Talent Retention and Development

Case Study: US Multinationals Based in Ireland

Dissertation submitted in part fulfilment of the requirements

For the degree of

Master of Business Administration (General)

At Dublin Business School

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22,000 words

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Declaration:

I, Chihab Eddine Meghlaoui, declare that this research is my original work and that it has never been presented to any institution or university for the award of Degree or Diploma. In addition, I have referenced correctly all literature and sources used in this work and this work is fully compliant with the Dublin Business School’s academic honesty policy.

Signed: CHIHAB EDDINE MEGHLAOUI
Date: 15/05/2016
Acknowledgments:

It would not be possible to write this dissertation without the help of God and support of the kind people around me.

Above all, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor David Wallace for his excellent guidance, caring and patience and providing me with an excellent atmosphere for doing this research.

I would also like to thank my parents who were always supporting me and encouraging with their best wishes from the other sides of the continent.
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Abstract

Objectives and scope: After Ireland became the mecca of worldwide companies; the US Multinationals came in in force and based the majority of the EU headquarters all over the country. Creating with this a huge amount of job opportunities that attracted talented employees from all over the world, but found themselves faced to a ferocious competition with other companies from the same type of business. In order to maintain the competitive advantage, companies started adopting the talent management model, and focusing on talent retention and talent development, to keep their employees from moving to competitors with all the knowledge they carry with them, and offering them as well chances to grow within the company and having more responsibilities. Furthermore, this study aims to discover the importance of talent retention and development and its design. The incentives used, the most and less effective, and what development technics and trends companies are following. If it matches the literature, their efficiency, and the impact of these on the employees’ performance as well.

This research aims to add more and fresher knowledge to the already existing literature available, with a focus on the US Multinationals based in Ireland, due to the lack of articles about this exact topic, which is the main limitation of the study.

Methodology: the author used qualitative study with semi-constructed interviews within different US Multinationals based in Ireland. The interviews were conducted with HR managers and other senior executives, to discover what are their methods for the talent retention and development.

Results: Talent retention and talent development influence directly the companies’ competitive advantage, as well as employees’ performance. The outcome of these on talents is the feeling of belongingness and recognition from their superiors, also if there are chances to grow in the company, and occupy senior level positions.
1. Introduction

In this chapter, the author will introduce the topic of the study and the research question, the researcher will explain also the importance of this research now days, the purpose and the framework of the dissertation.

1.1. Background

The importance of talented employees’ retention was always crucial for companies. Fitze-enz (1997) as cited in Smith Ramhall (2003) said that due to the amount of financial loses, estimated to 1$ million, related to every 10 managerial and professional employees who leave the company, the joined direct and indirect expenses connected to with one employee ranges from at least one year’s compensation and advantages, to a maximum of two years’ compensation and advantages. Hence, there is an important economic impact when a company loses any of its talented employees, as well as another type of loss, which is the loss of the knowledge that is lost with the talent’s take-off, and later on.

Companies will need to either build an intellectual capital environment, where the transmission of information happens all through the structure, or surrender to the continuous loss of talented employees’ knowledge that has been developed all along during their time at the company (Harris, 2000, as cited in Smith Ramhall, 2003). This rooted knowledge is what a lot see as a salvation for companies, in order to meet their needs and expectations and maintain a competitive advantage within the worldwide economy in which they are competing today (Smith Ramhall, Ph.D., 2003, p. 2).

Many scholars suggested that the training and development leads to improvement of work related attitude within the workers. It is seen that the training bestowed in the line of group building increase employees’ job satisfaction. Individual career development also have a crucial impact on the strategic development of talents. Employees work for companies to achieve organisational goals, and their own goals, so, this condition could play an important connexion between business plans, HR plans and development plans, and according to this, individual career development should be considered to keep employees committed. Hence, the developmental interventions can help to achieve both personal and organisational goals. It will be hard for companies to retain their talents if there are no growth chances. Development will offer the employees the chance to grow, and perform better; this will
motivate them to use their skills and capabilities at their fullest. For the sake of the company, knowledge sharing is seen as a valuable asset (Gravan, 1997, Frese et al, 2003, Hall, 2001; Smith and Farquhar, 2000; Prusak, 1999; Boisot and Griffiths, 1999 as cited in Sumita. P, Chandan .K.S., 2014, p. 2).

Performance management is over 100 years old; it first started in the 1900’s as performance appraisal during the World War I, and kept changing and developing and facing issues, until current time (Williams R., 1998) (Briscoe J.P. & Hall D. T., 1999, p.37).

Now days, complications related to traditional hierarchy were pulled down, leaving place to a more equal working environment, which resulted into a boost of the performance management systems that require numerous feedback sources when determining an individual’s performance – this is more known as 360-degree feedback (Steve Brooks. 2015. [Accessed 5 March 2016]).

Companies use different technics when it comes to performance appraisal and management, and this is more likely to investigate employer’s performance and possibility of development. By adopting a formal system, performance appraisals will have a positive outcome if they are accurate and well installed. They may help employees with their career choices decisions, the ulterior path of individual time and effort also the matter of reward allocation, promotion, recalls, transfers and training & development programs (Leena T. & Twinkle P., 2012, p. 1).
1.2. Aim of the Research

Rationale

The author tries to explore the methods used for talent retention and development, and its efficiency and impact within the US Multinationals based in Ireland. In order to have an overview of what have been done so far on this topic, recent literature reviews by different scholars will be used.

The topic is so far unique, and focus on the US Multinationals based in Ireland, especially the “Knowledge-Intensive Firms”. The main goal of this research is to find out what are the best practices related the topic, if companies are offering wide ranges of incentives or if they are following the trends related to talent development. This study is addressed to people susceptible to influence the importance accorded to this area, such CEOs and HR managers and their commitment towards their talented employees.

1.3. Research approach

A qualitative research method was used, due to the author’s preferences and sight of it being more adequate to answer the questions. Interviews with HR managers and senior executives different US Multinationals were held in order to have a view from the inside of the companies, and have a reliable statement of the kind of incentives used and development methods adopted by them.

There might be some limitations, due to the number of considered interviewees. The result of this depends on their estimation of the situation, and taking other companies may happen during the processing time.

1.4. Research questions

The chosen approach serves to answer the following research questions in order to add information and conclusions to the literature which do not, or not to that extent, exist so far.

- One: What is talent retention and why is it important?

The aim of this question is to learn how talent retention is defined by the US Multinationals, where does its importance resides, and create a new definition that fits these times.
- **Sub-question 1: What motivate talents in the Irish US Multinationals?**

Being aware of the motivators of the employees is already half way knowing how to retain them. This question aims to explore what are the talents’ needs, and if they are same as the previous generations.

- **Sub-question 2: What are the retentions tools used in Ireland?**

In this sub-question, the author will identify the different types of incentives that companies can use in order to satisfy the different needs of their employees, and their link to retain them and keep them motivated.

- **Two: What is talent development and why is it important?**

In this research question, the researcher will try to find a new definition of talent development from the point of view of the US Multinationals, and find out any differences with the current literature review.

- **Sub-question 1: What are the methods and how are they used?**

This sub-question, will talk in details about the multiple development tools used here in Ireland, by describing them and showing their importance, strength points and their usage in companies, as well as the their description by other.

- **Sub-question 2: What is the impact on the performance?**

This sub question aims to find the relation of talent retention and development, and its impact on the performance of the employees.

- **Three: What is the applicability of motivation theories now days?**

The last research question will try to answer the question of the applicability of the motivation theories on the companies’ subject of the case study, if these companies still rely on them, or they cannot find any use for them.
1.5. organisation of the dissertation

The dissertation will go in the first part through the most recent literature and reliable viewpoints and critics from journal articles and books from different scholars. This step is taken in order to illustrate and show the readers what has been found and written so far about talent retention and development, and identify any gaps or lacking from the literature.

The second part of will be the research method, which aims to show the readers which instruments the author used to complete his study, it describes how the primary and secondary data were collected and analysed in order to answer the research questions.

After the research method, the findings section will be the statement of the interviewees in the qualitative study, the findings will be compared and contrasted in order to get a clear idea about what the companies said, and this will lead to a keen discussion about the major findings the author aims to achieve, which is finding new definitions from talent retention and development, and exploring new methods related to the best practices of this topic, as well as the validity and applicability of the motivation theories now days.

The last part of the dissertation will be the conclusion and recommendations, where the author will bring some ideas that he deems able to solve problems related to the findings of the dissertation.
2. Literature Review:

2.1. Introduction:

According to Saunders et al. (2016), it is important to critically review the literature in order to develop an accurate understanding of, and observation into, past studies done by scholars related to the research questions and objectives. (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 112).

The literature review on talent retention and talent development within the US Multinationals based in Ireland will be relying on the research and findings done by scholars who did their research on this topic. Now days, most companies are focused on talent retention & development, they spend a lot of money, time and energy in order to improve this field, and this is due to their importance for achieving a competitive advantage on the other competitors. Analysing the recently released literatures within this area will grant the author the opportunity to build a base where extra research can be added.

The dissertation will explore the different technics related to the kind of retention tools companies are using, the type of incentives and their effect on the talents. The development tools and technics followed, and the latest trends regarding talent development in Ireland. This will be followed by a brief review of the impact of talent retention & development on the overall performance of talents and a critical analysis of motivation theories and their application now days done recently by scholars.

2.2. The importance of talent retention and development:

According to Tansley and Susanne (2013), talent management includes the strategies and protocols for the systematic attraction, identification, retention, development including the disposition of valued and highly potentiated employees within the organisation. In this process, once the company have identified the key talents in critical roles across the organisation – those talents that they need to keep at any cost – they need to find ways to retain them. (ADP., 2012, p. 3). Talent retention became a strategic tool to ensure superior work performance and competitive advantage, in addition to that, the company’s reputation also improve and with it, the key employees’ retention (Aizza A. et al, 2014, p. 3), also because organisations are never safe from danger, as attractive offers are always available and ready to take their talents (Ravinder K. & Ritu A., 2012, pp. 1-2). As talent retention continues to top
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the list of CEO’s priorities, Kamal (2015) argues that staff retention is considered as a big issue, since most talented employees tend to look for opportunities in other companies, so, their current employers are more likely to focus more on compensation, benefits, and talent management, in order to keep them.

As part of talent management, talent development is very important companies as well. If organizations are serious about developing their talent, they have to answer to both personal and organisational needs and in order to make this work; a personalized talent development is required (Liz Barlow., 2006, pp. 6 – 9). One of the strategies to achieve this is continuous training and development of the work force, as career development is an ongoing one lifetime continuous process throughout. The implementation of training programs will help companies to maintain its employees motivated & engaged, and will improve the executives’ effectiveness by improving their personal capacities and this, ensure the organisational effectiveness. (Amber W.A & Boris. N., 2014, p. 14) (Michelle C. Muratori and Carol K. S., 2015, pp. 173-174) Today there is no doubt that only following this strategy, the companies will be able to gain sustainable development and stand out from their competitors. (Monika C. & Agata S., 2013, p. 93).

This part of the literature review will help the author to answer the first question related to the definition and importance of talent retention.

2.3. Talent Retention tools:

According to Tejaswi B. Hackman and Oldham (1980) worked on motivational impact of job characteristics on employee goal achievement, they stated that different need satisfaction has intrinsic and extrinsic motivational potential, that fosters employees to meet their goals. These incentives are normally oriented to produce certain outcomes, and Kwok .L et al said that intrinsic motivation is formally defined as the motivation to perform an activity for its own sake. In order to experience the satisfaction inherent in the activity and extrinsic motivation focuses more on the consequences to which the activity leads than on the activity itself. Being extrinsically motivated implicates performing a job with the intention of getting something in return (Deci, Ryan, & Williams, 1996; Deci, Connell, & Ryan, 1989; Gagne & Deci, 2005as cited in Tejaswi, 2015), while Vaiman & Vance (2008) define two classes of retention tool to fulfil employees ‘expectation: extrinsic and intrinsic incentives (Figure 1). Extrinsic
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incentives are all the monetary rewards that can satisfy the physiological needs, while the intrinsic are the incentives that tend to satisfy the psychological needs of the employees.

When the extrinsic incentives are cited, most authors talk about monetary rewards and Aruna M. et al (2015) say that extra pay for extra hours, lesser work-life balance, retirement and fringe benefits in the job are all parts of the extrinsic incentives.

In Chin-Yi Shu’s work, Deci and Ryan (2000) defined intrinsic motivation as “doing a job not to get a reward after finishing it, but doing it for the satisfaction of achievement.” The need for autonomy is the need of feeling free, when he or she are doing a task of their own choice, without feeling being forced to do it. The need for competence is the feeling acquired when someone is able to learn or to perform a work-related task. Last, the need for relatedness is the feeling of belonging to a group, on whom he or she can rely, and all these needs are crucial components for, maximal performance and functionality of individuals (Deci & Ryan, 2000;
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Molix & Nichols, 2013; as cited in Chin-Yi Shu et al., 2015). While Janet Chew (2004) in her research found that, the retention tools can be split into two different groups of practice: HR (human resource) factors and organizational factors [Figure 2].

[Figure 2]

Veronika Knight adds that, for employees having good incentives is as important as having a good salary aside, and high productivity is mainly related to motivation programs of the company and this will reflect on its overall success. If employees feel like their efforts are not appreciated, they will be automatically demotivated and this will decrease their performance (Shutan, 2013 as cited in Veronika Knight, 2015), and low levels of employees’ happiness will cost companies a lot, because it will lead to high levels of turnover.
When it comes to Ireland, John C. K and Martin F. (2005, p. 43), said that Greville and Barry (2001) conducted an in-depth study to find out the best tools successful Irish companies used to retain their employees, they are both intrinsic and extrinsic, and these so called ‘hits’ are:

[Figure 3]

Due to the cost of recruitment, new staff training costs, and the waiting period for the new recruits to be able to perform as required. Companies will lose a lot of money in this process, so it would be more suitable, if they invest this money on their current employees, in order to retain and develop them. Beside the human loss, knowledge also will be gone with every employee turnover.
This part of the literature review will help the author to answer the second answer of the research questions about the retention tools.

2.4. Talent development:

Talent development is crucial for organisational efficiency and should be taken seriously (Pruis, 2011 as cited in Sunita P., 2015). Talent development is one of the ways that helps companies to retain their best talents, which make talent development a very important factor for organisational success (CIPD, 2015).

While Dr. David William price found in his research that, the main goal of talent development is to take the employees’ performance to a higher level and retain them. In order to achieve the business goals and support the organisational growth and a dedicated talent development will bring the needed: focus resources and expertise to the career & professional development, succession planning, strategic alignment of learning and development initiatives as well. (David William Price. 2015. [Accessed 16 March 2016]).

2.4.1. Talent Development tools:

According to Sue Mulhall, many reports expose the needs of Ireland, when it comes to the lack of sustainable employment opportunities. This can be achieved by the implementation of an economy, built on innovative knowledge. Gunnigle .p et al (2011) say that there is an ever-growing number of studies that stands with the importance of development for influencing organisation, and this can be achieved if companies make sure that all their employees are able to perform their tasks, in a way that will help the companies to achieve their goals. However, in order to do a good job, there are some requirements that are capable process, capable people and capable performance. (Penny Hackett, 2003, p. 5).
2.4.2. Trends in development:

According to the latest survey done by the CIPD (2015), there are some trends in development, that they came to after a large survey done last year, and these trends are:

There is a difference between a company and another one, but on the average, half of their L&D content is made from scratch, by L&D professionals, either from the company itself or from outside, two-fifths are using a current internal or external L&D tool, one-tenth are suing generated content. Many companies are offering training for students, clients or volunteers, depending on the job type. A merger between L&D and business strategy is highly anticipated, since the most changes that will affect the L&D sector will go with the business strategy of the company, the focus will be on mentoring, and evaluation, less responsibility to line managers and learners is also expected among those changes (CIPD, Learning and Development 2015, Annual Survey Report, pp. 9-12).
For the study, four most used and most effective tools suggested by the CIPD will be used.

