja vor allem, weil wenn man Fehler macht und man leitet das weiter, wird das das nächste Mal verhindert werden.“ (M1); „Ja absolut. Eben dieses Feedback einfordern und schauen ob man sich verbessern kann. Ja,..“ (M3); „...was mir sehr gut gefallen hat, was halt auch gut für die Marke ist, dass sie fragen, ahm bei jedem Besuch...was man verändern möchte oder ob man zufrieden ist, ob mir der Kontoführung alles in Ordnung ist... (C1); „Ist sicherlich sehr wichtig, habe ich selbst auch schon erlebt, von meiner eigenen Kundenberaterin...“ (C3); „Sicher positiv, immer wenn nachgefragt wird ob alles passt, das ist was, was beim Endkunden positiv ankommt.“ (C4); „Wenn Sie jetzt ein Feedback abgeben und dann persönlich ein Dankeschön haben oder irgendeinen Reiz, dann kommt das gerade bei jungen Leuten besser an.“ (C6);</p>

Deal with brand relevant topics and personal development to get background knowledge (E3, E5, E8, M3, M5, E15)	“Zum Thema Unternehmensmarke...die Erste Bank und die Sparkassen sollen ja noch zusätzlich zur Unternehmensmarke noch etwas bekommen, das wird die Biene sein...ich habe mich damit ein bisschen auseinandergesetzt, damit man vorbereitet ist, wenn die Kunden etwas sagen (E3); „Ich sollte wissen, wie schauts mit der Wirtschaft aus, wie schauts im Immobilienbereich aus, von all diesen Sachen sollte ich schon informativ grundlegende Informationen haben, damit ich mit dem Kunden darüber sprechen kann.“ (E3); „...es geht auch um solche Dinge wie ein bisschen in die Politik hinein, dass man sich da auch ein bisschen interessiert und einfach am Laufenden ist...um da eben auf Augenhöhe dem Kunden zu begegnen ist ganz, ganz wichtig“ (E5); „...bist du in der Freizeit gewillt dich mit Kollegen zu treffen und über Sachen nachzudenken die eigentlich die Firma betreffen...und somit für die Marke und Kultur die sich da entwickeln ganz ganz wichtig. (E8); „...Ja absolut und das wird auch zukünftig im Premiumsegment auch ganz bewusst so eingefordert – das gehört zum Job eines Premiumbetreuers dazu.“ (M3); ...ja hier sollten die Betreuer sich regelmäßig weiterbilden und sich auch sehr stark über das aktuelle wirtschaftliche Geschehen Bescheid wissen um so auch dementsprechendes Backgroundwissen zur Verfügung stellen um bestmöglichen Service bieten zu können.“ (M5); „Man muss aktiv schauen, dass man informiert ist was im Unternehmen vor sich geht. Auch allgemein in der Wirtschaft, man sollte vielleicht also nicht komplett betriebsblind sein...“ (E15);
Be convinced about the own products (E11, M3)	“Im Vertrieb ganz einfach überzeugt sein von den eigenen Produkten, die wir anbieten an unsere Kunden.“ (E11); „das Überzeugt - sein auf die Produkte und Leistungen der Bank auch im privaten Umfeld zu verkaufen.“ (M3);
Show commitment to build up the brand (E11, M3, M5)	„...da hat man gesehen, wie groß der Einsatz der Mitarbeiter war...also ich glaube schon, dass da die Mitarbeiter sehr hinter der Erste Bank stehen.“ (E11); „...naja ich weiß nicht, stolz zu sein für dieses Unternehmen zu arbeiten...“ (M3); „...dass man sich einfach einsetzt für die Filiale, dass man sich dazu committet die Marke zu stärken und zu fördern...“ (M5);

Table 12: Category 5 - Brand support and development behaviors

The fifth category of *brand support and development behaviors* includes the EBBB of *brand development activities*, which consists of activities, which support brand development in any form. On the one hand, this can be in the direct area of responsibility of the employee, e.g. as a brand manager or marketing manager (E4, M2, M4). On the other hand, this is the reporting of innovative ideas of service employees as well as back office employees (E7, E3), which will support the brand building process. In the well-known Austrian banking institute, where the study was conducted, platforms are provided under the working title “Profis forschen” or “Ideenmanagement”, where employees can announce their ideas for building up the brand (E5, E12).

Defend the brand from negative press and correct misconceptions is the next behavior of this category and focuses on the defense of the brand from negative influences of the media and other communication channels. Within this behavior, employees are trying to correct false statements regarding the actual economic situation, invalidate misconceptions and remove customer fears (E2, E5, E8, E9, E10, E13, M1, M3, M2, M4, M5, C1). These situations often occur during employee free time within the circle of friends; when somebody offends a bank employee, the employee should rectify the

statement. However, in such situations, the service employee needs profound banking knowledge (E4, E15, C5).

The next EBBB in the category of *brand support and development behaviors* is *ask for customer feedback*, where employees ask customers for feedback and improvement suggestions to make banking services as comfortable as possible for customers and therefore enhance the brand building process (E2, E3, M3, C1, C3, C4, C6). As a result, possible mistakes can be eliminated or will no longer be made (M1). Also, regular mystery shopping should be conducted to steadily improve customer advice (E5).

Within this category, the next relevant EBBB is *deal with brand relevant topics and personal development to get background knowledge*, where employees concentrate on personal development regarding brand relevant aspects and therefore try to obtain more detailed information about the brand to contribute to the brand building process (E3). This EBBB contains reading newspapers regularly, being well informed of current political developments and also of internal brand development aspects, e.g. when the company gets a new logo, having some relevant background information about this (E3, E5, E15, M5). Especially motivated employees meet in their free time and try to think about advantageous improvement suggestions regarding the brand (E8).

Another relevant opportunity within this category in regard to how employees can contribute to the brand building process is *be convinced about the own products*, which implies that employees act confidently in distributing products and services (E11, M3). This EBBB is applied also in the private context, when the customer advisors are asked how the products of the well-known Austrian bank are in relation to other banking products and offerings (M3).

The last relevant EBBB in this category is *show commitment to build up the brand*. Here employee focus is on demonstrating commitment in the brand building process and being proud to work for this certain banking institute. Employees stand behind the brand and are committed to building up the brand (E11, M3, M5).

3.4.3.6 Category 6 – Employee support behaviors

The last category of *employee support behaviors* was primarily derived from the qualitative analysis. Based on the insights gained from the conducted interviews, this category has become necessary and forms a supplement, which is described in detail in

the literature review and in Table 2 in detail, to the predefined categories. The behaviors within this category focus on demeanors for how employees can support their colleagues in building up the brand and making contributions to strengthen the brand.

Category 6¹³: Employee support behaviors	
<p>This category represents all demeanors for how employees can support colleagues in building up the brand and making contributions to strengthening the brand. Similar behaviors, e.g. organizational citizenship behavior (Organ and Bateman 1983) as well as behaviors applied by executive members to strengthen the brand (Morhart et al. 2009), are described in the literature.</p>	
Employee brand building behaviors (characteristics)	Illustrations
<p>Give advice to other colleagues and team members especially new colleagues regarding the brand values - be a mentor (E2, E3, E4, E8, M1, M3, M4, M5, E15)</p>	<p>“...zum Beispiel unter Kollegen Tipps geben... (E2); Sehe ich als sehr wichtig, denn die jungen Mitarbeiter...sind eigentlich eine der wichtigsten Faktoren zur Stärkung der Unternehmensmarke...sie lernen die Unternehmensphilosophie und sollen dann zukünftig im Beratungsgeschäft und im Dienstleistungsgeschäft erfolgreich tätig sein.“ (E3); „proaktives Zugehen auf Arbeitskollegen, wenn sie was planen und mitdenken, das könnte auch für die Abteilung X interessant sein und über den Tellerrand hinausschauen und die Marke als Gesamtes sehen.“ (E4) ...dass die Marke ein neues Aussehen bekommt, versucht man natürlich als Vermittler aufzutreten...“ (E8); „Das ist auf alle Fälle sehr wichtig. Jeder Mitarbeiter sollte wissen wofür die Sparkasse steht – das wird bei uns von der Personalabteilung gemacht, das ist ein Tagesseminar, dass man erfährt was macht die Sparkasse...“ (M1); „Ich glaube da gibt es noch viel zu tun...das könnte man sicher beim Neueintritt noch stärker positionieren wer die Erste Bank ist, wofür Sie steht und was die Marke bedeutet in unserer Werthaltung...“ (M3); Also als Führungskraft finde ich wichtig, dass einfach die, dass die Mitarbeiter einmal die Werte der Marke kennen und überhaupt sensibel sind dafür, was ist eigentlich die Marke, dass man das Bewusstsein dafür schafft, dass Marke nicht nur Logo ist...sondern dass jeder von uns Markenbotschafter ist...! (M4); „...die Voraussetzung geschaffen werden für die Zukunft ...dass hier die Mitarbeiter schon früh geschult werden...hier spiele ich als Manager natürlich auch eine wichtige Rolle, weil ich ja...die Mitarbeiter dementsprechend auf den richtigen Weg ...bringen muss.“ (M5); „...wenn ich mitbekomme, dass zum Beispiel Sachen jetzt nicht dem Wording entsprechen, ...da weise ich sie jedes Mal darauf hin...das machen wir eigentlich nicht so...oder das ist eigentlich nicht was zur Marke passt.“ (E15);</p>
<p>Motivate colleagues to build up the brand (E2, E4, E5, E7, M1)</p>	<p>“...zum Beispiel ...neue Mitarbeiter zu motivieren, die sich am Anfang noch nicht zurechtfinden und auf uns angewiesen sind, sie zu stärken.” (E2); ...wenn man jetzt zum Beispiel von Studien kommt...dann sehe ich es in jedem Fall darin vielleicht in Form eines Mentors, den man intern ernennt und sagt...kümmere dich doch um den...und schau, dass er vom Anfang an das Richtige von unserer Marke mitbekommt...“ (E4); „das ist halt auch eine Aufgabe des Senior Experts, seine Erfahrungen...an die jüngeren Kollegen weiterzugeben...bei schwierigen Gesprächen dabei sind und die Mitarbeiter unterstützen...“ (E5); „Finde ich schon wichtig – aber das sollte Teil der Einschulung sein...je nachdem wer den Kollegen einschult, kann auch ein Kollege sein.“ (E7); „Das muss man als Führungskraft machen. Man muss sagen, dass man froh sein muss, dass man da arbeiten darf und noch eine eigene Sparkasse sind und deswegen muss man auch dementsprechende</p>

¹³ In brackets the respondents, who all have mentioned this behavior, M...stands for managers, E...stands for employees and C...stands for customers, are named. The figures represent the number of the respondent.

	Geschäfte machen und das geht eben nur durch Präsenz.“ (M1); „
Executives act like a role model (M5, E1, E5, M2, M3, C3)	“Ich muss als Führungskraft diese Vorbildrolle leben“. „Ich würde mich auf jeden Fall einmal in gewisser Weise als Vorbild sehen, dass ich eben diese Markenwerte auch irgendwie vorleben kann...“(M5); „Absolut, die Vorbildwirkung ist natürlich etwas, was sich jede Führungsperson bewusst sein sollte, denn wenn die Führungsperson um 3 aus der Firma geht und ihn die Sache nicht interessiert, wird es die Leute darunter auch kaum interessieren.“ (E1); „Da sind auch die Führungskräfte ganz stark gefordert...die das Vorleben und in Kunden- und Kundenmitarbeitergesprächen das einfach ausloten.“ (E5); „...das ist ja ein Werthaltungssystem, das die Marke ausmacht und wenn ich bei internen Mitteln, seien es Mitarbeitergespräche, sei es der Umgangston miteinander, wenn ich das nicht einhalte, dann widerspricht sich das. Ja. Das wäre dann eine gewisse Scheinheiligkeit, die dann nach außen hin auch dann unglaubwürdig wird.“ (M2); „...ja ich finde halt gerade das Thema Marke ist auch ein sehr starkes das von der Führung, von der gesamten Führungslinie getragen werden muss und ein konsistentes Bild bilden...also das muss wirklich von ganz oben vom Vorstand bis zu jedem Mitarbeiter durchdringen diese Markenwerthaltung.“ (M3); Der Vorgesetzte sollte auf jeden Fall diese Marke auch genauso leben wie es gewünscht ist...von den Mitarbeitern.“ (C3);
Support and servicing other colleagues (E7)	“...haben wir auch eine große Verantwortung den Mitarbeitern gegenüber...dass wir die Mitarbeiter, die irgendwelche Anfragen haben ... schauen, dass wir möglichst alle irgendwie zufrieden stellen können – damit wir uns intern als Marke auch positionieren können und da gut dastehen. (E7);

Table 13: Category 6 - Employee support behaviors

In the last category of employee support behaviors, the first EBBB is *give advice to other colleagues and team members especially new colleagues regarding the brand values - be a mentor*. This activity includes giving advice to other colleagues regarding brand relevant aspects, for example, existing brand values, corporate wording or brand building behaviors (E2, E4, E15). Brand specialists from the marketing or customer experience department try to act as mentors to other employees (E8, M4). The latter is especially very important for new employees to obtain advice on how to build up the brand (E3). Also, participation in relevant seminars and training courses is part of this EBBB (M1, M4). The executive members aim their special attention at the provision of brand relevant information to other employees (M4, M5).

The employee brand building behavior of *motivate colleagues to build up the brand* seeks to motivate new employees to support the brand (E2). In this case, a kind of “brand ambassador” cares about the new employees and provides helpful information concerning the opportunities of how a new employee can support the brand (E4, E5). In parallel, executive members can also try to motivate new colleagues to commit to the brand building process (M1).

As well, the EBBB of *executives act like a role model* represents opportunities for how executive members can act as role models and thus the brand can be supported in the best way. Further, executives should point out new possibilities in the brand building process (E1, E5, M5, M2). In an additional step, the employees see which EBBBs can be applied in an optimal way and they can individually adapt these behaviors (M3).

The last EBBB in the category of employee support behaviors focuses on responsibility in *support and servicing other colleagues* regarding the brand building process. For example, when central units, like new business marketing or branch marketing, supply relevant information or implement a new tool, which supports the service of the bank (E7).

In Tables 8 to 13, all relevant EBBBs have been illustrated and have been assigned to certain categories of EBBBs. In relation to the literature, Table 2 provides an overview of which categories of EBBBs are derived from the literature and which ones are derived from the in-depth interviews. Summarized, it can be said that many of the mentioned EBBBs in Tables 8 to 13 are described in the internal branding literature. An exact delineation of which behaviors are mentioned in the internal branding literature and at the same time are part of the enumeration of this master's thesis can not be provided because this would by far exceed the frame of this thesis. Therefore, this thesis concentrates on this topic on a category-level and explains which categories are derived from the internal branding literature. Further, insights into which EBBBs are exactly described in the literature are listed in detail in the literature review in chapter 2.

3.4.3 Categorization overview of employee brand building behaviors

Based on the list of EBBBs created in the previous subchapter, a final enumeration of all relevant EBBBs can be provided in this subchapter. Some behaviors have been removed from the list of EBBBs when less than three respondents mentioned this opportunity to strengthen the brand in the in-depth interviews. This thesis proceeds from the assumption that when certain behaviors were mentioned rarely in interviews, such behaviors are not that important to strengthening the brand.

In the right column, the number of mentions of the respondents (employees, managers and customers) of this certain behavior are displayed. The number of mentions also includes some aided mentions when respondents were given small hints or had been

asked if a certain behavior can support and strengthen the brand. In this master's thesis, only an aided statement is included in the enumeration of EBBBs when a concrete situation, where the behavior can be applied, is named or a concrete example of usage can be remembered by the respondent. Otherwise, employee brand building behaviors are rejected and are not part of the current enumeration or further conceptualization.

In the first category of *customer orientation*, the behavior of *exclude the personal mood in conversation*, which was named twice across all conducted interviews, *consciously applied body language*, which was named only once, and *positive basic attitude*, which was only named twice in the interviews, were removed from this category and are not part of subsequent research. Also, the behavior of *get to know some new people and potential new customers*, which was described only once by the respondents, was removed from the category of *customer orientation*. In Table 14, the final categorization of category 1 is provided. The provided employee brand building behaviors in Tables 14, 15, 16, 17, 18 and 19 build the basis for future research on the conceptualization of EBBBs.

Category 1 - customer orientation (7 behaviors)	Mentions
Live customer orientation and fulfill customers' needs	17
Flexibility in customer appointments	12
Flexibility in customer issues	6
Open, natural, friendly and honest communication in the interaction with customers and extern partners	13
Building up and maintain customer networks to ensure a close long-lasting customer relationship and live the customer relationship	11
Know the customer and become familiar with the customer	6
Help customers in the free time and answering customer enquiries	6

Table 14: Categorization of customer orientation

Table 15 shows the final overview of the categorization of the EBBBs in the category of *brand representation*. In the second category, the following behaviors were removed from the original list because they were mentioned less than three times: *motivate*

customers to recommend the brand, which was named once and talk about the advertising, which was named twice.

Category 2 - brand representation (10 behaviors)	Mentions
Positive verbal recommendation and representation of the brand	11
Positive word of mouth regarding the products, the service and the company	13
Positive word of keyboard	6
Mentioning the brand name	6
Sponsoring of and participation in events and social projects	15
Showing the brand in the free time	10
Represent the brand on customer events	9
Show the brand values to the outside – to externals	4
Distribute giveaways, goodies and advertising materials	6
Acquire new customers in the free time	5

Table 15: Categorization of brand representation

In the category of *service orientation*, the behaviors of *offering products and make special offers*, which were named twice, and *after customer consultation service* had to be sorted out. Table 16 illustrates the final categorization of the category of *service orientation*.

Category 3 - service orientation (8 behaviors)	Mentions
Competent customer advice	18
Perfect all-round service	12
Provide a high quality service and live quality standards	10
Optimal process of the service	4

Excessive product knowledge and economic know how	5
Effective handling and quick processing of customer enquiries	4
Get and use customer information	5
Use available tools and information materials	10

Table 16: Categorization of service orientation

In the category of *brand congruent behavior*, no behaviors were excluded; all EBBBs were mentioned at least four times. Here Table 17 shows the final categorization of EBBBs in the category of *brand congruent behavior*.

Category 4 - brand congruent behavior (5 behaviors)	Mentions
Live the brand and the brand values (also in the free time)	15
Brand consistent customer appearance	20
Brand consistent process of customer advice	12
Uniform branch appearance	5
Help to carry corporate identity	5

Table 17: Categorization of brand congruent behavior

In the category of brand support and development behaviors, the opportunity to strengthen the brand building process by *be convinced about the products*, which was mentioned only twice, were removed. Table 18 provides a final overview of the categorization of the category of *brand support and development behaviors*.

Category 5 - brand support and development behaviors (5 behaviors)	Mentions
Brand development activities	9
Defend the brand from negative press and correct misconceptions	19

Ask for customer feedback	10
Deal with brand relevant topics and personal development to get background knowledge	6
Show commitment to build up the brand	3

Table 18: Categorization of brand support and development behaviors

In the category of employee support behaviors, the behavior of *support and provide services to servicing other colleagues* had to be removed. Table 19 shows a final categorization of the last category of *employee support behaviors*.

Category 6 – employee support behaviors (3 behaviors)	Mentions
Give advice to other colleagues and team members especially new colleagues regarding the brand values - be a mentor	9
Motivate colleagues to build up the brand	5
Executives act like a role model	6

Table 19: Categorization of employee support behaviors

Finally, six main categories of employee brand building behaviors have been identified, which include, in total, 38 behaviors as to how employees can significantly support and strengthen the brand. By clearly following the guidelines provided in the scientific literature, individual behaviors are assigned correctly to the six main categories. So, the objective is achieved in providing a complete enumeration and categorization of all relevant employee brand building behaviors. The provided list forms the basis of a further conceptualization of EBBBs.

3.4.4 Conceptualization of individual employee brand building behaviors

A complete enumeration and categorization of EBBBs has been provided in the previous subchapter. To answer research question 1b and provide a holistic conceptualization of EBBBs, follow-up online research has to be conducted. The existing six categories, including the assigned employee brand building behaviors, form the basis for future conceptualization. The classification characteristics, which have been used accordingly to the conceptualization of Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos (2012)

as well as Morhart et al. (2009) in the qualitative interviews, have to be extended in the quantitative survey as described in the following paragraphs. Based on the qualitative analysis, only a few EBBBs have been conceptualized in a holistic way. Hence, added classification characteristics need to be provided as well as all respondents need to classify all EBBBs in the quantitative analysis.

However, the main outcome of this subchapter regarding a holistic conceptualization of EBBBs is that 28 of the 38 (74%) employee brand building behaviors are conceptualized exactly based on the quantitative analysis. The other ten behaviors can only partially be classified. The classification, whether an EBBB is performed on the job, off the job or a combination of the two, is possible for all cases. Regarding the classification of employee brand building behaviors, whether an opportunity is in-role, extra-role or a combination of the latter, is often more difficult.

The originally provided classification characteristics, as described in present research, are not sufficient to conceptualize all employee brand building behaviors. In the literature, a strict differentiation of whether a behavior is performed on the job or off the job (Morhart et al. 2009), or is an in-role or extra-role behavior (Motowidlo and Van Scotter 1994; Morhart et al. 2009), is predominant. In the qualitative interviews, several respondents suggested additional classification characteristic for a conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors. They propose a combination of on the job and off the job EBBBs as well as a combination of in-role and extra-role, where a minimum standard / level of fulfillment of the EBBB is prescribed by the organizational role (e.g. in the job-description) and an extensive standard / level of fulfillment of this EBBB is reaching beyond the prescribed role and is thus discretionary. These recommended classification characteristics are integrated in the quantitative analysis to provide a holistic conceptualization of EBBBs. Hence, this master's thesis pursues the assumption that for many EBBBs a strict classification of whether the EBBB is performed on the job or off the job as well as is in-role or extra-role, as suggested in the literature, is not appropriate for a holistic conceptualization.

The following classification characteristics had to be assigned to every individual employee brand building behavior based on the quantitative follow-up online questionnaire (a detailed definition regarding the individual classification criterion and a linkage to the theoretical literature is illustrated in chapter 2).

- Classification characteristic 1: on the job EBBB (1a), off the job EBBB (1b) or a combination of on the job and off the job EBBB (1a+b) → **the latter classification characteristic was not offered as an answering possibility in the in-depth interviews. Based on independent mentions of this classification characteristic of the respondents in the interviews, the classification characteristics have to be extended in the quantitative analysis.**
- Classification characteristic 2: in-role EBBB (2a), extra-role EBBBs (2b) or a combination of the latter, that a minimum standard / level of fulfillment of the EBBB is prescribed by the organizational role (e.g. in the job-description) and an extensive standard / level of fulfillment of this EBBB is going beyond the prescribed role and is discretionary (2c) → **the latter classification characteristic was not offered as an answering possibility in the in-depth interviews. Based on the independent mentions of this classification characteristic of the respondents, the classification characteristics have to be extended in the quantitative analysis.**
- In the further analysis process, these abbreviations (1a, 1b, 1a+b and 2a, 2b, 2c; e.g. “1a/2b”) are assigned to the mentioned EBBBs, e.g. “1a/2b” stands for a behavior, which is provided on the job and is an extra-role behavior, which is not expected from the company.
- The conceptualization of EBBBs is made in two steps. A first attempt to classify individual EBBBs has been conducted based on the qualitative analysis of the in-depth interviews. Based on the interviews, only a few classification characteristics have been assigned objectively to the individual behaviors because the respondents only had the possibility to classify their own mentioned behaviors. Therefore, based on the qualitative analysis, only for a few EBBBs was conceptualization possible. Due to the lack of relevance in answering the research questions of this thesis, a detailed provision of this first step in the conceptualization process, based on the qualitative analysis, is only provided in the Appendixes.

- In a second step, a conceptualization, based on the follow-up online survey, is conducted. Here nearly for all EBBBs, a correct conceptualization has been possible. An EBBB is conceptualized in a correct way when a clear majority (> 50%) of the respondents have assigned the same classification characteristic to a certain EBBB. If this condition is not realized, the EBBB cannot be conceptualized in a clear way and is marked in this thesis with an **X**.

In the following paragraphs, the conceptualization of the EBBBs, according to the individual categories, is described in detail. For every category, two figures are provided, which illustrate the results in a graph. The first figure always shows the outcomes, whether an EBBB is performed on the job, off the job or a combination of the two. The second figure provides further results as to whether an EBBB is an in-role activity, an extra-role behavior or a combination of an in-role or extra-role EBBB. Afterwards, the figures' descriptions, regarding the conceptualization of every EBBB, are designated.

3.4.4.1 Conceptualization of customer orientation

In Figures 9 and 10, classification based on quantitative analysis is described. Figure 9 shows results regarding the classification characteristic 1 for every individual EBBB. Moreover, Figure 10 focuses on the classification characteristic 2, whether the behavior is performed in-role, extra-role or a combination of in-role and extra-role. Afterwards, a detailed conceptualization of the individual EBBBs is provided.

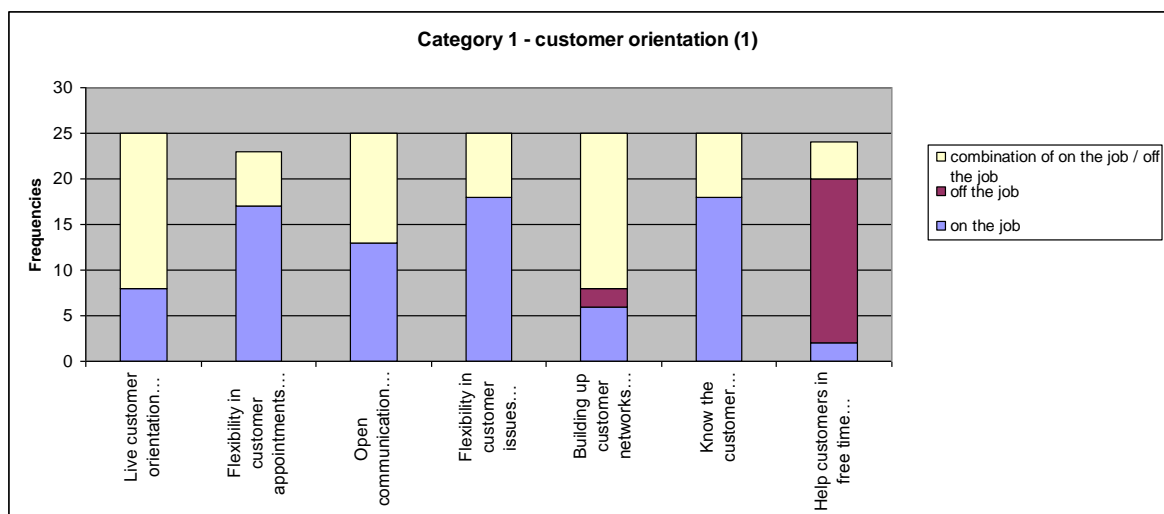


Figure 9: Conceptualization category 1 – Customer orientation (1)

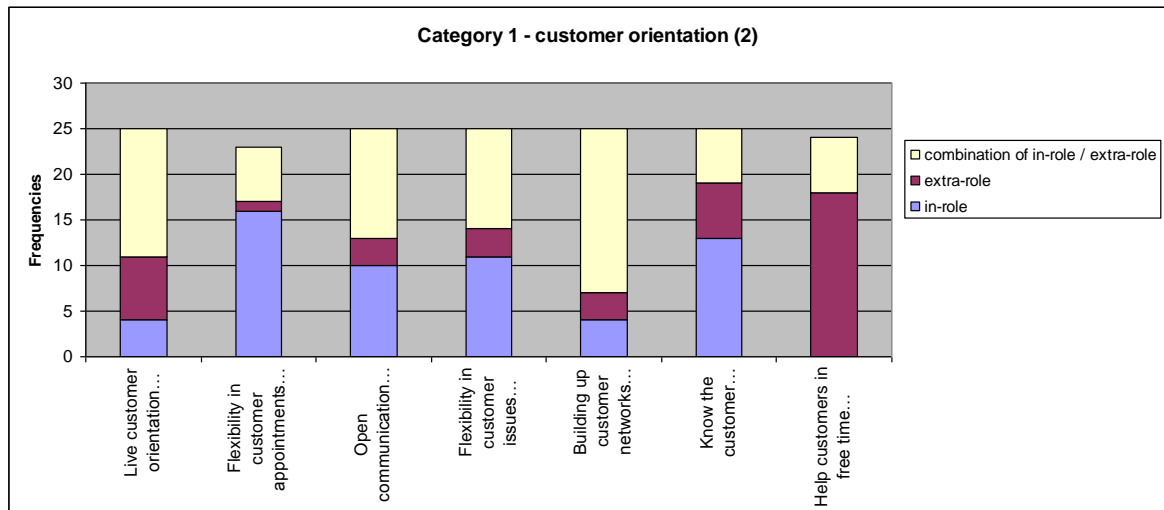


Figure 10: Conceptualization category 1 – Customer orientation (2)

Based on the follow up online survey (see Figure 9), 17 out of 25 respondents (68%) classified the behavior of *live customer orientation and fulfill customers' needs* as an opportunity to strengthen the brand, which is applied both on the job and off the job. Only eight of the respondents (32%) classified this behavior as an on the job behavior. Regarding classification characteristic 2, the picture is not so clear because here four respondents (16%) conceptualized this behavior as an in-role EBBB, seven respondents (28%) classified the behavior as an extra-role EBBB and a majority of 14 respondents (56%) assigned the classification characteristic 2c to the EBBB. The latter assigned abbreviation implies that a basic level of fulfillment of this behavior is role prescribed and an additional fulfillment of *living customer orientation and fulfill customer needs* beyond these minimum requirements, is discretionary. So the EBBB of *living customer orientation and fulfill customers' needs* can be conceptualized as **1a+b/2c**.

Regarding the next EBBB - *flexibility in customer appointments* - 17 out of 23 respondents (74%) conceptualized this EBBB as on the job, which implies that this behavior is applied directly in the area of profession. In contrast, only six respondents (26%) applied the abbreviation 1a+b to this EBBB. Regarding classification characteristic 2, 16 out of 23 respondents (69%) conceptualized this behavior as in-role, which implies that this behavior is part of the job description and definitely asked of the company. After a conceptualization based on the qualitative analysis as well as the quantitative analysis, the EBBB of *flexibility in customer appointments* can be conceptualized as **1a / 2a**.

Regarding the next EBBB - *open, natural, friendly and honest communication in the interaction with customers and extern partners* - the quantitative analysis faced difficulties in the conceptualization of this EBBB. Here as shown in Figure 9, 13 out of 25 respondents (52%) chose the classification criterion 1a to classify this EBBB. The remaining 12 respondents (48%) applied 1c to this EBBB, which suggests that a basic level of fulfillment of this behavior is role prescribed and an additional fulfillment of this EBBB beyond these minimum requirements is discretionary. Concerning the other classification criterion, 10 respondents (40%) identified this EBBB as in-role, three out of 25 respondents (12%) as extra-role and 12 respondents (48%) assigned 2c to this behavior. Based on these ambiguous results in this research step, an objective classification of this EBBB can only be provided as the following: **1a/X**.

As illustrated in Figure 9, a strong majority of 18 respondents (72%) conceptualized the EBBB of *flexibility in customer issues* as a behavior, which is applied on the job. In contrast, only seven of the respondents (28%) saw this EBBB provided off the job. Regarding classification criterion 2 as shown in Figure 10, 11 respondents (44%) assigned characteristic 2a to the behavior and another 11 respondents (44%) assigned characteristic 2c, which implies that a basic level of fulfillment of *flexibility in customer issues* is role prescribed and a subsequent fulfillment of this EBBB beyond these minimum requirements is discretionary. The remaining three respondents (12%) chose characteristic 2b for this EBBB. So it definitely can be said that the EBBB of *flexibility in customer issues* is applied on the job, but it is not really clear if the EBBB should be classified as in-role, or a combination of in-role and extra-role. Thus this EBBB can be conceptualized also only partially: **1a / X**.

