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before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic”

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## Abstract

Travelling is a huge aspect in most peoples' lives. With the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic travelling has been for a long time not possible and thus, the hospitality industry recorded huge losses. Especially the people working in this industry had and still are faced with the consequences. Therefore, the question raises of what the sector can do to fascinate and inspire people about the job again.

Thus, the research focus is to analyse the changes in the hiring process due to the pandemic, based on the most significant parts of recruitment from the employers' and employees' point of view in the hospitality sector before, and during the pandemic.

First, this thesis will analyse the changes in the European tourism sector due to the pandemic, as well as evaluate the support the European Union offered. The main part of the literature review will focus on the recruitment challenges for employers and employees before and during the COVID-19 pandemic, with its specifics in the hospitality sector. The methodology part is based on a qualitative content analysis created on the content of two approaches, first, four interviews with HR experts in the hospitality sector and second, the comments on the online job evaluation platform "kununu".

This master thesis will show in conclusion that the hospitality sector faced severe problems regarding the managing of people already before the pandemic and intensified partly during the pandemic. This is resulting in the need of the hotel sector to rethink the recruitment strategy.

## Abstract (German)

Reisen ist ein sehr wichtiger Aspekt im Leben vieler Menschen, was aufgrund der Corona-Pandemie für eine lange Zeit nicht mehr möglich war, und somit zu enormen Verlusten in der Hotelbranche führte. Insbesondere die Menschen, die in diesem Bereich arbeiten, mussten und müssen sich immer noch mit den Konsequenzen auseinandersetzen. Daher ergibt sich die Frage, was die Hotellerie tun kann, um Menschen wieder für diesen Beruf zu begeistern.

Der Forschungsschwerpunkt ist deshalb die Analyse der Veränderungen im Einstellungsprozess aufgrund der Pandemie, basierend auf den wichtigsten Bereichen des Personalgewinnung aus Sicht der Arbeitgeber und der Arbeitnehmer vor und während der Pandemie.

Zunächst werden die Veränderungen in der Europäischen Tourismusindustrie aufgrund der Pandemie, ebenso wie die Unterstützung der Europäischen Union analysiert. Der Hauptteil beleuchtet die Herausforderungen im Personalaufbau aus Sicht der Arbeitgeber und der Arbeitnehmer und umfasst im Speziellen die Herausforderungen der Hotellerie. Die Methodik basiert auf einer qualitativen Inhaltsanalyse fußend auf dem Inhalt zweier unterschiedlicher Ansätze. Das sind zum einen vier Interviews mit Personalexperten in der Hotellerie und zum anderen die Kommentare der digitalen Jobbewertungs-Plattform „kununu“.

Diese Masterarbeit wird abschließend zeigen, dass die Hotellerie ernsthafte Probleme im Personalmanagement bereits vor der Pandemie hatte, die sich während der Pandemie zum Teil verschärft haben und ein Umdenken in der Strategie der Personalgewinnung zwingend erforderlich machen.

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## 1. Introduction

*“And I think to myself, what a wonderful world”* (Earth Trekkers, 2021). If one might interpretate the title of Louis Armstrong’s most famous song as the feeling a traveller might have when exploring new places, it may also serve as the basis of a first definition of tourism, since it includes private holiday trips. Nevertheless, tourism includes more and is defined as:

*“The activity of visitors taking a trip to a main destination outside the usual environment, for less than a year, for any main purpose, including business, leisure or other personal purpose, other than to be employed by a resident entity in the place visited”* (Eurostat, 2014, p. 16).

How important travelling for people is, shows the number of holiday trips made by the 27 countries of the European Union in 2019, which was more than a billion. In Austria for instance more than 22 million trips were made for one night or more (Eurostat, 2022). This number offers already an impression of how significant tourism for the European Union is. According to the tourism Factsheet of the European Parliament (Pernice, 2022), the sector includes 2.3 million businesses, employs about 12.3 million people, and contributes, depending on how wide or narrow the definition of tourism is taken, 3.9%-10.3% to EU’s GDP (Pernice, 2022). In 2019 the three most important countries for tourism in the EU, measured by the contribution to the total GDP in European Union member states, were Croatia with 24.3%, Greece with 20.3 % and Portugal with 17.1%, whereas Ireland contributes only 4.2% to its GDP (Statista Research Department (Statista), 2021). In March 2020 the tourism sector was hit hard by the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus and faced new challenges concerning the prohibition of travelling and following new health protection regulations (Pernice, 2022). Regarding to the mentioned numbers, it is important to explain that in the tourism industry, especially the hospitality sector, the COVID-19 pandemic emphasizes the fact that people are the most important asset to any organisation and thus Human Resource Management is considered as one of the main significant strategies for success in this sector (Baum, Amoah and Spivack, 1997; King, 1995; Lee-Ross and Pryce, 2010). This is the reason why the topic of this master’s thesis is *“Managing people in the European tourism industry before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic”*. To explain the importance of this topic, it is first necessary to understand the difference between tourism and hospitality. The word tourism serves as a subsumed concept of travelling and includes all leisure, business, or other activities of people outside of their place of residence for not longer than one year (Europäische Gemeinschaften, 1998). Hospitality means in a commercial sense the direct relationship between guests and hosts, with the objective to guarantee the guests well-being during the stay and thus, to gain profit (King, 1995). Second, it is essential to explain what Human Resource Management (HRM) is about. In general, HRM defines all the activities a company makes regarding future and current people working there. This starts with recruitment of employees, through their retention, to termination (Rowold, 2015). For this topic, the most important part of HRM in the hospitality sector is recruitment because, and that was already the



problem before the pandemic started, from the employees' point of view this sector has a poor image, due to low future career possibilities, seasonal work, (European Commission, no date, a) and a high fluctuation rate (Collins, 2007). In addition, from the employers' point of view, the challenges are mainly finding enough qualified and engaged staff (Lin, Chiang and Wu, 2018). Furthermore, HR designs, e.g. Employer Branding, are just considered as costs (Saad, 2013). As the COVID-19 pandemic started, the challenges got even intensified by lockdowns, closed borders, and virtual recruitment (Society for Human Resource Management, 2021). Moreover, the industry is currently struggling between lockdowns and re-openings to find staff in general, because people decided to find other jobs due to insecurity or worries about health and safety issues (AFP and France 24, 2021; Sullivan, 2021). This is the reason limiting the topic of managing people in general to one special part of it, namely recruitment. Third, there should be explained why the topic is focused on the European level. In the year 2019 the 'travel and tourism' sector, including all linked economic divisions, made with 10.3% a significant contribution to the EU's GDP (Pernice, 2022). This industry is with over 27 million workers in 2019 a central factor to economic growth and employment goals of the European Union (Pernice, 2022). That is why the European Union hold a key role in this sector.

According to the problems mentioned in the media, the research focus of this master's thesis is to examine how the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic will influence the recruitment in the hospitality sector, with a special focus on the possibilities and responsibilities the European Union has, to support this sector. The Human Resource Management and the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on HRM are chosen as central guideline because they will have a deep impact on everybody's future working environment, by living and working in a world which is still confronted with the pandemic. In summary, this master's thesis tries to analyse the changes in the hiring process due to the pandemic, based on the most significant parts of HRM in the hospitality sector before and during the pandemic, which are relevant for the recruitment from the employers' and employees' point of view. Therefore, the research questions of this master thesis are:

- 1. What were the main recruitment challenges in the hospitality industry from the employers' point of view before the COVID-19 pandemic started?**
- 2. How did the recruitment challenges change in the hospitality industry from the employers' point of view during the COVID-19 pandemic?**
- 3. What were the main recruitment challenges in the hospitality industry from the employees' point of view before the COVID-19 pandemic started?**
- 4. How did the recruitment challenges change in the hospitality industry from the employees' point of view during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

The methodology of this master's thesis is based, besides the literature review, on the qualitative content analysis according to Mayring (2015) of interviews with HR experts of 5-stars hotels and of comments on the online job evaluation platform "kununu". Both methods have been chosen because they allow an interpretation of the recruitment challenges in the hospitality industry from the employers' and employees' point of view.

The structure of the thesis is as follows. First, there will be an analysis of the changes in the tourism sector, especially focusing on the hospitality sector, in Europe, by examining the tourism policy of the EU, the support of the EU and the specific national state aids, comparing Austria and Germany as examples. The main part of the literature review will focus on HRM and its theoretical background, as well as on the recruitment challenges for employers and employees before and during the COVID-19 pandemic, with its specifics in the hospitality sector. This will be followed by the methodology part and its results and subsequently, the discussion and conclusion part.

## 2. European Union's tourism policy

One of the main objectives of European tourism policy is to avoid the weaknesses this sector brings:

*“Poor image of tourism careers (e.g. seasonality and limited career prospects); key skills gaps (e.g. digital skills, interpersonal skills, communication, etc.); new skills are needed to remain competitive and tackle the new tourist demand (e.g. destination management, adventure tourism, accessible tourism, green tourism); Cross-border and transnational mobility needs to be encouraged more”* (European Commission, no date, a).

These challenges are requiring a lot of effort to overcome them and thus the European Union, according to Article 195 TFEU, tries to support integration and cooperation in the tourism sector by reassuring the Member States to work together (European Commission, 2010), in order to reach the following goals:

*“Stimulate competitiveness in the European tourism sector; Promote the development of sustainable, responsible and high-quality tourism; Consolidate the image and profile of Europe as a collection of sustainable and high-quality destinations; Maximise the potential of EU financial policies and instruments for developing tourism”* (European Commission, 2010).

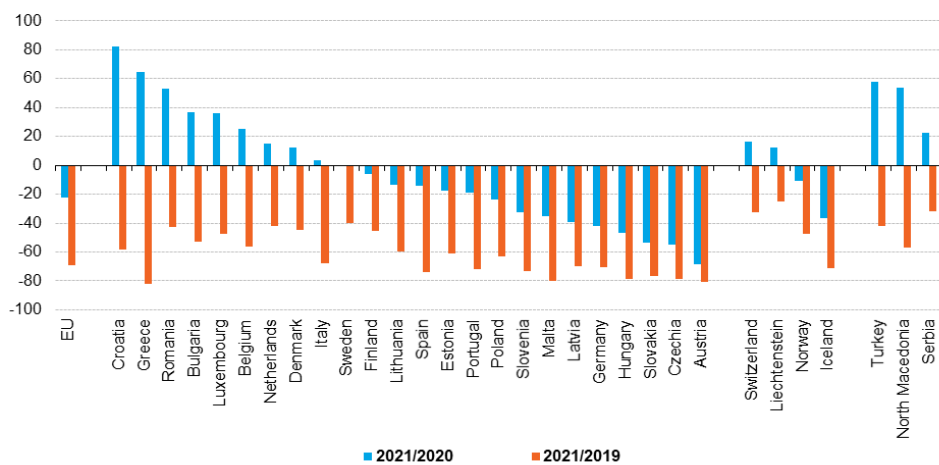
In alignment with these goals the European Commission committed itself to more concrete programmes and strategies. In the context of the goal ‘stimulate competitiveness in the European tourism sector’ the European Commission determines ‘improving professional skills’ as one important way to reach the objective (European Commission, 2010). Thus, packages like ‘Leonardo’ or the ‘Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme’ (CIP) with its ‘Erasmus for young entrepreneurs’ and ‘E-skill for innovation’ are going to find more support and promotion (European Commission, 2010). Moreover, the EU established the initiative ‘An Agenda for new skills and jobs’ in the framework of the ‘Europe 2020’ strategy (European Commission, 2010). In the year 2015 the European Union decided to combine the former EU-programmes concerning ‘life-time learning’, like ‘Leonardo’, to one project, namely ‘Erasmus+’ (Die Bundesregierung, 2015). ‘Erasmus+’ is a programme developed by the European Union in order to establish a platform for international education and training. The goals are advancing digitalisation, helping people to improve their international language and cultural skills, and creating a more interesting curriculum vitae to be competitive in a challenging labour market (European Commission, no date, b). There are advantages for individuals and organisations. For example, individuals, e.g. students or teaching staff can increase their chances on the job market or find a place to communicate and distribute knowledge (European Commission, no date, c), and organisations can profit from networking, high skilled staff, and international partnerships (European Commission, no date, d). Referring to the hospitality sector, there are some special projects, like ‘European Catering & Hospitality Language Training Course’ or ‘Be My Guest: Russian for European Hospitality’ (European Commission, no date, e; European Commission, no date, f), showing that ‘Erasmus+’ can be successfully adjusted to most economic sectors. The efforts

the EU make in this context show how important it is for employees and employers to be competitive on a more and more demanding labour market.

## 2.1 The influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism industry in Europe

The labour market got even more challenging because of the COVID-19 pandemic. To be able to understand the influence of the pandemic, a comparison of the numbers between the years before COVID-19 and during COVID-19 pandemic is necessary. The employment loss in 2020 in the tourism industry caused by the coronavirus was about 60 million jobs worldwide, and as it was expected beforehand, the region with the highest loss has been with 34 million lost jobs the Asia Pacific region, followed by Africa, 7.2 million, North America, 7.1 million, Latin America, 4 million, and on the fifth place, Europe with 3.6 million job losses (Statista Research Department (Statista), 2022a). These numbers can be explained through the severe decline of overnight stays. As it can be seen in Figure 1, all European Member States have been affected by the pandemic as the decrease of the numbers of nights spent in any tourist accommodation shows. All in all, there has been a decrease of 69% between 2019 and 2021 at EU level (Eurostat Statistics Explained, 2021). The lowest reduction has been in Liechtenstein with a minus of about 20%, whereas the highest fall of spent nights has been in Greece with a minus of a bit more than 80% (Eurostat Statistics Explained, 2021). Austria, with a minus of 80%, and Germany, with a minus of 70%, belong to those countries with the highest reduction in numbers of nights spent in tourist accommodations. However, there was also a growth in comparison of the period 2020 until 2021 in some countries, nevertheless, compared to the numbers before the pandemic it is still a decrease. In summary, there has been a minus of 20% at EU level (Eurostat Statistics Explained, 2021).

**Percentage change in number of nights spent in tourist accommodation, January to June 2021 compared with the same period in 2020 and in 2019 (%)**



Note: No data available for Ireland, France and Cyprus.  
 Source: Eurostat (online data code: tour\_occ\_nim)



Figure 1 Percentage change in number of nights spent in tourist accommodation January to June 2021 compared with the same period in 2020 and in 2019 (Eurostat Statistics Explained, 2021)

## 2.2 The EU's support during the COVID-19 pandemic

### Measures against the COVID-19 pandemic influencing the tourism sector

What are the main reasons causing these numbers of decline since the start of the pandemic? The corona virus caused many infected people within a very short time and led to a high death rate. With the 8<sup>th</sup> of May 2022 there have been more than 513 million infections and 6 million deaths (WHO, 2022). That is why the European Union defined a 'emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic', including:

*"Limiting the spread of the virus; supporting jobs, businesses and the economy; helping EU citizens stranded abroad; fighting disinformation; promoting research for treatments and vaccines; ensuring provision of medical equipment"* (European Council and Council of the European Union, 2021a). Moreover, *"limiting the spread of the virus [did include a] temporary closure of EU's external borders [thus,] a restriction of non-essential travel to the EU. In a next step the Member States initiated "internal border controls or travel restrictions within the EU"* (European Council and Council of the European Union, 2021b).

In order to respond to the global health crisis, the G7 leaders agreed on 16<sup>th</sup> of March 2020 to organise in joint way the health care for people, containing also *"national emergency measures"* (European Council and Council of the European Union, 2020).

On behalf of all EU countries, the measures to contain the pandemic in connection with the hospitality sector will now be explained, using the example of Austria. Austria started the first lockdown on 16. March 2020 until 11. April 2020, meaning that one was only allowed to leave the own house or flat for the coverage of basic needs, pandemic relevant work or help people in need of support (BGBLA, II, VO 98, 2020). Whereas first, the restaurants had a closing time at 3 p.m. and one day later they had to close completely (BGBLA, II, VO 97, 2020; Pollak, Kowarz and Partheymüller, 2020a). The first lockdown was followed by a 'lockdown light', started with the 3<sup>rd</sup> of November 2020 (movement restrictions from 8 p.m. to 6 a.m.), a second 'hard lockdown', started with the 17<sup>th</sup> of November 2020, including a complete closure of restaurants and hotels, and a third hard lockdown begun with the 26<sup>th</sup> of December 2020 (Pollak, Kowarz and Partheymüller, 2020b). The first months of the year 2021 were characterized by a mix of regional lockdowns and openings (Pollak, Kowarz and Partheymüller, 2021). Throughout Austria, opening steps started with 19<sup>th</sup> of May also including the hospitality sector (Pollak et al., 2021). Another lockdown followed on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of November 2021 until the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 2021, included again the closure of restaurants and hotels (BGBLA, II, VO 475, 2021). Starting with the 1<sup>st</sup> of June 2022 (approximately valid until the 23<sup>rd</sup> of August 2022) all regulations regarding the COVID-19 pandemic in hotels are dropped, there is only a recommendation to wear an FFP2-mask (WKO, 2022a).

## The financial support of the European Union during the Covid-19 pandemic

The lockdowns, but also the implementation of the new regulations, resulted in the huge financial loss in the hotel sector, as already seen before in the severe decline of overnight stays. Therefore, in a next step, there will be an examination at what is done to support the tourism industry based on EU-wide support programmes, as well as national support programmes of the Member States. Since the EU support agenda is mainly referring to the generic term of tourism, meaning that the hospitality sector is not mentioned in particular, there will be no further differentiation to the hospitality sector in this part.

The starting point of the EU was to guarantee fast and quick help, beginning with 'The EU's emergency response to the COVID-19 pandemic' (European Council and Council of the European Union, 2021a) in which the EU offered:

*"€540 billion as a support package for jobs and workers, businesses and member states. [This sum is divided in] €100 billion support to mitigate unemployment risks in an emergency (SURE), €200 billion Pan-European guarantee fund for loans to companies (European Investment Bank) and €240 billion pandemic crisis support for member states (European Stability Mechanism)"* (European Council and Council of the European Union, 2021a).

In a second step, the EU offered help directly to the affected businesses, like the tourism industry and the workers in this sector, with the general agreement to help with *"liquidity support, fiscal relief and an easing of state aid rules, as well as the temporary suspension of EU rules on airports slots to avoid empty flights"* (European Parliament, 2021). Furthermore, as it was necessary at the beginning of the pandemic with the cancellation of most flights, the EU brought thousands of Europeans back to their home countries through the EU Civil Protection Mechanism, as well as changing the 'package travel directive', by giving the opportunity to cancel already booked holidays without penalty (European Parliament, 2021). In a next step, on 13<sup>th</sup> of May 2020 the EU started a try to re-establish the tourism and transport sector, by publishing 'guidelines and recommendations on tourism and transport to help EU countries gradually lift travel restrictions' (European Parliament, 2021). Nevertheless, the EU had to coordinate travel restrictions again on the 17<sup>th</sup> of September 2020 (European Parliament, 2021). In order to overcome the loss of the sector, the European Commission passed the 'package on tourism and transport' already on the 13<sup>th</sup> of May 2020 (European Commission, 2020a).

### 2.3 The analysis of state aid in Germany and Austria and the problem of its support due to the employment structure in the hospitality industry

The analysis of the specific state aid regulations will be concentrated on Germany and Austria since the travel and tourism industry contributes significantly to both country's GDP. In Germany the tourism industry contributed in 2019 9.8%, in 2020 6.3% and in 2021 6.4% to the country's GDP, whereas in Austria the numbers are even a little bit higher, in 2019 10.7%, in 2020 7.9% and 2021 7.11% (Statista

Research Department (Statista), 2021). As already discussed, the pandemic influenced the hospitality industry in the way that they had to face huge financial losses. These losses affected especially the employees in the sector. For instance, the number of employees in Germany within the scope of National Insurance decreased from 1.1 million in 2019 to 977.500 in 2021 (Graefe (Statista), 2022). The financial losses due to the pandemic led to a huge number of layoffs or the put in of ‘Kurzarbeit’ application (Graefe (Statista), 2022). With October 2021, about 58.000 people were still in the employment system of ‘Kurzarbeit’, even though the hotels are open again (Graefe (Statista), 2022). Moreover, in 2020 more than one third of all employees have been marginal employed, this number is already a loss of 15.5% in comparison to the pre-pandemic year of 2019 (Destatis, 2022).

In Austria the number of employees including marginal employment decreased from almost 107 thousand employees in 2019, to 86 thousand in 2020 (WKO, 2022b, p. 14). In 2019 there has been 21.891 white collar workers, 80.231 blue collar workers, 4.606 trainees and 9.675 with marginal employment (WKO, 2022b, p. 14). In 2020 there has been 20.157 white collar workers, 61.532 blue collar workers, 4.322 trainees and 7.543 with marginal employment (WKO, 2022b, p. 14). The numbers from the year 2020 to the year 2021 changed not much, besides the numbers of trainees, there has been 561 less trainees in comparison to the year before, but also 550 more blue collar workers (WKO, 2022b, p. 14).

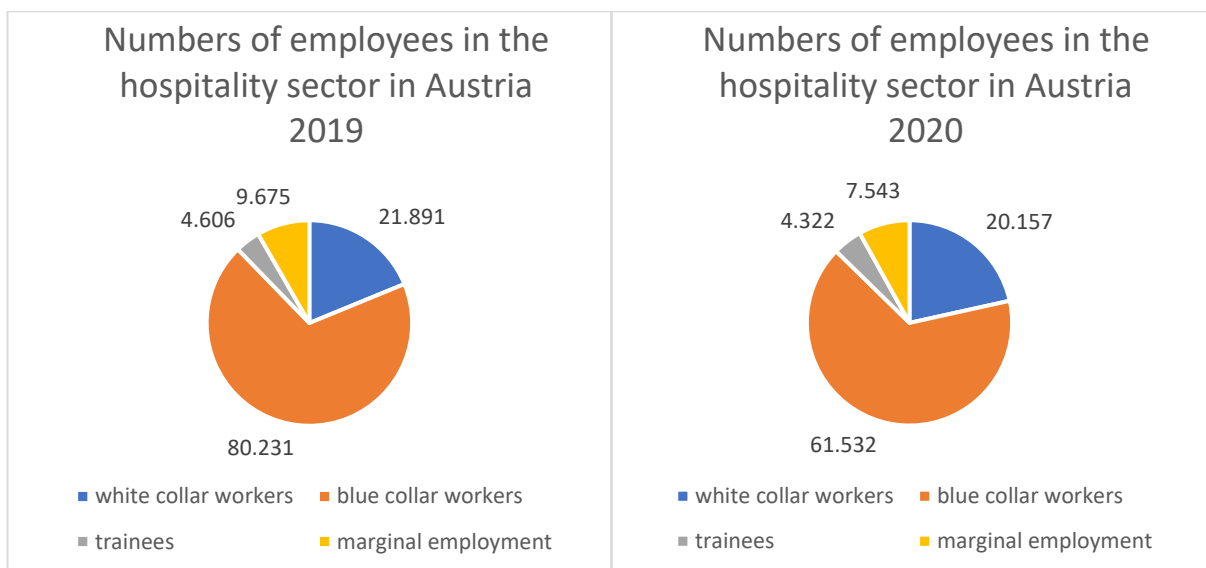


Figure 2 Numbers of employees in the hospitality sector in Austria 2019 and 2020 (own illustration, based on WKO, 2022b)

This overview of the employment structure helps to understand which employees benefit from the following discussed state aid. The first step is to analyse the help from the EU for specific states in context with the ‘temporary framework for state aid measures to support the economy in the current COVID-19 outbreak’ (European Commission, 2021a), and in a next step to examine the realisation in the countries.

The 'temporary framework for state aid measures to support the economy in the current COVID-19 outbreak' is a communication paper from 19<sup>th</sup> of March 2020, released from the European Commission, which has been edited since then, adapting to new developments of the pandemic (European Commission, 2021a). On the one hand, the framework contains arguments why specific state aid in a new form is necessary, since specifically small and medium enterprises are affected from the abrupt loss of income and need help to recover (European Commission, 2021a, p. 3). Moreover, the framework ensures that the Internal Market of the European Union remains unharmed (European Commission, 2021a, p. 4). On the other hand, the framework includes concrete regulations, like the limited amounts of aid, the form of aid, e.g. guarantees on loans or subsidised interest rates for loans (European Commission, 2021a, pp. 8-16).

There has been a lot of individual state aid support from the EU to Austria, the most important two, especially for the tourism sector, are the following: First, there has been the initial state aid of the 9<sup>th</sup> of April 2020, in which the European Commission granted €15 billion to Austria to deal with economic consequences of the COVID-19 outbreak (European Commission, 2021b), to be more concrete:

*“The scheme is Austria-wide, targeted at all companies, and allows for the provision of aid in the form of: (i) Direct grants, repayable advances and guarantees with a maximum of €800 000; (ii) State guarantees for loans subject to safeguards for banks to channel State aid to the real economy; (iii) Subsidised public loans to companies, with favourable interest rates”* (European Commission, 2021b, para. 17).

Second, there has been the one of the 3<sup>rd</sup> of June 2021, in which the Commission presented with €95 million a financial support for wages, in order to take care of those companies which are especially impacted from governmental measures against the spread of the COVID-19 virus, like hotels (European Commission, 2021b, para. 4).

The focus on state aid in Germany was especially on companies like Lufthansa or Deutsche Bahn. Nevertheless, in March 2020 the Commission accepted the instruments Germany wanted to put into practice to help the economy, including two different programmes, both under the umbrella of the German bank “Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW)” (European Commission, 2020c).

On the one hand, “[a] loan programme covering up to 90% of the risk for loans for companies of all sizes. Eligible loans may have a maturity of up to 5 years and can reach €1 billion per company, depending on the company's liquidity needs” (European Commission, 2020c, para. (i)), on the other hand “[a] loan programme in which the KfW participates together with private banks to provide larger loans as a consortium. For this scheme, the risk taken by the State may cover up to 80% of a specific loan but not more than 50% of total debt of a company” (European Commission, 2020c. para. (ii)).



In April 2020 an amendment of the two schemes had been covered by “Bundesregelung Kleinbeihilfen 2020”:

*“To support companies affected by the coronavirus outbreak provided for aid to be granted via direct grants, repayable advances and tax or payment advantages. The amendment approved allows also for aid in the form of loans, guarantees and equity. In particular, under the amended Temporary Framework, guarantees can cover 100% of the risk of loans with a nominal amount of up to €800,000” (European Commission, 2021c, para. 25),*

and “Bundesregelung Darlehen 2020” which *“is now amended in order to allow for subsidised interest rates for loans provided to beneficiaries” (European Commission, 2021c, para. 25).*

How did the support for the tourism industry look like in particular in Austria and Germany?

*Table 1 Comparison of state support in Austria and Germany (own illustration, based on Eco Austria, 2021, p. 26)*

	<b>Austria</b>		<b>Germany</b>	
Grants	Hardship funds (AMA)	22,1	Interim financial aid	4.785
	Fixed cost grants	453,96	November and December financial support	3.792
	Lockdown – sales compensation (I and II)	1.650	Restart financial support	360
	Lost sales bonus	1.017,98		
	Protection shield for sales losses or limitations regarding events	300		
Credit aid	Credit guarantee	1.270	KfW Covid-special program and quick credit support	15.492
Labour market	COVID-‘Kurzarbeit’	1.752	‘Kurzarbeit’	9.000
Tax measurements	Deferral of taxes	743,7	Decrease of VAT	6.720
	Decrease of VAT reduction	600		
Other	Insolvency protection (tour operators)	30,6	Guarantees Economic	1.500
			Stabilisation fund	2.565
	<b>Sum In % of GDP</b>	<b>7.818,24 1,97</b>		<b>38.979 1,13</b>

Note: numbers in € million

As it is shown in Table 1, the most important measures in Austria, due to the support of the tourism, had been protection against insolvency, a shield for events, as well as the temporary decrease of the sales tax (ECO Austria, 2021, p. 13). Though, in Germany the most support had not been sector related, however the tourism sector can call on the assistance of more than 140 programmes (ECO Austria, 2021, p. 19). The approval of € 100 billion for the support of the economy included loans from the

KfW, direct grants, e.g. transitional support, and guarantees. €30 billion had been additionally used for short-time allowance (ECO Austria, 2021, p. 19).

This analysis showed that the state aid offered help to support the employers. However, the state aid offers not strictly a direct support for the employees, since for example the system with 'Kurzarbeit' is only possible for those employees who have a cover of social security which is for example not the case for people working in marginal employment (Bundesagentur für Arbeit, 2022). Furthermore, since an actual case at the court for labour in Germany showed, the employers have also not the responsibility to pay workers who are marginal employed when the firm has to close because of COVID-19 (Bundesarbeitsgericht, 5 AZR 211/21, 2021). Given that an important way of employment in the hospitality sector is covered by marginal employment, as for instance in Germany more than one third have been marginal employed 2020 (Destatis, 2022), the industry lost a high number of employees. The following analysis of Human Resource Management in general and especially for the hospitality management will show that the hospitality industry faced difficulties to attract and retain qualified staff before the pandemic but is even more confronted with it since the outbreak of the coronavirus, and thus, need to rethink their recruitment policies.

### 3. Recruitment from the employers' point of view

#### 3.1 Introduction to Human Resource Management

As stated above, the COVID-19 pandemic influenced the economy worldwide enormously. *“Economic crises are [...] times of high risk to mental well-being of the population and of the people affected [...]”* (WHO, 2011, p.1). Even though, the chapter above showed that the European Union and its members try to help the weakened economy, even with the state aid the loss for the hospitality industry has been enormous. In comparison with other sectors the hospitality sector faced already from the beginning severe economic consequences. A study for the German federal ministry for economy and energy (2020) contemporary conducted during one of the first lockdowns showed that the most affected sector by the pandemic is the hospitality industry, on the second-place health and social service and other person-to-person services. On average the loss of revenue was about 55%, in the hospitality industry 78%, and in other person-to-person services 62% (Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Energie, 2020). The hospitality industry is also mostly affected regarding the introduction of the system ‘Kurzarbeit’, as well as dismissals (Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Energie, 2020). Simultaneously, Cypionka et al. (2020) stated that the economic consequences will be most severe in Austria for the hospitality industry with a loss of over 7 million in the added value whereas for instance the commerce sector would face a loss of about 2 million (Cypionka et al., 2020).

The hospitality sector is highly depending on the people working there and during the pandemic, the decline in employment in this sector has been immense. As already expressed above, in Austria the number of employees including marginal employment decreased from 2019, with 106.728 employees, to 2020 with 86.011 employees (WKO, 2022b, p. 14). But who are those people? In 2021 62 % women and 38% men have been working in this sector, as well as 72% have been blue-collar workers, 23.6% white collar workers and 4.4% have been trainees (WKO, 2022b, p.13). These are the people who have been or who are still working in the hospitality sector and thus, who have been affected mostly by the pandemic, and who should be the centre of this thesis, and thus of the following analysis.

Since people are the most important asset for an organization and since they are affected most by the pandemic Human Resource Management is going to play a more enhanced role in the future (Baum, Amoah and Spivack, 1997; King, 1995; Lee-Ross and Pryce, 2010; Deloitte, 2021). Being confronted with the pandemic, have made the business world realized that working in a person-to-person sector means that the mental well-being is today one of the most important assets of companies and it will be in the future an important challenge for the companies to implement physical and psychological well-being, as well as social and financial needs of the employees in the daily work (Deloitte, 2021).

The explained growing importance of Human Resource Management in general and for the hospitality management is the reason for the following analysis of the theoretical background of HRM.

According to Rowold (2015), Human Resource Management (HRM) follows specific processes and functions in different dimensions and time steps. Having the complexity of the current working world in mind, companies have to align their HRM with challenges like demographic changes and diversity, the higher pressure to stay competitive and thus, develop a good knowledge management, motivation, communication and organisational culture (Rowold, 2015). With this background HRM follows the cycle of an employee from the application until leaving the firm, with the important steps of personnel marketing, personnel planning, personnel selection, personnel development, personnel leadership, personnel motivation and remuneration, and personnel release. Rowold (2015) also stresses the importance of three cross-section functions, namely the importance of assessment and thus of data, as well as controlling as an evaluation tool of the success of the HRM, and operative tasks. Every step, every function, and every decision should be settled in alignment of strategic human resource management (Rowold, 2015).

What exactly is strategic HRM and why is it so important? Bormann (2015) explains strategic Human Resource Management, which is one part besides corporate strategy and business unit strategy, as a significant way to ensure the company's competitiveness in the present and future. Possible goals are inimitable professional skills and knowledge, or a high attractiveness of the employer for employees (Bormann, 2015). Another approach of a definition is that *"the term 'Strategic Human Resource Management' (SHRM) is used to emphasize the strategic character of a particular approach to talent and organisation management [...] HRM itself is inherently strategic nature"* (Storey et al., 2019, p. 1). Storey et al. continue their definition of SHRM by describing what it means to develop a strategic management, like for example thinking long-term, seeing the bigger picture and contexts from inside and outside the company, and creating stability (Storey et al., 2019).

Strategic Human Resource Management follows two different approaches: best-practice and contingency or best fit models (Kusluvan et al., 2010; Storey et al., 2019). Best-practice models try to find the *"causal links between context, practices and outcomes"* (Storey et al., 2019, p. 7) and focus moreover on the outcome of HRM, e.g. success, welfare, or performance. The goal is to find competitive advantage by realising those routines and methods in HRM which guarantee the highest performance (Gannon et al., 2015). Critics discussed the international applicability of those practices because of cultural differences or restrictions caused by the industry itself, but some practices are implemented in all organisations to create legitimacy (Gannon et al., 2015). On the other side, contingency or best fit models and frameworks focus on a successful combination between human resource strategy plans and company related environment, and therefore *"explain organisational behaviours and outcomes as highly dependent on some inner or outer environmental variable such as*

*country, technology, organisational size or industry type or the fit with a particular business strategy*” (Storey et al., 2019, p. 12). The criticism of this approach follows the problem with focusing especially on external factors, which could be a challenge since other firms in the same sector are facing the same environmental circumstances (Gannon, et al., 2015).