**On-the-job training:** is generally defined as a form of training that happens at the workplace while the employee is performing the job, usually involving one-on-one instruction (Jacobs & Jones, 1995; Rothwell & Kazanas, 2004; van Zolingen et al., 2000 as cited in Makoto M. 2014). Benefits of OJT include:

1. A powerful connexion between training and job;
2. Skills learned during the job become more efficient;
3. It is cost-effective;
4. Time effective; and
5. Learning issues are diminished because the training is in the workplace. OJT can also make of employees’ skills “company focused” with no flows, and no use to competitors (van Zolingen et al., 2000; Ortenblad, 2006 as cited in Makoto Matsuo, 2014, p. 2), and Jamsari et al continue by saying that, Mayfield (2011) suggested that training effectiveness is a good predictor of employee training. This association suggests that when employees have been trained in a training program, the training effectiveness is likely to be followed by job behaviour (Pelham, 2009 as cited in Jamsari et al., 2015), while W. M. Costen argues that training involves providing employees with the basic knowledge and skills they need to do their tasks with the company’s standards.

Feelings of efficiency that can come from being part of a training program will enhance job satisfaction (Hartline & Ferrell, 1996 as cited in W. M. Costen, 2011).
In-house Development programmes:

In-house training require the company to bring a trainer, to the place of their choice, inside or outside the company, to deliver an adjusted training program for the employees.

In-house training comes with benefits that will help companies, like:

- Fully customised training for the teams, departments or organisations
- Flexible training format, it can be taken in one session or multiple ones, they can be delivered over several months or to a year, depending on the selected time and number of employees.
- The company schedule the dates that suit its employees
- Employees’ traveling reduced or completely eliminated
- Cost effective, as it is better than sending each employee to a destination for training
- Consist in a combination of different L&D tools, from theory to practice, to ensure immediate efficiency
- Encourage team building, team work and colleagues mutual understanding
- Valuable experience brought by the trainers. (Wiley Publishing. 2013. [Accessed 19 March 2016])

Coaching:

In addition to the help it brings when it comes to talent retention, coaching is a very effective method to develop new staff and growing ones. (Mentoring & Coaching Help Employees Grow., 2001, pp. 1-3). Moreover, according to Jennifer Wright, making a difference between coaching & mentoring is not an easy task, since both of them are meant to achieve the same goal, but once put in practice; one can distinguish between the two of them. (Jennifer Wright, 2005, p. 2).

According to Tatiana B. et al, Coaching is a hard task influenced by the interaction of different elements at the same time, such as: character, coach’s skill or the relation between the coach and the learner. All these elements are susceptible to be affected by contextual issues. (De Haan & Duckworth, 2012; Ely et al., 2010, as cited in Tatiana B.).
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Gil B. et al say that; coaching attributed to a personalized, goal focused, developmental form of one-on-one profound learning, aiming to (a) enhance self-knowledge, (b) promote behavioural change, and (c) contribute to career development (Day, 2000 as cited in Gill B., 2015).

Tina .S found that; Ives (2008) describes coaching as a developing discipline which would imply that specialist coaching types are sub-disciplines, and continue by saying that coaching and mentoring are interdisciplinary and aims to the same target.(International Journal of Evidence, June 2014, pp. 2-3).

Since the coaching & mentoring are related to employees’ development, the CIPD defines coaching as a development tools, aiming to increase individual skills, knowledge or work efficiency via one-on-one communication. While mentoring as the relation between as much experienced colleague or a senior and a junior staff member, where the senior member share the job knowledge and experience to support the other’s development (CIPD., 2015. Coaching and mentoring. [Accessed 17 February 16]).

**Mentoring:**

Jamie Cleaver (2016) says that the essence of mentoring is about helping people to help themselves. The mentor should be in a position to help, by offering experience, wisdom or fresh perspectives. Mentees ‘helping themselves’ implies that responsibility for progress lies with the mentee. While Gil .B et al adds mentoring aims to supply the protégé with career-related guidance (e.g., sponsorship, coaching) and psychosocial help.

**E-learning courses:**

E-learning (or ‘electronic’ learning) can be described as the use of technology for the purpose of learning, training and developing in a company. The e-learning process can be divided into two parts: the inclusive e-learning, which do not require the use of a computer to connect to the network, and the exclusive e-learning that will be based on learning via the internet, the company’s intranet and other multimedia tools like videoconferencing and telecommunication, and this comes by the access into a computer (CIPD. 2015. [Accessed 17 February 2016]) (Stephen Gibb, 2011, pp. 284-285).
Dr. Tyechia V. Paul (2014) says that with e-learning, employees’ do not need an instructor or a coach, since most of the training sessions will be done, either on a computer or a mobile device, which will provide them with videos, quiz questions and interactive platforms, and beside that, they get an immediate feedback for their results.

In addition, Sung Youl Park et al say that: The concept of e-learning is based on the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) to reinforce and support learning outcomes. More specifically, e-learning was defined as a live platform where data and information are updated, stored and shared instantly with the all those who have access to it. In this study, e-learning is defined as self-regulated learning through web-based e-learning content provided by a learning management system (Rosenberg, 2001; OECD, 2005 as cited in Sung Youl Park et al., 2014).

However, no matter how the technology will evolve, it will not be able to take the place of a real human trainer or coach, because of the human interaction, and the other directions in which this position is being developed to. (Penny Hackett, 2003, p. 133).

2.4.3. Other talent development tools:

In addition to the covered talent development tools, other ones from the newest CIPD survey, companies can use to develop their talents to ensure a total advantage on their competitors, and narrow the gap between the current competencies and the ones the company is aiming for, some of them are:

Career planning:

According to Sajjad .W (2015), career implies lifelong work, also vocations, livelihoods, crafts, trades, arts, occupations, and professions. Generally, career planning refers to future-orientated thinking and imagining possible pathways to reach the aimed career goals. (Strauss et al., 2012 as cited in Mirjam Neureiter Eva Traut-Mattausch).

The career planning is a matter of both individual and organisational responsibility. Individuals must link their ambitions and objectives with organisational needs and opportunities, evaluating, helping and updating its employees on career planning, individual development efforts with training and development programs. (Eliza Antoniu, 2010, p. 2).
Succession planning:

According to Eugene Fibuch (2012) succession planning is a premeditated and organized effort by a company, to secure future leaders for key positions, retain and develop intellectual capital for the future. Push people to advance and develop an overall strategy, with a focus on unique roles & skill sets, hence, succession planning should be an essential element for any company’s strategic planning process.

Suzanne M. et al (2012) add that succession planning is a plan that companies undertake in purpose, and it aims to train future leaders for key positions, besides that, it focuses on preparing the employees to be in charge of management and bigger responsibilities via training.

Job rotation:

Job rotation is the process of moving employees from a job to another or changing their tasks, as well as transfer within the organisation’s departments. It involve moving them between different levels of responsibilities to enhance their experience for the different tasks they will undertake. (Olorunsula, 2000 as cited in Md Lazim Mohd Zin et al, 2013, pp. 2).

Saravani S. R. & Abbasi B. add that companies aim to reach a certain level of skills earning, job independence, motivation and efficiency, by moving employees across different jobs to achieve different tasks, because, the more employees will face different challenges, the more experience they will gain and the easier it will be for the company to evaluate and assess them.

In a leadership context, job rotation is an important development tool aiming to find the leader within the employees and identify high-potentiated ones, in order to give them an option to develop and move into an executive position in the company. (Lanier Danny, 2010, p. 2).

Talent development is very important both to companies and individuals, as it leads to high competitive advantage, and offer those talents the opportunity to grow within their organisation, and this part of the literature review was selected by the author in order to help answer the second question about the definition and importance of talent development, as well as the first sub-question about the methods used for development.
2.5. **The impact on performance:**

Talent retention and talent development plays an important part together on the enhancing of the organisational competitive advantage, as they have an important impact on the employees’ performance, which will lead to the improvement of the organisational performance.

Jane Weightman said that the primary design of performance management is that teams or individuals are aware of their obligations to make their impact on the organisational effectiveness. There should be a clear connection with the organisational objectives; this includes good transmission of clear goals at the reach of everyone. While Armstrong argued that performance is the accomplishment of results by a certain employees’ conduct. Performance management has an impact on performance by helping individuals to comprehend what is the good performance, and providing the required data to enhance it. Reward management has an impact on performance by perceiving and rewarding good performance and by granting incentives to enhance it. (Armstrong, 2014, p. 365) (Jane Weightman, 2004, p. 174).

Armstrong continues by saying that if companies use the rewards adequately, they can improve the employee’s performance. The rewards related to the performance are mostly non-financial, and can be in form of recognition through feedback, the provision of opportunities to achieve, to develop skills and capabilities, and chances for career development, all these rewards can encourage job and organisational commitment and make a stronger impact on the financial rewards. This is said, extrinsic incentives have an impact on employees’ performance as well, monetary incentives like pay increases, bonuses and compensations will increase the performance of employees. Some companies focus on extrinsic incentives, even if performance is meant to be enhanced by long-term rewards. (Armstrong, 2014, pp. 379-382).

This part of the literature review was selected, so it can helps to answer the second sub-question about the impact of talent retention and development on the performance.
2.6. Ireland and motivation:

Talking about talent retention require from companies the need to understand what motivate their talented employees, and to achieve this understanding, reviewing motivation theories will bring a lot of clarity, as they base their analysis of worker performance on how work and its rewards satisfy the individual employees’ needs. The general conclusion is that if these needs are satisfied, employees will be motivated, if not, their performance will be less than satisfactory. (Gunnigle P. et al., 2011, p. 137).

Since the study is focused on US Multinationals based in Ireland, the author will briefly explain what kind of company they are, who are their employees, and if they follow the concept mentioned earlier. According to Veronika Svatošová, companies took advantage of the internet to establish new business ideas, and provide with it new perspectives and possibilities. (Veronika Svatošová, 2011, p. 3). The majority of these companies are considered as “Knowledge-Intensive firms”, because they rely on highly educated people, able to perform the complicated job tasks. This new type of business pushed companies to focus more on talent retention and development, and gave the new generation to be part of this business revolution (Brian H. & Kathy M., 2014, p. 177).
Charlie Taylor says that, indeed.com found that the demographic variants affect the performance, and Ireland is one of the few countries with a median age of 36 for employees. (Charlie Taylor. 2016. [Accessed 31 March 2016]), according to Payscale, the median age at top US Multinationals is between 29 and 38, which make the majority of the employees are from Gen Y.

2.7. A critical perspective of motivation theories:

Due to the importance of motivation theories, many authors had their saying about them. Taking in consideration the time gap between their releasing time and now days, there can only be some issues in matter of their application, and this is because of the context, the business type and the generation of employees (Gen Y), but one cannot deny as well the help these theories bring.

In this section of the study, a critical perspective will be brought, from studies and researches done by scholars in different fields, either here in Ireland or elsewhere in the world.


Maslow’s Hierarchy of needs says that the human needs are in form of a pyramid, the basic needs according to him are supposed to motivate people. These needs in particular have to be fulfilled in order, starting with the basic ones, and once they are satisfied, the person move to the upper levels, and these needs come in order, from the bottom to the top: (a) Physiological Needs, (b) Safety, (c) Belonging, (d) Love/Esteem, to (e)Self-Actualization Needs. In the lower part of the pyramid, the physical needs, safety/security needs, love/belonging needs and esteem needs, while self-actualization needs, cognitive needs, aesthetic and self-transcendence are in the upper part of the pyramid. (Jae M. L., Sherman D. H., 2015, p. 133) (William J. H & Michael L. C, 2015, p. 1).

Given these facts, if one or more needs are satisfied, they are not a motivation anymore. When a need from a lower part of the hierarchy is satisfied, the next one becomes dominant, and the person focus on satisfying this higher need and only an unsatisfied need can motivate the person. (Çınar Orhan et al., 2011, p. 2).
Comparing the hierarchy of needs with the current generation’s needs, there can be issues while implementing it, because of the difference of mind. The main needs for Gen Y are related to self-actualisation, in contrary Maslow, and physiological and safety needs comes after, while the esteem comes at the top of their needs. For these differences, this theory may have problems if it is used now days (Venkatesh Ganapathy, 2014).

After that, there is the ERG theory that Bernard Mausner described in his research as a revision of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. Alderfer’s improvement to this theory comes into a cut into three elements, which are “existence”, “relatedness” and “growth”. The existence needs refer to the basic human needs related to physiological and safety needs. The relatedness needs are attributed to the human need of undertaking or having interpersonal relationships. The third group of needs is the growth needs, and it speaks of the needs of personal development, self-fulfilment and self-actualization. (CA. Arnolds & Christo .B., 2002, p. 698).

Nevertheless, the ERG theory suggests that, it is not imperative to satisfy the needs in the proposed order of the hierarchy of needs, which means that, one is allowed to satisfy whichever need he or she wishes to satisfy.

Mausner continue by saying that: if you desire something valuable, but you do not have it, just go and that you want it. This is the rational situation that might be achieved through the tendency of being consistent. Indeed, Alderfer counter the critics on his theory by assuring that it got many weak spots due to the difficulty to distinguish between needs, motives, attitudes, and that the positive combination between satisfaction and desire is due most of the time to the need of social fitting, through an approved pattern. (Bernard Mausner, p. 734-736).

The ERG theory, in the other hand, can be easily used within companies, but must be adapted to the Gen Y needs, because their fast-paced life style, as they can have different needs, and rapidly changing, and they want their employers at the same speed level (Coulter, DeCenzo, Robbins, 2014, p. 345).

While Chung H.K & Hugh .S say in their research about the Acquired Needs theory that, McClelland came up with three motivation elements, which are: the need of achievement, affiliation and power. (Chung H. K, SCULLION, Hugh, 2013, p. 26). The need for achievement was related to peoples’ desire to undertake challenges, or reach the standards of excellence.
The need of affiliation, which is the need to be with other people, feeling a sense of being part of something and involvement. The need of power represents the desire to take control of influence’s factor (Miguel K & Julius K, 2005, p. 4), McClelland said that the predominant needs will have their influence on the performed jobs, either positive or negative, and those needs are obtained and developed through a person’s lifetime. (Gunnigle P.et al, 2011, p. 142).

The acquired needs theory is one of the theories that can fit perfectly with the type Gen Y employees, because of its needs’ priorities, which fits with what those employees are expecting from their employers, and it goes toward their direction.

In addition, McGregor introduced Theory X and Theory Y, two structures that shows the importance of human nature in the eyes of managers, and their approaches to motivate the employees in organisational setting. (Travis L. Russ, 2013, p. 3).

Peter F. Sorensen indicated that in the work of Joanne Woodward; these two theories are used in two different kind of organisations, for theory X, it is more likely to be used in a mechanistic organizations, where it is more about mass production technology, while, theory Y fits better in organic organisations, with a consistency of advanced technology.

Richard E. goes further by saying that; companies should give up on the pattern used by theory X for the one from theory Y, and this is due to its humanistic and optimistic view of employees, and that many organisations became successful by adapting this theory.

Even though, theory X and theory Y are not considered as extreme opposites, many authors says that theory Y overweight theory X, but, due to the human nature and its assumptions, there will always be enough “X” in managers, to doubt the efficiency of managers with more “Y” within them. Despite the evidences, especially when it comes to the results of the participatively, managing way, reluctance remain, not sure, if the theory will work or not. (W. Warner Burke, 2011, p. 18).

McGregor’s theories X & Y, cannot both be applied, because the theory X goes extremely the opposite of who the Gen Y employees are, but theory Y, represents this generation, and express its needs, desires and motivators to be seen by the managers as mentees and help them in their professional life (Ryan, 2010).
Herzberg presented his Dual-Factor theory, a model that contains two major factors: motivators and hygiene, both are from corporate employee satisfaction. Employees are satisfied if hygiene factors are present and support members. (Rebecca Costello & S. A. Welch, 2014, p. 3). According to Alexandre N. Tuch, Herzberg said that if hygiene levels are low, this will lead to job dissatisfaction, but, even if it is high, it will not generate job satisfaction. In the other hand, the outcome of high motivators’ level is job satisfaction, but, if these motivators are not available, this will not result as job dissatisfaction. (ALEXANDRE N. T & KASPER .H, 2015, p. 2) and Rebecca C & Welsh (2014) continue by saying that both of these factors are based on different points of view. Hygiene factors are linked to supervision practices, policies, administration and interpersonal relations, while the motivators are more associated with success, superior’s recognition and career opportunities. Both of these factors are important for an efficient work, but with different roles, and unless the motivator factors are evident, employees will not make an try to improve.