Based on the online survey, a clear conceptualization regarding the EBBB of *building up and maintain customer networks to ensure a close long-lasting customer relationship and live the customer relationship* can be provided. Seventeen out of 25 respondents (68%) assigned the classification characteristic 1a+b to the EBBB, which implies that the EBBB, on the one hand, is applied directly in the professional environment and, on the other hand, also in the free time of employees. Further, as elucidated in Figure 10, 18 out of 25 respondents (72%) preferred the classification criterion 2c, which stands for a combination of an in-role and extra-role behavior. However, after the analysis of the online survey, a clear conceptualization of *building up and maintain customer*

networks to ensure a close long-lasting customer relationship and live the customer relationship can be provided as follows: **1a+b/2c**.

As elucidated in Figure 9 and 10, a clear conceptualization of the EBBB of *know the customer and become familiar with the customer* can be provided based on the online survey. Eighteen out of 25 respondents (72%) classified the EBBB as an opportunity to strengthen the brand, which is applied on the job. Further, regarding classification characteristic 2, thirteen of the respondents (52%) assigned 2a to the EBBB, which implies, that the behavior can be conceptualized as an in-role EBBB. In contrast, six of the respondents (24%) classified the EBBB as 2c and also additional six respondents (24%) chose the classification criterion extra-role for the conceptualization of this EBBB. Finally, according to the results of the online survey, the behavior of *know the customer and become familiar with the customer* can be conceptualized in an objective way: **1a/2a**.

After analyzing the online survey, a clear picture of how to conceptualize the EBBB of *help customers in the free time and answering customer enquiries* can be provided (see Figure 9 and 10). Eighteen out of 24 respondents (75%) mentioned that this behavior is applied off the job; hence, it takes place during free time. Regarding classification criterion 2, 18 out of 24 (75%) respondents classified the EBBB as an extra-role brand building behavior. After the analysis of the online survey, the EBBB of *help customers in the free time and answering customer enquiries* can be conceptualized as follows: **1b/2b**.

3.4.4.2 Conceptualization of brand representation

Figures 11 and 12 provide a graphical overview of how the individual EBBBs of the second category of *brand representation* can be conceptualized according to the quantitative analysis of the online survey.

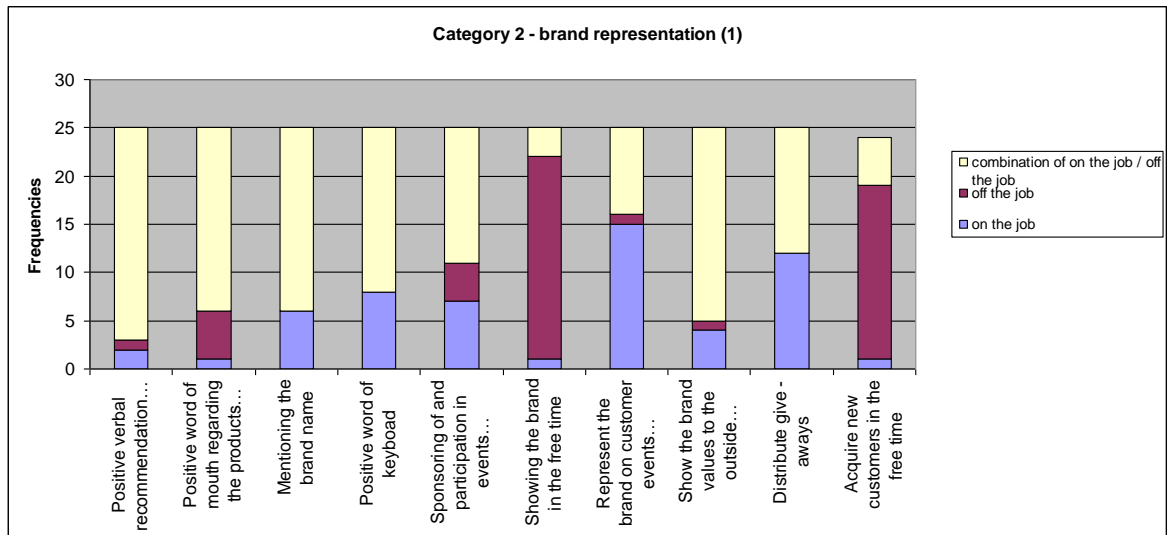


Figure 11: Conceptualization category 2 – Brand representation (1)

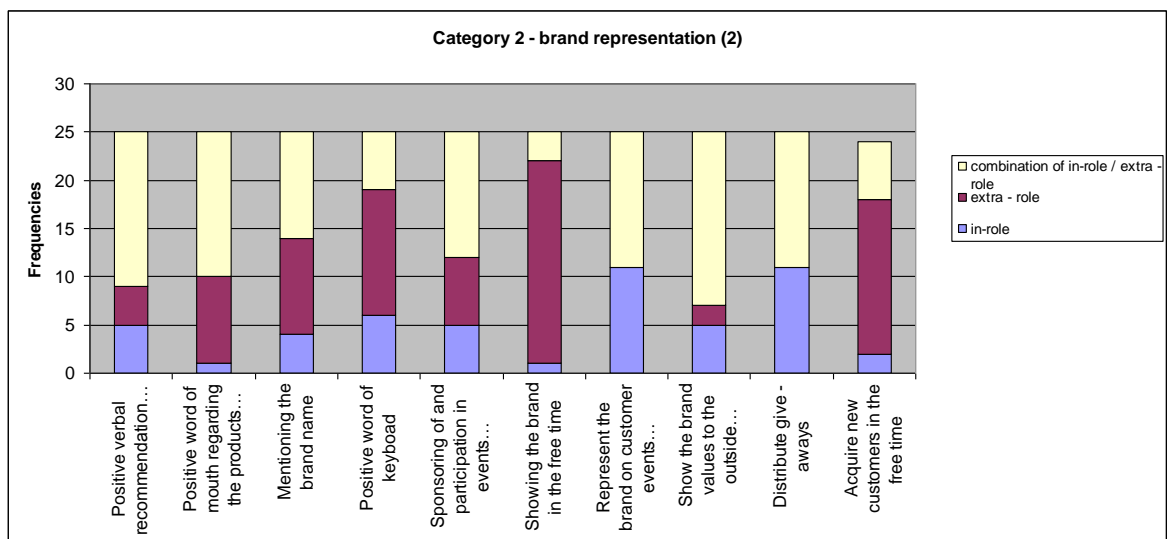


Figure 12: Conceptualization category 2 – Brand representation (2)

Based on the analysis of the online survey regarding the EBBB of *positive verbal recommendation and representation of the brand*, a valid conceptualization can be provided. Here 22 out of 25 respondents (88%), who represent a clear majority, conceptualized this EBBB as a combination of an on the job behavior and an off the job behavior. Further, regarding the second characteristic, 16 respondents (64%) classified this behavior as 2c, which implies that a basic level of fulfilling this EBBB is definitely role- prescribed by the company and an extensive level of fulfillment of this EBBB is provided out of their personal convictions. The clear outcome of the online survey confirms that the EBBB of *positive verbal recommendation and representation of the brand* can be conceptualized as follows: **1a+b/2c**.

Regarding the next EBBB of *positive word of mouth regarding the products, the service and the company*, 19 out of 25 respondents (76%) assigned the classification characteristic 1a+b to this EBBB, which indicates that activity to enhance brand building is also performed on the job as well as off the job. Based on the outcomes of the follow-up online survey, a clear majority of the respondents decided to conceptualize this EBBB in the same way. Fifteen respondents (60%) classified the behavior to strengthen the brand as a combination of an in-role and extra-role activity. This means that a basic level of fulfillment of this activity to build up the brand is role prescribed and an additional fulfillment beyond these minimum requirements is discretionary. The remaining nine respondents (36%) mentioned that the EBBB should be conceptualized as extra-role. Only one of the respondents chose to classify this EBBB as an in-role brand building behavior. In the end, a final conceptualization of the employee brand building behavior of *positive word of mouth regarding the products, the service and the company* can be provided as follows: **1a+b /2c**.

Based on the follow-up online survey, most of the respondents, exactly 19 (76%), classified the EBBB of *mentioning the brand name* as a combination of on the job and off the job. So the behavior is applicable in the professional environment as well as in the free time of employees. Regarding the second classification characteristic, an exact conceptualization cannot be found based on the outcomes of the online survey. Here 11 respondents (44%) classified the EBBB as a combination of in-role and extra-role, ten interviewees (40%) mentioned that this behavior is applied discretionally and is not a part of the job requirements or expected from the company, and four respondents (16%) classified the behavior as an in-role EBBB. Finally, only a partial conceptualization of *mentioning the brand name* can be provided in the current master's thesis, which is as follows: **1a+b/X**.

Regarding the next EBBB of *positive word of keyboard*, 17 of the respondents (68%) answered that the behavior is performed on the job as well as off the job. The remaining eight respondents (32%) argued that this EBBB is performed during working hours, on the job. Regarding the second classification characteristic in the quantitative analysis, 13 respondents (52%) classified the activity as an extra-role activity, which arises out of self-motivation. Further, six respondents (24%) mentioned that this EBBB should be

conceptualized as an in-role behavior and the other remaining six respondents (24%) stated that this EBBB is a combination of an in-role and extra-role activity to build up the corporate brand. After the quantitative analysis, an objective conceptualization of the behavior is provided as follows: **1a+b/2b**

As illustrated in Figures 11 and 12, the EBBB of *sponsoring of and participation in events and social projects* can be conceptualized in an objective way. Here 14 respondents (56%) formed the majority, classifying this EBBB as an opportunity to strengthen the brand, which is performed also on the job as well as off the job. Another seven interviewees (28%) rated this EBBB as an on the job EBBB. The remaining four respondents (16%) assigned the abbreviation 1b to this behavior. Regarding the second classification characteristic, a narrow majority of 13 respondents (52%) chose the classification characteristic 2c for this EBBB, which implies that a basic level of fulfillment of this behavior is expected or role-prescribed of the company and an extensive form of performing this behavior is out of self-motivation. Five respondents (20%) answered that this EBBB is in-role and the last seven interviewees (28%) stated that this EBBB is extra-role. Finally, an objective conceptualization can be provided as follows: **1a+b / 2c**.

Concerning the conceptualization of the EBBB of *showing the brand in the free time*, the following results can be mentioned in this thesis (see also Figure 11 and 12). Here 21 out of 25 respondents (84%) rated that this EBBB should be applied during the free time of the respondents. Also, a clear majority, exactly 21 of the respondents (84%), stated that this activity to enhance the brand building process is an extra-role behavior, which arises in total out of self-motivation and is not a part of the job description. So, finally, a definite conceptualization of *showing the brand in the free time* can be provided: **1b/2b**.

Further insights, as shown in Figures 11 and 12, as to how the EBBB of *represent the brand on customer events* should be conceptualized based on the outcomes of the online survey can be delivered within this subchapter. Regarding this behavior, 15 of the respondents (60%) estimated this activity to be performed on the job, within the working hours of an employee and also provided classification characteristic 1a to this EBBB. As well, regarding the second classification characteristic, based on the follow up online survey, 14 out of 25 interviewees (56%) classified this EBBB as 2c. Thus a

clear conceptualization of *represent the brand on customer events* can be provided: **1a/2c**.

Based on the outcomes of the follow-up online survey, a clear classification of the EBBB of *show brand values to the outside – to externals* can be provided. Here 20 interviewees (80%) stated that this is an on the job behavior, which is performed during working hours. In the second step of conceptualization, based on the online survey, 18 out of 25 respondents (72%) mentioned that this behavior can be conceptualized as 2c. Finally, a clear conceptualization of *show the brand values to the outside – to externals* can be provided: **1a+b/2c**.

The next behavior - *distribute give-aways, goodies and advertising materials* - can be clearly classified based on the outcomes of the follow-up online survey (see Figure 11 and 12). In this case, a narrow majority of the interviews, exactly 13 respondents (52%), rated this EBBB as a combination of on the job and off the job. The other 12 interviewees (48%) conceptualized this EBBB as 1a. Regarding the second classification criterion, 14 respondents (64%) classified this EBBB as 2c. In the end, an objective conceptualization of the EBBB of *distribute give-aways, goodies and advertising materials* can be delivered as follows: **1a+b/2c**.

As shown in the Figures 11 and 12, an objective conceptualization of the last EBBB of this category - *acquire new customers in the free time* - can be provided. A very clear direction of how this EBBB should be conceptualized is illustrated. Eighteen of the respondents (72%) classified this activity as an off the job behavior, which takes place during the free time of employees. Further, 16 out of 24 respondents (66%) saw this EBBB as 2b, which is not expected from the company and is discretionary. As a result, a conceptualization of *acquire new customers in the free time* can be provided as follows: **1b/2b**.

3.4.4.3 Conceptualization of service orientation

In Figure 13 as well as in Figure 14, a graphical overview of how the individual EBBBs of the third category - *service orientation* - can be conceptualized is provided:

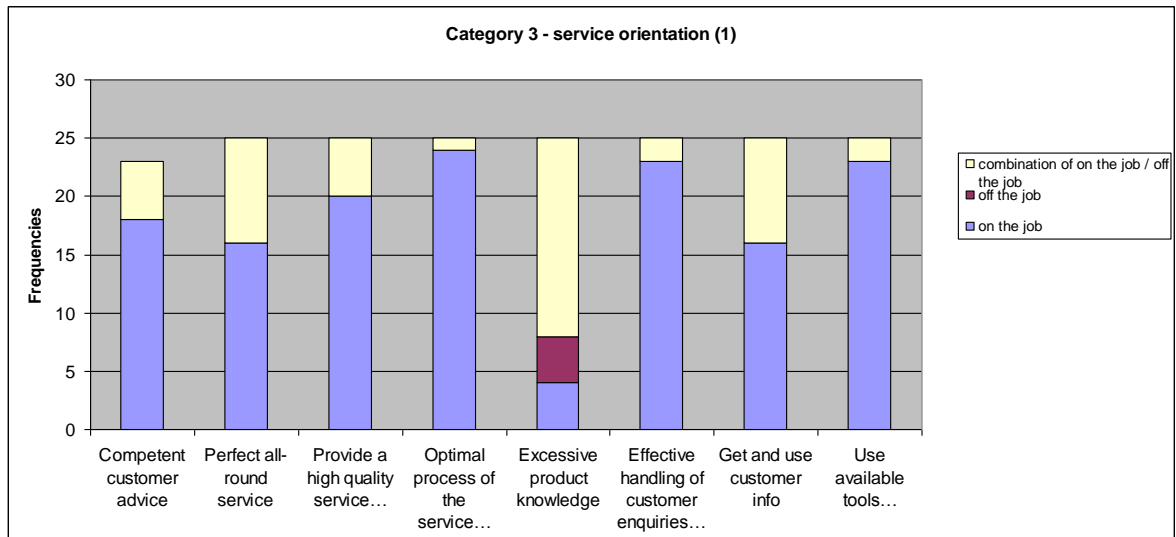


Figure 13: Conceptualization category 3 – Service orientation (1)

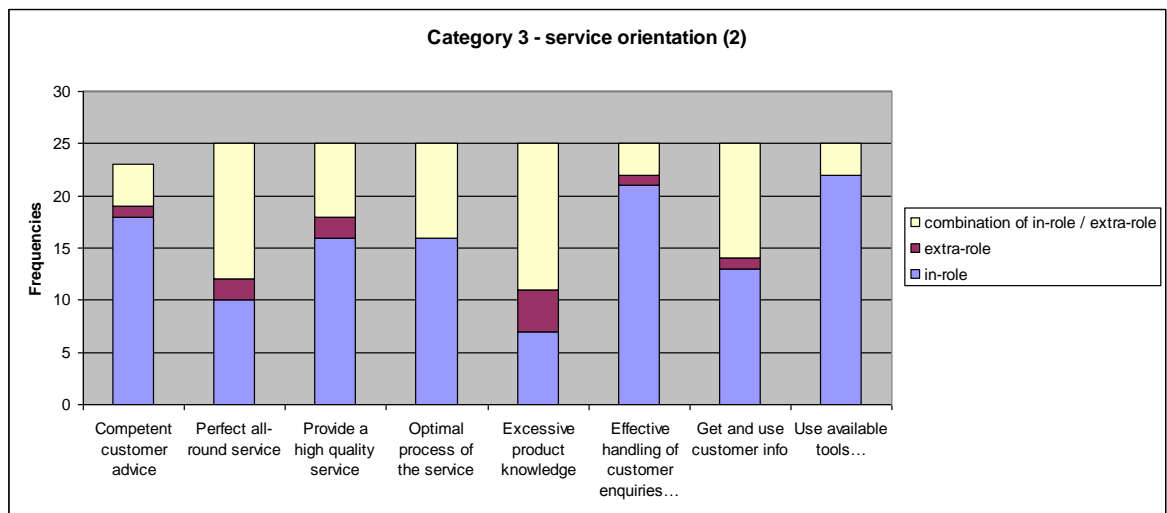


Figure 14: Conceptualization category 3 – Service orientation (2)

Based on the online survey, an objective conceptualization of the EBBB of *competent customer advice* can be elucidated. Here 18 out of 23 respondents (78%) assigned the classification characteristic 1a to this EBBB, which implies that this opportunity to strengthen the brand is applied directly in the job environment. Furthermore, 18 respondents (78%) evaluated this behavior as part of the job description and as expected by the company. Based on both analyses, the EBBB of *competent customer advice* can be conceptualized: **1a/2a**.

Regarding the next EBBB – *perfect all-round service* - a clear picture can be provided as to how this EBBB is conceptualized. As illustrated in Figure 13 and 14, we can see that 16 out of 25 respondents (64%) classified this behavior as 1a. Also, 13 out of the 25 respondents (52%) assigned the classification criterion 2c, which implies that a basic

level of fulfillment of this behavior is role prescribed and an additional fulfillment of this EBBB beyond these minimum requirements is discretionary. In contrast, ten respondents (40%) assigned the classification characteristic 2a to this EBBB and another two interviewees (8%) chose 2b for this EBBB. Finally, the online survey provides enough information to categorize the EBBB of *perfect all-round service* objectively as follows: **1a/2c**.

Provide a high quality service and live quality standards is the next EBBB in this category, which has been conceptualized. The follow-up online survey makes the information available that 20 out of 25 respondents (80%) classified this activity as an on the job behavior, which is applied during common professional job activities. Only five respondents (20%) applied the classification characteristic 1a+b to this EBBB. Further, 16 respondents (64%) conceptualized the EBBB as an in-role behavior definitely expected from the company. In the end, the employee brand building behavior can be conceptualized objectively as follows: **1a/2a**.

The online survey also provides necessary insights into the conceptualization of the EBBB of *optimal process of the service*. Here 24 out of 25 respondents (96%) classified this behavior as 1a, which implies that the behavior is performed during working hours. Regarding classification characteristic 2, 16 respondents (64%) chose 2a to conceptualize this activity to engage in the brand building process. Contrarily, nine respondents (36%) applied the abbreviation 2c to this EBBB, which stands for a combination of an in-role and an extra-role employee brand building behavior. Finally, a valid conceptualization of the EBBB of *optimal process of the service* can be provided in this thesis as follows: **1a/2a**.

Concerning the conceptualization of *excessive product knowledge and economic know how*, a valid conceptualization of this behavior can be illustrated. Seventeen out of 25 respondents (68%) provided the classification characteristic 1a+b. As well, regarding the second classification criterion, 14 out of the 25 respondents (56%) chose 2c, which implies that a basic standard of the applied behavior is part of the job description and the over-average fulfillment of this behavior is driven by self-motivation. In comparison, seven respondents (28%) classified this behavior as 2a and the remaining four interviewees (16%) decided that this behavior should be conceptualized as 2b.

Finally, the EBBB of *excessive product knowledge and economic know how* can be conceptualized as follows: **1a+b/2c**.

Based on the online survey, the EBBB of *effective handling and quick processing of customer enquiries* can be conceptualized exactly. Figures 13 and 14 provide a well-defined picture of how to classify this EBBB. A clear majority of 23 respondents (92%) conceptualized this behavior as 1a, which implies that this behavior is practiced during working hours in the office. Also, regarding classification criterion 2, the respondents had a uniform opinion of how this behavior should be conceptualized. Twenty-one of the questioned respondents (84%) classified this EBBB as 2a. Based on the quantitative analysis, a valid conceptualization of *effective handling and quick processing of customer enquiries* can be provided as follows: **1a/2a**.

Regarding the EBBB of *get and use customer information*, the picture of how to conceptualize this behavior is not so clear in comparison to other employee brand building behaviors. Here 16 out of the 25 respondents (64%) defined that this EBBB as an activity performed during working hours. Regarding the second classification characteristic, a narrow majority, exactly 13 out of 25 respondents (52%), classified this behavior as 2a, while 11 respondents (44%) chose the abbreviation 2c, which implies a combination of in-role and extra-role activity to enhance the brand building process. Finally, a conceptualization for the behavior of *get and use customer information* can be provided as follows: **1a/2a**.

For the EBBB of *use available tools and information materials*, a clearer conceptualization is possible. A significant majority of 23 respondents (92%) applied the classification characteristic 1a to this brand building behavior. Further, 22 out of 25 interviewees (88%) classified the EBBB as an in-role behavior. Finally, the behavior of *use available tools and information materials* can be classified as follows: **1a/2a**.

3.4.4.4 Conceptualization – brand congruent behavior

The following Figures, 15 and 16, show reliable results regarding both classification characteristics for every individual EBBB. Afterwards, a detailed conceptualization for every EBBB within this category can be provided.

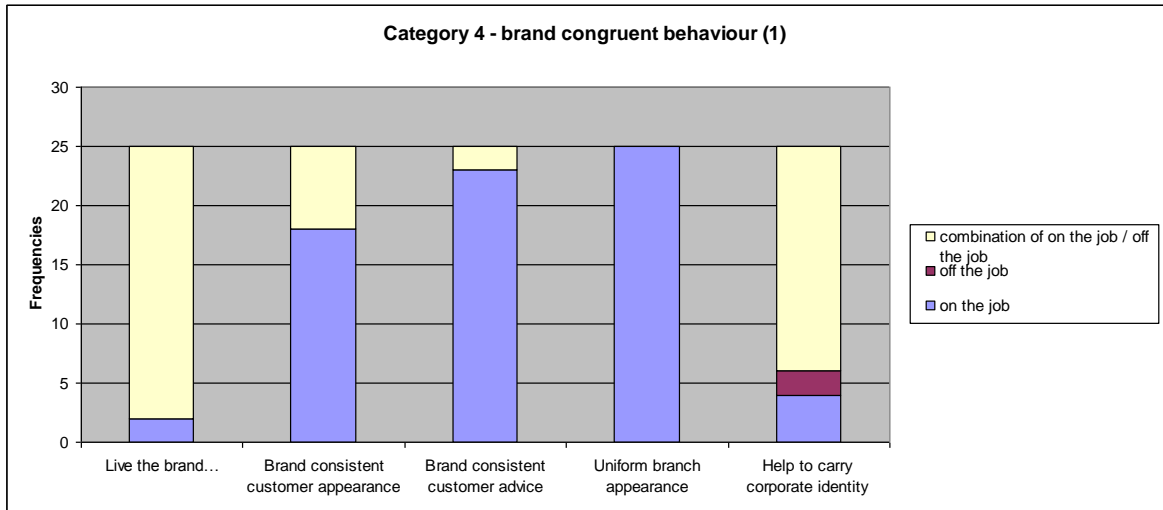


Figure 15: Conceptualization category 4 – Brand congruent behavior (1)

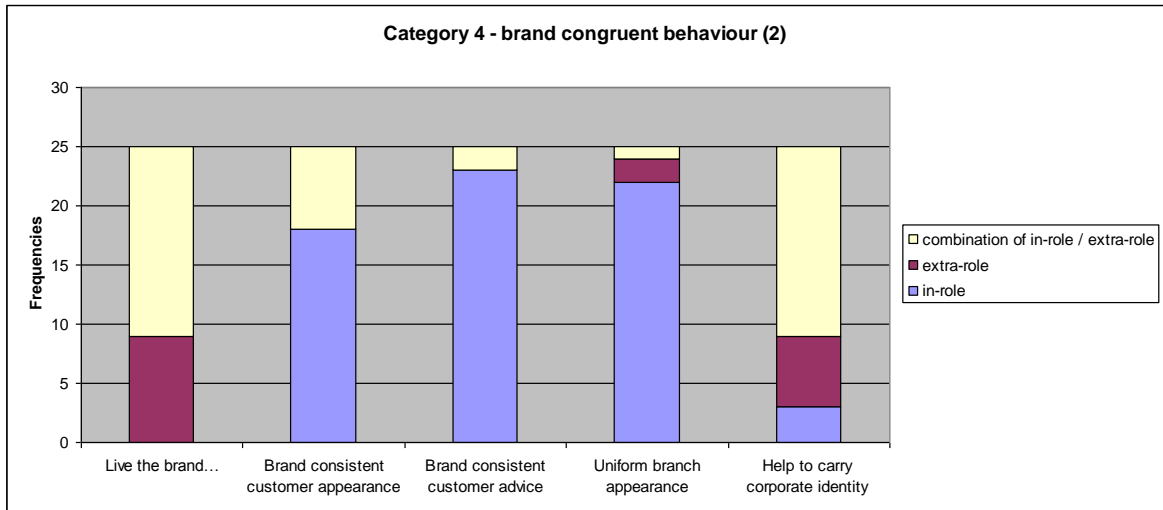


Figure 16: Conceptualization category 4 – Brand congruent behavior (2)

Based on the follow-up online survey, a clear and valid direction as to how respondents classified the employee brand building behavior of *live the brand and the brand values (also in the free time)* can be highlighted. Here 23 out of 25 respondents (92%) classified the EBBB as a combination of an on the job and off the job activity to enhance the brand building process. Regarding the second classification characteristic, 16 respondents (64%) applied abbreviation 2c to this EBBB. The remaining nine respondents (36%) decided that this EBBB is an extra-role behavior, which is discretionary and not expected from the company. Hence, after this quantitative research step, the following objective conceptualization of the behavior of *live the brand and the brand values (also in den free time)* can be provided: **1a+b/2c**

Concerning the EBBB of *brand consistent customer appearance*, 18 out of 25 respondents (72%) conceptualized this behavior as an on the job behavior. Regarding the classification characteristic 1, the remaining seven interviewees provided the abbreviation 1a+b to this activity. The outcome regarding the second classification step is that 18 respondents (72%) assigned the characteristic 2a to the EBBB, which implies that the behavior is seen in-role and therefore expected from the company. This allocation represents the majority because the remaining seven respondents (28%) chose to conceptualize this EBBB as 2c. In the end, after the analysis of the follow-up online survey, the EBBB of *brand consistent customer appearance* can be conceptualized as follows: **1a/2a**.

As illustrated in Figures 15 and 16, an exact conceptualization of the EBBB of *brand consistent process of customer advice* can be provided. Concerning this EBBB, 23 out of 25 respondents (92%) classified this behavior as 1a. The remaining two respondents applied the abbreviation 1a+b to this EBBB. Regarding the second classification characteristic, the picture is quite similar to the first step of the conceptualization. Based on the follow-up online survey, 20 respondents (80%) conceptualized the behavior as an in-role opportunity to strengthen the brand. Finally, a clear conceptualization of the EBBB of *brand consistent process of customer advice* can be outlined as follows: **1a/2a**.

However, regarding the next EBBB - *uniform branch appearance* - all 25 respondents (100%) conceptualized this EBBB as an on the job activity, which is part of daily business life. Regarding the second classification characteristic, 22 respondents (88%) assigned 2a to the EBBB, which means that this activity is seen clearly as in-role. Two respondents chose the classification characteristic 2b for a classification and one respondent used 2c to conceptualize this EBBB. Based on these outcomes, the behavior of *uniform branch appearance* can be conceptualized as **1a/2a**.

Concerning the last EBBB in this category - *help to carry corporate identity* - the results of the online-survey confirm a clear idea of how to conceptualize this activity to enhance the brand building process. Here the majority of the respondents, exactly 19 out of 25 interviewees (76%), categorized this EBBB as a behavior, which is applied also on the job as well as off the job. Only four respondents (16%) stated that this EBBB can be conceptualized as 1a, meanwhile the remaining two respondents (8%) decided that

this behavior can be conceptualized as 1b. Regarding the second classification characteristic, most of the respondents, exactly 16 (64%), saw this EBBB as a combination of an in-role and an extra-role behavior, which implicates that a basic level of fulfillment of this activity to build up the brand is role prescribed and an additional fulfillment of this EBBB beyond these minimum requirements is discretionary. Thus after the analysis of the online survey, the EBBB of *help to carry corporate identity* can be classified as follows: **1a+b/2c**.

3.4.4.5 Conceptualization – brand support and development behaviors

Figures 17 and 18 provide a graphical overview of how the individual EBBBs of the fifth category - *brand support and development behaviors* - can be conceptualized after quantitative analysis of the online survey.

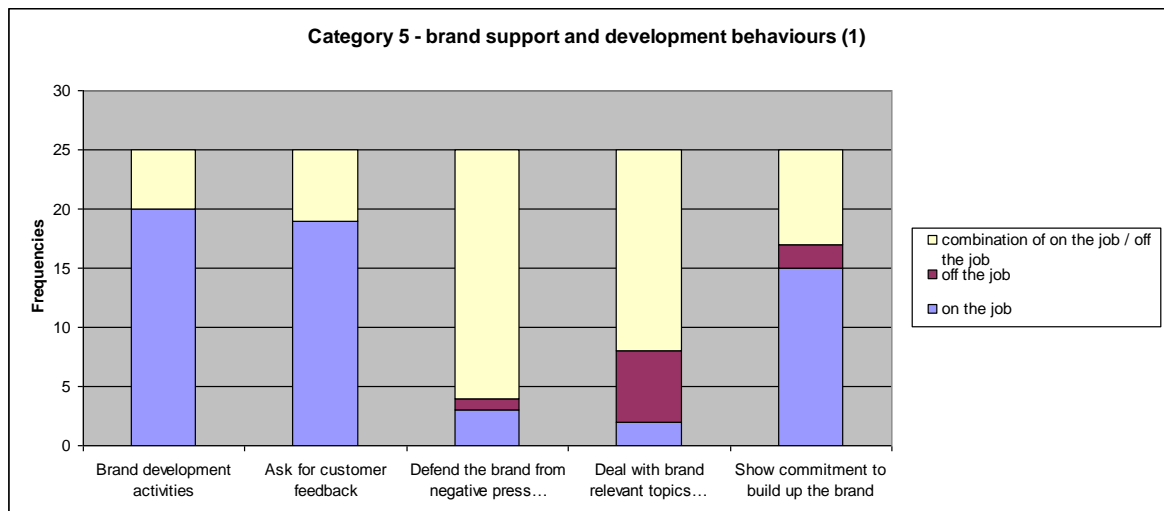


Figure 17: Conceptualization category 5 – Brand support and development behaviors (1)

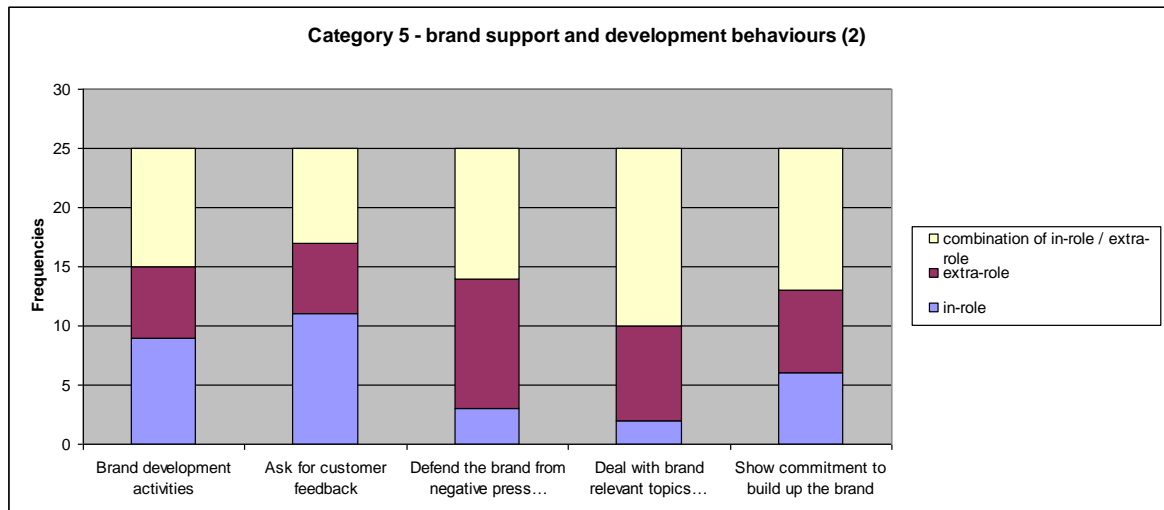


Figure 18: Conceptualization category 5 – Brand support and development behaviors (2)

Regarding the EBBB of *brand development activities*, 20 out of 25 respondents (80%) chose the classification characteristic 1a for this behavior. The remaining five interviewees (20%) mentioned that this behavior is, on the one hand, applied on the job and, on the other hand, off the job. Regarding the second part of the conceptualization, the picture is not as clear as in the first step. Here ten respondents (40%) stated that the behavior should be conceptualized as 2c, which means that a certain basic standard of this EBBB is role prescribed and an over-average fulfillment of this EBBB is discretionary and not expected of the organization. Beyond that, nine respondents (36%) indicated that this EBBB is in-role and the remaining six (24%) interviewed persons classified this EBBB as 2a. Regarding this EBBB, no clear majority in the assignment of the second classification characteristic can be identified. Finally, only a partial conceptualization of *brand development activities* can be provided: **(1a/X)**.