Consequently, HRM is an important success factor for companies to compete on the labour market. How crucial it is to be competitive on an exigent labour market for both, employers, and employees, shows an analysis of the current challenges the tourism sector faces concerning HRM. Tourism is based on the competences and skills of every person working there. With a changing kind of tourism, becoming more multifaceted, human capital gets more and more important.

One of the most important parts or phases on the labour market, is the recruitment process, especially because of the awareness that the recruitment is for both sides *“an investment decision”* (Spence, 1973, p.358), but an *“investment under uncertainty”* (Spence, 1973, p. 356). This uncertainty is particularly revealed during times of crises. Since the recruitment process is for both, employer, and employee a decision with ambiguity, there will now follow an examination of recruitment in general and with a special focus on recruitment in the hospitality sector from employers’ and employees’ points of view.

### 3.2 Definitions and general process of recruitment

As mentioned above, the hotel sector is, due to the crisis of the COVID-19 pandemic, faced with the problem to find, between lockdowns and re-opening, staff in general because people decided to find other jobs due to insecurity or worries about health and safety issues (AFP and France 24, 2021; Sullivan, 2021). Therefore, one of the most vital parts of the crisis management in the hotels is effective recruitment.

*“Most definitions of recruitment emphasize the organization’s collective efforts to identify, attract and influence the job choices of competent applicants”* (Ployhart, 2006, p. 869). According to a study from the job platform ‘Indeed’ from 2020, the number of how many people in Germany are actively looking for a new job is 17%, most of them are searching because of wage (56%) or better working conditions (43%), they are also looking for more flexibility (24%) or struggling with the company’s culture (20%) (Nier (Statista), 2020). Ployhart (2006) states that almost 50% of all employees are searching passively for new workplaces resulting in the fact that firms are confronted with higher recruitment efforts, while they have simultaneously problems to find qualified staff. Thus, recruitment is identified as *“critical not only for sustained competitive advantage but basic organizational survival”* (Ployhart, 2006, p. 870). Having this in mind, the focus will now be on the actual recruitment process, in order to find out what companies can do better already from the beginning.

First, the general recruitment process during the phase of realisation consists of job advertisement, staff selection procedure, and selection (Cohrs and Block, 2015). There can be many obstacles during the process caused by the wrong behaviour of the employer before and during the process of recruitment, for instance attracting the wrong people for the job or losing promising people (Breugh, 2008, p. 104).

Especially the second obstacle can be found to be explained in Figure 3. If companies are not able to communicate the way and the reasons for their recruitment process in a clear way, applicants might in 56% stop the process (Nier, (Statista) 2019). The second frequently made mistake, with 42,5%, is that companies react too slow to communicate their decisions, followed by the third often underestimation due to the employers' disagreeable behaviour during the hiring process (Nier, (Statista) 2019).

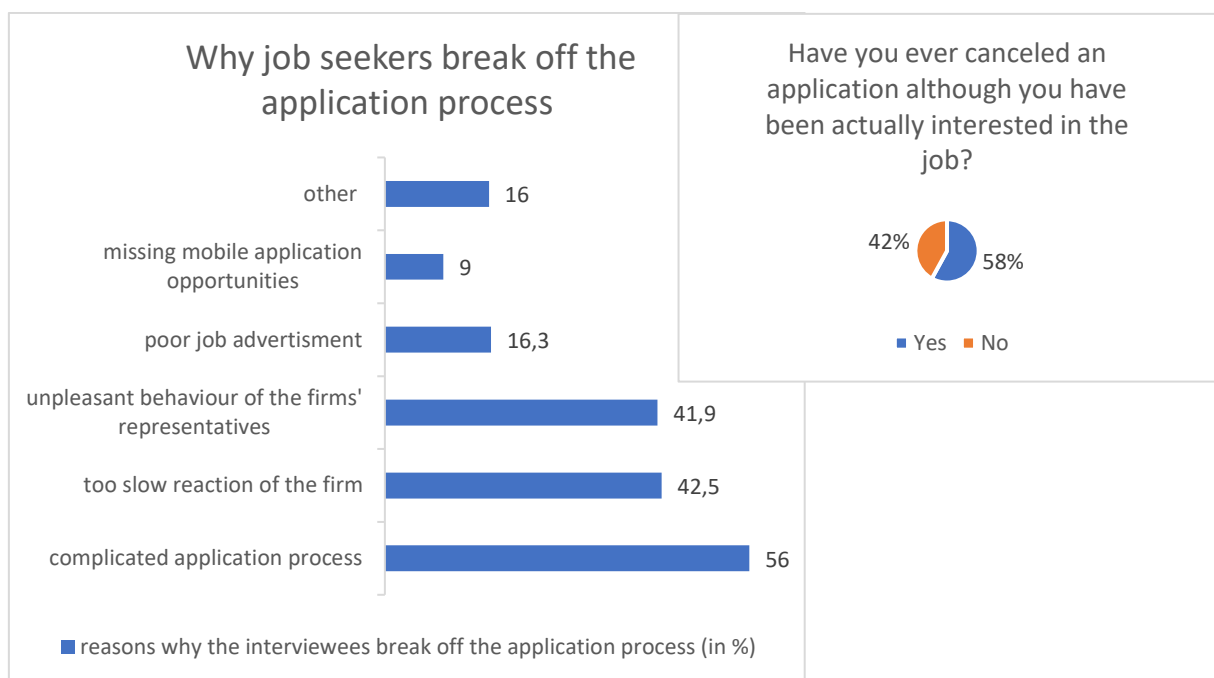


Figure 3 Why job seekers break off the application process (own illustration based on Nier (Statista), 2019)

Another problem is that many possible candidates do not know what the future job really necessitates, and thus, they do not know what to expect from the new position (Breugh, 2008). Moreover, they are unsure about their own knowledge and skills and therefore, they cannot tell how they will react to the new challenges (Breugh, 2008). This raises the question what can be done to avoid this from the employer's side. One solution, offered by Breugh (2008), could be realistic job previews (RJP) because if possible new employees have different job expectations than the employer, the chances of resignments are very high. Therefore, it is necessary to make things as clear as possible from the beginning. Realistic job previews include information about all aspects of future work, positive and negative ones and thus, offering the possibility to easily decide whether the job and the organisation

would fit to personal expectations. Consequently, those people who still apply for the job, should be able to confirm the job preview (Breugh, 2008, p. 106).

The most positive effects of realistic job previews can be gained with exceptional actions, like work simulations or a visit at the potential workplace. Moreover, there are a lot of possibilities of the timing to include those previews, e.g. already in the job advertisement (Breugh, 2008).

Afterwards, it is necessary to convey the job advertisement, which should be formulated in a clear and credible language, should be creative and innovative and should also include unpredicted information (Breugh and Starke, 2000). The upcoming communication should include significant individual information. Moreover, there is a discussion if most of the communication should be in person or written (Breugh and Starke, 2000). Advantages of personal communication are a better understanding of the dialogue partners due to non-verbal communication, or possible repetitions to avoid misunderstandings. A possible benefit from written communication can be a better understanding, because both have time to read the message (Breugh and Starke, 2000).

The next step is choosing a staff selection procedure. Cohrs and Block (2015) are defining in alignment to Schuler (2001) three different kinds of procedures: Characteristic-orientated, simulation-orientated, and biography-orientated procedures (Cohrs and Block, 2015, p. 160). Characteristic-orientated procedures should offer a psychological picture of the applicants' personality without a professional framework (Cohrs and Block 2015). Mostly tested are intelligence, concentration, knowledge, or different personality attributes. The best-known tests are the intelligence structure test, attentiveness endurance test d2, and the Wilde intelligence test (Cohrs and Block 2015). Simulation-orientated procedures try to detect explicit behaviour to predict future professional mode of behaviour. Possible methods are the preparation of a presentation according to a given topic, group discussion or a case study (Cohrs and Block 2015). The goal is to identify the analytic and professional competences. Biography-orientated procedures examines the past to foresee possible future success. Instruments are the classical application papers, biographical surveys, and the job interview (Cohrs and Block, 2015).

The next step is promotion. During this stage a company decides its communication goals, to be more concrete, who and what should be reached through communication, and defines how communication should look like internal and external (Homburg, 2017; Runkel, 2018). It is important to develop a lead message or a slogan, which should be the signature of the company, the quintessence of every decision made in the former process, and which should be echoed in every communication due to recruitment, e.g. the website, social media, or job advertisements (Homburg, 2017; Runkel, 2018).

It is general known, that hardly anything else changed the way of living so much like the world wide web. Therefore, the internet became one of the most important tools when it comes to recruiting. In 2019, 86.4% companies in Germany used the website of the company for job advertisements, 74.1%

used internet job board, 35.7% used a carrier network and 17% used social media network platforms, only 8.7% used print medias (Statista, 2020). There are a lot of advantages concerning the recruitment via internet, like time and cost saving, e.g. in the year 2006, one DIN A4 advertisement in the newspaper 'Süddeutsche Zeitung' with four colours amounts to 20.000€ (Grund, 2006). Moreover, employers are able to get employees from all over the world, because the advertisement can be seen everywhere, and an employee can apply anytime, which also reduces the opportunity costs (Grund, 2006). What are the reasons for the developments of computerised recruitment technologies? Reynolds and Weiner (2009) mention four causes, being the result of a changing and more challenging work environment: "*Labor market context, business landscape, technology advancement, and science-based selection method*" (Reynolds and Weiner, 2009, p. 5). But using social media and internet platforms also includes some potential risks for the employer, e.g. losing control about what is reported for example in evaluation platforms and moreover, social media needs continuous attention always having the strategic elements and goals of the company in mind (Runkel, 2018).

### 3.3 Personnel marketing and the special focus on Employer Branding in the recruitment process

A first start is having a closer look at one of the general steps of HRM: personnel marketing. According to Abrell and Rowold (2015), personnel marketing is crucial for HRM because it uses similar techniques as marketing in a traditional sense to make the firm captivating to employees. The goal is to find employees, who can identify themselves with the organisation and develop a long-term loyalty to the firm (Abrell and Rowold, 2015). Furthermore, personnel marketing defines itself as a combination of all possible long-term measurements and policies concerning the HRM field and faces all potential requirements of current and future staff (Abrell and Rowold, 2015).

One important instrument to reach the goals of personnel marketing is the so called 'Employer Branding' (Abrell and Rowold, 2015, p. 136). It is necessary for an organisation not only to stand against other firms concerning products but moreover, to make themselves as attractive as possible as an employer, because this ensures the company's competitiveness (Abrell and Rowold, 2015). Therefore, 'Employer Branding' is divided in two parts: internal marketing, e.g. concrete measurements to establish organisational culture, loyalty, and possible future internal leaderships, and external marketing, e.g. expected measurement for creating a positive picture as employer, reducing costs, and having an effective recruiting fund (Abrell and Rowold, 2015). Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) define 'Employer Branding' in a very similar way: "*employer branding [is] the process of building an identifiable and unique employer identity, and the employer brand [is] a concept of the firm that differentiates it from its competitors*" (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004, p. 502). In general, possible instruments are on the one side campaigns to increase the degree of fame and the number of possible



applicants with an active recruiting process, and on the other side 'onboarding', meaning to make the first day at work for an employee as best as possible, with, e.g. a guided tour through the place of the organisation and introduction programmes, and 'employee's commitment', with workshops, job rotation, and financial or intangible incentives (Abrell and Rowold, 2015). In the following the focus will be more concrete on the staffing process. After discussing the general definitions of personnel marketing now the focus is on how to realize it.

The goals, like being more competitive through having engaged employees, illustrate how vital it is to analyse how Employer Branding is able to become of strategic importance for the organizations. According to Runkel (2018), strategic importance can be reached as soon as Employer Branding creates added value for the organisation (Runkel, 2018, p. 41). But added value is difficult to measure, especially in the field of Human Resources, therefore, Runkel (2018) sees one way of measuring it in the perception of the added value. Additionally, perception needs concrete numbers to prove the effectiveness of employer branding. One opportunity could be a risk analysis, because it offers the possibility to avoid actions which would prevent reaching the firm's goals and examines the most important resource of HR – personnel. To be more concrete, Runkel (2018) proposes to analyse the risks of motivation, shortage, adaption, and resignation in order to find out what the organisation really needs, for example how to avoid employees' resignation and the loss of know-how or defining if needed staff should be hired external or internal (Runkel, 2018).

There are now different approaches to the realization of Employer Branding. A first overview shows that most of the literature follows three steps, e.g. *"Diagnosis or analysis, realisation, and control"* (Runkel, 2018, p. 49). Whereas Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) determine also the following three steps: The starting point for a company is to create a "value proposition" (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004, p. 502), meaning a firm has to evaluate what its essentials are, like the culture of the company or the image they want to have or already have on the labour market. During this process, it is very important that the company stays in line with its other marketing concepts (Sullivan 1999, cited in Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). In a next step, it is important to publish the value proposition to all people who belong to the target groups, e.g. the possible employees, job platforms, or hiring organisations. The last phase is to incorporate the external marketing strategies to the internal marketing, because *"the goal [...] is to develop a workforce that is committed to the set of values and organizational goals established by the firm"* (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004, p. 503). However, most of the literature emphasizes only on different parts of the process of Employer Branding. For instance, Bürkle (2010) focuses on the problem of the quality risk during hiring from the employers' perspective and is introducing a self-selection approach to avoid this risk. Breaugh (2017) examines especially the first step in Employer Branding, namely the job analysis. Attention should also be paid to the realisation step, following the question how the company can publish its Employer Brand, for example the Nielsen market analysis for job platforms

(Nielsen and monster.de, 2013) or examining the influence of social media (Runkel, 2018) and internet in general (Grund, 2005). Last, Rosenberger (2014) focuses mainly on the competences HR and managerial staff should develop to follow the goals of Employer Branding.

Having this overview in mind, it is now necessary to examine in more detail the different steps and their content, to develop a theoretical framework of the employer branding. This thesis will follow the classical process line of the strategy development in marketing.

### Overview process Employer Branding

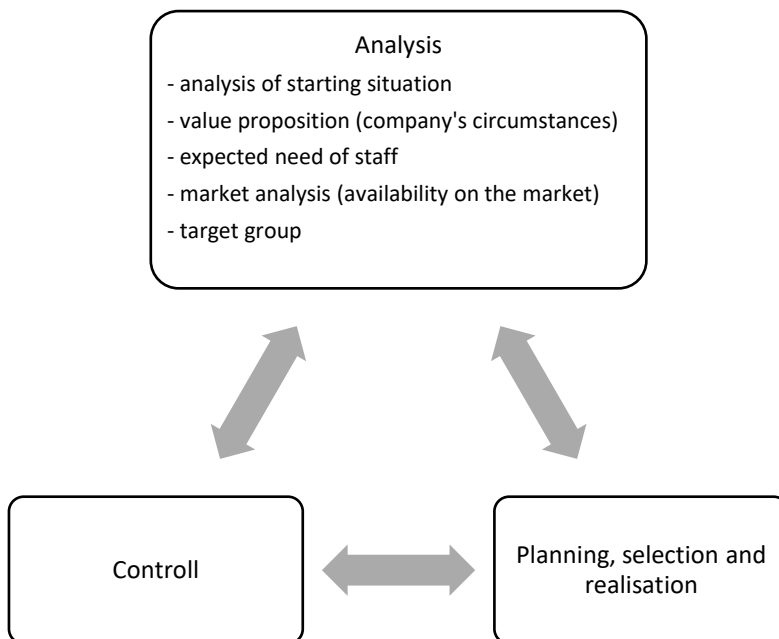


Figure 4 Overview process Employer Branding (own illustration based on Homburg, illustration 8-8, 2017, p. 463 and Runkel, 2018)

In the following there should be given an inventory due to the different steps, meaning which practices can be used for every step.

During the stage of analysis, a company should focus on firm related and market related components (Runkel, 2018). Possible general instruments to measure the company's starting point due to firm related issues are the analysis of fluctuation or absences, resignation interviews as well as employee surveys (Runkel, 2018). Furthermore, a firm has to make its value proposition (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004). The goal of this phase is to find out, how the employer branding should look like, to be more concrete, what is the identity, what is the culture, what are the values and what are the goals of the company? The answers will help to create an "unique employment proposition", "cultural fit", and an "employer brand positioning statement" (Runkel, 2018, p. 82).

The market related analysis can be based on the same principles as for the marketing of the company's products. The company should start with analysing the following questions: Who are the possible future employees? Which companies compete for the same employees? How does the labour market look like for what the company is searching for (volume, development, changes)? (Homburg, 2017). According to Homburg (2017), market segmentation is the preferred tool to analyse possible customers and can also be used as a blueprint for analysing possible employees. In this context, socio-demographic and psychographic segmentation seems to be the most promising ones. The Five-Forces-Model seems to be the best instrument for analysing the competitors and the labour market (Homburg, 2017).

The next step is to define the need of staff. Runkel (2018) proposes a portfolio analysis of staff requirement, meaning he supposes having a look at the development of the personnel requirement, for instance during the last five years, and rank it from *unchanged* to *strong increase*, and the adaption of qualification, again from *unchanged* to *absolutely necessary* (Runkel, 2018, p. 76). Additionally, there are plenty of more concrete and statistical or mathematical ways and different models for the determination of staff requirement, e.g. estimating, and mathematic models or simulation techniques, which are considered to develop decision models offering the setting to make the staff requirement choices. Which model to use, depends on several factors, like which data is available or which demands are placed (Spengler et al., 2019).

Defining the target group is the last important task in the phase of analysis. Runkel (2018) proposes also here a portfolio analysis, based on possible characteristics of the employees and the importance of those features (Runkel, 2018, p. 79). The starting point to define a target group is a job analysis. How will the job of possible future employees will look like? What characteristics are necessary to fulfil the tasks and challenges this job will bring?

*“Job analysis is a process for understanding a job [...] The two major outcomes of a job analysis are a job description and a list of job specifications. A job description is a statement of the tasks, duties and responsibilities that a position entails. It also may provide information about the work environment (e.g., an unheated warehouse). Unlike a job description, which focuses on work activities, job specifications involve worker attributes. Job specifications describe the knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (KSAOs) that an employee should possess to successfully perform a job” (Breaugh, 2017, pp. 12-13).*

To define the workers' attribute, a firm might develop a matrix containing the required competences (Rosenberger, 2014, p. 240).

The next step is the planning phase. During this period, it is important to take all the selected data from the stage before and channel them (Runkel, 2018). The best way to do that is to follow four general issues or questions: repeated definition of the goals, values, culture, and identity of the company in order to answer the questions: *“What makes the firm unique, who suits to our company, and how do we position our company as an employer?”* (Runkel, 2018, p. 82).

This is necessary because, one general known aspect of being competitive is to distinguish and stand out from other, which can be done by defining the own organisational culture. According to Hofstede, culture is in general *“the programming of the human mind by which one group of people distinguishes itself from another group”* (Hofstede Insights, 2021a). This can also be the framework for organisational culture, as it is created through the practices which are established in an organisation. Organisational culture, and thus, the mentioned measures, since they need always to be in alignment with the general strategies and goals of the firm, are able to change at short notice or can depend on the characteristics of the management team (Hofstede Insights, 2021a).

This is the reason why, even if a company is aware of the important aspect of an intentional creation of organisational culture, it is more than necessary to change it again and again in order to adapt to new developments and to stay successful (Hofstede Insights, 2021a). To establish this steady change, it is for example necessary that the company needs to be aware of those methods and procedures which are creating problems in the organisation, as well of those which are performing good (Hofstede Insights, 2021b).

Having this in mind, the next step is to define how the Employer Branding will look in detail. According to the classical marketing mix (Homburg, 2017; Jobber and Ellis-Chadwick, 2013), one possible solution could be:

**Possible solution for Employer Branding**

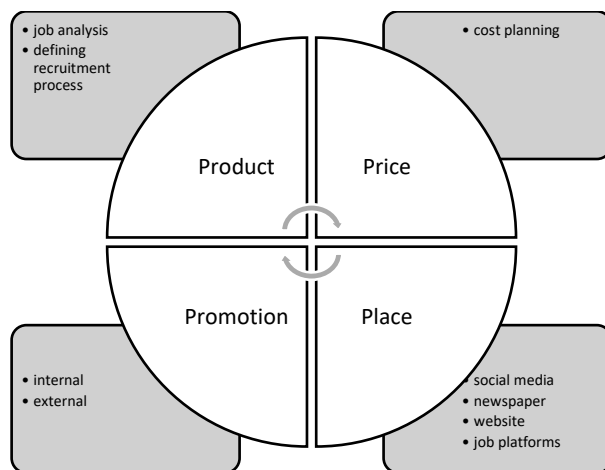


Figure 5 Possible solution for Employer Branding (own illustration based on Homburg, table 10-7, 2017, p. 530; Breugh and Starke, 2008; Runkel, 2018)

**3.4 Forces influencing the recruitment process and the Employer Branding**

Which forces do influence on the one hand the recruitment process and on the other hand Employer Branding, seen here as a special part of the recruitment process? Starting with the influences on the recruitment process per se, one might follow the framework Chapman et al. (2005) developed in the context of their meta-analysis regarding recruitment outcomes. The predictors which influence the recruitment outcomes are *“job and organizational characteristics, recruiter characteristics,*

*perceptions of the recruitment process, perceived fit, perceived alternatives, and hiring expectancies*" (Chapman et al., 2005, pp. 929-930). These characteristics are also defined by Uggerslev et. al (2012)., merely ignoring the point 'perceived alternatives'. Important when testing those predictors is to also examine the influence of *the "moderating effects of gender, race, and applicant type"* (Chapman et al., 2005, p. 930).

The results of the meta-analysis of Chapman et al. (2005) showed that it is very important who tries to attract job applicants and how this is done, meaning on the one side, recruiter characteristics are key issues, however, the focus should not be on the demographic factors, but on factors like personality and experience. On the other side especially job and organizational characteristics regulate how the outcome of the recruitment will look like (Chapman et al., 2005).

Therefore, it is important to look at those forces shaping especially this part, thus, the forces influencing Employer Branding. Employer Branding is influenced by internal and external organizational factors. First, internal factors are including the general organizational and HR strategy, the degree of organisational integration of marketing and staff management, and the product brands, e.g. the higher the prominence of the organisations' product brand, the higher the probable success of the Employer Brand (Stritzke, 2010). Second, external factors are involving the general economic situation, meaning, the better the economic situation, the higher should be the efforts in staff management, the pressure of differentiating to other possible employers, the competence of applying and negotiating of employees and target group specific success likelihood. The latter is explaining the circumstance that the higher the demand of a specific group of applicants, the more powerful employer branding must be (Stritzke, 2010). Biswas and Suar (2016) are defining *"realistic job previews, perceived organizational support, equity in reward administration, perceived organizational prestige, organizational trust, leadership of top management, psychological contract obligations, and corporate social responsibility"* (p. 57) as the most important factors influencing Employer Branding and thus, the financial and non-financial performance of the firm (Biswas and Suar, 2016, p. 57). Especially, *"leadership of top management is the most potent predictor of employer branding"* (Biswas and Suar, 2016, p. 57), including the sample items *"leadership behaviour matching employees' expectations"* and *"leaders having a good understanding of global markets"* (p. 63).

### 3.5 Changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic in the general recruitment process

To understand in how far the pandemic changed the recruitment process, the best way is to look at how the recruitment trends changed from the year 2011 to the year 2021. In the year 2011 the most popular and cross functional topics of the top 1000 companies in Germany had been the demographic change of the applicants' pool, the lack of qualified personnel, the Bologna-process, new

communication ways through social media and the long-term consequences of the world economic crisis (Weitzel et al., 2011). Firm internal key challenges had been the increasing awareness of the importance of Employer Branding, commitment of employees, internal Employer Branding, meaning staying the 'employer of choice', the alignment between HR and other departments and the visibility of personnel marketing in the company (Weitzel et al., 2011).

The COVID-19 pandemic changed mainly two things, the way of how recruitment is carried out and the recruiters' characteristics (Society for Human Resource Management, 2021). On one side, virtual hiring in combination with onsite practices will be the new regular methods.

*Moreover, "[s]ome experts believe that employers will build their workforce through internal mobility programs tied to reskilling initiatives or engage contingent talent instead of hiring externally. Others predict that companies will continue to move from static jobs toward project-based, cross-functional work dictated by changing business needs. Increased engagement, lower costs and a shorter hiring process are a few of the benefits of the shift to internal mobility" (Society for Human Resource Management, 2021, p. 2).*

On the other side, diversity, equity and inclusion and the companies' commitment to it, are playing a very important role for the applicants' job choice, therefore, it is essential that recruiters implement this commitment in the human resource management, as well as in the specific recruitment processes (Society for Human Resource Management, 2021). Moreover, it is necessary that recruiters increase their skills due to *"talent advisory training, virtual interviewing, being productive while working remotely, virtual onboarding and internal mobility"* (Society for Human Resource Management, 2021, p.3).

### 3.6 Recruitment specifics in the hospitality sector from the employers' point of view

#### 3.6.1 Recruitment methods in the hospitality sector before the COVID-19 pandemic started

It will be shown in the following that the recruitment methods in the hospitality sector changed over time. Having a look at older sources, like Collins (2007), or Wayszak and Bauer (1993), the most popular recruitment methods have been walk-in applications or internal transfers. Another study, collected in Australia, showed that the most usual technique for hiring staff in hotels are standard interviews and communication with former employers (Waryszak and Bauer, 1993). Moreover, theory supposes that recruitment in hotels depends mainly on the structure of management and the size of hotels, and additionally it is:

*"Based largely on non-validated and informal practices, although larger hotels will adopt a more structured approach [and] best practice is not necessarily represented by the more structured approach adopted in larger hotels; rather it is determined by the interaction of internal and external context, especially the labour market, the nature of service/product, the ownership/management structure of the hotel, and the selector" (Lockyer and Scholarios, 2004, p. 127).*

This emphasizes the importance of a perfect integration of HRM in the complete strategy of the firm, and the significance of a strong Employer Branding, as well as defining a recruitment process, which fits to the respective hotel and includes for example a good job analysis.

As already discussed above, social media is getting more and more important for recruitment, since 2019, 17% of companies in Germany used actively social media for their recruitment (Statista, 2020). Moreover, according to one of the most famous online job platforms Xing, it is important to use social media as a recruitment method, because it contains less effort with a high range of possible applicants, it helps to establish the important Employer Branding, and it encourages a better communication with applicants (Schmidt and Xing, n.d.). In a study of 2011, it was reported that 54% of the HR managers in the hospitality industry used social media to get a first impression of potential future employees (Madera, 2012). The question appearing when using social media is, how, in this type of recruitment, the fairness factor due to the recruitment technique is covered. This research objective was examined by Madera (2012), and generated two important outcomes, namely the confirmation of the hypothesis that firms using social media for hiring decisions are considered to be more discriminating than those who are not using social media (p. 1278), as well as the confirmation that applicants tend to decide less for a job in companies using social media for recruitment. The reasons are mainly the fear of privacy violations, and the missing explanation of recruiters if they use the future employees' own profile for selection. Thus, it is important for the firms to make clear and visible statements of what is exactly used for the recruitment and selection process, in order to attract qualified and engaged staff willing to get the job (Madera, 2012).

Torres and Mejia (2017) argue that hotels need employees who are able to recognize and realize every wish a guest might have and find quick, and customer-orientated solutions (p. 5). These desirable characteristics of a future employee seem to be very difficult to recognise in a conventional face-to-face interview and thus, a new attempt to improve the communication between the employer and the applicant is made by 'asynchronous video interviews' (AVI), offering the opportunity to decide based on the answers recorded from the interviewee to given questions (Torres and Mejia, 2017). The disadvantage is that the applicant cannot ask questions or get information during the interview (Torres and Mejia, 2017). For this form of online interview, a third-party software is necessary, if the company has not the possibility to create a specific software by its own. The difficulties can be manifold when a so-called 'eHRM strategy' is introduced for recruitment in the hospitality sector, especially the HR should clearly define the wished outcome in order to guarantee the standards in the service and to be able not to lose the applicants' trust. But if this is done carefully AVI seems to be a good additional opportunity to *"optimize the selection and hiring process in the hospitality industry, while maintaining cost-saving efficiencies"* (Torres and Mejia, 2017, p. 11).

### 3.6.2 Main problems of recruitment in the hospitality sector before the COVID-19 pandemic started

*“The hotel industry is labor intensive, requiring a large workforce to serve customers, and the demand for staff remains urgent. In this sense, hotels must attract suitable staff to provide excellent customer-orientated service. Therefore, recruitment activities should carefully consider how to deliver messages and further attract appropriate applicants” (Lin, Chiang and Wu, 2018, p. 229).*

This quote sums up the most important task of Human Resource Management in the hotel sector, namely finding enough qualified and engaged personnel. One opportunity, which is, according to Lin, Chiang and Wu (2018), not yet entirely adapted in the hospitality sector, is Employer Branding. Having a strong Employer Brand on the labour market is especially crucial for reaching students, who want to be part of the future qualified staff, because of supporting the understanding of the prospect employers' significance. Furthermore, Lin, Chiang and Wu (2018) define that Employer Branding is the most relevant issue concerning the job choice intention and guarantees a higher likelihood of the employees' forthcoming customer orientation.

The first step of recruitment and of developing an Employer Brand is, as seen above, to analyse the 'status quo' of the organisation. In Collins' (2007) approach to analyse the characteristics of staff and recruitment in the five-stars- hotels in Turkey (as a country representing the fourth important Mediterranean travel destination) the following problems due to Human Resource Management in hotels are defined. First, the high fluctuation rate is one major factor, e.g. in a time range of nine years, 85% of the former staff are no longer employed, due to reasons like disappointment concerning remuneration or continuation of other education programmes (Collin, 2007). Second, the lack of skills of the employees, for example speaking different languages or special training and education in the distinct sector, indicates the problems of efficient recruitment (Collins, 2007). Furthermore, theory showed that the vicious circle of hiring less skilled workers due to the problem of a high turnover rate and the shortage of staff in numbers is still existing, although there are different methods in HR planning which could help to find solutions for the generalized issue (Saad, 2013). Additionally, there exists a significant pay gap between employees carrying out the same job. The reason is that remuneration in hotels is often not based on HR designs, like developing and defining a payment system (Saad, 2013). Another aspect is that Human Resource managers seems not to usually realise some methods which would help to foresee changes or possible gaps, because of either missing the knowledge or not believing in the importance, for example taking HR just as costs into account (Saad, 2013).

As already mentioned, and according to the literature, especially the turnover rate seems to be one of the significant problems and should be analysed now in more detail. When companies facing a high



turnover rate, they are always confronted with direct costs (Park and Min, 2020). Moreover, the indirect costs, e.g. the expenditures for hiring and training new employees, must be considered (Park and Min, 2020). Therefore, it is necessary to define what turnover intention is and how the potential turnovers of employees are triggered:

*“Turnover intention is expressed as employee’s awareness or thoughts about quitting the job [...] [and] as the employee’s conscious and deliberate desire to leave the organisation in which they work. This can be measured by an employee’s desire to leave work and deliberate search for new jobs” (Akgunduz and Eryilmaz, 2018, p. 42).*

There are many issues which are directly linked to a potential turnover, the generic terms are:

*“Work attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction), job strains (e.g., burnout), HRM practices, role stressors and interrole conflicts, supervisor and leader behaviours (e.g., given support), emotional labor (e.g., emotional dissonance), performance, organisational contexts (e.g., organisational justice), and individual differences (e.g., self-efficacy)” (Park and Min, 2020, p. 2).*

How are these issues related to each other? The relationship can be explained at the example of job insecurity. Job insecurity is defined as the concern of the members of staff to get the notice to quit ((Akgunduz and Eryilmaz, 2018). These worries can be seen by the employer through a less employees’ engagement and motivation, and thus, to undesirable behaviour, ending with termination or dismissal (Akgunduz and Eryilmaz, 2018). Another reason for the high turnover rate in the hospitality sector is, that the industry relies on a young workforce, due to the high stress level, less promotion possibilities and low starting wages (Cheung and Woo, 2021). However, they are not considering the fact that young people often have high expectations towards their future career and therefore, are quitting their jobs in the hospitality sector soon again. Thus, the argument is to hire more older people in order to steady the workforce (Cheung and Woo, 2021). In contrast, Goh et al. (2020) argued that young employees are the future stabilizing workforce due to the demographic change and the willingness to work 24/7 in order to get a soon promotion.

As already mentioned, the hospitality sector faces some severe image problems (European Commission, no date, a). The work environment in the hospitality industry worldwide seems to be criticized most fiercely by Baum (2019a) and Baum (2019b) by stating the question if the hospitality sector even deserves talent and answering it with:

*“The underlying employment issues that characterise the sector are such that the industry does not meet reasonable criteria for the spirit or intent of the notion of decent work and, likewise, falls some way short of delivering on the objectives of the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals. With this indictment, it is difficult to conclude other than that the industry does not deserve talent” (Baum, 2019a, p. 3831).*

Moreover, he demands clear changes from the industry and insists on his hope for the hospitality sector:

*“Hospitality and its value chain meet the highest ethical standards with respect to work and employment in all sectors and levels within the industry, respecting the rights and dignity of*

*each individual worker and offering them opportunity to gain just reward for their efforts, and to grow and progress, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, or disability” (Baum, 2019b, p. 48).*

But if there should be change, there have to be high engaged and talented people who are able to change the situation, starting at the management level. Therefore, there will be now a closer look at which talents and skills will be necessary to do this work.

