HRM COMPETENCES: OLD OR NEW?

Results of the qualitative exploration into business requirements

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MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

The goal of this study was to explore companies their requirements of the competences that future HR professionals need to perform. To reach this goal, the importance of the two topics of HRM competences and individual HRM job performance for the HR professional were investigated and a theoretical framework was build.

The empirical study tried to explore what companies require from the future HR professional. To reach this goal, it was decided to conduct a qualitative study as this gave us the opportunity to go beyond our initial preconceptions and to gain full understanding about the topics. It was decided to conduct interviews with HR leaders from large companies in the Netherlands with a high position in HR, as we perceived these respondents to be good reliable sources, as they are professionals in the field of HRM and determine how HRM is done and who is qualified enough to do the job. In total, 10 respondents participated by giving a one-hour interview. In this interview, first, questions were asked about the function and work history of the respondent. Next, questions were asked about which competences and performance are required for the future HR professional and whether these requirements may differ with respect to company size, sector or scope.

Interviews were recorded and transcribed. After the transcripts were made, they were send to the respondents for adjustment and verification.

Coding was used as the method to analyze the transcripts, in which text bulks were given codes that referred to the topics of competences and performance. To ensure the reliability of these codes, a former colleague student was asked to co-code 3 of the 10 transcripts. Based on this check-code process, a reliable set of codes was defined and applied to the other transcripts. However, when re-coding the additional transcripts, new codes still emerged.

The coding process led to 34 codes referring to the topic of HRM competences and 5 codes referring to the topic of individual HRM job performance. The 34 codes that referred to the topic of HRM competences could be grouped into six competence domains.

The comparison between the data analyzed and the theoretical framework showed the following contributions of this research:

- A more extensive set of competences for the HR professional was recognized
- Performance was perceived to be the possession of HRM competences and little correspondence with the elements of individual HRM job performance was found
- Contingency factors of company size, type, scope and position determine the competences that are required from the HR professionals

Based on these contributions, we recommended future research to conduct a quantitative study to gain understanding on the relevance of the individual HRM job performance and to find possible correlations between the HRM competences and individual HRM job performance.

Furthermore, it was also recommended to further research the contingencies that affect what is being required of the HR professional by the business.

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1   INTRODUCTION

Several decades ago the research into the HRM competences required for the HR professional started. Ulrich, Brockbank and colleagues (2008) started the research on HRM competences as they tried to define and deliver a set of requirements for the HR professional. Based on the interesting findings of their first study, Ulrich and colleagues decided to repeat their so-called Human Resource Competence Study every four to five years.

The research into HRM competences is valuable for the HRM practice, as it indicates what is required from the HR professional to perform. The investigation of the required HRM competences for the HR professional contributes to an overall understanding of the fit between the competence requirements of the business and HR professionals. Hence, a fit implies two sides to exist: (1) the requirements of the business regarding the competences of HR professionals, and (2) the HR professionals who need to know and possess what is required by the business..
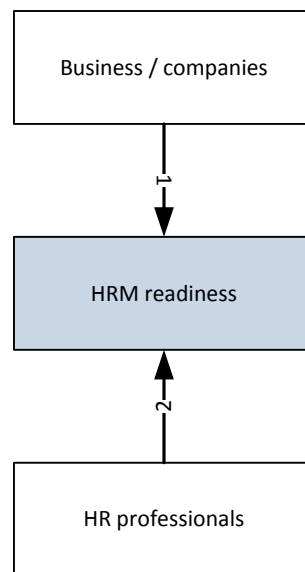
Figure 1 - HRM readiness between the business and HR professionals

A fit between the requirements of the business and the HR professionals is needed as it determines the HRM readiness (Figure 1). HRM readiness refers to the extent to which one is willing or prepared for service, action, or progress. For this research project, HRM readiness implies companies to be willing or prepared to work with the HR professional when the competence level of the HR professional satisfies the requirements of the business. It also implies the HR professional to be willing or prepared to work in a company when the competence level that is required to perform the job matches the requirements of the HR professional. Therefore, for the company and the HR professional to effectively work together, they need to be willing and prepared to work together, meaning that both their requirements need to be satisfied. Before the requirements can be satisfied, both parties need to know each other's requirements, as you cannot satisfy competence requirements when you do not know what they are.

1.1   RESEARCH PROBLEM

The starting point of this research was that there needs to be a match between the competence requirements of the business and the requirements of HR professionals. This research project was inspired by several studies into the field of HR competences, analysis of which has shaped the research problem.

The fact that a match does not exist, can be demonstrated by the study done by Hayton et al. on what the market demands from HR graduates (Hayton, Cohen, Hume, Kaufman, & Taylor, 2005). Though the research focuses on the fit between the market and HR teaching, it also shows the

mismatch between what the business expects and HR professionals are able to do, as when HR professionals do not learn the adequate competences, they cannot satisfy the requirements of the business. In their research, Hayton et al. (2005) present the perspectives of two expert practitioners on what the market demands from HR graduates. Before these practitioners presented their opinions, conversations with additional HR practitioners and heads of HR in major organizations were performed. The two expert practitioners are experts as they have experience with HR graduates to talk about what the market demands from HR graduates and are positioned as president, vice-president, and board member of HR institutes (Hayton, Cohen, Hume, Kaufman, & Taylor, 2005).

Based on conversations the two experts had with HR practitioners and HR leaders of several large companies, the experts argue that employers perceive HR graduates to have some shortcomings (Hayton et al., 2005). First, employers perceive the HR graduates to not understand what HR means; they seem to not understand the body of knowledge. Second, students are thought to lack the ability to think critically about the issues that face employers, meaning the employers are not satisfied with the current critical thinking skills that HR graduates are supposed to possess. Third, the experts argue that graduates do not seem to have the necessary skill set to think and analyze problems. Fourth, education programs seem to be focused on helping the students to understand business, but employers perceive HR graduates to not understand HR as well as business. Fifth, employers perceive HR graduates to lack experience, which could have been gained from for example internships. Because there is no practical experience, employers are of the opinion that the graduates cannot apply theory into practice, as they do not have the application skills to align theory with what the employer needs.

Overall, the conversations that the two experts had with other HR practitioners show that employers perceive HR graduates to lack some necessary HRM knowledge, skills, and abilities, which form the HRM competences. What makes the research of Hayton et al. (2005) for this research valuable is that it tries to gain understanding in the difference between the requirements of the market, which is the business, and the competences possessed by HR graduates, who are the future HR professionals. It shows that more understanding may be needed in what the market requires from HR graduates as the future HR professionals.

Furthermore, Johnson & King (2002) tried to investigate whether HR practitioners are trained the right way. They are of the opinion that education should together change with changes in the expectations of the business, as adjustments to the curricula may be needed to satisfy the new expectations. Overall, changes in the expectations of the business are assumed to influence how people are educated and trained (Garavan & McGuire, 2001), so which competences need to be possessed. HR practitioners need to get the appropriate education to satisfy the changing expectations of the business. However, the study of Johnson & King (2002) shows that the competences that were rated to be of high importance for the entry-level HR practitioner to possess, were too less covered in the university HR programs. Competences that were covered in programs showed to be mostly the traditional functional competences. Competences that have gained importance recently were covered very little or even not in university HR programs (Johnson & King, 2002). What makes this research interesting is that it acknowledges the fact that the readiness of the HR practitioners does not fit the requirements of the business, as they did not receive the right education. The research shows that what the business requires from HR professionals is not clear, as HR practitioners are not provided with the right education.

A problem with findings like the research of Hayton et al. (2005) is that the requirements of the business regarding HR practitioners change because of changes in the business environment (Johnson & King, 2002). As the research of Hayton et al. (2005) investigated some requirements of the business, the research of Johnson & King (2002) showed these requirements not to be clear enough as the competences required by the business are not being taught to the HR practitioners.

The research problem that emerges here is that the research does not try to explain why differences exist between the actual competences possessed by the HR professionals and the competences desired by the business. Our assumption is that what the business requires from the HR professional is not clear enough and therefore needs to be further investigated.

As the research indicated not a match to exist between what the business requires and what is possessed by HR professionals, we needed to gain a better understanding on what the business expects from the HR professional. A better understanding can help future HR professionals understand the qualities that are needed to perform and help the business to select HR professionals that are qualified enough to do the job. Hence, when HR professionals know what is required, they know which competences need to be possessed.

Ulrich and colleagues acknowledged the importance of gaining insight into which HRM competences are required for the HR professional, as in 20 years they conducted four Human Resource Competence Studies. Each research round led to new, interesting competence insights. However, as the last resource round was performed in 2007/2008, the HRM competences found within this research round may not apply to the current HR professional anymore. It may be case that within the last four years, the required profile of HRM competences for the HR professional by the business has changed, as the business environment changes and HR graduates do not seem to possess the required competences. Competences need to be monitored as they might be changing. Therefore, we decided it was time to take a new, fresh look on the HRM competences required for the HR professional.

However, looking at the competences we did not found enough, as the topic of HRM competences can be related to the topic of performance. Knowledge of the HRM competences required for the HR professional is important as it determines whether the HR professional is able to perform his job. Therefore, we also decided to investigate what performance for the HR professional means.