Anindita B. G argues that the theory needs to be revisited according to the motivators of this generation, since they may not be the same anymore, and has to be identified. Not many scholars explored the existing motivation elements for the current workforce, and because of this, a lot of work needs to be done, to get a better knowledge of employees’ emotions, to create and adaptable motivational scheme. (Guha, Anindita Bose, 2010, p. 3). Moreover, for these reasons, this theory may face problems and today’s companies, and must be imperatively updated.

According to HSIU-LI LIAO et al, expectancy theory is a procedure theory of motivation, arguing that development of people’s effort is depends on the outcomes they are expecting, and the importance of that outcome in the person’s mind (Isaac & Pitt, 2001, as cited in HSIU,. 2011).

George .L (2015) adds that Vroom’s expectancy theory is grounded on four presumptions: (1) individuals are hired with requirements regarding their demands, incentives, and experiences, (2) a person’s conduct is a consequence of deliberate preference, (3) individuals require distinct things from the organization, and (4) individuals will select among choices so as to hone end results for them personally.
Moreover, Maija R. (2010) et al say individuals will act in a way related to their expectations, that the act will result in a given outcome and on the attractiveness of that outcome to the individual. Simply put, the theory states that the actions of an individual are driven by expected consequences.

In addition to this, Dr. Parnav P. suggests that people work in companies for personal reasons, and it is the achievement of their goals, these goals or desires can be satisfied by the help of the company by rewards, which make the relation between the rewards and personal goals very important. This relation can be defined as the given value of work outcomes by the employees. Secondly, the dedication and efficiency of individual’s results as rewards offered by the company, and the belief an employee have, that if he or she will work hard, they will be rewarded is also very important. Thirdly, the idea an employees get, that the more they work hard, the higher their performance will be is also important. From this, there are four distinguished variables that are important in motivation which are 1- personal effort, 2- personal performance, 3- company’s reward, and 4- individual goals. Nevertheless, Edward Lawler says that the expectancy theory is deceptive, because it looks at the employees as greedy persons, who will put more efforts to achieve tasks, just to get a reward, such as financial bonuses or promotions from their employers. (Dr. Pranav Parijat, 2014, p. 9).

The expectancy theory may not be suitable for the Gen Y, if the company takes in consideration their profile, because they have a high level of narcissism, and this resulted in a kind of right and high expectation as part of Gen Y personality, and this has led into a disconnection with motivation (Sauser, W. and Sims, R., 2012).

While Shi .Z (2014) says that equity theory was developed by Adams to outline the conditions that make people feel that a situation is unjust and to indicate the ways in which individuals react to such a situation. Following comparisons done on social scale and relative deprivation theorists, Adams said that people compare their efforts and the results they have with another person as a reference. The Equity theory proposes that people’s motivation is influenced by what he or she think being equitable compared with others. David. A et al added that the main focus of scholars was on equity as a standard of equality and it is more likely used in the area of incomes distribution and reward. As noted, distribution fairness usually assume that outcomes to be equivalent. Equality is typically esteemed as a predominant premise for accomplishing distributive equity when the general objective is one of fostering or keeping up
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decent interpersonal relations, attaining a sense of community, or achieving social integration. (Deutsch 1985, 1986 as cited in David. A et al., 2012).

Kevin T. M (2013) adds that equity theory faced many critics since its beginning, due to its lack of precision, and for missing many points when it comes to its predictiveness power. It was later on classified as a “not-so-useful theory”, even though the research done on it were all successful, it did not find its way for a specific application. Overall, a mixed view of the researches into the equity theory may be the best thing to do (Latham & Budworth, 2007; Campbell, Dunnette, Lawler, & Weick, 1970; Lawler, 1970; Miner, 1984; Levy, 2013 as cited in Kevin T. M.,) Michaeline. S (2011) said that the most recent literatures on equity theory in the workplace are more likely about organisational equality regarding the employees’ efficiency as well as the behaviours that may occur when the results do not match the perceived achieved job.

The equity theory also like the expectancy theory, may not be suitable now, because of the all the laws and policies. Fairness became a crucial element for motivation, Gen Y is known for its self-esteem, consider their work as valuable compared to the offered reward, or even compared to others (Eisner S., 2005, pp. 4-15).

The literature review related to the motivation theories aims to help the author answer the question, about the applicability of those theories now days and it is the third research question.

2.7.1. The limitations of Motivation Theories:

As observed above, the basic motivation theories have limitations, they are either outdated to be applied on the business concept, or on the generation itself (GEN Y). Companies found themselves in front of new problems, generated by this generation, one of them is how to retain them. Employees from the Gen Y are more likely to take challenges for new opportunities and management decisions, look more a work-life balance, because they are considered as the next hero generation and to become the perfect generation (M. Aruna and J. Anitha, 2015, p. 2). In addition to this, the type of the business subject of the study, since it is considered as a Knowledge-Intensive Firm (business), in which, companies offer customers intangible solutions by using the knowledge of its employees. Indeed, in this kind of business, knowledge got different roles such as: 1- source of competitive advantage; 2- providing a
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special product and service to customers; 3- developing expertise to combine both products and services; 4- elaborating new ways for fast problem solving (Alvesson, 1993; Wich & Schneider, 1993; Alvesson, 1993; Alvesson, 1995; Starbuck, 1992 as cited in Massaro Maurizio et al, 2014, p. 2).
3. Research methodology:

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter the researcher will try to describe the research method used to answer the questions asked before, and for this, the research ‘onion’ of Saunders et al (2016, p. 124) have been used as shown below:

3.2. Research Philosophy:

According to Saunder et al. (2016), the research philosophy is attributed to a system of convictions and assumptions related to the enhancement of knowledge in a specific area. A judicious and rational combination of assumptions will create a conceivable research philosophy, which will build the methodological choice, research strategy, data collection techniques and analysis procedures. This will help the author to design a meaningful research project, in which all the component of the research fit together. Johnson and Clark (2006), as cited in Saunter et al. (2016), found out as business and management researchers, that there is a need to be acquainted of the philosophical commitments made through the choices of
research strategy, because this will have an important influence on what will be done and how the research will be understood. (Saunders et al., 2016, pp. 124-125).

3.2.1. Is there a best philosophy for business and management research?

According to Tsoukas and Knudsen (2003) cited in Saunders et al. (2016), there is no agreement about a perfect philosophy between business and management scholars. When it comes to develop a private and design the research project, it is good to know that philosophical disagreements are an intrinsic element of business and management research, and that every research philosophy and paradigm add something exclusive and beneficial to business and management research, representing a distinct and singular ‘way of seeing’ organisational realities (Morgan 1986, as cited in Saunders et al., 2016, pp. 125-126).

As Saunders et al. mentioned in their work, there are three types of research assumptions to differentiate research philosophies: ontology, epistemology and axiology.

**Ontology** is related to the assumptions about the nature of reality, and **Epistemology**, as Burrell and Morgan (1979) cited in Saunders et al. said that it is the beliefs regarding knowledge, what is acceptable, valid and legitimate knowledge, and how the researchers can share this knowledge with others. The **Axiology** refers to the part the values and ethics play within the research process. This merges questions about how researchers accept the contact of their own values with those of the companies in the research. (Saunders et al., 2016, pp. 127-128)

After talking about the types of research assumptions, there is a need to understand that they are two opposing extremes, and in order to distinguish between them, they will be divided into Objectivism and Subjectivism assumptions.

According to Saunders et al. (2016), Objectivism integrate the beliefs of the natural sciences, contending that the social reality researched is foreign to others. While Subjectivism is mixes between the assumptions of the arts and humanities, affirming that social reality is created from the approach and consequent behaviours of social actors. (Saunders et al., 2016, pp. 128-130).
For this study, the author will use *subjectivism* as it mixes the beliefs of the arts and humanities. It encompass to nominalist *ontology*, which says that social phenomena are created through the language, approaches and consequent behaviours of social actors. *Epistemology* focused on the social actors’ point of view, narrative, interpretative, approaches that brings these social realities, and claims to have a value-bound, reflexive *axiology*.

In succession to what was discussed before, the researcher will introduce the five major philosophies in business and management: positivism, critical realism, interpretivism, postmodernism and pragmatism.

For this study, the author selected the interpretivism, which is same as critical realism, developed as a critic of positivism but from a subjectivist angle. Interpretivism focus on the idea that humans are not same as the other physical phenomena since they create meanings. The aspiration of being an interpretivist for is research is to make new, richer understandings and analysis of the selected area of study, and the author will be looking at talent retention & development from the point of view of a human resource manager. *(Saunders et al., 2016, p. 140)*.

Taking the path of being an interpretivist researcher, the author collected what is important for the research. Numerous attitudes of interpretivism place minor different emphasis on how to proceed this in real, so the author worked as a phenomenologist, and studied the existence, focused on companies’ lived experience memories and interpretations of their experiences, and left the Hermeneutics approach because of its focus on the study of cultural artefacts such as texts, symbols and imagines, as well as the Symbolic interactionists, that drive its approach from a pragmatist thinking, that see the communication between individuals will lead to a meaning. Due to its core, based on the complexity, richness, variety of interpretations and meaning making, interpretivism is clearly subjectivist and discover phenomena in qualitative ways *(Crotty, 1998, as cited in Saunders et al., 2016, pp. 140-141)*.

Positivism was not used, because of its relation to the philosophical attitude of the natural scientist and involve working with a perceptible social reality to produce generalisations. The idea of positivism is attributed to the value of what is ‘posited’. This prioritise the positivist focus on strictly scientific empiricist method created to return into pure data and evidences uninfluenced by human interpretation or bias. For the philosophy of critical realism, Reed
(2005), as cited in Saunders et al. (2016) said that it focuses on clarifying what the author see and experience, when it comes to the accentuate structures of reality that shape the observable events. Critical realists believe that reality is external and autonomous, but cannot be directly accessed through the examination and knowledge of it, and critical realists follow an epistemological relativism (Saunders et al., 2016, pp. 139-140).

Postmodernism focus on the importance the language and power relations play, looking to question the ways of thinking already adopted and try to present new substitutional minor perspectives. Postmodernist researcher, would rather challenge organisational theories, and try to establish what point of view and realities they ban and leave silent and whose interest they serve, and this is not the aim of the study they author is doing (Saunders et al., 2016, pp. 141-142).

Pragmatism claims that concepts are only applicable where they backup the acts (Kelemen and Rumens 2008, as cited in Saunders et al. 2016). It aims to integrate objectivism and subjectivism, evidences and values, detailed and meticulous knowledge and different contextualised experiences. It does this by taking in consideration theories, concepts, ideas, hypotheses and findings, not in a philosophical form. However, in terms of the roles, they play as elements of thought and action, in terms of their constructive consequences in precise contexts, and for a pragmatist, research starts with a problem, and its goal is to bring in practical solutions that will instruct future practice. Researcher values drive the compulsory measure of analysis, which is triggered by doubt and a sense that something is not in place or inaccurate, and which re-creates assumptions when the dilemma is solved (Elkjaer and Simpson 2011, as cited in Saunders et al., 2016, p. 143).

### 3.3. Approaches to theory development:

According to Ketokivi and Mantere (2010) cited in Saunders et al. (2016), the degree to which the author is certain about the theory at the start of the research raises a crucial question regarding the design of the research project, and there are two approaches that can be adopted: deductive or inductive. There is a third approach that the researcher can use, which is the abductive approach, which starts with a ‘surprising fact’ being examined (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 144).
According to Saunders et al. (2016), in order to select which theory to develop for the research, the researcher must be aware of the path token. If the research starts with theories, collected from reading academic literatures, and then design a research strategy to test the theory, then, it is a deductive approach. In the other hand, if the research begin with the gathering of data to understand a phenomena and aim to develop a theory, then, this is an inductive approach. When the data are gathered in order to explore a phenomenon, analyse themes, to provide a recent or modified already existing theory, which is tested under different data collection, this is the abductive approach (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 145).

The author will be using the inductive approach for the study, since it is particularly related to the context in which the situation is happening. It will also help the author answering the research questions, and this will be by using qualitative data from a small number of companies, and due to this, the author will be able to find how the HR managers see talent retention and development inside their company.

The deductive approach was not used because of its quantitative data need, and dependence on large number of company, which is not the aim of the study, that wants to have detailed and not general information.

3.4. Research Strategies:

The research design is the overall plan of how the research questions will be answered and their objectives, define the sources of the gathered secondary and primary data, how the data analysis will be. The ethical issues faced, as well as the constraints met during the research, it can be problems to get access to data, time, location and money (Saunders et al., 2016, p.164).

The first methodological choice is, either work with a quantitative, qualitative or mixed method. The nature type of the research project will be also, either exploratory, descriptive, explanatory, evaluative or a combination of all these. The author will discuss the role of each one of them in the research design. The methodological choices and concerned strategies will also influence the choice of a proper time horizon, because, each research design will take the author to probable ethical issues, and it will be important take in consideration these, to minimise the outcomes (Saunders et al., 2016, p.164).
3.4.1. **Methodological choice: the use of a quantitative, qualitative or mixed methods research design:**

In this section, the research strategy will be approached. The term strategy is defined by Denzin and Lincoln (2011) as “a plan of action to achieve a goal”. In other words, a research strategy can be described as the way a researcher will go to answer the research questions. It is the methodological connexion between the philosophy and consequent choice of methods to gather and analyse data (Denzin and Lincoln 2011, as cited in Saunders et al., 2016, p. 177).

According to Saunders et al. (2016), in order to make a difference between quantitative research and qualitative research, the researcher can look at the difference between the data, one is based on ‘numeric data’, and the other on ‘non-numeric data’. So, quantitative method is usually used for any data analysis that produce or use numerical data. In the other hand, qualitative method is most likely to be used when the data is in form of interviews, and the generated data is non-numeric. (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 165).

For the study, the author selected the use of the qualitative research design, because of its association with the interpretive philosophy (Denzin and Lincoln 2011, as cited in Saunders et al. 2016). It is interpretive due to the need to make sense of the subjective and socially built meanings asserted about the phenomena being studied. Usually, this research is shown as naturalistic, because of the context where the researcher must work, which is a natural one, in order to build an access to meaning and comprehensive understanding (Saunders et al., 2016, p.168).
3.5. Approach to theory development

There are different kinds of qualitative research starting with the inductive approach to develop a theory, the author use the naturalistic research design in order to build up a theory, or to enhance an already existing one (Saunders et al. 2016, p. 168). The qualitative data make it easy to understand the processes. Due to its ability to briefly snap the evolving phenomenon in rich detail, and this almost impossible to achieve with methodologies based on quantitative data that are shallow, and do not go deeper in the process to find out more (Langley, 1999: 705 as cited in Giovanni et al., 2016, p. 137).

According to Saunders et al. (2016), Qualitative research studies are achieved by the use of numerous data gathering methods and analytical strategies, to develop a conceptual scheme and theoretical improvement. Bansal and Corley (2011), as cited in Saunders et al. (2016), said that the qualitative research is identified by methodological alterations; it stays important to use the method to expose the methodological accuracy and theoretical addition. The questions and procedures may shift and mix along the research process, and this is because of the non-standardised data gathering. It is also more likely to use the non-probability sampling methods. The achievement of the researcher’s part rely on the possibility of physical access to the companies, building a rapport and showing sensitivity to get access to their data. In this qualitative research design, the author will be using a single data collection technique, which is the semi-structured interviews, and corresponding qualitative analytical procedure. This is known as a mono method qualitative study. The author may also use a qualitative research design using more than one qualitative data collection technique and corresponding analytical procedure, if another company accept the interview, it is known as a multi-method qualitative study (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 168).

In the other hand, the Quantitative research was not used, because of its relation with positivism, notably when it is used with predetermined and extremely organised data gathering methods. Hence, some survey research, while done quantitatively, they may be seen to slightly fit within the interpretivist philosophy. Quantitative research can also be adopted within a realist pragmatist philosophies.
The quantitative research is generally related with the deductive approach, where the researcher focuses on the use of data to test theories. However, it may also include an inductive approach, where theories are developed using data.