Besides changing the working environment from the employees’ point of view, high-skilled workers are also attractive and advantageous from the employers’ point of view, because of the hope the education and thus, the knowledge of the workers would build an additional asset for the firms’ revenue (Nicely and Tang, 2015). Furthermore, the increase in education can lead to a higher effort on specific leadership factors, which are necessary for the success of the company and secondly, *“the more specializations the managers pursued at the post-secondary level [...], the significantly more they transferred knowledge from their education to solve problems and innovate at work” (Nicely and Tang, 2015, p. 137).*

The firm, but also possible future employees should take into consideration what influences the decision of recruiters and which characteristics are necessary from the applicants to receive a job offer for a career in the hospitality sector. The relationship between the characteristics, the recruiters’ demographic background, the expectations, the recruitment-selection process, and the hiring decision can be seen in the following figure, defined as ‘the modified factors influencing hospitality recruiters’ hiring decision (FIHRHD) model’ (Kwok et al., 2012).

**The modified factors influencing hospitality recruiters’ hiring decision (FIHRHD) model**

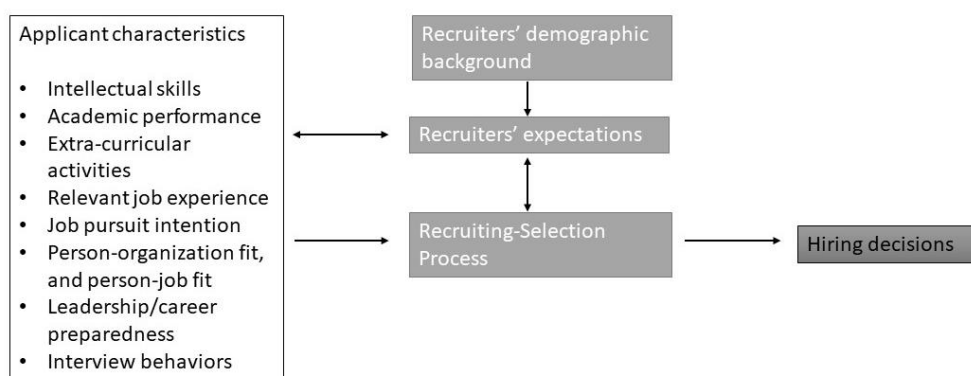


Figure 6 The modified factors influencing hospitality recruiters’ hiring decision (own illustration based on Kwok et al., 2012, p. 503)

In a last step it is important to not only look at the required skills of potential employees, moreover, to define what can be done from the employers’ side to change the bad image of the hospitality sector. In context with the Hierarchical/Negotiation Model McGinley et al. (2017) discuss the possibility of

how attraction to the hospitality industry can be influenced by personal motivators and the awareness of, for instance, work life conflicts (p. 120). First, the hotel should be aware of the importance of corporate social responsibility as a factor which increases the commitment of employees to their working place. Second, the employer should convey that work life will not compete against private life, there should be rather intensive efforts to make it possible for the employee to balance both easily (McGinley et al., 2017). Additionally, it is important that pay and career possibilities are clearly communicated (McGinley et al., 2017).

Another important aspect is the social relationship between an employee and his or her co-workers. When it is clear that one is supported by others, the social exchange theory predicts effective and positive behaviour within the working place, as well as an increase in job satisfaction and productivity, which reduces again the willingness to quit the job (Akgunduz and Eryilmaz, 2018). One special idea according to the support is offering internal psychological and promotion support by either managers or especially trained mentors to reduce on the one hand high turnover costs (Yang et al, 2019), and on the other hand buddy programs are able to help new workers in the hotel to understand the expectations, as well as dealing with the new workload (Goh and Okumus, 2020).

In order to overcome the bad image of the working environment and to have a successful recruitment in this industry, the employer could think about the 'fun factor' at work to improve the motivation and also establish an employer brand which attracts new applicants, for example establishing monthly sport events between the different departments (Goh and Okumus, 2020). In this context it is also mentioned by Goh and Okumus (2020) that a provision of a clear vision of a possible career path is given to especially younger potential employees, reaching the goal to tie the employees to the organisation. Additionally, the development of open days can show how the future daily work life will look like and reduce the turnover intention caused by not knowing what to expect (Goh and Okumus, 2020). Finally, the most important factor to establish a good employer brand is to reduce inequality and discrimination by adopting different diversity strategies, like making sure that women are more represented in leadership positions (Goh and Okumus, 2020).

### 3.6.3 Recruitment specifics in the hospitality sector during the COVID-19 pandemic

As already mentioned above, the pandemic influenced especially the recruitment in the hospitality sector. Those influences are perceptible because of the attempt of *"downskilling by cutting back on recruitment of high-skill jobs more than low-skill jobs, to reduce [...] costs and try to sustain [...] business"* (Hamouche, 2021, p. 5). Another significant consequence in recruitment due to the pandemic was the numbers of dismissals. However, some organisations indeed increased their recruitment because of hiring subcontracted workers, e.g. temporary agency employees, due to the

insecurity of the development of the crisis (Hamouche, 2021). Nevertheless, they were facing the problem of how to select those possible employees if they were not able to meet them in person. The fast development of virtual recruitment portrays one of the most significant changes in recruitment caused by the pandemic (Hamouche, 2021). Furthermore, *“retaining and attracting qualified individuals represent a challenge for companies in the COVID-19 era, mainly because these individuals are often looking for job opportunities in sectors that were not negatively affected by this pandemic”* (Hamouche, 2021, pp. 5-6).

The goal of this master’s thesis is to identify how recruitment changed from the time before the COVID-19 pandemic started to the time during the pandemic. The literature review regarding the employer’s view shows, that in theory one is aware of the challenges the employers in this industry have to face but it seems to miss the research to identify if and how those challenges changed during the pandemic. Therefore, it will be necessary to first identify and clearly define the recruitment challenges in the hospitality sector before the pandemic started in order to analyse in a next step if and how those challenges changed during the pandemic. Thus, the first two research questions and the resulting propositions of this master’s thesis are:

1. **What were the main recruitment challenges in the hospitality industry from the employers’ point of view before the COVID-19 pandemic started?**

**Proposition 1: The main recruitment challenge in the hospitality industry from the employers’ point of view before the COVID-19 pandemic started has been the lack of qualified personnel.**

2. **How did the recruitment challenges change in the hospitality industry from the employers’ point of view during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

**Proposition 2: The problem from before the pandemic, namely the lack of qualified personnel, intensified since there is the challenging need to find not only qualified personnel but also staff having a high level of commitment to the work and the workplace.**

**Proposition 3: Recruitment in the hospitality sector is getting more challenging because of the need to match the employees’ more demanding requests to stay in the organisation.**

#### 4. Recruitment from the employees' point of view

As already mentioned, especially in the hospitality sector, people are the most important asset to the organisation (Baum et al., 1997; King, 1995; Lee-Ross; Pryce, 2010). This is the reason why an organisation should have a look at why people would want to work for them. The following graph shows a general and not sector orientated overview of reasons why employees would change their employers.

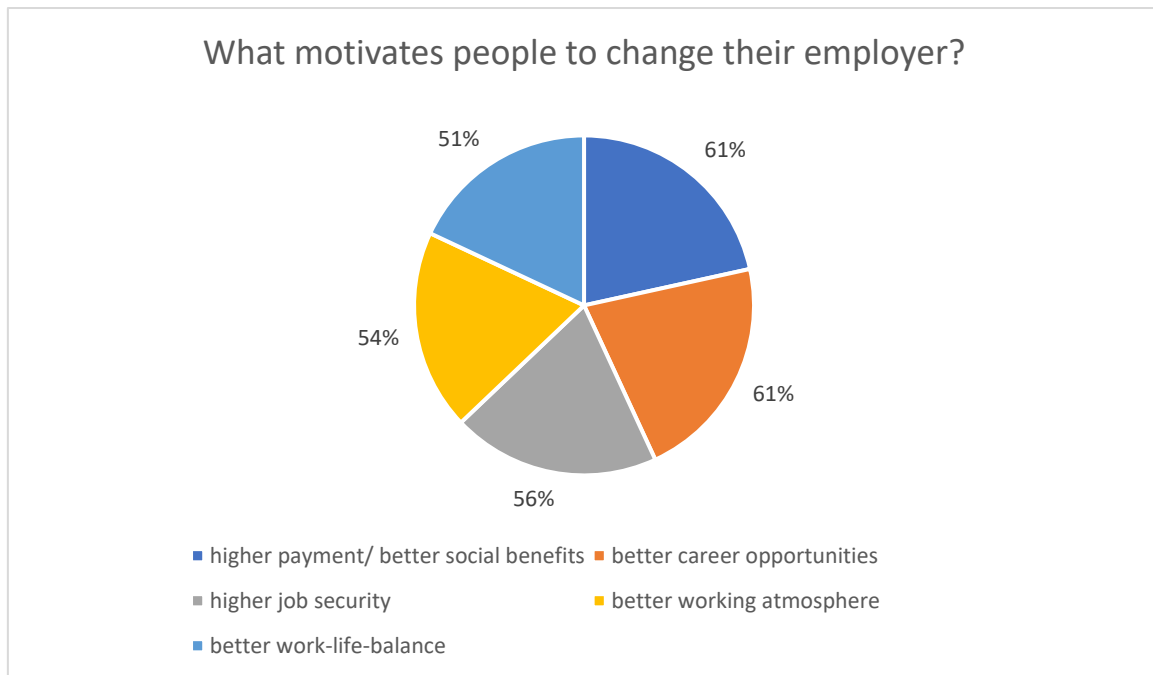


Figure 7 What motivates people to change their employer? (Own figure, based on Statista Research Department (Statista), 2022b)

According to this graph, the following analysis should give a theoretical background on those topics which are important for the employees when it comes to recruitment, starting with the point job security. The literature offers, besides other factors, two, especially for the hospitality industry important, theories which are essential parts of job security, namely crisis management and the management of leadership (Filomonau et al., 2020; Kara et al., 2013).

##### 4.1 Importance of the employers' crisis management for the employee

*"Anticipating and preparing to deal with the threat of crises precipitated by disaster from natural and people-made catastrophes is an important challenge facing tourism"* (Pforr and Hosie, 2007, p. 249).

The tourism sector seems to be very susceptible towards crises, as it was already shown on a worldwide stage by the catastrophes of 9/11 and the Asian Tsunami 2004 (Pforr and Hosie, 2007). How exactly can a crisis be defined? A crisis, or a *"disaster, negative event, catastrophe, problem or turning point, risk, chaos, vulnerability"* (Pforr and Hosie, 2007, p. 252), is a circumstance or an event which is

not wanted, not expected, not manageable and with having no parallels and thus reasons doubts and instability. Moreover, it is defined through a divergence from the standard and portrays a risk which questions every fundament of any system (Eredie et al., 2021).

*“Starting in the late 2019, humanity had to deal with a large-scale global crisis that affected virtually every individual, work team, organization and society on earth, albeit to different extents: the COVID-19 pandemic. [...] The pandemic forced employees in most, if not all, industries to change the ways in which they conduct their work and to adopt to various organizational changes (e.g., increased safety precautions, working from home, reduction of work hours, layoffs)”* (Zacher and Rudolph, 2022, p. 2).

This is the reason why it is indispensable to look in detail at the definition and theory of crisis management because HRM could benefit from the results and adopt it in their own strategy (Zacher and Rudolph, 2022; Eredie et al., 2021). Although, the following part of the chapter will describe how crisis management can look like from the employers’ point of view, it seems nonetheless mandatory to have this analysis in the part of recruitment challenges from the employees’ point of view because for the employees, job security, and thus, how an organisation manages crises, is very important.

The core themes of crisis management are ‘preparedness’, ‘sensibilization’, and ‘initial response’ (Pforr and Hosie, 2007, p. 251). There are a lot of approaches to crisis management, starting with the leading role of organizations, like the World Tourism Organization or the different governments in reactive crisis management by focusing on communication, information, and coordination management. Therefore, it is important to consider that every kind of crisis management is context dependent, e.g. it is determined by the environment or political issues (Pforr and Hosie, 2007). The idea of crisis management starts with the following definition:

*“Crisis management can be defined as an ongoing integrated and comprehensive effort that organizations effectively put into place in an attempt to first and foremost understand and prevent crisis, and to effectively manage those that occur, taking into account in each and every step of their planning and training activities, the interest of their stakeholders”* (Santana, 2004, p. 308, cited in Pforr and Hosie, 2007, p. 254).

According to Eredie et al. (2021) crisis management is divided in three segments according to the type of crisis: political uncertainty, economic crisis, and natural disasters. In this context, it is hypothesized that the pandemic of the COVID-19 is defined as a natural disaster because of fitting in the definition of being *“unwanted, unexpected, unprecedented, and unmanageable”* (Eredie et al., 2021, p. 4). Another approach is to distinguish between the two concepts of ‘Cobra’, which is defined as an unexpected catastrophe, like 9/11, and requires a defensive reaction and ‘Python’, which is described as a long and insidious crisis (Pforr and Hosie, 2007). The goal of every crisis management is to have a concrete action plan in case the negative event might happen, this is also called the pre-crisis stage. On top of that it necessitates a response management to handle and reduce the possible influences,

this is called the crisis stage. Finally, in the post-crisis stage, an action plan is required which includes possibilities to deal with the consequences (Pforr and Hosie, 2007).

The, according to the timeline, first approach was described by Heath (1998) and is named the Crisis Management Shell Structure. It is an integrated one, in the sense of including central management responsibilities and different subdivisions, e.g. an organisation management for control and communication (Heath, 1998). According to the Pforr and Hosie (2007), the most suitable crisis management model for the tourism industry, and thus, also for the hospitality sector, is the one of Faulkner (2001). A model based on Faulkners' attempt, but also on Smith (1990), and Smith and Spipika (1993), is the one of Evans and Elphick (2005), also including one phase for learning from the process, as well as introducing the awareness of possible future events in the organizations (Evans and Elphick, 2005; Pforr and Hosie, 2007).

Being the most central models for the tourism industry, since they are also tested in this sector, the focus will now be on presenting and comparing the two crisis management models of Faulkner (2001) and Evans and Elphick (2005).

Faulkners' (2001) tourism disaster management framework is based on three pillars: *"phase in disaster process; elements of disaster management responses [assigned to the phases]; [and] principal ingredients of disaster management strategies"* (p. 144), which are in direct relationship with the elements of the responses. According to Faulkner (2001), there are six phases, starting with the pre-event, in which for example a disaster management team (DMT) is identified and plan for potential crises is worked out, furthermore the probability of the event is estimated. The second phase is the prodromal phase, in which it is already clear that a crisis will come and in which mobilisation is now the most vital element, as well as concrete disaster contingency plans, which allows every individual to know what to do and which analysis the forecasted influence on the risk groups (Faulkner, 2001, p. 144). This principal ingredient, the disaster contingency plans, are extended over every following step. The third phase is the emergency phase, including action plans to, e.g. health or medical help and observing potential problems with the communication system (Faulkner, 2001, p. 144). In the intermediate step, the short-term needs are fulfilled, and the first responses of recovery can start, and it is followed by the same goal in the next step, only having the difference to respond now in the view of long-term recovery. In the last phase, resolution, a new routine has been already established (Faulkner, 2001, p. 144).

In the second model, developed by Evans and Elphick (2005) and formulated after the catastrophe of 9/11, there exist, as it can be seen in Figure 8, three different steps in the process, starting with the crisis of management, followed by the operational crisis and finally the crisis of legitimation. Between

those different periods, it needs to be self-evident that it is easy to identify in which period the crisis is at every point in time and that there is learning during the process (Evans and Elphick, 2005).

### Process of crisis management

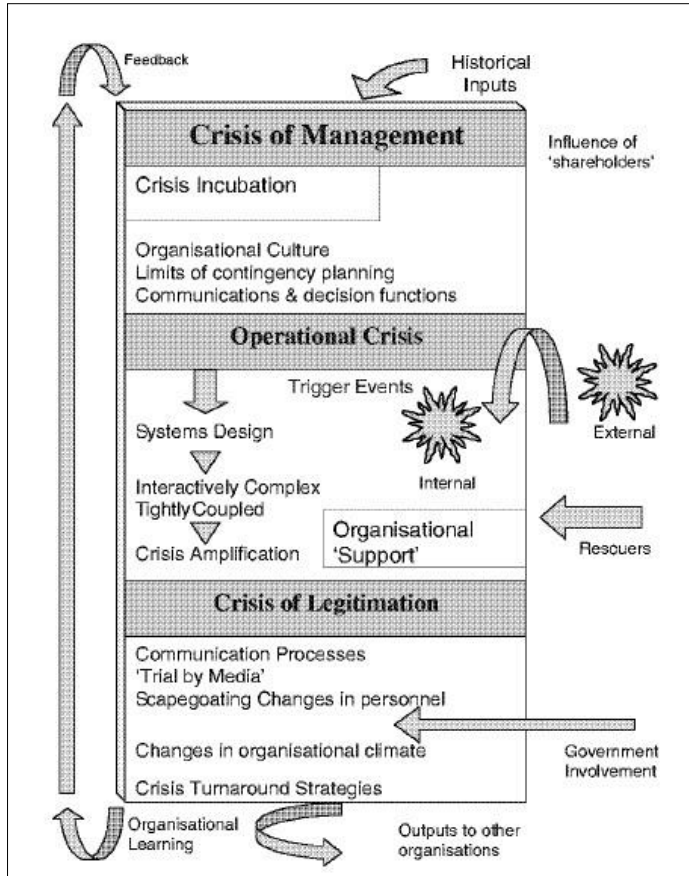


Figure 8 Process of crisis management (Evans, Elphick, 2005, p. 142)

The progress which was made with the model is shown first in the pre-crisis period, which is similar to Faulkners' pre-event phase (Evans and Elphick, 2005; Pforr and Hosie, 2007) and in which it is essential that the firms realize potential situations that will take place in the future and try to include a huge number of personnel to find a way how to respond to an actual crisis (Evans and Elphick, 2005). Second, and this is a clear improvement to the models before, the feedback loop was introduced, it describes the succeeding of the crisis and the learned lessons, in order to be able to come back to the pre-crisis stage (Evans and Elphick, 2005). As Evans and Elphick (2005) discovered in their study, there is lot of room for improvement when using the model besides the theory, and they furthermore sum up three essential lessons which needs to be translated into practise:

*"Prepare detailed contingency plans; define decisional and informational roles and responsibilities; retain a degree of flexibility in order to react swiftly and decisively at an operational level but not to rush into more strategic level decision-making"* (Evans, Elphick, 2005, p. 148).



The first part was about the analysing of stages and the response of the organization to it. In the next step, there should be given an overview about the most relevant theories which “*can be used to explain how employees react and adapt to crisis and associated events*” (Zacher and Rudolph, 2022, p. 4). The mentioned overview is illustrated in Table 2:

Table 2 Overview of theories explaining employees’ reaction to crises (own Illustration, based on Zacher and Rudolph, 2022)

	Stress theories	Theories of adjustment to work-related changes	Career construction theory	Event system theory	Social identity model of identity change	
<b>Theoretical approaches, following the goal of understanding behaviour and experiences of employees during crises. Thus, they are important because:</b>	<b>Transactional stress model:</b> “Explains how the effects of a crises or crisis event on employee well-being and strain are mediated by appraisal and coping processes” p.4	<b>Theory of work adjustment:</b> “Crisis events are likely to lead to changes in both employees’ abilities and needs (e.g., reduced ability to concentrate, increased need for emotional support), as well as work requirements and supplies (e.g., increased safety precautions, reduced customer contact)” p. 6	“The theory proposes three major work-related challenge that require individuals to adapt, including vocational development tasks (i.e., age-graded normative transitions, such as retirement), occupational transitions (i.e., career mobility), and work traumas (i.e., unpredictable and undesired events, such as company closings, accidents, and contract violations)” p. 7	“Provide insights into how HRM practices [...], which reside at the organisational meso-level, may buffer or intensify potential negative effects of macro-level crisis events on individual employee experiences and behavior” p.8	“Crises can lead to significant life changes, such as sudden illness or death of a loved one, job loss, or permanently working from home, and corresponding changes in group memberships” p.10	
	<b>Conversation of resources theory:</b> “Crisis events threaten individuals’ resources and complicate resource gains” p. 5	<b>Theory of work role transitions:</b> “Crisis events may require that employees transition to new work roles with different demands and resources” p. 6				
	<b>Job demands-resources model:</b> “Crises can be assumed to lead to changes in employees’ work characteristics (e.g., increased emotional demands, reduced cognitive resources)” p.5					<b>Page numbers refer to:</b> <b>Zacher and Rudolph, 2022</b>

How does crisis management look like in hotels during COVID-19? First, the literature is according to Leta and Chan (2021) mainly focusing on mid crisis management, as well as on post-crisis recovery. Hu et al. (2021) explain how important the role of HR is in response to the crisis and therefore, it has been also analysed, as it is shown in Figure 9, how it would be possible to encourage employees to accept and implement the COVID-19 safety measures in order to create a safe work environment and thus, keep the business going. According to Figure 9, two central strategies are necessary to receive that. First, the organization must be seen as a safe environment to work, which requires an awareness of the potential risks, and second, the management needs to obligate themselves to their own actions, which would lead to the wished behaviour and integration of the crisis management (Hu et al., 2021).

## Strategy to implement measures to overcome the crisis

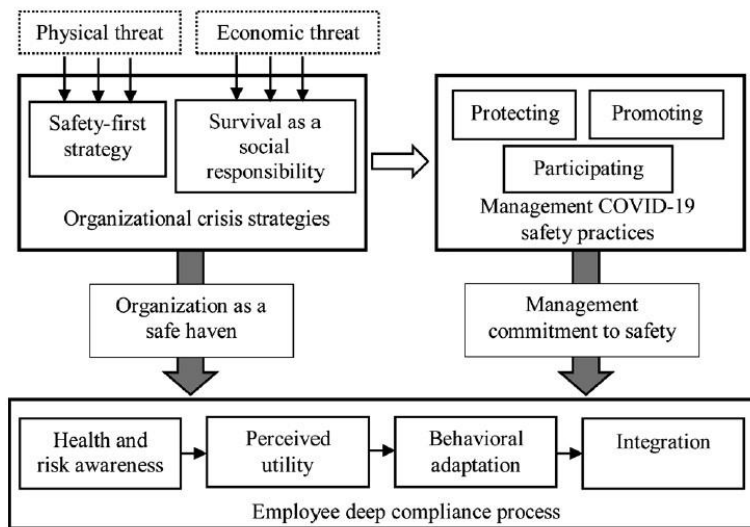


Figure 9 Strategy to implement measures to overcome crisis (Hu et al., 2021, p. 4)

How does crisis management look like in practice? The following analysis should give an overview about how the industry deals with the COVID-19 pandemic and which HRM initiatives are possible to improve the current situation for employees, present and future, in hotels, again in order to create one of the most essential reasons for employees to stay in a firm.

The starting point is to compare two different frameworks developed in the literature, regarding the crisis management concretely in the hospitality sector. First, Duarte Alonso et al. (2020) proposed a framework, which is about “*understanding concerns, coping and adjusting*” (p. 10). The beginning explains the contemporary challenges in the extreme context of the COVID-19 pandemic. On this basis they developed the major concerns on three different dimensions: ‘business’, ‘unknown’, and ‘human’ (Duarte Alonso et al., 2020). These concerns are on the business dimension, financial and socioeconomic effects, as well as the worry of changing consumer demands and of losing consumers, on the unknown dimension, the period of the pandemic, as well as the steady uncertainty about the future developments, and on the human dimension the fear of the own, but also of the others’ health and welfare (Duarte Alonso et al., 2020). These concerns are managed by two different approaches, ‘ways of coping’ and ‘changing-adjusting’. The dimensions of the ways of coping are ‘self-reliant’, ‘vigilant’, and ‘inoperative’ (Duarte Alonso et al., 2020). Self-reliant describes the process of creativity and the developing ideas to deal with the new situation of the pandemic (Duarte Alonso et al., 2020).

According to the research of Duarte Alonso et al., (2020) 37.8 percent of “*participants chose a vigilant position, which articulates the preparation for changes in health and safety requirements while their operations had been critically affected*” (p. 8). Although it sounds negative, those who have been not working, or were ‘inoperative’ did not always have the chance to act self-reliant, e.g. due to missing

concrete action plans. The ‘changing-adjusting’ approach defines three other dimensions, namely work-based adjustment, adjustment to compliance and fringe-detachment (Duarte Alonso et al., 2020). The work-based adjustment shaped existing practices towards significant changes in everyday work, for example, advancing the online presence, and adjustment to compliance means the way work changed in alignment with new regulations determined from outside the firm. The fringe-detachment dimension offers an attempt to evaluate the future of the organisation and of one’s own (Duarte Alonso et al., 2020). Combining all those measures, it is now necessary that the organisation is ‘building resilience’ as well as ‘adapting, preparing and learning’ (Duarte Alonso et al., 2020).

### Framework of hotel pandemic crisis management

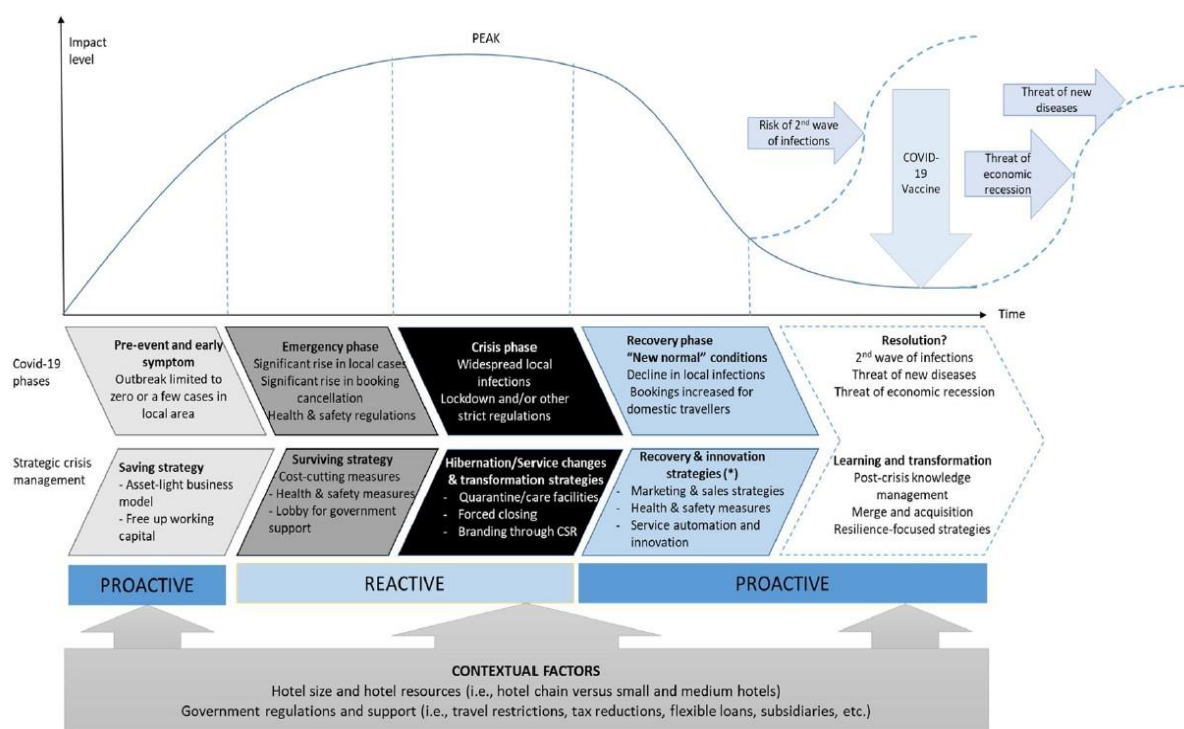


Figure 10 Framework of hotel pandemic crisis management (Le and Phi, 2021, p. 3)

The second framework, as it can be seen in Figure 10, developed by Le and Phi (2021), offers a more detailed and different structured framework of hotel pandemic crisis management, with including contextual factors, like the hotel resources or size and government regulations. The model is dividing the pandemic in five COVID-19 phases and proactive and reactive responses of the strategic crisis management (Le and Phi, 2021). The most noticeable response, since it is not or less discussed in other literature, is branding through CSR. Those hotels which had enough resources used the time, in which all hotels were forced to close, to offer free stays in their rooms for health workers and to donate for charity. (Le and Phi, 2021).

## 4.2 Importance of the employers' management of leadership styles for the employee

As it is already discussed, the hospitality industry is defined by a challenging environment, namely the high competitiveness and the need for steady improvements regarding for instance changing customer needs or service requirements. Moreover, the industry is marked by highly challenging working conditions, like stress or low payment, resulting in the high turnover intention rate (Hoang et al, 2021). One way to deal with these obstacles is, according to the literature, for instance in Kara et al. (2013), Hoang et al. (2021), or Elkhwesky et al. (2021) an effective managing of leadership. The choosing of the most effective leadership style for an organisation can help to develop a stronger commitment between employer and employee and a better working atmosphere, which results in higher engagement and better performance and thus, also in job satisfaction and less turnover intention (Kara et al., 2013). Moreover, it is shown that the leadership style has a significant effect on the employees' quality of life which is highly influenced by the employees' quality of work life (Kara et al., 2013). The employees' well-being is an essential part of the success in the hospitality sector, however, most of the organizations in this industry follow established conventional leadership styles, making quick decision-making hard for the employees who are actually working with the guests and need to offer a high standard and thus, also flexible service (Huertas-Valdivia et al., 2019). More responsibility would also mean in this case that the employees would work with more enthusiasm and passion (Huertas-Valdivia et al., 2019). These are the reasons why it is required that the following chapter will describe the leadership styles as one part of the recruitment challenges from the employees' point of view.

Which leadership style should be chosen in the hospitality industry? Different types of leadership are discussed here. It is important to understand what the distinct management styles offer and which outcome can be expected. Choosing the leadership style can depend on many different variables like for instance financial, environmental, or cultural factors (Huertas-Valdivia, 2019). One example for this is the study of Gui et al. (2019) since they researched the effects of transformational leadership in different dimensions of culture, based on Hofstede's dimensions (Hofstede, 1984 and 2010, cited in: Gui et al., 2019), so they compared individualistic and collectivistic cultures and the result was:

*"The relationships between transformational leadership (TFL) and organizational climate, satisfaction and performance are stronger in individualistic cultures (vs collectivistic cultures), while the relationships between TFL and organizational identification, work engagement and extra activities are stronger in collectivistic cultures (vs individualistic cultures)" (Gui et al., 2019, p. 2149).*

Transformational leadership is one of the preferred leadership styles since it influences in a strong way the engagement and commitment of employees, and thus, their *"overall life satisfaction"* (Kara et al, 2013, p. 16). This causes again a low turnover intention (Kara et al., 2013). Moreover, it enhances organisational innovation and advancement (Gui et al., 2019). Another important aspect of

transformation leadership is that the leaders manage to communicate that the goals of the firm need to be placed above personal goals, they support and engage the employees to take risks and create a strong commitment and trust towards the management (Salem, 2015).

Another discussed management style is the empowering leadership, which differ from other leadership styles since it follows the current movement to focus on the employees as the centre of organisational change, providing them with more autonomy and decision-rights to enhance the performance by thinking outside of the box and find creative ways to solve problems (Hoang et al., 2021). The task of the management here is to remove administrative constrictions, engage employees and show them the trust to find opportunities (Hoang et al., 2021).

The difference between both management styles is that transformational leadership focuses on the goals of the management, whereas empowering leadership moves the employees and their development and interdependence into the centre (Lee, Ding, 2020; Hoang et al., 2021). Whatever leadership style, transformational or empowering, is preferred, autocratic, passive, or laissez-faire styles will certainly lead to less engagement, increasing stress and a hostile working environment, since responsibilities or needs of the employees will be ignored (Elkhwesky et al., 2021). The most recommended leadership styles are thus, transformational, and empowering leadership since they offer inspiration and motivation, also in times of crisis (Elkhwesky et al., 2021). Which leadership style an organization prefers, might influence the decision of a potential employee during the recruitment process.

#### 4.3 Retention management

Why should an employee stay at a firm? The reasons for the organisations are manifold, reaching from competitive advantage, since especially those workers with specific skills bring additional value to the firm, to simple reduce the costs a high turnover rate would bring (Narayanan et al., 2019). This seems to be especially true for the hospitality sector because of its general known high turnover rate and the tolerating of the status quo (Hughes and Rog, 2008). Thus, it is important that organisations have an effective retention policy.

Besides the already mentioned costs resulting from the replacement of staff, retention management is important for the working atmosphere since it generates a *“culture of retention”* (Baharin and Hanafi, 2018, p. 699). Moreover, it is responsible for the efficiency and productivity of a firm (Hughes and Rog, 2008). Therefore, retention management can be described as a status in an organisation, in which employees are choosing to stay because of their engagement based on the general conditions the workplace offers (Baharin and Hanafi, 2018). One popular strategy to gain employee retention is talent management (Narayanan et al., 2019). The selection of employees into a talent pool stimulates

their productivity and thus their performance because the commitment to the organisation becomes higher since they invested in the employee. With a high level of individual performance, the intention of employees to stay in the firm grows (Narayanan et al., 2019). However, there are a lot of more factors which play a role in the retention management. For instance, organisational justice, the level of fairness, e.g. equal payment structures, satisfaction with the job, e.g. the possibility of trainings, engagement, and commitment, for example through the managers' understanding of the employees' needs and motivations, as well as experienced confidence and support (Narayanan et al., 2019; Hughes and Rog, 2008).