1.2 RESEARCH PURPOSE AND QUESTION

Based on the research problem, the goal of this research was to explore companies their requirements of the competences that are needed for future HR professionals to perform. What made this research of importance is that by exploring the requirements of the business, the future HR professional can gain understanding of what is required from him to do his job, as earlier research indicated fresh HR professionals not to be qualified enough. The reason that we decided to look at what is required from the HR professional in terms of HRM competences, is that competences show which qualities are needed for an HR professional to perform. By measuring the competence level of the HR professional, a company determines whether the HR professional matches the company requirements and is qualified enough to do the job. Furthermore, it was decided to look at the business side as companies are the employers of HR professionals and decide what the HR professionals needs to be able to do. Companies face certain challenges and the HR professionals need to help the company to cope with these challenges by possessing the right set of competences. It was also decided to focus on the topic of competences as research showed current HR graduates, who now enter the market, not to possess the required competences. Furthermore, as companies change because of changes in the business environment, a look at what is required from future HR professionals was needed.

To reach the goal of this research, the following research question was made:

> *Which competences do companies require future HR professionals to possess to perform the job?*

1.3 APPROACH

As the research question shows, this study consisted out of two main topics: competences and performance. Hence, if the future HR professional wants to be able to perform, he needs to possess the right competences.

In order to give an answer to the research question and achieve the research goal, the following approach was taken.

A theoretical framework needed to be built that included both the topics of competences and performance. However, before we were able to build this framework, we needed to investigate the meaning of competences and performance. Furthermore, we tried to relate the topics of competences and performance, as our research question implied it for the HR professionals to be needed to possess competences to be able to perform.

Based on the theoretical framework, the empirical study was performed by asking HR leaders from large companies in the Netherlands their opinion on what is required from the future HR professional in terms of competences and performance.

The opinions of the respondents were transcribed and analyzed by using the method of coding. This enabled us to label and group quotations of the respondents that referred to the topics of competences and performance.

At the end, we were able to come up with an extended set of HRM competences that were previously not recognized to be of importance but did fit the original defined competences.

The study showed it to be difficult for the respondents to make a distinction between competences and performance, as the respondents indicated performance to be the possession of the HRM competences.

Furthermore, this study also enabled us to come up with a set of contingency factors that can influence the extent to which the competences for the HR professional are required.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 INTRODUCTION

To architect a conceptual framework for this study, we focused on two theoretical notions: HRM competences and individual HRM job performance. Hence, in order for future HR professionals to be able to perform, essential HRM competences are required.

The main theoretical contribution of this study is the inclusion of the concept of individual HRM job performance. Where previous research has laid the basis for how HRM competences affect the performance of the business (Ulrich, Brockbank, Yeung, & Lake, 1995), we wanted to contribute to previous research by integrating the concepts of HRM competences and individual HRM job performance.

First, we take a closer look at the importance and content of individual HRM job performance, and its relation with the topic of HRM competences. Second, we take a closer look at the importance and content of HRM competences.

The idea is to eventually come up with a framework that includes the link between HRM competences and individual HRM job performance. Such a framework "seeks to identify the ideal combination of skills, knowledge, attitudes, and experience: the position of which enables employees to become high performers with the potential to add value to the organization" (Gorsline, 1999, as cited in Garavan & McGuire, 2001, p.145).

2.2 JOB PERFORMANCE

The research on the relevancy of HRM has mainly focused on how HRM contributes to business performance, by showing that HRM practices or HRM systems facilitate business performance (Delery & Doty, 1996; Huselid, 1995).

Where some research acknowledges the link between HRM practices and HRM systems and business performance, other research looks deeper into which HRM competences will lead the HR professional to be able to improve business performance (Ulrich, Brockbank, Yeung, & Lake, 1995).

It seems that research has only addressed the relevancy of HRM competences for business performance, as the use of HRM systems requires some HRM competences to be possessed for the HR professional to be able to deliver HRM to improve business performance.

Where the research of Delery & Doty (1996) and Huselid (1995) focuses on the relevancy of HRM as a whole for business performance, they do not look at what is required from the HR professional to help facilitate the business performance. Although the research of Ulrich et al. (1995) investigates what is required for the HR professional to add value to the business, they do not consider what is needed for the HR professional to perform in his individual job.

The idea is that when the HR professional is able to perform in his job, the HR department is able to perform and business performance can be improved. It means that individual HRM job performance is needed for the HRM department to perform, as the department itself cannot perform without the help of individual workers. It also means that business performance is eventually created by the individual HRM job performance of the workers, as business performance is influenced by the HRM performance. This is why we decided to focus on HRM performance on the individual level, as the business cannot perform without the performance of individuals and the HR department cannot perform without the individual performance of the HR professional.

2.2.1 INDIVIDUAL JOB PERFORMANCE OF HR PROFESSIONALS

To be valuable to the organization, it is necessary for HR professionals to perform. Individual HRM job performance means that *the HR professional is able to function in his position at the required or even above the required level* (McEvoy, Hayton, Warnick, Mumford, Hanks, & Blahna, 2005).

We need to know what characterizes this individual HRM job performance. Research on job design suggests the following individual job performance categories to exist: attitudinal performance, behavioral performance, cognitive performance, and well-being performance (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2008). Next to these performance categories, we add another one: social performance. We think that it is necessary for an HR professional to socially perform, as in jobs the relational aspect is becoming more visible (Grant & Parker, 2009). In their review on work design literature, Grant & Parker (2009) take a relational perspective and suggest that jobs, roles, and tasks are more socially embedded because of an increase in the interdependence and interactions between workers. They suggest the social part of work to influence work outcomes. As individual job performance is the wholeness of work outcomes, also considering the social performance with the relational aspect is necessary.

What makes all the performance categories taken together important, is that they determine whether someone is able to perform or not. Job performance may be reached when the HR professional shows the outcomes on the individual performance categories. It must be noticed that the performance outcomes do not stand alone, as they may be related to each other.
What characterizes the performance categories and how they may be related to each other, will be discussed next.

ATTITUDINAL PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES
Attitudinal performance is being referred to as the feelings about the job and the organization (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2008). In translating this category to HRM, it means that the HR professional can perform because he has positive feelings about the job and the organization. When the HR professional does not experience positive feelings, he might not like to do his job and might not be willing to put the needed effort in the job.

What makes the attitudinal performance important is that the feelings represent whether the HR professional is willing to put effort in the job. The willingness to put effort in one's job shows the HR professional's potential to perform, as the HR professional needs to be willing to put effort in one's job to take on the behavior of actually performing tasks and duties.
The components that characterize attitudinal performance are: job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job involvement, and intrinsic motivation.

Attitudinal performance means that the HR professional experiences feelings of satisfaction with his or her job. *Job satisfaction* may be referred to as the HR professional his happiness with the job and job opportunities. The meta-analysis done by Petty, McGee & Cavender (1984) on the relationship between individual job satisfaction and individual performance shows that much evidence from studies has been found for the relationship between individual job satisfaction and individual job performance and that the strength of this relationship depends on the job level: the higher the job level, the stronger the relationship (Petty, McGee, & Cavender, 1984). As HR professionals possess a high job level, because they operate on a managerial level, this increases the importance for an HR professional to be satisfied with his job.

Second, attitudinal performance means that the HR professional feels committed to the organization. According to the research of Suliman & Iles (2000) on the link between organizational commitment and job performance, *organizational commitment* is made up out of three types of commitment. First, there is the affective organizational commitment in which a person identifies with and feels involved in the organization (Porter et al., 1974, as mentioned in Suliman & Ilnes, 2000). Second, there is the continuance organizational commitment in which the person does investments that bind him to the organization to be loyal to the organization (Suliman & Iles, 2000). Third, there is the normative organizational commitment in which there is congruency between the

person's goals and values and organizational aims that make him feel obliged to the organization (Suliman & Iles, 2000). All three types of organizational commitment are found to be important for job performance, but Suliman & Ilnes (200) found the strongest positive relationship to exist between affective organizational commitment and job performance. This suggests that when an HR professional feels identified with and committed to the organization, he performs the most because he is more prepared to put effort in his job. However, the HR professional also performs when he does investments that bind him to the organization and when there is congruence between the HR professional's goals and the organizational aims.

Third, attitudinal performance means that the HR professional experiences feelings of involvement. *Job involvement* means for the HR professional that "one is cognitively preoccupied with, engaged in, and concerned" (Paullay et al., 1994, p. 224, as cited by Diefendorff, Brown, Kamin, & Lord, 2002) with its job. In their study regarding job involvement, Diefendorff et al. (2002) showed a positive relationship to exist between job involvement and in-role (job) performance, when job involvement involves that 'one feels engaged in the specific tasks that make up one's job' (Paullay et al., 1994, p. 225, as cited by Diefendorff et al., 2002) and that 'one finds carrying out the task of one's job in the present job environment to be engaging' (Paullay et al., 1994, p. 225, as cited by Diefendorff et al., 2002). For the HR professional this means that he is able to perform when he feels engaged in the tasks that he does and finds doing the tasks to be engaging.