The next EBBB in need of conceptualization and in the category of *brand support and development behaviors* is *ask for customer feedback*. Based on the quantitative analysis, a holistic conceptualization of this EBBB is difficult to conduct. Nineteen out of 25 respondents (76%) defined this EBBB as an on the job activity, which is applied directly in the professional environment. Regarding the second classification characteristic, a clear direction of how this EBBB should be conceptualized cannot be detected. Here 11 respondents (44%) classified this EBBB as 2a. Another eight respondents (36%) chose the classification characteristic 2c, meanwhile the remaining six interviewees used the abbreviation 2b to conceptualize this EBBB. Based on the

analysis of the follow up online survey, a conceptualization of *ask for customer feedback* can only be done in parts: **1a/X**.

Concerning the next EBBB - *defend the brand from negative press and correct misconceptions* - the outcomes of the online survey can also deliver only a partial conceptualization of this behavior. In this case, 21 respondents (84%) classified the current EBBB as 1a+b. Further, three interviewees assigned 1a to the EBBB and one respondent allocated 1b for the conceptualization of this behavior. Regarding the second classification characteristic, 11 respondents (44%) decided that the behavior is extra-role and another 11 respondents (44%) chose the abbreviation 2c to describe the conceptualization of the EBBB. The remaining two respondents (8%) chose the classification characteristic 2a, which stands for an in-role activity. Finally, a holistic conceptualization of the EBBB of *defend the brand from negative press and correct misconceptions* cannot be found based on this analysis; only a conceptualization in parts was possible: **1a / X**

A clear conceptualization of the EBBB of *deal with brand relevant topics and personal development to get background knowledge* can be provided. As illustrated in Figures 17 and 18, a clear idea of how to conceptualize this EBBB can be outlined. Seventeen out of 25 respondents (68%) assigned the abbreviation 1a+b to this activity, which means that this behavior is taking place on the job as well as off the job. Regarding the second classification characteristic, a clear majority of 15 interviewees (60%) stated that this EBBB is a combination of an in-role and an extra-role activity to strengthen the brand. Thus a holistic conceptualization of *deal with brand relevant topics and personal development to get background knowledge* can be provided as follows: **1a+b/2c**.

Also, for the last EBBB of *show commitment to build up the brand* in the category of *brand support and development behaviors*, a full conceptualization is not possible based on the results of the quantitative analysis. Here 15 respondents (60%) assigned the classification characteristic 1a to this behavior, which stands for an application of the EBBB during working hours. Regarding the second classification criterion, 12 of the respondents (48%) defined this EBBB as 2c. Further, six respondents allocated 2a and seven respondents assigned 2b to this behavior. As a result, no clear majority regarding the second classification criterion was identified. According to the evaluation of the

quantitative survey, the EBBB of *show commitment to build up the brand* can be conceptualized partially as follows: **1a/X**.

3.4.4.6 Conceptualization – employee support behaviors

Figures 19 and 20 provide a graphical overview of how the individual EBBBs of the last category of employee support behaviors can be conceptualized based on the outcomes of the follow-up online survey.

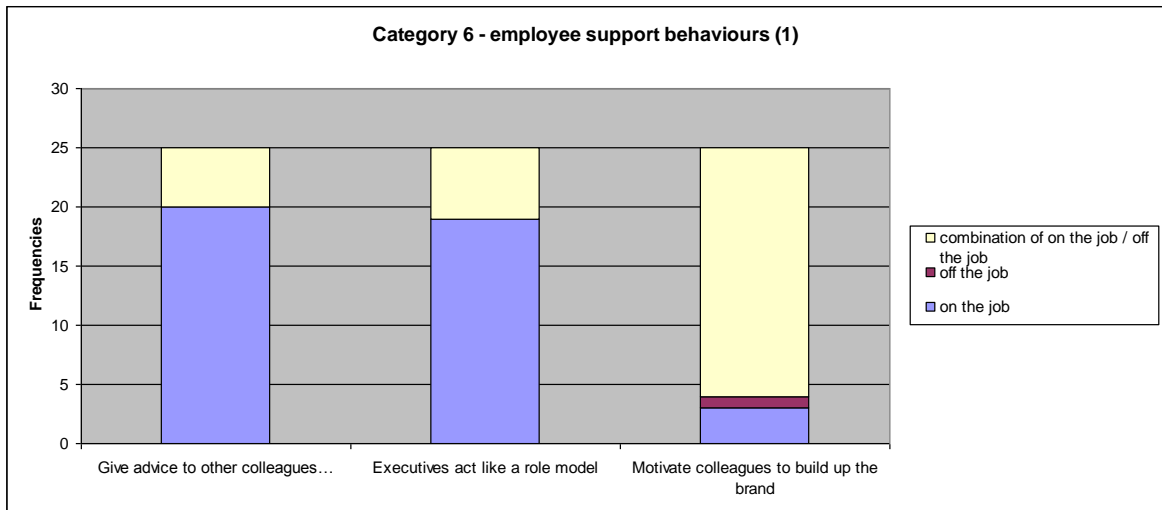


Figure 19: Conceptualization category 6 – Employee support behaviors (1)

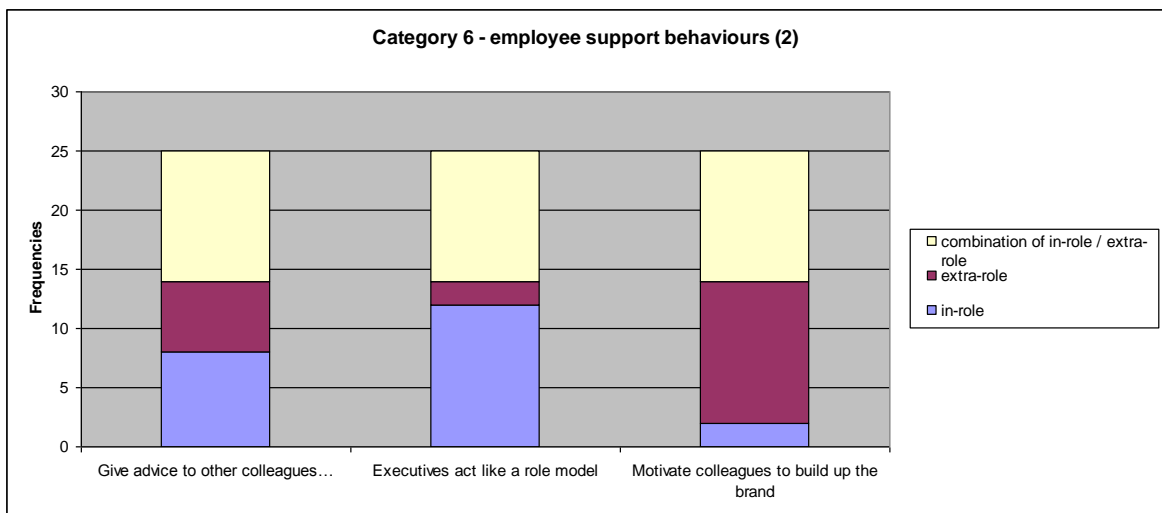


Figure 20: Conceptualization category 6 – Employee support behaviors (2)

Based on the online survey, a clear direction of how the respondents have conceptualized the EBBB of *give advice to other colleagues and team members especially new colleagues - be a mentor* can only be provided in parts. Twenty of the respondents (80%) classified this activity to support the brand as 1a. The remaining five respondents (20%) assigned the classification characteristic 1a+b to the behavior.

Regarding the second classification characteristic, the allocation does not show a clear majority. Here 11 out of 25 respondents (44%) decided that the behavior is a combination of in-role and extra-role activity, which means that a certain basic standard is role prescribed and an over-average fulfillment of this EBBB is discretionary, thus not expected of the organization. Another six respondents (24%) allocated the abbreviation 2a to this behavior and the remaining eight interviewees (32%) stated that this behavior should be conceptualized as 2a. Finally, the EBBB of *give advice to other colleagues and team members especially new colleagues - be a mentor* only can be conceptualized partially as follows: **1a /X**.

The analysis of the EBBB of *executives act like a role model* also cannot provide a full conceptualization of this behavior. An application based on the first classification criterion can be done successfully. Here 17 respondents (72%) stated that this EBBB is performed on the job, during working hours. Concerning the second classification characteristic, 12 respondents (48%) saw this behavior as 2a; meanwhile 11 of the respondents (44%) classified this EBBB as 2c. Finally, only a conceptualization in parts as follows can be provided: **1a/X**.

Regarding the last EBBB - *motivate colleagues to build up the brand* - in the category of *employee support behaviors*, the follow-up online survey cannot provide a total conceptualization. In this case, 12 respondents (48%) classified this behavior as 1a, meanwhile 13 of the respondents (52%) stated that this activity as a way to build up the brand is also performed on the job as well as off the job. Regarding the second classification characteristic, 12 out of 25 respondents (48%) identified this behavior as an in-role activity; meanwhile, 11 of the respondents (44%) preferred conceptualizing this EBBB as 2c. After the quantitative analysis, a conceptualization regarding *motivate colleagues to build up the brand* can only be provided in parts as follows: **1a+b/X**.

Finally, it can be said, that due to the extension of the existing conceptualization approach in the literature (Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Morhart et al. 2009), nearly a complete and holistic conceptualization of EBBBs can be delivered. Twenty-eight out of the 38 EBBBs have been conceptualized in this master's thesis. Based on the analysis of the conducted in-depth interviews, only a few employee brand building behaviors could be classified. How the individual employee brand building behavior can be conceptualized based on the literature is shown in detail in the literature review

in chapter 2. A complete one-to-one comparison to the literature is rather difficult because, on the one hand, the same conceptualization model with identical classification characteristics does not exist in the present literature and, on the other hand, in many conceptualization approaches, only the whole category (Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Morhart et al. 2009) is conceptualized and not individual EBBBs, as is the approach of this master's thesis.

3.4.5 Final conceptualization of individual employee brand building behaviors

In this subchapter, the detailed outcomes provided in the previous subchapter regarding the conceptualization of all employee brand building behaviors are summarized. Further, a clear displayed overview of the final conceptualization of the employee brand building behaviors is provided in the following paragraphs.

The first attempt to conceptualize EBBBs based on the qualitative analysis was very difficult because only for a few of EBBBs were useful assignments of the classification characteristics identified. In the qualitative study, the respondents only had the possibility to assign classification characteristics to their own mentioned EBBBs, not for all existing EBBBs, as in the quantitative online survey. Enclosed in the Appendixes of this master's thesis, the detailed research steps of the conceptualization process of EBBBs based on the outcomes of the in-depth interviews are described. Based on the quantitative online survey, with extended classification characteristics, a holistic conceptualization of EBBBs can be provided in Table 20.

CATEGORY	BEHAVIOR ¹⁴	ON-OFF THE JOB DISTINCTION			IN-ROLE/EXTRA-ROLE DISTINCTION		
		on the job	off the job	on and off the job	in-role	extra-role	In-role and extra-role
Customer orientation	Live customer orientation and fulfill customers' needs			X			X
	Flexibility in customer appointments	X			X		
	Flexibility in customer issues	X					
	Open, natural, friendly and honest communication in the interaction with customers and extern partners	X					
	Building up and maintain customer networks to ensure a close long-lasting customer relationship and live the			X			X
	Know the customer and become familiar with the customer	X			X		
	Help customers in the free time and answering customer enquiries		X			X	
Brand representation	Positive verbal recommendation and representation of the brand			X			X
	Positive word of mouth regarding the products, the service and the company			X			X
	Positive word of keyboard			X		X	
	Mentioning the brand name			X			
	Sponsoring of and participation in events and social projects			X			X
	Showing the brand in the free time		X			X	
	Represent the brand on customer events	X					X
	Show the brand values to the outside – to externals			X			X
	Distribute giveaways, goodies and advertising materials			X			X
	Acquire new customers in the free time		X			X	
Service orientation	Competent customer advice	X			X		

¹⁴ EBBBs, which can be conceptualized in a complete way are highlighted in grey

	Perfect all-round service	X					X
	Provide a high quality service and live quality standards	X			X		
	Optimal process of the service	X			X		
	Excessive product knowledge and economic know how			X			X
	Effective handling and quick processing of customer enquiries	X			X		
	Get and use customer information	X			X		
	Use available tools and information materials	X			X		
Brand congruent behavior	Live the brand and the brand values (also in the free time)			X			X
	Brand consistent customer appearance	X			X		
	Brand consistent process of customer advice	X			X		
	Uniform branch appearance	X			X		
	Help to carry corporate identity			X			X
Brand support and development behaviors	Brand development activities	X					
	Defend the brand from negative press and correct misconceptions	X					
	Ask for customer feedback	X					
	Deal with brand relevant topics and personal development to get background knowledge			X			X
	Show commitment to build up the brand	X					
Employee support behaviors	Give advice to other colleagues and team members especially new colleagues regarding the brand values - be a mentor	X					
	Motivate colleagues to build up the brand			X			
	Executives act like a role model	X					

Table 20: Final conceptualization of EBBBs

Table 20 illustrates a clear overview of the final holistic conceptualization of all relevant EBBBs identified during the analysis process of this master's thesis. More specifically, it can be shown that 28 out of the 38 (74%) employee brand building behaviors can be conceptualized exactly based on the quantitative analysis. The other ten behaviors can only be classified partially. In all cases, the classification of whether an EBBB is performed on the job, off the job or a combination of the two, has not been a problem. Here the online survey provides in all cases clear results. The classification of the employee brand building behaviors, whether an opportunity is in-role, extra-role or a combination, was often more difficult. Regarding the second classification characteristic, several different approaches of how to classify the EBBBs have been mixed up and have made a definitive conceptualization, based on the majority of mentions, difficult in some cases. Further research must investigate this research problem and focus on this part of the conceptualization of EBBBs in more detail.

3.4.6 Main differences between employees, managers and customers regarding the conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors

In this subchapter, the main differences for conceptualization regarding the different groups of respondents - like employees, executive members and customers - are illustrated. In general, it can be said that between the individual groups of respondents, not many serious differences in the conceptualization were identified. Some slight tendencies of how the EBBBs are conceptualized, which are typical for certain groups of respondents, are provided in the following paragraphs. In general, most of the EBBBs have been conceptualized uniformly among all categories of respondents.

3.4.6.1 Customer orientation – main differences between individual respondents groups

Regarding the category of *customer orientation*, slight differences based on the analysis can be found. Concerning the enumeration of EBBBs, one tendency, which is relevant for several categories in this thesis, is that the managers on average named more possibilities as to how employees can strengthen the brand than employees or customers. This fact can be applied for all EBBBs of this category, except for *open, natural, friendly and honest communication in the interaction with customers and extern partners*.

Necessary to point out is that executive members show a strong tendency of seeing behaviors, like *live customer orientation and fulfill customers' needs; flexibility in customer appointments; and open, natural, friendly and honest communication in the interaction with customers and extern partners* as in-role. Meanwhile, the other groups of respondents (employees and customers) tended to rate these EBBBs a little bit more extra-role, more as a combination of in-role and extra-role behavior, where a minimum standard of fulfillment of these EBBBs is role prescribed and an over-average fulfillment is discretionary out of self-motivation. It is important to say that the mentioned differences are just slight tendencies based on the conducted analysis. The reasons for the different tendencies must be clarified in further research.

In general, it can be said that customers show a tendency to assign classification criteria 2c to the activities (e.g. *live customer orientation and fulfill customers' needs and flexibility in customer issues*), which implies that a basic fulfillment of these behaviors is role prescribed and an extensive application of these behaviors is extra-role. The reason for this could be¹⁵ that customers are not quite sure of which behaviors are in-role and extra-role because of missing insights into the daily working life of the service employees of a well-known Austrian Bank. Regarding the first classification characteristics - whether an EBBB is performed on the job or off the job - no serious differences were identified.

3.4.6.2 Brand representation - main differences between individual respondents groups

In the second category of *brand representation*, the following differences regarding different points of view in the conceptualization of EBBBs can be identified. The individual EBBB of *sponsoring of and participation in events and social projects* has been mentioned by all managers as an important opportunity to support the brand. Here only one of three employees mentioned this EBBB in the interviews as an important possibility to strengthen the brand. Based on these outcomes, participation in events and social projects is, especially for the management, an important issue to strengthen the brand. Instead, for the customers as well as for the employees, the EBBB of *positive*

¹⁵ Author's note: these assumptions are made out of the insights gained from the conducted studies

word of mouth regarding the products, the service and the company is more important in comparison to executive members.

After the qualitative and quantitative research steps, concerning the first classification characteristic, a strong tendency of how the executive members have conceptualized EBBBs, like *positive verbal recommendation and representation of the brand; positive word of mouth regarding the products, the service and the company; positive word of keyboard; sponsoring of and participation in events and social projects; and distribute give aways, goodies and advertising material* as activities, which are applied on the job as well as off the job, is visible. In this case, in contrast, employees and customers see these behaviors to be more on the job because they separate more clearly between business life and private life. The reason for this might be,¹⁶ that executive members want their employees to build up the brand also outside their regular working hours. This eventually can cause high assignment by the management of the characteristics 1a+b, which implies that these behaviors are also applied off the job.

Based on the qualitative and quantitative analysis, it is obvious that there was a strong tendency of managers to classify the EBBBs, e.g. *positive word of mouth regarding the products, the service and the company; sponsoring of and participation in events and social projects; and represent the brand on customer events* as activities, which are a combination of in-role and extra-role activities. In contrast, employees and customers partially tend to classify EBBBs, like *positive word of mouth regarding the products, the service and the company* and *sponsoring of and participation in events and social projects*, as extra-role because they do not feel that these EBBBs are expected by the company. Here a main difference can be detected regarding the point of view between managers and employees based on the different roles each person represents in the company. The reason for these differences must be analyzed in a further separate research study.

3.4.6.3 Service orientation - main differences between individual respondents groups

It is notable that the EBBBs of *provide a high quality service and live quality standards; use available tools and information materials; and get and use customer information*

¹⁶ Author's note: these assumptions are made out of the insights gained from the conducted studies

have often been mentioned in the conducted interviews by executive members as an opportunity to strengthen the brand. In contrast, for employees and customers, these EBBBs have not been decisive in enhancing the brand building process. Maybe one reason for this could be,¹⁷ for example, that the usage of customer information and of all existing service tools in the customer advice, are important management issues nowadays in a bank.

Regarding classification characteristic 1, whether a brand is performed on the job or off the job, no significant differences in the conceptualization between employees, managers and customers can be identified. In a second step of conceptualization, whether or not an activity is in-role or extra-role, some differences occur between the different groups of respondents. Here employees tend to classify the EBBBs of *perfect all-round service; optimal process of the service* and *get and use customer information* as in-role activities, which are part of the job description. The customers see these EBBBs more as a combination of in-role and extra-role activities; meanwhile the managers are not quite sure how to conceptualize these EBBBs. The reasons for these differences must be analyzed in a future research study with focus on this facet.

Regarding the EBBB of *effective handling and quick processing of customer enquiries*, the customers evaluated this activity strongly as a combination of in-role and extra-role, where a basic level of fulfillment is role prescribed and extensive fulfillment is discretionary. In this case, the employees and the executive members clearly see the behavior as in-role. One reason for the latter described difference can be¹⁸ that here the customers again, as described also above, are not quite sure which behaviors are definitively expected from the company.

3.4.6.4 Brand congruent behavior - main differences between individual respondents groups

Regarding the category of *brand congruent behavior*, the majority of managers mentioned the EBBBs of *brand consistent process of customer advice* and *uniform branch appearance* in the interviews as an opportunity to strengthen the brand.

¹⁷ Author's note: these assumptions are made out of the insights gained from the conducted studies

¹⁸ Author's note: these assumptions are made out of the insights gained from the conducted studies

Contrary, these EBBBs were not often named by employees and customers. The reasons for this must be investigated in a further research study. The EBBB of *brand consistent customer appearance* is obviously very important for customers because here all seven interviewed customers pointed out this opportunity to strengthen the brand in the in-depth interviews.

In an extended conceptualization, no main differences between the different groups of respondents could be highlighted. Regarding the first step of conceptualization of the EBBBs, whether an employee brand building behavior is on the job, off the job or a combination of the two, no differences between employees, managers and customers could be identified. Also, regarding the second step in conceptualization, no differences could be pointed out.

3.4.6.5 Brand support and development behaviors - main differences between individual respondents groups

In the fifth category of employee brand building behaviors, the following major differences in the enumeration of EBBBs between employees, executive members and customers can be detected. Based on the in-depth interviews, the two EBBBs of *show commitment to build up the brand* and *brand development activities* were often mentioned by managers as an effective possibility for building up the brand. In contrast to the other groups of respondents, who do not rate these EBBBs as relevant to contribute to the brand building process as the managers. A reason for this could be¹⁹ the certain role of the executive members in the brand building process. Executives are often responsible for the enhancement of the brand building process and so these behaviors come to their minds more often in contrast to employees or customers. Also, very relevant for the managers was the EBBB of *defend the brand from negative press and correct misconceptions*. All five executives named this EBBB in the interviews as an important activity to support the brand building process. In contrast, only less than a half of the customers mentioned this EBBB as a good opportunity for enhancing the brand building process.

Regarding the first step of conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors, the following major differences are described. Customers had a strong tendency to classify

¹⁹ Author's note: these assumptions are made out of the insights gained from the conducted studies

the activity of *show commitment to build up the brand* as a combination of on the job and off the job, in opposition to the employees and the managers, who definitely see this EBBB as an on the job behavior. Further, also the EBBB of *ask for customer feedback* and *brand development activities* were classified very clearly as on the job activities by the employees and the managers. In contrast, the customers also tended to categorize these EBBBs as a combination of on the job and off the job behavior, which implies that these behaviors are applied both during working hours and also in the free time of the customers. Concerning the other EBBBs, no significant differences can be recognized in this thesis.

In the second step of conceptualization, whether an EBBB is in-role, extra-role or a combination of the two, more differences in the conceptualization between employees, executive members and customers can be recognized. Regarding the EBBBs of *show commitment to build up the brand* and *deal with brand relevant topics and personal development to get background knowledge*, the employees did not see these behaviors clearly as a part of their job description. In contrast, the executives expected this behavior in a basic form of fulfillment. Here we have different points of view regarding these EBBBs. To ascertain further information regarding the reasons for these differences, a separate study needs to be conducted focusing on this special topic. Also, differences can be detected concerning *ask for customer feedback* and *brand development activities*. The employees tended to evaluate these EBBBs more as in-role activities, which are expected from the company. A complete different point of view is represented by the customers, who stated that these EBBBs are, on the one hand, in-role and, on the other hand, extra-role, depending on the level of fulfillment. Regarding this EBBB, the executives did not reach a consensus on how to conceptualize these activities to enhance the brand building process.

3.4.6.6 Employee support behaviors - main differences between individual respondents groups

In the last category of employee brand building behaviors, some slight differences in the conceptualization of EBBBs between employees, executive members and customers were identified. Based on the qualitative analysis, for the executive members, the EBBBs of *give advice to other colleagues and team members, especially new colleagues regarding the brand values - be a mentor* and *executives act like a role*

model were relevant. In both cases, 80 % of the managers mentioned these behaviors as important opportunities to strengthen the brand. Here the other respondents did not tend to rate these behaviors with the same importance. The reason for this might be,²⁰ that these are activities, which are often applied by the executive members, especially in the case of *executives act like a role model*. The executives are also more in charge of giving advice to new employees in regards to what the relevant brand values are and how the brand can be built up. This could be the responsible reason²¹ for the strong tendency of the managers to mention these behaviors.

Regarding classification characteristic 1, whether a brand building behavior is performed on the job, off the job or a combination of the two, strong differences have been recognized concerning the brand building behavior of *executives act like a role model*. Here executives preferred the point of view that this EBBB is performed on the job as well as off the job. The employees tended to categorize this behavior as an on the job activity and the customers are discordant and unable to decide whether this EBBB is performed on the job or is a combination of on the job and off the job. Regarding the other EBBBs, no differences in the first step of classification could be found.

In a further step of conceptualization, some interesting differences also occur during an extensive analysis. In case of the EBBBs of *give advice to other colleagues team members, especially new colleagues regarding the brand values - be a mentor* and *executives act like a role model*, customers had a strong tendency to classify these EBBBs as a combination of in-role and extra-role activities, based on the level of fulfillment. The employees and managers tended to classify these behaviors as in-role, meaning behaviors expected from the company and part of the job description. The reason for this could be,²² that the customers are not sure, as already described above, as to which behaviors are expected from the company.

In conclusion, there are less serious differences in the conceptualization of EBBBs between employees, managers and customers. However, some slight differences, which

²⁰ Author's note: these assumptions, are made out of the insights gained from the conducted studies

²¹ Author's note: these assumptions are made out of the insights gained from the conducted studies

²² Author's note: these assumptions are made out of the insights gained from the conducted studies

are true for all six categories of EBBBs, can be outlined, but most of the differences are only valid for a certain category of behaviors. In most cases, the respondents have conceptualized the behaviors as more or less identical. One difference is that managers, on average, named more behaviors relevant for building up the brand. As well, customers were often prone to conceptualizing a behavior as a combination of in-role and extra-role behavior. Moreover, executive members slightly tended to see EBBBs as performed on the job as well as off the job and as in-role brand building behaviors. In this thesis, some assumptions for possible reasons for the differences, based on the analysis, are provided, but they are not empirically proven. Therefore, a further study needs to investigate the reasons for existing differences.

3.4.7 Importance of the individual EBBBs

The following subchapter seeks to answer research questions 2a and 2b of this thesis. Therefore, a ranking regarding the importance of the individual EBBBs should be provided in the following paragraphs. The respondents have assigned numbers from 1 (not important to strengthen the brand) to 10 (very important to strengthen the brand) to the individual EBBBs to identify which behaviors are seen as more important to strengthening the brand and which activities are seen less important in supporting the brand building process.

Summarized, it can be outlined that based on the outcomes of this thesis, the importance of employee brand building behaviors to strengthen the corporate brand, especially in the service sector, is undisputed. Based on the analysis, 96.3% of the respondents mentioned that EBBBs are important for a company and can influence overall performance positively. A clear ranking regarding the importance of individual EBBBs to enhance the brand building process is outlined in this subchapter. The most important category of employee brand building behaviors is *service orientation* with an average mean of 8.86. The second most important category of employee brand building behaviors is *customer orientation*, which has been rated by the respondents with an average score of 8.74. Finally, it can be outlined that in general, most of the EBBBs were rated very high and therefore can be seen as important opportunities for enhancing the brand building process.

3.4.7.1 General importance of employee brand building behaviors

In this subchapter, research question 2a - as to whether it generally is important for a company to have employees, who engage in the brand building process - will be answered. Is the organization able to benefit from an outstanding performance of its employees, who steadily participate in the brand building process? Also, research studies have underpinned the importance of brand building behaviors for the economic performance of the company (e.g. Punjaisri and Wilson 2007).

Table 21 illustrates which respondents have answered the question “Do you think that it is important for a company, to have employees, who participate in the brand building process?” with yes or no. For a better understanding of whether EBBBs in general are important or not, some comments and substantiations of the statements are also provided in this table²³.

Question regarding the importance of EBBBs	Yes	No	Comments / Substantiations
Do you think that it is important for a company, to have employees, who participate in the brand building process?	E1, E2, E3, E4, E5, E6, E7, E8, E9, E10, E11, E12, E13, E15, M1, M2, M3, M4, M5, C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7	E14	“...sehr wichtig. Gerade im Dienstleistungsbereich, wo man eben sehr homogene Produkte verkauft, wird es auf Dauer...positive Effekte haben.” (E1); „Ohne solche Menschen ist es für ein Unternehmen schwieriger erfolgreich zu arbeiten.“ (E2); „Absolut, das hat uns ja die Vergangenheit schon gezeigt, dass eine Fluktuation (von Betreuern, Anm. Autor) speziell in einem Dienstleistungsbereich von Kunden aber schon gar nicht akzeptiert wird eigentlich...“ (E10); „Sehr wichtig...es muss glaube ich authentisch bleiben...hängt auch von der Position ab. Ab einem gewissen Level erwartet es man natürlich und finde ich es auch legitim, weil du einfach andere Gehaltsniveaus erreichst, wo der Deal ok ist...“ (E12); „...Ja, also ich glaube man sollte, da sollte man wirklich schon beim Recruiting schauen, dass die Leute zur Unternehmenskultur passen und im Idealfall sollte ja eigentlich die Unternehmenskultur ja vor allem die Marke widerspiegeln.“ (E15); „Das ist für ein Unternehmen, das vom Kunden lebt nicht nur wichtig, sondern auch unerlässlich.“ (C2); „Auf jeden Fall...bei jedem Dienstleistungsunternehmen und auch bei einer Bank ist das sehr wichtig, ja.“ (C5). „Auf jeden Fall, ich glaube, dass es fast einer der wichtigsten Punkte ist, weil wenn nicht einmal die Mitarbeiter überzeugt sind vom Unternehmen, dann schaut es halt eher schlecht aus.“ (C6);

Table 21: Importance of employees to engage in the brand building process

Regarding research question 2a - if it is important for a company to have employees, who strengthen the corporate brand and participate in the brand building process - a

²³ The respondents, who all have mentioned this behavior, are listed in brackets. M = managers, E = employees and C = customers. The figures represent the number of the respondent.

clear statement can be delivered in this thesis. Based on the analysis of the in-depth interviews, 26 out of 27 respondents definitely think that employees, who engage in the brand building process in a positive way, are important for a company to compete successfully on the market.

The respondents consider the commitment and the engagement of employees to building up the corporate brand, especially in services, as very important (E1, E10, C2, C5). The given reasons for this fact, especially in the area of financial services, are that offered services and products are very homogeneous in comparison to the competition and so employees are playing a more and more a central role in service delivery (E1). This trend is also very well described in the literature (Brodie et al. 2009; Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Punjaisri and Wilson 2007; Tomczak et al. 2009). Further, one respondent identified a positive overall economic performance as a consequence of a successful brand building process supported by the employees of a company (E2). Additionally, another respondent considered the brand building process very important because, as a result, employees are more loyal towards the company and employee turnover can be reduced, which is very important for consistent service delivery (E10). Also, another respondent stated that the importance of the brand building process is related to the authentic delivery of the brand promise and the authentic implementation of relevant brand building behaviors (E12).

In conclusion, it can be mentioned that the importance of the brand building process and the relevance of brand building activities to strengthen the corporate brand, especially in the service sector, is undisputed. Of the respondents, 96.3% agree with and confirm the latter statement.

3.4.7.1 Customer orientation - importance of the individual EBBBs

In Figure 21 the importance of individual EBBBs within the category of *customer orientation* is clearly illustrated.