In addition to the retention management, it should be also considered in times of crisis that negative experiences influence the emotions of persons in a negative way, and thus, their behaviour, in this context mainly the occupational identification (Birtch et al., 2021). This feeling of belonging to a specific profession is determined by three different types of motivation, the 'can do'-motivation, which influences one's self-efficacy, the 'reason to'-motivation, based on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, and the 'energize to'-motivation, reflecting one's passion to do something (Birtch et al., 2021, p. 2). Especially in the hospitality sector intrinsic motivation plays an important part in answering the question why people still want to work in this sector, although the circumstances might be difficult.

#### 4.4 Intrinsic motivation

What is intrinsic motivation? It is a behaviour describing engagement caused by own will, *"intrinsically motivated behaviors are themselves enjoyable, purposive, and provide sufficient reason to persist"* (Cerasoli et al., 2014, p. 981). Meaning that, people engage in tasks because they like it, find it stimulating and demanding, as well as fascinating and attracting (Kim et al., 2019; Chang and Teng, 2017). The effects of intrinsic motivation are manifold reaching from higher motivation resulting in more job satisfaction and thus in higher performance (Putra et al., 2017). The reasons for this are based in the self-determination theory finding a relation between *"choice of direction and intrinsic motivation"* (Cerasoli et al., 2014, p. 982), meaning the resulting behaviour of having the willingness to learn new things, sampling new and more knowledge and finding creative ways of solutions to developing problems (Kim et al., 2019) and the participation in tasks grow and a *"higher degree of intensity or effort in its production"* (Cerasoli et al., 2014, p. 982). The roots of work behaviour, and thus, motivation can be described based on McClelland's (1985) theory of the three needs, 'need for power' (need to have an impact on the work of the co-workers to follow organizational goals), 'need for affiliation' (the need for good relationships with co-workers), and the 'need for achievement' (need for personal success and feedback) (Kim et al., 2019, p. 170; Krisor and Rowold, 2015; McClelland, 1985).

Moreover, there are also studies, in which intrinsic behaviour is the most relevant motivator for creativity in the working environment, defined here in the possibility to find new solutions to problems. Creativity is also again promoted by, for instance transformational leadership (Chang and Teng, 2017). Furthermore, creativity is a relevant factor in the hospitality sector of competitive advantage, by offering high-quality services, which is achieved through a better job performance, flexibility, and the willingness to take more risks (Chang and Teng, 2017; Horng et al., 2016). In addition, intrinsic motivation supports the organization's success by increasing profits and decreasing labour costs, as well as the turnover rate (Putra et al., 2017). To sum up, *"[e]ngaging in challenging tasks that match one's personal skills activates intrinsic motivation, generates psychological flow, increase mental focus and inspire a sense of joy. This motivation and passion contribute to creative behaviours"* (Horng et al., 2016, p. 27). Intrinsic behaviour and motivation lead to outstanding performance in comparison to those who are only extrinsic motivated, this is the case mainly for quality orientated tasks. However, also quantity tasks are more influenced from intrinsic behaviour than it is generally assumed, nevertheless, incentive-based motivation works still better in the quantity's context (Cerasoli et al., 2014).

#### 4.5 Recruitment specifics in the hospitality sector from employees' point of view

The COVID-19 pandemic changed HRM in an unprecedented way, meaning that not only the way how employees can work changed, moreover, the job description changed in some areas. One might think of the kitchen division in the hotels, in which work processes changed from onsite to 'call and collect or deliver' and thus, needed for example a change in logistics. Another example could be seen in the department housekeeping, as soon as it was again allowed to accommodate guests in the hotels, the health regulation changed the daily work of every member of the housekeeping. Every new work process needed to be organised with the steady premise of reducing personal contacts as much as possible. The challenges of the pandemic can also be seen from a strategic HRM view, including the stakeholder perspective and addresses the following challenges for possible upcoming research:

*"Future research needs to consider how HR practices need to be modified to account for shifts in service delivery, such as increased digitisation of service provision or reduced physical interaction in service provision, in response to COVID-19 and how these impact key customer outcomes. Research could also consider how customer perceptions of how employees have been managed in response to COVID-19 impacts on their trust in the products and services of those firms and how they engage with them"* (Collings, et al., 2021, p. 1380).

In this context it is important to analyse the crisis management in the hospitality sector from the employees' point of view in two different approaches, on the one side, the actual influence on the work itself, and on the other side, the consideration if working in the hospitality sector is still attractive.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused huge job insecurity, especially for those who are working in the hospitality sector. This insecurity has severe consequences, since it negatively influences the work engagement and thus, leads to the intention to leave the job (Jung et al., 2021). In order to avoid those consequences, the employer should have an effective crisis management, and thus, should be able to create a work environment which offers, despite the pandemic, a stable and secure workplace and solid relationships between employer and employees. As a result, there will be fewer turnover intentions and the employer will be able to hold qualified staff in the organisation (Jung et al., 2021).

In close relation of the mentioned job insecurity, there was also an analysis of the employees' preparedness to work at all during the pandemic. As the results, gained by Stergiou and Farmaki (2021) showed, most of those persons being questioned felt a responsibility to continue with their work, however there are some barriers making professional duty difficult. Those barriers are mainly defined by the following. First, there is a fear of being infected with the virus, especially while using the public transport to get to work (Stergiou and Farmaki, 2021). Second, those employees with a family at home stated that 'family comes first', meaning their safety and well-being. Third, more than the half of participants stated that there is no pandemic planning on the employer side, e.g. no training about how to deal correctly with the health measures they should provide, this led to the fourth barrier, namely the 'erosion of goodwill' since the working conditions get worse (Stergiou and Farmaki, 2021).

Furthermore, the challenge is also reflected in the discussion if the hospitality sector is still attractive for employees. As it is argued that employment in hotels is already branded as insecure and being predisposed for external crises, recruitment in the post-Covid era will be one of the key puzzles to solve (Filimonau, et al. 2020).

*Moreover, "the significant decline in hospitality jobs due to COVID-19 (i.e., mass lay-offs, hospitality business failures) has created stress and fear among hospitality workers which by extension is likely to cause similar anxiety and negative affective reactions for those preparing for a career in hospitality management" (Birtch et al., 2021, p. 1).*

One possible opportunity to counterbalance those negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on recruitment, are practices of corporate social responsibility (CSR) in order to have a vital impact on the employees' commitment to the firm (Filimonau et al., 2020). CSR also portrays positive impacts on *"self-efficacy, hope, resilience and optimism of tourism employees [...] and showcased the inter-linkages between job satisfaction of staff and organisational response to the pandemic"* (Filimonau et al., 2020, p. 2). Another substantial and necessary possibility is to determine and invest in concrete future crisis management and thus, increase job security and loyalty to the organisation (Filimonau et al., 2020).

The crisis necessitates more than ever most qualified and engaged staff, fulfilling requirements of personal engagement, load-bearing capacity and excellent communication skills (Filimonau, et al.



2020). All in all, competences which seems especially hard to find during times of crisis. This offers the opportunity to examine how retention management and intrinsic motivation could look like in the hospitality sector in order to hold qualified and engaged staff in the organisations and thus, submit an opportunity to reduce recruitment challenges from the employees' point of view.

Retention management plays an important role, especially in the hospitality industry, since there are a lot of reasons why an organisation should take care that an employee stays at the firm, for instance reducing costs caused by a high turnover rate, for which the hospitality sector is known in particular (Narayanan et al., 2019; Hughes and Rog, 2008). The factors playing a role in the retention management in the hospitality industry are discussed by Lee and Way (2010). Most important factors in their analysis of job satisfaction and thus, retention, have been the work environment, since for instance communication as a part of the work environment is relevant for every employee regardless of working at the bar or as a manager, which is also true for the factors work itself, supervision, and compensation (Lee and Way, 2010). Consequently, also the retention management plays an important part in the recruitment process, since on the one side, the employee might decide on taking the job by analysing for instance the level of fairness, which is offered by the firm, and on the side, the employer will try to submit the best possible retention management since it offers competitive advantage and saves potential high turnover costs.

As already discussed above, job satisfaction and therefore, retention is closely related to intrinsic motivation or behaviour describing engagement caused by own will (Cerasoli et al., 2014). The hospitality sector is described by offering on the one side tangible products, like for instance, breakfast, but on the other side it is more about offering intangible products, meaning the interpersonal interactions between host and guest (Putra et al., 2017). According to Putra et al. (2017), studies in this field found out that people working in sectors with intangible service are tending to be more engaged in their daily work, and thus show more commitment and higher efficiency and output. Engagement and motivation again derive from jobs, which provide meaningful and interesting tasks resulting in emotional and mental willingness to perform best (Putra et al., 2017).

To achieve intrinsic behaviour an organisation has to ensure the environmental factors provide such motivation and creativity (Horng et al., 2016). Moreover, the hiring of staff with a proactive personality, working with much passion can advantage the ability to persist on a highly competitive market with the dynamic wishes and preferences of customer (Horng et al., 2016). Another way of offering an engaging working environment is working on the relationship between employer and employee, or the presence of employers, offering support not only with words, but, for instance, with a helping hand in the service, or to make work meaningful offering team leader positions (Putra et al., 2017). Therefore, during the recruitment process in the hospitality sector, it might be necessary to find

out if the applicant already offers a proactive personality, as well as if the employer can offer the environmental factors to support intrinsic behaviour and thus, can gain the favour of the applicant.

The literature review of this chapter helps to explain that recruitment is a topic especially in the hospitality sector, which is not only challenging for the employers, but moreover for the employees. It has been illuminated what is important for the employees, like crisis management or leadership styles. However, the literature seems to be missing, also from the employees' point of view, the research to identify if and how the recruitment challenges changed during the pandemic, similarly to the employers' point of view. Therefore, it will be necessary to first identify and clearly define the recruitment challenges in the hospitality sector from the employees' point of view before the pandemic started as well, in order to explore in a next step if and how those challenges changed during the pandemic. Thus, the second two research questions of this master's thesis are:

- 3. What were the main recruitment challenges in the hospitality industry from the employees' point of view before the COVID-19 pandemic started?**

**Proposition 4: The main recruitment challenge before the pandemic started has been the question if hotels can offer a workplace with an acceptable level of job security, including crisis management and leadership performance.**

- 4. How did the recruitment challenges change in the hospitality industry from the employees' point of view during the COVID-19 pandemic?**

**Proposition 5: During the pandemic the recruitment challenges from the employees' point of view intensified since the question of job security intensified. The intensified job insecurity leads to higher level of turnover intention.**

## 5. Methodology: qualitative content analysis of the interviews and the online evaluation platform “kununu”

### 5.1 Approach to the analysis of the interviews and the analysis of the online evaluation platform “kununu”

The literature review showed that the hospitality industry was hit very hard by the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, and thus, the high importance of the Human Resource Management. Especially the hospitality industry is characterized by focusing on reducing the labour costs and the resulting bad working conditions, like high working hours and difficulties in having a work-life balance, as well as job insecurity due to a high turnover rate and seasonality (Hughes and Rog, 2008; Lin, Chiang and Wu, 2018). Therefore, having a successful recruitment strategy is one of the central goals the hospitality industry needs to follow, since they are often struggling with the attraction of potential employees (Ployhart, 2006), with failing to implement effective employer branding since the industry faces for instance severe image problems resulting in the question if the sector even deserves talent (Baum, 2019a), and finally, dealing with a high turnover rate (Goh et al., 2020). The COVID-19 crisis intensified the critical recruitment situation, mainly since potential and actual employees leave the sector due to job insecurity and try to find jobs in other industries (Hamouche, 2021; Birtch et al., 2021). Having this in mind, the goal of this thesis is to identify and analyse the recruitment challenges employers and employees in the hospitality industry need to face, in order to increase the awareness of the problems and to give indications of how to overcome the obstacles.

The methodology of this master’s thesis is based, besides of the already discussed literature review, on the analysis of interviews with HR experts of 5-stars hotels and on the analysis of job evaluations on online platforms. Both contents have been chosen because they allow an interpretation of the recruitment challenges in the hospitality industry from the employers’ and HR expert point of view and from the employees’ point of view. Only if the problems on both sides are analysed it is possible to change the demanding environment of the hospitality industry.

#### Approach to the analysis of interviews with hotels

The analysis of interviews was chosen to get an insight on what is important for the employer regarding the recruitment challenges. Thus, HR experts in four 5-stars hotels in Germany and Austria had been questioned.<sup>1</sup> Those four hotels are chosen because they can reflect, as anchor examples, how the industry works, what is important for the experts when it comes to recruitment and how they see the problems and possible solutions.

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<sup>1</sup> For the interview guideline and transcription of the interviews, see appendix

## Approach to the analysis of the online platform “kununu”

In order to find answers to the question if employees have a similar or a different point of view regarding the recruitment challenges it has been decided to analyse the employees’ point of view as well. The first step was to find data which is able to answer the research questions based on the focus of this master’s thesis, recruitment. As it has been already explained, recruitment depends on two different perspectives. A broad place to find information for the employee’s point of view are job evaluation platforms. Thus, the next step was to decide which online job evaluation platforms will be used. The focus was on the most general known platforms, like “kununu”, “glassdoor”, and “hotelcareer”, since the last one would be a specific platform regarding the hospitality industry. However, the decision was made to use the platform “kununu” because it is the only platform with a high enough number of comparable evaluations of 5-stars hotels in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland before and during the pandemic.

The category 5-star hotel has been chosen to find a comparable number of hotels subject to the same requirements of staff due to the high standard expected from the guests. According to websites<sup>2</sup> offering lists of hotels fitting in the criteria of being a 5-stars hotel and being located in Germany, Austria and Switzerland, there has been first deep research of which hotels have how much evaluations. Those three countries are chosen because first, all of them are available on “kununu”, second, those countries have the same comparable standard of hotels, and third, the focus should have been on German-speaking countries in the European Union, which is the furthermore the reason why only German-speaking Cantons of Switzerland have been chosen. Moreover, the research also included the question, if there would be enough of them if they are separated in current employees and applicants, which was not the case, and thus, there has been no differentiation in that.<sup>3</sup>

In a next step, there was a separation of the evaluations according to their date, since the requirement was to find a comparable number of evaluations before and during the pandemic, according to the research questions. The period before COVID-19 includes a timeline between 01.03.2017-01.03.2020, and the period during COVID-19 a timeline between 01.03.2020 – 19.02.2022.

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<sup>2</sup> The list of websites can be seen in the references

<sup>3</sup> List and information table of chosen hotels can be seen in the appendix

This was followed by the decision of choosing the following categories:

- Employees' likes regarding the employer<sup>4</sup>
- Employees' dislikes regarding the employer<sup>5</sup>
- Suggestions for improvements<sup>6</sup>
- What would you like to praise your employer for dealing with the Corona situation?<sup>7</sup>
- Where do you see opportunities for your employer to deal better with the Corona situation?<sup>8</sup>
- How can your employer support you deal with the Corona situation even better?<sup>9</sup>

In general, all the evaluations including text in a minimum of two categories out of three before the pandemic and out of six during the pandemic have been taken into account. In the case of Austria and Switzerland there are hotels which evaluations are represented in the sample with a text only in one of the categories because there were not enough hotels in the same category with enough evaluations. If there have been more evaluations before the pandemic started, than during the pandemic, the more current ones are used.

## 5.2 Qualitative content analysis for the interviews and the reviews on the job evaluation platforms

### 5.2.1 Taken approach to the qualitative content analysis

#### **Reasons for choosing the Mayring (2015) method**

Before the analysis is made, there should be explained why the qualitative content analysis by Mayring (2015) has been chosen. The goal of this master's thesis is to analyse the changes in the hiring process due to the pandemic, based on the most significant parts of HRM in the hospitality sector before and during the pandemic, which are relevant for the recruitment from the employers' and employees' point of view. This means the thesis depends on the content of communication, the opinion of those people who are affected from the pandemic and its challenges to recruitment – employers and employees (Froschauer and Lueger, 2020, p. 49). The qualitative content analysis of Mayring (2015) allows deepening and classification of this master's thesis' research questions, while offering at the same time a standard of methodical course of action.

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<sup>4</sup> Gut am Arbeitgeber finde ich

<sup>5</sup> Schlecht am Arbeitgeber finde ich

<sup>6</sup> Verbesserungsvorschläge

<sup>7</sup> Wofür möchtest du deinen Arbeitgeber im Umgang mit der Corona-Situation loben?

<sup>8</sup> Wo siehst du Chancen für deinen Arbeitgeber mit der Corona Situation besser umzugehen?

<sup>9</sup> Wie kann dich dein Arbeitgeber im Umgang mit der Corona-Situation noch besser unterstützen?

## Explaining the Mayring (2015) method

The explaining of the method is based on Mayring (2015). The first step is the definition of the sample (4 expert interviews + 166 evaluations, 90 before the COVID-19 pandemic, 76 during the COVID-19 pandemic) and the definition of the material, which in this case are the transcriptions of the interviews and the text of the evaluations, based on the chosen categories. Second, there needs to be the definition of the form of the analysis which has been the setting up inductive categories, and the definition of the categories: Both, interviews and evaluations, include everything which is related with challenges of recruitment based on the literature review and the propositions. In a next step, the level of abstraction needs to be defined. The first approach has been here to use the rather general formulations of categories to include everything which seems to be of significant importance for the challenges of recruitment. Furthermore, the coding unit is defined for interviews and evaluations. In the case of the evaluations the coding unit describes every element of the evaluation with significant content and meaning in the different categories, as they are described already above. These text units have been analysed and put into different categories. However, some of the text units are mixing different things, so the smallest coding unit is one sentence. For the context unit the whole interview and every evaluation fitting in the filters are chosen. The evaluation unit is described by the whole material. The important next step was the formulation and definition of the categories, defining the codification rules evaluations (is the comment meant positively or negatively?) and the preparation of the subcategories. In the case of the interviews, there has been no definition of codification rules because the interview partners discussed the problems, what they do to improve things or what difficulties they are struggling with. Therefore, the coding units have been put into the categories, how often the subcategories occur has been counted, but the focus of the analysis here is the content, and not the numbers. For the evaluations the focus is more on the numbers, meaning, how often is one subcategory meant positively, or how often is another one meant negatively? The analysis shows what is important for the employees, which things are mentioned very often, and then there is a comparison with what the HR experts say, are they aware of it, and what they do to handle it. After working through 50% of the material, there has been the defining of subcategories, which has been followed by working through the whole material again. Regarding to the evaluations, sometimes people had mixed up the categories, or wrote everything in one category, and then again, most times in the category "suggestions for improvement". So, the decision was made to make the smallest coding unit, one sentence or keyword (depending on how the employees write in the comment). This means that the absolute numbers of the comments in the categories do not reflect the numbers of evaluations, however, it rather mirrors the real opinion of people if something is important for them, they mention it several times.

### 5.2.2 Explaining the categories and the coding guideline

To be able to understand the results of the qualitative content analysis of the interviews and the online platform “kununu”, the following part should explain the categories and the coding guideline, both conducted in alignment with the method of Mayring (2015). The categories are derived from the literature review, containing the most important aspects of recruitment challenges for employers and employees. All in all, there are six categories. The first category is the ‘lack of qualified and engaged staff’, divided in two subcategories ‘lack of qualified personnel’ and ‘lack of staff in general’. This category is defined by everything which is negatively related to skills, knowledge of job requirement or engagement. The second category is named Employer Branding/ recruitment and retention, again divided in subcategories, namely benefits, work-life-balance, image, retention, and recruitment. This category includes all comments regarding Employer Branding, following the question what makes the employer unique, and in this context as well everything regarding retention management. Both contains factors like the contractual structure, motivation, job satisfaction, problems with traineeships or apprenticeships, benefits, image, and work-life balance. This category includes furthermore the point recruitment, because all these factors are also relevant from the employers’ point of view to attract possible employees. The third category is named ‘working conditions’ and contains the subcategories career, payment, and working environment. It is defined by all comments regarding for instance the workload, stress factor, communication, or personal opinions for improvements. The fourth category ‘job security’ is split up in leadership, crisis management and state aid and is defined by plans and trainings regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, law regulations, state aid, dismissals, ‘Kurzarbeit’, or leadership qualities. The fifth category is regarding ‘undefined HR problems’, meaning potential dissatisfaction with the HR department or staff decisions. A sixth category has been established to collect all comments which do not have relevant content, for instance very personal opinions or just saying everything is bad without naming anything in specific.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> A table of the coding guideline can be found in the appendix, as well as the representative screenshot of an online evaluation fitting not in the categories, an information table for the evaluations, the interview guideline, and the transcription of the interviews.

## 6. Results of the qualitative content analysis of the interviews

### 6.1 Challenges before the COVID-19 pandemic

The interview part is organised in alignment with the interview guideline, meaning that according to the established categories the analysis will follow the challenges before the pandemic and the challenges during the pandemic.

Before the pandemic started, it seems the most important topic based on the intensity was the lack of qualified personnel, followed by recruitment, whereas image and payment seemed not to be a big problem. The lack of qualified personnel was either mentioned in general, meaning that this has been a challenging problem for the hotels but also for the hospitality sector as a whole, but it was also mentioned that the lack of qualified staff is reasoned not by getting enough applications but by unrealistic job expectations: *“And otherwise, the challenges are very difficult, unrealistic ideas how the on-site work will look like, I’ll say, regarding the working times, but also (the attitude?), having many and very different ideas”<sup>11</sup>* (Hotel C). As one of the interviewees explained, recruitment was an important but different topic before the spread of the COVID-19 virus, because it contained more active presence in schools or trade fairs to be able to recruit new employees through explaining what makes the hotel so unique (Hotel B). Moreover, it was mentioned by another interviewee, (Hotel D), that the hotel sector is on the one hand not the easiest to find new employees but on the other hand, it is more challenging to find qualified staff for key positions. However, the interviewee mentioned also that this is very close related to the image of the hotels, meaning the better the image the easier is successful recruitment. Another problem mentioned is the low payment (Hotel D).

### 6.2 Challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic

#### Category 1: “Lack of staff”

The lack of staff is a problem pointed out from the interviewees. The lack of staff in general is mentioned and how difficult it is to search for new employees, and moreover, the lack of qualified personnel is commented, addressing here one time also the problem of how difficult it is to find new qualified staff and that hotels had to learn to deal with this challenge (Hotel B). Furthermore, it is referred to the difficulty of wrong job expectations, like for instance employees coming from school and thinking they would have instantly a management position, while also not knowing that this is not a 9/5 job and flexible working hours are required (Hotel C).

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<sup>11</sup> „Und ansonsten die Herausforderungen sind, sehr schwierige, unrealistische Vorstellungen wie es dann die Arbeit generell vorort ablaufen wird, sag ich jetzt mal, sei es von den Arbeitszeiten, sei es aber auch (die Haltung?), dass man da dann ja, sehr viele unterschiedliche Vorstellungen“ (Hotel C, ll. 8-11).



## Category 2: “Employer Branding/ recruitment and retention”

The problem of retention because of the pandemic is explained as follows: Those people who are still working in the industry are those who really love their jobs in the hotel sector (Hotel B, Hotel A). Another interviewee mentioned that those who worked for a long time in the hotel, will come back (Hotel A). However, especially in this industry, as it is mentioned in the interviews, changing the job after 18 months or 2 years is normal to make new experiences, which is not true for the management staff (Hotel C). Moreover, it is stated that the competitors concerning the labour force are not only from the own sector but also from other branches (Hotel D).

Work-life-balance is discussing the already known problem of difficult working times. One interviewee said that they try to find a solution but also argued that people should know that the hotel sector is not one with regular working hours (Hotel C). The other interviewee addressed besides payment issues and the exertion the job requires the problem of the working hours and is arguing that the hotels need to change, but the problem would be that it is difficult to allow people in the service departments to make home office or flexitime since they need the manpower for fixed hours (Hotel D).

The benefits in the distinct hotels are very important, reaching from the possibility for the employees to work in different destinations in different countries (Hotel D), to a newspaper for the staff, in which benefits are communicated (Hotel C), to getting the chance to travel privately and cheaper to the other destinations of the hotel (Hotel A; Hotel D), provide uniforms free of charge, or thinking about the idea to open a kindergarten for employees’ children (Hotel A).

The image of the hotels has been a significant topic in the interviews. The relevant question here was, how the hotels make themselves attractive as an employer. The answers have been mainly focusing on the try to be unique through being pioneers regarding for instance working conditions or following the approach of being different and attach great importance on diversity, as well as focusing on the image, the history, and the location of their hotels, and on the working atmosphere (Hotel D). Moreover, they are trying to fix the image which got lost because of the pandemic through making them online more present (Hotel C).

Most of all, recruitment has been discussed in the interviews. How do the hotels try to find new staff? As the interviewees stated it is necessary to offer a higher online presence, recruitment via print medias seems not to be so effective anymore, and to be unique and write this in the job advertisements (Hotel B, Hotel C). Especially the hotel chains are concerned regarding the steady need to find a balance between what the hotel group wants and what the local market desires (Hotel A). Also, the way of recruitment changed due to the pandemic, since one interviewee for example mentioned that they have been very active in finding new staff by for example visiting recruitment

fairs or schools for hotel management, though, with the outbreak of the virus they have to change those things in online events (Hotel B). Moreover, the hotels try to build new working relationships with specific online platforms to create a broader range to reach applicants (Hotel A, B, C, D) and also focusing on internal job platforms (Hotel D). To reach future employees, one interviewee mentioned likewise an internal program named 'Employees Recruit Employees'<sup>12</sup> with getting benefits for those employees who can find new employees (Hotel A), or special recruitment days in hotel management schools all over Europe (Hotel D).

Furthermore, it was discussed which requirements an applicant needs to get specific jobs. All interviewees agreed on the fact that special knowledge and experience is good and fine, but when the potential employees do not bring the personal requirements, like passion and the 'Gastgeber-Gen' (Hotel B), it is more difficult to get and stay in the job. Therefore, they are all more looking for personality than for experts since there is the possibility to learn what is needed in the job. With the missing of personality, it is very difficult to integrate new personnel in existing teams. Additionally, the interviewees illuminated how they select the staff. Usually, they select from the applications pool and then have one or two interviews with the applicants. Besides HR, also the head of the distinct departments and sometimes the managing directors are part of the interview. One of the interviewees mentioned also that they have an assessment program, which needs to be successfully done by every potential employee (Hotel A). Faced problems are for instance a highly competitive situation on the labour market for good and qualified staff, it is necessary to be quick and convincing to get those employees the hotel want (Hotel A). According to the distinct job there exist mostly a fixed catalogue of questions but also the flexibility to see in which direction the interviews might go.

### Category 3: "working conditions"

First, the working environment is mentioned as a challenge in the interviews, concerning the time during the pandemic. It explained how difficult communication is when most of the employees are at their homes during the lockdowns, so the result was to find new ways of communication, like a special online communication tool for hotels, including, e.g. news, or manuals (Hotel B).

Second, the effort of the hotels is emphasized to offer career opportunities to their employees. This could be trainings or the idea of having an internal online platform where employees can post their development plan, and which results in a strong exchange between the employees and the HR departments in the different hotel destinations. This begins already with the trainees who are able to continue their traineeship in other destinations and thus often also in other countries (Hotel D).

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<sup>12</sup> ,Mitarbeiter werben Mitarbeiter'

Third, the discussion of payment is addressing the awareness of the problem, which intensified during the pandemic. Employees are asking more for better payment conditions since the pandemic started (Hotel A). But also, the change of the bargaining contracts is named, whereas one comment is mentioning that the hotel also tried before to pay above the collective wage agreement to take care of financial security of their employees (Hotel B). Moreover, one interviewee specified in this context also the importance of additional benefits for the staff (Hotel D).

#### Category 4: “job security”

The statement regarding the leadership offers an insight of how leadership can work in the hospitality industry by including employees in decisions (Hotel C). However, this is true for the HR department, but how the management included the workers is getting not clear here, which is the reason it is also defined here as a challenge.

Moreover, the issue of state aid has been discussed. On the one hand, state aid has been seen critically since it did not help even those people who are living for their jobs in the hotel sector to manage the situation financially. There is the expectation that people will return to their jobs when the situation is getting more stable but the fear of getting back to the system of ‘Kurzarbeit’ scare a lot of potential employees off (Hotel B). On the other hand, ‘Kurzarbeit’ is also praised because it made it possible to cover the staff financially. However, the bureaucracy required a lot of time and engagement of the HR departments, with always having the fear in mind to make something wrong since nobody knew how the concrete procedure should be with the extent the pandemic demanded (Hotel D). Furthermore, the system of ‘Kurzarbeit’ and other state aid, for instance the deferment of the payment of social insurance helped the hotels through difficult times: *“Yes, that has been definitely ‘Kurzarbeit’, without (...) not knowing how it would have been like, this has been an important instrument äh for us”*<sup>13</sup> (Hotel A).

The most relevant topic in this category is crisis management. Interviewees explained how they managed to deal with the current situation. This ranges from being for example more careful and thus, more restrict with the measurements than the law would actually tell, to attach also a certain value on the communication within the teams (Hotel C). They were also talking about the problems of not being able to hold the employees since other sectors are more stable and there is currently a lot of insecurity in the hotel sector (Hotel D).

However, one is also explaining that it is now the chance to get a job in the hotel sector, if one really wishes to do so (Hotel C). Since the hotels have been facing huge booking requests in the time between

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<sup>13</sup> „Ja, das war auf jeden Fall die Kurzarbeit, ohne, (...) nicht wie es ausgeschaut hätte, das war ein wichtiges Instrument, äh, für uns” (Hotel A, II: 205-207).

the lockdowns but on the same time have been missing the staff. Furthermore, they have also the problem that one employee takes care about 15 guests, while before the pandemic started one employee took care of 5 guests (Hotel D). This leads also to mental health problems since the workload is not bearable anymore. Nonetheless, the hotels try to deal with mental well-being and its importance since it is noticed that it makes no sense to fear what could be, but instead just make the best out of the situation and *“taking simply care in this situation, in order to make sure that nobody is left behind”*<sup>14</sup> (Hotel C). All interviewees had concepts how to deal with a situation when the employees got infected, and also clear hygiene concepts. One interviewee mentioned that they had crisis concepts from for example the financial crisis 2008 but that they had to develop new plans since the time period between the crises was too high and also the crises are not comparable to each other (Hotel D).

### 6.3 Additional results

Additional results which were not matching to the categories, are mainly concentrating on the awareness of the hotels to change. This started especially at the beginning of the pandemic by realising that the representation of the hotel will now be mainly online, and this seemed to be a great challenge. Furthermore, it was also mentioned that the need for personality and passion in the industry is more important than specific knowledge or experience, since for instance unengaged staff creates no additional value because the guests are not satisfied.

Consequently, there are high recruitment numbers, as one interviewee explained, since the hotels want to signal *“we are on the market, we are here, we did not get lost, we survived, and we are looking for new qualified staff”*<sup>15</sup> (Hotel D). This also opens the door for people entering the hotel sector different from their educational background. Moreover, it seems to be realised that there must be a change if they want to have again a successful company, with reacting more flexible to the needs of employees regarding their working hours, like for instance, offering the possibility to work part time or offering fixed days off, which makes it more schedulable (Hotel A). This is for example possible by taking into consideration the current labour force when making the booking plan and stop selling rooms if there is not enough staff available (Hotel D).

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<sup>14</sup> „in dieser Situation auch einfach dafür sorgen, dass keiner irgendwie auf der Strecke bleibt“ (Hotel C, II: 128-129)

<sup>15</sup> „wir sind auf dem Markt, wir sind da, wir sind nicht untergegangen, wir haben’s überlebt, und wir suchen neu qualifiziertes Personal“ (Hotel D, II:115-116)

The next argument is the awareness of the need to do something against the lack of qualified staff, by focusing on the apprenticeship and trainings:

*“As a company, I have to actively do something to ensure that future specialists are also working in the industry again, that they are passionate about the industry. Yes, I have to convince young people that the hospitality sector is the most beautiful one that can exist in the world. And that is why I think it is incredibly important to offer, in addition to the classical traineeship, dual studies, possibilities for trial internships, compulsory internships for students, who need a practical part to complete their studies. So, everything that has to do with the subject of training is essential to address this lack of qualified personnel”<sup>16</sup> (Hotel B).*

And as a last fact, it should be mentioned that there is also the awareness of a changing way of how people apply to potential employers because there is a noticing of a change from the classical application to mobile recruiting. Meaning that people can apply for example via apps within two minutes without a motivation letter or a CV (Hotel B).

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<sup>16</sup> „Ich muss aktiv als Unternehmen was dafür tun, dass zukünftige Fachkräfte auch wieder in der Branche tätig sind, dass die für die Branche brennen. Ja, ich muss junge Leute davon überzeugen, dass die Hotellerie die schönste Branche ist, die es auf der Welt geben darf. Und deswegen, finde ich es unglaublich wichtig, neben der klassischen Lehre, auch ein duales Studium anzubieten, auch Möglichkeiten des Schnupperpraktikums anzubieten, Pflichtpraktika für Studenten, die im Rahmen ihres Studiums einen praktischen Teil brauchen, um ihr Studium zu absolvieren. Also all das, was das Thema Ausbildung, was das Thema Lehre betrifft, ist unerlässlich, um gegen diesen Fachkräftemangel auch anzugehen“ (Hotel B, II: 140-147).

## 7. Results of the qualitative content analysis of the online platform “kununu”

The interpretation of the evaluations on the “kununu” platform is made on two different levels.<sup>17</sup> On the one side, it will be analysed how often categories or subcategories are mentioned positively or negatively, and what the most striking numbers are. Every subcategory was divided in meant positively or negatively, or both, for example retention (+), retention (-) and retention (+/-). This results in the fact that in some categories of (+/-) there is no comment at all, however, they are still in the evaluations as a matter of consistency, but not shown in the figures. On the other side, it will be discussed which comments are eye-catching regarding their content. Subsequently, the analysis is based not only on the frequency, but also on the intensity. In a next step, the interpretations before and during the COVID-19 pandemic will be compared: What has become more important for the people, and what less, or which demands do employees in the hospitality industry have? Additionally, which trends are observable?