Saunders et al continue by saying that quantitative research analyse the link between variables that are calculated numerically and analysed using different statistical and graphical methods, something that the author is not going do in the study. The quantitative research usually includes controls to grant the validity of data, as in an empirical design. This methodology regularly uses the probability-sampling methods to ensure generalisability, while for this study, the author is not trying to generalise the findings. A quantitative research design can be achieved using a single data gathering method, like a questionnaire, and corresponding quantitative analytical operation. This is commonly known as a mono-method quantitative study. A quantitative research design can be achieved by using more than one quantitative data gathering method and corresponding analytical operation. This is known as a multi-method quantitative study. The multi-method as well was not selected by the author as it suggests the use of more than one quantitative or qualitative method, but does not mix the two of them. Bryman (2006), as cited in Saunders et al. (2016) said that there many technics that has been encouraged in the business and management research. Due to their capacity to overcome weaknesses related to with the use of a mono method, and contributing for a richer and broader approach to data gathering, analysis and translation (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 166).

3.6. Recognising the purpose of the research design:

According to Saunders et al. (2016), the research project contains questions to be answered and research objectives. In order to know how the research questions will be asked, the author must their use an exploratory, descriptive, explanatory or evaluative research path. The aim of the research path may change over time as well.

For this research, the author decided to use an exploratory study - even though, the other research studies may fit as well at a certain degree that will not be enough - as it goes with what the author want to achieve with this study.

Using an exploratory study, the author will ask open questions explore the topic deeper, and gain a vision about the interested field, research questions used generally start with ‘what’ or
‘how’. While the questions asked to gather primary data usually starts with ‘What’ or ‘How’ as well. The exploratory study is extremely useful due to the what the author wants to achieve, which is a clear understand of the topic in the selected area of business.

There are a different of ways to run an exploratory research. The author is going through books and journal articles to make the literature; in-depth individual interviews will be done with experts in the area, and while being relatively unstructured and mainly relying on the quality of the information given by the interviewee.

The advantage of the **Exploratory** method is its flexibility and adaptability to changes. By conducting **exploratory** research, the author will start with a broad vision that will become narrower as the research progresses (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 174).

The other research methods were not selected, since the purpose of **descriptive** research is to have an exact profile of events, person or cases, and it may be an expansion of an exploratory research piece, or a precursor to an explanatory research piece. It is crucial to have an idea of the phenomena subject of the data gathering. However, it should be thought of as a channel to an end more than end itself. Which means that the research project using description is more likely to be forerunner to explanation. This kind of studies is known as descripto-explanatory studies (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 175).

The author dismissed the explanatory study, because it aims to study a case or an issue in order to explain the connexions between variables. Research questions that aims for an explanatory study usually start with ‘Why’ or ‘How’, while the questions asked for a primary data gathering start with ‘Why’ or ‘How’ as well (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 176).

The evaluative study was not selected by the author because it aims to find the degree of efficiency of works, research questions generally start with ‘How’, or ‘What’, in the form of ‘To what extent’ for example. Evaluative research in business management is more likely related with estimating the efficiency of a company or a business strategy, policy, programme, action or process. This may be about any department of a company or business. One of the things done by the evaluative study, is a comparison between events, situations, place and time periods, which give it the opportunity to deeply examine the performance and compare it, and this is not the aim of the dissertation the author is undertaking (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 176).
The last study, which is the combined one, was also dismissed by the author, and this is due to its use of different technics at the same time. Due to the topic of the study and given time to achieve such a work, also its final outcome, as it may not lead to the desired results like the ones the author aims to obtain with the exploratory study. The combined method will not be used. (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 176).

3.7. Choosing a research strategy or strategies:

3.7.1. The different research strategies:

There are multiple research strategies, either with *quantitative* or *qualitative* research design, while there are some of them that can be mixed for both of them. These strategies are:

- Experiment;
- Survey;
- Archival and Documentary Research;
- Case Study;
- Ethnography;
- Action Research;
- Grounded Theory;
- Narrative Inquiry. (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 178).

For the study, a *case study* theory was selected among the other theories, because it explores a topic or a phenomena deep and within a real-life context (Yin 2014, as cited in Saunders et al. 2016, p. 184). According to Flyvberg (2011), cited in Saunders et al. (2016), the ‘case’ in case study research point out to a person (for this study: HR Managers) or other entities. Selecting the case to be studied and setting the limits of study are crucial elements in defining the case study. Once defined, this will help the reader understand the dynamics of topic subject of the study within its natural context (Eisenhardt 1989; Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007, as cited in Saunders et al., 2016). Creswell (1994), as cited in Rajen K. et al, said that in the case study, an individual, company or phenomena is inspected within a set of time, utilising different data gathering gears. The case study is build to richly explain, illustrate a phenomena, the case is usually studied onsite in its natural ground. The data collection process is usually bilateral, as the researcher work with a person participating to the case
subject of study, which will consist the primary data, and secondary data will also be collected and used (Rajen K. et al, 2015, pp. 24-25).

The advantage of using the case study design, is that the researcher can be as much detail on the writing as possible. This design is extremely relevant, because it aims to extensively explore and understand the topic, rather than confirming and quantifying. It contributes with an analysis and in-depth understanding of a case, process and interactional dynamics within an entity of study (Ranjit Kumar, 2014, p. 273).

The experiment technic is a type of research that owes much to the natural sciences, in spite of the fact that it includes strongly in psychology and sociology research. The goal behind an experiment is to contemplate the likelihood of an adjustment in an autonomous variable bringing on an adjustment in another, dependent variable, and because of this, the creator is not going to use it for this topic.

Then, the survey method is usually connected with a deductive research approach. It is a prominent and common technic in business and management research, and is generally answer questions that start with 'what', 'who', 'where', 'how much' and 'how many'. It subsequently has a tendency to be used for descriptive research. Survey strategies utilizing questionnaires are well known as they permit the gathering of standardised data from a sizeable population in a highly economical way, permitting simple comparison, and since the study is a qualitative one, this methodology was rejected.

Archival or documentary research is not an effective and efficient method to use because of its propriety for the research question. Since, the data utilized for the research are viewed as secondary information, and the primary data is crucial for the study, alongside that, there can be some issues, similar to; documents' access denial, confinement for secrecy, and in addition the relatedness of these documents to the subject of study, since they may not coordinate with the necessities of the author.

The author did not use ethnography for its motivation to study the culture or social universe of a group, regardless of being the earliest qualitative research technic, with its origins in colonial anthropology (Saunders et al., 2016, pp. 187-189).

There are three Ethnography strategies for itself, which are:
Realist Ethnography is the closest to the ethnographic methodology described before. The realist ethnographer have faith in objectivity, verifiable reporting and distinguishing "true" meanings. The situation will be accounted for as seen, through facts or data about structures and procedures, practices and customs, routines and standards, artefacts and symbols.

Interpretive Ethnography puts much more stress on subjective impressions than on objectivity. The interpretive ethnographer believes in the probability of numerous meanings instead of being capable to distinguish a single, genuine meaning.

Critical Ethnography has a radical reason, which is to investigate and clarify the effect of power, privilege and authority on the individuals who are liable to these impacts or underestimated by them.

Action Research is an iterative procedure of request. It was created to help answer real organisational problems, through a participative and collaborative approach, which uses diverse types of information, and which will have suggestions for companies, and the organisation beyond the research project (Coghlan 2011; Coghlan and Brannick 2014, as cited in Saunders et al., 2016). For these reasons, since the author is not aiming to solve any company's problems, this method was not selected (Saunders et al., 2016, pp. 189-192).

Grounded theory method alludes to the data gathering systems and analytic methods that it uses. 'Grounded theory' might be utilized freely to fuse methodology and technics but more particularly it alludes to a theory that is grounded in or developed inductively from an arrangement of data. In light of its utilization to create theoretical explanations of social interactions and procedures in an extensive variety of context, this hypothesis was rejected by the author as it appears not to be fit for the study conducted (Saunders et al., 2016, pp. 193-195).

Narrative Inquiry tries to protect chronological associations and the sequencing of events as told by the narrator (company) to enrich the comprehension and help the analysis. chase (2011: 421, as cited in Saunders et al., 2016) alludes to this strategy as giving the opportunity to associate events, actions and their outcomes after some time, and because of its intensive, time-consuming nature and the probability of ending up with a lot of data, the author preferred not to use this theory as well (Saunders et al., 2016, pp. 197-198).
3.8. Time horizon:

Time horizon is a crucial question to be asked when the author is writing the dissertation, either to make it a ‘snapshot’ taken at a set of time, or more likely as a ‘diary’ (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 200). Due the time limit during the dissertation is proceeded; the researcher is going to explore the talent retention and talent development within US multinationals based in Ireland, in a set of time.

The author is going to use the cross-sectional, because it involves the study of a particular phenomenon at a particular time. This is because, it is recognised that most research projects undertaken for academic courses are time constrained. Cross-sectional studies regularly use the survey strategy. They might look to depict the incidence of a phenomena (for example, the IT skills of managers in a company at a given time) or to clarify how factors are connected in different companies. However, they may likewise use qualitative or mixed methods research strategies. For example, many case studies depend on interviews conducted over a short period of time. (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 200).

For the longitudinal research, the author did not use it because of its focus on the study of progress and advancement. This sort of study may likewise give a measure of control over of the variables being studied, by using the massive amount of released data collected over time that needs to be analysed. From these surveys, it is conceivable to gain valuable secondary data, which would give a strong insight into developments in human resource management and employee relations in a period of wide-ranging change (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 200).

Since the author is not focused on studying the changes or development of the elements subject of study, as well as the time consuming of this method, the author is not going to use the longitudinal research, and will focus on the cross-sectional method.

3.9. Data Collection:

According to Saunders et al. (2016), data collection technics include examination of secondary data, questionnaires, interviews and observation (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 58). For the secondary data, the author used mostly journal articles talking about talent retention and talent development, and took the most recent data available, and for primary data, the interview method seemed to be the most appropriate, as it is a tool for qualitative studies.
The semi-structured interview approach was selected due to the change it brought to the method of conducting interviews, and it may also help the author designing other forms of interviews, that would suit the study (Uwe Flick, 2014, p. 217).

During the interview, the parts of the theory are remade. The interview guide talks about a number of topical areas. Each of these is introduced by an open question and finished by an confrontational question. Open questions like: “What do you think” that may be answered on the basis of the knowledge that the interviewee has instantly within reach (Uwe Flick, 2014, p.218).

More specifically, and due to the companies’ decision, the researcher will be using the Telephone and Email survey, to make the interview with the company. Telephone surveys can be done by making a call to the interviewee and ask him or her a number of questions or by interactive voice response. In the other hand, E-mail surveys are easy to distribute to the companies, not complex and they are of a good fit to this study (Kenneth S. Bordens et al., 2014, pp. 267-269).

The decision of using the interview as a data collection was due to its qualitative approach and the advantages it is offering in terms of deep information, as well as Insights, knowledge of the interviewee, his or her flexibility and accuracy of the responses, and beside that, the information given will be valid for the study.

3.9.1. Data analysis:

Data analysis is the procedure of bringing order, structure, and elucidation in the mass of gathered information. Concentrating on qualitative research, data analysis commonly go as an inseparable unit to build a coherent interpretation of the data (Giovanni et al., 2016, p 320).

Secondary Data and primary data need to be analysed, and this will be done through the utilization of the notes from the interviews, and the audio recording. The data analysis methodology will be used, so the author will not confront issues to accomplish the study objective. The use of an inductive approach may include, an extensive time of simultaneous data gathering, and analysis in order to investigate the topic adequately. In addition to this, this method may combine some elements of the deductive approach, to create recommendations, and after that test their pertinence through subsequent data collection and analysis (Saunders et al., 2016, pp. 570-572).
An interpretivist philosophy was selected, because the author need to make sense of the subjective and socially developed implications expressed by the companies in the study, while it does not generate a theory, this kind of research incorporates the examination of qualitative data and looks to increase the understanding. After the identification of the topic, the author uses the coding method, which helps to sort information with identical meanings. Coding includes labelling every unit of data inside a data item with a code that symbolises or summarises that extract's significance. The reason in undertaking this procedure is to make every bit of information in which the author is interested accessible further analysis. Qualitative data sets are usually large and complex in their content and may include variety of references (Saunders et al., 2016, pp.568-580). The coding of interviews scripts was done in the qualitative data analysis software Atlas.ti. This software is utilized for qualitative data management and model building. This software ease the analysis procedure by helping with coding, connecting codes, content fragments, and visual presentation of data findings. (Miles et al., 1998; Weitzman, 2000; Creswell, 2007 as cited in Rajen K. et al., 2015, p. 179).
3.9.2. The need to sample:

Whatever the research questions and objectives, there will be a need to consider using the sampling. In the case, it will be the US multinationals in Ireland. Out of this sampling frame, five representatives are selected to reduce the mass of the needed data, and these representatives will be the samples. (Saunders, 2016, p. 272) The researcher had access to a limited number of Ireland US based multinational, and the study will be based on the best practices of this one.

The aim of the sampling design is to minimize the gap between the values acquired from the sample and those prevalent in the study population.

The basic reason in sampling is that a relatively small number of companies represent the study population, can give – with an adequately high level of probability– a real reflection of the sampling population subject of study.

While continuing with the sampling, the author tries to accomplish two key aims of sampling: (i) the avoidance of bias in the selection of sample; and (ii) the attainment of maximum accuracy for a given outlay of resources.

In qualitative research, the purpose is not to choose a random or unbiased sample but one that can give us, with detailed, accurate and complete data. For this reason, the author is prevalently guided by the convenience and judgment in the choice of the companies (Ranjit Kumar, 2014, pp. 407-413, Saunders, 2016, p. 275).
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For these reasons, the judgemental sampling will be used. (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 301) The author is selecting cases within the US multinational in Ireland that he judges able to answer the research questions. Other sampling methods are excluded because the selected companies will be able to provide the needed information required for the study.

The interviews were conducted with the HR managers, who were able to answer the questions, but wanted to keep their anonymity due to confidentiality agreements. The author will refer to them as company (1), (2), (3) and (4).

3.9.3. Practical efforts

While creating a project plan, necessary practical efforts to obtain and access primary data should be considered, these are:

- Developing an interview guide, content form, confidentiality agreement etc.

- Analysing the sample frame, decision which companies would suit

- Contact the companies via phone and e-mail, providing documents

- Preparation for the interview

- Interview

- De-briefing, Transcribing, Analysis etc.

3.9.4. Research bias:

The interviewer himself is influenced by the so-called interviewer bias. He may influence the interviewee in how the questions are asked. (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 719)

Interviews leave space for interpretation. If the author does not consider that, he might have a pre-developed opinion that he is more likely to apply, and his finding about the study may not be correct. (Saunders et al., 2016, pp. 396-397) The results of the study still stay subjective and cannot logically be evidenced.

Regarding the type of the study, the answers can change over time due to more bias (Saunders et al, 2016, pp. 183-184).
3.9.5. Ethical issues

Due to the importance of the ethical issues and their influence on the outcomes of the research and the findings, the author made sure to be aware of the most important issues that he deems to be the most important.

While conducting the interview, the interviewer should not harm the companies, in whatever form: companies’ development, self-esteem, career or future development. To diminish this harm, a confidentiality agreement was set. The aim of it was not to ask the interviewee questions other than the ones agreed on. (Bryman and Bell, 2015, pp. 135-137) to make it possible to ask critical questions, the interviewer tried to create a relaxed and trustworthy environment for the company to ensure the confidentiality of the answers. After that, the author met with the interviewee at the offices of the company to create a feeling of trust and professionalism.

Since the privacy is related to the informed consent, the researcher took the initiative to give as much information -about the topic to the interviewee- as possible, to avoid any privacy invasion. In the other hand the researcher tried to avoid any deception feeling from the company, by asking her questions other than the one agreed upon, this problem is avoided by explaining to the company what will the conclusion and the outcomes of study be, and allowance of consultation if needed. (Bryman and Bell, 2015, pp. 143-144).

During the interview, additional ethical issues were considered, in order to provide a clear work and interview as possible, and these issues are Data management, copyright, reciprocity and trust, affiliation and conflicts of interests. (Bryman and Bell, 2015, pp. 146- 149).
4. Data analysis and findings:

4.1. Introduction

This chapter will be about the data analysis of the primary qualitative research. The author’s goal is to outline and present his findings to the readers. A deep and targeted interview was conducted with the HR managers of a US Multinational based in Ireland. The interviewees were asked 38 questions related to talent management, and more specifically, talent retention and talent development, which are the core of the study. In order to bring as much understanding as possible, some questions had to be adapted to suit the interviewee. The interview time was approximatively of 40 minutes, plus, the same questionnaire was sent via e-mail to the companies. The sessions were recorded, written on paper and word document.