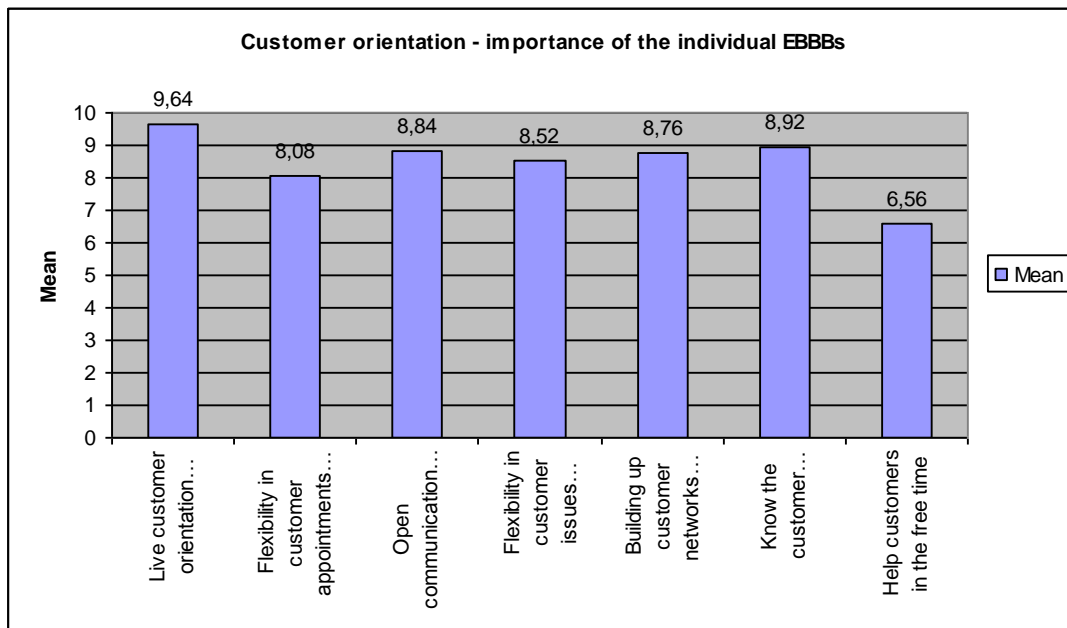


Figure 21: Importance Customer orientation

The EBBB of *live customer orientation and fulfill customers' needs* is seen as the most important employee brand building behavior within the category of *customer orientation*, with a mean of 9.64. The behaviors of *flexibility in customer appointments; flexibility in customer issues; open, natural, friendly and honest communication in the interaction with customers and extern partners; building up and maintain customer networks to ensure a close long-lasting customer relationship and live the customer relationship; and know the customer and become familiar with the customer* are seen more or less equally important to enhancing the brand building process. These behaviors were rated with a mean between 8.08 and 8.92. The employee brand building behavior of *help customers in the free time and answering customer enquiries* is the least important opportunity for strengthening the brand within this category, with a mean of 6.56.

The average score of the whole category of *customer orientation* is 8.74. This fact implies that on average the EBBBs within this category are in general important and helpful in strengthening the brand. The average standard deviation among the category is 2.02, which is relatively low. A low standard deviation can be interpreted as respondents scarcely differing in their evaluation regarding the importance of the individual employee brand building behaviors.

3.4.7.2 Brand representation - importance of individual EBBBs

Figure 22 provides an overview regarding the average evaluation of the importance of EBBBs in the category of *brand representation*.

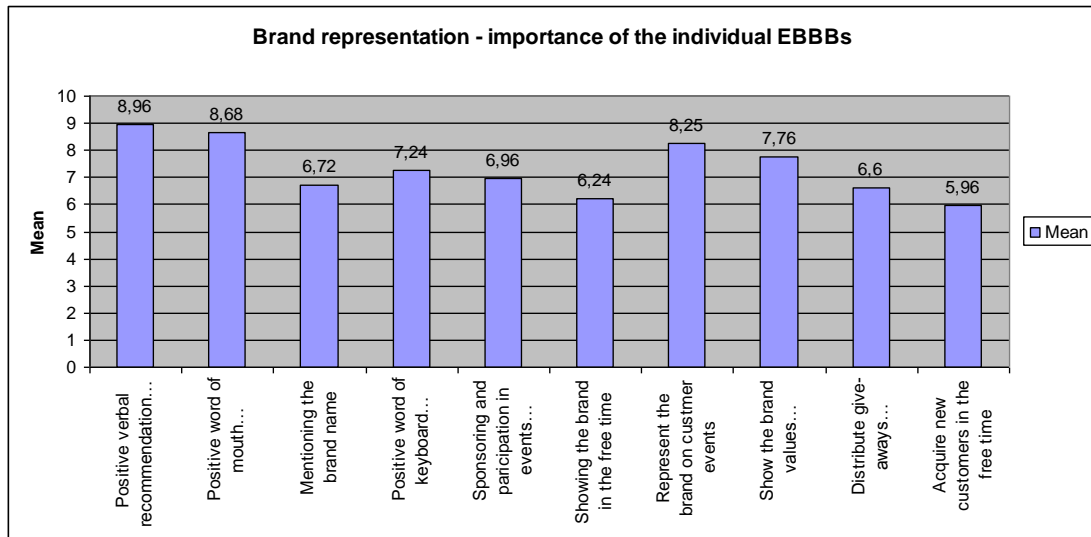


Figure 22: Importance Brand representation

The most important behavior within this category is *positive verbal recommendation and representation of the brand*, with a mean of 8.96. Located slightly behind are the behaviors *positive word of mouth regarding the products, the service and the company*, with a mean of 8.68, and *sponsoring of and participation in events and social projects*, with a mean of 8.76. Less important in this category are the behaviors of *showing the brand in the free time; distribute giveaways, goodies and advertising material; mentioning the brand name; and acquire new customers in the free time*. All these behaviors only have a mean between 6.72 and 5.96.

The average score the respondents assigned to the behaviors within the category of *brand representation* is 7.48. In comparison to other categories, such as *customer orientation* and *service orientation*, this category was rated a bit lower. The average standard deviation among this category is 1.49 and thus the second lowest values across all categories of employee brand building behaviors. The respondents evaluated the EBBBs within this category as continuously high and quite uniform.

3.4.7.3 Service orientation - importance of individual EBBBs

An overview of the importance of the employee brand building behaviors of the category of *service orientation*, based on the quantitative analysis, is provided in Figure 23.

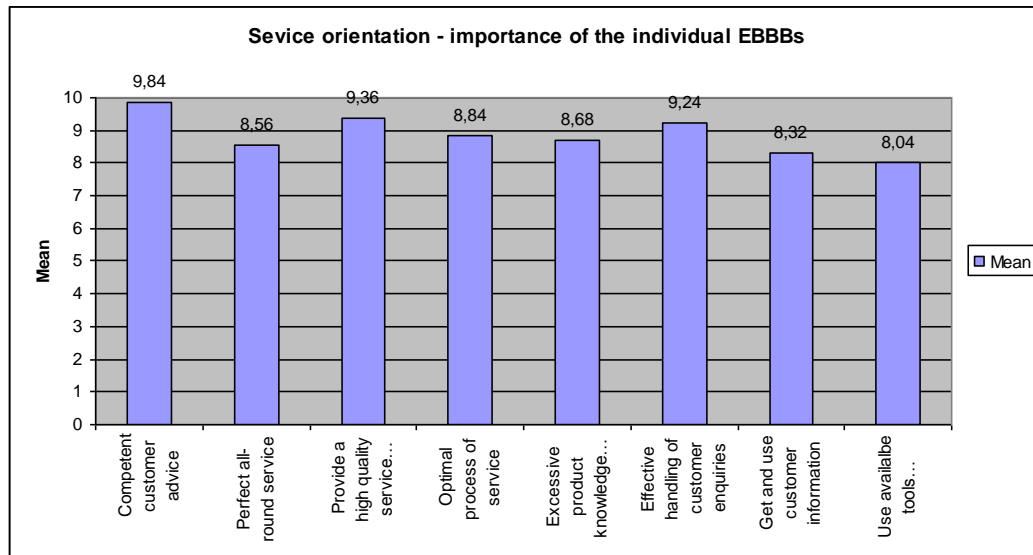


Figure 23: Importance Service orientation

Within the category of *service orientation*, the most important EBBB is *competent customer advice*, with a mean of 9.84. This brand building behavior seems to be very important for strengthening the brand because the respondents have assigned the highest scores to this EBBB. Slightly behind are the EBBBs of *provide a high quality service and live quality standards*, with a mean value of 9.36, and *effective handling of customer enquiries*, with a mean of 9.24. The remaining opportunities to strengthen the brand have a mean value between 8.04 and 8.84.

In general, it can be said that the average value in this category, regarding the importance of building up the brand, is 8.86 and therefore very high compared to other categories, e.g. *brand representation*. This category is on average the most important and includes the most important EBBBs for enhancing the brand building process. The average standard deviation among all employee brand building behaviors is 1.67, which indicates that the respondents evaluated the EBBBs quite uniformly.

3.4.7.4 Brand congruent behavior - Importance of individual EBBBs

In Figure 24, all EBBBs of the category of *brand congruent behavior* are presented in a graphical overview to provide information as to how individual EBBBs have been rated by the respondents.

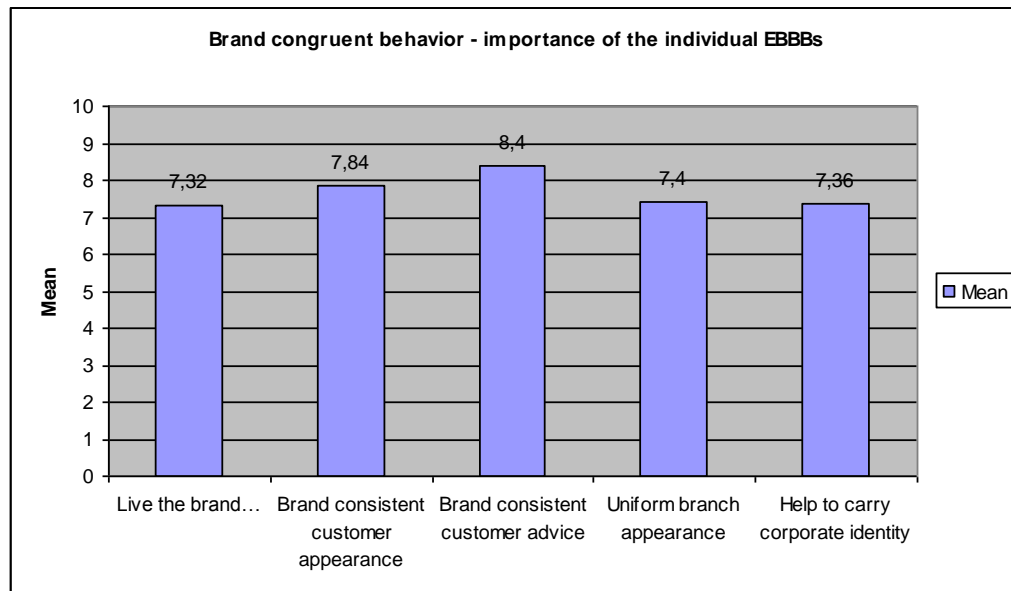


Figure 24: Importance Brand congruent behavior

The most important EBBB within the category of *brand congruent behavior* is *brand consistent process of customer advice*, with a mean of 8.4. The respondents assigned the other EBBBs average scores between 7.32 and 7.84.

Noticeable here is the relatively low average value of the individual employee brand building behaviors. The average score within the category of *brand congruent behavior* is 7.66, which, compared to the other categories, is proportionally low. The average standard deviation among all EBBBs of the category of *brand congruent behavior* is 1.79, which is quite low and stands for a uniform rating of the individual EBBBs through the employees.

3.4.7.5 Brand support and development behaviors - importance of the individual EBBBs

In Figure 25, the ranking of the EBBBs in the category of *brand support and development behaviors* is provided.

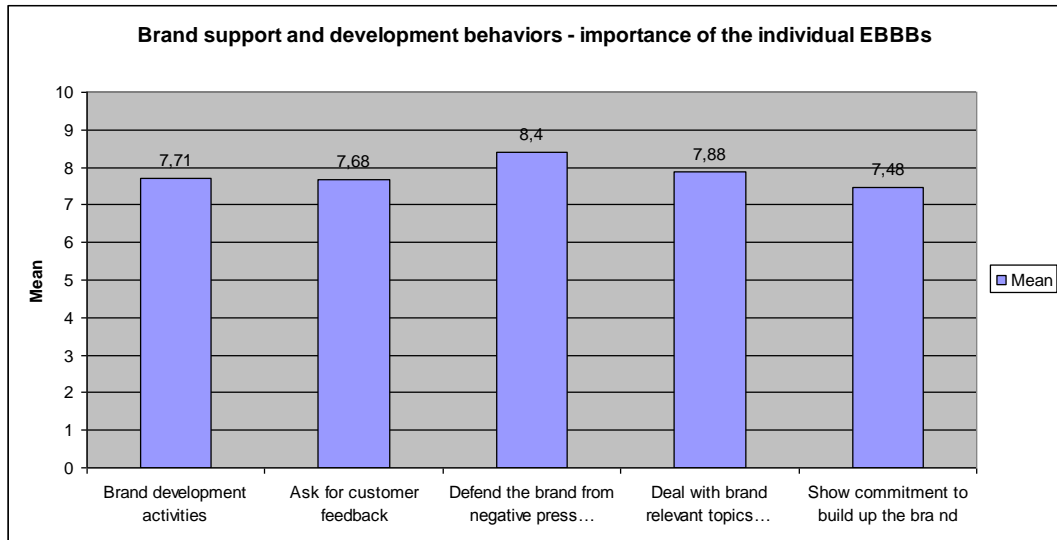


Figure 25: Importance Brand support and development behaviors

The most important EBBB within this category is *defend the brand from negative press and correct misconceptions*, with an average score of 8.4. The other employee brand building behaviors show average scores assigned by the respondents between 7.4 and 7.68.

The average score among the category of *brand support and development behaviors* is 7.70. This average score positions the category, in accordance to the relevance in the brand building process, in the middle compared to the other categories. The average standard deviation is one of the highest in this study, with 1.97, which means that the respondents had a tendency towards choosing different scores among all EBBBs within this category, e.g. in comparison to the category of *brand representation*.

3.4.7.6 Employee support behaviors - importance of the individual EBBBs

In Figure 26 the average scores of the EBBBs regarding the importance of the individual EBBBs in supporting the brand building process can be provided for the last category.

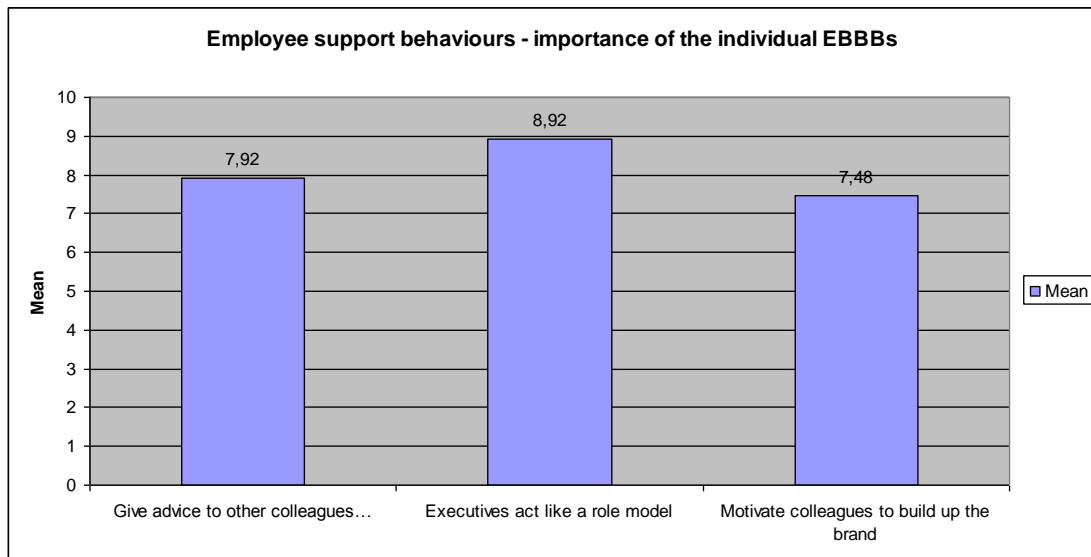


Figure 26: Importance Employee support behaviors

Within this category, the most important employee brand building behavior is *executives act like a role model* with an average score of 8.56. Additionally, the respondents assigned the mean of 7.92 to the EBBB *give advice to other colleagues and team members especially new colleagues regarding the brand values - be a mentor*, and 7.48 to the EBBB of *motivate colleagues to build up the brand*.

The average score among all EBBBs within the category of *employee support behavior* is 7.98. The average standard deviation is, at 1.3212, the lowest in comparison to the other categories. Here the respondents evaluated the EBBBs in a uniform way. In the next paragraph, the results are presented in a compact form and a ranking of all EBBBs is provided.

3.4.7.8 Final ranking of all EBBBs regarding the importance of supporting the brand building process

Finally, it can be said that in general, the average scores, which have been assigned to the individual EBBBs, are very high across all behaviors. This goes in line with other outcomes of this master's thesis that also clarify the general importance of employee brand building behaviors. To illustrate the importance of the individual employee brand building behaviors and to answer RQ 2b, a full ranking based on the average scores the respondents assigned to the behaviors is provided in Table 22.

RANK	CATEGORY	BEHAVIOR	IMPORTANCE (BASED ON THE MEAN)
1	Service orientation	Competent customer advice	9.84
2	Customer orientation	Live customer orientation and fulfill customers' needs	9.64
3	Service orientation	Provide a high quality service and live quality standards	9.36
4	Service orientation	Effective handling and quick processing of customer enquiries	9.24
5	Brand representation	Positive verbal recommendation and representation of the brand	8.96
6	Customer orientation	Know the customer and become familiar with the customer	8.92
6	Employee support behaviors	Executives act like a role model	8.92
8	Customer orientation	Open, natural, friendly and honest communication in the interaction with customers and extern partners	8.84
8	Service orientation	Optimal process of the service	8.84
10	Customer orientation	Building up and maintain customer networks to ensure a close long-lasting customer relationship and live the customer	8.76
11	Brand representation	Positive word of mouth regarding the products, the service and the company	8.68
11	Service orientation	Excessive product knowledge and economic know how	8.68
13	Service orientation	Perfect all-round service	8.56
14	Brand representation	Flexibility in customer issues	8.52
15	Brand support and development	Defend the brand from negative press and correct misconceptions	8.4
15	Brand congruent behavior	Brand consistent process of customer advice	8.4
17	Service orientation	Get and use customer information	8.32
18	Brand representation	Represent the brand on customer events	8.25
19	Customer orientation	Flexibility in customer appointments	8.08
20	Service orientation	Use available tools and information materials	8.04
21	Employee support behavior	Give advice to other colleagues and team members especially new colleagues regarding the brand values - be a mentor	7.92
22	Brand support and development behavior	Deal with brand relevant topics and personal development to get background knowledge	7.88
23	Brand congruent behavior	Brand consistent customer appearance	7.84
24	Brand representation	Show the brand values to the outside – to externals	7.76
25	Brand support and development behavior	Brand development activities	7.71
26	Brand support and development behavior	Ask for customer feedback	7.68
27	Brand support and development behavior	Show commitment to build up the brand	7.48

28	Employee support behavior	Motivate colleagues to build up the brand	7.40
29	Brand congruent behavior	Uniform branch appearance	7.40
30	Brand congruent behavior	Help to carry corporate identity	7.36
31	Brand congruent behavior	Live the brand and the brand values (also in the free time)	7.32
32	Brand representation	Positive word of keyboard	7.24
33	Brand representation	Sponsoring of and participation in events and social projects	6.96
34	Brand representation	Mentioning the brand name	6.72
35	Brand representation	Distribute giveaways, goodies and advertising materials	6.6
36	Customer orientation	Help customers in the free time and answering customer enquiries	6.56
37	Brand representation	Showing the brand in the free time	6,4
38	Brand representation	Acquire new customers in the free time	5.46

Table 22: Ranking of EBBBs regarding importance

Table 22 answers research question 2b with a clear ranking of all 38 EBBBs regarding the importance of building up the brand. In general, the average scores, which have been assigned to the individual EBBBs, are very high across all behaviors, emphasize the importance of all employee brand building behaviors. It is obvious that EBBBs from the category *service orientation* are very important to strengthening the brand. Here three of the four most important EBBBs are behaviors from this category. Contrarily, the EBBBs, e.g. *showing the brand in the free time* or *acquire new customers in the free time*, which are performed during the free time of the employee, are seen as the most unimportant opportunities for strengthening the brand.

4 Discussion

In the following chapter, key findings regarding the research questions based on the two research studies within the master's thesis are connected and presented in a compact synopsis. Also, the main points and the most interesting outcomes are discussed. In addition, the perspective of the actual scientific research is also integrated into the discussion. The aim is to achieve a broad overview of the outcomes of this work and how these key findings fit into the actual approaches found within the literature as well as how such new insights will influence future research.

In anticipation of the following clarification and explanation of the outcomes of this study, it can be stated that nearly all research questions have been answered and a full enumeration of relevant employee brand building behaviors (EBBBs) as well as an almost holistic conceptualization of EBBBs can be provided based on the qualitative and quantitative analysis.

4.1 Enumeration and categorization of employee brand building behaviors

In the present internal branding literature, many different attempts to provide an enumeration of opportunities for how employees can strengthen and build up a company's brand, are outlined (Baumgarth and Schmidt 2010; Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Morhart et al. 2009; Narver and Slater 1990; Parasuraman et al. 1985; Saxe and Weitz 1982). All these studies point out various important and relevant behaviors in terms of how employees can engage in the brand building process. After an extensive literature review, it can be said that there is no study, which considers all relevant employee brand building behaviors in one complete approach. In the present literature, it is already difficult to find research work that investigates brand building behaviors, which go beyond the situation of the direct service delivery as well as customer interaction, to provide a holistic view of this topic (Bettencourt and Brown 2003; Burmann and Zeplin 2005; Hughes and Ahearne 2010; Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Morhart et al. 2009). Subsequent results of the analysis of the qualitative research study will answer research question (RQ) 1a and will provide a complete enumeration of all relevant employee brand building behaviors. For a better overview, the individual EBBBs have been assigned to individual categories, which were, on the one hand, derived from scientific research and, on the other hand, created based on the analysis of the conducted interviews. All categories, instead of employee support behaviors, have been derived from the internal branding literature.²⁴

²⁴ Details regarding the individual categories are provided in Table 3 in chapter 3.

RQ 1a: What are relevant employee brand building behaviors to strengthen the brand?

Concerning research question 1a, 27 in-depth interviews were conducted to provide a full list of all relevant and existing behaviors in an attempt to enhance the brand building process. Based on the insights of the qualitative analysis, 38 individual employee brand building behaviors in six different categories were identified. The enumeration of the existing and relevant employee brand building behaviors as well as the category scheme have been elaborated based on the analysis of the existing literature and on the conducted in-depth interviews. In Table 23, a graphical overview of the individual categories with the assigned employee brand building behaviors is provided.

CATEGORY	BEHAVIOR ²⁵	ON-OFF THE JOB DISTINCTION			IN-ROLE/EXTRA-ROLE DISTINCTION		
		on the job	off the job	on and off the job	in-role	extra-role	In-role and extra-role
Customer orientation	Live customer orientation and fulfill customers' needs			X			X
	Flexibility in customer appointments	X			X		
	Flexibility in customer issues	X					
	Open, natural, friendly and honest communication in the interaction with customers and extern partners	X					
	Building up and maintain customer networks to ensure a close long-lasting customer relationship and live the			X			X
	Know the customer and become familiar with the customer	X			X		
	Help customers in the free time and answering customer enquiries		X			X	
Brand representation	Positive verbal recommendation and representation of the brand			X			X
	Positive word of mouth regarding the products, the service and the company			X			X

²⁵ EBBBs, which can be conceptualized in a complete way, are highlighted in grey

	Positive word of keyboard			X		X	
	Mentioning the brand name			X			
	Sponsoring of and participation in events and social projects			X			X
	Showing the brand in the free time		X			X	
	Represent the brand on customer events	X					X
	Show the brand values to the outside – to externals			X			X
	Distribute giveaways, goodies and advertising materials			X			X
	Acquire new customers in the free time		X			X	
Service orientation	Competent customer advice	X			X		
	Perfect all-round service	X					X
	Provide a high quality service and live quality standards	X			X		
	Optimal process of the service	X			X		
	Excessive product knowledge and economic know how			X			X
	Effective handling and quick processing of customer enquiries	X			X		
	Get and use customer information	X			X		
	Use available tools and information materials	X			X		
Brand congruent behavior	Live the brand and the brand values (also in the free time)			X			X
	Brand consistent customer appearance	X			X		
	Brand consistent process of customer advice	X			X		
	Uniform branch appearance	X			X		
	Help to carry corporate identity			X			X
Brand support and development behaviors	Brand development activities	X					
	Defend the brand from negative press and correct misconceptions	X					

	Ask for customer feedback	X					
	Deal with brand relevant topics and personal development to get background knowledge			X			X
	Show commitment to build up the brand	X					
Employee support behaviors	Give advice to other colleagues and team members especially new colleagues regarding the brand values - be a mentor	X					
	Motivate colleagues to build up the brand			X			
	Executives act like a role model	X					

Table 23: Conceptualization and enumeration of EBBBs

As shown in Table 23, the developed category scheme contains six categories: (1) *customer orientation*, (2) *brand representation*, (3) *service orientation*, (4) *brand congruent behavior*, (5) *brand support and development behaviors* and (6) *employee support behaviors*. The first five categories have been identified as pre-categories based on the literature review, as illustrated in Table 3, and have been taken over in the category scheme of the qualitative analysis. Based on the analysis of the interviews, another category - *employee support behaviors* - is necessary in order to correctly assign the identified EBBBs to categories.

4.2 Conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors

Based on the previous described enumeration and categorization of the employee brand building behaviors, a holistic conceptualization of the EBBBs will be elucidated. Concerning research question 1b, the major outcomes and a final conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors are outlined in Table 23, which has been inserted in the previous subchapter.

RQ 1b: Can a holistic conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors be

Regarding a conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors, several approaches exist in the scientific literature. Many researchers have looked at this topic from various angles and have illuminated this issue precisely, but a holistic approach, which covers all existing and relevant employee brand building behaviors, has not yet been provided. For this thesis, the existing approaches, as described in chapter 2 in detail, provide a kind of starting point for the subsequent analysis of this thesis.

Based on the present research, two central classification criteria are taken over to classify employee brand building behaviors (Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Motowidlo and Van Scotter 1994; Morhart et al. 2009). A more detailed description of the existing approaches can be found in chapter 2 of this thesis. The first classification criterion distinguishes whether an EBBB is performed on the job during working hours or off the job in the free time of the employee. This approach to conceptualizing brand building behaviors can be underpinned by several research studies (Berry 2000; Morhart et al. 2009; Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012). A second segmentation of how employees can build up the brand can also be taken from the literature. This second classification criterion focuses on the differentiation between employee behaviors to enhance the brand building process, which are role prescribed as well as expected from the company and other activities, which go beyond the defined roles and are provided on a discretionary basis out of the self-motivation of the employees. The behaviors, which are part of the role description of an employee, are in-role EBBBs and the behaviors, which are discretionary, are referred to as extra-role EBBBs (Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Miles and Mangold 2004; MacKenzie et al. 1998; Morhart et al. 2009; Motowidlo and Van Scotter 1994). Summarized, it can be said that the conceptualization models of Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos (2012), Morhart et al. (2009) as well as Motowidlo and Van Scotter (1994) form the starting point of this thesis in conceptualizing employee brand building behaviors.

This master's thesis pursues a two-study research design, which includes a qualitative and a quantitative analysis. Firstly, the qualitative analysis of the conducted interviews has provided a complete enumeration and categorization of the EBBBs as well as a first outline regarding the conceptualization of the identified EBBBs. Based on the qualitative analysis, only a conceptualization of a few EBBBs was possible (detailed information regarding the conceptualization of the EBBBs based on the qualitative analysis is outlined in the Appendixes). The reason for this, on the one hand, is that with the suggested approaches in the existing literature of how to conceptualize EBBBs, not all identified EBBBs can be covered and, on the other hand, every respondent has only conceptualized his or her own mentioned EBBBs. As a result, the existing scientific approaches, which have been identified based on the literature review, have to be extended for the quantitative analysis of the follow up online survey to provide a holistic conceptualization approach, which covers all previously identified EBBBs. This

quantitative analysis will be necessary to provide a complete conceptualization of all relevant EBBBs.

The respondents suggest extending the existing opportunities to conceptualize the EBBBs regarding the job (on the job and off the job) as well as the role of the employee in the organization (in-role and extra-role) and enrich the selection possibilities with the following classification characteristics to ensure a valid conceptualization of the EBBBs:

job: to add a combination of on the job and off the job, as a further classification characteristic

role: to add a combination of in-role and extra-role as a further classification characteristic so that a minimum standard of fulfillment of the EBBB is prescribed by the organizational role (e.g. in the job-description) and an extensive level of fulfillment of the EBBB is going beyond the prescribed role and is discretionary

Hence, this master's thesis pursues the assumption that for many EBBBs, a strict classification as to whether the EBBB is performed on the job or off the job as well as is in-role or extra-role, as suggested in the literature, is not appropriate for a holistic conceptualization. Contrary to the classification approaches in the literature (e.g. Morhart et al. 2009; Motowidlo and Van Scotter 1994), this thesis proclaims that a clear differentiation in regard to the original classification characteristics is not appropriate for several EBBBs. This extended conceptualization approach still does not exist in the literature and was included in the follow up online questionnaire. Here 25 respondents filled in the online questionnaire correctly and provided a holistic conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors. The final conceptualization of all relevant EBBBs has been provided in Table 23. In total, 28 EBBBs have been conceptualized as a whole. Ten EBBBs have only been conceptualized in parts. Regarding the first classification characteristic, all relevant employee brand building behaviors can be classified exactly in terms of whether the EBBB is applied on the job, off the job or both. Regarding the second classification criterion, the situation of whether an EBBB is performed in-role, extra-role or as a combination as described above, is not exactly clear. The categories of *service orientation* and *brand congruent behaviors* can be conceptualized in a complete and holistic way. Regarding the categories of *brand*

support and development behaviors and *employee support behaviors*, some problems occur in the second step of conceptualization: regarding the category of *brand support and development behaviors*, four of five EBBBs cannot be conceptualized completely and in the category of *employee support behaviors*, no EBBB can be classified in a holistic way. In the next paragraphs, the conceptualization of each category is described in detail.

4.2.1 Customer orientation – conceptualization of individual EBBBs

As shown in Table 23, the first category of *customer orientation* contains seven employee brand building behaviors. After the analysis process, for nearly all EBBBs of this category, a valid conceptualization can be found. For the EBBBs of *flexibility in customer issues* and *open, natural, friendly and honest communication in interaction with customers and extern partners*, only a classification in parts can be provided.

The EBBBs of *live customer orientation and fulfill customers' needs* and *building up and maintain customer networks to ensure a close long-lasting customer relationship and live the customer relationship* can be classified as behaviors, which are applied on the job as well as off the job and where a basic standard of fulfillment of the EBBBs is prescribed by the organizational role (e.g. in the job-description) and an extensive level of fulfillment of the EBBB is going beyond the prescribed roles. *Flexibility in customer appointments* and *know the customer and become familiar with the customer* can be classified as applied on the job and as in-role activities. *Help customers in the free time and answering customer enquiries* is the last EBBB in this category and can be conceptualized as performed off the job and as an extra-role opportunity to enhance the brand building process. In this category, all different approaches of how EBBBs can be conceptualized are present.

According to the conceptualization of Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos (2012), customer oriented behavior is performed on the job and is an in-role behavior. The latter can not be confirmed by this thesis because no clear direction in regard to how this category as a whole can be conceptualized can be provided based on the outcomes of this work.

4.2.2 Brand representation – conceptualization of individual EBBBs

The next category of *brand representation*, as shown in the Table 23, contains ten behaviors. After conducting an online survey, nearly all behaviors except *mentioning the brand name* can be conceptualized completely. After having a closer look at the conceptualization of this category, it is obvious that here the extension of the classification characteristics has been very useful in providing a holistic conceptualization.