### Category 1: “Lack of staff”

The first category is “lack of staff”, and it is divided in two subcategories: “lack of qualified personnel” and “lack of staff in general”.

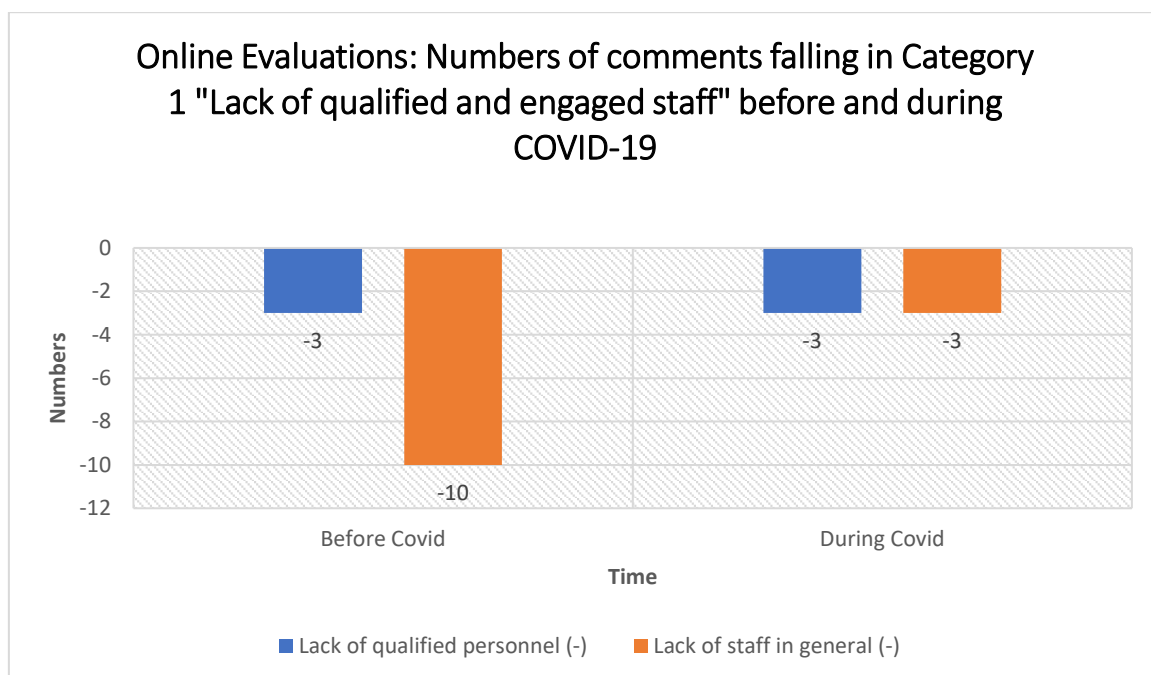


Figure 11 Online evaluations Category 1: own illustration, based on the results of the kununu platform analysis

In the category “lack of staff” ten comments before the pandemic mentioned a general lack of staff, only three mentioned especially the lack of qualified personnel. Surprising is that during the pandemic the number of the mentioned subcategories is for both cases only three, so all in all, six comments

<sup>17</sup> For an overview of the results of all categories, see Appendix.

mentioned the lack of staff. Before the pandemic started, the comments regarding the lack of staff had been not so emotional, e.g. *“there is a lack of staff”*<sup>18</sup> (Grand Elysee, Hamburg, January 2019), but during the pandemic the comments become more emotional *“has the future shortage in staff actually reached you?”*<sup>19</sup> (Ritz Carlton, Wien, June 2021) or *„nothing innovative, no ambition to change something and do something good for the staff. Do nothing actively against the lack of (qualified) staff”*<sup>20</sup> (Rocco Forte The Charles Hotel, Munich, December 2021). So, the numbers of comments mentioning this category might be decreasing, but the intensity increases.

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<sup>18</sup> „Es herrscht ein Fachkräftemangel“ (Grand Elysee, Hamburg, January 2019)

<sup>19</sup> „Ist der zukünftige Fachkräftemangel bei euch eigentlich schon angekommen?“ (Ritz Carlton, Wien, June 2021)

<sup>20</sup> „Nichts Innuvatives, keinen Ehrgeiz etwas zu ändern und was Gutes für das Personal zu machen. Nichts gegen den (Fach-)Kräftemangel aktiv zu machen!“ (Rocco Forte The Charles Hotel, Munich, December 2021)

Category 2: “Employer Branding/ recruitment and retention”

The second category is named “Employer Branding/ recruitment and retention”, and it is divided in the following subcategories: “benefits”, “work-life-balance”, “image”, “retention”, and “recruitment”.

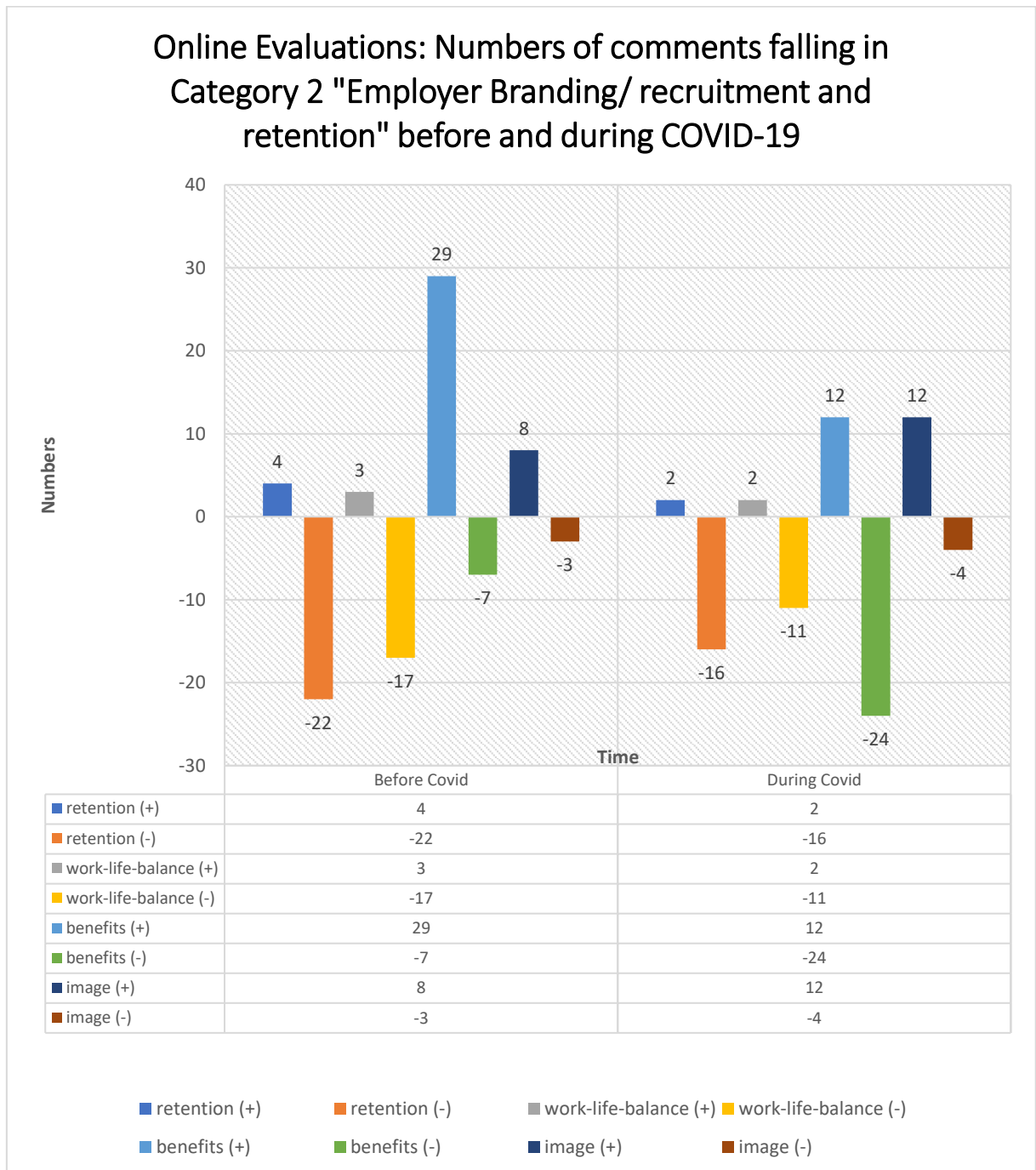


Figure 12 Online Evaluations Category 2: own illustration, based on the results of the kununu platform analysis

Before the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus, the most relevant subcategories have been retention, work-life-balance and benefits. 22 comments have been negatively associated with retention, for



instance *“there should be an attempt to retain staff in the long term, instead of scare them away”*<sup>21</sup> (Hotel Bayerischer Hof, Munich, February 2019), and 17 comments criticised the work-life-balance, e.g. *“no regulation of extra hours”*<sup>22</sup> (Grand Elysée, Hamburg, August 2018). However, the most striking numbers here are the 29 comments which appreciated the benefits, e.g. *“great alpine pastures that belong to the hotel, where you can eat/drink with reduced prices”*<sup>23</sup> (Hotel Krallerhof, Leogang, Juni 2018), or *“the benefits are good and there are events on a regular basis, like birthday coffee, or gm breakfast and of course ‘kick-off’ and a ‘Wiesn’ for staff”*<sup>24</sup> (Rocco Forte The Charles Hotel, Munich, September 2019). Whereas only seven negative comments regarding the benefits have been mentioned. During the pandemic, retention, work-life-balance<sup>25</sup>, and benefits<sup>26</sup> have been the most significant subcategories, indicated by the numbers, but also the subcategory image<sup>27</sup> is getting more relevant, since there has been an increase in comments from eight to twelve positive associations with the image, like for example *“great ambience, wonderful house with history, great location in the centre of the city”*<sup>28</sup> (Hotel Bayerischer Hof, Munich, January 2022). But it is most remarkable that the numbers of comments regarding the benefits decreased from 29 positive comments and only seven negative comments, to 24 negative comments and only twelve positive comments during the pandemic. Employees criticized that programs and benefits which had existed earlier do not exist anymore, or need improvement like for instance *“re-establishment of the sport opportunity ‘Qualitrain’”*<sup>29</sup> (Grand Elysée, Hamburg, December 2021) or *“need to catch up regarding the room offer for employees, renovation and capacities”*<sup>30</sup> (Hotel Krallerhof, Leogang, October 2021). It should also be mentioned that there are some ambiguous statements regarding the benefits.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> „Sie sollten sich langfristig bemühen, gute Mitarbeiter zu halten, anstelle sie zu vergraulen“ (Hotel Bayerischer Hof, Munich, February 2019)

<sup>22</sup> „Die nicht geregelte Überstundenregelungen“ (Grand Elysée, Hamburg, August 2018)

<sup>23</sup> Tolle Almen, die zum Hotel gehören, wo man vergünstigt essen/trinken kann“ (Hotel Krallerhof, Leogang, Juni 2018)

<sup>24</sup> „Die benefits sind gut und es gibt auch regelmäßig Veranstaltungen, wie zb Geburtstagskaffee oder gm breakfast und natürlich kickoff und Mitarbeiter wiesn.“ (Rocco Forte The Charles Hotel, Munich, September 2019)

<sup>25</sup> One comment during the pandemic regarding the work-life-balance is put in the category (+/-). In comparison with the other numbers of the subcategory work-life balance, the comment is not significant, and thus, not illustrated in the figure.

<sup>26</sup> Two comments during the pandemic regarding the benefits are put in the category (+/-). In comparison with the other numbers of the subcategory benefits, they are not significant, and thus, not illustrated in the figure.

<sup>27</sup> One comment during the pandemic regarding the image is put in the category (+/-). In comparison with the other numbers of the subcategory image, the comment is not significant, and thus, not illustrated in the figure.

<sup>28</sup> „Tolles Ambiente, wunderschönes Haus mit Geschichte, tolle Lage mitten in der Stadt“ (Hotel Bayerischer Hof, Munich, January 2022)

<sup>29</sup> „Wiederaufnahme des Sportangebotes "Qualitrain"“ (Grand Elysée, Hamburg, December 2021)

<sup>30</sup> „Aufholbedarf am Zimmerangebot für Mitarbeiter, Renovierung und Kapazitäten“ (Hotel Krallerhof, Leogang, October 2021)

<sup>31</sup> Three comments in the category (+/-) is the highest number of all comments in the category (+/-). This is the reason why it is mentioned here in particular. Nevertheless, the numbers of the category (+/-) are, all in all, too small to illustrate them in the figures.

Before the pandemic started there were three comments about benefits which could be seen positively and negatively, like for instance the wish for changes but at the same time the acknowledgement that it is already in process, like the quality of meals for employees<sup>32</sup> or the necessary renovation for staff apartments<sup>33</sup>.

### Category 3: “working conditions”

The third category is named “working conditions” and is divided in the subcategories: “career”, “payment”, and “working environment”.

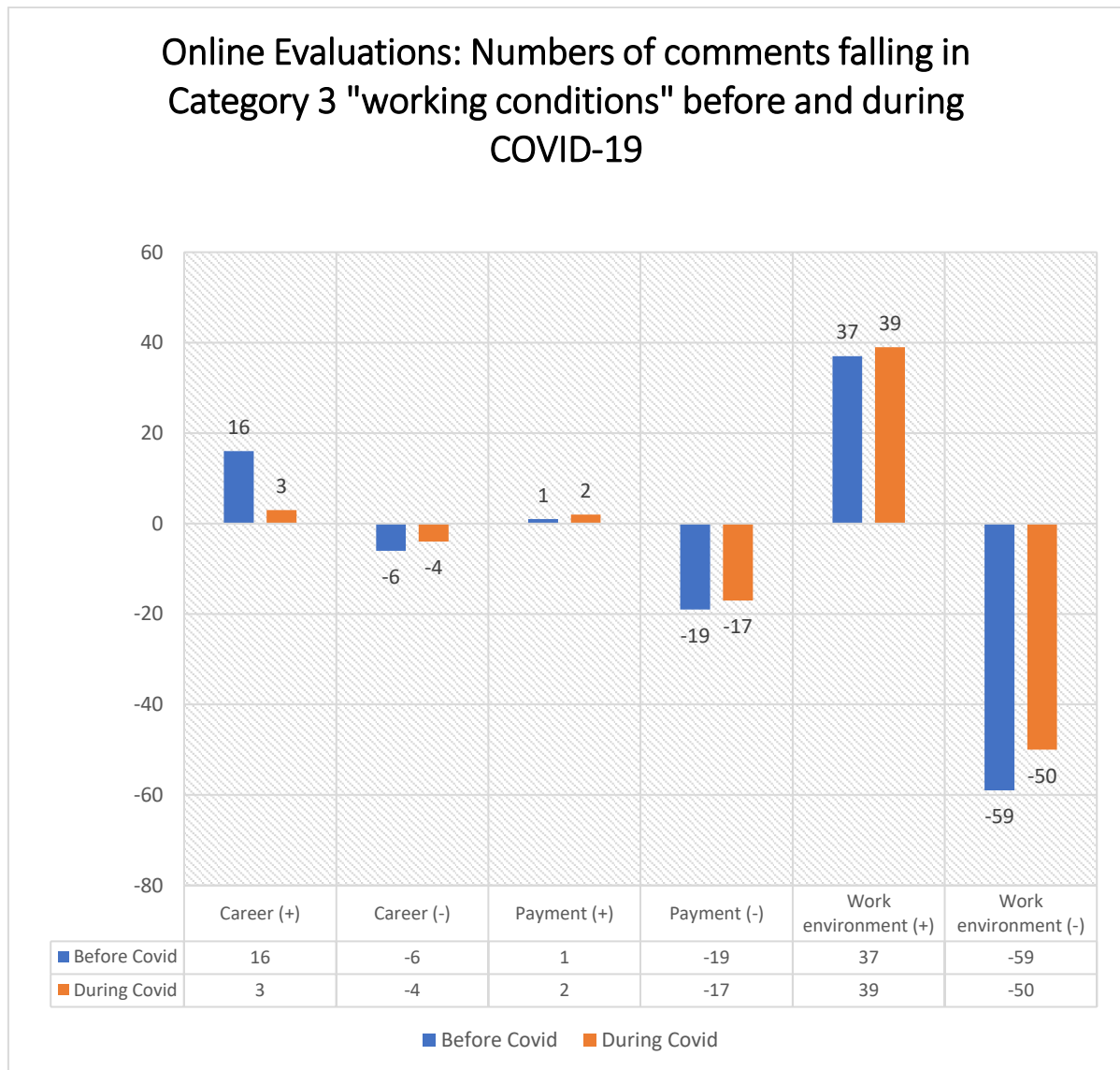


Figure 13 Online Evaluations Category 3: own illustration based on the results of the kununu platform analysis

<sup>32</sup> „Das Mitarbeiteressen war anfangs teilweise nicht sehr abwechslungsreich, das wurde aber mit der Zeit immer besser“ (Hotel Krallerhof, Leogang, Juni 2018)

<sup>33</sup> „Eigentlich nur die Renovierung des Personalhauses - die aber gerade angefangen hat“ (Steigenberger Grandhotel Belvédère, Davos, November 2018)

Career is with 16 positive comments, and six negative comments, for instance *“no opportunity to develop personally”*<sup>34</sup> (Stock Resort, Finkenberg, December 2018) the category which is stated more times before the pandemic. Nevertheless, especially the opportunity for trainings is important for employees, since it is the most cited topic, followed by personal career chances. During the pandemic career issues are only remarked three times in a positive context, e.g. *“good career prospects, internal retraining opportunities, international transfer to other partner firms”*<sup>35</sup> (Park Hyatt, Vienna, March 2020) and four times in a negative context. So, the magnitude of this topic seems to be decreasing during the pandemic. The next large subcategory is payment with 19 negative comments, and only one positive one. Mostly criticized is the amount of the payments: *“Definitely increase wages”*<sup>36</sup> (Ritz Carlton, Vienna, July 2019). The only positive statement notices that the payment is on time on the bank account (Grand Elysée, Hamburg, October 2019). During the pandemic the importance of the payment problem seems to be stay the same, since the number is 17 negative comments, and two positive statements.

The most crucial topic is the one of work environment. Before the pandemic started there had been 59 negative comments and 37 positive ones.<sup>37</sup> This is clearly one of the most relevant topics for employees. The subcategory work environment includes team spirit, solidarity, and working atmosphere, including the management of daily work, like communication between the teams, interesting tasks, or workload. Positive examples here are *“dealing with all colleagues, solidarity”*<sup>38</sup> (Steigenberger Grandhotel Davos, October 2020), *“interesting tasks and guests”*<sup>39</sup> (Rocco Forte The Charles Hotel, Munich, March 2017), and negative ones are *“the work sharing, the dealing with employees [...] savings are made where it is somehow possible or not possible”*<sup>40</sup> (Ritz Carlton, Vienna, March 2018). The importance did not change during the pandemic, the numbers stayed more or less the same, 50 negative statements and 39 positive statements. However, the content of solidarity and working atmosphere stayed the same, but the tone changed in the way that during the pandemic the importance of equality between the employees increased, this is noticeable by the criticism regarding the missing equality, like: *“reducing prejudices and treat everybody the same way, not flying to golf*

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<sup>34</sup> „Keine Möglichkeiten sich persönlich zu entfalten“ (Stock Resort, Finkenberg, December 2018)

<sup>35</sup> „Gute Karrierechancen, interne Umschulungsmöglichkeiten, internationaler Transfer zu anderen Partnerbetrieben“ (Park Hyatt, Vienna, March 2020)

<sup>36</sup> „Definitiv die Lohnvergütung erhöhen“ (Ritz Carlton, Vienna, July 2019)

<sup>37</sup> Two comments before the pandemic regarding the work environment are put in the category (+/-). In comparison with the other numbers of the subcategory work environment, they are not significant, and thus, not illustrated in the figure.

<sup>38</sup> „Umgang mit allen Kollegen, Zusammenhalt“ (Steigenberger Grandhotel Davos, October 2020)

<sup>39</sup> „interessenten Aufgaben und Gäste“ (Rocco Forte The Charles Hotel, Munich, March 2017)

<sup>40</sup> „Die Arbeitsaufteilung, Umgang mit Mitarbeitern [...] es wird gespart wo es nur irgendwie geht oder auch schon nicht geht geht“ (Ritz Carlton, Vienna, March 2018)

with only some persons"<sup>41</sup> (Rocco Forte The Charles Hotel, Munich, September 2020), or "Vitamin B is more than a must here to go ahead!"<sup>42</sup> (Rocco Forte The Charles Hotel, Munich, February 2021).

#### Category 4: "job security"

The fourth category is job security, divided in the subcategories: "leadership", "crisis management", and "state aid".

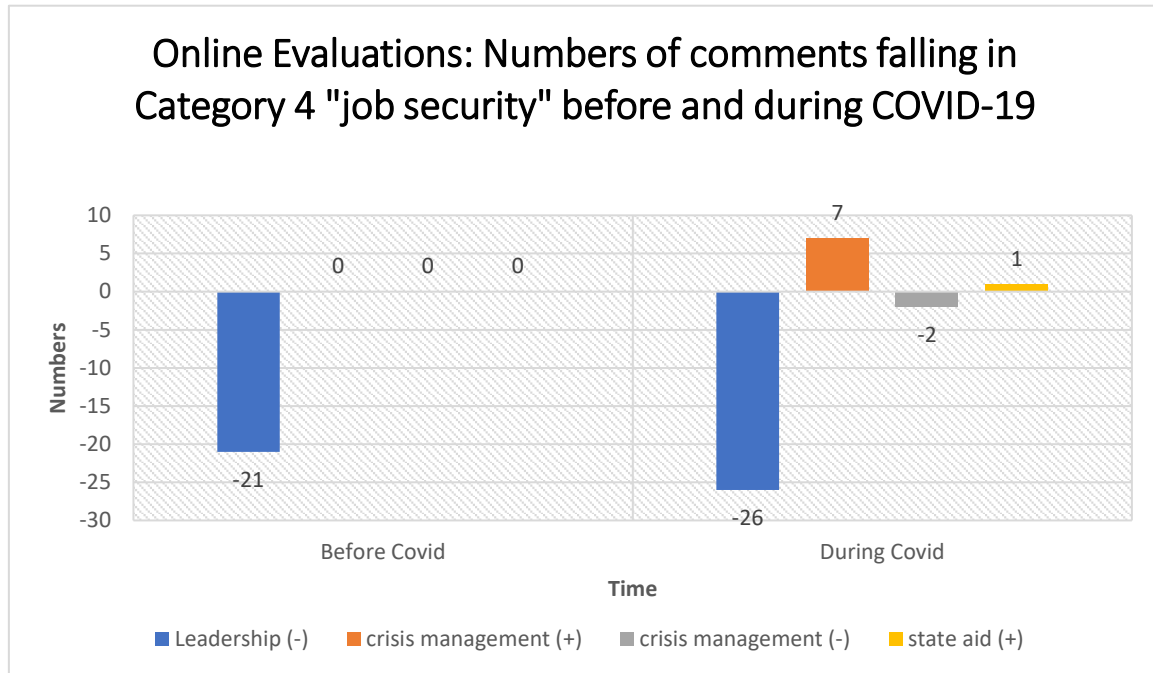


Figure 14 Online evaluations Category 4: own illustration based on the results of the kununu platform analysis

State aid was, as it can be seen in the figure, not really a topic in the online evaluations. Crisis management seemed to be more important. It was not mentioned before the pandemic but two times criticized during the pandemic, especially the inequality regarding the 'Kurzarbeit'. One answer to the question 'What would you like to praise your employer for dealing with the Corona situation?' has been "Not at all, the 'Kurzarbeit' was here faster! Besides the upper floors"<sup>43</sup> (Rocco Forte The Charles Hotel, March 2020), Surprisingly, with having the media and the literature in mind, have been the positive comments of crisis management during the pandemic. The number of comments is only seven, but the employees really appreciated the behaviour of employers during the pandemic and praised the security and crisis management their employers offered: "Especially during the pandemic has been and is signaled that the working place is safe and that everything is done to keep that this way. Zoom-

<sup>41</sup> „Vorurteile abbauen und alle gleich behandeln, nicht mit einzelnen zum Golfen fliegen“ (Rocco Forte The Charles Hotel, Munich, September 2020)

<sup>42</sup> „Vitamin B ist hier mehr als ein muss um weiteruikommen!“ (Rocco Forte The Charles Hotel, Munich, February 2021)

<sup>43</sup> „Gar nicht, die Kurzarbeit war schneller da! Außer in der Oberen Etage!“ (Rocco Forte The Charles Hotel, March 2020)

*Meetings on a regular basis to make sure that the employees do not lose the relation to the employer*<sup>44</sup> (Hotel Bayerischer Hof, Munich, August 2020). What seems to be most on the employees' mind, are the problems with leadership, before the pandemic 21 statements offered a negative opinion about the leadership, and during the pandemic the number increases to 26 negative comments. The leadership problems extending from *"fear to express criticism"*<sup>45</sup> (Grand Resort, Bad Ragaz, April 2021), to the impression that there is a huge barrier between the management and the employees: *"Bringing top management closer to the workforce"*<sup>46</sup> (Grand Resort, Bad Ragaz, July 2021), and to missing respect, equality, and esteem: *"Leadership behaviour must change fundamentally. More appreciation, more understanding, greater trust in own employees, who are mostly very motivated and loyal and do a great job"*<sup>47</sup> (Hotel Bayerischer Hof, Munich, August 2021).

#### Category 5: "undefined HR issues"

The fifth category „undefined HR issues“ is a very small one, with six statements before the pandemic, and three statements during the pandemic. The problems here seem to be very manifold, from communication issues: *"not satisfying communication with the HR department"*<sup>48</sup> (Grand Elysée Hotel, Hamburg, January 2019) to questioning the recruitment decisions of management positions<sup>49</sup> (Stock Resort, Finkenbergr, November 2018). The question is if really the HR department is responsible for apparently wrong recruitment decisions, or if it is just the personal opinion of a view persons, who are not satisfied with some decisions or the cast of some positions for personal reasons, since the number of comments is very small.

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<sup>44</sup> „Gerade während der Pandemie wurde und wird signalisiert, dass der Arbeitsplatz sicher ist und man alles tut, damit dies auch so bleibt. Regelmäßige Zoom Meetings, damit auch die Mitarbeiter in Kurzarbeit den Bezug zum Arbeitgeber nicht verlieren.“ (Hotel Bayerischer Hof, Munich, August 2020)

<sup>45</sup> „Angst Kritik auszusprechen“ (Grand Resort, Bad Ragaz, April 2021)

<sup>46</sup> „Topmanagement näher an Belegschaft rücken“ (Grand Resort, Bad Ragaz, July 2021)

<sup>47</sup> „Das Führungsverhalten muss sich grundsätzlich ändern. Mehr Wertschätzung, mehr Verständnis, größeres Vertrauen in die eigenen Mitarbeiter\*innen, welche überwiegend sehr motiviert und loyal sind und eine tolle Arbeit leisten.“ (Hotel Bayerischer Hof, Munich, August 2021)

<sup>48</sup> „Die nicht zufriedenstellende Kommunikation mit der Personalabteilung“ (Grand Elysée Hotel, Hamburg, January 2019)

<sup>49</sup> „Besetzung der Abteilungsleiter hinterfragen“ (Stock Resort, Finkenbergr, November 2018)

## 8. Discussion

This master's thesis outlines with which challenges the hospitality sector has to deal when it comes to recruitment and how the COVID-19 pandemic influenced and still influences Human Resource Management in this industry. The interviews made clear that the hotels are trying to change the status quo, which led to the need of analysing if employees see those challenges as well or have different views about it and moreover, if they can confirm that the employers want to improve the situation.

The literature and its theory show that experts in this sector are aware of especially the problems an employer has, regarding for instance the Employer Branding. The first research question, namely identifying what the main recruitment challenges for employers have been before the pandemic started, led to the proposition that the main task has been to find qualified personnel.

This has been proofed on the one hand by the already existing literature and on the other hand by the interviews made for this thesis. The reasons for the **lack of qualified personnel** are manifold, like for instance that the hospitality sector faces some severe image problems (European Commission, no date, a) as well as a high turnover rate and missing skills, like speaking different languages (Collins, 2008). The analysis of the interviews has been able to prove the theoretical approaches, but also enhanced it by additional results.

The interviews show that the **hotels are aware of the problems in the industry**, and that they want to react, address the issues, and change the working environment. Nevertheless, this change will take time and, although the pandemic boosted not only the existing problem but also increased the awareness of it, the change will be difficult, since, besides for example making the working hours schedulable, the most measures are very cost intensive and subsequently the wanted change seems to be hard to put into practice when the virus makes it unstable to plan with future numbers of guests.

In this context the thesis was also able to answer the second research question, namely how the recruitment challenges for employers changed during the pandemic. The assumption here has been that the problem of missing qualified staff intensified and as in a first step the literature review showed, this is true.

The crisis led to a huge loss of staff in the sector, not only because of the lockdowns, but moreover since the pandemic changed the way people think about their job. For the employees it was difficult to stay in the job, not only because of the different and long lockdowns (see Chapter 2.2) but also because the crisis changed the motivation and commitment to the work (Birtch et al., 2021).

In consequence, this results in the second proposition of the second research question. If the employees' motivation to stay in the job is getting lower, the recruitment challenges intensified even

more since the employer now need to address the higher demands of employees to consider staying in the organisation (Narayanan et al., 2019; Hughes and Rog, 2008). Therefore, as it was illuminated in the interviews, the **pandemic offers a real chance to change things and make a new kind of effective recruitment possible to avoid a future lack of staff**, through two different approaches: on the one hand, offering huge possibilities for apprenticeships and trainings, providing specific benefits which are available for every employee, a point which is often criticized in the online evaluations of the hotels, and making oneself present especially on online platforms but also on recruitment days in hotel management schools, offering them maybe also virtual. On the other side, advancing the possibility for people who want to work in the hotel sector without having experience or education in this field, since trainings can always be provided but passion is nothing one can learn.

Another important point is that a lot of the criticism employees offered on the online platforms, like the work-life balance or the payment issues can be regulated through a new contractual structure, in Germany, for instance, the bargaining contracts are going to change 2022 (DEHOGA Bayern, 2022) and there are also some regional changes in these contracts as it is mentioned in one of the interviews (Hotel D). As a result of the analysis of literature and the interviews, the master's thesis was able to answer the research questions from the employers' point of view.

The challenges of the hospitality sector are not only including the employers' point of view when it comes to recruitment. The additional value of this master's thesis is also including the employees' point of view. Similarly, to the employers' point of view, the literature is in theory aware of the problem of employees in the sector, but the analysis of the 'kununu' platform illustrated in very much more detail with which challenges the employees are really faced with and what they are most concerned about. The third research question, which recruitment challenges existed from the employees' point of view before the pandemic, offered the proposition that employees mainly facing the problem of job insecurity.

Whereas the existing literature offered the proof that job security is an important decision factor for employees to decide not to quit (Kara et al., 2013), which is also true for an effective crisis management (Pforr and Hosie, 2007), the study of the evaluation platform goes beyond and confirms furthermore, that the **personnel in the hospitality sector is absolutely aware of the problems the employers have**, namely that the sector is not able to find qualified staff. They notice this challenge because they have to face the consequences in their everyday work. The employees criticize mainly that the employers do not much to improve the situation, but as it is explained above, the hotels are aware of the problem and try to fix it. The main problem here seems to be the **missing communication**.

The fourth research question, how the recruitment challenges changed for the employees during the pandemic, led to the proposition that because of a higher level of job insecurity the turnover rate also increased. This was also proofed by the literature. Jung et al. (2021) for instance discussed the influence of an effective crisis management and a good relationship between employer and employee on the turnover rate.

However, the analysis of the job evaluation platform “kununu” showed another significant outcome. This result is the fact that the employees seemed to be much more satisfied with their benefits before the pandemic started and are suffering since from losing what made and still makes the hotels as employers unique. Moreover, the career opportunities seemed to be better before the pandemic started and thus, this is something which need to change in order to address the underlying problem of lack of qualified staff. One of the most significant concerns employees have, is the working environment. **An acceptable workload, measurements to increase the team spirit and solidarity would help employees to decide to stay in the organisation, which again would reduce the turnover rate**, resulting again in the need for new, qualified, and engaged staff. This is an aspect which is also reflected in the high distance between employers and employees. Again, communication seems here to be the most promising solution. In summary, the master’s thesis has been able to answer the research questions with their propositions through providing a deep literature research and using the results of the methodology.



## 9. Conclusion

*“A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step”* – Lao Tzu (Backpacker Buddies, 2021).

This quote cannot only be aligned to tourism in general, it rather offers an allegory for the journey the hospitality sector made during the COVID-19 pandemic. As it is shown at the beginning of this thesis, the economy worldwide, especially the hospitality sector suffered immense due to the outbreak of the pandemic because of the up and downs between the lockdowns. Hotels had to close during the lockdowns, employees left the sector because of the high level of insecurity or because the firms had to dismiss their staff.

However, the hospitality industry had already faced huge challenges regarding their managing of people before the COVID-19 crisis intensified the situation, like the bad working conditions, low wages, or the image. These challenges made clear that that the hospitality sector needs help and change. The European Union offered during the pandemic a lot of financial help, and also helped to improve the distinct state aids. One of the most important methods in Austria and Germany has been the financial support for ‘Kurzarbeit’. Nevertheless, this financial help alone will not help the sector to recover.