Fourth, attitudinal performance means that the HR professional feels internally motivated to do his job. This internal motivation is the so-called *intrinsic motivation*. When an HR professional feels intrinsically motivated, one has "the tendency to seek out novelty and challenges, to extend and exercise one's capabilities, to explore, and to learn" (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p. 70). As Vallerand et al. (1993) argue, three types of intrinsic motivation can be defined. First, there is the intrinsic motivation to know, in which you do something for the pleasure and satisfaction experienced while learning. Second, there is the intrinsic motivation to accomplish things, in which you do something for the pleasure and satisfaction experienced while trying to accomplish things. Last, there is the intrinsic motivation to experience stimulation, in which you do something in order to experience stimulating sensations (Vallerand, Pelletier, Blais, Brière, Senécal, & Vallières, 1993, p. 160). The literature review of Vallerand et al. (1993) suggests that different types of motivation – extrinsic, intrinsic, and amotivation – have different consequences, and that the most positive correlations can be obtained with the types of intrinsic motivation, and especially with the intrinsic motivation to know. When an HR professional feels intrinsically motivated, he is able to perform, as he experiences for some reason pleasure and satisfaction and may put more effort in doing a job activity.

Together, the positive feelings of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job involvement, and intrinsic motivation make up the attitude of the HR professional towards his job and the organization, as they express the willingness of the HR professional to put effort in his job.

BEHAVIORAL PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES
Behavioral performance is being referred to as the specific actions of the HR professionals (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2008). For HRM, it means that the HR professional takes the right actions by putting the needed effort into his job.
With attitudinal performance, we recognized the importance of the willingness to put effort on the job. Here, with behavioral performance, real effort should be put on the job, as real results need to be achieved to create job outcome.
The components of which behavioral performance consists are: quantitative performance behavior, qualitative performance behavior, absenteeism, and turnover.

Behavioral performance means that the HR professional takes actions that are optimal at the *quantitative level*. It means that the HR professional performs his work in the most efficient way, in which he uses the adequate amount of resources (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2008).

Second, behavioral performance means that the HR professional takes actions that are optimal at the *qualitative level*. It means that the HR professional does his job accurate, but also comes up with innovative ideas that may improve overall quality (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2008).

Third, behavioral performance means that the HR professional withdraws behaviors of *absenteeism*. The meta-analysis on the link between job satisfaction and absenteeism, done by Scott & Taylor (1985), shows that absenteeism can be operationalized in two ways: as absence duration, which is the total amount of absence expressed in hours, days, or a specific time period; or as absence frequency, which is the number of times someone is being absent (Scott & Taylor, 1985). With both absence measures, there is a negative relationship between absenteeism and job satisfaction (Scott & Taylor, 1985). Here, absenteeism as a behavioral outcome is connected to the attitudinal outcome of job satisfaction. For the HR professional, it means that when he performs because he experiences feelings of job satisfaction, he also performs because he puts effort in his job as absence duration and frequency are minimal because he likes to do his job.

Fourth, behavioral performance means that the HR professional shows low *turnover*. Turnover refers to the fact that the HR professional leaves his job. Turnover can occur voluntary (someone takes a better job) or involuntary (someone is fired) (Campion, 1991). Here, the focus will be on voluntary turnover, since a HR professional can only influence his own decisions. Cotton & Tuttle (1986) also studied the link between turnover and job satisfaction by doing a meta-analysis on the variables that correlate with turnover. Their study shows strong confidence that a negative relationship exists between turnover and job satisfaction (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986), meaning that high turnover means low job satisfaction. So an HR professional performs when he shows low turnover, meaning he will stick to his job. The link with job satisfaction shows that when an HR professional feels satisfied with the job and therefore performs, the HR professional also performs as he sticks to his job because he is satisfied with his job.
The turnover of the HR professional plays for the overall individual HRM job performance an important role, as it influences other performance outcomes. Hence, next to the negative relationship with job satisfaction, turnover is also perceived to have negative consequences for overall job performance, organization commitment, and role clarity (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986).

Together, the HR professional takes the right actions when he performs optimal on a quantitative and qualitative level, and shows low absenteeism and turnover, as these express the real effort the HR professional takes in doing his job.

COGNITIVE PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES
Cognitive performance is being referred to as the thoughts about or developmental outcomes of the work (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2008). For HRM, it means that the HR professional takes on a proactive behavior, in which he anticipates on change and creates work change (Grant & Parker, 2009). The HR professional needs to take on a proactive role in thinking about his work, as he needs to know what the organization and the environment expect from him, and what actions are needed to satisfy these expectations. Next to this so-called proactive work behavior (Grant & Parker, 2009), the HR professional needs to take on a proactive strategic behavior, in which he thinks about how he can help the organization change, by for example helping formulate and implement a strategy (Grant & Parker, 2009).
The components of which cognitive performance consists are: role ambiguity, role breadth self-efficacy, flexible role orientation, and learn and develop.

Cognitive performance means that the HR professional is proactive in preventing *role ambiguity*. Role ambiguity refers to "the expectations surrounding a role" (Ilgen & Hollenbeck, as mentioned in Tubre & Collins, 2000, p. 155), in which the HR professional lacks knowledge of the most effective job behavior (Tubre & Collins, 2000), which consists out of role responsibilities (Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman, 1970). In their meta-analysis on the link between role ambiguity and job performance, and role conflict and job performance, Tubre & Collins (2000) found role ambiguity to be negatively related to job performance. When an HR professional experiences role ambiguity he does not perform, as he is not able to do what is expected from him because of a lack of information about the expectations (Tubre & Collins, 2000). The HR professional needs to take efforts to reduce role ambiguity, as it can have an impact on job performance (Tubre & Collins, 2000).

Role ambiguity also can be linked to other performance outcomes. The research done by Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman (1970) shows role ambiguity to negatively influence job satisfaction, which is an attitudinal performance outcome that needs to be ensured. It means that when the HR professional knows what is expected from him, he will also perform because he is satisfied with his job. Furthermore, role ambiguity does positively influence turnover (Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman, 1970), which is a behavioral performance outcome, in the sense that when the HR professional experiences role ambiguity, he cannot perform as his voluntariness to leave will be more likely.

Second, cognitive performance means that the HR professional ensures *role breadth self-efficacy*. Role breadth self-efficacy means that the HR professional feels confident that he is able to carry out a broader and more proactive role than is technically required (Parker S. K., 1998). In a study done on the link between self-efficacy and work performance, Judge et al. (2007) found a correlation to exist between self-efficacy and work performance. Here, work performance was operationalized as task performance and job performance. The correlation that is found to exist between self-efficacy and performance, is most present between self-efficacy and task performance, and not that much with job performance (Judge, Jackson, Shaw, Scott, & Rich, 2007). However, we think role breadth self-efficacy is important for the HR professional to perform, as you sometimes have to think and act out-of-the-box. Furthermore, as a job consists out of doing several tasks, job performance may be perceived as consisting out of task performances, meaning that also for job performance role-breadth self-efficacy is necessary.

Third, cognitive performance means that the HR professional ensures a *flexible role orientation*. A flexible role orientation for the HR professional means that he embodies a broader and more proactive approach to his role in which he both owns, or feels responsible for, work beyond his immediate operational tasks and recognizes the importance of acquiring and using a wide range of skills and knowledge to enable him to contribute at the broader level (Parker, Wall, & Jackson, 1997, pp. 900-901). Here, it becomes visible that role orientation has two aspects: productive ownership, in which the HR professional owns work problems and goals or feels responsible for it; and the importance of production knowledge (Parker, Wall, & Jackson, 1997), in which the HR professional takes the steps to *learn and develop*. For the HR professional it means that he performs when he ensures both facets of flexible role orientation.

Last, cognitive performance means that the HR professional has minimal *turnover intentions*. With the behavioral outcome performance, we saw turnover as whether the HR professional voluntary leaves his job. Here, we look at the cognitive process of the intentions regarding leaving a job. Performance means that the HR professional has minimal reasons as possible to leave his job, as otherwise the job performance comes into danger.

Campion (1991) looked into the reasons people have to voluntary leave the organization and whether these can be linked to their satisfaction. Employees show to have several reasons to leave the organization, of which the top five is: (1) leaving for higher wages, or a better career opportunity, (2) moving away, (3) dissatisfied with the supervision, (4) dissatisfied with working

conditions, and (5) leaving because of health problems (Campion, 1991). Of these reasons for voluntary leave, some lead to satisfaction (e.g. better career opportunities), as others lead to dissatisfaction (e.g. health) (Campion, 1991). Here again, the link between turnover and the attitudinal performance outcome of satisfaction becomes visible.

For the HR professional it means that he should not have the intention to leave the organization for the mentioned reasons above. With respect to job satisfaction, minimal turnover intentions means that the HR professional performs as he also feels satisfied with his job.

Together, the HR professional performs when he prevents role ambiguity, takes on a more proactive behavior than may be required, feels responsible and ownership for his work, learns and develops himself, and has minimal turnover intensions, as these express the proactivity the HR professional takes.

<u>Well-being performance outcomes</u>
Well-being performance is being referred to as the physiological and psychological reasons to do a job (Morgeson & Humphrey, 2008). For HRM, it means that the HR professional needs to have healthy reactions to his job. These reactions are important as they may influence the other performance outcomes. Overall, the HR professional needs to be healthy to fulfill his job obligations. The components of which well-being performance consists are: stress, burn-out, work-life balance, workload, and health.