In this case, the EBBBs of *positive verbal recommendation and representation of the brand; distribute giveaways, goodies and advertising materials; sponsoring of and participation in events and social project; show the brand values to the outside – to externals; and positive word of mouth regarding the products, the service and the company* can be classified as activities, which are performed on the job as well as off the job and are a combination of in-role and extra-role behaviors. In the case of the latter described conceptualization, a basic level of fulfillment of these EBBBs is role prescribed as well as expected from the company and an extensive level of fulfillment is discretionary and out of self-motivation. *Represent the brand on customer events and acquire new customers in the free time* are classified as off the job behaviors and extra-role activities. Another EBBB is *positive word of keyboard*, which is applied on the job as well as off the job and has been conceptualized by the respondents as an extra-role activity, which is not expected from the company. The last EBBB in this category is *represent the brand on customer events*, which is applied on the job and has been classified as a combination of in-role and extra-role, where a basic standard of fulfillment of this EBBB is prescribed by the organizational roles (e.g. in the job-description) and an extensive level of fulfillment of this EBBB is going beyond the prescribed roles and is discretionary.

In the category of *brand representation*, nearly all employee brand building behaviors can be conceptualized in a complete way. Moreover, it is noticeable that a majority of the respondents indicated that the EBBBs within this category are performed on the job as well as off the job and that a basic fulfillment of these EBBBs is role prescribed and an over-average fulfillment is out of self-motivation as well as discretionary. The latter issues show clearly that an extension of the existing classification characteristics was

necessary to provide a holistic conceptualization of all relevant employee brand building behaviors within this category.

4.2.3 Service orientation - conceptualization of individual EBBBs

As presented in Table 23, eight behaviors represent the category of *service orientation*. All behaviors within this category can be conceptualized clearly in an objective way. Here a very strong tendency in the conceptualization of EBBBs can be recognized. All behaviors except two can be classified uniformly as on the job behaviors and in-role activities, which are part of the job description. One of the remaining behaviors - *perfect all-round service* - is also an opportunity to enhance the brand building process, which is applied during working hours and is classified as a combination of in-role and extra-role, where a basic fulfillment of the EBBB is expected and further fulfillment is discretionary. The last EBBB in this category is *excessive product knowledge and economic know how*, which is performed on the job as well as off the job and can be classified as a combination of in-role and extra-role.

Regarding the conceptualization of the EBBBs within the category of *service orientation*, it is not surprising that many EBBBs are applied on the job and are in-role activities, which are expected from the company. For a service company, these EBBBs are very central to building up the corporate brand because they are heavily related to the core business of the service firms and so are definitely expected from customers. Without performing well in this area, a successful brand building process is not possible.

4.2.4 Brand congruent behavior - conceptualization of individual EBBBs

In the category of *brand congruent behavior*, as shown in the Table 23, five behaviors are included. In this category, all EBBBs can be conceptualized in a correct way. Finally, the EBBBs of *brand consistent customer appearance; brand consistent process of customer advice* and *uniform branch appearance* can be conceptualized as activities, which are performed on the job and are in-role. The remaining EBBBs of *live the brand and the brand values (also in the free time)* and *help to carry corporate identity* can be categorized as behaviors, which are applied on the job as well as off the job and are a

combination of in-role and extra-role activities. This implies that a basic standard of fulfillment of these EBBBs is prescribed by the organizational roles (e.g. in the job-description) and an extensive level of fulfillment is going beyond the prescribed roles.

Within this category, a tendency for how the respondents conceptualized these EBBBs can be identified. A majority of EBBBs are applied within the professional roles of the employees and are expected from the organization. This conceptualization of the category of *brand congruent behaviors* as a whole goes in line with the conceptualization approach of Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos (2012), who also mentioned that brand congruent behavior is applied on the job and is in-role. For a conceptualization of the other EBBBs, the extension of the classification possibilities, as described above, has been definitely necessary to cover all relevant employee brand building behaviors.

4.2.5 Brand support and development behaviors - conceptualization of individual EBBBs

The category of *brand support and development behaviors* consists of five activities to support the brand building process, as presented in Table 23. Here some problems occurred in the conceptualization because four out of five EBBBs can only be conceptualized partially, as the respondents have different opinions on how these EBBBs should be conceptualized.

The remaining opportunity to strengthen the brand building process of *deal with brand relevant topics and personal development to get background knowledge* can be conceptualized in an objective way. In this case the EBBB is applied on the job and also off the job. Regarding the second classification criterion, the respondents assigned the characteristic that a basic level of fulfillment of the EBBB is in-role and an extensive level of fulfillment is extra-role. All the other EBBBs have been conceptualized partially as on the job behaviors. Regarding the first classification criterion, a tendency in conceptualization can be recognized. Nearly all respondents conceptualized the EBBBs within this category as performed on the job. These outcomes can be underlined by conceptualization approaches in the literature (Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Morhart et al. 2009).

4.2.6 Employee support behaviors - conceptualization of individual EBBBs

The last category of *employee support behaviors* includes three EBBBs, as outlined in Table 23. Here no employee brand building behavior can be conceptualized in a correct way. Only a partial conceptualization as to whether the behavior is applied on the job, off the job or both is possible.

Regarding the first classification characteristic, the EBBBs of *give advice to other colleagues and team members especially new colleagues regarding the brand values - be a mentor* and *executives act like a role model* can be classified as on the job behaviors. The EBBB of *motivate colleagues to build up the brand* is seen as an on the job as well as off the job behavior. Within the category of *employee support behaviors*, the respondents have different opinions on how to conceptualize the EBBBs. Due to the latter described issue, a complete conceptualization of these EBBBs cannot be provided in this master's thesis.

Summarized, a holistic conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors as well as a further development of the conceptualization approaches of Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos (2012) and Morhart et al. (2009) can be provided. In the end, a detailed comparison with existing conceptualizations in the literature is difficult because often only categories are conceptualized. Additionally, all research studies use different designations, which also make comparison more difficult. For instance, in this master's thesis, individual behaviors are being conceptualized, which also makes a comparison with actual research challenging. Due to the fact that for all relevant employee brand building behaviors a complete conceptualization has not been possible, future research on this topic will be necessary to accomplish a complete classification of all identified employee brand building behaviors.

4.3 Main differences regarding the conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors between managers, employees and customers

In this part of the discussion, the major different points of view regarding the conceptualization of the identified EBBBs will be outlined in a summarized version. Within this subchapter, an answer to research question 1c is delivered.

RQ 1c: What are the main different points of view regarding the conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors between managers, employees and

Generally, it can be said that the differences in the conceptualization between managers, employees and customers are sparsely available. Regarding the research question, if employees, managers or customers evaluate the importance of individual EBBBs in a different way, it can be elucidated that here no general valid differences have been identified. To work out these differences, further research studies with a larger sample size need to be conducted. The initial results and the outcomes of this thesis can build the basis for additional research in order to investigate in detail the differences regarding the different points of view.

In this master's thesis, only some tendencies of certain groups of respondents can be highlighted. For instance, one point is that managers have different perceptions when compared to employees and customers as to which behaviors are prescribed and expected from the company. It is noticeable to point out that executive members show a strong tendency to see behaviors like *live customer orientation and fulfill customers' needs; flexibility in customer appointments; and open, natural, friendly and honest communication in the interaction with customers and extern partners* as in-role. This difference primarily occurs in the EBBB category of *customer orientation*. One possible reason could be²⁶ that executive members often define which behaviors are mandatory to perform a job with the goal of building up the brand. So, they often tend to indicate a broader spectrum of existing in-role opportunities to strengthen the corporate brand. In contrast, employees, who have to implement manager assigned guidelines, often have

²⁶ Author's note: assumption, which is made out of the insights gained from the conducted studies

the tendency, which is also shown in the analysis of both research steps, to minimize their brand building efforts within their working hours.

In general, it can be said that customers show a tendency to assign a classification criterion, which implies a basic fulfillment of a behavior as role prescribed and an extensive application of the behavior as extra-role, to EBBBs like *effective handling and quick processing of customer enquiries; show the brand values to the outside – to externals; executives act like a role model; defend the brand from negative press and correct misconceptions; ask for customer feedback; and flexibility in customer issues*. One possible reason for this could be²⁷ that the customers are not quite sure which behaviors are in-role and extra-role because of missing insights into the daily working life of service employees of the well-known Austrian Bank.

Another main difference between the individual groups of respondents, which occurred mostly in the categories of *brand representation* and *service orientation*, can be elucidated here. Concerning the first classification characteristic of whether an EBBB is performed on the job or off the job, a tendency of the executive members in the conceptualization process of EBBBs, like *positive verbal recommendation and representation of the brand; positive word of mouth regarding the products, the service and the company; positive word of keyboard; sponsoring of and participation in events and social projects; and distribute give aways, goodies and advertising material*, can be pointed out. The managers saw these EBBBs as being applied on the job as well as off the job, contrary to the employees, who partially saw these behaviors more as being on the job because they distinguish more clearly between business life and private life. The reason for this could be²⁸ that executive members want their employees to build up the brand outside of regular working hours, so this can cause the high assignment by the managers of the classification characteristics implying that the behaviors are applied on the job as well as off the job.

In some categories, for example, *service orientation* and *brand congruent behavior*, the individual groups of respondents evaluated these EBBBs very uniformly and tend to see

²⁷ Author's note: assumption, which is made out of the insights gained from the conducted studies

²⁸ Author's note: assumption, which is made out of the insights gained from the conducted studies

a very consistent conceptualization. Hardly any differences between employees, managers and customers can be highlighted. This shows that regarding categories, like service quality, which is one of the main focuses of a bank and is very important for the correct positioning of the brand, the employees exactly know which activities are necessary to apply regarding the brand building process.

Based on the qualitative analysis, for the executive members, the EBBBs of *give advice to other colleagues and team members, especially new colleagues regarding the brand values - be a mentor* and *executives act like a role model* are very important. In both cases, 80% of the managers mentioned these behaviors as important opportunities to strengthen the brand, while, the other respondents do not tend to see these behaviors as very important. The reason for this may²⁹ that these are activities, which are often applied directly by the executive members. Here the executives give advice to new employees in terms of what relevant brand values are and how the brand can be built up as well as act as role models for new employees. This can be the reason for the identified tendency in mentioning these behaviors in the respondent group of managers.

Finally, it can be said that the respondents conceptualized the employee brand building behaviors very consistently among the different categories. Some slight differences were detected in the process of conceptualization and have been described in this subchapter. Further research with a larger sample size is needed for subsequent investigation of additional existing differences in the conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors between managers, employees and customers.

4.4 Importance of employee brand building behaviors

In the second part of the discussion, the remaining two research questions, regarding the importance of the employee brand building behaviors, are discussed. First, clarification of the issue of whether it is in general important for a company to have employees, who engage and participate in the brand building process, is provided. Further, a complete ranking regarding the importance of the individual employee brand building behaviors is illustrated.

²⁹ Author's note: assumption, which is made out of the insights gained from the conducted studies

4.4.1 General importance for companies to have employees, who support the brand building process

This subchapter should clarify the research question regarding the general importance for companies to have employees, who engage in the brand building process and support the creation of a strong brand.

RQ 2a: Is it important for companies to have employees, who support the brand

Summarized, it can be stated that the importance of the brand building process through the employees of a company and the relevance of the identified brand building activities to strengthen the corporate brand, especially in the service sector, is undisputed. Of the respondents, 96.3% agree with the latter statement and confirm that it is important for a company to have employees participating in the brand building process.

4.4.2 Importance of the individual employee brand building behaviors

Based on the quantitative follow-up online survey, a complete ranking regarding the importance of individual employee brand building behaviors is provided in Table 24 to answer research question 2b. Later, also an overview regarding the importance of the individual categories is illustrated.

RQ 2b: Can the behaviors be arranged according to the importance of the individual employee brand building behavior?

To illustrate the importance of the individual employee brand building behaviors, a full ranking based on the average scores, which the respondents have assigned to the behaviors, is provided in Table 24. The respondents evaluated every individual EBBB with a score between 1 (not important to strengthen the brand) and 10 (very important to strengthen the brand) to determine which EBBBs can best enhance the brand building process.

RANK	CATEGORY	BEHAVIOR	IMPORTANCE (BASED ON THE MEAN)
1	Service orientation	Competent customer advice	9,84
2	Customer orientation	Live customer orientation and fulfill customers' needs	9,64
3	Service orientation	Provide a high quality service and live quality standards	9,36
4	Service orientation	Effective handling and quick processing of customer enquiries	9,24
5	Brand representation	Positive verbal recommendation and representation of the brand	8,96
6	Customer orientation	Know the customer and become familiar with the customer	8,92
6	Employee support behaviors	Executives act like a role model	8,92
8	Customer orientation	Open, natural, friendly and honest communication in the interaction with customers and extern partners	8,84
8	Service orientation	Optimal process of the service	8,84
10	Customer orientation	Building up and maintain customer networks to ensure a close long-lasting customer relationship and live the customer	8,76
11	Brand representation	Positive word of mouth regarding the products, the service and the company	8,68
11	Service orientation	Excessive product knowledge and economic know how	8,68
13	Service orientation	Perfect all-round service	8,56
14	Brand representation	Flexibility in customer issues	8,52
15	Brand support and development	Defend the brand from negative press and correct misconceptions	8,4
15	Brand congruent behavior	Brand consistent process of customer advice	8,4
17	Service orientation	Get and use customer information	8,32
18	Brand representation	Represent the brand on customer events	8,25
19	Customer orientation	Flexibility in customer appointments	8,08
20	Service orientation	Use available tools and information materials	8,04
21	Employee support behavior	Give advice to other colleagues and team members especially new colleagues regarding the brand values - be a mentor	7,92
22	Brand support and development behavior	Deal with brand relevant topics and personal development to get background knowledge	7,88
23	Brand congruent behavior	Brand consistent customer appearance	7,84
24	Brand representation	Show the brand values to the outside – to externals	7,76
25	Brand support and development behavior	Brand development activities	7,71
26	Brand support and development behavior	Ask for customer feedback	7,68

27	Brand support and development behavior	Show commitment to build up the brand	7,48
28	Employee support behavior	Motivate colleagues to build up the brand	7,40
29	Brand congruent behavior	Uniform branch appearance	7,40
30	Brand congruent behavior	Help to carry corporate identity	7,36
31	Brand congruent behavior	Live the brand and the brand values (also in the free time)	7,32
32	Brand representation	Positive word of keyboard	7,24
33	Brand representation	Sponsoring of and participation in events and social projects	6,96
34	Brand representation	Mentioning the brand name	6,72
35	Brand representation	Distribute giveaways, goodies and advertising materials	6,6
36	Customer orientation	Help customers in the free time and answering customer enquiries	6,56
37	Brand representation	Showing the brand in the free time	6,24
38	Brand representation	Acquire new customers in the free time	5,46

Table 24: Ranking regarding the importance of the EBBBs

In general, it can be concluded, based on the outcomes of the quantitative analysis, that the respondents have rated the EBBBs, on average, very high. The average score among all EBBBs is 7.36. Based on Table 24, four key EBBBs regarding the importance of building up the brand, which have reached a score over 9.00, can be identified. These behaviors are *competent customer advice; live customer orientation and fulfill customers' needs; provide a high quality service and live quality standards; and effective handling and quick processing of customer enquiries*. Three of these four key behaviors are included in the category of *service orientation*. Additionally, in total, 20 EBBBs have been evaluated with an average score above 8.00. Furthermore, 32 employee brand building behaviors have a higher average score than 7.00 in terms of strengthening the brand. The latter fact clearly illustrates how important the identified EBBBs are in building up the company's brand. The average standard deviations of the individual categories are all between 1.32 and 2.02 and thus quite low, which implies that the respondents have rather equally evaluated the separate behaviors regarding the importance of strengthening the brand.

As well, based on the ranking in Table 24, it can be mentioned that the most important EBBB for strengthening the brand is *competent customer advice* with an average score of 9.84. Nearly all respondents assigned the behavior with the highest score regarding

the importance of this EBBB. The second most important EBBB within the complete ranking is *live customer orientation and fulfill customers' needs*, which is part of the category of *customer orientation*. This behavior reached an average score of 9.64. As well, the third most important EBBB for enhancing the brand building process is *provide a high quality service and live quality standards*, which reaches an average score of 9.36.

The least important brand building behaviors, which are part of the enumeration in Table 24, are *acquire new customers in the free time; showing the brand in the free time*; and *help customers in the free time and answering customer enquiries*, which all have an average score below 6.6 in reference to the importance of building up the brand. These EBBBs all have in common that the behaviors are applied during the free time of employees and are extra-role behaviors, which are discretionary (see also Table 23). Based on these outcomes, it can be outlined that the respondents do not see these EBBBs, which are definitely applied during employee free time and stem from self-motivation, as being very important in comparison to other behaviors utilized to build up a brand.

4.2.2.1 Overview regarding the importance of the categories of employee brand building behaviors

In addition, the output as to which categories of employee brand building behaviors are important or not is very important for the present scientific research and will be provided here. In Table 25, a short overview of the average scores of the separate categories in relation to importance of building up the brand, are provided.

Category	Average mean
Service orientation (average standard deviation: 1,6724)	8,86
Customer orientation (average standard deviation: 2,0180)	8,74
Employee support behaviors (average standard deviation: 1,3212)	8,11
Brand support and development behaviors (average standard deviation: 1,9747)	7,83
Brand congruent behavior (average standard deviation: 1,7936)	7,66
Brand representation (average standard deviation: 1,49141)	7,38

Table 25: Overview regarding the importance of the categories of EBBBs

Regarding these results shown in Table 25, it is interesting to see that the differences in the average scores of importance of the individual categories are not very big. The EBBBs within the category of *service orientation* reach the highest average score. Here also the standard deviation is quite low (average standard deviation = 1.6724), which means that the respondents tended to assign uniform scores regarding the importance of these EBBBs within this category. It is obvious that for employees, managers and customers of a well-known Austrian bank offering financial services, the most important behaviors for enhancing the brand building process are strongly related to the service itself. This category includes behaviors, which are strongly related to the core business of a bank. In this case, many seminars and courses are also provided in the major Austrian bank for the service employees to target aspects of service quality improvements. These effects can also positively influence the evaluation by the respondents of the importance of EBBBs in the category.

The second most important category of EBBBs is *customer orientation*, which reaches an average score of 8.74 regarding the importance of the EBBBs to building up the brand. The category of *customer orientation* is only rated a little lower than the category of *service orientation*. *Customer orientation* is also a big goal for service firms, especially for the well-known Austrian bank, which uses the claim “In jeder Beziehung zählen die Menschen”. So it is also obvious that this category has been rated high regarding its importance for building up the brand.

The next category of *employee support behaviors* has been rated as the third most important category of employee brand building behaviors. The respondents gave a score of 8.11 to the third category. This category has the lowest average standard deviation (1.3212), which implies that the respondents rated this category very uniformly. Thus the asked respondents have a clear opinion of the importance of the category of *employee support behaviors* in enhancing the brand building process.

The category of *brand support and development behaviors* has been awarded with a score of 7.83 and an average standard deviation of 1.9747. The respondents have rated this category significantly lower than the most important categories of EBBBs in supporting the brand building process. Also, the average standard deviation is one of the highest in this study. The least important categories are *brand congruent behavior* with an average score of 7.66 and *brand representation*, which reached an average score of 7.38. Important to mention here is that the categories with the lowest valuation still have a relatively high score.

In conclusion, this master's thesis confirms that all six categories of EBBBs are important to the enhancement of the brand building process. A clear prioritization regarding the importance of the individual categories to building up the brand can be provided. This thesis illustrates the four key brand building behaviors of (1) *competent customer advice*, (2) *live customer orientation and fulfill customers' needs*, (3) *provide a high quality service and live quality standards* and (4) *effective handling and quick processing of customer enquiries*, as being capable of supporting the brand building process in an outstanding way and as very important to building up the brand.

5 Conclusion

Due to the fact that employees play a crucial role in building up a strong brand, the variety of approaches in the scientific literature to describe employee brand building behaviors is manifold. According to Morhart et al. (2009), employee brand building behaviors can be defined as “employees’ contribution (both on and off the job) to an organization’s customer oriented branding efforts” (p.123). Several approaches exist in present research on how employees can engage in the brand building process and how these employee brand building behaviors can be conceptualized. Research from a

holistic point of view, to provide a complete enumeration and conceptualization of opportunities of how employees can strengthen the brand, is still missing.

Addressing this deficiency in the scientific research, a category scheme based on an extensive literature review as well as a qualitative analysis of conducted in-depth interviews has been developed. Here six main categories of employee brand building behaviors have been identified to cover all relevant employee brand building behaviors. Based on the qualitative analysis, 38 employee brand building behaviors have been gathered, which have been assigned to the following categories: (1) *customer orientation*, (2) *brand representation*, (3) *service orientation*, (4) *brand congruent behavior*, (5) *brand support and development behaviors* and (6) *employee support behaviors*. Based on the first qualitative research step, a complete enumeration of opportunities as to how employees can strengthen the brand is provided in this master's thesis.

Furthermore, based on the accomplished enumeration of relevant employee brand building behaviors, a holistic conceptualization of these behaviors was revealed. Existing approaches to classifying employee brand building behaviors in the literature (Löhndorf and Diamantopoulos 2012; Morhart et al. 2009; Motowidlo and Van Scotter 1994) formed a starting point for a conceptualization. These approaches segment opportunities to strengthen the brand and help to determine whether such behaviors are performed on the job or off the job and whether they are in-role activities - which are expected from the company - or extra-role activities - which are discretionary and not a part of the prescribed role description of the employees. Based on the outcomes of the qualitative analysis, only a few employee brand building behaviors could be exactly conceptualized. Hence, the classification characteristics had to be extended to provide a holistic conceptualization based on a further follow-up online survey, which covers all relevant behaviors. In the quantitative study, the following classification criteria were integrated:

- *a combination of on the job and off the job*
- *a combination of in-role and extra-role, which implies that a minimum standard of fulfillment of the EBBB is prescribed by the organizational role*

(e.g. in the job-description) and an extensive level of fulfillment of the EBBB is beyond the prescribed role and discretionary

Hence, this master's thesis confirms that for many EBBBs, a strict classification as to whether the EBBB is performed on the job or off the job as well as is in-role or extra-role, as suggested in the literature (Morhart et al. 2009; Motowidlo and Van Scotter 1994), is not appropriate for a holistic conceptualization. Contrary to the classification approaches in the literature, this thesis proclaims that a clear differentiation in regard to the original classification characteristics is not appropriate for several EBBBs. This approach still does not exist in the present research. Thus, this thesis conveys valuable insight into this research field for the conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors. Through this extended approach, for 28 of the 38 identified employee brand building behaviors, a valid conceptualization was possible. The remaining ten brand building efforts could only be conceptualized in parts.

Additionally, this master's thesis has investigated the differences in the conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors between managers, employees and customers. Summarized, it can be said that the respondents conceptualized the employee brand building behaviors very consistently among the different categories. Only some slight differences have been detected in the process of conceptualization, which are not valid among all six categories of behaviors. The last part of this work focused on the general importance of the brand building process through the employees for a company. Here 96.3% of the respondents confirmed that it is important for a company to have employees, who participate in the brand building process. Moreover, this thesis proclaims that, in general, all six categories of EBBBs are important to enhance the brand building process. A clear prioritization regarding the importance of the individual employee brand building behaviors to build up the brand can be provided. The four key brand building behaviors, which can strengthen the brand in the most outstanding way, are as follows: (1) *competent customer advice*;, (2) *live customer orientation and fulfill customers' needs*; (3) *provide a high quality service and live quality standards*; and (4) *effective handling and quick processing of customer enquiries*.

The outcomes regarding a complete enumeration of employee brand building behaviors as well as a holistic conceptualization of these behaviors suggest many opportunities

and chances for the management of an organization in terms of how their employees can strengthen the company's brand in a significant way. Moreover, this thesis shows the wide range of brand building behaviors and how important most of them are to building up strong brands. Compared to other research studies, which often focus only on small aspects of this topic, the current thesis sheds light on all areas of brand building efforts and points out several possibilities as to how the employees of a company can engage in the brand building process. Hence, this thesis should pave the way for management to enforce these brand enhancing behaviors among employees to create a strong brand and in succession ensure or maintain a competitive advantage on the market based on a well-established brand. All employees of an organization should be aware of how certain behaviors, applied through employees, can affect the brand building process. If these insights are available in an organization, training courses or special education programs can be tailored for employees to promote these behaviors and thus enhance brand building. In addition, trainee programs and special trainings for new employees, who are not used to the existing brand values, should be aligned with the outcomes of this master's thesis to create framework conditions for an efficient and well-functioning brand building process. Based on the current results, how an employee can ideally support the brand building process as well as which behaviors are more efficient in building up a strong brand can be pointed out to management. Due to the provided ranking, the management clearly knows which behaviors should be focused on building up the brand in a most efficient way. Furthermore, this master's thesis shows that the employee brand building behavior of *executives act like a role model* has been detected as one of the most important opportunities to strengthen the brand. Managers act as a role model regarding various brand building opportunities to encourage brand building activities among the whole workforce of a company. Executive members can positively influence the brand enhancing behavior of all employees of an organization. One main point of this thesis is the main differences in the points of view of employees, managers and customers. Here the executive members should be aware of the different points of view and keep in mind that certain groups of interest have different attitudes towards building up a strong brand, which should be included in the branding strategy of an organization.

This master's thesis provides a solid base for future research on the conceptualization of relevant employee brand building behaviors. Prospective investigation can build on

these results and further develop the provided conceptualization model as well as classification approach of brand building behaviors. In order to generate valid and objective results capable of being generalized among different branches, many research studies need to deal with this research topic in the future. Due to the fact that all respondents, who participated in the current research study, were customers or employees of a major Austrian financial institute, the current thesis focuses on the area of services, especially financial services. Further research should investigate if this conceptualization model is also applicable to other economic sectors. A different sample consisting of employees, managers and customers from other branches will provide essential insight into this research topic and can also support the provision of generalizable results. Also, further investigation into this topic regarding international differences and peculiarities must be addressed in further research studies because the present thesis concentrates on the Austrian financial services market and does not consider this research topic in an international context. Due to the fact that a complete conceptualization for all relevant employee brand building behaviors has not been possible, further research on this topic will be necessary to accomplish the assignment of the classification criteria to the individual behaviors. More precisely, ongoing research should engage in conceptualizing the remaining ten employee brand building behaviors to complete the conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors. Furthermore, the qualitative in-depth interviews as well as the quantitative follow-up online survey have shown a wide range of existing employee brand building behaviors, which have been assigned to six main categories based on a qualitative analysis. Thus it is proposed to engage in further quantitative research to confirm the assignment of the individual brand building behaviors to the categories as described in this master's thesis. Here the sample size in the quantitative research step was quite low. Moreover, to confirm the conceptualization model, further research with a larger sample size in the quantitative analysis should be conducted. Additionally, the differences in the points of view between managers, employees and customers regarding the conceptualization of the employee brand building behaviors need further investigation. The current thesis only provides first insights and expert knowledge, which definitely can be extended and refined. An extended sample as well as a more focused and detailed investigation in reference to this point of interest is necessary in prospective research. Further insights can help management to revise their brand building strategies and support the brand building process through the employees of an organization.

6 References

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7 Appendixes

7.1 Conceptualization – Based on the qualitative analysis

Here the conceptualization of the individual employee brand building behaviors, based on the qualitative analysis of the conducted interviews, is described in detail. This section was excluded from the main part of this thesis because the conceptualization of only four EBBBs was possible in this research step. Due to the lack of relevance to contribute to the research question of this master's thesis, this part of analysis is provided in the Appendixes.

7.1.1 Category 1 – customer orientation

The following classification characteristics have been originally applied in the qualitative analysis of the conducted interviews:

- Classification characteristic 1: on the job EBBB (1a) or off the job EBBB (1b)
- Classification characteristic 2: in-role EBBB (2a) or extra-role EBBB (2b)
- In the qualitative analysis, the respondents often suggested the following classification characteristics, which were not originally provided in the interview guidelines. The respondents demanded the combination of an on the job and off the job EBBB (1a+b) as well as the combination of in-role and extra-role, where a minimum standard / level of fulfillment of this EBBB is prescribed by the organizational role (e.g. in the job-description) and an extensive standard / level of fulfillment of this EBBB goes beyond the prescribed role and is discretionary (2c).

In the brackets beside the classification characteristics, respondents, who assigned the classification characteristic to this EBBB (e.g. E6 stands for employee number six, M3 stands for manager number three and C4 stands for customer number four), are named. These abbreviations are used throughout all categories.

Category 1 - customer orientation (7 behaviors)	Conceptualization
Live customer orientation and fulfill customers' needs	({E6: 1a/2a}; {E8: 1a/2b}; {E11: 1a/2c}; {E12: 1a/2b}; {E14: 1a/2b}; {M3: 1a/2a}; {M5: 1a/2c}; {E15: 1a/2c}; {C4: 1a/2c}; {C5: 1a/2b}; {C6: 1a/2c}; {C7: 1a/2c}); [[1a/2a: E6,M3]; [1a/2b: E8, E12, E14,C5]; [1a/2c: E11, M5, E15, C4, C6, C7]]
Flexibility in customer appointments	({E2: 1a/2a}; {E9: 1a/2a}; {E10: 1a/2a}; {E11: 1a/2a}; {E5: 1a/2a}; {C1: 1a/2a}; {C5: 1a/2b}; {C6: 1a/2a}; {C7: 1a/2c}); [[1a/2a: E2,E9,E10,E11,E5,C1,C6]; [1a/1b: C5]; [1a/2c: C7]];
Flexibility in customer issues	{C1: 1a/2a}, {C7: 1a/2c}); [[1a/2a: C1]; [1a/2c: C7]]
Open, natural, friendly and honest communication in the interaction with customers and extern partners	({E2: 1a/2b}; {E14: 1a/2b}; {E15: 1a/2c}; {C1: 1a/2a}; {C2: 1a/2a}; {C4: 1a/2a}); [[1a/2a: C1,C2,C4];[1a/2b: E2,E14]; [1a/2c: E15]]
Building up and maintain customer networks to ensure a close long-lasting customer relationship and live the customer relationship	({E3: 1b/2b}; {E5: 1b/2b}; {E7: 1a/2c}; {E9: 1a+b/2a}; {E10: 1a+b/2c}; {E11: 1a/2c}; {M1: 1a+b/2b}; {C2: 1b/2b}); [[1a+b/2a: E9]; [1a+b/2c: E10]; [1b/2b: E3,E5,C2,]; [1a/2c: E7,E11,]; [1a+b/2b: M1]]
Know the customer and become familiar with the customer	({E11: 1a/2c}; {M2: 1a/2b}); [[1a/2b: M2]; [1a/2c: E11]]
Help customers in the free time and answering customer enquiries	({C3: 1b/2b}); [[1b/2b: C3]]

Table 26: Conceptualization category 1 (qualitative analysis) - customer orientation

As highlighted in Table 26, to the behavior of *live customer orientation and fulfill customers' needs*, the above-described categorization characteristics were assigned 12 times. All the respondents assigned the classification characteristic 1 uniformly to this

EBBB, which implies that this EBBB is applied definitely on the job within professional activities. Regarding classification characteristic 2, a clear interpretation based on the statements of the conducted in-depth interviews is difficult. Respondents E6 and M3 saw this behavior as role prescribed and as a part of the job-description. Respondents E8, E12, E14 and C5 assigned the classification characteristic 2b to the EBBB, seeing this behavior as not a part of the job-description of the employees, but more at one's own discretion. Also, respondents E11, M5, E15, C4, C6 and C7 assigned classification characteristic 2c, which was integrated during the course of interviews to this behavior and which stands for a combination of the classification features 2a and 2b. The characteristic 2c indicates that a basic level of fulfillment of this behavior is role prescribed and an additional fulfillment of *live customer orientation and fulfill customers' needs* beyond these minimum requirements is discretionary. This classification characteristic originally was not part of the interview guidelines, but based on the demand for this criterion from the respondents, this characteristic has been included in the interviews when the respondent mentioned this way of conceptualization. So all in all, regarding *live customer orientation and fulfill customers' needs*, a final classification cannot be conducted based on the outcomes of the qualitative analysis. Here a further analysis based on the online questionnaire is needed to provide an objective conceptualization of this EBBB.