The firms in this industry must rethink, according to the huge number of dismissals during the pandemic, their recruitment. Starting with implementing an effective crisis management, which includes all departments, developing fitting leadership styles for their management, offering a work environment which allows employees to engage themselves and to be motivated and thus, to stay in the companies. The next step would be to bring the needed attention to the actual recruitment process, with a special focus on the Employer Branding. Employer Branding should be one of the major goals the firms are focusing on since the high lack of qualified and engaged staff in this sector and the economic situation caused by the pandemic. It is important that the organisations understand that they have to create on the one side, an organisational culture which brings employees to stay at the firm and on the other side, to create a very positive image of the firm to make it attractive to potential qualified personnel.

As the results of the empirical part of this thesis show, employees require from the firm a good working environment, meaning a positive working atmosphere, acceptable working hours, and higher wages. However, the interviews showed that the hotels made already the first steps and are going in the right direction since they are already aware of the problems and try to find solutions for them, like attractive bonuses, internal career options and others. This is as well visible in the online evaluations, nevertheless, most of the employees seem to be still unsatisfied, so the processes in the hotels are still requiring a steady improvement.

This master's thesis analyses the problems of managing people in the hospitality industry. The main limitation of this master's thesis is that the number of interviews is too less, even though they have been able to gain a deeper knowledge of the recruitment from the view of HR experts. The master's thesis was able to define a connection between state aid and the success of the hotels, however it could be of interest for future research how it would be possible to improve the impact of EU's tourism policy on the organizations and their employees. Another interesting point future research should consider is to look at how the industry will actually change in the future and if the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic will help to overcome the already before the pandemic started known problems of the sector.

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## Appendix

A. List of chosen hotels for the analysis of the job evaluation platform “kununu” with the numbers of all evaluations without filters

*Table 3 List of chosen hotels for the analysis of the job evaluation platform "kununu" with the numbers of all evaluations without filters (own illustration)*

kununu.com	numbers of all evaluations without filters	
<b>Hotels Deutschland</b>	<b>Anzahl Mitarbeiter Bewertungen 01.03.2017-01.03.2020</b>	<b>Anzahl Mitarbeiter Bewertungen ab 01. März 2020</b>
Hotel Grand Elysée Hamburg	14	33
Hotel Bayerischer Hof, Munich	46	11
Rocco Forte The Charles Hotel, Munich	36	47
<b>Hotels Österreich</b>	<b>Anzahl Mitarbeiter Bewertungen 01.03.2017-01.03.2020</b>	<b>Anzahl Mitarbeiter Bewertungen ab 01. März 2020</b>
Hotel Krallerhof, Leogang	10	15
Stock Resort, Finkenberg	30	22
Park Hyatt, Vienna	8	14
The Ritz-Carlton, Vienna	18	14
<b>Hotels Schweiz</b>	<b>Anzahl Mitarbeiter Bewertungen 01.03.2017-01.03.2020</b>	<b>Anzahl Mitarbeiter Bewertungen ab 01. März 2020</b>
Grand Resort, Bad Ragaz	10	28
The Chedi Andermatt, Uri (GHM)	6	4
Carlton Hotel, St. Moritz, Graubünden	6	9
Steigenberger Grand Hotel Belvedere, Davos, Graubünden	5	6
Lenkerhof Gourmet Spa Resort, Lenk im Simmental, Bern	8	6



## B. Information table of hotels on “kununu”

Table 4 Reference list including the name of the hotel, date when the comments were made (date of posting) and the link of the distinct website

Hotel	Date of posting	Website
Grand Elysée, Hamburg, DE	June 2017	<a href="https://www.kununu.com/de/elyse-hotel-hamburg/kommentare?category=positive,negative,suggestion&amp;sort=oldest">https://www.kununu.com/de/elyse-hotel-hamburg/kommentare?category=positive,negative,suggestion&amp;sort=oldest</a> (Accessed at: 19.02.2022)
	October 2017	
	October 2017	
	February 2018	
	April 2018	
	August 2018	
	January 2019	
	July 2019	
	October 2019	
	December 2019	
	April 2020	
	April 2020	
	October 2020	
	December 2020	
	December 2020	
	March 2021	
July 2021		
December 2021		
Hotel Bayerischer Hof, München, DE	October 2018	<a href="https://www.kununu.com/de/hotel-bayerischer-hof/kommentare?category=positive,negative,suggestion&amp;sort=oldest">https://www.kununu.com/de/hotel-bayerischer-hof/kommentare?category=positive,negative,suggestion&amp;sort=oldest</a> (Accessed at: 19.02.2022)
	February 2019	
	March 2019	
	March 2019	
	September 2019	
	October 2019	
	July 2020	
	August 2020	
	March 2021	
	August 2021	
October 2021		
January 2022		

Rocco Forte The Charles Hotel, München, DE	March 2017	<a href="https://www.kununu.com/de/rocco-forte-the-charles-hotel/kommentare?category=positive,negative,suggestion&amp;sort=oldest">https://www.kununu.com/de/rocco-forte-the-charles-hotel/kommentare?category=positive,negative,suggestion&amp;sort=oldest</a> (Accessed at: 19.02.2022)
	April 2018	
	September 2018	
	September 2018	
	November 2018	
	November 2018	
	November 2018	
	December 2018	
	January 2019	
	June 2019	
	September 2019	
	March 2020	
	July 2020	
	July 2020	
	August 2020	
	August 2020	
	September 2020	
	January 2021	
	February 2021	
	February 2021	
	March 2021	
	March 2021	
	April 2021	
	July 2021	
	July 2021	
	August 2021	
	November 2021	
	November 2021	
	December 2021	
	December 2021	

Hotel Krallerhof, Leogang, AT	June 2018	<a href="https://www.kununu.com/at/hotel-krallerhof1/kommentare?category=positive,negative,suggestion&amp;sort=oldest">https://www.kununu.com/at/hotel-krallerhof1/kommentare?category=positive,negative,suggestion&amp;sort=oldest</a> (Accessed at: 19.02.2022)
	October 2019	
	January 2020	
	January 2020	
	August 2020	
	August 2020	
	October 2020	
	October 2020	
	November 2020	
	October 2021	
	November 2021	
Stock Resort, Finkenberg, AT	May 2017	<a href="https://www.kununu.com/at/stockresort1/kommentare?category=positive,negative,suggestion&amp;sort=oldest">https://www.kununu.com/at/stockresort1/kommentare?category=positive,negative,suggestion&amp;sort=oldest</a> (Accessed at: 19.02.2022)
	May 2018	
	May 2018	
	May 2018	
	May 2018	
	November 2018	
	December 2018	
	March 2019	
	October 2019	
	January 2020	
	March 2020	
	March 2020	
	August 2020	
	September 2020	
	November 2020	
	March 2021	
	November 2021	

Park Hyatt Vienna, AT	December 2017	<a href="https://www.kununu.com/at/park-hyatt-vienna/kommentare?category=positive,suggestion,negative&amp;sort=oldest">https://www.kununu.com/at/park-hyatt-vienna/kommentare?category=positive,suggestion,negative&amp;sort=oldest</a> (Accessed at: 19.02.2022)
	April 2018	
	August 2018	
	October 2019	
	January 2020	
	March 2020	
	October 2020	
	October 2020	
	October 2020	
	January 2022	
The Ritz-Carlton, Vienna, AT	March 2017	<a href="https://www.kununu.com/at/ritz-carlton-wien/kommentare?category=positive,negative,suggestion&amp;sort=oldest">https://www.kununu.com/at/ritz-carlton-wien/kommentare?category=positive,negative,suggestion&amp;sort=oldest</a> (Accessed at: 19.02.2022)
	December 2017	
	March 2018	
	July 2018	
	January 2019	
	July 2019	
	October 2019	
	October 2020	
	November 2020	
	December 2020	
	February 2021	
	June 2021	
	June 2021	
	October 2021	
	December 2021	

Grand Resort Bad Ragaz, Schweiz	March 2018	<a href="https://www.kununu.com/ch/grand-resort-bad-ragaz1/kommentare?category=positive,negative,suggestion&amp;sort=oldest">https://www.kununu.com/ch/grand-resort-bad-ragaz1/kommentare?category=positive,negative,suggestion&amp;sort=oldest</a> (Accessed at: 19.02.2022)
	May 2018	
	June 2019	
	August 2019	
	September 2019	
	November 2019	
	February 2020	
	June 2020	
	March 2021	
	April 2021	
	June 2021	
	June 2021	
	July 2021	
	August 2021	
	October 2021	
The Chedi, Andermatt, Schweiz	November 2017	<a href="https://www.kununu.com/ch/the-chedi-andermatt/kommentare?category=positive,negative,suggestion&amp;sort=oldest">https://www.kununu.com/ch/the-chedi-andermatt/kommentare?category=positive,negative,suggestion&amp;sort=oldest</a> (Accessed at: 19.02.2022)
	December 2017	
	March 2019	
	May 2019	
	November 2020	
	August 2021	
	November 2021	
Carlton Hotel, St. Moritz, Schweiz	December 2017	<a href="https://www.kununu.com/ch/carlton-hotel-st-moritz1/kommentare?category=positive,negative,suggestion&amp;sort=oldest">https://www.kununu.com/ch/carlton-hotel-st-moritz1/kommentare?category=positive,negative,suggestion&amp;sort=oldest</a> (Accessed at: 19.02.2022)
	March 2018	
	October 2019	
	June 2020	
	October 2020	
	October 2020	
	February 2021	
	January 2022	
	February 2022	
	February 2022	

Lenkerhof, Lenk, Schweiz	June 2018	<a href="https://www.kununu.com/ch/lenkerhof-gourmet-spa-resort1/kommentare?category=positive,negative,suggestion&amp;sort=oldest">https://www.kununu.com/ch/lenkerhof-gourmet-spa-resort1/kommentare?category=positive,negative,suggestion&amp;sort=oldest</a> (Accessed at: 19.02.2022)
	August 2018	
	April 2019	
	August 2019	
	December 2020	
	September 2021	
	September 2021	
Steigenberger Grandhotel Belvedere, Davos, Schweiz	April 2018	<a href="https://www.kununu.com/ch/steigenberger-grandhotel-belvedere-davos/kommentare?category=positive,negative,suggestion&amp;sort=oldest">https://www.kununu.com/ch/steigenberger-grandhotel-belvedere-davos/kommentare?category=positive,negative,suggestion&amp;sort=oldest</a> (Accessed at: 19.02.2022)
	April 2018	
	November 2018	
	October 2020	
	October 2020	
	November 2021	

## C. Interview guideline

### Einleitung

- ✓ Einleitung, Datenschutz (Anonymität), Aufnahmeerlaubnis
- ✓ Einstieg:

„Vielen Dank, dass Sie sich die Zeit für dieses Gespräch nehmen. Wie Sie ja bereits wissen, geht es in diesem Interview darum, wie sich das Recruitment/ die Personalgewinnung in der Hotelbranche aussieht und wie es sich während Corona verändert hat.

### Hauptteil

1. Bitte erinnern Sie sich an die Zeit **vor der Corona Pandemie** zurück. Mit welchen Herausforderungen in der Personalgewinnung hatten Sie vor der Pandemie zu tun?

*Fluktuationsrate, Fehlen von qualifiziertem Personal*

2. Was sind die Gründe für diese Herausforderungen gewesen?

*Fehlendes Employer Branding, Fehler im Prozess der Personalgewinnung*

3. Wie gingen Sie konkret bei der Personalgewinnung vor? Welche Methoden und welche Auswahlkriterien nutzten Sie?

*Walk-in Bewerbungen, interne Stellenbesetzung*

4. Wie machen Sie sich als Arbeitgeber attraktiv?

*Werte als Arbeitgeber, konkrete Jobanalyse (wissen die Bewerber, was sie erwartet?), Bonusprogramme/finanzielle Anreize*

5. Was hat sich im Bereich der Personalgewinnung / Recruitment **seit Ausbruch der Pandemie** verändert? Hinsichtlich der Herausforderungen? Hinsichtlich der Methoden? Hinsichtlich der Arbeitgeberattraktivität?

*Große Jobunsicherheit-> höhere Fluktuationsrate, online Plattformen, Social Media, Kurzarbeit, Zeitarbeit, verstärktes Employer Branding*

6. Wie denken Sie, hat sich die Pandemie auf die Job Attraktivität in der Hotelbranche ausgewirkt? Hat sich das auch auf die Anzahl der Bewerber ausgewirkt?

*Sinkende Attraktivität, weniger Bewerber, weniger Ausbildungsbewerbungen*

7. Wenn Sie sich jetzt in eine **Zeit nach Corona** versetzen, wie denken Sie, wird die Zukunft in der Hotelbranche aussehen? Speziell natürlich auf das Recruitment / die Personalgewinnung bezogen? Welche signifikanten Veränderungen werden sich bemerkbar machen?

*Verstärktes Employer Branding, online recruitment*

8. Welche Lösungsmöglichkeiten sehen Sie, um die Auswirkungen der Pandemie zu überwinden?

*Krisenmanagement und finanzielle Hilfe (EU/staatliche Hilfe)*

9. Welche Hilfe erwarten Sie von der Europäischen Union / von Österreich? Was könnte besser gemacht werden? Was ist besonders gut gelaufen/ Welche Hilfe konnte konkret bereits in Anspruch genommen werden? (Falls vorher die Jobunsicherheit erwähnt wurde: Denken Sie, dass diese Hilfe bereits zur Reduzierung der Jobunsicherheit beigetragen hat?)

*Finanzielle Hilfe, schwierige Erreichbarkeit von Hilfen, Zusage von Sicherheiten (z.B. finanzielle Hilfe des Staates) reduziert Jobunsicherheit*

10. Falls vorher noch nicht erwähnt: In der Literatur wird auch effektives Krisenmanagement als wichtiges Instrument zur Bewältigung von Krisen, wie die Corona Pandemie angeführt. Hatten Sie vor dem Ausbruch der Pandemie bereits einen Krisenplan?

Falls vorher erwähnt: Sie erwähnten bereits das Krisenmanagement, hatten Sie vor dem Ausbruch der Pandemie bereits einen Krisenplan?



<b>JA</b>	<b>NEIN</b>	
Wer war an der Entwicklung beteiligt? Welche Abteilungen?	Haben Sie dann im Laufe der Pandemie einen Krisenplan entwickelt?	
Was war besonders gut an dem Plan / was nicht so gut?	<b>JA</b>	<b>NEIN</b>
	Wie lange hat das gedauert und wer war daran beteiligt, welche Abteilungen?	Was waren oder sind die Gründe dafür?
Konnten Sie in Ihrer Abteilung, also im Personalbereich, von dem Krisenplan profitieren?		
<b>JA</b>	<b>NEIN</b>	
Wie hat der Krisenplan Ihnen geholfen die ersten Schritte in der Pandemie zu bewältigen?)	Warum nicht?	
Wie hat sich der Krisenplan oder das Krisenmanagement während der Pandemie entwickelt?		
Wie werden Sie mit zukünftigen Krisen umgehen?		

*Anfangs kein Krisenplan, Entwicklung während der Pandemie, zukünftig existieren konkrete Pläne, Effektives Krisenmanagement als einzige Möglichkeit die Pandemie zu überstehen*



## D. Coding guideline

Table 5 Coding guideline

Number	Categories	Definition	Anchor examples		Codification rules
			Evaluations	Interviews	
1	Lack of qualified and engaged staff	Skills, knowledge of job requirements, engagement	Es herrscht ein Fachkräftemangel. (Example: lack of qualified personnel)	Ja, also ich glaube das Thema Fachkräftemangel und Personalgewinnung ist uns allen kein Fremdwort. Das ist uns irgendwie allen auch geläufig und damit umzugehen, das haben wir alle in den letzten Jahren so ein bisschen lernen dürfen. (example: lack of qualified personnel)	-
1.1	Lack of qualified personnel		mehr Personal zur Entlastung des bestehenden Personals (example: lack of staff in general)		
1.2	Lack of staff in general				

2	Employer Branding/ recruitment and retention	retention management (contractual structure, motivation, job satisfaction, turnover rate, problems with apprenticeships/ traineeships)	Alle Mitarbeiter mal gleich behandeln und viel besser bezahlen sonst möchte hier bald keiner mehr arbeiten (example retention)	Und durch Corona sind wir da alle so ein bisschen tatsächlich ins Straucheln gekommen. Ich weiß noch wie wir, ich glaub es war im Januar oder Februar, als der Coronavirus das erste Mal so richtig in [Nachrichtenprogramm] aufgetaucht ist und wir hatten gerade in den nächsten Tagen eine Arbeitssicherheitsausschusssitzung mit unseren ähm, Arbeitsmedizinern, und wir haben uns so ein bisschen darüber ausgetauscht, was für Möglichkeiten es gibt, weil wir eben wussten, wir sind in 2 Wochen auf den Schweizer Recruiting Messen und an den ganzen Schweizer Hotelfachschulen. Das war, da kann ich mich noch total gut daran erinnern, gerade der Zeitpunkt, wo gerade im Raum stand, was machen wir jetzt, wie gehen wir damit um, gehen wir trotzdem in die Schweiz, oder sagen wir, hey, uns ist das Risiko zu groß und wir verzichten darauf. .. Und ähm, wir haben uns dann tatsächlich darauf, ja, tatsächlich entschieden, es erstmal bleiben zu lassen, nicht zu gehen, und das Ganze dann online stattfinden zu lassen. (example recruitment)	+/-
2.1	Benefits	benefits, work- life-balance, image	Den Zuschuss zum HVV Ticket und zur Betrieblichen Altersvorsorge. Angebotene Schulungen. Zwei Mitarbeiterevents im Jahr. Die Lage des Hotels. (example benefits)		
2.2	Work-life- balance				
2.3	Image				
2.4	Retention				
2.5	Recruitment		(-) Mehr auf die Überstunden der Azubis achten und auch darauf achten, dass sie nicht mehr als erlaubt arbeiten dürfen. (example work-life- balance)		
			Also wir legen sehr, sehr viel Wert auf diversity, international, intercultural, und der ganze approach zum... how to be different, how to be perfectly different. (example image)		

3	Working conditions	career options, wages, workload, stress factor, working atmosphere/wellbeing, communication within the teams	Löhne könnten höher sein (example: payment)	aber wir versuchen natürlich auch unseren Kandidaten bestmöglich entgegenzukommen, sei es, dass sie mal Trainings machen wollen, oder sonstiges (example: career)	+/-
3.1	Career		der zusammenhalt im Team war sehr gut, man hat sich jederzeit unterstützt (example work environment)		
3.2	Payment				
3.3	Working environment (Team spirit, communication, description of work, well-being, personal opinion for improvement)				
4	Job security	Plans/training due to corona pandemic, law regulations due to the pandemic, Kurzarbeit, dismissals, leadership qualities, state aid (financial)	Raus aus dem "Glaskasten" und Kontakt zu den Mitarbeitern suchen (example: leadership)	Ja, das war auf jeden Fall die Kurzarbeit, ohne, (...) nicht wie es ausgeschaut hätte, das war ein wichtiges Instrument äh für uns. (example: state aid)  Ja, ein sehr spannendes Thema. Ich glaube, keiner würde die Hotellerie noch als sicher bezeichnen, andererseits ist genau jetzt die Zeit Chancen zu nutzen, dass man wirklich einen Job bekommt in der Hotellerie, aber natürlich, sowohl für Mitarbeiter als auch Bewerber steht viel, viel Unsicherheit im Raum. (Example: crisis management)	+/-
4.1	Leadership				
4.2	Crisis management				
4.3	State aid				
5	Undefined HR problems	(Dis-)satisfaction with HR department or personnel decisions	Besetzung von Führungspositionen, insbesondere in der HR überdenken.  Gutes Personalbüro	-	+/-

6	not assignable	text with no content, not related to the other categories, general opinion for the sector itself, too private information of users, mentioning of expert knowledge, which is not relevant, just saying everything is bad without examples or arguments	Keine nichts mehr. Es war einmal alles gut aber jetzt ist alles schlecht.	Vor Corona? Das kann ich Ihnen gar nicht beantworten. Weil, ich bin nämlich während der Corona Pandemie eingestiegen. Ähm ... Ich weiß nicht, wie hilfreich es dann ist, Ihnen aus anderen Erzählungen zu berichten.	
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E. Example of the chosen filters (screenshot) and example of an evaluation which is not taken into account since there is no content (Rocco Forte, The Charles Hotel, Munich, August 2019)

## Nicht empfehlenswert

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1,2 ★☆☆☆☆



Nicht empfohlen

August 2019

Ex-Angestellte/r oder Arbeiter/in • Hat bei Rocco Forte The Charles Hotel gearbeitet.

### Gut am Arbeitgeber finde ich

Nix

### Schlecht am Arbeitgeber finde ich

Alles

### Verbesserungsvorschläge

Alles neu aufbauen

[Sterne anzeigen](#)

[Teilen](#)

---

Figure 15 Example of chosen filters (screenshot) on the "kununu" platform (Rocco Forte, The Charles Hotel, Munich, August 2019)

F. Overview results evaluation "kununu" platform

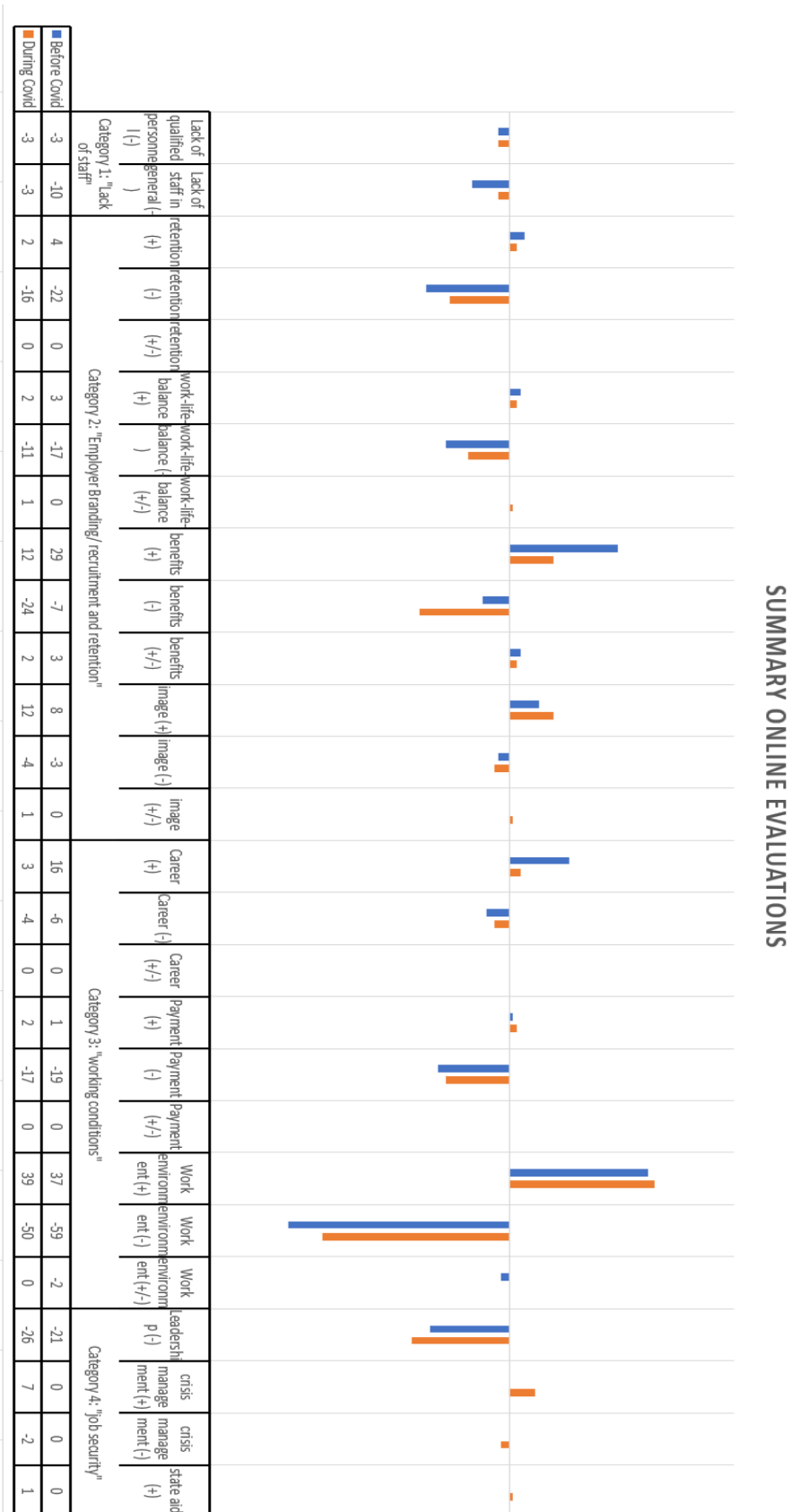


Figure 16 Overview results evaluation "kununu" platform (own illustration, overview results evaluation "kununu" platform)

Hotel A, 25.01.2022, 16h

A = Interviewer, I = Interviewee

## G. Transcriptions

- 1 Einleitung nicht aufgenommen.
- 2 A: Vielen Dank auf alle Fälle nochmal, dass Sie sich Zeit nehmen für das Gespräch. Wenn Sie sich einfach  
3 mal kurz an die Zeit vor der Corona Pandemie erinnern würden, welche, ähm, Herausforderungen in  
4 der Personalgewinnung hatten Sie da? .. oder eben
- 5 I: Vor Corona?
- 6 A: Vor Corona genau.
- 7 I: Das kann ich Ihnen gar nicht beantworten.
- 8 A: Okay.
- 9 I: Weil, ich bin nämlich während der Corona Pandemie eingestiegen.
- 10 A: Mhm.
- 11 I: Ähm ... Ich weiß nicht, wie hilfreich es dann ist, Ihnen
- 12 A: Alles gut.
- 13 I: aus anderen Erzählungen zu berichten.
- 14 A: Okay
- 15 I: Genau, aber es war, es war davor schon herausfordernd, ja.
- 16 A: Das kann ich mir vorstellen.
- 17 I: Es war schon ein Thema gewesen in unserer Branche.
- 18 A: Okay. Wie ist es dann jetzt mit den Herausforderungen, also was konkret, oder welchen  
19 Herausforderungen konkret sehen Sie sich denn gegenüber, jetzt im Moment?
- 20 I: Mhm, also eine große Herausforderung ist es, äh, ... ja, geeignete Mitarbeiter zu finden, ja, aber auch  
21 zeitlich gesehen, ja, also wir haben unsere Stellen jetzt viel länger offen, um diese auch besetzen zu  
22 können.
- 23 A: Okay
- 24 I: Das ist, ja, der Prozess ist viel länger geworden, gleichzeitig dürfen wir aber viel schneller handeln,  
25 weil die Konkurrenz gerade sehr groß ist, das heißt sobald eine qualifizierte Bewerbung reinkommt,  
26 muss man dementsprechend gleich schnell den Bewerber kontaktieren, sonst ist er weg, ja.
- 27 A: Mhm
- 28 I: Sonst hat ihn die Konkurrenz. Ähm, Fachkräftemangel, ja, jein. Das Problem, was wir jetzt hatten,  
29 waren einfach die permanenten Lockdowns, ja, da haben viele dann gesagt, ach, jetzt warten wir noch,  
30 jetzt warten noch, jetzt warten wir wieder, jetzt warten wir wieder und da hat man auch gemerkt vor  
31 Weihnachten zum Beispiel, da kamen sehr wenige Bewerbungen, weil dann viele gesagt haben, ach,  
32 im neuen Jahr dann, das hat man halt schon sehr stark gemerkt. .. Und was auch eine Herausforderung  
33 ist, sind die, das sind die Gehälter und die Löhne. .. Weil grad jeder Mitarbeiter sucht und da ist jetzt  
34 auch viel möglich, die Bewerber verlangen jetzt auch viel mehr, was auch gut ist aus der Bewerbersicht.  
35 Ähm, genau, das sind gerade so die Challenges, die wir haben.

Hotel A, 25.01.2022, 16h

A = Interviewer, I = Interviewee

36 A: Mhm, sehen Sie da die Gründe nur in der Corona Pandemie, oder ist das ein allgemeines Problem  
37 in der Hotelbranche, gerade mit der Suche nach dem qualifizierten Personal?

38 I: Also, das war ja vor Corona leider auch schon ein Problem. Ja, die Löhne sind einfach niedrig. .. Leider.

39 A: Ja.

40 I: Und das war vorher auch schon schwierig. Ähm, es wurde aber auch jetzt jedenfalls verstärkt.

41 A: Okay

42 I: Durch die Kurzarbeitsbeihilfen. Viele sagen, ach gemütlich, wenn ich daheim bin und arbeite  
43 irgendwo geringfügig und verdiene dann am Ende mehr, oder gleich viel, das ist jetzt auf jeden Fall  
44 verstärkt, ja.

45 A: Okay. Alles klar. Wie gehen Sie denn konkret bei der Personalgewinnung vor? Also welche  
46 Methoden, nutzen Sie Online-Recruitment oder Job Plattformen oder was es so alles für Möglichkeiten  
47 gibt?

48 I: Ähm, ja, unsere wichtigste Plattform ist „hotelcareer“, also online.

49 A: Mhm.

50 I: Wir haben aber auch Hilfe vom (Name der staatlichen Behörde für Arbeit), ja, die haben auch so eine  
51 Art Jobbörse. Und dann machen wir aber auch innerhalb der Firma, wir haben so ein „Mitarbeiter  
52 werben Mitarbeiter“-Programm, ja, falls irgendwer irgendjemanden kennt mit finanziellen Anreizen.  
53 Und wir gehören ja zu [Hotelgruppenname], die haben auch eine Karriere Plattform, das funktioniert  
54 leider nicht so gut, und über LinkedIn .. probieren wir auch dies und das. Das kommt aber auch sehr  
55 speziell auf die jeweiligen Jobs dann an, einen Koch finde ich vermutlich nicht auf LinkedIn und wir  
56 haben auch schon Printmedien versucht, das war nicht so erfolgreich (lacht). Und, ja, also online wird  
57 da sehr viel gemacht.

58 A: Mhm, okay. Und nach welchen Auswahlkriterien gehen Sie da vor, also sagen wir, ein Job bei der  
59 Empfangsleitung oder so, haben Sie da einen konkreten Prozess, den die Bewerber durchlaufen  
60 müssen, oder sagen Sie im Gespräch, ja, okay, das passt, das versuchen wir jetzt mal?

61 I: Mhm, .. also da kommt es auch wieder auf die Position darauf an, genau. Also wenn es jetzt ist, sagen  
62 wir, der normale Receptionist, da ist es eigentlich so, wir sind immer zu zweit im Bewerbungsgespräch,  
63 die Front-Office Managerin, in dem Fall der Abteilungsleiter derjenigen Stelle und ich, aus der  
64 Personalabteilung. Wenn es dann aber auch um eine tatsächliche Führungsposition geht, also wenn es  
65 zum Beispiel um den Front Office Manager geht, dann würde auch noch die Generaldirektion dabei  
66 sein, also die Hotelmanagerin, und wenn es dann da noch drüber geht, ja, dann spricht auch der  
67 Eigentümer noch mit, das kann dann bis zwei Runden dauern. (05:13)

68 A: Mhm, okay.

69 I: Genau. Was es bei uns auch noch gibt, ist ein Assessment, das hat etwas mit [Hotelgruppenname] zu  
70 tun, also eigentlich durchläuft jeder Bewerber ein Assessment.

71 A: Mhm.

72 I: Das kommt auf die Stelle darauf an, von der Schwierigkeit her, beziehungsweise von den  
73 Aufgabenstellungen generell, ähm, das durchläuft eigentlich auch jeder. Genau.



74 A: Okay, verstehe. Klingt auf alle Fälle sehr interessant, weil ich meine, gerade im Gespräch, oder was  
75 ich jetzt so gelesen habe, oder auch persönliche Erfahrung, zeigt halt, dass im Gespräch die meisten  
76 im Prinzip gleich sehen, ob das passt oder ob es nicht passt, also das auf alle Fälle.

77 I: Absolut.

78 A: Auch dass da so aufgebauschte Prozesse irgendwie schwierig sind.

79 I: Man weiß es sofort. Also ich weiß nicht, ob Sie da schon sehr viel Erfahrung damit haben, aber die  
80 Bewerbung sagt schon sehr viel aus und auch spätestens der erste Eindruck beziehungsweise, wenn  
81 derjenige dann die erste Frage beantwortet, dann weiß man's. (lacht)

82 A: Haben Sie da einen vorgefertigten Fragenkatalog, oder auch positionsorientiert, nehme ich an, denn  
83 Sie dann stellen?

84 I: Genau. Ja, ja, schon. Also, kommt auch auf die Abteilung drauf an, weil im Housekeeping fragt man  
85 natürlich andere Dinge

86 A: Ja, natürlich.

87 I: als am Empfang zum Beispiel. Und da ist dann doch jeder wieder sehr individuell, ja, oft ergibt sich  
88 was im Gespräch, aber so im Großen und Ganzen haben wir schon immer ungefähr den gleichen  
89 Ablauf. .. Genau.

90 A: Okay. Dann hätte ich noch eine Frage, und zwar bezüglich Ihrer Arbeitgeberattraktivität, also wie  
91 Sie das gestalten, wie Sie versuchen, Bewerber für sich zu gewinnen? Und dann eben auch, weil Sie  
92 gesagt haben, es ist kompliziert eben Leute zu finden, die qualifiziert genug sind, die dann für einen  
93 selber zu gewinnen.