Well-being performance means that the HR professional experiences an acceptable amount of *stress*. In their literature review, Sullivan & Bhagat (1992) argue that people need some stress level to be triggered to do their jobs and not put their energy in coping with stresses but in enhancing performance (Sullivan & Bhagat, 1992). So an acceptable amount of stress means here that the HR professional feels triggered enough to do his job, but is not being overwhelmed by it.
Stress plays also an important role for other performance outcomes. So does too much stress negatively influence the attitudinal performance outcome job satisfaction, meaning that the HR professional not performs as he feels too much stress and does not like his job (Sullivan & Bhagat, 1992). Furthermore, too much stress does positively influence turnover, turnover intentions, and absenteeism (Sullivan & Bhagat, 1992), meaning that the HR professional cannot perform because he feels too much stress and wants to be absent or voluntary leave. Stress is also likely to positively influence the burnout outcome, as higher levels of job stress predict higher levels of burn-out (Parker & Kulik, 1995), meaning that because of the stress the HR professional cannot perform his job as he feels exhausted.

Second, well-being performance means that the HR professional experiences no *burn-out*. In a study done on the effects of burnout on performance and absenteeism with a sample of nurses of a hospital, Parker & Kulik (1995) found burn-out to be negatively related to performance. This effect especially occurs with emotional exhaustion as a facet of burn-out, which "involves the depletion of one's emotional resources and feelings of being overextended" (Parker & Kulik, 1995, p. 582). Thus, the HR professional can perform when he does not experience a burn-out and for most not feels emotionally exhausted.
Furthermore, burn-out shows to positively influence the behavioral performance outcome of absenteeism, as for personal health reasons people may have to be absent (Parker & Kulik, 1995). Burn-out because of emotional exhaustion does cause people to be absent more for mental than physical health reasons (Parker & Kulik, 1995). So when an HR professional experiences emotional exhaustion, this can lead to absenteeism, which inhibits the HR professional to perform.

Third, well-being performance means that the HR professional experiences a *work-life balance*. It means that the HR professional feels that he has enough time to spend with his family, and not

always has to work. The HR professional performs here in the sense that the experience of work-life balance gives the HR professional job satisfaction. The HR professional performs when he experiences feelings of satisfaction.

Fourth, well-being performance means that the HR professional experiences an acceptable amount of *workload*. When the HR professional has to perform too many tasks, there is the chance that not enough effort is being put on each task, which brings the quality of the work in danger. When experiencing an acceptable amount of workload, the HR professional performs as he can put all his effort in doing his tasks, which means that better quality can be achieved.

Sixth, well-being performance means that the HR professional feels *healthy*. When the HR professional feels healthy, the work is of better quality. Furthermore, healthiness can be linked to other outcomes, such as absenteeism, stress, and burn-out. For example, not feeling healthy, will lead the HR professional to be absent. When the HR professional experiences stress or burn-out, these are sources which can lead to unhealthiness and so bring the job performance of the HR professional into danger.

Together, the HR professional performs when he experiences an acceptable amount of stress, no-burn-out, a work-life balance, an acceptable workload, and feels healthy, as these express the overall healthiness of the HR professional.

SOCIAL PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES
Compared to the other individual job performance categories mentioned above, social performance has not received much attention in job design literature. However, the social world is more gaining importance, as in our jobs we have to hold relations with other people, from different nations. Globalization implies for HRM that the HR professional is required to operate and manage on a global level, in which the delivery of national HRM systems may not be good enough, as countries have a diverse workforce with different cultures and institutions that may ask for the delivery of different HRM (Bae & Rowley, 2001). So next to holding relations with national coworkers, international relations also become more and more important as the HR professional needs to understand the mindset of international coworkers. We are more socially embedded than before, as we more interact with and interdepend on workers (Grant & Parker, 2009).
As the HR professional is a function that concerns many interactions and relationships with other people, the social performance category is of high importance and will therefore for the individual job performance be taken into account.

For HRM, social performance means that the HR professional is able to cope with social responsibilities, as social interactions and interpersonal relationships give the HR professional responsibilities. For the HR professional it is important to take on these social responsibilities as other people depend on him and he depends on others. Social performance is also important as it may relate to other performances. The ability of the HR professional to cope with its social responsibilities has an effect on attitudinal and behavioral performances, as it may determine one's willingness to put effort in the job and whether one will actually take effort in the job. When the HR professional perceives itself not to be able to cope with the social responsibilities, one may not feel satisfied or committed to the organization and with such an attitude may not be willing to put effort in the job. When not being willing to put effort in the job, real actions may not be of the required level.

Social performance means that the HR professional provides his relations with *feedback*. When providing feedback, there is an interaction between the HR professional and a coworker that can further strengthen the relationship between the two. Feedback consists out of two directions: the

HR professional provides feedback, and the HR professional receives feedback from a coworker. Here the coworker can be someone who is working below the HR professional, but it can also be someone from a higher management level working above the HR professional.

Second, social performance means that the HR professional is *integer*. Relations need to be able to trust the HR professional and feel that the HR professional is being honest. Here, there shows to be a link between feedback and integrity, as coworkers may be more prepared to accept and give feedback as they perceive the HR professional to be integer.

Together, the HR professional performs when he provides feedback and is integer, as these express the ability of the HR professional to cope with his social responsibilities.

The outcomes of the performance categories are displayed in Table 1. These performance outcome categories frame the individual HRM job performance for the HR professional.

Table 1 - Individual HRM job performance for the HR professional

Attitudinal performance outcomes	Behavioral performance outcomes	Cognitive performance outcomes	Well-being performance outcomes	Social performance outcomes
• Job satisfaction • Organizational commitment • Job involvement • Intrinsic motivation	• Quantitative performance behavior • Qualitative performance behavior • Absenteeism • Turnover	• Role ambiguity • Role breadth self-efficacy • Flexible role orientation • Learn and develop • Turnover intentions	• Stress • Burn-out • Work-life balance • Workload • Health	• Feedback • Integrity

In order to perform on the performance categories – attitudinal, behavioral, cognitive, well-being, and social – mentioned above, HR professionals need to possess certain HRM competences. To know whether HR professionals are able to perform, we should take a closer look at the HRM competences required.

2.3 HRM COMPETENCES
2.3.1 DEFINITION AND IMPORTANCE OF HRM COMPETENCES FOR HR PROFESSIONALS
The definition of competences developed by Boyatzis (1982) is mostly used. This definition states that a competence is "an underlying characteristic of a person which results in effective and/or superior performance in a job" (Boyatzis, 1982, p. 21). The definition of Boyatzis is for this research useful as it acknowledges the importance of the link between characteristics of the worker (in our research, the fresh HR professional) and the individual job performance, as both are causally related (Boyatzis, 1982). Boyatzis (1982) further elaborates on his definition as referring to competences as "a characteristic of a person that may be a motive, traits, skills, aspect of one's self-image or social role, or a body knowledge which the person uses" (Boyatzis, 1982, p. 21).
Ulrich, Brockbank and colleagues also developed a definition for competences. However, as Boyatzis (1982) talks about competences on a general level, Ulrich, Brockbank and colleagues talk about HR competences. They refer to HR competences as being "the values, knowledge, and abilities of HR professionals" and the ability of them to use knowledge (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, & Younger, 2007), or on a more general level to "an individual's demonstrated knowledge, skills, and abilities" (Ulrich, Brockbank, Yeung, & Lake, 1995, p. 474). Compared to the definition of Boyatzis (1982), Ulrich et al. (2007; 1995) with their definition do not make the link with performance.

We define HRM competences as being *the HR professional's knowledge, skills, abilities, and motives that enable the HR professional to perform*.

What makes HRM competences important to consider, is that the HRM competences define what is required from HR professionals (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, & Younger, 2007). For an HR professional it is important to possess the expected HRM competences as otherwise the HR professional cannot satisfy the requirements of the business. HRM competences are important to consider as they are a form of measurement, because they determine the quality of the HR professional (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, & Younger, 2007). Hence, when not possessing the required HRM competences, the quality of the HR professional is not adequate and competence improvements may be required.

HRM competences are needed for the HR professionals not to only individually perform, but to also let the organization perform. The HR professional eventually needs to add value to the organization, so the organization is able to build some source of competitive advantage (Ulrich, Brockbank, Yeung, & Lake, 1995).

With respect to individual HRM job performance, we recognized that performance means that the HR professional needs to function in his position at or even above the required level. Boyatzis (1982) states in his work on competences that the possession of competences results in superior performance. This means that for the HR professional to perform, the HR professional needs to possess HRM competences. The HR professional needs to develop these HRM competences, in order to successfully perform in his professional role (McEvoy, Hayton, Warnick, Mumford, Hanks, & Blahna, 2005).

2.3.2 HRM COMPETENCES REQUIRED FROM HR PROFESSIONALS

Literature review shows that over the years the understanding and inclusion of HRM competences has been extended.

Ulrich and colleagues began their research on HRM competences in 1988 (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008). The main goal of their research was to identify the requisite technical and social competences at the level of the individual HR professional (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008). Next to identifying the necessary HRM competences, they also investigated the linkage between an HR professional's competences and the impact on the performance of the individual and the performance of the business.