The next behavior in this category is *flexibility in customer appointments*. The defined classification categories were assigned nine times to this behavior. All respondents, who characterized this behavior, agreed that this opportunity to strengthen the brand is taking place in the direct professional environment. Further, respondents E2, E9, E10, E11, E5, C1 and C6 assigned the classification characteristic 2a to *flexibility in customer appointments* and categorized this behavior as role prescribed. Respondent C7 categorized this activity as 2c, where a minimum standard of fulfillment of this EBBB is prescribed by the organizational role (e.g. in the job-description) and an extensive standard of fulfillment of this EBBB is reaching beyond the prescribed role and therefore is discretionary. So a conceptualization based on the qualitative analysis, that the EBBB of *flexibility in customer appointments* is applied on the job and is role-prescribed, can be provided: **1a/2a**.

Flexibility in customer issues is the next behavior in the category of *customer orientation* to be analyzed further regarding a classification. Here only two respondents

assigned classification characteristics to the behavior. Both respondents - C1 and C7 - stated that this is an on the job behavior, which is part of the employee's professional role. Based on the very few mentions concerning the further classification characteristics of 2a, 2b and 2c, a follow-up online questionnaire is needed to provide a valid conceptualization.

In the category of *customer orientation*, the next behavior is *open, natural, friendly and honest communication in the interaction with customers and extern partners*. Six respondents assigned classification attributes to the opportunity to strengthen the brand. Respondents C1, C2 and C4 categorized the behavior as an on the job activity, which supports the brand building process in the direct field of professional activity and as an in-role behavior, which implies that this behavior is role prescribed and expected from the organization. Respondents E2 and E14 rated this behavior also as an on the job opportunity to strengthen the brand, but have conceptualized this behavior as extra-role, which is not part of the job description and arises out of self-motivation. Finally, respondent E15 assigned abbreviation 1a to this behavior, which indicates that the behavior is performed on the job, and also classified this behavior as 2c, which stands for a combination of a prescribed basic-level fulfillment of the behavior and a discretionary fulfillment beyond the standard level in a more extensive dimension. Finally, based on the analysis of the interviews, a final conceptualization of *open, natural, friendly and honest communication in the interaction with customers and extern partners* cannot be provided, thus a further online questionnaire is needed to clarify a further conceptualization.

An analysis of the interviews regarding the behavior of *building up and maintain customer networks to ensure a close long-lasting customer relationship and live the customer relationship* to build up the corporate brand, allows for the following conclusions. Respondents E9, E10 and M1 assigned the classification characteristics 1a+b to the behavior, which means that the activity is applied during working hours and also beyond. Nevertheless, respondent E9 evaluated the activity as an in-role EBBB; meanwhile, respondent M1 defined the behavior as an extra- role EBBB and, ultimately, respondent E10 stated that this opportunity to support the brand building process is a combination of a prescribed basic-level fulfillment and a more extensive fulfillment of this behavior is at one's own discretion. Also, respondents E3, E5 and C2 categorized the activity of *building up and maintain customer networks to ensure a close long-*

lasting customer relationship and live the customer relationship as an activity, which happens during free time and is extra-role. Respondents E7 and E11 evaluated the behavior as an on the job activity, which is on a basic level role prescribed as well as part of the job-definition, and everything beyond that is extra-role. Finally, based on the analysis of the qualitative analysis, a clear conceptualization cannot be found – a follow-up online questionnaire must clarify how this EBBB can be conceptualized.

Know the customer and become familiar with the customer is the next behavior in the category of *customer orientation*, which should be further analyzed regarding a conceptualization based on the qualitative analysis. Here only two respondents assigned classification characteristics to this behavior. Respondents M2 and E11 stated that this is an on the job behavior, which is part of the employee's professional role. However, respondent M2 evaluated the activity as being classified as an extra-role behavior, which is discretionary, and respondent E11 assigned the abbreviation 2c to the actual EBBB. Based on the very few mentions, a follow-up online questionnaire is needed to clarify how this behavior can be exactly conceptualized.

Similar to the latter conceptualization, the last brand building activity in this category of *help customers during free time and answering customer enquiries* cannot be classified based on the outcomes of the qualitative analysis because only one respondent assigned classification characteristics to this EBBB. The only statement here is from respondent C3, claiming that this behavior is seen as off the job and as an extra-role activity. Based on the very few mentions, a further online analysis is needed to clarify how this behavior can be exactly conceptualized.

7.1.2 Category 2 – brand representation

Category 2 - brand representation (10 behaviors)	Conceptualization
Positive verbal recommendation and representation of the brand	({E1: 1b/2b} {E4: 1b/2b}; {E6: 1b/2b}; {E7: 1b/2b}; {E8: 1b/2b}; {E9: 1b/2b}; {E11: 1b/2a}; {E13: 1b/2b}; {E14: 1b/2b}; {M1: 1b/2b}; {M2: 1b/2b}; {M3: 1b/2b}; {M4: 1a+b/2c}; {M5: 1b/2c}; {E15: 1b/2c}); {C3: 1b/2b}; {C7: 1b/2b}); [[1b/2b: E1,E4, E6, E7, E8, E9, E13, E14, M1, M2, M3, C3, C7]; [1b/2c: M5, E15]; [1a+b/2c: M4]; [1a+b/2a: C4]; [1b/2a: E11]]
Positive word of mouth regarding the products, the service and the company	({E4: 1b/2b}; {E6: 1b/2b}; {C1: 1b/2b}; {C2: 1b/2b}; {C3: 1b/2b}; {C4:1a+b/2a}); [[1b/2b: E4, E6, C1, C2, C3]; [1a+b/ 2a: C4]]
Mentioning the brand name	({C6: 1b/2b}; {C7: 1a/2a}); [[1b/2b: C6]; [1a/2a: C7]]
Positive word of keyboard	({E4: 1b/2b}; {E13: 1a+b/2b}; {E14: 1a+b/2a}; {M4: 1b/2b}; {M5: 1a+b/2b}; {E15: 1a+b/2b}); [[1b/2b: E4, M4]; [1a+b/2b: E13, M5, E15]; [1a+b/2a: E14]]
Sponsoring of and participation in events and social projects	({E13: 1b/2b}; {M2: 1a+b/2b}; {M3: 1a/2a}; {M1: 1b/2b}; {C2: 1a/2a}; {C3: 1b/2c}; {C5: 1b/2c}; {C6: 1b/2b}; {C7: 1a/2a}); [[1b/2b: E13, M1,C6]; [1a/2a: M3,C2, C7]; [1a+b/2b: M2]; [1b/2c: C5,C3]]
Showing the brand in the free time	({E7: 1b/2b}; {E13: 1b/2b}; {M5: 1b/2b}; {E15: 1b/2b}; {C2: 1b/2b}; {C5: 1b/2b}); [[1b/2b: E7, E13, M5, E15, C2; C5]]
Represent the brand on customer events	({E2: 1a / 2a}; {E12: 1a/2c}); [[1a/2a: E2,E12]]
Show the brand values to the outside – to externals	({M4: 1a+b/2a}; [[1a+b/2a: M4]]

Distribute giveaways, goodies and advertising materials	({E7: 1b/2b}); [[1b/2b: E7]]
Acquire new customers in the free time	({E2: 1b/2b}); [[1b/2b: E2]]

Table 27: Conceptualization category 2 (qualitative analysis) – brand representation

As illustrated in the Table 27, in the second category of *brand representation*, the EBBB of *positive verbal recommendation and representation of the brand* has been classified by 15 respondents as an opportunity to strengthen the brand, which is executed off the job. Two respondents - C4 and M4 - defined this activity to support the brand as a behavior, which is performed both on the job and off the job. Further, 13 of all respondents, who assigned a classification characteristic to this behavior, evaluated that this activity is extra- role. Three respondents - M4, M5 and E15 - stated that this behavior should be classified as 2c, which denotes that a basic level of performance of this behavior is role prescribed and everything beyond this basic fulfillment of the EBBB is extra-role. A clear majority of the respondents preferred the classification of *positive verbal recommendation and representation of the brand* as an off the job behavior beyond the immediate working hours and as an extra-role EBBB, which is not part of the job description. Hence, this EBBB can be conceptualized as follows: **1b/2b**.

Concerning the EBBB of *positive word of mouth regarding the products, the service and the company*, after closer investigation of the conducted in-depth interviews, six respondents classified this behavior. Respondents E4, E6, C1, C2 and C3 assigned classification criterion 1b to the activity of *positive word of mouth regarding the products, the service and the company*, which stands for an off the job behavior. Five respondents evaluated this activity as a discretionary EBBB, which arises out of the self-motivation of the employees. Due to the low assignment of classification characteristic to this EBBB, only a tendency of how it should be classified can be provided: 1b/2b. A final conceptualization of this EBBB needs to be done based on the follow-up online survey.

Mentioning the brand name is the next behavior in the category of *brand representation*, which should be analyzed further regarding an objective conceptualization. Here only two respondents assigned classification characteristics to this behavior based on the qualitative interviews. Respondent C6 stated that this is an off the job behavior that does not take place in the professional role of the employee.

Also, the EBBB was classified by respondent C6 as an extra–role behavior. Respondent C7 conceptualized the EBBB as an on the job activity and an in-role behavior. Based on the very few mentions in the conducted interviews, further online analysis needs to clarify how this behavior can be exactly conceptualized.

The next behavior in the category of *brand representation*, which is presented in Table 27, is *positive word of keyboard*. Respondents E13, E14, E15 and M5 classified this EBBB as an activity, which is also performed within working hours and in the field of business activities as well as beyond in the free time of employees. Respondents E4 and M4 mentioned that this EBBB is performed solely during the free time of the respondents. In the further classification process, respondents E4, M4, E13, M5 and E15 classified the EBBB as an extra-role behavior, which is not anchored in the prescribed role of an employee. Respondent E14 allocated the classification characteristic 2a to categorize the EBBB. After an interview-based classification process, a final conceptualization of the behavior of *positive word of keyboard* cannot be found. Hence, an online survey could provide deeper insight into how to carry out a holistic conceptualization of this EBBB.

Based on the conducted interviews, the next activity of *sponsoring of and participation in events and social projects* cannot be exactly conceptualized in reference to strengthening the brand. Several different approaches are mixed together and no clear direction as to how to classify this EBBB can be identified. Respondents E13, M1, C6, C5 and C3 classified this behavior as an off the job activity, which occurs during the free time of the customers. Further, respondents M3, C2 and C7 answered that this is an on the job behavior. In contrast, respondent M2 classified the EBBB as a combination of on the job and off the job. Regarding the second classification characteristic, four respondents chose that the activity is extra-role, three mentioned that the activity is in-role and only two respondents answered that this EBBB is a combination of in-role and extra-role. Due to the latter described inconsistent outcomes, a follow up online survey is needed for an objective conceptualization of *sponsoring of and participation in events and social projects*.

Six respondents assigned classification characteristics to the brand building activity of *showing the brand in the free time* to provide an objective conceptualization. The respondents classified the behavior unanimously as an activity performed off the job

and as an extra-role behavior. Based on the uniform decision of all respondents, a conceptualization of the behavior as follows can be provided based on the qualitative analysis of the interviews: **1b / 2b**.

The next behavior of the category of *brand representation* is *represent the brand on customer events*. Regarding this behavior, two respondents in total assigned a classification characteristic to the activity. Respondents E2 and E12 classified the EBBB as performed on the job in the direct field of business activities, and in-role. Therefore, the opportunity to strengthen the brand is role-prescribed and is required from the organizational side. Based on such assignments by only two respondents, a final objective conceptualization of the EBBB must be done based on the online survey.

Based on the qualitative interviews, the last three EBBBs of the second category of brand representation -*show the brand values to the outside – to externals; distribute giveaways, goodies and advertising materials; and acquire new customers in the free time* - cannot be conceptualized in an objective way because only one respondent for each EBBB assigned classification characteristics. This incident will make a further analysis based on the in-depth interviews inappropriate. The next step in the conceptualization process must be done based on the online survey.

7.1.3 Category 3 – service orientation

Category 3 - service orientation (8 behaviors)	Conceptualization
Competent customer advice	({E1: 1a/2b}; {E6: 1a/2c}; {E7: 1a/2c}; {E11: 1a/2a}; {E14: 1a/2a}; {E15: 1a/2c}; {C1: 1a/2a}; {C3: 1a/2a}; {C4: 1a/2a}; {C5: 1a/2a}; {C6: 1a/2a}; {C7: 1a/2c}); [[1a/2a: E11, E14, C1, C3, C4, C5, C6]; [1a/2b: E1]; [1a/2c: E6, E7, E15, C7]]
Perfect all-round service	({E4: 1a/2b}; {E14: 1a/2a}; {E5: 1a/2c}; {E15: 1a/2c}; {C5: 1a/2a}; {C6: 1a/2c}); [[1a/2a: E14, C5]; [1a/2b: E4]; [1a/2c: E5, E15, C6]]
Provide a high quality service and live quality standards	({E5: 1a/2c}); [[1a/2c: E5]]

Optimal process of the service	(({E1: 1a/2a}; {E7: 1a/2a}; {E5: 1a/2c}); [[1a/2a: E1, E7]; [1a/2c: E5]])
Excessive product knowledge and economic know how	(({E5: 1a/2a}; {E6: 1a/2c}; {E7: 1a/2c}); [[1a/2a: E5]; [1a/2c: E6, E7]])
Effective handling and quick processing of customer enquiries	(E2: 1a/2b; {E5: 1a/2c}); [[1a/2b: E2]; [1a/2c: E5]]
Get and use customer information	(({E12: 1a/2a}); [[1a/2a: E12]])
Use available tools and information materials	(({C6: 1a/2a}; {C7: 1a/2a}); [[1a/2a: C6, C7]])

Table 28: Conceptualization of category 3 (qualitative analysis) – service orientation

In the third category of *service orientation* regarding the EBBB of *competent customer advice*, all 12 respondents - E11, E14, C1, C3, C4, C5, C6, E1, E6, E7, E15 and C7 - classified this opportunity to strengthen the brand as an on the job EBBB, which is applied directly within business activities. Additionally, seven respondents - E11, E14, C1, C3, C4, C5 and C6 - assigned the classification characteristic 2a to the behavior and evaluated this activity to support the brand building process as an in-role behavior. Only respondent E1 classified the brand building activity of *competent customer advice* as an extra-role EBBB. The remaining respondents - E6, E7, E15 and C7 - stated that this behavior should be classified as 2c, which implies that a basic level of this behavior is role prescribed and everything beyond that basic fulfillment of this EBBB is extra-role. A clear majority of the respondents determined that this EBBB is an on the job behavior, which is applied within the immediate working hours and the field of professional activities. Further, the EBBB can be classified as an in-role EBBB, which is part of the job description and is expected from the organization. So a conceptualization of this EBBB, based on the qualitative analysis, can be done: **1a/2a**.

Regarding the EBBB of *perfect all-round service*, all six respondents uniformly assigned classification characteristic 1a to this activity and classified the opportunity to strengthen the brand as an on the job EBBB. Further analysis based on the conducted interviews regarding the second classification criterion shows no clear line because respondents E14 and C5 classified the behavior as a part of the job description and expected from the company; meanwhile; respondent E4 assigned classification characteristic 2b to the EBBB and respondents E5, E15 and C6 allocated classification

criterion 2c to this activity. Based on these assignments, an objective conceptualization cannot be provided. Hence, an online survey could provide deeper insight for carrying out a holistic conceptualization of this EBBB.

The next EBBB in the third category - *provide a high quality service and live quality standards* - cannot be conceptualized in an objective way because only one respondent assigned classification characteristics, which would make further analysis based on the in-depth interviews not appropriate. An objective conceptualization must be done based on the follow-up online survey.

The next behavior is *optimal process of the service*, which should be further analyzed regarding a valid classification. Here three respondents assigned classification characteristics to this behavior. All respondents - E1, E5 and E7 - stated that this is an on the job behavior, which is part of the employee's professional role. However, regarding the second classification characteristic, respondents E1 and E7 evaluated that the activity can be classified as an in-role behavior, which is part of the job description of the employee. Respondent E5 assigned the abbreviation 2c to this EBBB. Based on so few mentions, a further online survey is needed to clarify how this behavior can be objectively conceptualized.

Also, the next EBBB of *excessive product knowledge and economic know how* should be conceptualized by the respondents. The first classification characteristics were assigned uniformly to the opportunity to strengthen the brand. Respondents E5, E6 and E7 classified the EBBB as an on the job activity within typical business activities. Further, respondents E6 and E7 assigned classification characteristic 2c to this EBBB, which indicates that this EBBB is, on the one hand, role prescribed and, on the other hand, discretionary. Respondent E5 allocated classification criterion 2a to this EBBB. Due to a lack of information, a follow-up online survey is needed to run an objective conceptualization of the EBBB of *excessive product knowledge and economic know how*.

Effective handling and quick processing of customer enquiries is the next behavior in the category of *service orientation*, which should be analyzed regarding an objective and valid conceptualization. Here only two respondents assigned classification characteristics to this behavior. Respondents E2 and E5 stated that this is an on the job

behavior, which is part of the employee’s professional role. Furthermore, respondent E2 assigned classification feature 2b to this actual activity, which denotes that this EBBB is seen as an extra-role behavior. The other respondent considered that this behavior should receive classification characteristic 2c, which represents an EBBB in which a basic level of this behavior is role prescribed and everything beyond basic fulfillment is extra-role. Based on the small number of mentions, further online analysis is needed to clarify how the behavior can be exactly conceptualized.

Based on the conducted interviews, the last two EBBBs of *get and use customer information* and *use available tools and information materials* cannot be conceptualized in an objective way because only one respondent, respectively, two respondents per EBBB, assigned the classification characteristic to the brand building activity. This incident makes further analysis based on the follow-up online survey necessary. In detail, regarding the EBBB of *use available tools and information materials*, both respondents categorized this activity as applied on the job and as an in-role EBBB. Regarding the brand building behavior of *get and use customer information*, respondent E12 classified this behavior as an on the job activity and as an in-role activity, which is definitely expected by the organization and is part of the job description. A further step to provide a valid conceptualization must be conducted based on the quantitative analysis.

7.1.4 Category 4 – brand congruent behavior

Category 4 - brand congruent behavior (5 behaviors)	Conceptualization
Live the brand and the brand values (also in the free time)	({E11: 1a+b/2b};{M3: 1b/2c}; {M4: 1a+b/2a}; {M5: 1a/2c}; {C3: 1a+b/2b}); [[1a+b/2b: E11, C3]; [1b/2c: M3]; [1a+b/2a: M4]; [1a/2c: M5]; [1b/2c: M3]]
Brand consistent customer appearance	({E1: 1a/2a}; {E4: 1a/2a}; {E7: 1a/2c}; {E8: 1a/2b}; {E11: 1a/2a}; {E13: 1a/2a}; {E14: 1a/2a}; {M5: 1a/2c}; {C1: 1a/2a}; {C4: 1a/2a}); [[1a/2a: E1, E4, E11, E13, E14, C1, C4]; [1a/2c: E7, M5]; [1a/2b: E8]]

Brand consistent process of customer advice	{E13: 1a/2a}; {M5: 1a/2c}; {C1: 1a/2a}); [[1a/2a: E13, C1]; [1a/2c: M5]]
Uniform branch appearance	[not classified]
Help to carry corporate identity	[not classified]

Table 29: Conceptualization of category 4 (qualitative analysis) – brand congruent behavior

The first EBBB of the category of *brand congruent behavior* is *live the brand and the brand values (also in the free time)*. Regarding this behavior, five respondents in total assigned classification characteristics to this activity. In regard to classification characteristic 1, respondents E11, M4 and C3 classified this behavior as an activity, which is performed on the job and also off the job. Respondent M3 assigned characteristic 1b to this EBBB. Respondent M5 stated that *live the brand and the brand values (also in free time)* is an on the job behavior. Regarding the second classification criterion, no clear direction can be found based on the conducted in-depth interviews. Interviewees E11 and C3 assigned classification attribute 2b to the behavior, respondent M5 as well as M3 assigned attribute 2c and respondent M4 allocated 2a to this EBBB. A further step in the conceptualization of this behavior must be done based on the follow-up online survey.

In the fourth category of *brand congruent behavior* regarding the EBBB of *brand consistent customer appearance*, all ten respondents - E1, E4, E8, E11, E13, E14, C1, C4, E7 and M5 - classified this opportunity to strengthen the brand as an on the job EBBB, which is applied directly within business activities. Seven respondents - E1, E4, E11, E13, E14, C1 and C4 - who assigned classification characteristic 2a to the behavior, evaluated that this activity to support the brand building process is in-role. Respondents E7 and M5 stated that this behavior should be classified as 2c, which implies that a basic level of performing this behavior is role prescribed and everything beyond this basic fulfillment of the EBBB is extra-role. Respondent E8 has assigned second classification criterion 2b to this activity. A clear majority of respondents prefer the classification of *brand consistent customer appearance* as an on the job behavior within the immediate working hours and the field of professional activities. Based on the qualitative analysis, a tendency regarding classification criteria 2 can also be

elucidated. According to the qualitative analysis, this EBBB is part of the job description and is expected from the organization. A final classification must be pointed out through the online survey.

The next behavior in the category of *brand congruent behavior*, which should be analyzed further regarding a holistic classification, is *brand consistent process of customer advice*. In the assignment of the first classification characteristic, three respondents uniformly assigned 1a to this behavior. Further, the EBBB was classified by respondents E13 and C1 as an in–role behavior. Respondent M5 assigned classification characteristic 2c to the behavior, which stands for a combination of a prescribed basic-level of fulfillment of the behavior and a discretionary fulfillment beyond the standard level in a more extensive dimension. Based on the few mentions, a further online survey is needed to provide more data in order to conduct a holistic conceptualization of this EBBB. The follow-up online survey should close this lack of information.

For the last two behaviors of *uniform branch appearance* and *help to carry corporate identity*, no classification attributes were assigned. Hence, an online survey should provide necessary insights to help carry out a holistic conceptualization of these relevant EBBBs.

7.1.5 Category 5 – brand support and development behaviors

Category 5 - brand support and development behaviors (5 behaviors)	Conceptualization
Brand development activities	({E1: 1a/2a}; {E5: 1a/2c}; {E7: 1a/2b}; {E15: 1a/2c}); [[1a/2a: E1]; [1a/2b: E7]; [1a/2c: E15, E5]]

Defend the brand from negative press and correct misconceptions	({E2: 1a/2c}; {E3: 1a/2b}; {E4: 1b/2b}; {E7: 1a/2a}; {E8: 1a+b/2a}; {E10: 1a/2b}; {E11: 1b/2a}; {E12: 1a/ 2c}; {E13: 1b/2b}; {E15: 1a+b/2c}; {C5: 1b/2b}); [[1a/2c: E2, E12]; [1a/2b: E3, E10]; [1b/2b: E4, C5]; [1a/2c: E2, E12]; [1a+b/2a: E8]; [1a+b/2c: E15]; [1a/2a: E7]]M5]; [1a/2b: E8]]
Ask for customer feedback	({C5: 1a/2b}); [[1a/2b: C5]]
Deal with brand relevant topics and personal development to get background knowledge	({E3: 1a/2b}; {E7: 1a/2a}; {E10: 1a+b/2b}; {M3: 1a/2c}; [[1a/2b: E3]; [1a+b/2b: E10]; [1a/2c: M3]]
Show commitment to build up the brand	({E12: 1a/2c}); [[1a/2c: E12]]

Table 30: Conceptualization of category 5 (qualitative analysis) – brand support and development behaviors

In the category of *brand support and development behaviors*, the first analyzed behavior is *brand development activities*. In total, four respondents assigned classification attributes to this opportunity to strengthen the brand. All respondents - E1, E7, E15 and E5 - categorized the behavior as an on the job activity, which supports the brand building process directly in the field of professional activity. In the assignment of the second classification attributes based on the qualitative analysis, no clear line of how to conceptualize this EBBB can be detected. According to respondents E15 and E5, this behavior can be classified as 2c, which stands for a combination of a prescribed basic-level of fulfillment of this behavior and a discretionary fulfillment beyond the standard level in a more extensive dimension. Respondent E1 assigned classification characteristic 2a, meanwhile respondent E7 allocated classification characteristic 2b. Based on the qualitative analysis of the interviews, a final conceptualization of *brand development activities* cannot be provided. A follow-up online survey should provide further information necessary for an objective conceptualization.

The second EBBB of the category of *brand support and development behaviors* is *defend the brand from negative press and correct misconceptions*. Regarding this behavior, in total, 11 respondents assigned classification characteristics to the activity. A conceptualization of this EBBB based on a qualitative analysis is not possible

because all possible approaches to conceptualize this behavior are completely mixed up and no clear direction can be found here. A further step in the process of conceptualization of the behavior of *defend the brand from negative press and correct misconceptions* must be done based on the follow-up online survey so as to provide a valid conceptualization.

The next EBBB of the fifth category of *ask for customer feedback* cannot be conceptualized in an objective way based on the qualitative analysis because here only one respondent assigned classification characteristics. A follow-up online survey could help to substantiate the conceptual approach.

Regarding the EBBB of *deal with brand relevant topics and personal development to get background knowledge*, three respondents - E3, E7 and M3 - assigned classification characteristic 1a to this activity and therefore decided that the opportunity to strengthen the brand is performed on the job. According to respondent E10, this behavior is applied in the office during working hours and also during the free time of employees. In reference to the second classification characteristic, no clear direction can be found. A follow-up online questionnaire would help to provide clarification in the conceptualization of the EBBB of *deal with brand relevant topics and personal development to get background knowledge*.

The last EBBB of the fifth category - *show commitment to build up the brand* - cannot be conceptualized in an objective way based on the analysis of the qualitative data because only one respondent assigned classification characteristics to this activity in the in-depth interviews. A follow-up online survey would help to concretize the conceptualization of this EBBB.

7.1.6 Category 6 – employee support behaviors

Category 6 - employee support behaviors (3 behaviors)	Conceptualization
Give advice to other colleagues and team members especially new colleagues regarding the brand values - be a mentor	({E5: 1a/2a}; {E15: 1a/2c}); [[1a/2a: E5]; [1a/2c]]

Motivate colleagues to build up the brand	({M1: 1a/2a}; {M6: 1a/2c}); [[1a/2a: M1]; [1a/2c: M6]]
Executives act like a role model	({M4: 1a/2a}; {M6: 1a/2c}); [[1a/2a: M4]; [1a/2c: M6]]

Table 31: Conceptualization of category 6 (qualitative analysis) – employee support behaviors

The first EBBB of the category of *employee support behaviors* is *give advice to other colleagues and team members especially new colleagues - be a mentor*. Here two respondents assigned classification characteristics to this behavior. According to respondents E5 and E15, this EBBB is an on the job behavior. Further, this EBBB was classified by respondent E5 as an in-role behavior, and by respondent E15 as a combination of a prescribed basic-level fulfillment of the behavior and a discretionary fulfillment beyond the standard level. Based on so few mentions, an objective conceptualization of this behavior is not possible. A follow-up online survey would help to provide clarification.

Also, the conceptualization of the next two EBBBs - *motivate colleagues to build up the brand* and *executives act like a role model* - has faced the same problems as the latter EBBB. For the EBBB of *motivate colleagues to build up the brand*, both respondents M1 and M6 assigned classification characteristic 1a. Additionally, the EBBB of *executives act like a role model* was categorized in the same way as the later EBBB by respondents M4 and M6. Regarding the second classification attributes, for both EBBBs, one respondent each assigned abbreviation 2a to the opportunity to build up the brand and also one interviewee each stated that the EBBBs are a combination of in-role and extra-role. An objective conceptualization of these two behaviors cannot be provided based on the qualitative analysis. A follow-up online survey would help to ensure an objective conceptualization of these EBBBs.

7.2 Interview guidelines

In this subchapter of the Appendixes, the different interview guidelines for employees, executive members and customers are presented in terms of how they were used in the qualitative analysis.

7.2.1 Interview guidelines (English)

Discussion Guide of the Qualitative Study

A: Explanation of the research purpose of the master's thesis and why interviews are conducted

- The department of international marketing at the University of Vienna is conducting a study aimed at a complete conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors. According to the definition of Morhart et al. (2009), employee brand building behaviors are the “employees’ contribution (both on and off the job) to an organization’s customer oriented branding efforts” (p.123). Miles and Mangold (2004) summarize the previously mentioned term as a kind of process to capture the idea that employees constitute engagement in a variety of behaviors to build and strengthen the corporate brand. To obtain deep insight, your time and effort to answer and discuss the questions would be highly appreciated.
- Information about the following: the general process of the in-depth interviews, usage of data only in academic research work, confidential treatment of data and recording of the data, anonymized data treatment and representation of names in this master’s thesis

B: Possible course of the in-depth interview, course of questions

Do you know what your organization’s brand XXX³⁰ stands for, what do you think? (What are the core values of the brand, what is the brand promise given to consumers, what values are communicated in advertising? Do you think that XXX is a stand-alone brand or do you think it is only part of brand XXX).

What do you as an employee/executive member associate spontaneously with the expression “employee brand building behaviors?” (Please give a suggestion or a proposition of what you think)
(Explanation of brand building behavior through the interviewer)

Do you support the corporate brand XXX in some way? What is your contribution to the brand in general? (Please imagine a usual working day, when you are at work, what situations can you remember in your every-day work that give some contribution to the corporate brand?)

³⁰ XXX stands for the brand of the well-known Austrian bank, where the study was conducted

If yes: Please tell me what this support to the brand exactly looks like? (What are the benefits for both sides supporting the brand, is it a Win-Win-situation? What positive (or negative) effects can potentially arise?)

If no: Why are you not supporting brand XXX, what are the reasons? (Maybe what can motivate you to support the brand? What must happen for you to start strengthening the corporate brand – Which incident must occur to cause you to strengthen the brand with your full commitment?)

(Do you also support corporate brand XXX in your free time, apart from normal every day-work in the office - beyond the job description? (Please try to imagine some situations, where you have acted that way?)

Now you have named some opportunities of how you can support the brand. Please think of some possible scenarios for a highly motivated ideal employee, who maybe is new in the company, to act as a “brand champion”? (Please describe the ideal range of brand building behaviors – what comes to mind? Please keep in mind that you are not to describe your opinion, just what “this ideal employee” possibly can do...)

Do you think that an employee’s contribution to strengthening the brand is only a part of your job description or also something, which occurs beyond your normal organization’s role description and also exists during an employee’s free time?

What do you think about extra-role brand building behaviors in supporting the brand? (What activities come to mind, please take your time, think for a moment and tell me how an employee / executive can support the corporate brand off the job?)

(In the event no answer is given, possible input for the interview are listed here) Now I will tell you a pre-specified list of possible brand building behaviors. Please tell me for every behavior, whether it takes place in the daily business context or if it is an action, which only occurs during the free time of an employee. Please also give me some information about your personal usage of these behaviors and the grade of importance in their ability to strengthen the corporate brand.

Employee brand building behaviors	General importance	Personal perception, Yes / no
Recommend the brand XXX to friends		
Defend the brand XXX from criticism		
Positive Word of mouth		
Encourage other employees to focus their efforts on the brand XXX		
To appear personally consistent with other manifestations of our branding (e.g. advertising)		
Control personal conclusions (Be aware of the fact that everything you say or do can affect the brand image of XXX)		

Voluntarily work longer hours if that were to positively affect the brand image of XXX (e.g. to improve a customer usability process, to care about important customer issues)		
To incorporate customer /service orientation		
To actively asking customers for feedback		
Voluntary self-education by reading manuals, guidebooks or professional journals		
Develop new ideas for our products or services		
Suggestions for improvements without being asked		
Take care about brand congruent behavior		
Communicate the brand values of XXX to new colleagues		
Forward customer feedback or reports of internal problems to the people in charge		
Participating in brand building		
Taking part in an voluntary project supported by the brand XXX		
To underline the advantages of our brand in comparison to our competitors' brands		
Report competitive initiatives that might impact the brand XXX to the management		
Correct out-of-stock situations (e.g. replace displace on the POS, pull up facings, etc.)		

Have you been inspired by named examples; please tell me some more relevant brand buildings behaviors, which maybe come to mind? (Now we have heard a lot of different possibilities for employees to support and fortify the corporate brand, maybe now you have a different view on this topic and new inspirations have come spontaneously to your mind, please take your time and think a little bit about this and tell me some new opportunities for supporting the corporate brand?)

You have named some “new” brand building behaviors, can you concretize them a little / why can these be important to strengthening the brand?

In general, do you think that brand XXX is supported by its employees? Can you imagine other brands you know of that enjoy stronger support from employees? Why?