94 I: Mhm. ... Ja, das ist ein spannendes Thema. (lacht) Es ist, wir haben da einerseits einen kleinen Vorteil,  
95 ja, man kennt uns, wenn jetzt einer sagt, ach, ich möchte in eines der [Straßennamen] in [Stadt], da  
96 sind wir einfach dabei, das ist auf jeden Fall ein Vorteil. Ähm, dann ist es aber auch so, wir gehören zu  
97 [Hotelgruppenname], das heißt, wir können tolle Mitarbeiterraten für Mitarbeiter anbieten, die können  
98 günstig verreisen, das spricht aber nicht alle gleich gut an, ja, weil das normale Zimmermädchen wird  
99 auch vermutlich nicht so viel verreisen. Dann geht's darum, wir stellen kostenlos die Uniform zur  
100 Verfügung, bei uns werden die Mitarbeiter kostenlos verpflegt, das ist ein großer wichtiger Punkt. Wir  
101 haben dann auch noch so dies und das an Vergünstigungen, bei lokalen Shops und, und so weiter. Wie  
102 gut das uns jetzt tatsächlich als Arbeitgeber attraktiv macht, ... weiß ich nicht.

103 ...

104 A: Aber Sie sind da schon auch dahinter her, oder? Sich selbst, also wenn man das so sagen kann, sich  
105 selbst eben attraktiv zu machen einfach.

106 I: Genau, wir müssen das ja einerseits oder müssen, dürfen ja auch schon in die Stellenausschreibungen  
107 reinschreiben, was wir bieten. Wir können ja nicht immer nur was von den Mitarbeitern was verlangen,  
108 wir müssen ja auch was zurückgeben und bei jeder Gelegenheit erinnern wir natürlich alle daran.  
109 (lachen)

110 A: Das ist doch schön (lacht)

111 I: Also ja, das ist ein, ein on-going Prozess, das ist ein großes Thema, wir sind, wir werden da ja  
112 einerseits auch gut von [Hotelgruppenname] unterstützt, andererseits müssen wir aber auch, weil wir  
113 in [Stadt] sind, auch auf den lokalen Markt eingehen

Hotel A, 25.01.2022, 16h

A = Interviewer, I = Interviewee

114 A: Mhm, das teilt sich praktisch dann?

115 I: Genau, genau. Einerseits ist es natürlich [Hotelgruppenname] (...), das spricht einige sehr gut an, bei  
116 anderen, das sagt ihnen ja gar nix, denen geht es einfach nur um den Arbeitgeber in (Stadtname)

117 A: Mhm

118 I: .. Das heißt, da gibt es die beiden Seiten und das ist ein großes Thema, permanent wie man sich da  
119 verbessern kann, was man tun kann.

120 A: Mhm.

121 I: Das steht auf unseren to do's immer ganz oben. (lacht)

122 A: Okay (lachen) perfekt. Glauben Sie denn, dass sich die Jobattraktivität in der Hotelbranche durch  
123 die Pandemie ganz generell verändert hat? Also, dass man einfach sagt, für mich im Hotel, das ist nichts  
124 mehr, das ist einfach zu unsicher, oder war es vielleicht auch vorher schon.

125 I: Ja, also es ist ganz spannend zu beobachten, weil einerseits sind jetzt wirklich nur noch die da, die  
126 wirklich für die Hotellerie brennen, und man sagt ja auch gern, entweder man liebt es oder man liebt  
127 es nicht, ja. Das war einerseits schön zu beobachten, dass man jetzt die hier hat, die wirklich motiviert  
128 sind. (10:10)

129 A: Mhm.

130 I: .. Andererseits, war es natürlich sehr schwer, weil die, die noch ein bisschen unsicher sind, oder die,  
131 die noch sehr jung sind, die hat die Pandemie natürlich erstmal abgeschreckt, ja, bin aber davon  
132 überzeugt, dass .. viele auch wieder zurückkommen werden.

133 A: Mhm.

134 I: Weil es einfach ein schöner Arbeitsplatz ist oder generell die Hotellerie.

135 A: Ja, das sehe ich auch so. (lachen)

136 I: Ja, schön, das freut mich, (lachen) ja, es ist tatsächlich so, man kann es nicht leugnen. Genau, ja.

137 A: Perfekt. Wenn Sie jetzt mal an eine entfernte Zeit nach Corona denken, ähm, wie glauben Sie, dass  
138 die Zukunft in der Hotelbranche ausschauen wird, gerade im Recruitment natürlich?

139 I: Ja, also ich bin davon überzeugt, dass wir sehr schnell wieder an die Zahlen anknüpfen können vor  
140 Corona. Ich glaube aber, dass die Mitarbeitersuche weiterhin schwer sein wird. Ähm, ich glaube, ja,  
141 einerseits die Lohn und Gehalt, andererseits auch die Attraktivität im Sinne von 4 Tage Woche zum  
142 Beispiel, ich glaube, wenn wir mit so etwas nicht endlich mal aufwarten können, dann wird es schwierig  
143 werden.

144 A: Auch mit fixen Dienstplänen, die sich halt nicht viel ändern, oder?

145 I: Genau, genau, das ist, .. ich würde sagen, dass sind so die zwei, die zwei Proppen, die uns länger  
146 begleiten werden.

147 A: Mhm

148 I: Arbeitszeit und Entlohnung, genau.

149 A: Okay, Sie haben jetzt gerade schon die 4-Tage-Woche angesprochen, was gibt es sonst für  
150 Lösungsmöglichkeiten, um eben mehr Leute für die Hotelbranche zu gewinnen?

Hotel A, 25.01.2022, 16h

A = Interviewer, I = Interviewee

151 I: Ja. Ja, genau, also das ist einerseits die 4-Tage-Woche, aber andererseits auch, dass man einfach  
152 flexibler auftritt, als Arbeitgeber auch. Dass man jetzt zum Beispiel mehr Teilzeitkräfte schaut, dass  
153 man nicht gleich sagt, mm, nein, wir suchen aber Vollzeit.

154 A: Mhm.

155 I: (...) also, dass wir als Arbeitgeber auch flexibler werden, auch dass man wirklich auf die Leute eingeht,  
156 und wenn der sagt, Freitagnachmittag mach ich immer meinen Englisch Kurs und dass wir das auch  
157 einfach akzeptieren und demnach rundherum planen. Genau, also Teilzeit und dass wir auch auf die  
158 Arbeitszeitgestaltung generell mehr Acht geben. Und auch, ja, uns daran zu erinnern, dass die  
159 Menschheit auch ein Leben, ein Privatleben hat. Und man kann ja sehr gut drumherum arbeiten. Ich  
160 meine, die Woche hat 7 Tage, und wenn jetzt da ein Tag ein bisschen schwierig ist, deswegen soll das  
161 jetzt kein Ausschlusskriterium sein.

162 A: Das stimmt.

163 I: Genau.

164 A: Sehr beeindruckend auf alle Fälle (überlappend)

165 I: (überlappend) Wir diskutieren auch, Entschuldigung?

166 A: Ich wollte nur sagen es ist sehr beeindruckend.

167 (kurzes persönliches Gespräch 13:08-13:55)

168 I: Wir diskutieren auch, das ist aber wirklich noch sehr weit in der Ferne, einen Betriebskindergarten  
169 mit anderen Hotels.

170 A: Okay.

171 I: Das ist aber .. wirklich noch Zukunftsmusik, weil da muss man ja sehr viel beachten. Weil, wenn die  
172 Mitarbeiterin von sehr weit kommt, macht es dann überhaupt Sinn, das Kind mit in die Stadt zu  
173 schleppen, oder (...), aber ja, da wird schon sehr viel überlegt jetzt, wie wir einfach attraktiver werden  
174 können.

175 A: Mhm, okay. Ähm, in eine andere Richtung gefragt, es war viel in den Medien ja auch berichtet, dass  
176 die EU sehr hilft und auch der Österreich, Österreich als Staat halt finanziell hilft, haben Sie denn den  
177 Eindruck, dass Sie davon profitieren konnten?

178 I: Ich wüsste nicht, (lacht) das hat mich überhaupt nicht erreicht.

179 A: Okay, alles klar. Ähm, denken Sie denn, rein theoretisch, wenn es Sie erreicht hätte, also finanzielle  
180 Hilfe, diese Unsicherheit bei den Arbeitnehmern reduziert hätte? Dass man einfach sagt, da kommt von  
181 oben finanzielle Hilfe, das könnte funktionieren?

182 I: Ja, also, es gibt schon auch diese (Behördenname für Arbeit) Beihilfen, das hat jetzt nix mit der EU zu  
183 tun, aber da gibt es sogenannte Eingliederungsbeihilfen für diverse Mitarbeiter, sei es Alter, sei es  
184 Geschlecht, was auch immer, und ... das ist natürlich schon gut, (lacht) wenn man das bekommt, es ist  
185 jetzt aber nicht ausschlaggebend, ob ich jetzt einen Mitarbeiter nehme oder nicht. (...).

186 A: Okay, alles klar

187 I: Das ist dann doch nicht so viel, dass man sagt, da nehmen wir dann einfach alle. (lacht)

188 A: (lacht) ähm

Hotel A, 25.01.2022, 16h

A = Interviewer, I = Interviewee

- 189 I: Ich weiß nicht, das von der EU, weil es mich jetzt interessiert, was wäre das? Also finanzielle .....
- 190 A: Ja, genau, die haben eben für zum Beispiel Österreich, aber auch für Deutschland finanzielle Hilfen  
191 sozusagen locker gemacht, und gesagt, ihr könnt so und so viel Geld haben und das könnt ihr in den  
192 Tourismus stecken oder in die Hotels stecken, und da hätte mich einfach interessiert, ob da tatsächlich  
193 auch was angekommen ist, also ob das bei den Mitarbeitern tatsächlich .. okay da war Hilfe da, das hat  
194 funktioniert.
- 195 I: Ja, das einzige ist jetzt die Kurzarbeitsbeihilfe, das bringt uns was, weiß aber nicht wie weit das auf  
196 EU-Ebene, Investitionsprämien, diese Dinge gibt es auch, falls das mit der EU zusammenhängt, ja, jein,  
197 ich würde sagen direkt auf den Mitarbeiter gibt es am Ende nicht ...
- 198 A: Mhm. Naja, das war zu befürchten eigentlich, würde ich sagen, da haben sie auch Werbung  
199 sozusagen dafür gemacht, aber ja genau, da wollte ich nochmals nachfragen.
- 200 I: Traurig eigentlich (lacht), hmm, nein, bei uns ist nichts angekommen hier.
- 201 A: Was anderes, also gerade in der Theorie, wird auch erwähnt, wie wichtig eben effektives  
202 Krisenmanagement ist, gerade in Zeiten von Corona. Hatten Sie denn, bevor Corona gestartet ist, oder  
203 auch währenddessen, irgendwie einen Krisenplan, wo Sie gesagt haben, okay, so kann das  
204 funktionieren, ähm, ..
- 205 I: Ja, das war auf jeden Fall die Kurzarbeit, ohne, (...) nicht wie es ausgeschaut hätte
- 206 A: ohne wäre es gar nicht gegangen, ja.
- 207 I: das war ein wichtiges Instrument, äh, für uns. Und ja klar, (...) generell, wenn man das konkret jetzt  
208 einfach runterbricht, was machen wir, wenn ein Mitarbeiter Corona hat
- 209 A: Mhm
- 210 I: Das hat ja sehr weitreichende Folgen, ja, muss ein anderer Mitarbeiter in Quarantäne, wer deckt  
211 dessen Schicht ab und so weiter und so fort, also, in der Hinsicht gibt und gab es natürlich Krisenpläne
- 212 A: Mhm.
- 213 I: und die diversen Lockdowns haben uns natürlich auch dazu gezwungen gleich mal wieder alles  
214 runterzufahren, also das war im November fast schon routiniert.
- 215 A: Mhm, kann ich mir vorstellen.
- 216 I: (...) einfach alles runtergefahren sind, und ähm genau, ich weiß nicht, ob das jetzt Ihre Frage  
217 beantwortet?
- 218 A: Mhm, doch, auf alle Fälle, um das ging es, und auch, dass die Kurzarbeit ein wichtiges Instrument  
219 ist, gab es noch andere Instrumente, wo Sie sagen, das hat uns wirklich geholfen, durch die Pandemie  
220 durch, gerade am Anfang vielleicht?
- 221 (Pause)
- 222 I: Hmm, ich komm sofort auf die Kurzarbeit. Es gab dann Stundungen für die ..  
223 Sozialversicherungsbeiträge, bei der [Firma]
- 224 A: Mhm.
- 225 I: Wo es dann auch schön auf kulante .. (...) zurückzugreifen, und so Dinge, aber es war einfach die  
226 Kurzarbeit, ganz klar, ohne die Kurzarbeit wär hier gar nix gegangen

Hotel A, 25.01.2022, 16h

A = Interviewer, I = Interviewee

227 A: Das ist gut, dass es dann zumindest einen Teil gegeben hat, wo man das dann irgendwie ausgleichen  
228 konnte, auf alle Fälle.

229 I: Ja. Das ist auch jetzt nicht das Wundermittel, war trotzdem schwierig, aber da muss man schon auch  
230 dankbar sein, ja, für die Unterstützung, die wir hatten.

231 A: Okay, versteh ich. Vielen Dank und das war's schon. (19:36)

232 Schluss nicht aufgenommen.

Hotel B, 01.02.1011, 11h, online

A = Interviewer I= Interviewee

1 Einleitung nicht aufgenommen

2 A: Dann auf alle Fälle nochmal vielen Dank, und wie Sie ja bereits wissen, geht es in diesem Interview  
3 darum, wie sich Recruitment oder die Personalgewinnung während Corona verändert hat. Ähm,  
4 deswegen würde ich Sie ganz kurz nur einmal bitten, wenn Sie sich vielleicht an eine Zeit vor Corona  
5 erinnern, mit welchen Herausforderungen hatten Sie denn da in der Personalgewinnung zu tun?

6 I: .. Ja, also ich glaube das Thema Fachkräftemangel und Personalgewinnung ist uns allen kein  
7 Fremdwort. Das ist uns irgendwie allen auch geläufig und damit umzugehen, das haben wir alle in den  
8 letzten Jahren so ein bisschen lernen dürfen. In Zeiten vor Corona war das Recruitment tatsächlich so  
9 ein bisschen ein anderes. Es war geprägt von sehr aktivem Recruiting.

10 A: Mhm.

11 I: Bedeutet, wir waren viele Tage im Jahr auch aktiv auf Veranstaltungen, auf Messen, waren in  
12 Schulen, haben uns präsentiert, haben Vorträge gehalten, um einfach auch so nochmal die Reichweite  
13 von [Hotelname] nochmal zu vergrößern, aber auch aktiv zu erzählen, was uns ausmacht, was uns  
14 einzigartig macht und was für Vakanzen wir auch in den entsprechenden Teams aufweisen. Und durch  
15 Corona sind wir da alle so ein bisschen tatsächlich ins Straucheln gekommen. Ich weiß noch, wie wir,  
16 ich glaub es war im Januar oder Februar, als der Coronavirus das erste Mal so richtig in  
17 [Nachrichtenprogramm] aufgetaucht ist und wir hatten gerade in den nächsten Tagen eine  
18 Arbeitssicherheitsausschusssitzung mit unseren

19 A: Mhm

20 I: ähm, Arbeitsmedizinern, und wir haben uns so ein bisschen darüber ausgetauscht, was für  
21 Möglichkeiten es gibt, weil wir eben wussten, wir sind in zwei Wochen auf den Schweizer Recruiting  
22 Messen und an den ganzen Schweizer Hotelfachschulen.

23 A: Mhm

24 I: Das war, da kann ich mich noch total gut daran erinnern, gerade der Zeitpunkt, wo gerade im Raum  
25 stand, was machen wir jetzt, wie gehen wir damit um, gehen wir trotzdem in die Schweiz oder sagen  
26 wir, hey, uns ist das Risiko zu groß und wir verzichten darauf. .. Und ähm, wir haben uns dann  
27 tatsächlich darauf, ja, tatsächlich entschieden, es erstmal bleiben zu lassen, nicht zu gehen, und das  
28 Ganze dann online stattfinden zu lassen.

29 A: Ah, okay.

30 I: Und dass, dieser Wechsel von diesem aktiven ich trete als Person auf und repräsentiere [Hotelname]  
31 und dem Haus, in dem ich arbeite, hin zum ich repräsentiere mich online und die Kandidaten müssen  
32 aktiv erstmal meinen Meetingraum betreten, das war schon eine riesige Umstellung muss ich  
33 tatsächlich sagen.

34 A: Das glaube ich, ja. Ähm, weil Sie schon gerade die Messen und so gerade erwähnt haben, wie gehen  
35 Sie da konkret vor, Sie haben Stände erwähnt, gibt es noch andere Methoden, wo Sie sagen, wir sind  
36 auf verschiedenen Plattformen unterwegs, oder, welche Methoden nutzen Sie da noch?

37 I: Hmm, wir haben tatsächlich mit den (kooperellen?) Portalen, sind wir ein bisschen, haben wir uns  
38 ein bisschen vergrößert, wir hatten eigentlich immer nur die Kooperation mit ganz klassisch  
39 Hotelcareer, weil es

40 A: Mhm

41 I: auch das Portal ist, über das die meisten arbeiten und auch suchen, und Azubiyo, mit denen haben  
42 wir auch kooperiert,

43 A: Mhm

44 I: hinsichtlich der Gewinnung von Auszubildenden und haben uns dann aber verstärkt nochmal auf  
45 diese Online Portale, auch ja, uns einfach informiert, welche Möglichkeiten gibt es da mit  
46 unterschiedlichen Portalen auch zusammenzuarbeiten und haben da auch nochmal einige Portale mit  
47 ins Portfolio genommen, um nochmal die Reichweite auch zu vergrößern.

48 A: Mhm. Hat sich das verstärkt während der Pandemie oder war das vorher schon ein großes Thema?

49 I: Das war davor ein Thema, aber die Wichtigkeit ist nicht so richtig in den Vordergrund getreten, weil  
50 wir eben wussten wir können auch sehr gut vor Ort eben auf den Messen rekrutieren, aber dadurch,  
51 dass es dann von jetzt auf gleich weggefallen ist, war dann doch schnell das Interesse da mit diesen  
52 Portalen zu kooperieren.

53 A: Und (kurze Unterbrechung der Verbindung 3.52-3:54) ah, jetzt war ganz kurz das Bild weg, alles gut.  
54 Ähm, welche Auswahlkriterien nutzen Sie denn, ähm, bei Bewerbungen, haben Sie ein bestimmtes  
55 System?

56 ...

57 I: Ähm, ich sag immer es gibt im Grunde genommen immer nur die persönlichen Kriterien, die für uns  
58 unglaublich wichtig sind. All die fachlichen Anforderungen, Qualifikationen, die können wir alle im  
59 Laufe des Tages oder im Laufe der Arbeitszeit auch beibringen

60 A: Mhm

61 I: Ja, im Laufe der Einarbeitungszeit, die dann doch einige Wochen umfasst, aber sobald die  
62 persönlichen Kriterien nicht mitgebracht werden, die Herzlichkeit und das Gastgeber-Gen, die  
63 Leidenschaft, dann fällt es uns tatsächlich unglaublich schwer, jemanden auch erfolgreich in das  
64 entsprechende Team zu integrieren.

65 A: Okay, das ist ein guter Punkt, weil, bis jetzt, was ich auch so in der Theorie gelesen habe, geht es  
66 halt hauptsächlich darum, okay ich habe einen Lebenslauf, der hat die und die Stationen, okay das  
67 passt schon mal, und die persönlichen Kriterien, ja dann halt erst im Gespräch und so, aber jetzt nicht  
68 der Ansatz, dass man jetzt sagt, okay wir können das jetzt auch bei uns noch ausarbeiten, das ist ein  
69 guter Ansatz.

70 I: Absolut, ich glaube, davon muss die Hotellerie so ein bisschen wegkommen, weil wir einfach auch  
71 ein Dienstleistungsunternehmen sind und diese ganzen Faktoren, die kann man alle erlernen, ich kann  
72 jedem beibringen, wie er Weinservice machen soll, ich kann jedem beibringen, wie er einen Check-In  
73 macht, aber wenn die Herzlichkeit fehlt, wenn er die Leidenschaft dafür nicht hat, dann kann er es  
74 vielleicht am Ende des Tages, aber es bringt uns trotzdem keinen Mehrwert, weil wir unzufriedene  
75 Gäste haben. (05.27)

76 A: Ja, das springt halt auch gleich rüber zu den Gästen, wenn jemand mit Herzblut dabei ist, ja, das  
77 stimmt.

78 I: Voll.

79 A: Auf alle Fälle, ähm, wie machen Sie sich denn als Arbeitgeber selbst attraktiv, also dass die Leute  
80 sagen, okay, zu Ihnen möchte ich unbedingt und nicht nur, weil Sie ein wahnsinnig bekanntes Hotel  
81 sind?

82 I: Mhm, das ist eine ganz, ganz wichtige Frage, weil wir versuchen, so ein bisschen Vorreiter zu sein.

83 A: Mhm.

84 I: Jetzt hatten wir in den letzten Jahren so ein großes Meeting, wo wir einfach auch geschaut haben,  
85 hey wie könnten wir (Hotelname) zukünftig attraktiver gestalten und bevor jetzt die neue Regierung  
86 in (Ländernamen) ihr Amt angetreten hat und quasi den Mindestlohn von 14€ auch bestätigt hat, haben  
87 wir tatsächlich schon proaktiv das Ruder in die Hand genommen und gesagt, hey wir möchten das von  
88 uns aus machen. Es ist uns einfach wichtig, da nicht nur den Mindestlohn zu zahlen, weil die Hotellerie  
89 auch ein Stück weit dafür bekannt ist, jetzt nicht unbedingt die besten Löhne zu zahlen, da einfach  
90 auch zu sagen, hey, wir versuchen da einen Schritt auf alle Arbeitnehmer zuzugehen und zu sagen es  
91 gibt Möglichkeiten, sich auch finanziell bei uns entsprechend so aufzustellen, dass man da  
92 sorgenfrei davon leben kann, ohne gerade so am Hungertuch zu nagen.

93 A: Ich bin schwer beeindruckt, muss ich ganz ehrlich zugeben, das ist ein guter Ansatz, auf alle Fälle.

94 I: Also es ist immer für alle total schwer vorstellbar, gerade jetzt in unserem Alter, vielleicht dann doch  
95 lieber in der Stadt, in Wien oder in Berlin oder in München leben, aber da muss man halt auch erstmal  
96 die Menschen ansprechen und sagen, die können sich das auch irgendwie vorstellen in der Natur zu  
97 leben, in der Natur zu arbeiten (07:09-07:30 aus Anonymisierungsgründen weggelassen).

98 A: Wie denken Sie denn, weil wir da jetzt schon ganz kurz draufgekommen sind, mit schlechter  
99 Bezahlung, wie sich aufgrund von der Pandemie die Jobattraktivität in der Hotelbranche geändert hat?  
100 Glauben Sie es ist schlechter geworden oder ist es vielleicht sogar für manche attraktiv geworden?

101 I: Aber es hat sich jetzt ganz klar herauskristallisiert, wer .. Gastgeber durch und durch ist und wer das  
102 nur so nebenher macht, weil er irgendwie keinen anderen Job gefunden hat, oder weil es bequem war  
103 einen Job in der Hotelbranche zu finden. Ich glaube diejenigen, die sagen, sie brennen nicht für die  
104 Hotellerie, was ja oftmals eher die Hilfskräfte sind, weil die .. ja vielleicht einfach sagen, sie brauchen  
105 das Geld, um ihre Familie zu unterstützen, die vielleicht in den osteuropäischen Ländern dann ihr  
106 Zuhause haben, die sind vielleicht eher aus der Branche abgewandert, weil die gesagt haben, mit  
107 Kurzarbeit kommen sie nicht hin, mit dem Kurzarbeitergeld, sie suchen sich dann vielleicht einen Job  
108 im Einzelhandel, wo sie kontinuierlich auch arbeiten können und das volle Entgelt dann auch erhalten.  
109 Und diejenigen, die jetzt noch in der Hotellerie sind, so ist meine persönliche Ansicht, die brennen für  
110 die Hotellerie, ja, da kann kommen was wolle, da kann noch ein Lockdown kommen, die Menschen  
111 werden dieses Gen in sich tragen, da wird immer der Wunsch da sein auch in der Hotellerie tätig zu  
112 sein, viele werden sich auch vermutlich zwischenzeitlich einen anderen Job suchen, um finanziell  
113 wieder hinzukommen, weil wenn das Kurzarbeitergeld nicht reicht, aber auf lange Sicht, so ist auch  
114 meine persönliche Erfahrung, oder vielleicht nicht persönlich, aber die Erfahrung der Arbeitskollegen,

115 A: Mhm.

116 I: ist, dass sie dann auch wieder zurückkommen, wenn dann auch die Zukunft der Hotellerie wieder  
117 gegeben ist.

118 A: Okay. Wenn Sie sich jetzt mal in eine ferne Zukunft nach der Pandemie versetzen, glauben Sie, ..  
119 oder wie glauben Sie, dass die Zukunft in der Hotelbranche ausschauen wird? Gerade bezüglich  
120 Recruitment? Können Sie da irgendwelche Trends jetzt schon sehen, vielleicht?

121 I: Also ein Trend, in dem wir schon mitten drin stecken, ist das Mobile Recruiting, also, ich weiß nicht  
122 wie es Ihnen geht, aber viele aus meiner Generation, haben vielleicht gar keinen PC mehr zuhause, und  
123 haben ihre Bewerbung jetzt gar nicht mehr vorgefertigt auf dem PC, sondern tippen das dann einfach  
124 schnell am Handy runter oder schnell am iPad runter, ähm, da muss man dann, .. also es wird, glaub



125 ich, ganz viel Aufmerksamkeit gelegt werden, sich mobil bewerben zu können, innerhalb von zwei  
126 Minuten kurz einmal hinschicken, hey, ich wäre interessiert, per WhatsApp, per SMS, per, per  
127 Instagramm sogar vielleicht. Und das wird ein Trend sein, wo die Hotellerie sich, glaub ich, so ein  
128 bisschen anpassen werden muss, weil das noch untypisch ist für unsere Branche, ähm, weil wir doch  
129 immer mal wieder Referenzanfragen noch vorliegen sollten, oder man immer nochmal einen CV  
130 braucht, um sich dann später noch bewerben zu können. Manche sagen auch, ein  
131 Motivationsschreiben ist nach wie vor unerlässlich, um die Bewerbung vollständig einreichen zu  
132 können. Und das wird, glaub ich, so ein Wandel sein, den wir alle dann auch, gerade auch in der  
133 Hotellerie begleiten dürfen. (10:47)

134 A: Mhm, Sie haben vorher schon ein paar Probleme angesprochen, die halt die Pandemie auch so mit  
135 sich bringt, wie z.B. der höhere Fachkräftemangel jetzt, ähm, wie sehen Sie da die  
136 Lösungsmöglichkeiten, also was kann die Hotelbranche tun, damit Sie sagen, okay, ich krieg die  
137 richtigen Leute, was gibt es da für Lösungen?

138 I: Die wichtigste Möglichkeit diesem Fachkräftemangel entgegenzuwirken, ist die Ausbildung.

139 A: Mhm

140 I: Ich muss aktiv als Unternehmen was dafür tun, dass zukünftige Fachkräfte auch wieder in der  
141 Branche tätig sind, dass die für die Branche brennen. Ja, ich muss junge Leute davon überzeugen, dass  
142 die Hotellerie die schönste Branche ist, die es auf der Welt geben darf. Und deswegen, finde ich es  
143 unglaublich wichtig, neben der klassischen Lehre, auch ein duales Studium anzubieten, auch  
144 Möglichkeiten des Schnupperpraktikums anzubieten, Pflichtpraktika für Studenten, die im Rahmen  
145 ihres Studiums einen praktischen Teil brauchen, um ihr Studium zu absolvieren. Also all das, was das  
146 Thema Ausbildung, was das Thema Lehre betrifft, ist unerlässlich, um gegen diesen Fachkräftemangel  
147 auch anzugehen.

148 A: Vielen Dank. (Unterbrechung aus Anonymisierungsgründen/ Keine Auskunft: 12:05-12:42)

149 A: In der Literatur zum Beispiel ..... ist zum Beispiel ein effektives Krisenmanagement ein großes Thema,  
150 wie man über Krisen hinwegkommt, gerade in der Pandemie, oder politischen Krisen auch in anderen  
151 Ländern, hatten Sie vor der Corona Pandemie bereits so ein Krisenmanagement, wo Sie sagen, okay,  
152 da konnten wir darauf aufbauen, das hat funktioniert?

153 ...

154 I: Ähm, also in (Hotelname) wird das tatsächlich so praktiziert, dass wir ähm, unglaublich schnell  
155 reagieren auf die Umgebung oder den Veränderungen, mit denen wir konfrontiert werden, wir haben  
156 zum Beispiel ein tägliches Meeting, wo die Abteilungsleiter Teil davon sind, wo man solche Dinge  
157 minutiös dann auch besprechen kann und dann auch direkt darauf reagieren kann. Und unser Ziel war  
158 es immer nicht dem Ganzen hinterherzulaufen und einen Schritt zurück zu sein, sondern ein Schritt vor  
159 dem Geschehen zu sein, und noch ein Stückchen vorsichtiger sein, als die Politik es vielleicht verlangt,  
160 um möglichen Schließungen beispielsweise entgegen wirken zu können.

161 A: Da waren alle Abteilungen mitbeteiligt, nehme ich an, oder?

162 I: Ja genau, also wir haben eine Person, die maßgeblich für das Hygienekonzept zum Beispiel zuständig  
163 ist, die jetzt auch entsprechend die Corona Richtlinien auf dem Laufenden hält, die entsprechend die  
164 Mitarbeiter darüber informiert, um da entsprechend einfach immer auf dem aktuellen Stand zu sein.  
165 Aber auch das komplette Direktorenteam unterstützt dann auch diese Person und versucht dann auch  
166 mit dabei zu bleiben.

Hotel B, 01.02.1011, 11h, online

A = Interviewer I= Interviewee

167 A: Okay. Ähm, das waren jetzt vorwiegend sag ich mal positive Aspekte, die Sie da genannt haben, gab  
168 es denn auch irgendetwas, das nicht so gut funktioniert hat?

169 I: Jetzt gerade Corona-bedingt meinen Sie?

170 A: Mhm, genau.

171 I: .. Wir hatten anfangs, vielleicht um das mal als Beispiel zu nennen, anfangs haben wir uns überlegt,  
172 Mensch, wie können wir an den Mitarbeiter ran treten, jetzt ist der nicht mehr im Hotel, wie können  
173 wir die Information trotzdem kommunizieren, auch wenn er nicht mehr hier ist. Thema Schwarzes  
174 Brett fällt komplett weg, ja, Thema Mitarbeiteransprache fällt komplett weg, einfach auch wegen  
175 Versammlungsverbot oder weil die Mitarbeiter vielleicht auch gar nicht mehr in (Ländername) sind,  
176 sondern mittlerweile vielleicht bei ihren Familien (...)

177 A: Mhm.

178 I: auf der ganzen Welt wieder verstreut sind, sodass wir dann ein System implementiert haben, um  
179 den Mitarbeitern schnell und formlos auch zu kommunizieren. Wir haben ein Tool eingeführt, wo man  
180 mit den Mitarbeitern per SMS kommunizieren kann

181 A: Okay, super.

182 I: sodass man auch ganz schnell die Mitarbeiter auf den laufenden Stand bringen kann. Und wir haben  
183 dann vor einem knappen Jahr [SoftwareName], das ist vielleicht auch ein Begriff, das ist ein  
184 Kommunikationstool, ist glaub ich in [Ländername] gegründet worden, in [Stadtname] soweit ich weiß,  
185 auf die Hotellerie spezialisiert, wo man Übergaben machen kann, Handbücher erstellen kann, wo man  
186 News teilen kann, um einfach jeden Mitarbeiter dann hotelintern auch auf dem laufenden Stand der  
187 Dinge zu halten. Und das haben wir dann entsprechend auch eingeführt, sodass wir jetzt quasi drei  
188 Kommunikationswege haben, einmal die SMS, einmal [SoftwareName] und einmal die persönliche  
189 Ansprache.

190 A: Okay, super. Das wäre es eigentlich schon gewesen von meiner Seite. 16:20

191 Schluss nicht aufgenommen

1 Einleitung nicht aufgenommen

2 A: Perfekt. Wenn Sie sich jetzt einfach mal an eine Zeit vor Corona zurückerinnern, mit welchen  
3 Herausforderungen hatten Sie denn in der Personalgewinnung vor der Pandemie zu tun?

4 I1: Also das kann ich sehr gerne beantworten, sag ich mal die größte Herausforderung war, dass es  
5 doch sehr viele Bewerbungen gegeben hat, so der Rücklauf war wirklich sehr, sehr gut, die Qualität  
6 war aber eher schlechter.

7 A: Mhm

8 I1: Muss ich auch ganz ehrlich sagen. Und ansonsten die Herausforderungen sind sehr schwierige,  
9 unrealistische Vorstellungen, wie es dann die Arbeit generell vorort ablaufen wird, sag ich jetzt mal,  
10 sei es von den Arbeitszeiten, sei es aber auch (die Haltung?), dass man da dann ja, sehr viele  
11 unterschiedliche Vorstellungen. Das sind im Prinzip die größten Herausforderungen dann, passende  
12 Kollegen zu gewinnen.

13 A: Mhm. Hatten Sie denn auch mit einer hohen Fluktuationsrate zu kämpfen? Also dass viele praktisch  
14 nur kurzfristig bei Ihnen waren und dann wieder zurück, woanders hingegangen sind?