By observing the HR profession and HR professionals over the years, Ulrich and colleagues (2008) tried to define and deliver a new set of expectations for HR professionals and rooted these expectations into a set of HRM competences. Since 1988, Ulrich and colleagues have repeated their observations for their so-called Human Resource Competency Study (HRCS) four more times. Observations were done by distributing surveys to HR professionals around the world, to come up with patterns of HRM competences that distinguished effective HR professionals (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008). When participants completed the survey, they had to send it to their peers, subordinates, supervisor, and clients (associates), whom could be from HR or not. Survey questions focused on the knowledge and abilities of the HR professional and the extent to which one could use HR practices to build business success (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008). With the use of factor analysis, Ulrich and colleagues identified patterns of relationships, from which the competence domains emerged.

Over the years, the competence domains developed by Ulrich and colleagues have been widely accepted, as for example Boselie & Paauwe (2005) based their research on the HRCS by investigating the HRM competences in European companies.

Where the Human Resource Competence Study (HRCS) in 1988 consisted out of three requisite HRM competence domains for the HR professional, the fourth research round in 2002 consisted out of five requisite HRM competence domains. The last HRCS was performed in 2007, but no more competences were added. However, with the research round in 2007/2008, the competences were redefined in six HRM competence domains. In Table 2 below, the development of the HRM competence domains over the years is displayed (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008).

Table 2 - Development of HRM competence domains over time (Ulrich et al., 2008)

Round 1: 1988	Round 2: 1992	Round 3: 1997	Round 4: 2002	Round 5: 2007/2008
Business knowledge	Business knowledge	Business knowledge	Business knowledge	Business ally
HR delivery	HR delivery	HR delivery	HR delivery	Talent manager/Organization designer
				Operational executor
Change	Change	Change	Strategic contribution	Culture & change steward
	Personal credibility	Culture		Strategy architect
		Personal credibility	Personal credibility	Credible activist
			HR technology	Operational executor

For our research, we looked at the five HRM competence domains developed in research round four in 2002 and integrated these with the six HRM competence domains developed in research round five in 2007/2008. Only looking at the competence domains developed in 2007/2008 we found not enough, as the five domains developed in 2002 are most widely accepted and formed a better basis for this research.

Several researchers have investigated the HR effectiveness of HR professionals with the use of the five HRM competence domains developed in 2002. Where Ulrich, Brockbank and colleagues studied the HR effectiveness of HR professionals by sending surveys to HR professionals over the world, Boselie & Paauwe (2005) investigated the HR effectiveness of HR professionals located in European companies based on the HRCS developed by Ulrich and colleagues in 2002.

Ulrich and colleagues investigated the effectiveness of HR at the five HRM competence domains developed in 2002. In the HRCS 2002, they found HR professionals to be perceived to be the best in personal credibility, followed by HR delivery, strategic contribution, business knowledge, and HR technology (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).

Like the research of Ulrich and colleagues, Boselie & Paauwe (2005) asked non-HR and HR managers to rank how the HR professional performs compared to other known HR professionals on the five HRM competence domains. The findings of Boselie & Paauwe (2005) show non-HR managers to rank personal credibility the highest, followed by HR delivery, strategic contribution, business knowledge and HR technology. HR managers also rank personal credibility to be the highest, followed by strategic contribution, HR delivery, business knowledge, and HR technology. Furthermore, HR managers rank themselves higher on strategic contribution, personal credibility, and HR technology. Taken together, according to Boselie & Paauwe (2005) these findings should be interpreted as general satisfaction, and not in terms of importance.

When looking at the findings of the research of Ulrich and colleagues and of Boselie & Paauwe (2005) we could say that the findings are the same. Though both studies show an order of relevancy of the competences, we feel that the studies have some shortcomings. Where the studies of Ulrich and colleagues and Boselie & Paauwe (2005) focus on ranking a score to the competence domains

presented, we wanted to gain an explorative insight on what competences are required for the HR professional. We perceived the HRM competence domains to be a good starting point for our research, but did not restrict to them. We didn't want to test whether companies in the Netherlands also perceived the same order of relevancy as researched by others.

Another shortcoming of the studies mentioned above, is that they look at a quite diverse sample (e.g. Worldwide and Europe). As the world is characterized by much diversity, the findings may be of a too generalized level. As we were interested in what is required from an HR professional working in a Dutch company, we would have restricted ourselves by considering the findings of the studies of Ulrich and colleagues and Boselie & Paauwe (2005).

Overall, it means that we took the HRM competence domains as a starting point, as they cover the concept of HRM competences. However, further investigation may show other competence domains to exist.

In addition to the HRM competence domains developed by Ulrich and colleagues, we considered another competence domain derived from the research of Maurer & Weiss (2010). As Maurer & Weiss (2010) investigate the association between aspects of managerial work and the need for competence at continuous learning, they find it for each aspect of work important to be able to continuously learn. Maurer & Weiss (2010) themselves state that "the ability to learn and develop one's skills is quickly becoming a core career competency", meaning that you need to continuously learn and develop to ensure career success. For HR professionals this means that next to possessing the right HRM competences, the competences should also be kept on an adequate level by constantly being educated. The competence of continuous learning is interesting to add as an additional competence, as it determines its own requirements for the HR professional.

In Table 3 below, we present the HRM competence domains with the requirements for the HR professional (Based on Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, & Younger, 2007; Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009; Maurer & Weiss, 2010). The elements in these HRM competence domains need to be possessed by HR professionals to be effective in their jobs.

Table 3 - HRM competences for the HR professional

HRM competence domains	Competences
Business knowledge Knowledge about the value chain, the value proposition, and social context of the business to understand the business and act on that understanding to be able to influence business decisions (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008).	*Knowledge of the value chain* To have knowledge of the activities that comprise the value chain and that link the market demands with internal supply (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009; Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008).
	Knowledge of the firm's value proposition To have knowledge about who the customers are and why these customers buy the company's products and services (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008).
	Knowledge of the social context To have knowledge of how the company creates wealth by knowing the business and social context in which the business operates (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008).
HR delivery Executing the operational aspects of managing people and organization that are traditionally associated with the HR function (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008; Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).	*Staffing* - To create a comprehensive staffing process of staffing practices – hiring, promoting, transferring, firing – that supports the HR strategy (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009). - To continually define and create the individual competencies and organizational capabilities that are needed (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).
	Development To offer training programs to employees and to take change interventions at the organization and team level (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).

		• To create capable employees, by looking at the competency requirements of individuals and how they enter and move up, across, or out of the organization (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, & Younger, 2007).
		Structure • To assist in the design of the organization by restructuring activities in order for the organization to be more effective – i.e. placing people together, creating coordination mechanisms, creating control mechanisms, creating organization design teams (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009). • To make sure employees are matched with the well-designed organization and roles (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, & Younger, 2007).
		HR measurement To measure how much the HR activities add value to the HR value proposition (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).
		Legal compliance To have knowledge about the legal issues that influence and safeguard people at work (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).
		Performance management To design and deliver performance management systems that consist out of measuring performance and giving rewards (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).
Strategic contribution Helping establish business strategy, having a vision of the future, providing insights on business issues, understanding external customers, and working with business leaders to articulate purpose and meaning for the organization (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008).		*Culture management* • To appreciate, articulate, and help shape a company's culture that is consistent with the requirements of the external customers, the business strategy, and the employees (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009; Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, & Younger, 2007). • To design and deliver HR practices that translate and enforce the culture into the right employee attitudes and behaviors (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).
		Fast change To make change happen successfully and thoroughly when planning and implementing change (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).
		Strategic decision making To know the business and make decisions that set the direction of change for the future (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).
		Market-driven connectivity To take on signals from the external environment and translate these into the organization to respond to market demands (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).
Personal credibility Being credible in personal and interpersonal relationships with HR counterparts and business line managers whom HR professionals serve (Boselie & Paauwe, 2005).		*Achieving results* • To be committed and to do what one says he will do; • To achieve results that are error free and meet the highest standards of integrity (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009)
		Effective relationships To maintain effective interpersonal skills to work well with colleagues because of an atmosphere of trust (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).
		Communication skills To have effective written and verbal communication skills to clearly communicate critical messages for organizational success (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).
HR technology Using HR applications to help accomplish HR tasks (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).		*Working with e-HRM* To work with e-HRM by inventing and using new HR applications to accomplish HR goals (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009). Following the definition of Bondarouk and Ruël (2009, p. 507), "e-HRM is an umbrella term covering all possible integration mechanisms and contents between HRM and Information Technologies aiming at creating value within and across organizations for targeted employees and management".

Continuous learning	Developmental or learning orientation
The ability to continuously gain new skills and develop professionally (Maurer & Weiss, 2010, p. 1).	The persuasion of developmental activities and endeavors that are important to the HR professional (Maurer & Weiss, 2010).
	Inner work standards
	To strive that one will better oneself, even when a lower level of performance would be acceptable (Maurer & Weiss, 2010).
	Scholastic aptitude
	To be able to learn new things readily (Maurer & Weiss, 2010).
	Self-objectivity
	To be able to recognize one's own strengths and weaknesses (Maurer & Weiss, 2010).