Do you think that it is relevant for a company to have employees, who act as brand champions? What do you think are the benefits?

C: What must happen in your company for you to say “I will support brand XXX even more now”? (Please think about some scenarios, which can occur in the company, which maybe influence those previous discussed behaviors)

D: Personal Data

Interview number: _____

Respondent abbreviation: _____

Gender: male female

Age: _____

Completed Education:

- Basic education
- Apprenticeship
- Grammar School / Vocational School
- University

Area of occupation: Erste Bank Sparkasse

- Frontline Staff Backoffice
- Employee Executive member

Area: _____

7.2.2 Interview guidelines (German, customer)

Diskussionsleitfaden Konzeptualisierung “Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter zur Stärkung der Unternehmensmarke”

(Kunde)

A: Erläuterung des Forschungszieles der Masterarbeit

- Begrüßung und Vorstellung des Interviewers

- Ich schreibe derzeit am Institut für Internationales Marketing an der Universität Wien an meiner Masterarbeit über die Konzeptualisierung von Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter zur Stärkung der Unternehmensmarke. (Ich versuche eine vollständige und gesamtheitliche Auflistung aller Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter zu finden, welche in relevanter Weise zum Aufbau und zur Stärkung der Marke beitragen können).
- Information zum Interviewprozedere: Ich möchte dich darauf hinweisen, dass die Verwendung der Daten ausschließlich für die wissenschaftliche Forschung verwendet werden. Die Daten müssen zur weiteren Verarbeitung aufgenommen werden, jedoch erfolgt die Weiterverarbeitung der Daten anonymisiert und streng vertraulich und erfasste Daten werden nicht an Dritte weitergegeben.

B: Möglicher Ablauf des Interviews, Ablauf der Fragen:

Was ist deine Hausbank bzw. Hauptbank?

1. Weißt Du für was die Unternehmensmarke deiner Hausbank bzw. Hauptbank steht, was glaubst du? (Was glaubst du sind die zentralen Grundwerte der Marke? Was ist das Markenversprechen, mit welchem sich die Marke an dich als Kunden richtet, was sind die Werte, welche zum Beispiel in der Werbung kommuniziert werden?)
2. Was assoziiert du aus der Kundensicht spontan mit dem Begriff „Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter zur Stärkung der Marke?“ (Bitte gib einen Vorschlag ab, der für dich am plausibelsten scheint) (Eventuelle Erklärung des Begriffes durch den Interviewer) (Optionale Frage – je nach Output)
3. Stell du dir bitte kurz deinen letzten Bankbesuch mit Beratungs – bzw. Servicesituation vor bzw. falls dieser schon länger zurückliegt, stell dir einfach das Szenario eines typischen Bankbesuchs mit einer Beratung bzw. Servicesituation vor.

Falls nein: siehe Punkt C

- a) Bitte erzähl mir, wie eine Unterstützung der Marke deiner Hausbank durch Verhaltensweisen bzw. Auftreten des Kundenbetreuers im Rahmen des Bankbesuches ausgesehen hat bzw. aussehen könnte? (Welche Auswirkungen kann so ein Verhalten des Mitarbeiters Ihrer deiner Meinung haben? (sowohl auf die Marke als wie auch auf dich selbst)
- b) Unterstützt dein Kundenbetreuer die Marke deiner Hausbank nur im Rahmen der Beratung – bzw. Servicesituation in der Filiale oder denkst du gibt es diesbezüglich auch einen Beitrag zum Aufbau und zur Stärkung der Marke

in der Freizeit, über die normale Arbeitszeit in der Filiale hinausgehend? (Bitte versuche dich kurz zu erinnern ob dies schon einmal vorgekommen ist, dass ein Kundenbetreuer außerhalb seiner beruflichen Tätigkeit in der Bankfiliale die Marke versucht hat zu fördern und- ob es vielleicht sogar öfters vorkommt?) (Welche Maßnahmen zur Unterstützung der Marke würden speziell in der Freizeit vorkommen?)

4. Jetzt hast du einige Möglichkeiten genannt, wie dein Kundenbetreuer die Unternehmensmarke stärken kann. Bitte stell dir nun einen hoch motivierten Bankbetreuer vor, für welchen keine Mühe zu groß ist und der keine Möglichkeit auslässt die Marke in irgendeiner Form zu unterstützen und zu fördern.

a) Was könnte aus Kundensicht, dieser perfekte Mitarbeiter alles tun um die Marke bestmöglich zu unterstützen und voranzubringen? – Bitte beschreibe das ideale Spektrum an Verhaltensweisen zur Stärkung der Marke! (Was kommt Dir hierzu in den Sinn – Bitte denke daran, dass es hier rein um das optimale Verhalten dieser zu beschreibenden Person geht und nicht um deinen persönlichen Kundenbetreuer).

b) Siehst du Verhaltensweisen des Bankmitarbeiters zum Aufbau und zur Stärkung der Marke in der Job-Beschreibung verankert? Denkst du gibt es Verhaltensweisen zur Stärkung der Marke, welche auf Grund der beruflichen „Rolle“ eines jeden Bankmitarbeiters in einer Organisation erfüllt werden müssen, die quasi von einem Kundenbetreuer erwartet werden?

c) Hast du bereits Verhaltensweisen deinem Bankbetreuer erlebt, welche zum Teil aus deiner Sicht nicht vom Unternehmen gefordert werden und über eine Job-Beschreibung hinausgehen – welche quasi deiner Einschätzung nach freiwillig waren?

Was denkst du aus Kundensicht über diese „extra“ Verhaltensweisen zur Stärkung der Marke die über den normalen Tätigkeitsbereich der Mitarbeiter hinausgehen? Welche Aktivitäten fallen Ihnen dir hier ein, nimm dir ruhig Zeit, ein wenig nachzudenken, was hier eventuelle Möglichkeiten sein könnten? (Kommen diese in der Praxis eher häufig vor bzw. oder werden diese Verhaltensweisen eher selten angewandt?)

Hast du persönliche Erfahrungen diesbezüglich bzw. haben hast du in dieser Form schon erlebt, dass ein Mitarbeiter solch einen Beitrag zur Stärkung der Marke geleistet hat?

5. (Fall der Kunde keine Verhaltensweisen nennen kann, sind hier ein paar Inputs angeführt). Ich werde dir nun ein paar mögliche Verhaltensweisen zur Stärkung der Marke vorschlagen – bitte gib mir kurz Bescheid, ob diese Verhaltensweisen deiner Meinung nach zur Stärkung und zum Aufbau der Marke wichtig sind - und ob diese

Verhaltensweisen eines Bankmitarbeiters von dir schon einmal persönlich wahrgenommen oder erlebt wurden.

Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter zur Stärkung der Marke	Generelle Wichtigkeit	Persönliche Wahrnehmung (JA / NEIN)
Weiterempfehlen der Marke an Freunde und Bekannte		
Verteidigen der Marke vor Kritik durch Medien, andere Personen, etc.		
Zwischenfrage: Was würdest du als Kunde unter einem „markenkonsistentem“ Verhalten des Bankberaters verstehen und wie würdest du es definieren? Wann wird deiner Meinung nach ein Mitarbeiter „markenkonsistent“ wahrgenommen – welche Faktoren sind hier relevant? Konsistentes Auftreten des Mitarbeiters gegenüber dem kommunizierten Erscheinungsbild der Marke.		
Kontrollieren persönlicher Aussagen (Sich bewusst sein, dass alles was man sagt und tut das Markenimage des Unternehmens beeinflussen kann)		
Freiwillig länger arbeiten, wenn es das Markenimage des Unternehmens positiv beeinflusst (z.B.: um einen Prozess kundenfreundlicher zu gestalten, sich um Kundenprobleme zu kümmern, etc.)		
Besonders kunden – und serviceorientiertes arbeiten		
Aktives Fragen der Kunden nach Feedback		
Weiterleiten von Kundenfeedback oder internen Problemen zu den verantwortlichen Personen		
Teilnehmen an freiwilligen Projekten zur Unterstützung der Marke		
Unterstreichen der Vorteile der Marke im Vergleich zur Konkurrenz		

Bist du von den eben genannten Beispielen möglicher Verhaltensweisen inspiriert worden – wenn ja, nenn mir bitte noch zusätzliche relevante Verhaltensweisen zur Stärkung der Unternehmensmarke welche du bereits in der Vergangenheit wahrgenommen hast. (Es wurden nun viele Möglichkeiten für Mitarbeiter aufgezeigt, wie die Unternehmensmarke gestärkt werden kann. Fallen dir nun spontan noch weitere Möglichkeiten ein, welche vorhin nicht genannt wurden, wie der Mitarbeiter die Marke unterstützen kann.

(Falls ja: Du hast nun „neue“ mögliche Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter aufgezählt, kannst du diese ein bisschen konkreter beschreiben, warum sind diese Möglichkeiten für die Stärkung der Marke notwendig?)

6. Glaubst du, dass es für ein Unternehmen wichtig ist Mitarbeiter zu haben, welche sich für die Marke einsetzen und diese stets versuchen aufzubauen? Was glaubst du als Kunde, sind die Benefits für das Unternehmen?

7. Im Gegensatz zu den Verhaltensweisen, welche die Unternehmen stärken, fallen dir als Kunde Verhaltensweisen von Bankmitarbeitern ein, die besonders schädlich für den Markenaufbau sein können?

Wurden solche Verhaltensweisen von dir schon bei deiner Hausbank / Hauptbank persönlich erlebt oder beobachtet? (Warum sind diese Verhaltensweisen deiner Meinung nach für die Marke schädlich? Was sind die Konsequenzen?)

C: Einflussfaktoren für Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter zur Stärkung der Marke

Glaubst du im Allgemeinen, dass deine Hausbank von seinen Mitarbeitern im Hinblick auf den Markenaufbau unterstützt wird – wenn ja in welchem Ausmaß?

-wenn nein, was könnten hierfür Gründe sein, warum die Mitarbeiter nicht gewillt sind die Marke zu unterstützen?

(Kannst du dir vorstellen, dass andere bekannte Marken (in anderen Branchen) stärker durch ihre Mitarbeit gestärkt und unterstützt werden?)

Falls 3 nein:

Wieso denkst du unterstützt der Mitarbeiter die Unternehmensmarke nicht, was könnten hier mögliche Gründe für eine Verweigerung des Support der Unternehmensmarke sein?

Könnte auch sein, dass Verhaltensweisen zur Stärkung der Unternehmensmarke zwar vorhanden sein können, dir jedoch nicht aufgefallen sind bzw. von dir nicht wahrgenommen worden sind?

Was denkst du könnte den Mitarbeiter motivieren die Marke seiner Hausbank stärker zu unterstützen?

D: Persönliche Daten

Interview - Nr: _____

Respondent - Nr: _____

Geschlecht.: männlich weiblich

Alter: _____

Höchste abgeschlossene Ausbildung:

- Pflichtschule
- Lehre
- Matura
- Universität

Arbeitsfeld: Kunde

7.2.3 Interview Guidelines (German, employee)

Diskussionsleitfaden Konzeptualisierung “Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter zur Stärkung der Unternehmensmarke”

(Mitarbeiter)

A: Erläuterung des Forschungszieles der Masterarbeit

- Begrüßung und Vorstellung des Interviewers
- Ich schreibe derzeit am Institut für Internationales Marketing an der Universität Wien an meiner Masterarbeit über die Konzeptualisierung von Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter zur Stärkung der Unternehmensmarke. (Ich versuche eine

vollständige und gesamtheitliche Auflistung aller Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter zu finden, welche in relevanter Weise zum Aufbau und zur Stärkung der Marke beitragen können).

- Information zum Interviewprozedere: Ich möchte Sie darauf hinweisen, dass die Verwendung der Daten ausschließlich für die wissenschaftliche Forschung verwendet werden. Die Daten müssen zur weiteren Verarbeitung aufgenommen werden - jedoch erfolgt die Weiterverarbeitung der Daten anonymisiert und streng vertraulich und erfasste Daten werden nicht an Dritte weitergegeben.

B: Möglicher Ablauf von Interviews, Ablauf der Fragen:

1. Wissen Sie / weißt Du für was die Unternehmensmarke XXX³¹ steht, was glaubst du / glauben Sie? (Was glauben Sie / glaubst du sind die zentralen Grundwerte der Marke? Was ist das Markenversprechen, mit welchem sich die Marke an den Kunden richtet, was sind die Werte welche zum Beispiel in der Werbung kommuniziert werden?)

2. Was assoziieren Sie/ assoziiert du als Mitarbeiter spontan mit dem Begriff „Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter zur Stärkung der Marke?“ (Bitte geben Sie einen Vorschlag ab, der für Sie am plausibelsten erscheint) (Eventuelle Erklärung des Begriffes durch den Interviewer)

3. Unterstützten Sie bzw. unterstützt du den Aufbau der Unternehmensmarke in irgendeiner Form? (Bitte stellen Sie sich / stell dir vor einen normalen Arbeitstag vor, wenn Sie / du in der Arbeit sind/ bist, welche Situation können sie / kannst du im Berufsalltag erinnern, wo Sie / Du einen Beitrag zur Stärkung der Unternehmensmarke geleistet haben/ hast?)

Falls ja:

Falls nein: siehe Punkt C

a) Bitte erzählen Sie / erzähl mir bitte wie so eine Unterstützung der Marke im Rahmen der beruflichen Tätigkeit während der Arbeitszeit aussehen könnte? (Was sind die Vorteile für beide Seiten wenn die Marke unterstützt wird, kann man hier von einer Win-Win Situation sprechen? Was für positive bzw. negative Effekte können hier auftreten?)

b) Unterstützten Sie / unterstützt du die Marke XXX nur im Rahmen der Arbeit oder gibt es diesbezüglich auch einen Beitrag zur Markenbildung in der Freizeit, über den normalen Büroalltag hinausgehend? (Bitte versuchen Sie / versuche dich bitte kurz zu erinnern ob dies schon einmal vorgekommen ist, ob es vielleicht sogar öfters vorkommt?) (Welche Maßnahmen zur Unterstützung der Marke würden speziell in der Freizeit vorkommen?)

4. Jetzt haben Sie / hast du einige Möglichkeiten genannt, wie Sie/du als Mitarbeiter Ihre Unternehmensmarke stärken können. Bitte stellen Sie sich / stell dir nun einen hoch

³¹ XXX stands here for the brand of the well-known Austrian bank, where the study has been conducted

motivierten Mitarbeiter vor, für welchen keine Mühe zu groß ist und der keine Möglichkeit auslöst die Marke in irgendeiner Form zu unterstützen.

a) Was könnte dieser perfekte Mitarbeiter alles tun um die Marke bestmöglich zu unterstützen und voranzubringen? (Bitte beschreiben Sie / beschreibe das ideale Spektrum an Verhaltensweisen zur

Stärkung der Marke – was kommt Ihnen / Dir hierzu in den Sinn – Bitte denken Sie / denke daran, dass es hier nicht um das eigene Verhalten geht, sondern rein um das optimale Verhalten dieser zu beschreibenden Person.)

b) Sehen Sie / siehst du Verhaltensweisen des Mitarbeiters zum Aufbau und zur Stärkung der Marke in der Job – Beschreibung verankert? Gibt es Verhaltensweisen zur Stärkung der Marke, welche auf Grund der beruflichen „Rolle“ die jeder Mitarbeiter in einer Organisation erfüllen muss, von einem Mitarbeiter erwartet werden?

c) Denken Sie / denkst du, gibt es Verhaltensweisen welche zum Teil eine Job-Beschreibung hinaus gehen und gar nicht vom Unternehmen gefordert werden – welche quasi auf freiwilliger Basis beruhen und der persönlichen Motivation und Eigeninitiative entspringen?

Was denken Sie über diese „extra“ Verhaltensweisen zur Stärkung der Marke?

(Welche Aktivitäten fallen Ihnen / Dir hier ein, nehmen Sie / nimm dir ruhig Zeit, ein wenig nachzudenken, was hier eventuelle Möglichkeiten sein könnten? Kommen diese in der Praxis eher häufig vor bzw. oder werden diese Verhaltensweisen eher selten angewandt? Haben Sie / hast du persönliche Erfahrungen diesbezüglich bzw. haben Sie / hast du in dieser Form einen Beitrag zur Stärkung der Marke geleistet?

5. (Falls der Mitarbeiter keine Verhaltensweisen nennen kann, sind hier ein paar Inputs angeführt). Ich werde Ihnen / dir nun ein paar mögliche Verhaltensweisen zur Stärkung der Marke vorschlagen, bitte geben Sie / gib mir kurz Bescheid, ob diese Verhaltensweisen Ihrer / deiner Meinung nach zur Stärkung und zum Aufbau der Marke XXX wichtig sind und ob diese Verhaltensweisen bei Ihnen / bei dir persönlich Anwendung finden.

Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter zur Stärkung der Marke	Generelle Wichtigkeit	Persönlich Anwendung (JA / NEIN)
Weiterempfehlen der Marke XXX an Freunde und Bekannte		
Verteidigen der Marke XXX vor Kritik durch Medien, andere Personen, etc.		
Andere Mitarbeiter zu motivieren einen Beitrag zur Marke XXX zu leisten		
Konsistentes Auftreten des Mitarbeiter gegenüber dem kommunizierten Erscheinungsbild der Marke		

Zwischenfrage: Beschreiben Sie / Beschreibe mir kurz was Sie/du unter „markenkonsistentem“ Verhalten verstehen und wie Sie / du es definieren würdest? Welche Voraussetzungen, denken Sie müssen erfüllt sein, damit der Mitarbeiter vom Kunden als „markenkonsistent“ wahrgenommen wird?		
Kontrollieren persönlicher Aussagen (Sich bewusst sein, dass alles was man sagt und tut das Markenimage der XXX beeinflussen kann)		
Freiwillig länger arbeiten, wenn es das Markenimage der XXX positive beeinflusst (z.B.: um einen Prozess kundenfreundlicher zu gestalten, sich um Kundenprobleme zu kümmern, etc.)		
Besonders kunden – und serviceorientiertes Arbeiten		
Aktives Fragen der Kunden nach Feedback		
Freiwillige persönliche Weiterbildung durch lesen von Handbüchern, Fachzeitschriften, etc.		
Vorschläge für Verbesserungen machen ohne explizit danach gefragt zu werden		
Kommunizieren der Markenwerte der XXX an neue Mitarbeiter		
Weiterleiten von Kundenfeedback oder internen Problemen zu den verantwortlichen Personen		
Teilnehmen an freiwilligen Projekten zur Unterstützung der Marke XXX		
Unterstreichen der Vorteile der Marke XXX im Vergleich zur Konkurrenz		
Berichterstattung an das Management über Aktivitäten der Konkurrenz, welche die Marke XXX beeinflussen könnten		
Situative Unterstützung in alltäglichen Situationen (z.B.: Displays wieder aufstellen, Verkleidungen und Blenden wieder aufstellen, etc.)		

Sind Sie / bist du von den eben genannten Beispielen möglicher Verhaltensweisen inspiriert worden, bitte nennen Sie / nenn mir noch zusätzliche relevante Verhaltensweisen zur Stärkung der Unternehmensmarke. (Es wurden nun viele Möglichkeiten für Mitarbeiter aufgezeigt, wie die Unternehmensmarke gestärkt werden kann. Fallen Ihnen / fallen dir nun spontan noch weitere Möglichkeiten ein, welche vorhin nicht genannt wurden, wie der Mitarbeiter die Marke XXX unterstützen kann.

Falls ja: Sie haben / du hast nun „neue“ mögliche Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter aufgezählt, können Sie / kannst du diese ein bisschen konkreter beschreiben, warum sind diese Möglichkeiten für die Stärkung der Marke notwendig?

6. Glauben Sie / glaubst du, dass es für ein Unternehmen wichtig ist Mitarbeiter zu haben, welche sich für die Marke einsetzen und diese stets versuchen aufzubauen? Was glauben Sie / glaubst du, sind die Benefits für das Unternehmen? (Glauben Sie, dass dies eine Win:Win Situation sein kann, sowohl für den Mitarbeiter als auch das Unternehmen?)

7. Im Gegensatz zu den Verhaltensweisen, welche die Unternehmensmarke stärken, fallen Ihnen / dir Verhaltensweisen ein, die besonders schädlich für einen Markenaufbau sein können? Warum sind diese Verhaltensweisen Ihrer Meinung nach für die Marke schädlich? Was sind die Konsequenzen? (Kommen dies in Ihrem / deinem Unternehmen vor? Treten solche Verhaltensweisen tendenziell öfters auf, als Verhalten zur Stärkung der Marke?)

C: Einflussfaktoren für Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter zur Stärkung der Marke

Glauben Sie / glaubst du im Allgemeinen, dass die Marke XXX von seinen Mitarbeitern unterstützt wird – wenn ja in welchem Ausmaß

- wenn nein, was könnten hierfür Gründe sein, warum die Mitarbeiter nicht gewillt sind die Marke zu unterstützen (Können Sie sich / kannst du dir vorstellen, dass andere bekannte Marken (in anderen Branchen) stärker durch ihre Mitarbeiter gestärkt und unterstützt wird?)

Falls bei 3. nein: Wieso unterstützten Sie / unterstützt du die Marke XXX nicht, was sind hier die Gründe für eine Verweigerung des Support der Unternehmensmarke? (Was könnte Sie / Dich motivieren die Marke zu unterstützen? Was müsste passieren, dass Sie /Du die Unternehmensmarke stärken würden / würdest – Welche Begebenheit würde Sie / Dich motivieren die Marke mit vollem Einsatz zu unterstützen)

Was müsste passieren bzw. was müsste sich ändern in Ihrem / deinem Unternehmen, dass Sie sich /du dich (stärker) für die Marke einsetzen würden / würdest. (Bitte denken Sie / denk an mögliche Szenarien, welche auftreten könnten und welche möglicherweise die vorhin genannten Verhaltensweisen beeinflussen können).

Welche Situationen oder Einflussfaktoren können in gewisser Weise das konstruktive Markenverhalten negativ beeinflussen?

D: Persönliche Daten

Interview - Nr: _____

Respondent - Nr: _____

Geschlecht.: ○ männlich ○ weiblich

Alter: ○ <25 Jahre

 ○ 26J. – 35J.

- o 36J. – 50J.
- o Über 50 J.

Höchste abgeschlossene Ausbildung:

- o Pflichtschule
- o Lehre
- o Matura
- o Universität

- Arbeitsfeld:
- o Erste Bank
 - o Sparkasse
 - o Mitarbeiter mit Kundenkontakt
 - o Backoffice
 - o Führungskraft (Jahre als Führungskraft: ____)

7.2.4 Interview guidelines (German, executive member)

Diskussionsleitfaden Konzeptualisierung “Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter zur Stärkung der Unternehmensmarke”

(Führungskraft)

A: Erläuterung des Forschungszieles der Masterarbeit

- Begrüßung und Vorstellung des Interviewers
- Ich schreibe derzeit am Institut für Internationales Marketing an der Universität Wien an meiner Masterarbeit über die Konzeptualisierung von Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter zur Stärkung der Unternehmensmarke. (Ich versuche eine vollständige und gesamtheitliche Auflistung aller Verhaltensweisen der

Mitarbeiter zu finden, welche in relevanter Weise zum Aufbau und zur Stärkung der Marke beitragen können.)

- Information zum Interviewprozedere: Ich möchte Sie darauf hinweisen, dass die Verwendung der Daten ausschließlich für die wissenschaftliche Forschung verwendet werden. Die Daten müssen zur weiteren Verarbeitung aufgenommen werden, jedoch erfolgt die Weiterverarbeitung der Daten anonymisiert und streng vertraulich und erfasste Daten werden nicht an Dritte weitergegeben.

B: Möglicher Ablauf von Interviews, Ablauf der Fragen:

1. Wissen Sie / weißt Du für was die Unternehmensmarke XXX³² steht, was glaubst du / glauben Sie? (Was glauben Sie / glaubst du sind die zentralen Grundwerte der Marke? Was ist das Markenversprechen, mit welchem sich die Marke an den Kunden richtet, was sind die Werte welche zum Beispiel in der Werbung kommuniziert werden?)

2. Was assoziieren Sie/ assoziiert du als Führungskraft spontan mit dem Begriff „Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter zur Stärkung der Marke?“ (Bitte geben Sie einen Vorschlag ab, der für Sie am plausibelsten scheint) (Eventuelle Erklärung des Begriffes durch den Interviewer)

3. Unterstützten Sie bzw. unterstützt du als Führungskraft den Aufbau der Unternehmensmarke in irgendeiner Form? (Bitte stellen Sie sich / stell dir einen normalen Arbeitstag vor, wenn Sie/du in der Arbeit sind, welche Situation können sie / kannst du im Berufsalltag erinnern, wo Sie / Du einen Beitrag zur Stärkung der Unternehmensmarke geleistet haben/ hast?)

Falls ja: 3a

Falls nein: siehe Punkt C

a) Bitte erzählen Sie / erzähl mir bitte wie so eine Unterstützung der Marke im Rahmen deiner beruflichen Tätigkeit während der Arbeitszeit aussehen könnte? (Was sind die Vorteile für beide Seiten wenn die Marke unterstützt wird, kann man hier von einer Win-Win Situation sprechen? Was für positive bzw. negativen Effekte können hier auftreten?)

b) Unterstützten Sie / unterstützt du die Marke XXX nur im Rahmen der Arbeit oder gibt es diesbezüglich auch einen Beitrag zur Markenbildung in der Freizeit, über den normalen Büroalltag hinausgehend? (Bitte versuchen Sie / versuche dich kurz zu erinnern ob dies schon einmal vorgekommen ist, ob es vielleicht sogar öfters vorkommt?) (Welche Maßnahmen zur Unterstützung der Marke würden speziell in der Freizeit vorkommen?)

4. Jetzt haben Sie / hast du einige Möglichkeiten genannt, wie Sie/du als Führungskraft Ihre Unternehmensmarke stärken können. Bitte stellen Sie sich / stell dir nun einen hoch

³² XXX stands here for the brand of the well-known Austrian bank, where the study has been conducted

motivierten Mitarbeiter vor, für welchen keine Mühe zu groß ist und der keine Möglichkeit auslöst die Marke in irgendeiner Form zu unterstützen.

a) Was könnte dieser perfekte Mitarbeiter alles tun um die Marke bestmöglich zu unterstützen und voranzubringen? (Bitte beschreiben Sie / beschreibe das ideale Spektrum an Verhaltensweisen zur

Stärkung der Marke, was kommt Ihnen / Dir hierzu in den Sinn ? Bitte denken Sie / denke daran, dass es hier nicht um das eigene Verhalten geht, sondern rein um das optimale Verhalten dieser zu beschreibenden Person.)

b) Sehen Sie / siehst du Verhaltensweisen des Mitarbeiters / Führungskraft zum Aufbau und zur Stärkung der Marke in der Job – Beschreibung verankert? Gibt es Verhaltensweisen zur Stärkung der Marke, welche auf Grund der beruflichen „Rolle“ die jeder Mitarbeiter /Führungskraft in einer Organisation erfüllen muss, von einem Mitarbeiter / Führungskraft erwartet werden?

c) Denken Sie / denkst du, gibt es Verhaltensweisen welche zum Teil eine Job-Beschreibung hinaus gehen und gar nicht vom Unternehmen gefordert werden – welche quasi auf freiwilliger Basis beruhen und der persönlichen Motivation und Eigeninitiative entspringen?

Was denken Sie über diese „extra“ Verhaltensweisen zur Stärkung der Marke?

(Welche Aktivitäten fallen Ihnen / Dir hier ein, nehmen Sie / nimm dir ruhig Zeit, ein wenig nachzudenken, was hier eventuelle Möglichkeiten sein könnten? Kommen diese in der Praxis eher häufig vor bzw. oder werden diese Verhaltensweisen eher selten angewandt? Haben Sie / hast du persönliche Erfahrungen diesbezüglich bzw. haben Sie / hast du in dieser Form einen Beitrag zur Stärkung der Marke geleistet?

5. (Falls die Führungskraft keine Verhaltensweisen nennen kann, sind hier ein paar Inputs angeführt). Ich werde Ihnen / dir nun ein paar mögliche Verhaltensweisen zur Stärkung der Marke vorschlagen – bitte geben Sie / gib mir kurz Bescheid, ob diese Verhaltensweisen Ihrer / deiner Meinung nach zur Stärkung und zum Aufbau der Marke XXX wichtig sind - und ob diese Verhaltensweisen bei Ihnen / bei dir persönlich Anwendung finden.

Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter zur Stärkung der Marke	Generelle Wichtigkeit	Persönlich Anwendung (JA / NEIN)
Weiterempfehlen der Marke XXX an Freunde und Bekannte		
Verteidigen der Marke XXX vor Kritik durch Medien, andere Personen, etc.		
Andere Mitarbeiter zu motivieren einen Beitrag zur Marke XXX zu leisten		
Konsistentes Auftreten des Mitarbeiter gegenüber dem kommunizierten Erscheinungsbild der Marke		

Zwischenfrage: Beschreiben Sie / Beschreibe mir kurz was Sie/du unter „markenkonsistentem“ Verhalten verstehen und wie Sie / du es definieren würdest? Welche Voraussetzungen denken Sie müssen erfüllt sein, damit der Mitarbeiter vom Kunden als „markenkonsistent“ wahrgenommen wird?		
Kontrollieren persönlicher Aussagen (Sich bewusst sein, dass alles was man sagt und tut das Markenimage der XXX beeinflussen kann)		
Freiwillig länger arbeiten, wenn es das Markenimage der XXX positive beeinflusst (z.B.: um einen Prozess kundenfreundlicher zu gestalten, sich um Kundenprobleme zu kümmern, etc.)		
Besonders kunden – und serviceorientiertes Arbeiten		
Aktives Fragen der Kunden nach Feedback		
Freiwillige persönliche Weiterbildung durch lesen von Handbüchern, Fachzeitschriften, etc.		
Vorschläge für Verbesserungen machen ohne explizit danach gefragt zu werden		
Kommunizieren der Markenwerte der XXX an neue Mitarbeiter		
Weiterleiten von Kundenfeedback oder internen Problemen zu den verantwortlichen Personen		
Teilnehmen an freiwilligen Projekten zur Unterstützung der Marke XXX		
Unterstreichen der Vorteile der Marke XXX im Vergleich zur Konkurrenz		
Berichterstattung an das Management über Aktivitäten der Konkurrenz, welche die Marke XXX beeinflussen könnten		
Situative Unterstützung in alltäglichen Situationen (z.B.: Displays wieder aufstellen, Verkleidungen und Blenden wieder aufstellen, etc.)		

Sind Sie / bist du von den eben genannten Beispielen möglicher Verhaltensweisen inspiriert worden, bitte nennen Sie / nenn mir noch zusätzliche relevante Verhaltensweisen zur Stärkung der Unternehmensmarke. (Es wurden nun viele Möglichkeiten für Mitarbeiter sowie auch Führungskräfte aufgezeigt, wie die Unternehmensmarke gestärkt werden kann. Fallen Ihnen / fallen dir nun spontan noch weitere Möglichkeiten ein, welche vorhin nicht genannt wurden, wie der Mitarbeiter die Marke XXX unterstützen kann.

Falls ja: Sie haben / du hast nun „neue“ mögliche Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter / Führungskräfte aufgezählt, können Sie / kannst du diese ein bisschen konkreter beschreiben, warum sind diese Möglichkeiten für die Stärkung der Marke notwendig?

6. Glauben Sie / glaubst du, dass es für ein Unternehmen wichtig ist Mitarbeiter / Führungskräfte zu haben, welche sich für die Marke einsetzen und diese stets versuchen aufzubauen? Was glauben Sie / glaubst du, sind die Benefits für das Unternehmen? (Glauben Sie, dass dies eine Win:Win Situation sein kann, sowohl für den Mitarbeiter als auch das Unternehmen?)

7. Im Gegensatz zu den Verhaltensweisen, welche die Unternehmensmarke stärken, fallen Ihnen / dir Verhaltensweisen ein, die besonders schädlich für einen Markenaufbau sein können? Warum sind diese Verhaltensweisen Ihrer Meinung nach für die Marke schädlich? Was sind die Konsequenzen? (Kommen diese in Ihrem / deinem Unternehmen vor? Treten solche Verhaltensweisen tendenziell öfters auf, als Verhalten zur Stärkung der Marke?)