4.2. Data Findings

- **Q1: how would you define talent management?**

According to company (1) & (4), talent management consist in the gathering of information from all over the departments in the company, in order to make a plan for future, what are the company’s needs, while company (2) said that talent management is the practice of putting the right people in the right place. Company (3) defined talent management as all the practices done to maintain both happy talents and high organisational efficiency.

- **Q2: how do you see the importance of talent management in Ireland?**

The company (1) said that talent management is extremely important, and that her company accord a very high priority due to its importance. The company (2) & (4) said that talent management is very important and crucial for the success, while company (3) said that it is extremely important, and this is translated by all the effort done.

- **Q3: do you consider your company as a “knowledge-intensive firm”?**

The company (1) said their company is not only a KIF because they have some labour work as well, while company (2) said that they are 100% KIF since their business rely on the knowledge of their employees. Company (3) (4) affirmed that they are a 100% KIF due to their sector.
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- **Q4: what is the average age at your company?**

The company (1) said that the average age within their company is between 24-40, while company (2) said that their employees are between 27 and 40. Company (3) did not give any details due to employees’ privacy agreements, while company (4) said that they have employees between 23 and 37.

- **Q5: what is the percentage of Gen Y talents at your company?**

According to company (1), and due to the high number of Gen Y staff, their Gen Y talents are between 20 – 23%, in the other hand, company (2) said that their Gen Y talent pool is currently of almost 30%. Company (3) & (4) could not give any information about this.

- **Q6: which employees are considered talents?**

According to companies (1) & (2), talented employees are those who are enthusiastic, passionate and committed, highly skilled in IT systems, fast learners and who can adapt and learn from the current situation, multi-tasking and who are able to deliver high level of customer service. Company (3) said that they are employees who are not afraid to go the extra step or hour to achieve their tasks, talents are also those who are very skilled with IT and can multitask, calm and focused. Company (4) said that talents are IT focused people, who are able to innovate within the business area and always come up with new ideas.

- **Q7: how do you attract them?**

When it comes to talents’ attraction, companies agree on the methods, since they all use different methods, but the main one is online advertising and especially through their website, but they also other methods like job fairs (p2), newspaper (p1). Company (3) & (4) said that they only use their website and universities’ lectures they give.

- **Q8: what is the percentage of talent in your company?**

The first company could not tell exactly the percentage of talent, but affirmed that it is the quarter of the employees, while company (2) said that it is between 20-27%. Company (3) said that the percentage of talents in the company was between 25 to 35%, while company (4) said that, their talent percentage is about 15% without being sure.
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- **Q9: are the identified talents aware of this?**

According to all the companies, their talents are aware of their status and this done via direct feedback or via the performance management system in the employees’ computers and it is part of transparency.

- **Q10: what is the impact of this, on the other employees?**

According to the companies, the impact of this information on the other employees is always positive, because feedback is given to everyone, so they all know their strengths and weaknesses.

- **Q11: what are the specific needs of talented employees?**

According to company (1) & (2), the talented people do not have any specific needs and this is due to the same conditions applied for everyone. Company (3) said their talents need a good work conditions and environment. Company (4) in the other hand said that they may like freedom of action within their company.

- **Q12: what motivate them, compared to other employees?**

For the motivators, company (1) said that some are motivated by the chances the company is offering them, others feel more motivated when they deliver a high level of work and the company shows them its appreciation. Company (2), (3) & (4) said that their talents are motivated by the challenges available and the opportunities they have with them.

- **Q13: what positions do they hold (talents)?**

Taking in consideration the size of the company and its number of staff, company (1), (2) and (3) agreed that their talents have positions in different levels and departments of the company. Company (4) said that their talents are mostly in the software development department.

- **Q14: how would you define talent retention?**

Company (1) & (4) said that it is the strategy we undertake to keep all of our talented employees, by using different kind of incentives, company (2) defined it as the energy; money and time a company spend on its talents in order to keep them as long as possible. Company
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(3) in the other hand, said that it is the expenses and opportunities a company put in disposition to keep its talents.

- **Q15: how/where, do you see its importance at your company?**

Company (1) said that it is highly important and companies spend a lot of money in it, in order to keep their best talents. Company (2) said that their company depends on talent retention, due to the type of business they are running, while company (3) said that talent retention for the due to the love they have for their talents. Company (4) said that they do not want their knowledge walking out with no coming back.

- **Q16: what kind of retention tools are you using? Why? How do you use them?**

All companies agreed on the use of different kind of retention tools, extrinsic and intrinsic incentives, and this is to meet the expectations of all the talents. This is due to the difference of personalities between them, some of them like monetary rewards, and other non-monetary rewards.

- **Q17: could you please rank these retention tools from the most, to the less effective? (Compensation, benefits, working environment, development & training, feedback, work-life balance, leadership behaviour, corporate culture).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company/rank</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Company 1</td>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
<td>Work environment</td>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>Leadership behaviour</td>
<td>Corporate culture</td>
<td>Work-life balance</td>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td>Compensation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company 2</td>
<td>Work-life balance</td>
<td>Corporate culture</td>
<td>Benefit</td>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>Work environment</td>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
<td>Leadership behaviour</td>
<td>Compensation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company 3</td>
<td>Work environment</td>
<td>Work-life balance</td>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td>Corporate culture</td>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
<td>Compensation</td>
<td>Leadership behaviour</td>
<td>Feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company 4</td>
<td>Working environment</td>
<td>Work-life balance</td>
<td>Benefits</td>
<td>Feedback</td>
<td>Leadership behaviour</td>
<td>Corporate culture</td>
<td>Training &amp; development</td>
<td>Compensation</td>
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</table>
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- Q18: how do you see talent retention in Ireland?

According to the companies, talent retention grew bigger and more important in Ireland within the past few years, companies are aware of its importance within the company, and so, they are spending more money and time on this, so they can reach their goals.

- Q19: what are the retention tools you would like to use in the future? Why?

From the interview done with the company (1), the company is looking to introduce an international transfer program, to give more opportunities to their employees, while company (2) said that they want to introduce the stock options, because they are hassle free and make more sense. Company (3) said their company does not want to change any of their practices, because they are happy and so their talents, while company (4) said that would like to give the chance to their employees to pick up a destination of their choice, or maybe their home country and work there.

- Q20: which tools you had to adapt for Ireland? Why?

All the companies agreed that there was no need to adapt in of their methods for the Ireland, explaining this by saying that these tools can all be applied all over the world, nevertheless, some technics were added to complete them.

- Q21: how would you define talent development?

According to the company (1), talent development is the keeping up of the high performers’ level and increasing it, and the development of low performers to make them better and more efficient, while company (2) said that it is giving a chance to talent to enhance or upgrade their already owned skills, to work faster and better. Company (3) said that it is the procedure a company undertake to increase its talents’ skills and capabilities. Company (4) said that it is the opportunity for a company to upskill its talents and take them to a higher level.

- Q22: how/where, do you see its importance at your company?

Company (1) & (4) said that it is very important due to its impact on the overall performance, while company (2) said that it is very important because we want to have talents who works in all departments and get more and more talents of our own development. Company (3) said that it is very important for us that our employees are always fresh and up to date.
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- **Q23: what are the development tools you are using? Why?**

All the companies were using coaching & mentoring, e-learning and in-house training, but some of them had their own methods like: buddy program for company (1); group class and university programs for company (2).

- **Q24: could you please rank them, from the less to the most effective?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company/ rank</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Company 1</td>
<td>Coaching</td>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>In-house training</td>
<td>E-learning</td>
<td>Buddy system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company 2</td>
<td>University programs</td>
<td>Group classes</td>
<td>External coaching</td>
<td>Coaching &amp; mentoring</td>
<td>E-learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company 3</td>
<td>Workshops</td>
<td>Coaching</td>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>University programs</td>
<td>E-learning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company 4</td>
<td>External coaching</td>
<td>Coaching</td>
<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>E-learning</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

- **Q25: do you provide career development options?**

According the companies, career development options are available for talents who prove their efficiency within their companies and they can have more responsibilities and higher positions.

- **Q26: do you use the in-house development? If yes, how?**

Company (1) said that it runs for two weeks in classroom, following this another two weeks on the floor, talented employees have managers with them all the time, the next two weeks, they are integrated in the team. Company (2) & (3) said that their in-house development is done in classes, where senior member lecture junior members about different areas of the company. Company (4) in the other hand said that their in-house training is based on the coaching, mentoring and E-learning.

- **Q27: do you use coaching by line managers? If yes, how?**

All companies said that they have coaching within their companies. Company (1) said that it is held every two weeks, where senior members offer their expertise to the new recruits. Company (2) & (3) said that team leaders are the coaches; they are always backing up the employees and helping them, assisting them and assessing them, while company (4) said that
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high performant employees, who have knowledge, help and assist the other employees all along the working days.

- **Q28: Do you use mentoring? If yes, how?**

The companies agreed that mentoring was done by senior levels. They meet their mentees in a more private way to talk about the topics they want to improve, discuss different issues the mentee is facing while doing the job, so the mentor brings his or her experience and vision about the problem, and tries to help the mentee in a face-to-face meeting.

- **Q29: do you use e-learning? If yes, how?**

All the companies said that they are using the E-learning method, and that each of them developed this program according their needs, and their employees can either access it on site or from their place.

- **Q30: do you have a succession-planning program? If yes, how?**

All the companies said that they have succession-planning program, but it is only for the people who they believe are able to fill the positions in the future.

- **Q31: do you have a job rotation program within your company? If yes, how?**

For the job rotation, company (1) said that job rotation program is only for people who are planning to stay in the company for more than a year, while company (2) said that it is part of their training program, and talents go from a department to another to increase their knowledge and skills. Company (3) & (4) in the other hand said that do not have any job rotation programs, because of the high accuracy their job needs.

- **Q32: what are the development tools you would like to use in the future? Why?**

The company (1) said that they want to upgrade their in-house training program to have more talents, while company (2) said that they want to have their courses implemented by universities. Company (3) said that they want implement an international transfer so their talents can work within the main offices, while company (4) said that they want to build connexion with big universities where they can send their talents, so they can develop their knowledges and skills.
- Q33: do you develop your talents according to the company’s needs? If yes, describe it

According to company (1), talents are developed in order to fit in all departments of the company, while company (2), (3) & (4) said that they are more focused in developing the technical skills of their talents due to their business type.

- Q34: do you plan your talent acquisition in advance? Why?

All the companies said that they plan their talent acquisition in advance, to meet the business and clients’ requirement, and to achieve their organisational goals, everyone of them is in a different sector and they all have priorities and clients who expect the best.

- Q35: did many of your talents left before?

All the companies said that their turnover rates were very low compared to the average, especially now days.

- Q36: what do you are the reasons?

The companies said that the turnover, was due to personal decisions, like changing career, relocation or even retirement for senior members, but none of them left because dissatisfaction.

- Q37: from the list of motivation theories, which one do you think is more suitable for your company? Why?

Company (1) said that they use a mix of the theories or just the best elements of each theory, so they can satisfy their talents or employees’ needs, while company (2), (3) & (4) said that they are not using any of the motivation theories, because, according to them, they are outdated.

- Q38: do you think that the best practices of talent retention and talent development affect the overall performance?

All the companies said that the impact of talent retention and development on performance was very high, that performance is directly linked to the best practices of talent management in general, and if a company wants their talents to be performant, they should do all it takes to develop their talent retention and development technics.
5. Discussion:

The primary research was done in order to gain a deeper knowledge of talent retention and talent development in the US Multinationals based in Ireland, the importance of these tools and the used methods. HR managers from different companies were part of the research, and findings are based on their statements and experience in the fields. The author in consideration not only the origin of the company, but also its type of business and its employees’ age, and by this, touching the most important aspects of his study, knowing that talent retention and development were both adopted by these companies.

Talent retention for the US Multinationals:

The aim of this question is to know how the US Multinationals based in Ireland define talent retention within their companies, and how its importance is translated. The comparison between the primary data based on the interviews will be compared with the literature review, and the gaps between those two will be explored further more.

In the definition of talent retention, the collision between the secondary data and the primary data was about the side of the definition, some of the secondary data focused on defining it from an organisational context, where it is more important to take in consideration the goals of the company, while other took the side of the employees, where they see that talent retention has to be more about the commitment of the employees.

The context in which talent retention was developed first come in an agreement between company (1) & (4) with kamal (2015), as the three of them considered talent retention more of a strategy that a company adopt to keep its talents, by using different incentives, that the company choose, and thinks they are suitable for their employees, without taking in consideration what their talents may need or require.

In the other hand the company (2) & (3) comes in total opposite of what was suggested by the ADP (2012) and Aizza et al. (2014). The companies defined talent retention by taking in consideration their talents as members of the company, and as human beings that needs security, rather than just tools that will help the organisation to achieve its goals, while both the ADP (2012) and Aizza et al. (2014) defined talent retention as an important element, that
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A company must have to achieve the organisational goals and embellish its image, without taking in consideration what their talents really need.

When it comes to the importance of talent retention within the organisation, here as well both primary and secondary data did not agree, since scholars had their point of view about the importance of talent retention, and the company of the interviews as well, gave their in-depth opinion about this.

The importance of talent retention was focused on the organisational goals, and how a good talent management is important to ensure a superior work performance, and that this will lead to a competitive advantage, besides that, it is important for the image of the company (Aizza et al. 2014), and company (1) agreed with Aizza et al. by saying that talent retention is highly important within the organisation because, their success depends on the job provided by their talents, and this can be done only if their talents feel some kind of security and belongingness.

However, Ravinder (2012) and Kamal (2015) both said that it is important, not to achieve competitive advantage, but to make sure that talents do not leave the company for another one, and take their acquired knowledge, and employ it to benefit of another company, and the company (4) agreed with both of them by saying that talent retention is important to the company, because they do not want to their talents, that they nurtured with knowledge about their business and company, to go walk out.

In the other hand, two companies, put the emphasis on the importance of talent retention, not on its importance to achieve organisational goals, nor the fear of losing knowledge, but, company (2) said that it is important for their company, because the existence of the company depends on their talents, they are not only talents that they can replace, but they are pillars so important that they cannot lose, and company (3) said that talent retention is important because of the feelings the company have towards its talents, as the company feels some kind of responsibility to keep its talents, and this was expressed as the love the company have for the talents, and it goes beyond the interest.

By critically reviewing the primary and secondary data, the author took in consideration the limitations met while doing the research and conducting the study, as not many research were done lately on this topic, so there was a lack of direct literature review, and the number of
companies that accepted to be part of the study as well. However, the variety of companies, subject of study offered the author the chance to explore in-depth different business models. Every company is a leader on its sector, and because of this, a major contribution will be done in this field, and no generality will be drawn.

Regarding the definition and importance of talent retention, both an economic and humanitarian approach must be used, by taking in consideration the organisational goals the company aims to achieve and its high importance in one hand. In addition, the role talent retention plays in the mental of employees who seeks to achieve their goals as well in their work place and the importance that it has on the life of the employees.

**Motivation for the US Multinationals:**

When it comes to motivators of talents, there was a lot of contradiction in between the literature review and the interviews conducted within the US Multinationals, and this is due to the different nature of primary and secondary data.

According to the companies (2), (3) & (4), talents see the challenges they face within their daily job tasks, as well as the opportunities that these tasks may lead to, and this goes in accordance with what Kwok L. and Chin Yi said, because they emphasised on the fact that some of the motivators related to talents are the their performance regarding the job they had to do, the pleasure and challenge they drawn from it and the satisfaction of achievement as well, and these are motivators that the company cannot provide in a physical way, but have to find employees who are motivated by this, and put them in positions where they can trigger their motivators.

In the other hand, Tejaswi B. and company (1), also agreed on the fact that some talents tend to be motivated once they achieve a job that have a final outcome, and it can be chances of growth, recognition or avoiding guilt, and as well, the reader can see that the motivators both the companies and scholars focus on, are mostly intrinsic motivators.