2.4 HRM COMPETENCES AND INDIVIDUAL HRM JOB PERFORMANCE

So far, we discussed the concepts of individual HRM job performance and HRM competences separately. However, there is an important link between both concepts, as we recognized that HRM competences are needed in order to perform on the individual HRM job performance categories. As mentioned before, previous research has mainly focused on the link between HRM competences and business performance. The link between HRM competences and individual performance has not received that much attention. Though Ulrich and colleagues (2008) with their HRCS looked into individual performance, they looked into the importance of the competence domains in relation to the perceived ranking of the HR professional by associates. The perceived individual performance was measured by asking associates of the HR professional to rank on a scale from 0-100 on the competence domains how the HR professional compares to other HR professionals they know. Where Ulrich and colleagues operationalized individual performance as the performance compared to other HR professionals, we also look at the individual performance of the HR professional but based on performance defined in job design literature. We do not want to look at which competences HR professionals are the best, we want to know what is required from the HR professional in order to perform the HRM job well. As a starting point, we therefore assume each HRM competence to be of equal importance for the individual HRM job performance. With the empirical research we may be able to say which competences are most important for the individual HRM job performance.

In this part, we present an illustration of the assumed associations between the HRM competence domains and the individual HRM job performance categories. The main idea is that a competence domain can be associated with one or more individual job performance categories. To illustrate our reasoning, we present a scenario in which the HR professional needs to possess all the HRM competences for him to be able to individually perform. It must be noticed that different scenario's may be possible. Our scenario is based on our understanding to offer a starting point for the empirical research.

We will now discuss one scenario and present an illustration of what the HR professional needs to possess to be able to perform, meaning how each HRM competence domain may be associated with the individual HRM job performance categories. It must be noticed that our scenario represents our optimal situation, meaning that for the HR professional to be able to perform, all HRM competences that can be associated with the performance categories need to be present. This means that when some competences are not present, the HR professional may still be able to perform, but not at the required level.

As we want to know what is required from an HR professional to perform, we discuss for each performance category which HRM competences may be required and why.

Attitudinal performance implies that the HR professional experiences positive feelings about the job and the organization and is therefore willing to put effort in the job. First of all this means that the HR professional needs to understand the business in which one operates. For the HR professional it will be difficult to form a positive attitude, if he does not understand the business. By having knowledge of the business, the HR professional knows how the business works in terms of the value chain, meaning that one knows which activities are important for the business to be successful. When the HR professional knows the business, one can place itself in one of the valuable activities, meaning that the HR professional is able to recognize the importance of his job and the importance of him putting effort in the job. When the HR professional understands that he is valuable to the organization, this creates a more positive attitude towards the job and the organization.

Next to having business knowledge, the HR professional needs to be able to deliver HR activities to be positive about one's job and willing to work. Delivery of HR is an essential task for the HR professional, as it always has been the primary task of HR professionals. Strategic tasks are gaining more and more importance, but the HR professional should also still be able to deliver operational tasks. When an HR professional is not able to deliver operational HR tasks, one cannot feel positive about its job and will not put the needed effort in the job as one is not able to cope with the job. This means that to have a positive attitude, the HR professional needs to be able to deliver HR.

The HR professional should also be able to strategically contribute to have a positive attitude about one's job. As mentioned with the delivery of operational HR tasks, strategic tasks are gaining importance. When the HR professional is not able to handle these strategic tasks, one will not feel positive about one's job as there is a lack of confidence. This lack of confidence again means that the HR professional will not be willing to put effort in the job as one is not satisfied and motivated enough. When the HR professional does have the ability to strategically contribute, one sees itself as being valuable to the organization, meaning that one will put effort in the job because one may feel satisfied, committed, and motivated.

Last, to be positive about one's job, the HR professional needs to be willing to continuously learn. When the HR professional is willing to continuously learn, it represents the willingness to put effort in the job as one wants to become better. When the HR professional is not willing to continuously learn, one is not able to have the best positive attitude, as one lacks some satisfaction and/or motivation.

Behavioral performance implies that the HR professional takes the right actions. This means that the HR professional puts effort in the job and creates good outcomes with this effort. Again, first you need to understand the business. When the HR professional does not understand the business, he is not able to put the right effort on the right actions as one does not understand the value chain. The HR professional needs to understand how the business works to make the right actions. Otherwise actions may be wasted as they give no value to the business.

The HR professional also needs to be able to deliver operational HR tasks to take the right actions. Like mentioned above, the operational tasks form the primary work field of the HR professional.

When one is not able to do these, one is not able to make the right actions as one is for example not able to use the right resources by not being able to put people in the right place.

Next to the business knowledge and the HR delivery, the HR professional should also be able to strategically contribute to make the right actions, as strategic tasks are becoming more important in the job of the HR professional. When the HR professional is not able to strategically contribute, one does not see the importance of putting one's actions towards achieving the strategy, meaning that the HR professional is not able to take the right actions.

Personal credibility is also needed for the HR professional to take the right actions. The HR professional needs to be actively involved with people and needs to be able to communicate with people to take the right actions, as one needs to know which actions are being required. When the HR professional operates very isolated from coworkers, one is not able to perform its job in the best way as the activities might not be needed or essential activities might be missing.

The HR professional needs to be able to work with HR technology to take the right actions, in the sense that technology can help the HR professional to spread time between activities. As HR technology does take away the administrative burden of the HR professional, the HR professional has more time to put effort in other tasks, meaning that these tasks may be performed better as the HR professional spends more time on them.

Last, the HR professional needs to continuously learn to take the right actions, as tasks may change over time and additional knowledge and skills may be needed. The HR professional can only take the right actions when one's education is being up-to-date.

Cognitive performance implies that the HR professional is proactive in changing itself for the work. Again, this means that the HR professional needs to understand the business. When the HR professional understands the business, one knows how the business works and which role one plays. The HR professional can only be proactive in changing oneself if one understands why one should change. When the HR professional understands the business and when the business changes, one is able to see why one should also change, meaning that one will also go to change.

The HR professional should also be able to strategically contribute to be proactive in changing itself. When the HR professional is able to strategically contribute, one knows why change in work is necessary as one understands that change is needed to achieve the strategy.

Last, the HR professional should continuously learn to be proactive in changing itself. When the HR professional continuously learns, it shows the HR professional to be proactive in changing itself as one wants to gain more knowledge and skills to cope with one's role and maybe work even beyond that role.

Well-being performance implies that the HR professional feels healthy in his job by having healthy psychological and physiological reactions to the job. When the HR professional is able to deliver operational HR tasks, one is more able to feel healthy as one has the confidence that the work can be handled. As the delivery of HR is the primary work of the HR professional, the ability to be able to deliver these operational tasks determines the well-being of the HR professional. When the HR professional is not able to deliver HR, one can experience a huge amount of stress and even a burn-out, as one cannot cope with its job.

To feel healthy in the job, the HR professional also needs to be able to work with HR technology. HR technology is a tool that helps the HR professional to save time. Of course the HR professional is not always able to influence its healthiness, but being able to work with HR technology can contribute in feeling healthy, as working with technology can decrease unhealthy situations such as stress, as it might take away some of the workload.

Social performance implies that the HR professional can cope with its social responsibilities that flow from social interactions and relationships. This means that the HR professional should be personally credible, as one needs to be able to create and maintain relationships with coworkers that give

people a sense of trust. When the HR professional is personal credible, one can cope with social responsibilities, because the HR professional listens to and respects other people.

The HR professional should also understand the business to be able to cope with social responsibilities, as one needs to understand the business to know which interactions with whom are required.

Last, to cope with social responsibilities, the HR professional needs to be able to deliver the operational HR tasks. With the operational tasks, the social component is of high importance as the HR professional is concerned with the management of people, meaning the HR professional needs to be able to manage people to cope with social responsibilities.

Based on the discussion above, the figure presented below (Figure 2), represents our scenario on the associations between the HRM competence domains and the individual HRM job performance categories. The illustration shows many possible associations to exist.