C: Einflussfaktoren für Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter zur Stärkung der Marke

Glauben Sie / glaubst du im Allgemeinen, dass die Marke XXX von seinen Mitarbeitern / Führungskräften unterstützt wird – wenn ja in welchem Ausmaß

- wenn nein, was könnten hierfür Gründe sein, warum die Mitarbeiter / Führungskräfte nicht gewillt sind die Marke zu unterstützen (Können Sie sich / kannst du dir vorstellen, dass andere bekannte Marken (in anderen Branchen) stärker durch ihre Mitarbeiter gestärkt und unterstützt wird?)

Falls bei 3. nein: Wieso unterstützen Sie / unterstützt du die Marke XXX nicht, was sind hier die Gründe für eine Verweigerung des Support der Unternehmensmarke? (Was könnte Sie / Dich motivieren die Marke zu unterstützen? Was müsste passieren, dass Sie /Du die Unternehmensmarke stärken würden / würdest – Welche Begebenheit würde Sie / Dich motivieren die Marke mit vollem Einsatz zu unterstützen)

Was müsste passieren bzw. was müsste sich ändern in Ihrem / deinem Unternehmen, dass Sie sich /du dich (stärker) für die Marke einsetzen würden / würdest. (Bitte denken Sie / denk an mögliche Szenarien, welche auftreten könnten und welche möglicherweise die vorhin genannten Verhaltensweisen beeinflussen können).

Welche Situationen oder Einflussfaktoren können in gewisser Weise das konstruktive Markenverhalten negativ beeinflussen?

D: Persönliche Daten

Interview - Nr: _____

Respondent - Nr: _____

Geschlecht.: ○ männlich ○ weiblich

Alter: ○ <25 Jahre

- o 26J. – 35J.
- o 36J. – 50J.
- o Über 50 J.

Höchste abgeschlossene Ausbildung:

- o Pflichtschule
- o Lehre
- o Matura
- o Universität

Arbeitsfeld: o Erste Bank o Sparkasse

- o Mitarbeiter mit Kundenkontakt
- o Backoffice
- o Führungskraft (Jahre als Führungskraft: ____)

7.3 Translation of the categories and EBBBs

In this subchapter of the Appendixes the translated designations for the individual categories and the individual EBBBs are presented, how they have been used in the quantitative follow – up online survey.

Customer orientation (7 behaviors): Kundenorientierung:

Diese Kategorie beinhaltet Verhaltensweisen wie Mitarbeiter durch Kundenorientierung, das heißt durch Verständnis für den Kunden, Wissen über den Kunden und durch Eingehen auf seine individuellen Bedürfnisse, eine langfristige und ehrliche Kundenbeziehung sicherstellen können sowie die Erwartungen des Kunden an die Marke zu erfüllen.

- Kundenorientierung leben und Kundenbedürfnisse erfüllen
- Flexibilität hinsichtlich Kundenterminen bieten
- Flexibilität hinsichtlich Kundenangelegenheiten bieten
- Offene, natürliche, freundliche und ehrliche Kommunikation im Kundengespräch und Interaktion mit externen Partnern

- Aufbauen und aufrechterhalten von Kundennetzwerken um eine langlebige Kundenbeziehung sicherzustellen und diese Kundenbeziehung auch zu leben
- Den Kunden kennen und über ihn Bescheid wissen
- Kunden in der Freizeit helfen und Kundenanfragen beantworten

Brand representation (10 behaviors): Repräsentation der Marke:

Diese Kategorie beinhaltet alle Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter die Marke positiv darzustellen und zu repräsentieren. Alle Möglichkeiten die Marke zu präsentieren und die werbliche Präsenz der Marke zu steigern werden in Betracht gezogen, um die Markenwerte zu transportieren und die Marke aufzubauen.

- Positive Darstellung und verbale Empfehlung der Marke
- Positive Mund-zu-Mund Werbung betreffend die Produkte, das Service und das Unternehmen
- Repräsentieren der Marke auf Social Media Plattformen
- Erwähnen des Markennamens
- Sponsoring und Teilnahme an Events und sozialen Projekten
- Präsentieren der Marke in der Freizeit
- Repräsentieren der Marke bei Kundenevents
- Die Markenwerte nach außen hin präsentieren
- Verteilen von Give-aways, Goodies und Werbemitteln
- Neukunden akquirieren in der Freizeit

Service orientation (8 behaviors): Serviceorientierung:

Diese Kategorie beinhaltet alle Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter welche die Erbringung und die Qualität der Dienstleistung bzw. des Service beeinflussen. Ziel ist es die Serviceleistung für den Kunden spürbar zu verbessern, um sich so von der Konkurrenz abheben zu können.

- Kompetente Kundenberatung bieten
- Perfektes "Rund-um-Service" bieten
- Hohe Servicequalität anzubieten und Qualitätsstandards befolgen
- Optimale Abwicklung der Serviceleistung
- Umfangreiches Produktwissen und wirtschaftliches Hintergrundwissen aneignen
- Rasche und effektive Abwicklung von Kundenanfragen
- Erlangen und archivieren wichtiger Kundeninformationen
- Verfügbare Beratungsinstrumente und Informationsmaterial verwenden

Brand congruent behavior (5 behaviors): Markenkonsistentes Verhalten (der Marke entsprechendes Verhalten):

Die Kategorie steht für sämtliche Verhaltensweisen, wie sich Mitarbeiter der Marke entsprechend verhalten können und wie in allen Situationen im Kundenkontakt die zentralen Markenwerte in

durchgängiger Art und Weise transportiert werden können. So soll die Unternehmensmarke in der Erbringung der Dienstleistung selbst und darüber hinaus unterstützt werden.

- Die Marke und die Markenwerte leben (auch in der Freizeit)
- Durchgängiges der Marke entsprechendes äußeres Erscheinungsbild
- Durchgängiger der Marke entsprechender Kundenberatungsprozess
- Einheitliches Erscheinungsbild der Filiale
- Corporate Identity nach außen tragen

Brand support and development behaviors (5 behaviors): Verhaltensweisen zur Unterstützung und Weiterentwicklung der Marke:

Diese Kategorie repräsentiert Verhaltensweisen, wie Mitarbeiter die Marke weiterentwickeln können, sowie wichtige Informationen und Ideen zur Verfügung stellen um die zukünftige Marken Performance zu verbessern und somit in weiterer Folge den Prozess des Markenaufbaus zu fördern.

- Aktivitäten zur Weiterentwicklung der Marke setzen
- Die Marke verteidigen von negativen medialen Einflüssen und Missverständnisse aufklären
- Die Kunden nach Feedback fragen
- Sich mit markenrelevanten Themen beschäftigen und sich persönlich weiterbilden
- Einsatz im Markenaufbau zeigen

Employee support behaviors (3 behaviors): Verhaltensweisen zur Unterstützung der Mitarbeiter:

Diese Kategorie repräsentiert Verhaltensweisen, wie Mitarbeiter ihre Kollegen unterstützen können einen Beitrag zum Markenaufbau leisten zu können.

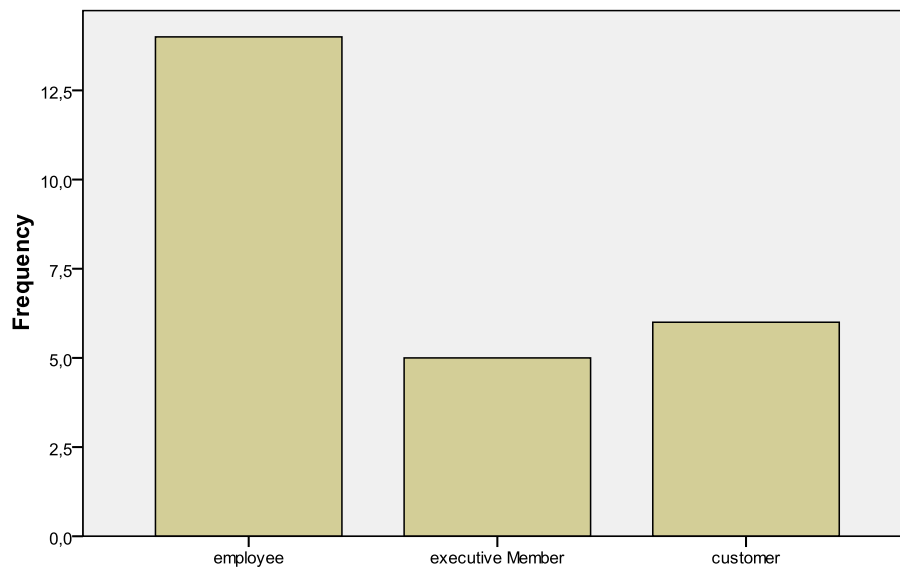
- Vermittlung der zentralen Markenwerte und Ratschläge bezüglich der Marke an Kollegen und neue Mitarbeiter erteilen
- Kollegen zu motivieren sich für den Markenaufbau einzusetzen
- Führungskräfte agieren als Vorbild für andere Mitarbeiter

7.4 Descriptive figures of the sample regarding the quantitative analysis

Question if the respondent is an employee, executive member or customer

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid employee	14	56,0	56,0	56,0
executive Member	5	20,0	20,0	76,0
customer	6	24,0	24,0	100,0
Total	25	100,0	100,0	

Question if the respondent is an employee, executive member or customer



Question if the respondent is an employee, executive member or customer

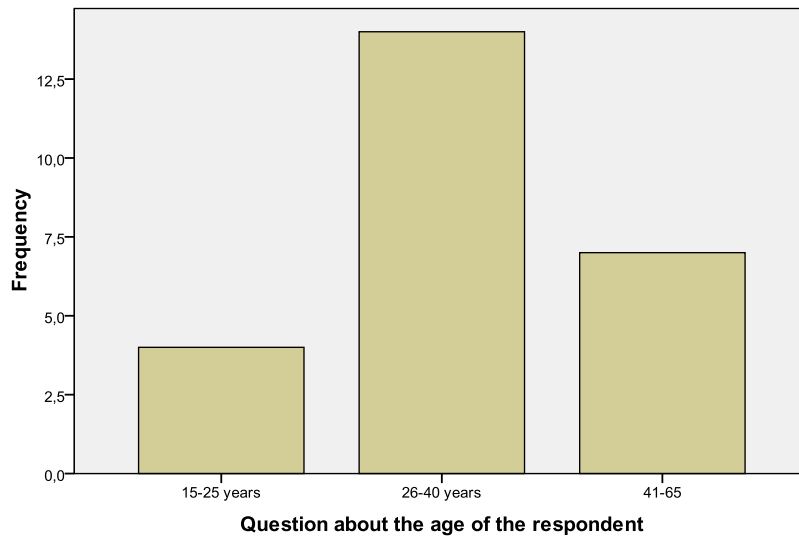
Question about the age of the respondent

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 15-25 years	4	16,0	16,0	16,0
26-40 years	14	56,0	56,0	72,0
41-65	7	28,0	28,0	100,0

Question about the age of the respondent

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	15-25 years	4	16,0	16,0	16,0
	26-40 years	14	56,0	56,0	72,0
	41-65	7	28,0	28,0	100,0
	Total	25	100,0	100,0	

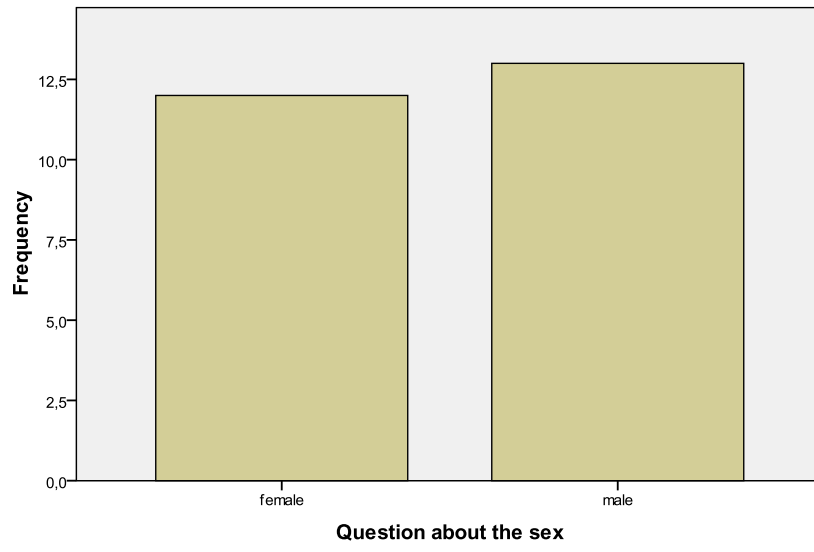
Question about the age of the respondent



Question about the sex

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	female	12	48,0	48,0	48,0
	male	13	52,0	52,0	100,0
	Total	25	100,0	100,0	

Question about the sex



7.5 Follow – up online questionnaire



 universität wien

9%

Sehr geehrte Damen und Herren,

herzlich Willkommen zum zweiten und abschließenden Teil meiner Befragung für meine Diplomarbeit "Konzeptionalisierung von Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter zur Stärkung der Marke." Ich möchte Sie nun noch kurz bitten, mir bei der Einteilung der bereits erhobenen Verhaltensweisen, wie Mitarbeiter die Unternehmensmarke aufbauen und unterstützen können, kurz zu helfen. Der Zeitaufwand wird ca. 10 Minuten betragen.

BITTE SCHALTEN SIE FÜR DIE UMFRAGE IN DEN VOLLBILDMODUS

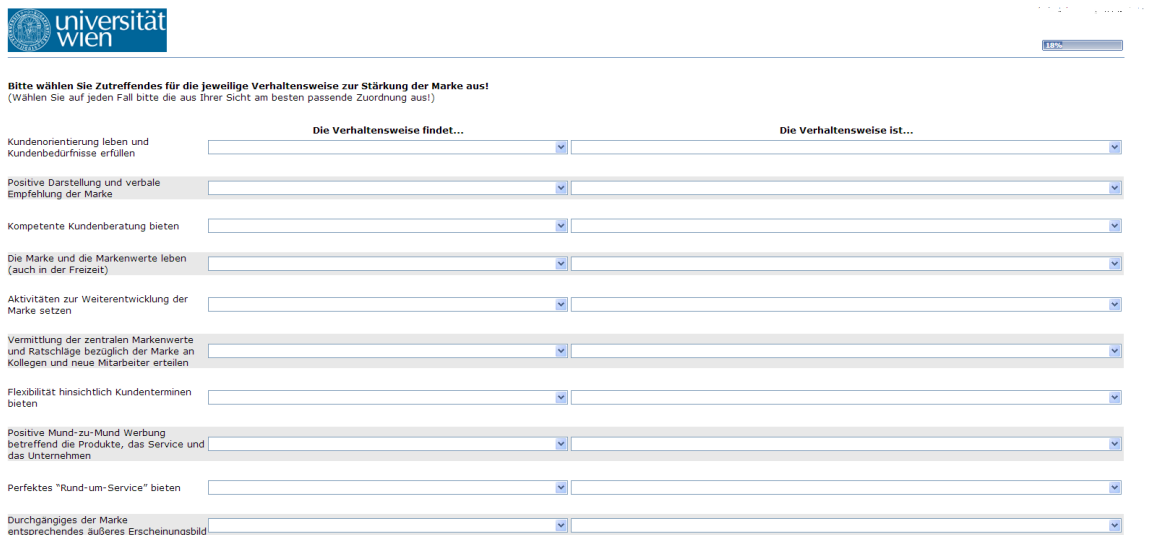
Vielen Dank im Voraus für Ihre Unterstützung!


Freundliche Grüße

Kristof Swoboda

[WEITER](#)

Figure 27: Online survey - screen 1



 universität wien

18%

Bitte wählen Sie Zutreffendes für die jeweilige Verhaltensweise zur Stärkung der Marke aus!
(Wählen Sie auf jeden Fall bitte die aus Ihrer Sicht am besten passende Zuordnung aus!)

	Die Verhaltensweise findet...	Die Verhaltensweise ist...
Kundenorientierung leben und Kundenbedürfnisse erfüllen	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Positive Darstellung und verbale Empfehlung der Marke	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Kompetente Kundenberatung bieten	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Die Marke und die Markenwerte leben (auch in der Freizeit)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Aktivitäten zur Weiterentwicklung der Marke setzen	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Vermittlung der zentralen Markenwerte und Ratschläge bezüglich der Marke an Kollegen und neue Mitarbeiter erteilen	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Flexibilität hinsichtlich Kundenterminen bieten	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Positive Mund-zu-Mund Werbung betreffend die Produkte, das Service und das Unternehmen	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Perfektes "Rund-um-Service" bieten	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Durchgängiges der Marke entsprechendes äußeres Erscheinungsbild	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Figure 28: Online survey - screen 2

Bitte wählen Sie Zutreffendes für die jeweilige Verhaltensweise zur Stärkung der Marke aus!
(Wählen Sie auf jeden Fall bitte die aus Ihrer Sicht am besten passende Zuordnung aus!)

	Die Verhaltensweise findet...	Die Verhaltensweise ist...
Durchgänger der Marke entsprechender Kundenberatungsprozess	direkt im beruflichen Tätigkeitsbereich statt (innerhalb der Arbeitszeit)	vom Unternehmen verlangt bzw. Teil der Job- Beschreibung
Die Kunden nach Feedback fragen	außerhalb des beruflichen Tätigkeitsbereich statt (in der Freizeit)	freiwillig bzw. aus Eigenmotivation heraus
Führungskräfte agieren als Vorbild für andere Mitarbeiter	sowohl im beruflichen Tätigkeitsbereich sowie auch in der Freizeit statt	zu einem Grundmaß vom Unternehmen verlangt und eine überdurchschnittliche Erfüllung ist auf freiwilliger Basis
Offene, natürliche, freundliche und ehrliche Kommunikation im Kundengespräch und Interaktion mit externen Partnern		
Erwähnen des Markennamens		
Die Marke verteidigen von negativen medialen Einflüssen und Missverständnisse aufklären		
Kollegen zu motivieren sich für den Markenaufbau einzusetzen		
Flexibilität hinsichtlich Kundenangelegenheiten bieten		
Repräsentieren der Marke auf Social Media Plattformen		
Hohe Servicequalität anzubieten und Qualitätsstandards befolgen		

Figure 29: Online survey – screen 3

Bitte wählen Sie Zutreffendes für die jeweilige Verhaltensweise zur Stärkung der Marke aus!
(Wählen Sie auf jeden Fall bitte die aus Ihrer Sicht am besten passende Zuordnung aus!)

	Die Verhaltensweise findet...	Die Verhaltensweise ist...
Optimale Abwicklung der Serviceleistung		
Einheitliches Erscheinungsbild der Filiale		
Sich mit markenrelevanten Themen beschäftigen und sich persönlich weiterbilden		
Aufbauen und aufrechterhalten von Kundennetzwerken um eine langlebige Kundenbeziehung sicherzustellen und diese Kundenbeziehung auch zu leben		
Sponsoring und Teilnahme an Events und sozialen Projekten		
Umfangreiches Produktwissen und wirtschaftliches Hintergrundwissen aneignen		
Corporate Identity nach außen tragen		
Einsatz im Markenaufbau zeigen		
Den Kunden kennen und über ihn Bescheid wissen		
Präsentieren der Marke in der Freizeit		

Figure 30: Online survey – screen 4

Bitte wählen Sie Zutreffendes für die jeweilige Verhaltensweise zur Stärkung der Marke aus!
 (Wählen Sie auf jeden Fall bitte die aus Ihrer Sicht am besten passende Zuordnung aus!)

	Die Verhaltensweise ist...	Die Verhaltensweise findet...
Rasche und effektive Abwicklung von Kundenanfragen	vom Unternehmen verlangt bzw. Teil der Job- Beschreibung	direkt im beruflichen Tätigkeitsbereich statt (innerhalb der Arbeitszeit)
Kunden in der Freizeit helfen und Kundenanfragen beantworten	freiwillig bzw. aus Eigenmotivation heraus	außerhalb des beruflichen Tätigkeitsbereich statt (in der Freizeit)
Repräsentieren der Marke bei Kundenevents	zu einem Grundmaß vom Unternehmen verlangt und eine überdurchschnittliche Erfüllung ist auf freiwilliger Basis	sowohl im beruflichen Tätigkeitsbereich sowie auch in der Freizeit statt
Erlangen und archivieren wichtiger Kundeninformationen		
Die Markenwerte nach außen hin präsentieren		
Verfügbare Beratungsinstrumente und Informationsmaterial verwenden		
Verteilen von Give-aways, Goodies und Werbemitteln		
Neukunden akquirieren in der Freizeit		

WEITER

Figure 31: Online survey - screen 5

Bitte wählen Sie jeweils aus Ihrer Sicht, wie wichtig die jeweilige Verhaltensweise für den Aufbau der Unternehmensmarke ist?

1...gar nicht wichtig
10...sehr wichtig

Bitte wählen Sie Zutreffendes aus!

Kundenorientierung leben und Kundenbedürfnisse erfüllen	10 ▼
Positive Darstellung und verbale Empfehlung der Marke	8 ▼
Kompetente Kundenberatung bieten	9 ▼
Die Marke und die Markenwerte leben (auch in der Freizeit)	▼
Aktivitäten zur Weiterentwicklung der Marke setzen	▼
Vermittlung der zentralen Markenwerte und Ratschläge bezüglich der Marke an Kollegen und neue Mitarbeiter erteilen	▼
Flexibilität hinsichtlich Kundenterminen bieten	▼
Positive Mund-zu-Mund Werbung betreffend die Produkte, das Service und das Unternehmen	▼
Perfektes "Rund-um-Service" bieten	▼
Durchgängiges der Marke entsprechendes äußeres Erscheinungsbild	▼

Figure 32: Online survey - screen 6

Bitte wählen Sie jeweils aus Ihrer Sicht, wie wichtig die jeweilige Verhaltensweise für den Aufbau der Unternehmensmarke ist?

1... gar nicht wichtig
10...sehr wichtig

**Bitte wählen Sie
Zutreffendes
aus!**

Durchgängiger der Marke entsprechender Kundenberatungsprozess	<input type="text" value=""/>
Die Kunden nach Feedback fragen	<input type="text" value=""/>
Führungskräfte agieren als Vorbild für andere Mitarbeiter	<input type="text" value=""/>
Offene, natürliche, freundliche und ehrliche Kommunikation im Kundengespräch und Interaktion mit externen Partnern	<input type="text" value=""/>
Erwähnen des Markennamens	<input type="text" value=""/>
Die Marke verteidigen von negativen medialen Einflüssen und Missverständnisse aufklären	<input type="text" value=""/>
Kollegen zu motivieren sich für den Markenaufbau einzusetzen	<input type="text" value=""/>
Flexibilität hinsichtlich Kundenangelegenheiten bieten	<input type="text" value=""/>
Repräsentieren der Marke auf Social Media Plattformen	<input type="text" value=""/>
Hohe Servicequalität anzubieten und Qualitätsstandards befolgen	<input type="text" value=""/>

Figure 33: Online survey - screen 7

Bitte wählen Sie jeweils aus Ihrer Sicht, wie wichtig die jeweilige Verhaltensweise für den Aufbau der Unternehmensmarke ist?

1... gar nicht wichtig
10...sehr wichtig

Bitte wählen Sie Zutreffendes aus!

Optimale Abwicklung der Serviceleistung	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Einheitliches Erscheinungsbild der Filiale	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Sich mit markenrelevanten Themen beschäftigen und sich persönlich weiterbilden	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Aufbauen und aufrechterhalten von Kundennetzwerken um eine langlebige Kundenbeziehung sicherzustellen und diese Kundenbeziehung auch zu leben	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Sponsoring und Teilnahme an Events und sozialen Projekten	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Umfangreiches Produktwissen und wirtschaftliches Hintergrundwissen aneignen	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Corporate Identity nach außen tragen	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Einsatz im Markenaufbau zeigen	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Den Kunden kennen und über ihn Bescheid wissen	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Präsentieren der Marke in der Freizeit	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Figure 34: Online survey - screen 8

Bitte wählen Sie jeweils aus Ihrer Sicht wie wichtig die jeweilige Verhaltensweise für den Aufbau der Unternehmensmarke ist!

1...gar nicht wichtig
10...sehr wichtig

Bitte wählen Sie Zutreffendes aus!

Rasche und effektive Abwicklung von Kundenanfragen	<input type="text"/>
Kunden in der Freizeit helfen und Kundenanfragen beantworten	<input type="text"/>
Repräsentieren der Marke bei Kundenevents	<input type="text"/>
Erlangen und archivieren wichtiger Kundeninformationen	<input type="text"/>
Die Markenwerte nach außen hin präsentieren	<input type="text"/>
Verfügbare Beratungsinstrumente und Informationsmaterial verwenden	<input type="text"/>
Verteilen von Give-aways, Goodies und Werbemitteln	<input type="text"/>
Neukunden akquirieren in der Freizeit	<input type="text"/>

WEITER

Figure 35: Online survey - screen 9

Bitte beantworten Sie noch kurz folgende Fragen zu Ihrer Person

Sind Sie derzeit Mitarbeiter bzw. Führungskraft der Erste Bank oder Sparkassen oder sind Sie derzeit Kunde eines österreichischen Bankinstitutes ?

(Bitte Zutreffendes ankreuzen!)

- Mitarbeiter der Erste Bank und Sparkassen
- Führungskraft der Erste Bank und Sparkassen
- Kunde eines österreichischen Bankinstitutes

In welche Alterskategorie würde Sie sich einordnen?

(Bitte Zutreffendes ankreuzen!)

- 15- 25 Jahre
- 26 - 40 Jahre
- 41 - 65 Jahre
- 66 Jahre oder älter

Sind Sie männlich oder weiblich?

(Bitte Zutreffendes ankreuzen!)

- weiblich
- männlich

Figure 36: Online survey - screen 10

Vielen Dank für Ihre Mithilfe und Untersützung!

Freundliche Grüße

Kristof Swoboda

Figure 37: Online survey - screen 11

7.6. Curriculum Vitae

Lebenslauf Kristof Swoboda, Bakk.



Persönliche Daten



Kristof Swoboda, Bakk.
Blätterstrasse 37/10/8
A-2620 Neunkirchen
0664 | 8385278
kristof.swoboda@erstebank.at

geboren am 14.11.1984 in Wiener Neustadt
österreichische Staatsbürgerschaft
ledig, keine Kinder

Aus- & Weiterbildung

seit 01 2012	Master thesis "Conceptualization of employee brand building behaviors"
seit 03 2009	Masterstudium am Betriebswirtschaftlichen Zentrum der Universität Wien (Spezialisierung in Marketing / Internationales Marketing)
09 2008 - 02 2009	Werbeakademie, Fachlehrgang Marktkommunikation (1.Kurs mit gutem Erfolg absolviert)
10 2004 - 06 2009	Bakkalaureatsstudium BWL an der KF Universität in Graz - Bakkalaureatsarbeit „Gestaltung von Werbeplakaten und neuartige Methoden zur Werbewirkungsmessung“ (Benotung Sehr Gut) - Spezialisierung in Marketing und Digitaler Ökonomie
09 2003 - 04 2004	Präsenzdienst beim Bundesheer (Kaserne Großmittel)
08 1995 - 06 2003	Realgymnasium Neunkirchen mit Maturaabschluss
08 1991 - 06 1995	Volksschule Pottschach

Berufliche Tätigkeiten

seit 01 2013	Channel Development Erste Bank
10 2012 - 12 2012	Externer Mitarbeiter New Business Marketing Erste Bank
10 2010 - 09 2012	Externer Mitarbeiter Zielgruppenmarketing Privatkunden Erste Bank
07 2010 - 09 2010	Ferialangestellter Zielgruppenmarketing Privatkunden Erste Bank
02 2008 - 03 2010	Barkeeper im Bar/Restaurant MOTTO
10 2007- 01 2008	Autovermietung HERTZ in Graz (Stadtbüro) (Autoüberstellung in Europa)
09 2005 - 07 2007	Samstagsaushilfe als Verkäufer bei Intersport Eybl Wiener Neustadt
07 2006	Ferialpraxis bei Schoeller-Bleckman Technisches Service
09 2006	Schichtarbeit bei Hamburger AG in Pitten
06 2005	Ferialpraxis bei Schoeller-Bleckman Technisches Service
05 2004 - 08 2004	Ferialpraxis bei Schoeller-Bleckman Technisches Service

Besondere Kenntnisse

Fremdsprachen:
- Englisch in Wort und Schrift (verhandlungsfähig)
- Spanisch in Wort und Schrift (Grundkenntnisse)
(mehrere Sprachkurse an der Universität Graz)

Führerschein B (Mobilität gegeben)

Software: MS-Office, SPSS

7.7. Abstract German

“Conceptualization of Employee Brand Building Behaviors”

Heutzutage ist es nicht einfach für Dienstleistungsunternehmen am Markt nachhaltig zu reüssieren. Oftmals stellt der Markenwert eine der wichtigsten Vermögenspositionen innerhalb eines Unternehmens dar. Diese Tatsache unterstreicht die Wichtigkeit eines effizienten Markenaufbaues, welcher eine Differenzierung am Markt gegenüber der Konkurrenz möglich macht. Allein durch physikalische Unterschiede der angebotenen Produkte, vor allem im Bereich der Finanzdienstleistungen, ist dies oft nur schwer realisierbar.

Die aktuelle Forschung verdeutlicht mit zahlreichen Studien die zentrale Rolle der Mitarbeiter im Aufbau einer starken Dienstleistungsmarke. Trotz dieses enormen Einflusses der Verhaltensweise der Mitarbeiter zur Stärkung der Unternehmensmarke, haben sich bis jetzt tendenziell wenig Studien und wissenschaftliche Arbeiten explizit mit Verhaltensweisen von Mitarbeitern zur Stärkung der Marke beschäftigt. Diesbezüglich existiert weder eine vollständige Auflistung dieser Verhaltensweise noch kann eine gesamthafte Einteilung sowie Konzeptualisierung dieser Verhaltensweisen, durch die aktuelle Forschung, zur Verfügung gestellt werden. Um diese Forschungslücke zu schließen, beschäftigt sich diese Masterarbeit mit dem Thema Konzeptualisierung von Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter zur Stärkung der Marke. Durch eine ausführliche Literaturanalyse sowie einer qualitativen und einer quantitativen empirischen Analyse, soll ein vollständiger Überblick über sämtliche relevante Verhaltensweisen zur Stärkung der Marke zur Verfügung gestellt werden. In weiterer Folge soll eine gesamthafte Konzeptualisierung dieser Verhaltensweisen ausgearbeitet werden.

Durch Tiefeninterviews mit Managern, Mitarbeitern und Kunden eines bekannten österreichischen Finanzdienstleisters, sollen sämtliche relevante Verhaltensweisen zum Aufbau und Stärkung der Unternehmensmarke identifiziert werden. Basierend auf einer Literaturrecherche sowie den Ergebnissen der durchgeführten Interviews soll eine Kategorisierung der einzelnen Verhaltensweisen erstellt werden. Durch einen darauffolgenden Online – Fragebogen kann eine Konzeptualisierung, der vorhin identifizierten Verhaltensweisen, vorgenommen werden. In diesem Teil der

Masterarbeit wird spezifiziert, welche Verhaltensweise direkt im beruflichen Umfeld stattfinden oder eher in der Freizeit angewandt werden, sowie welche Verhaltensweisen auf freiwilliger Basis durchgeführt werden oder Teil des definierten Aufgabengebietes der Mitarbeiter sind. Darüber hinaus verdeutlicht diese Masterarbeit, welche Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter zur Stärkung der Unternehmensmarke am wichtigsten sind. In einer weiterführenden Analyse soll gezeigt werden, welche Unterschiede in der Konzeptualisierung der Verhaltensweisen zwischen Managern, Kunden und Mitarbeiter existent sind.

Die Ergebnisse der wissenschaftlichen Arbeit stellen eine solide Basis für weitere Forschungsarbeiten zur Verfügung. Darüber hinaus werden dem Management von Dienstleistungsunternehmen relevante Implikationen zur Verfügung gestellt, welche Verhaltensweisen der Mitarbeiter möglich sind und welche davon besonders wichtig sind, um die Unternehmensmarke zu stärken. So kann der wirtschaftliche Erfolg eines Unternehmens nachhaltig sichergestellt werden.