While undertaking this study, the author aimed to find the freedom of act as a motivator, and this was achieved as Chin-Yi said that talents can be motivated if their employers give them the opportunity to work from their own initiative, without being supervised or controlled, and the company (4) confirmed this, by saying some of their best talents are offered a total freedom, no supervision and no mentoring from their superiors, and this has led to trigger
their motivation, because of the feeling of trust, that this procures to them, furthermore; the limited number of interviews did not offer the opportunity to explore more companies that would use the same motivators, as the company (4) was the only one putting forward this initiative.

One of the other motivators this study helped to explore in-depth was the importance of the workplace and work environment as well, company (3) and due to the kind of business the company is undertaking, said that their talents require high standards when it comes to the working environment and corporate policies, because this tends to motivate them more than what was provided before, and with this Chin-Yi suggested on the literature review that talents’ motivators are related to the feeling of belongingness and relatedness that company can offer them, through an appropriate working environment. Here as well, the author found the limitations of the primary data, are related to the lack of information analysed, as the aim was to find as much motivators as possible, and that maybe – regardless the diversity of companies- there could be companies where talents are motivated by monetary incentives.

In addition to this, companies (1), (2) & (3) said that one of the motivators in their companies were related to the different positions that were offered to their talents, and the possibility to move from one to another and by this, having experience within different departments and levels, which triggered the motivation of the talents, and this was reinforced by Chin-Yi as the scholar said that talents are motivated when they learn to perform a new job task, and this can achieved only when the company is offering talents the chance to move from a job to another.

However, some of the companies said that their talents had no special needs that may trigger their motivation. Companies (1) and (2) especially said that their talents were completely depending on the motivators provided by their employers, and that they work perfectly within these conditions.

The limitations related to this research question was related to the number of interviews conducted, because this led to some lack of data, when it comes to extrinsic motivators, since all the ones cited before were intrinsic ones. Kwok L. said incentives meant to trigger talents motivation are also related to extrinsic incentives, that can be translated into monetary rewards or other money-related rewards, and Veronika Knight goes further by saying that the
motivation programs proposed by the company themselves can be motivators for the talents. This is said, even with the lack of extrinsic motivators in the primary data, this can be completely understood, since the most of the employees, and talents of the companies – subject of the interviews- are Gen Y, and the concept of being motivated by intrinsic incentives rather than extrinsic, totally fit with what was said by the companies to the interviews.

Nevertheless, further interviews, could have cleared this, either by confirming the fact that talents within US Multinationals are mostly motivated by intrinsic incentives, or there are some exceptions, and this is probably another limitation of the study.

The methods used by the US Multinationals:

Whit this sub-question, the author wanted to explore in-depth the retention tools or methods the US multinationals in Ireland are using, and what are the most used ones.

Most companies, who accepted to be part of the study, said that they are using different kind of incentives in order to satisfy their talents’ needs, though; the author noticed a slight difference between the incentives mentioned in the literature review and the ones in the interviews.

While conducting the interviews with the companies, the author spotted a difference of retention methods or technics used by the companies compared with the incentives offered by the authors in the literature review.

Vaiman & Vance (2008), suggested twelve incentives, four of them are extrinsic (performance-related payment, stock options, retirement provisions and facilities), and eight intrinsic incentives (feedback, training & development, career opportunities, mentoring, employer branding, job tailoring, work-life balance and job rotation). Comparing these literature review findings with the primary data findings, the occurring and noticeable difference spotted is the number of incentives used and some differences.

Company (1) said that they are offering their employees different monetary incentives, training, mentoring, career opportunities and equity within the workplace, and in here the difference can be spotted in the intrinsic incentives, as the company is not using any job tailoring or work-life balance options, and this can be understood and accepted due to the fact that some of the intrinsic incentives the author was discussing are already implemented.
in the policy of the company and are not considered as incentives on their own. In the other hand, company (2) said that their company is more focused on the extrinsic incentives and their employees are more motivated by it, rather than growing bigger in the company. Company (3) in the other hand, what was said completely fit with the statements of Vaiman and Vance (2008) as the incentives offered are grouped into themes, so there are no complications in the understanding of the incentive schemes. However, company (4) added a new dimension to the incentives by saying that their company is offering healthcare for both parents and their kids, and this kind of incentives is the one that is both intrinsic and extrinsic at the same time, thing that Vaiman and Vance did not offer.

The other author talking about the retention tools is Janet chew (2004), when she changed the incentives from intrinsic & extrinsic, to HR factors and organisation factors, by doing this, she created groups of incentives that were supposed to contain most of the needs talents require. However, one of the companies’ statement do not really agree with the author, and this is due to the type of business and the generation of their employees. Companies (3) and (4) added that they are using working time flexibility and healthcare options, things that they call as hits in their company, because this keeps their employees satisfied. In the other hand, companies (1) and (2), from their interviews, the kind of incentives they are using within their companies totally fit with the model suggested by Janet Chew (2004).

However, while doing the research on the literature review, the author an incentive plan done by John C. K and Martin F. (2005) that suggested an incentives’ plan used in the Irish companies and supposed to satisfy all the needs of the employees. After conducting the interviews within the four participating companies, a very close similarity was found between these four and what was offered by the scholar. But the issue faced with this exact literature review was the lack of details, because as much as it is clear with its sixteen incentive hits, it still remains blurry, because the researcher could not find exact inventives as mentioned by the companies in the interviews.

During the collection of primary data, the limitations faced where related to the restrictions and agreements done with the interviewees, as they were not able to give exact answers to the asked questions and this was a turning point in the research. However, the answers given where issued from their best practices, and this shown that there is no perfect model of incentives that all the companies can adopt, and the best way for incentives is to be modelled
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through an in-depth survey done with the employees to see what they want, and build their incentive program based on the surveys’ results.

**Talent development in the eyes of the US Multinationals:**

The goal behind this is finding a recent and different definition to talent development and its importance within the company, other than the definitions agreed upon in the literature review.

During the collection of primary data, the same difference of definition found in talent retention was found in talent development.

According to the findings in the literature review, talent development was defined as a strategy to ensure organisational effectiveness and to maintain employees engaged and motivated (Amber W, 2014), while Monika C. adds that talent development is a strategy to gain sustainable development and stand out from competitors. This means that for the scholars, talent development is another tool the company will use, not to achieve the personal goals of talents, and its organisational goals, but only to achieve the organisational goals, without taking in consideration the effects this will have on the employees in general, and talent specifically. Company (1) said about the definition of talent development, that it is a way to keep the talents within their high performance rang and increase it, and develop the simple employees to turn them into talents. Company (3 said that talent development is a method the company use to increase the talent’s skills and capabilities. Comparing statements, between the primary and secondary data, the difference found was related to the general overview of talent development. The authors from the literature review defined it by looking at it from the company’s view, while the interviewees defined it from the view of talents themselves, and this can be a game changer when it comes to the definition of talent development and can change a lot of stereotypes about the US Multinationals are their best practices.

In addition to this, company (2) said that talent development is giving the change to talents to enhance their already owned skills enhance their efficiency, while Dr David Williams (2015) said that it is a tool aiming to achieve business goals and support organisational growth. Comparing these two statements, helped the researcher to see the limitations of the literature
review, because despite the limitations of the primary data, what was uncovered with the interviews, was not cited in the literature review.

However, not all the companies disagreed with the findings in the literature review, as the company (4) defined talent development as an opportunity for the company to upskill its talents for a better and faster performance, and this goes directly with what was found in the CIPD literature, since it was seen as a way to retain talents, and that was directly linked to their performance as an outcome.

When it comes to the importance of talent development, almost the same statements found in the literature review, were given in the interviews. The literature review saw the importance of talent management only as a link to success and organisational goals, and this was consolidated by the statements of companies (1), (2) & (4) who said that the importance of talent development is linked to the final performance of the organisation; also, it was linked to the capabilities this will build within their talents. However, company (3) went out of the box by saying that the importance of talent development is within its outcome on the talents themselves, and the company find it important that its employees are continuously updated.

By asking this question, the researcher aimed to find the difference between the primary data and secondary data collection. Regardless the limitations during the interviews and the number of the companies, the researcher was able to bring in recent and major adding to the definition of talent development, as it can be defined now as: a strategy companies take in order to upskill and enhance their talents efficiency and satisfy their individual goals, in order to achieve the organisational goals and stay out of the competitors’ reach.
Talent development methods of the US Multinationals and its efficiency:

Taking in consideration the importance of talent development, the researcher focused on the talent development methods used by the US Multinationals and tried to find the differences between them and what was proposed by the most recent survey of the CIPD, and this has led to exciting results that matched the expectations of the researcher.

Following the chart provided by the CIPD on the most effective and used training and development tools

Company (1) said that the most effective development tools were coaching, mentoring, in-house training, e-learning and buddy system, and this is different from the order that the CIPD provided on the survey from 2015. This difference in the data finding may be due to the amount of companies in the survey. However, by doing the interview with company (1), the researcher had a new element related to talent development, which is “Buddy system” which consists in a casual meeting between colleagues in an area of the company, where they can
exchange information and knowledge about their work, it can be between seniors, or between entry level staff. This finding adds a new finding to the already suggested one by the CIPD. Besides that, company (1) is planning to integrate an international transfer system, to allow their talents to develop their skills abroad, and this development tool was not mentioned at all in the CIPD survey, and it can be a major add into the development area.

Company (2) in the other hand is using the same development tools suggest by the CIPD, but there is a big difference when it comes to the effectiveness of those tools or methods. The suggest chart by the CIPD was completely flipped by company (2), and university programmes are considered the most effective, followed by group class (workshops), followed by the external coaching which is not considered effective at all by the CIPD, and the less effective development tools are coaching & mentoring and the last one is E-learning. This also can be considered as a major add to the literature review, because it shows that there is a difference between the results of the survey and this US Multinational’s practices.

When it comes to company (3), the development methods used are the same suggested by the CIPD survey, but with a difference in the effectiveness, because in this US Multinational as well, the level of effectiveness of these methods was very different from the CIPD’s. This is probably due to the type of business the company is running, and CIPD may have not included this specific sector, which make the gap between the development tools very big compared by the ones used by the US Multinationals so far.

However, company (4) showed the use of the exact same methods the CIPD suggested, but still with slight differences regarding the efficiency of the development tools, because the researcher found in the company (4) that external coaching is very efficient compared to what the CIPD survey suggested, and it is followed by coaching, mentoring and e-learning in the end, and these last three methods fit with the ranking given by the CIPD.

After conducting the primary data collection, the researcher ended up with a list of development tools are their efficiency and compared the findings with the CIPD data, and there was a big difference between the secondary data and primary, mostly related to the efficiency of the development methods. Even though the CIPD survey is very concrete and recent, the results did not match with what was found in the US Multinationals. Even by taking in consideration the small number of companies, the results found largely show a lack of in-
depth exploration done by the CIPD, and this can be linked to the big number of subjects of study. Besides, some of the companies are planning to develop their own and new development methods, something that can be added to the already existing literature review and bring in a new and in-depth insight of the methods used in the US Multinationals here in Ireland.

**The impact of talent retention and development on performance:**

After getting the statements related to talent retention and development, it was obvious that this will lead to the impact they have on performance. The four company companies agreed on this impact. Company (1) said that their employees’ performance depends on how the company treats them when it comes best practices, while company (2) said that if they do not look after their talent retention and development methods, this would affect the performance of the company in general. Company (3) said that if a company gives its best, the employees would do the same and vis-versa. Company (4) in the other hand said that performance is linked to talent retention and development and depends on it. All these statements fit with what Armstrong said about the performance, that if a company use incentives in an appropriate way, this would have a positive impact on the overall performance, and these findings confirm as well that the non-monetary incentives are also the best way to increase the performance and complete the literature review proposed earlier.

**Motivation theories and the 21st century:**

Usually, when retention and development are studied, motivation theories are always brought forward due to their direct connexion. However, while collecting the primary data, the researcher, and to his own surprise found that only company (1) was using one of the motivation theories, and it was not even the complete theory, but it was a combination of different theories, and this was done by taking what was considered as strength points. The other three companies (2, 3 &4) affirmed that they are not using any of the mentioned theories previously, and this at the expense of their own culture and politics that they deem newer, fresher and more adapted to the current generation.

Comparing these findings with what was said in the literature review, as multiple scholars claimed the importance of motivation theories within the workplace, there is a clear disagreement between primary and secondary data findings.
These specific “disagreements” findings add a major information regarding the motivation theories and expose them as “old fashioned” as highlighted by the US Multinationals participating to the interview, and this means that further and in-depth research should be done in order to update and rejuvenate these theories so they can fit with the current generation and business models.

Motivation theories' usage "Primary data"
6. Conclusion and Recommendations:

6.1. Conclusion:

This study had for goal, to explore the area of talent retention and development within the US Multinationals based in Ireland. As mentioned in the introduction, the study will go through the different tools and methods related to retention processes, the intrinsic and extrinsic incentives, and after that the technics used in order to develop the employees.

Managing the talents within a company was never and will never be an easy task, and if not handled with precaution, it can have important consequences for both the company and the employees. Due to the change occurred in the economical world, that lead to a great shift from the old traditions related to retention and development, the change of employees’ generation and the multicultural working environment, companies found themselves facing a survival problem, and had to adapt in order to achieve the competitive advantage. From data collected in the primary research, the interviews showed the importance the companies now days are according to talent’s retention and development, the use of different methods, either mentioned in the literature review or not and the impact of these elements on the employees’ overall performance.

Despite the traditional way of rewarding people was always to use extrinsic incentives, since people were interested in it, now days, companies are more like to use intrinsic rewards to keep their employees, and it works, and this is due to the generation of the employees (Gen Y), who are more likely to be satisfied with incentives like career opportunities, challenges and development, and this was backed up by the literature review saying that, the majority of US Multinationals here in Ireland are KIFs, and base their success on people’s knowledge, which makes of these people, intrinsic-driven persons. Therefore, the extrinsic incentives are also required in the companies, because not all the employees can be satisfied in the same way, and some of them would rather have a rise on their pay than having more responsibilities. The primary data collected, gave the author an in-depth view of how these retention tools are selected and used, how the intrinsic and extrinsic incentives are schemes are designed, which ones are the most efficient, and those that are not, and the kind of incentives companies focus on. Many scholars from the literature review argued the best usage of the one or the other within the company, but the majority ended up accepting the fact that, when it comes to
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satisfy the talented employees, there is no perfect way to do it, and the most effective method, is to mix intrinsic and extrinsic incentives, to please the maximum of talents.

In the literature review, the importance of talent development within the companies as well, and the latest trends for this area were discussed, and in here as well, many scholars argued about the best development tool or technic, and what would be the suitable way to enhance the employees skills, for a better performance. The author used the CIPD annual review of training and development to have an accurate idea on which methods are used now, and what is their level of use, and this gave a very detailed data that helped see also in-depth what are these methods, their impact on the talents’ development, and the impact of these on the performance. The primary data collected from the interviews done with different US Multinationals, resulted in a more specific and keen data about the development technics, and showed some similarities and differences, because some of the tools used in those companies were not mentioned at all in the literature review, and others were ranked “not that effective” compared with what was said in the literature review.

Many companies said that their talent development programs were not that advanced compared to the competition, and a serious update need to be brought, in order to enhance the talents’ skills, to the levels required to achieve the competitive advantage, while other companies, said that they are working on new technics to develop their talents, so they can meet their organisational needs in more international way, but in the end, all the interviewed participants said that same as the retention tools, there is no perfect development technic, that would work at all levels, or for everyone, thus, all the companies are using a combination of the development tools discussed in the literature, in addition to their some technics from their own creation to meet their specific organisational goals.

Due to the direct connexion of talent retention and development to the employees’ performance, a brief section was dedicated to the impact of these on the performance, and many scholars related the high performance to the intrinsic incentives as Armstrong (2014) said that the best way to enhance the employees’ performance is by giving them feedback and recognise the work they did, motivate them and offer them the chance to grow bigger within the company, because he considers the performance as a long-term asset, that needs long-term-related incentives. At the same time, the extrinsic rewards also, play a crucial part in employees’ performance, and the primary data collected confirmed that, since most of the
participants affirmed that the performance is triggered in different ways, depending on the level of the employee, or talent, and sometimes, individuals perform better when they work on target, and are promised cash by the end of the line. Others said that the performance is managed by a team on its own, due to the complexity of this, and sometimes, they have to asset employees’ performance, in comparison with the incentives given to them, and then adopt it, in order to get the expected outcome from them.