The left side of the illustration represents the six HRM competence domains; the right side represents the five individual HRM job performance categories. The colors of the lines that visualize the associations correspond with the colors of the performance categories.
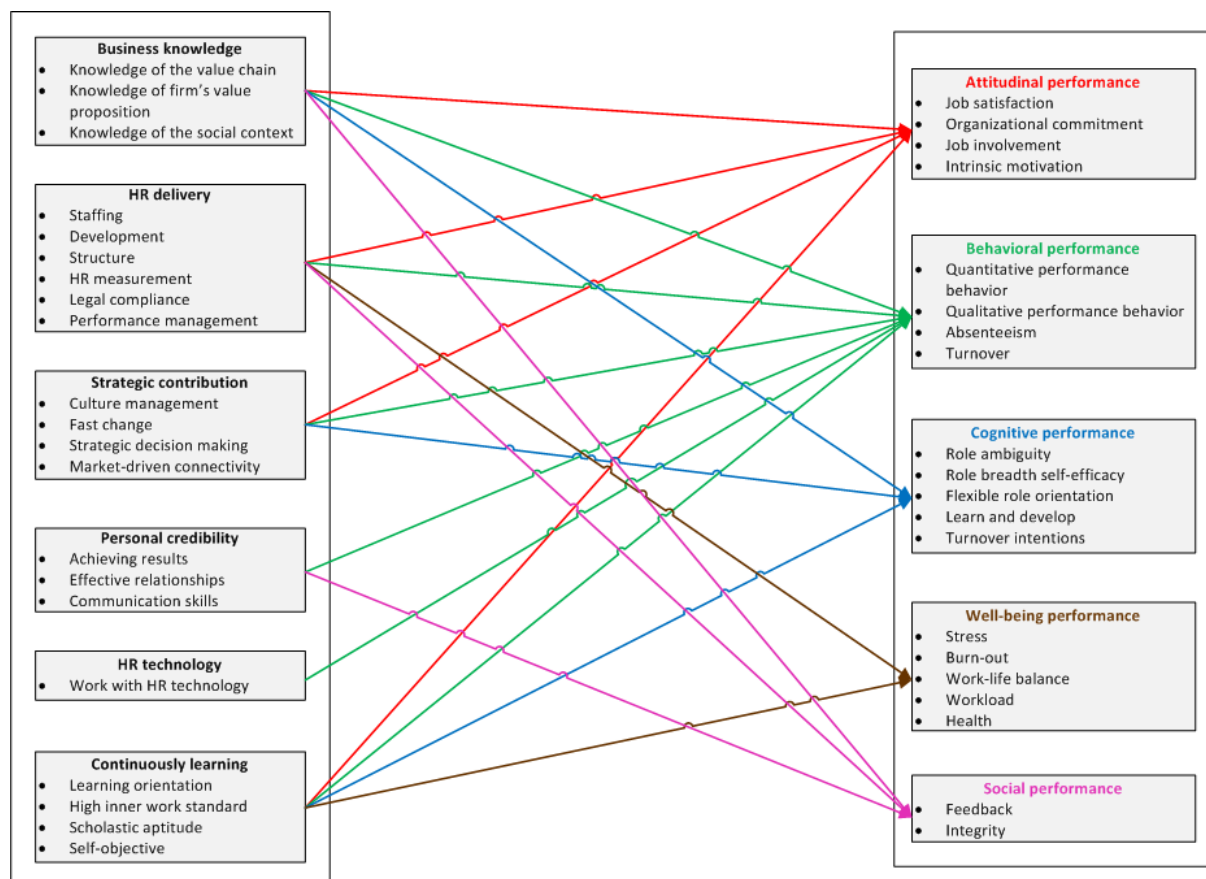
Figure 2 - Illustration of assumed associations between HRM competence domains and individual HRM job performance

2.5 RESEARCH FRAME

Based on our discussion on the individual HRM job performance, HRM competences, and the illustration of associations between the two concepts, the following research frame was made (Figure 3).
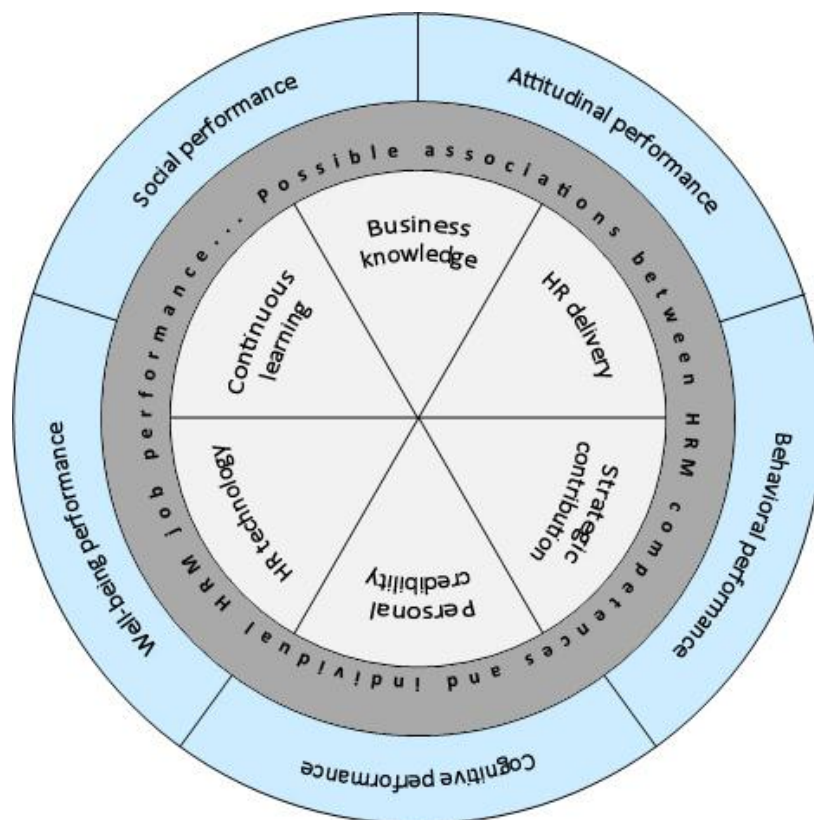
Figure 3 - Research frame on HRM competences and individual HRM job performance

As the topics of HRM competences and individual HRM job performance show to be important and interrelated, our empirical study will have the purpose to gain in-depth inside into these two topics as we want to explore what the business requires from future HR professionals to be able to perform the HRM job. In the next chapter, we will describe the way the research was done.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This study was designed to explore the business' requirements of the HRM competences that are needed for future HR professionals to be able to perform the HRM job. Hence, previous research suggests a lack of understanding to exist about what is required by the business.

3.2 JUSTIFICATION RESEARCH FRAME

Our research frame shows two interrelated topics to exist: HRM competences and individual HRM job performance.

The research frame formed the basis for our empirical study. With the research frame we wanted to gain in-depth insight into the topics of HRM competences and individual HRM job performance. We wanted to investigate whether the HRM competences, that we recognized to be of importance by looking at the existing knowledge on HRM competences, would correspond with the competences that the business finds important for future, fresh HR professionals to possess. With the exploration we did not want to restrict ourselves to the HRM competence domains presented in the research model. We were aware that additional HRM competences may needed to be added or that existing HRM competences in the research model may needed to be refined or even removed.

Our research question and research frame suggest an important link to exist between HRM competences and individual HRM job performance. Therefore, next to exploring the topic of HRM competences, the research frame was also used to gain insight into what individual HRM job performance for the future, fresh HR professional means. Similar to the topic of HRM competences, based on the performance categories recognized to be of importance in job design literature, we looked whether these performances were also recognized by the business to be of importance. Again, we did not restrict ourselves to the research model, meaning that we were open to new meanings of performance.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The main purpose of this research was to gain insight into which HRM competences and which individual HRM job performance are important for the future HR professional. To reach this purpose, it was decided to perform a qualitative analysis, as this would give us the opportunity to explore the opinion of the business on the two topics of HRM competences and individual HRM job performance. The qualitative data helped to go beyond our initial preconceptions and frameworks, as the qualitative data was more likely to lead to serendipitous findings and to new theoretical integrations (Miles & Huberman, 1984) When conducting a quantitative analysis, we would restricted ourselves to only testing the research model by asking the business to indicate a level of importance to the recognized competences and performance domains. The qualitative analysis gave us the advantage of being able to discover new, interesting insights on the two topics.

Next to the importance of finding the content of the two topics, the research frame also suggested that the HRM competences may be associated with individual HRM job performance elements. If we wanted to gain insight into these possible associations, it would have been first necessary to know which HRM competences and HRM performance elements the business finds important for the future HR professional. Due to the time and scope of this project it was decided to only empirically research the content of the HRM competences and individual HRM job performance. Our findings of this research phase can however be used for further investigation on the possible associations between the two topics. This future research should then be a quantitative analysis, as correlations between the HRM competences and performance elements need to be measured.

Overall, the research mainly focused on finding the HRM competences and the HRM job performance elements that the business finds important.

The research design is illustrated in Figure 4. Each phase will be discussed separately.

RESEARCH PHASE	RESEARCH PROCEDURE	RESEARCH PRODUCT
Qualitative data collection	• Developing interview questions • Conducting interviews with HR leaders (n=10) • Verification of transcripts by respondents	• Interview protocol • Notes and recordings of interviews
Qualitative data analysis	• Transcribing interviews • Coding of quotations of HR leaders • Check-coding • Grouping and defining codes	• Verified transcripts • Overview of quotations and corresponding codes
Qualitative results	• Interpretation and explanation of the qualitative results	• Discussion • Conclusions & Recommendations

Figure 4 – Qualitative research design

3.3.1 QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION

3.3.1.1 Sampling

To gain insight into the HRM competences and individual HRM job performance, we decided to conduct interviews with HR leaders. We perceived the HR leaders to be good reliable sources, as they are the professionals in the field of HRM, meaning that they determine how HR is done and who is qualified enough to do the job. HR leaders were selected based on the criteria that they were located in a company with an extended HR department in the Netherlands and had some experience with fresh HR practitioners.

The respondents were theoretically sampled, meaning that we selected HR leaders from companies that satisfied our criteria of having experience in HR and positioning a high level in HR. With the selection of our respondents, we did not include the criteria of company size and sector. Though these may matter for the desired profile sketched for the future HR professional, we did not want to restrict ourselves by only looking at companies with a certain amount of employees or operating in a certain sector. However, with the data collection and analysis we kept awareness of the fact that different requirements may be present between companies that differ in size or sector. Therefore, we decided to also ask respondents themselves if they thought differences in requirements to exist between companies with different sizes and sectors. Not selecting the companies based on the criteria of size and sector felt for us as an opportunity to maybe also say something about differences in the desired profile of the HR professional by looking at company differences.