15 I1: Also, da muss man immer unterscheiden, die Kollegen, die schon ganz lange bei uns sind, die bleiben  
16 auch, aber das ist jetzt generell sag ich jetzt mal, doch relativ modern, dass man sagt, man bleibt  
17 vielleicht 18 Monate, eineinhalb Jahre, zwei Jahre maximal und geht dann woanders hin. Weil man  
18 einfach gerade besonders in der Hotellerie in verschiedenen Bereichen Erfahrung sammeln kann, so  
19 (...) mehrere schnell wechseln, ich sag jetzt mal so alle eineinhalb, zwei Jahre ist der normale Wechsel.

20 A: Mhm

21 I1: Wie kann man das sagen? Also wenn es um Managerstellen geht, die bleiben natürlich wesentlich  
22 länger, aber wenn es jetzt um Kollegen geht, die in der Küche arbeiten, oder die zum Beispiel im Service  
23 arbeiten, da merkt man schon, die gehen alle ein, zwei Jahre und das ist der normale Wechsel in der  
24 Hotellerie, würde ich so sagen (...) sonst eher sehen als Chancen.

25 A: Okay, alles klar, vielen Dank. Sie haben vorher ein paar Herausforderungen genannt, wo glauben Sie  
26 liegen die Gründe dafür, dass zum Beispiel weniger qualifiziertes Personal oder ähm, .. oder nicht zu  
27 viel qualifiziertes Personal Bewerbungen losschickt?

28 I1: Oftmals hat es bestimmt auch ein bisschen was mit der Schule zu tun, dass die Schule einen falschen  
29 Einblick übermittelt,

30 A: Mhm

31 I1: glauben, die direkt von der Schule kommen, dass sie gleich im Management starten können und  
32 das sind natürlich die falschen Vorstellungen. Man sagt, okay in ein paar Jahren vielleicht, aber man  
33 muss halt wirklich mal vom Boden aus anfangen, mal das Grundlegende kennenlernen, das ist  
34 bestimmt etwas, wo man sagt, das sind die Herausforderungen.

35 A: Mhm

36 I1: Das sind vielleicht falsche Vermittlungen, aber doch wo man sagt, die Kollegen, die neu in der  
37 Hotellerie sind, nicht wissen, wie es ist, dass wir einfach 24/7 offen haben, dass man dadurch die  
38 Arbeitszeiten relativ flexibel gestalten muss.

39 A: Mhm. Anderes Thema, wie gehen Sie denn konkret bei der Personalgewinnung vor, haben Sie da  
40 einen konkreten Prozess, den sie durchlaufen, ähm, welche Methoden verwenden Sie?

Hotel C, 09.02.2022, 10h, online

A= Interviewer I1= Interviewee 1, I2= Interviewee 2

41 I1 Wir haben unsere Stellen auf mehreren Plattformen ausgeschrieben,

42 A: Mhm

43 I1: heißt natürlich, auf unserer Homepage sind alle unsere Stellen ausgeschrieben, dann arbeiten wir  
44 mit Plattformen wie, z.B. karriere, hotelcareer, und im Prinzip, wenn dann diejenige Bewerbung  
45 einlangt, machen wir, HR, die Vorselektierung, und stimmen uns natürlich auch mit dem  
46 Abteilungsleiter ab, dann kommt es zum Vorstellungsgespräch, eventuell zum zweiten  
47 Vorstellungsgespräch, dann wird die Entscheidung schon getroffen.

48 A: Okay, haben Sie auch einen, ... sagen wir, Wettbewerb zwischen den .. Kandidaten? Also, dass es da  
49 so einen Test gibt, oder?

50 I1: So ein Assessment-Center meinen Sie?

51 A: Ja, genau.

52 I1: Haben wir nicht.

53 A: Okay.

54 I2: Ist auch unserer Meinung nach gar nicht so notwendig, weil wir sagen, wir arbeiten in wirklich guten  
55 Teams (...) in manchen Abteilungen mehrere Stellen frei (...)

56 A: Perfekt, Dankeschön. Wie machen Sie sich denn als Arbeitgeber attraktiv? Wie setzen Sie sich da in  
57 Szene? Gerade, wenn Sie sagen, es kommen weniger qualifizierte Bewerbungen rein, gibt es eine  
58 Methode, mit der Sie da entgegenwirken?

59 I2: Wir geben natürlich unser Bestes, und das ist halt einfach auch branchenabhängig, muss man klar  
60 sagen, grundsätzlich sind wir, glaube, ich ein sehr renommiertes Haus, und auch sehr beliebt für  
61 Bewerbungen, würd ich jetzt mal sagen, wir sind ein sehr familiäres Team, was wir auch nach außen  
62 hin zeigen, was auch viele nicht erwarten, ja, manche denken vielleicht auch nicht, dass man doch auch  
63 ein sehr freundschaftliches Verhältnis auch irgendwo hat. Wir versuchen auch teilweise, dass wir  
64 (Termine finden?), also dass die Arbeitszeiten stimmen, ja, es ist klar, dass man nicht immer in der  
65 Hotellerie von 8-12 arbeiten kann, ich glaube, das ist ganz verständlich, aber wir versuchen natürlich  
66 auch unseren Kandidaten bestmöglich entgegenzukommen, sei es, dass sie mal Trainings machen  
67 wollen, oder sonstiges, aber wir haben auch eine Mitarbeiterzeitung, wo alle Benefits drinnen stehen,  
68 auch spezielle Mitarbeiterrabatte in den anderen Hotels, aber auch bei uns im Hotel, oder auch die (...)  
69 die wir machen. (05:18)

70 A: Alles klar, vielen Dank. Jetzt hat sich natürlich seit dem Ausbruch der Pandemie, gerade in der  
71 Hotelbranche, viel verändert. Was hat sich denn bei Ihnen genau verändert, also in der  
72 Personalgewinnung? Konnten Sie da konkrete Veränderungen feststellen?

73 I2: Also es ist halt ganz viel Angst da, dass Kurzarbeit wieder kommt, oder dass die Leute ihren Job  
74 verlieren. Also dadurch ist auch der Bewerberflow wieder geringer geworden, also gering geworden,  
75 wir bekommen natürlich Bewerbungen, aber, also qualitativ, qualitativ sind sie nach wie vor nicht so  
76 gut, also wir kämpfen da schon sehr damit, dass wir Personal bekommen, einfach gutes Personal  
77 bekommen, das wir auch länger halten können.

78 A: Mhm

79 I2: Es ist häufig auch, dass Mitarbeiter in eine andere Branche wechseln müssen, es gibt da nicht nur  
80 unsere brancheninternen Mitbewerber, ähm, es gibt sowieso auch andere Branchen, die einfach  
81 krisensicherer sind, ja, das sind so die, die Herausforderungen, die wir im Moment haben.

82 A: Mhm, hat sich denn bezüglich Ihrer Methoden bei der Bewerbung was verändert, oder, also nutzen  
83 Sie jetzt irgendwie vermehrt Online Recruitment, oder dass die Vorstellungsgespräche über  
84 (Softwarename) stattfinden?

85 I2: Das war, glaube ich, gerade so um den Lockdown herum der Fall, dass wir es online gemacht hatten,  
86 da war ich jetzt noch nicht wirklich im Haus, ansonsten sind wir generell viel offener, also wir zeigen  
87 uns viel mehr auf LinkedIn und Co, damit man einfach ein gutes Bild nach außen vermittelt, wir geben  
88 auch eher Menschen eine Chance, die vielleicht weniger Erfahrung haben, aber die das machen  
89 möchten, wo einfach der Wille im Vordergrund steht, weil wir sagen, lernen kann man gut, das ist alles,  
90 aber die Arbeitseinstellung muss einfach vorhanden sein.

91 A: Mhm.

92 I2: Prinzipiell, Vorstellungsgespräche zu Lockdownzeiten waren so tatsächlich das erste Gespräch  
93 einmal online, damit man mal vorab das Haus ein bisschen erzählen kann oder präsentieren kann und  
94 dann ist es aber dennoch immer zu einem zweiten Gespräch gekommen, weil man persönlich andere  
95 Eindrücke hat.

96 A: Ja, das stimmt natürlich.

97 I1: (...) damit man das Haus ein bisschen kennenlernt, und was noch dazu kommt, wir arbeiten mit  
98 (Behördenname für Arbeit) zusammen (...)

99 A: Okay, alles klar, danke schön. Wie denken Sie denn hat sich die Pandemie auf die Jobattraktivität  
100 generell in der Hotelbranche ausgewirkt?

101 I2: Ja, ein sehr spannendes Thema. Ich glaube, keiner würde die Hotellerie noch als sicher bezeichnen,  
102 andererseits ist genau jetzt die Zeit, Chancen zu nutzen, dass man wirklich einen Job bekommt in der  
103 Hotellerie, aber natürlich, sowohl für Mitarbeiter als auch Bewerber steht viel, viel Unsicherheit im  
104 Raum.

105 A: Mhm, wenn Sie sich jetzt mal in eine, ja, entfernte Zeit nach Corona versetzen würden, wie denken  
106 Sie, wird sich das denn in Zukunft entwickeln?

107 I2: Ich glaube, wir müssen uns als Branche gesamt sehr weiterentwickeln, sehr stark auf Mitarbeiter  
108 eingehen, und auch auf potentielle Kandidaten besser eingehen, auch flexibler und offener werden,  
109 auch mehr im Online-Auftritt machen, dass man eben auch, ähm, dieses Image wiederaufbauen kann,  
110 was grundsätzlich mal da war, es wird eine Zeitlang dauern, aber das ist machbar, aber es ist definitiv  
111 (mit Arbeit verbunden?)

112 A: Wird sich denn auch bezüglich dem Recruitment konkret etwas ändern bei Ihnen? Sehen Sie da ..  
113 andere Möglichkeiten, die es vor der Pandemie noch nicht so gegeben hat?

114 ...

115 I1: Also ich sag jetzt mal, das ist ein bisschen schwieriger, natürlich kommt es immer auf das  
116 Recruitment an, wie gesagt, wir versuchen uns immer online zu präsentieren, das ist ganz, ganz wichtig,  
117 es hat auch jetzt den vordersten Wert, aber jetzt nicht nur auf (diese Dinge?) bezogen, einmal diese  
118 Printmedien, das ist jetzt nicht mehr, aber das war es auch schon lange vor der Pandemie nicht mehr

119 A: okay

120 I1: Man muss einfach jetzt schauen, dass man sich digital einfach verstärkt präsentiert, und ja, genau,  
121 das ist eigentlich das Größte, und das ist auch unabhängig von der Pandemie und wird beim  
122 Recruitment verstärkt da sein.

123 A: Okay, alles klar. Sie haben ja jetzt schon die Digitalisierung als Lösungsmöglichkeit angesprochen,  
124 gäbe es da noch Weiteres, wo Sie sagen, so würden wir die Auswirkungen, die die Pandemie mit sich  
125 gebracht hat, gut überwinden?

126 I2: Da muss man einfach positiv bleiben, es hilft nix, wenn man den Kopf in den Sand steckt, also mit  
127 den Maßnahmen einfach umgehen und das Beste draus machen, da ist unser Management auch sehr  
128 stark im Thema drin, die uns da auch wirklich super einbinden, ja, und in dieser Situation auch einfach  
129 dafür sorgen, dass keiner irgendwie auf der Strecke bleibt, grundsätzlich ..., wird es sehr spannend, ja.  
130 ..Ja, es ist eine ungewisse Zeit, ja. (10:21)

131 A: Ja, natürlich.

132 I1: Ja, wenn man positiv dem Ganzen entgegensieht, das ist einfach das Bestmögliche, ständig  
133 nachschauen, wie es ist, keiner hat leider eine Kristallkugel, hätte man gern, ist leider so.

134 A: Ja, das stimmt natürlich.

135 I1: Wird für die Hotellerie nochmal eine Herausforderung.

136 A: Ja, ich komm auch aus der Hotellerie, deswegen auch das Thema der Masterarbeit, versteh ich, ja.

137 I1: Wobei da auch (bestätigend?) zu unterscheiden ist, welche Klassifizierung das ist von dem Hotel,  
138 und da auch unterscheidet, wo das Hotel ist, also natürlich ein 5\*-Superior Haus in [Stadtname] hat es  
139 vielleicht da ein bisschen schwieriger als ein, ja, Hotel am Land. (...), da muss man dann nachschauen,  
140 wie es in der jetzigen Situation weitergeht

141 A: Das stimmt, ja. ...Haben Sie sich den von der Europäischen Union mehr Hilfe erwartet, bezüglich den  
142 Lockdowns, finanzielle Hilfe, oder auch vom Staat an sich?

143 Keine Antwort möglich (arbeitsrechtlich), betrifft auch Krisenmanagement (11:24-11:42)

144 A: Aber Sie werden miteingebunden in die Entscheidungen, oder?

145 I1: Also eingebunden nicht, die Entscheidungen werden uns kommuniziert, wir haben dann tatsächlich  
146 auf jeder Ebene auch total tolle Kommunikation, jeder weiß über vieles Bescheid, (...) alle  
147 Entscheidungen werden einfach kommuniziert.

148 A: Okay, super

149 I2: Also auch die Führungspositionen haben uns, also wenn ich jetzt von meiner Position spreche, auch  
150 miteinbezogen, inwiefern wir das gesehen haben, auch im Lockdown, wie viele Mitarbeiter  
151 beschäftigt, was wir tun, das ist schon ein Thema.

152 A: Wunderbar, dann wäre es das auch schon gewesen meinerseits. 12:20

153 Schluss nicht aufgenommen

1 Einleitung nicht aufgenommen.

2 A: Wenn sie sich mal an eine Zeit vor Corona erinnern würden, ähm, mit welchen Herausforderungen  
3 hatten Sie denn da in der Personalgewinnung zu tun?

4 I: Hmm, .. die Hotellerie, glaub ich, war auch vor Corona nicht, nicht die einfachste Instanz, um zu sagen  
5 oder nicht die einfachste Industrie, um zu sagen, ich finde hier geeignetes Personal, ich muss mich da,  
6 das sag ich auch in Interviews immer, ein bisschen herausnehmen, was so die Standardindustrie  
7 betrifft, weil ich mit dem Hotel (Hotelname) natürlich den Namen auf dem Dach habe und die perfekte  
8 geographische Lage in (Stadtname). Das heißt, ich hatte sicherlich Herausforderungen, was  
9 Schlüsselpositionen sind, die man nicht von heute auf morgen besetzt, aber ich konnte dennoch immer  
10 in einem guten, guten Flow rekrutieren. Und hab gesagt, okay, ich, es blieb mir bisher verwehrt zu  
11 sagen, ich muss hier Headhunter einschalten, oder ich muss auf kostenspielige Recruitment-  
12 Kampagnen aufspringen, um zu sagen, um neue Talente sozusagen für mein Haus zu gewinnen.

13 A: Mhm, was glauben Sie denn, was so grundsätzliche Gründe für Herausforderungen gerade in der  
14 Hotelbranche bezüglich des Recruitings sind, also Sie haben gerade schon angesprochen, dass  
15 qualifiziertes Personal schwierig zu finden ist, gibt es denn sonst noch ein paar Sachen, die Ihnen da  
16 einfallen?

17 I: Mmm, ich glaube, dass generell die Beschaffenheit in den Hotels selbst und die Gegebenheiten von  
18 Arbeitszeit und körperlich, die Anstrengung, sowie hin zu Gehalt, das sind so drei Faktoren, wo man  
19 sagt, okay, die Hotellerie muss sich umorientieren. Es ist natürlich schwierig für mich zu sagen, im  
20 Service, im Frontoffice, im Housekeeping, mache ich Gleitzeit oder mach ich Homeoffice, weil das nicht  
21 funktioniert. Ich kann es auf die Administrative sicherlich ausweiten, aber für den Service an sich, den  
22 ich im Hotel biete, habe ich eine manpower, die von bis da sein muss. Die Gehaltsstrukturen sind  
23 sicherlich etwas, wo man in der Industrie drauf schauen muss, und auch derzeit tatsächlich auch sehr  
24 stark drauf schaut, also der Tarifvertrag, mit dem wir hier zum Beispiel in (Stadtname) arbeiten, erhöht  
25 sich in diesem Jahr um vier Prozent am Anfang, um sechs Prozent am Ende, das heißt, da gibt es eine  
26 zehn prozentige Gehaltserhöhung, und die Hotelgruppen, lassen sich natürlich neben den  
27 Standardbenefits ähm, noch einige Benefits mehr für die Mitarbeiter einfallen, um zu sagen, ihr habt  
28 den und den Profit, um bei uns zu arbeiten.

29 A: Mhm, okay. Wie gehen Sie denn konkret bei der Personalgewinnung vor, also welche Methoden,  
30 welche Auswahlkriterien nutzen Sie?

31 I: Auswahlkriterien, .. also es gibt gewisse Boxen, die ich bei mir im Haus ticken muss, wo ich sagen  
32 muss, okay, ich brauche ein Sprachniveau von B2, mindestens, weil ich weiß, dass meine Gäste  
33 tatsächlich zu 60-70% aus dem deutschsprachigen Raum kommen. Ich habe sehr viel Österreicher,  
34 Deutsche und Schweizer im Haus, und das tatsächlich auch überwiegend. Wir sind aber eigentlich über  
35 die Maße hinaus eigentlich sehr, sehr offen und flexibel, was den Lebenslauf betrifft, alles das, was ich  
36 in der Hotellerie mache, ist keine rocket science, ich mache, ich operiere nicht am offenen Kopf, und  
37 ähm, wenn ich eine Herausforderung habe, ist die lösbar.

38 A: Mhm.

39 I: Das heißt, ich bin, was das talent sourcing, betrifft eigentlich sehr offen und lass mich unter den  
40 derzeitigen Umständen vor allen Dingen, schon nicht mehr so sehr von dem Lebenslauf beeinflussen.  
41 Wenn ich natürlich eine Senior-Position suche, muss ich da natürlich auch ´ne gewisse Erfahrung im  
42 Lebenslauf haben, die Möglichkeit für einen Quereinsteiger in die Industrie zu finden, ist meines  
43 Erachtens noch sehr einfach.

44 A: Okay.

45 (kurze Unterbrechung/ Anonymisierungsgründe 04:10-04:44)

46 A: Sie arbeiten ja wirklich in einem herausragenden Haus, wie machen Sie sich denn, abgesehen von  
47 Ihrem Namen jetzt, als Arbeitgeber attraktiv? (04:54)

48 I: Bei mir ist das natürlich so, ich bin nicht in aller erster Linie das Hotel (Hotelname), sondern ich bin  
49 das (Hotelname, Hotelgruppe, Stadtname), das heißt, ich bin attraktiv, einmal weil ich sicherlich die  
50 Lage (geographisch spezifisch beschrieben) habe, weil ich das 5\* Haus in (Stadtname) bin und natürlich  
51 auch über die Grenzen hinaus, vor allem in (Ländername), ich habe aber auch eine wundervolle  
52 Company hinter mir stehen, mit (Zahl) derzeit operierenden Häusern, wo meine Mitarbeiter und  
53 Mitarbeiterinnen die Möglichkeit haben, quer durch die Welt zu reisen, privat, aber auch beruflich. Es  
54 gibt bei uns intern ein Programm, welches von unserem (Abteilungsname) betreut wird, intern, wo  
55 jeder Mitarbeiter ein kleines Profil hat und wo man angeben kann, okay, ich bin mobil, ich bin nicht  
56 mobil, das ist mein Development Plan, da möchte ich hin, das möchte ich werden. Das heißt, wir haben  
57 einen sehr, sehr starken Austausch zwischen den Personalabteilungen und das weltweit, und da findet  
58 auch tatsächlich ein sehr starker Austausch statt, für Mitarbeiter, Mitarbeiterinnen von Mitarbeiter,  
59 Mitarbeiterinnen. Und das fängt tatsächlich schon im Azubi Dasein an, meine Azubis im zweiten  
60 Lehrjahr haben den Vorzug in die Häuser nach Kroatien, Slowenien, Schweiz, Österreich zu gehen, und  
61 im Umkehrschluss bekomme ich dann Trainees oder Azubis von den Häusern.

62 A: Mhm.

63 I: Das heißt, wir sind sehr international aufgestellt, auch wenn wir nur in Anführungsstrichen (Anzahl)  
64 Häuser haben, aber wir sind flächendeckend auf fast jedem Kontinent und wir sind aufgrund der  
65 Größe, die nicht besonders groß ist für eine Hotelgruppe wie uns, sehr, sehr gut vernetzt mit allen  
66 anderen HRlern in dieser Welt.

67 A: Mhm, okay.

68 I: Das ist ein Benefit und das spricht sich rum, ich betreue (spezieller Firmengruppenteil), ähm, die  
69 ganzen Recruiting Hotelfachschulen und dann immer im Frühling und im Herbst fliege ich dann über  
70 Spanien, Schweiz, Holland und Österreich, Deutschland die ganzen Hotelfachschulen an, mit den  
71 ganzen Recruitment Days, die wir haben und bin dann auch international aufgestellt, ich vertrete da  
72 nicht nur (Hotelname), sondern bin wirklich für die (Hotelgruppenname) verantwortlich und rekrutiere  
73 dann den Trainee aus Egypt, der nach Kuba geht und so weiter und so fort. Also wir legen sehr, sehr  
74 viel Wert auf diversity, international, intercultural, und der ganze approach zum... how to be different,  
75 how to be perfectly different.

76 A: Wow, ähm, klingt super interessant auf alle Fälle. Wenn Sie sich jetzt mal überlegen, was sich seit  
77 dem Ausbruch der Pandemie hinsichtlich der Personalgewinnung alles geändert hat, was sehen Sie  
78 sich da konkret welchen Herausforderungen gegenüber?

79 I: Der Trend geht weg von der Hotellerie, weil wir unstable sind, wer weiß, was mit uns passiert in der  
80 nächsten Woche, es gibt den revenge tourismus, wie wir den im Sommer letzten Jahres hatten, alle  
81 kommen zurück, alle reisen wieder, das Haus ist voll, es gibt aber dann wiederum zu wenig Personal,  
82 um das Haus komplett voll zu machen. Das heißt, der Trend ist, dass die Mitarbeiter und  
83 Mitarbeiterinnen durch die Unsicherheit, die die Industrie derzeit bietet, aufgrund der Pandemie,  
84 mehr oder weniger dazu gezwungen, ich verlasse die Industrie. In (Stadtname) hab' ich das Phänomen  
85 ich bin ein Start-up-heaven, das heißt, jeder, der im Finance, Sales, Event-Sales, in Human Resources,  
86 in einer administrativen Abteilung arbeitet, könnte morgen einen anderen Job anfangen. Ähm, aber



87 auch mein Personal, was im Service unterwegs ist, Guest Relation, Front Office, wir sind mittlerweile  
88 so gut ausgebildet in der Hotellerie, und das fängt beim Azubi-Dasein an, dass andere Industrien auf  
89 uns schauen und wissen, was wir tun können, und werden dementsprechend halt wegrecruitiert und  
90 dann kriegt man halt einiges geboten, Monday to Friday, 9 to 5, Homeoffice, Gleitzeit

91 A: Mhm

92 I: Benefits, Bonusprogramm, besseres Gehalt, und die Pandemie macht natürlich, das war für mich von  
93 Anfang an sowieso nicht einfach, aber durch diese konstante Unsicherheit, was alles so als nächstes  
94 mit uns passiert, bin ich in diesem furchtbaren Dilemma, dass ich sagen muss, okay, Kurzarbeit hin,  
95 Kurzarbeit her, ähm, wie halte ich meine Mitarbeiter und Mitarbeiterinnen hier bei Laune, und dann  
96 kommt erschwerend hinzu, dass ich einen großen Personalstamm verloren habe, und der muss  
97 natürlich gecouvert werden und das Rekrutieren ist ja sehr schleppend und wenn ein Mitarbeiter fünf  
98 Gäste betreut hat, sind das jetzt, kommen auf einen Mitarbeiter 10/15 Gäste.

99 A: Mhm.

100 I: Das heißt, das passiert immer auf den Schultern meiner Mitarbeiter, Mitarbeiterinnen, und das ist  
101 dann immer so der letzte Rest, wo viele auch sagen, ich kann einfach nicht mehr.

102 A: Mhm, okay, wie versuchen Sie denn dem entgegenzuwirken? Also welche Lösungsmöglichkeiten  
103 sehen Sie da?

104 I: Wir sind im Haus so verblieben, dass wir wirklich sagen, okay, was kann, was ist gesund zumutbar,  
105 und haben dann unsere Belegung gedeckelt. Das heißt, ab einem gewissen Prozentsatz sagen wir, okay,  
106 die Auslastung ist voll, obwohl das Haus nicht voll ist, und das mach ich tatsächlich abhängig an den  
107 (FTIs?), an den Händen, die ich hier im Haus habe. Das heißt, ich höre bei 40% Belegung auf und mach  
108 einen Belegungsstopp und ich kann hier keine Zimmer mehr verkaufen. (10:17)

109 A: Okay.

110 I: Ich rekrutiere, ich rekrutiere im Akkord, das funktioniert derzeit, Klopf auf Holz, sehr, sehr gut. Ähm,  
111 es gibt wieder viele Bewerbungen, wir sind hier im Personalteam .. jeden Tag am endlos vielen  
112 Gesprächen führen, ähm, also unsere Strategie ist da Recruitment.

113 A: Mhm

114 I: Wir haben gut investiert, wir haben sehr viel monetär ins Marketingkonzept finanziert, um zu sagen,  
115 wir sind auf dem Markt, wir sind da, wir sind nicht untergegangen, wir haben's überlebt, und wir  
116 suchen neu qualifiziertes Personal.

117 A: Okay. Wenn Sie sich jetzt mal in eine Zeit, hoffentlich bald, nach Corona versetzen würden, wie  
118 denken Sie, wird denn die Zukunft in der Hotelbranche ausschauen? In welche Richtung wird es gehen?

119 I: mm, ich denke, dass wir in jedem Fall weiterhin Problem kriegen werden, was die Personalgewinnung  
120 betrifft, ich denke aber auch, dass sich in der Hotellerie viel in der Struktur selbst in den letzten 2 Jahren  
121 verändert hat. Die Hotellerie ist bekannt dafür, wir sind eine Industrie, die es als allerletzte .. versteht,  
122 dass es auch anders geht, und was wir bewiesen haben, in den letzten zwei Jahren ist, dass wir es  
123 können. Ich kann von Zuhause aus arbeiten, ich kann meine Gespräche online führen, ich kann  
124 effektiver und, und, und dementsprechend auch lukrativer zu meinem Ziel kommen, ohne dass ich  
125 meine alten Strukturen beibehalte. Viele Sachen werden gleichbleiben, wie gesagt, mein Service muss  
126 vollbracht werden und das ist vor allem in einem 5\* Haus schwieriger, als wenn ich sage, ich  
127 vollautomatisierte meinen Check-In und mein Check-Out, wie (Hotelname) zum Beispiel. Das kann ich

128 nicht tun, das werde ich auch in Zukunft nicht tun können und dementsprechend brauche ich  
129 manpower, die ihre Schichten einhalten und so zur Arbeit kommen.

130 A: Ja.

131 I: Benefit-Programme und Gehälter und Löhne, haben sich meines Erachtens nach in den letzten sechs  
132 Monaten vor allen Dingen verändert und das wirklich flächenübergreifend, bis hin zu den  
133 Tarifverträgen, und dementsprechend hatten wir durch die Pandemie natürlich einmal einen  
134 ziemlichen Einschlag und, im Sinne von, okay, es hat uns hart getroffen, aber es war auch ein wake-up-  
135 call, we need to change, wenn wir in Zukunft wieder da hin wollen, wo wir einmal waren. .. Hundert  
136 Prozent Auslastung

137 A: Ja, hoffentlich bald wieder.

138 I: Genau.

139 A: Hätten Sie sich denn, oder welche Hilfe hätten Sie sich denn von der Europäischen Union oder auch  
140 vom Staat selber erwartet? Gab es da Sachen, die besonders gut gelaufen sind, oder Sachen, die so gar  
141 nicht gelaufen sind?

142 I: Das Kurzarbeit, ähm, das System der Kurzarbeit in Deutschland ist ja sensationell.

143 A: Mhm.

144 I: Das heißt, unsere Mitarbeiter und Mitarbeiterinnen hatten die Möglichkeit, oder waren durch den  
145 Staat sozial abgesichert. Ähm, es gab da verschiedenste monetäre Prozente, wo man gesagt hat ab  
146 sechs Monate geht's dann von 60% auf 70%, dann geht's auf 80%, wenn man Kinder hatte, sogar 67,  
147 77, 87 Prozent. Die Kurzarbeit zu implementieren und die anzumelden, war natürlich für uns alle etwas,  
148 was wir vorher nie gemacht haben. Das heißt, hm, ich hab' hier 500 Mitarbeiter, und dafür für 350  
149 Mitarbeiter Kurzarbeit anzumelden, war natürlich ein administrativer Aufwand, der in keinem  
150 Verhältnis mehr steht. 13:47

151 A: Mhm, das ist dann,

152 I: Es hat alles funktioniert, es gab immer Ansprechpartner,

153 A: Okay

154 I: Ähm, trotz der.. hohen Anzahl, die beantragt wurde in (Ländername). Es hat ja nicht nur uns  
155 getroffen, sondern hundert andere Häuser, in (Stadtname) selbst auch, und ähm, was weniger gut ist,  
156 und das liegt aber auch, meines Erachtens daran, auch die (Behördenname) hat das vorher nicht so  
157 erlebt.

158 A: Mhm.

159 I: Das heißt, man hat natürlich auch dort neues Personal, von heute auf morgen beschaffen müssen,  
160 um gewisse Positionen zu covern. Aber wenn man Rückfragen hat, zu den Vorgängen in der Kurzarbeit,  
161 da hat man sehr oft gehört, okay, wir müssen das selber erst nachlesen und wir haben dazu keine  
162 Antwort, ich würde mal sagen, eventuell, und das ist bis heute noch ungewiss, weil vielleicht bricht es  
163 uns das Genick, wenn irgendwann die Kontrollen kommen, oder man sagt, es lief alles gut. Das heißt,  
164 man ist immer in der Pflicht gewesen, dass man alles schriftlich hat, das muss alles irgendwo  
165 verzeichnet sein. Wir haben natürlich Telefonate aufgenommen und haben gesagt, okay wir müssen  
166 uns hier irgendwie absichern, weil, oftmals am anderen Ende, man auch nicht wusste, wie eigentlich  
167 die Vorgehensweise ist. Jetzt sind zwei Jahre vergangen, jetzt ist das einfacher, wenn ich jetzt

168 Rückfragen habe, kriege ich tatsächlich auch qualifizierte Antworten. Am Anfang aber war das so, okay,  
169 wir können es auch nicht wirklich sagen. Und deswegen, also wir warten noch auf den absoluten  
170 Supergau (lachen), entweder haben wir alles richtig gemacht, oder es kommt zu einer Nachzahlung,  
171 oder es gab da Kommunikationsschwierigkeiten, und das ist noch so ein Ungewisses.

172 A: Mhm, verstehe. Dann zur letzten Frage, in der Literatur wird häufig effektives Krisenmanagement,  
173 gerade bei Bewältigung von Krisen, so etwas wie die Corona Pandemie angeführt, hatten Sie denn  
174 bereits vor dem Ausbruch der Pandemie bereits eine Art von Krisenmanagement, wo Sie sagen, okay,  
175 wenn so etwas mal kommt, passiert das und das, oder gar nicht?

176 I: Hmm, es gibt, ein Krisenmanagement, wir hatten ein implementiertes Krisenmanagement und da  
177 ging es damals, um den großen Wirtschaftsknall, als die Wirtschaftskrise schon mal war.

178 A: Mhm

179 I: Und in der Wirtschaftskrise hat es aber unser Haus tatsächlich geschafft, das war 2008, dass wir ohne  
180 die Anmeldung der Kurzarbeit da durchgelaufen sind, also wir hatten nicht wirklich zusätzlich das  
181 Bedürfnis, uns da irgendwie zusätzliche Unterstützung zu suchen, was den Staat betrifft.

182 A: Mhm

183 I: Es gab da gewisse Konzepte, die waren in-place, aber es gab nicht, dass wir darauf zurückgreifen  
184 mussten. Es ist dann aber auch schon wieder zehn Jahre, elf Jahre her gewesen, und somit war das  
185 dann obsolet. Wir haben uns dann tatsächlich bei null hier in der Personalabteilung wieder  
186 zusammengefunden und haben uns an einen Tisch gesetzt und haben verrückte Schichten geschoben,  
187 um das über die Bühne zu kriegen. Ähm, Krisenkonzept, was die Sicherheit im Haus betrifft, wir haben  
188 tatsächlich eine eigene Abteilung, unsere Security Abteilung, wo wir einen Director of Security haben,  
189 und da wir ein sehr politisches Hotel sind, im Sinne von politische Besuche, Staatsbesuche, gibt es bei  
190 uns gewisse Standardvorkehrungen, Sicherheitsvorkehrungen, die uns sehr geholfen haben, um  
191 Corona hier im Haus sicher zu händeln, wir sind bis dato, und auch da wieder, Klopf auf Holz, mit  
192 hunderten blauen Augen weggekommen, es hat bei uns nie zu einem Komplettausfall geführt, wir  
193 mussten das Haus nicht schließen, wir hatten keine Überanzahl von Corona Fällen bei den Mitarbeitern  
194 und Mitarbeiterinnen, aber dafür hätte es, oder würde es ein explizit ausgearbeitetes Konzept geben.

195 A: Okay, super. Das war es auch schon, vielen herzlichen Dank für Ihre Antworten.

196 I: Sehr gern. 17:29

197 Schluss nicht aufgenommen.