By the end of the literature review, a critical perspective of the motivation theories, done by different scholars was brought, and it depicted those theories in details and a mirroring was done with the companies subject of study and especially the generation of people working there, and a conclusion was drawn, that most of the theories were outdated and cannot fit with the current context of the business, and this due to the big difference between their releasing time and now. Besides, the primary data showed that most companies are not using any motivation theory or only using some strength points from each one of them, this is justified by the variety of departments available in the company, and the variety of levels also. This variety can be noticed in the variety of methods and technics used for retention and development, in order to get the best of the employees, keep them, and enhance their skills.

As a general conclusion, talent retention and development is of high importance to companies, because their competitive advantage rely directly on it, and the performance of the employees. Even if there is work on this field from the companies, yet, important gaps are still seen and has to be filled soon, or the outcome will be disastrous, as they will be watching their best talents leaving for competitors, who will use everything in their possible to be on top of the list.
6.2. Recommendations:

First of all, I personally would like to recommend to anyone who is conducting the same kind of study, a quantitative part, focused on the employees and not only HR managers, in order to gain a deeper knowledge, keen and broad at the same time, about what they really need from their employers. Besides that, some of the recommendations I see able to enhance the effectiveness of talent retention and development are:

1- A company-focused incentives and reward system, based on a study done on all the employees, and not just a generic method used elsewhere, this will help the company to gain knowledge about what employees really need, and what can really influence their performance.

2- A redefinition of both talent retention and development, and another view of their importance within the company from the talents and employees’ shoes instead of the company only.

3- One of the fields that is almost inexistent, or neglected is the international career path, and I think that companies should start thinking about sending their talented employees abroad, to their others subsidiaries or even the headquarter, in order to them the opportunity to see, how it is really working, and from where the culture is coming, and this will motivate and retain more than one employer.

4- Another point that has to be considered is the application of the motivation theories now days, as most of the research done, are out dated, or the work done is just mirroring those theories on current scenarios, and this may affect badly the data if gathered, so, an update must be done about this current generation (Gen Y), and about the biggest leading businesses (KIFs), to get a real idea about, what theory works now, and which ones needs to be adapted, or not used at all.
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Appendices:

Reflection on learning:

As I finished my MBA studies, a reflection on the outcomes of this year has to be done, since the first days of the MBA program, I faced multiple challenges that I have never faced before, topics that I never explored in such a way, and I complete different and broad vision of the studied topics. This helped me acquire a sense of empowerment, organisation and confidence that I certainly was lacking when I first came here. The topic I selected for my dissertation and skills I developed and acquired to finish it, showed me that I can finish everything I start despite all the problems and stress I faced during the research period, I personally selected this topic, because I had it in mind since my bachelor degree years, but due to circumstances, I could not explore like I had the chance to do now. Even while doing it, I had to push myself out of the comfort zone, and talk to people, either to ask for interviews or to conduct them, and it was a very hard task, since I am not used to this, and to the number of denial I had in short period of time.

I am personally interested in this topic, because of my belief in the power of people, and what a talented employee can achieve, compared to the other employees, and that companies must take the needed time and spend the needed money to retain them, and must adopt also an advanced development methods that will make their talent pool as bigger and varied as one can dream about, in order to achieve their goals. Selecting this topic reflect my desire to work and advance in HR career within a multinational that have employees from all over the world, as I am very interested in the multicultural companies, and the experience one would have working there.

After finishing my study, the results I ended up having, were very satisfying to my own development, even though there were some points that I assumed, they would have a negative influence on the companies’ overall efficiency and affect the employees’ motivation and performance. Starting this dissertation and exploring all the literature review gave me a sense of recognition for the complexity and importance of talent retention and development, and their impact on both company and employees, as well as the extreme importance of the human recourse staff within the multinationals, especially in a multicultural country like Ireland.
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As I never used this kind of method to complete a dissertation before, I found it relatively hard to manage time, emotions, quantity of literature, article, journals and books to read. Before starting this master degree, I was working full time in my own business, and it was for 3 years in a row, I was not faced with issues where I had to be as critical and keen as I had to be now. Being able to develop a sense of critical analysis will help me to produce things of value, that will come in help in the real world, and this is a very important outcome I learned about myself. Reviewing all the literatures, journals and books was both benefit and stressful, as I was not sure what I should take, if some scholars were inadequate for my study or not, and also the issue of finding the most recent data as well, due to the fast changing nature of the workforce here in Ireland, in the other hand, all these challenges did not bring me down, as I was able, with the help of the librarians, to find out what I think are the most recent, relevant and reliable source to be used for my topic.

Going through all the literatures gave a sense of belongingness to this topic, as felt that this really what I want to do, and that I can do it easily, while bringing fresh ideas that can make talent retention and development much more efficient. I do believe that working on this dissertation will help with my future career choices and would make tasks easier, since I have gathered information about this topic, and interviewed people from different US multinationals, who shared their knowledge and experience with me, which mad this dissertation, some kind of red carpet into the human resources world, and really encouraged me to take this career path.

Other things that I learned about myself either while I was working on the dissertation or during the classes, is that my understanding has a real issues, which is “the bigger picture”, which I think, it is very important issue to consider. I always find myself digging deeper and deeper into some topic, until it becomes almost impossible to control, or it loses all its importance. After all the guidance I had from my supervisor, and other lecturers during this year, I started learning how to narrow my ideas in order to create a solid idea with “almost” no flows, and this is all due to learning. this result is not only important for personal satisfaction, but I believe that it will also be very important in the professional life, as I will be facing challenges every day, that will require from me an zen and serious attitude, focus and determination.
One of the most important personal and educational outcomes of working on the dissertation was the methodology and all its technics and strategies. I came from a background where we do not use this style of justification, and working with the provided research method literature, really opened my eyes and showed me my strengths and weaknesses. Working on the methodology surprise me as I ended up doing things, that I never thought I would be able to do in real life, which is an extremely important thing to me, because now, I know that I can use these outcomes in my daily life, and help myself dealing with decision makings, in personal and professional life.

My next step is focused on my career and professional life, as I want to bring what I learned during this MBA and especially my dissertation, and put it in work, in real life situations. I am fully confident that my skills have developed enough to undertake challenges in the working life, with no stress issues, and with a more organised and structured brain, that can deal with many things at the same time with no flows in the results, and high accuracy and quality of work. I personally think this development is due to the methodology, which at first sight; it was a real maze, or a puzzle that I thought I would not be able to understand within the given time. However, after long and thought reflection, I was able to understand it, or solve it. All this done, I am planning on apply for positions in the HR departments in multinationals and use all what I have learned to have a successful career, and later on, by the will of God, continue further in my studies and apply for another master and Ph.D.
Liste of interviews:

The company (1) is an online retailer of home décor products, founded in 2002, based in Boston, Massachusetts (Forbes. 2016. [Accessed 20 April 2016]). The company employed 3809 people as of December 31, 2015, (company’s homepage, 2016).

Company (2) is an online booking company, founded in 2002, based in Mountain view, California, and they have 6897 employees so far. The company (3) is an IT company that was founded in 1994 in Seattle; the company have 230,800 employees by December 2015. Company (4) is an IT company founded in 1995 in San Jose, California, and has over 36500 employees (companies’ homepages, 2016).

Company 1:

- Q1: how would you define talent management?

According to the company, talent management consist in the gathering of information from all over the departments in the company, in order to make a plan for future, what are the company’s needs, how many people are needed. It looks as well to the retention and development of current or future talents, and most of the times, talent management depends on the sales and revenues of the company, because if it is positive, it helps them achieving their goals.

- Q2: how do you see the importance of talent management in Ireland?

From her previous and current experience in the fields, the company said that talent management is extremely important, and that her company accord a very high priority due to its importance, either for competitive advantage, or for employees’ performance.

- Q3: do you consider your company as a “knowledge-intensive firm”?

According to the Company, the type of business the company is running, the company is considered as a knowledge-intensive firm.
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- **Q4: what is the average age at your company?**

From what the Company said, there are employees from almost all ages in most companies in Ireland, and when it comes to her workplace, the average age of employees is between 22 and 40 years old, from entry level to senior manager.

- **Q5: what is the percentage of Gen Y talents at your company?**

According to the Company, Gen Y employees dominate the company, as they consist most of its staff, and due to this reason, it is up to 20 to 23% of the total talents of the company are Gen Y.

- **Q6: which employees are considered talents?**

Talented employees are those who are enthusiastic when they are doing their job, they do it with passion and commitment, and who are highly skilled when it comes to IT systems, fast learners and who can adapt and learn from the current situation, multi-tasking and who are able to deliver high level of customer service.

- **Q7: how do you attract them?**

When it comes to employees’ attraction, the company focuses its strategy on different types of marketing tools, going from the social media campaigns, online advertising via the company’s website or other recruitment websites, beside this, the company advertise through the newspaper and in their local area, but mostly, online advertising is deemed to be the highest used one.

- **Q8: what is the percentage of talent in your company?**

Due to the keen selection the company have done so far, the Company affirmed that number of talented employees within the company is almost the quarter of all the staff, and it keeps growing up.

- **Q9: are the identified talents aware of this?**

The Company continued by saying that the talented employees are contacted by the performance management team, and through their system and data, they become aware of their status as a “talented employee” or a high performer, which will affect their motivation directly.
Q10: what is the impact of this, on the other employees?

According to the Company, the impact of this information on the other employees is always positive, because it makes them see that the company care about its talents, make them know it and reward them for it, so this information will trigger a motivator inside them that will make them work harder, in order to be a talent or a high performer as well.

Q11: what are the specific needs of talented employees?

According to the Company from her current and previous experience, the talented employees do not have any specific needs, since they work in the same conditions as the other employees and are all treated in the same way, so there are no hard feelings.

Q12: what motivate them, compared to other employees?

And for the motivators, the Company said that they vary from an employee to another, some of them are motivated by the chances the company is offering them, which match perfectly their ambitions, other employees feels more motivated when they deliver a high level of work and the company shows them its appreciation.

Q13: what positions do they hold?

Taking in consideration the size of the company and its number of staff, the Company said that the talented employees are positioned all over the company, across all the departments.

Q14: how would you define talent retention?

Talent retention is the strategy we undertake to keep all of our talented employees, by using different kind of incentives, from the intrinsic intensives like training & development, career planning, team nights out, to the extrinsic ones like benefits, compensations, health care and stock options.

Q15: how/where, do you see its importance at your company?

Due to its importance in today’s economy, talent retention is highly important and companies spend a lot of money in it, in order to keep their best talents, to keep the competitive
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advantage against other competitors, and keeping the knowledge those talents carry within them.

- **Q16: what kind of retention tools are you using? Why? How do you use them?**

The Company affirmed that different kind of retention tools are used, in order to keep their most valuable employees. Some of them are interested by the intrinsic incentives, while the other are more likely to be motivated by extrinsic incentives. The intrinsic incentives are mostly based on the training and development of the talented employees, to offer them the chance to grow higher in the company’s hierarchy or occupy important positions, while the extrinsic incentives are translated into monthly bonuses and stock options offered by the company.

- **Q17: could you please rank these retention tools from the most, to the less effective?**
  (Compensation, benefits, working environment, development & training, feedback, work-life balance, leadership behaviour, corporate culture).

  1- Training and development
  2- Work environment
  3- Feedback
  4- Leadership behaviour
  5- Corporate culture
  6- Work-life balance
  7- Benefits
  8- Compensation.

- **Q18: how do you see talent retention in Ireland?**

According to the Company again, talent retention grew bigger in Ireland, and companies are aware of its importance within the company, and so, they are spending more money and time on this, so they can reach their goals.

- **Q19: what are the retention tools you would like to use in the future? Why?**

From the interview done with the Company, the company is not looking to use any other retention tool from the ones they are using now, due to its fit with the kind of business they have. Nevertheless, they are looking to introduce an international transfer program, to give more opportunities to their employees.
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- **Q20:** which tools you had to adapt for Ireland? Why?

Even regarding the origins of the company, the Company affirmed that no adaptation was needed for the retention tools, as they kept everything the same, according to her, people have the same motivations and the company is offering a varied range of incentives that they can please everyone.

- **Q21:** how would you define talent development?

According to the Company, talent development is the keeping up of the high performers level and increasing it, and the development of low performers to make them better and more efficient.

- **Q22:** how/where, do you see its importance at your company?

Due to its impact on the company’s overall performance, the Company said that talent development is as important to the company as the talent retention, and the company she works for accord a high interest to develop its talents.

- **Q23:** what are the development tools you are using? Why?

The Company said that the company is offering its talents and employees a variety of development tools, as they are offering them E-learning, in-house training, one on one coaching, mentoring and buddy programs, and this is made to touch as much employees and different areas in the company as possible.

- **Q24:** could you please rank them, from the less to the most effective?
  1- Coaching
  2- Mentoring
  3- In-house training
  4- E-learning
  5- Buddy system.

- **Q25:** do you provide career development options?

According the Company, the company is offering the talented people a chance to move up in the hierarchy, by offering them internal promotion, so they can occupy higher positions in the company, and have more responsibilities and feel valuable.
Q26: do you use the in-house development? If yes, how?

The in-house training program is run for two weeks in classroom, following this there is another two weeks on the floor, it is called the nesting, talented employees have managers with them all of the time where they are training, the next two weeks, they are integrated in the team, where they are trained as well.

Q27: do you use coaching by line managers? If yes, how?

The Company said that the coaching program is available for all the talented employees across the different departments in the company, and is held every two weeks, where senior members offer their expertise to the new recruits.

Q28: Do you use mentoring? If yes, how?

When it comes to mentoring, the Company said that it is used in a quarterly basis. The mentor meets with the person they are mentoring, and they talk about the topics they want to improve, discuss different issues the mentee is facing while doing the job, so the mentor brings his or her experience and vision about the problem, and tries to help the mentee in a face-to-face meeting.

Q29: do you use e-learning? If yes, how?

According to the Company, the E-learning is available for use all the time, and this is via the computers provided by the company, and every office, people can log in get access to the courses provided by the company, to help employees improve their talent skills.

Q30: do you have a succession planning program? If yes, how?

The Company said that there is a succession planning program that company is using to feel the positions with key talents when needed, and it is done via the selection of key talents regarding their performance and commitment, by the performance management team, and from this, a list of potential key talents is set.

Q31: do you have a job rotation program within your company? If yes, how?

There is a job rotation program. It aims to give the talented employees a preview of any path they would like to take in the future, by moving them from a department to another, though,
the job rotation option is available only for people who were with a company for at least twelve months.

- **Q32: what are the development tools you would like to use in the future? Why?**

The Company said that there are not planning on using any other development tool other the ones they are using now, but in the other hand, they are trying to develop their in-house training, and this is to increase their number of talents.

- **Q33: do you develop your talents according to the company’s needs? If yes, describe it**

According to the Company, talented employees are developed not only in one field, but they are developed in order to fit in every position they can take responsibility of, and this is to make sure the company run at its full potential.

- **Q34: do you plan your talent acquisition in advance? why?**

The Company said that they plan their talent acquisition in advance, due to the importance of this for the running of the business, and that problems will occur if more talented employees are needed, but no plan was made.

- **Q35: did many of your talents left before?**

According to the Company, about 10% of the talented employees left the company.

- **Q36: what do you are the reasons?**

From what the Company said; there are two major factors, that caused the turnover of their talents, and they are; the total change of career path, or the relocation, but none of the reasons were related to dissatisfaction or lack of motivation.

- **Q37: from the list of motivation theories, which one do you think is more suitable for your company? Why?**

For the last question, the Company make it clear that, the company is using more than one motivation theory factors, because, according to her, there are different departments, with different needs and different implementation, so the there is a need to use more than one theory of motivation, in order to keep all the workers satisfied.
Company 2:

- **Q1: how would you define talent management?**

Talent management can be defined as the practice of putting the right people in the right place or positions within a company, to achieve high performance.

- **Q2: how do you see the importance of talent management?**

From my own experience as a talent acquisition manager, I believe and see the impact of talent management on the company, and I would say that it is a crucial success element.

- **Q3: do you consider your company as a “knowledge-intensive firm”?**

I would say that we are, because we depend on the knowledge of our employees, and our main product, is a service, generated by the employees’ knowledge.

- **Q4: what is the average age at your company?**

I would say that, hmm it is between 27 and 40, not exactly to be honest with you.

- **Q5: what is the percentage of Gen Y talents at your company?**

By Gen Y you mean, people who are by now, 36 years old, right? Well, I would say that the majority of the employees is Gen Y but it will not exceed the 30% because, we have a lot of seniors.

- **Q6: which employees are considered talents?**

A talented employee for us is a person who have technical skills in different technical areas within our business, and can fit in most of the departments; it is also a curious and challenge-driven person.

- **Q7: how do you attract them?**

Mainly we attract talents through our website, this is the best way and most suitable for us, besides, we go to universities, campuses, and job fairs.

- **Q8: what is the percentage of talent in your company?**

Well, since we have a talent pool system, I would tell you that we have between 20-27%
- **Q9: are the identified talents aware of this?**

Some of them yes, others no, because, we have some policies within the company, and some areas of our business require a 24/7 high performance, and we cannot afford any flows.

- **Q10: what is the impact of this, on the other employees?**

The impact on the other employees is different, from a person to another, but in general, it has a positive impact, because people see how talents are rewarded, and of course, they work hard to be at the same level.

- **Q11: what are the specific needs of talented employees?**

I do not know what you mean by this question, but they are like everyone else I would say

- **Q12: what motivate them, compared to other employees?**

Our talented employees are motivated by the challenges available and the opportunities they have with us.

- **Q13: what positions do they hold (talents)?**

Our talents are all over the company, they have different positions in different departments, we have even talents who are seniors, but the focus of talent is in the development and business relations departments.

- **Q14: how would you define talent retention?**

Talent retention, I would say that it is the energy; money and time a company spend on its talents in order to keep them as long as possible.

- **Q15: how/where, do you see its importance at your company?**

I do not want to sound exaggerating, but I would say that our company depends on talent retention, due to the type of business we are running, we cannot afford to lose, and not even one of our talents and our success rely on our employees, so it is a top priority for us.
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- **Q16: what kind of retention tools are you using? Why?**
  
  By that you mean, how do we reward our talents, right? Well we have different, but not too much, I would say, we offer them monetary rewards, monthly bonuses, stock options, and also career development options.

- **Q17: could you please rank these retention tools from the most, to the less effective?**
  
  (Compensation, benefits, working environment, development & training, feedback, work-life balance, leadership behaviour, corporate culture).
  
  I would say this: work-life balance, corporate culture, benefits, feedback, work environment, development & training, leadership behaviour, compensation.

- **Q19: what are the retention tools you would like to use in the future? Why?**
  
  In the future, we are planning to use stock options, because we believe that it is a long-term reward, hassle free and employees will feel part of the company.

- **Q21: how would you define talent development?**
  
  Talent development is, giving a chance to talents to enhance or upgrade their already owned skills, to work faster and better, and be able to face more challenges.

- **Q22: how/where, do you see its importance at your company?**
  
  It is very important, because we have a number of talents, who are skilled in certain areas and not others, and we want them to be adaptable to all positions where we need them, we also have employees that we want to develop to a level of “talents”, so it is quiet important I’d say.

- **Q23: what are the development tools you are using? Why?**
  
  Right now, we are using external coaching, university programs, internal coaching & mentoring, and e-learning from our data base, and we have group classes every 3 weeks.

- **Q24: could you please rank them, from the less to the most effective?**
  
  It is hard to rank them, they are all important, but I would say: university programs, group classes, external coaching, internal coaching & mentoring and E-learning.
- **Q25: do you provide career development options?**

Yes, we do have career development. Whoever prove their commitment to the company and achieved remarkable work, we give them the chance to grow bigger and have more challenges.

- **Q26: do you use the in-house development? If yes, how?**

Yes, our in-house program is the classes that we offer our employees. Most of the times, the senior members give classes about certain areas of our company, what to do and how to do, other times, we bring lecturers or engineers from outside the company to give classes about technical areas of the business.

- **Q27: do you use coaching by line managers? If yes, how?**

Yes, we do have coaching. We have teams and team leaders, they are the coaches, they are always backing up the employees and helping them, assisting them and assessing them.

- **Q28: Do you use mentoring? If yes, how?**

We do use mentoring as well. The team leaders I mentioned earlier, they have their own leaders, and they are who we call mentors, they usually take a group of 2 or 3, and they offer them help, from their own experience, to clear some issues.

- **Q29: do you use e-learning? If yes, how?**

We do have e-learning in the company. We have a very organised data base, that everyone can access, organised according the company’s needs, so everyone can find what they want to learn, easily and effectively.

- **Q30: do you have a succession-planning program? If yes, how?**

We do have succession planning, but unfortunately, not everyone is entitled for it. Our succession planning is more for the business side of the company, where we try to always have one or a group of persons who are fit to success the seniors who might leave.
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- **Q31: do you have a job rotation program within your company? If yes, how?**

  We do have a job rotation program and it is part of our training program, both the employees in the business and technical area can be sent to another department, so they can get new skills, learn new things, but not all of them want to do this.

- **Q32: what are the development tools you would like to use in the future? Why?**

  Our goal for the next year is to develop our own course and have it implemented in universities, because we have specific requirement, and it is not something easy to build from nothing, it takes time, and time is money.

- **Q33: do you develop your talents according to the company's needs? If yes, describe it**

  Yes, we do, especially in the technical side of the business, as I told you before; we have specific needs, so try to guide our talents the way that goes with the business.

- **Q34: do you plan your talent acquisition in advance? Why?**

  Yes we do. Well, it is easy, we do not want run of people and secondly we have business agreements with clients, they tell us their requirements in advance, so we can plan our talent pool in advance, and keep everyone happy.

- **Q35: did many of your talents left before?**

  Since we started? Not that much, we have a very low turnover rates. But of course some of them left, most were seniors.

- **Q36: what do you are the reasons?**

  New opportunities, with new companies, start-ups, new challenges, mostly that is it.

- **Q37: from the list of motivation theories, which one do you think is more suitable for your company? Why?**

  To be honest, I do not know if we can use any of them, not that I am aware of, maybe some elements of each one, but not a specific one, because we think that we have our own model, it works very good and we try to upgrade it whenever we see gaps.
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- Q38: do you think that the best practices of talent retention and talent development affect the overall performance?

Yes, I don’t think it, I am living it every day, and I can see it in the face of the employees, and by the end of the day when we see what they accomplished compared to the day before. So yeah, the more your employees feel secured and have opportunities, the better they will work.

**Company 3:**

- Q1: how would you define talent management?

Talent management within our organisation is defined by all the practices we do in order to maintain both happy talents and high organisational efficiency.

- Q2: how do you see the importance of talent management?

It is extremely important for us, and this is translated by all the effort we do.

- Q3: do you consider your company as a “knowledge-intensive firm”?

Yes, we are a 100% knowledge-intensive company.

- Q4: what is the average age at your company?

This is a confidential question that I may not be able to answer you, because we respect our employees’ privacy.

- Q5: what is the percentage of Gen Y talents at your company?

I can tell you that we have a high percentage of Gen Y.

- Q6: which employees are considered talents?

Talented employees are those who are not afraid to go the extra step or hour to achieve their tasks, talents are also those who are very skilled with IT and can multitask, calm and focused.

- Q7: how do you attract them?

Our main attraction channel is our website, and sometimes we give lectures at universities. That’s all.
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- Q8: what is the percentage of talent in your company?
I would say 35 to 40% of our employees are talented.

- Q9: are the identified talents aware of this?
Of course they are. Transparency is one of our values.

- Q10: what is the impact of this, on the other employees?
Positive, because we give feedback to everyone, so nobody feels bad.

- Q11: what are the specific needs of talented employees?
They want a good work conditions and work environment.

- Q12: what motivate them, compared to other employees?
Like other employees, they are motivated by the rewards and opportunities we offer them.

- Q13: what positions do they hold (talents)?
They have different positions, within the most productive and important departments.

- Q14: how would you define talent retention?
I would say that, it is the expenses and opportunities a company put in disposition to keep its talents.

- Q15: how/where, do you see its importance at your company?
It is very important for us, because we cherish our talents.

- Q16: what kind of retention tools are you using? Why?
We use different kinds of incentives, monetary and non-monetary, to be able to please all different needs.

- Q17: could you please rank these retention tools from the most, to the less effective?
(Compensation, benefits, working environment, development & training, feedback, work-life balance, leadership behaviour, corporate culture).

Work environment, work-life balance, benefits, corporate culture, development & training, compensation, leadership behaviour, feedback.
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- **Q19: what are the retention tools you would like to use in the future? Why?**

We are very happy with our practices, and our employees as well.

- **Q21: how would you define talent development?**

Talent development is the procedure a company undertake to increase its talents’ skills and capabilities.

- **Q22: how/where, do you see its importance at your company?**

Due to the high competition we have, it is very important for us that our employees are always fresh and up to date.

- **Q23: what are the development tools you are using? Why?**

We have coaching and mentoring, e-learning, university programs and workshops, sometimes we use a mix of all these methods, because we know that we all have different learning capacities, and we want to reach everyone.

- **Q24: could you please rank them, from the less to the most effective?**

Workshops, coaching and mentoring, university programs, e-learning.

- **Q25: do you provide career development options?**

Yes, we have career development process. We offer our people the chance to grow bigger and have more responsibilities within the company.

- **Q26: do you use the in-house development? If yes, how?**

Our in-house development program is done by supervision of senior members, we schedule a training session for a number of people from different departments and we gather them in one of our facilities, and we try to clear all their queries and train them.

- **Q27: do you use coaching by line managers? If yes, how?**

Our coaching methods consists in the supervision by team leaders, they follow day by day the job done by their team members and see the development or regression.
- **Q28: Do you use mentoring? If yes, how?**

The mentoring is same as in-house training, but in a more specific area of the company, where one of the experienced members meet with usually one or two mentees at the same time, and share the knowledge and experience with them, in a friendly way.

- **Q29: do you use e-learning? If yes, how?**

Yes, we have e-learning, it is based on the facilities’ computers or via the company’s network, if you are part of the company, you can access the classes, either from your laptop or smart phone.

- **Q30: do you have a succession-planning program? If yes, how?**

We do have succession-planning programs, and it is based on the potential leaders, selected from the high board.

- **Q31: do you have a job rotation program within your company? If yes, how?**

No, we don’t have it, our business require high focus and performance and the tasks.

- **Q32: what are the development tools you would like to use in the future? Why?**

Later on, we would like to have a headquarter programs, where we can send our talents to the main offices, so they can see how it all started, and this will give them a feeling of belongingness.

- **Q33: do you develop your talents according to the company’s needs? If yes, describe it**

Yes we do, we try to be the best in this area of business, and so our talents, so we try to lead them through the same path the company is taking.

- **Q34: do you plan your talent acquisition in advance? Why?**

Before, yes, but now, not really, we have enough talents in our talent pool, but we still try attract as much talents as possible.

- **Q35: did many of your talents left before?**

No, not really, we are a very low turnover rate company.
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- **Q36:** what do you are the reasons?
- **Q37:** from the list of motivation theories, which one do you think is more suitable for your company? Why?

To be honest with you, I cannot give you a proper answer to this question. But I don’t think we are using any of them.

- **Q38:** do you think that the best practices of talent retention and talent development affect the overall performance?

Yes. One cannot work with the other, you give your best, and you will only get the best and vis-versa.

**Company 4:**

- **Q1:** how would you define talent management?

I would say that it is the capacity of a company to select, recruit, develop and keep their best assets, to work at high level.

- **Q2:** how do you see the importance of talent management?

It is of an extreme importance, we rely our efficiency on it.

- **Q3:** do you consider your company as a “knowledge-intensive firm”?

Yes we are, we definitely are.

- **Q4:** what is the average age at your company?

I don’t know exactly, but we have employees, from 23 to 37, this I know.

- **Q5:** what is the percentage of Gen Y talents at your company?

Most of the company is Gen Y, but I do not have an accurate percentage to give you.

- **Q6:** which employees are considered talents?

Our talents are people who are IT focused people, who are able to innovate within the business area and always come up with new ideas.
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- **Q7: how do you attract them?**

We have a career section in our website, where you can see all the available opportunities, we go to job fairs, campuses and we advertise online as well.

- **Q8: what is the percentage of talent in your company?**

Hard to say, because we do not have a talent pool, but I would say 15%.

- **Q9: are the identified talents aware of this?**

Yes they are, we give our talents a feedback of their work.

- **Q10: what is the impact of this, on the other employees?**

Positive I would say, or at least, we see that they work harder to improve their performance as well.

- **Q11: what are the specific needs of talented employees?**

They do not have any specific needs, I don’t think so, maybe they like freedom of action.

- **Q12: what motivate them, compared to other employees?**

They are motivated by the opportunities they think will let them innovate.

- **Q13: what positions do they hold (talents)?**

Most of our talents are in the software development department.

- **Q14: how would you define talent retention?**

Talent retention is the ability of a company to keep its most valuable and performant employees.

- **Q15: how/where, do you see its importance at your company?**

It is very important for us, because we don’t want our knowledge to walk out of our doors with no coming back.

- **Q16: what kind of retention tools are you using? Why?**

Right now, we are offering healthcare for parents and kids, amazing starting packages, growth opportunities, and bonuses when we reach a certain amount of sales.
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- Q17: could you please rank these retention tools from the most, to the less effective? (Compensation, benefits, working environment, development & training, feedback, work-life balance, leadership behaviour, corporate culture).

Working environment, work-life balance, benefits, feedback, leadership behaviour, corporate culture, development & training, compensation.

- Q19: what are the retention tools you would like to use in the future? Why?

Since we are planning to open subsidiaries in other European countries, we would like to give the chance to our employees to pick up a destination of their choice, or maybe their home country and work there.

- Q21: how would you define talent development?

I would say that, it is the opportunity for a company to upskill its talents and take them to a higher level.

- Q22: how/where, do you see its importance at your company?

For us, it is very important, because we want to be leaders in our sector, and want to have the best people.

- Q23: what are the development tools you are using? Why?

Right now, we are using the coaching and mentoring, e-learning, and external coaching.

- Q24: could you please rank them, from the less to the most effective?

External coaching, coaching and mentoring and e-learning.

- Q25: do you provide career development options?

Right now, yes, but it’s very limited. Only high profile employees, with administrative experience can grow in the company.

- Q26: do you use the in-house development? If yes, how?

Yes we do, we base it on the coaching & mentoring and e-learning
Q27: do you use coaching by line managers? If yes, how?
Yes we do, we have high performant employees who have knowledge of what we are doing, and the help other employees.

Q28: Do you use mentoring? If yes, how?
We do use mentoring at an administrative level, where experienced members share their knowledge and experience, to help junior members.

Q29: do you use e-learning? If yes, how?
Yes, we do have our own e-learning program, developed by our own engineers, it contains all what have to be known about the business, the development, it can be accessed via the computers or via the smart phone application of the company, and it is weekly updated.

Q30: do you have a succession planning program? If yes, how?
We do have a succession planning. We build a list of potential leaders that can take the lead at any moment, without affecting the efficiency of the company.

Q31: do you have a job rotation program within your company? If yes, how?
We don’t really have a job rotation program, we like to keep our staff focused on what they are doing and excel at it.

Q32: what are the development tools you would like to use in the future? Why?
We would like to build connexion with big universities where we can send our talents, so they can develop their knowledges and skills.

Q33: do you develop your talents according to the company’s needs? If yes, describe it
Yes, we do, we have specific requirement, and we want every single talent to work at its top level in his or her area.

Q34: do you plan your talent acquisition in advance? Why?
Yes, of course, we need to be always in advance, so we can face any issues that may occur.
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- **Q35:** did many of your talents left before?

Here in Ireland, yes we did, but a handicapping loss.

- **Q36:** what do you are the reasons?

Change of the career path, other left the country, and others left of other competitors (laugh).

- **Q37:** from the list of motivation theories, which one do you think is more suitable for your company? Why?

I believe that we are using our own method, because we love our employees, and we trust them with the expected work they have to do.

- **Q38:** do you think that the best practices of talent retention and talent development affect the overall performance?

Yes, it does, I think that performance is directly linked to retention and development practices, the best it is done, the higher the performance will be.

Proof of Qualitative data analysis with Atlas.Ti 7:
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