The HR leaders located in the selected companies were contacted by e-mail or phone, with the question if they wanted to participate by giving a one-hour interview about what they require from the future HR professional. The introductory letter that was generally used to invite HR leaders to cooperate can be found in Appendix 1 (in Dutch only).

Several HR leaders were asked about their opinion by participating in an interview. In total, we found ten respondents to be willing to participate. All respondents were promised to be kept anonymous and will therefore not be named by their names but by their nicknames. A short overview of the characteristics of the respondents and the companies for which they work is displayed in Table 4.

Table 4 - Overview of respondents

Nickname of respondent	Function in HR	Work experience in HR	Company sector	Company scope	Number of employees
Respondent 1 [R1]	Two years the HR manager of the division health	Worked in several HR functions for seven years	Health insurance	National	22.000
Respondent 2 [R2]	Former director personnel and communication	Operated at several HR related positions since 1980	Chemical industry	International	60.000 worldwide, of which 5.000 in the Netherlands
Respondent 3 [R3]	One and a half year Manager Human Resources in charge of a team of HR advisors	More than ten years of experience in HR: HR consultant, HR advisor, manager HR	Banking	International	60.000 worldwide, of which 32.000 in the Netherlands
Respondent 4 [R4]	One and a half year the Global HR director	HRM was always in task package since about nine years	Publishing	International	100
Respondent 5 [R5]	Half a year the head of the P&O department	For ten years been the head of the P&O department at a different organization	Education	National	650
Respondent 6 [R6]	One year the Manager P&O Advice of the P&O advisors	Always employed in doing personnel matters	Health insurance	National	2.600
Respondent 7 [R7]	Six year the HR manager and responsible for the HRM in the organization	For fourteen years being concerned with HR functions	Installation sector	International	2.000
Respondent 8 [R8]	Four years the HR manager of the Benelux organization	Been a HR manager at two other companies	Consultancy	International	18.000 worldwide
Respondent 9 [R9]	Half a year the concern director of HR	For twenty-four years been the HR manager of a different organization	Education	National	3.300
Respondent 10 [R10]	Two years the HR manager	For sixteen years been the HR manager of two other organizations	Warehousing / Logistics service	International	1.000

3.3.1.2 Research method: interviews

As mentioned above, interviews were chosen as the qualitative method to collect data. Interviewing was perceived to be the best method, as we were able to interactively talk with the HR leaders about the topics of HRM competences and individual HRM job performance and to further question the HR leaders when necessary.

Before the interviews could be conducted, we prepared an interview protocol, containing questions about the topics we wanted to cover (Appendix 2, Dutch only). The interview protocol was used with

each interview, to ensure each interview covered all the topics. However, where possible, also additional questions were asked to gain full understanding of the subject. The interview protocol (Appendix 2) covered questions about the function and work experience of the HR leader, his or her perception on how the future HR professional should perform and which competences the future HR professional is required to possess.

Based on the interview protocol, data was collected by conducting face-to-face or telephone interviews with the HR leaders. Though there is a difference in conducting face-to-face interviews and telephone interviews, the most important issue was to be able to record the interviews. Fortunately, we were able to record the interviews in both ways. Though there were two ways in which respondents were interviewed, we did not had the feeling that this restricted ourselves as we felt respondents to be very open about the subject in both face-to-face and telephone interviews. To make a good analysis possible, the interviews were recorded with a digital voice recorder. Before each interview, the respondent was asked for his or her permission to record the conversation.

3.3.2 Qualitative data analysis

Transcribing

Based on the recordings and notes made during the interview, the interviews were transcribed. Transcripts were made after each interview, as the interview was then still fresh in mind. As interviews took place in Dutch and transcripts were needed to be made in English for the purpose of further analysis for this paper, the transcripts were translated to English. In order to be sure to really have understood the opinion of the respondents, it was decided that before the transcripts of the interviews could be analyzed, the transcripts would be send to the respondents for verification. So verification of respondents was needed for two reasons: (1) as the interviews were in Dutch and the analysis was in English, an English translated transcript of the conversation was sent to the respondent to make sure no language misunderstandings would be present; (2) as the interview was transcribed after the interview, we wanted to make sure no essential details would be missing on the opinion of the respondent, meaning the respondent was free to make adjustments.

Coding

After the respondents verified the transcripts, we were able to start the analysis. The transcripts were analyzed by using the method of coding. With coding, you classify the words by applying an abbreviation or symbol to a segment of words (Miles & Huberman, 1984, p. 56). As Miles and Huberman (1984) recognize, it is after the data collection important to reduce data in order to not be overloaded with data and to be able to start the analysis. By coding the transcripts, we were able to reduce data that was not relevant to the subject and to only have data that was interesting to further explore.

Coding was done by looking at when a respondent mentioned something that could be related to the topic of HRM competences or individual HRM job behavior. Next to coding the quotations that referred to the topics of HRM competences and individual HRM job performance, the respondents' opinion about whether the requirements of the HR professional depend on issues like company size or type were also coded and analyzed.

When a respondent mentioned something about these topics, the text was highlighted and a code was given to the quotation. When possible, the quotations were coded with the names of the HRM competences and individual HRM job performance elements that we recognized to be of importance in the theoretical study. However, as mentioned earlier, we did not want to restrict ourselves to the competences and performance elements that we already found to be of possible importance. Therefore, in the coding process, also new codes were inductively created when the quotation did not fit the codes of competences and performance. Codes then were defined based on the name given to the code, meaning that codes were defined by explaining their meaning as was mentioned

in a dictionary or based on common sense. So codes were not defined based on the quotations that corresponded with the codes, but the definition of the codes did need to fit the opinions of the respondents within a code.

Miles and Huberman (1984) argue that codes can be created in three different ways: (1) by starting with a list of codes that come from the conceptual framework, research question, hypotheses, problem areas, and/or key variables, and form a single sheet for easy reference; (2) with inductive coding by reviewing lines or paragraphs and based on that to create codes; and (3) by using a general accounting scheme in which there is not a content specific theme, but general domains in which codes can be developed inductively (Miles & Huberman, 1984). Although we used the competences and performance elements defined in our theoretical study as a basis, we only selected them when they applied to quotations of the respondents. The competence domains and performance categories mainly formed the basis for thinking about the codes that could be developed in these domains. When quotations fitted one of the elements of these domains, it was coded with this name. Therefore, our coding method corresponds most with the accounting scheme method, as we did start with a list of codes but also inductively created new codes that could be fitted into the pre-defined domains. However, there was still awareness that some coded quotations may not fit the predefined domains and that additional domains may needed to be defined.

Next to the topics of HRM competences and individual HRM job performance, the transcripts also showed data to exist on contingencies that determine what is required from an HR professional. As the theoretical background did not consider these contingencies, coding based on a general accounting schema was not possible. Therefore, quotations of respondents regarding the contingencies were inductively labeled and grouped.

CHECK-CODING

In order to check the reliability of the transcripts coded, it was decided to check-code. Check-code means that two coders separately work on a set of data to see whether both coders come to the same reliable set of codes. Hence, coding is a method in which the research subjectively labels a quotation with a code.

The researcher and the co-coder separately code 5-10 pages of the first set of transcripts. After coding the first data, the researcher and co-coder review each rendition together. (Miles & Huberman, 1994) The comparison between the codes of the researcher and the co-coder will give insight into which codes can be accepted as reliable by judging whether there is consensus or some kind of agreement. An agreement is present when both coders have created consensus about the code that is linked to a quotation. A disagreement refers to the opposite.

In the check-code process it could be the case that the researcher has coded a quotation which the co-coder has not coded, and vice versa. This means that we can only compare the codes and calculate the reliability of the quotations and corresponding codes when they were coded by both the researcher and the co-coder.

A former colleague student with experience in the field of HRM was asked to code three transcripts, as this fitted the criteria of coding 5-10 pages. She was free to choose from which respondents she would code the transcripts. The co-coder coded the quotations by the same method we used: by highlighting the quotations and giving it a code. The co-coder was provided with some theoretical background in order to have some insight into the domains that we used with coding. However, the co-coder was asked not to feel restricted to the theoretical domains and was free to inductively come up with codes on her own.

RELIABILITY

To ensure the reliability of the check-coding process, we need to calculate the intercoder reliability. This is a percentage that indicates the relationship between the number of agreements and number

of disagreements. The intercoder reliability can be calculated by looking at the relationship between the number of agreements and the total number of agreements and disagreements (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 64).

Of the three transcripts both the researcher and the co-coder coded, in total 118 quotations were coded. Of these 118 unique quotations, 20 quotations were found to be irrelevant, as they did not refer enough to the topic of HRM competences and individual HRM job performance and were too descriptive. In total, 98 quotations were by one or both parties coded and useful for the research. Of these 98 quotations, 93 quotations referred to the topic of HRM competences and 5 quotations to the topic of individual HRM job performance.

The researcher – coder 1 – coded 103 quotations, of which 14 quotations were found to be irrelevant. Overall, 89 useful quotations were coded by the researcher of which 84 referred to the topic of HRM competences and 5 to the topic of job performance.

The co-coder – coder 2 – coded 77 quotations, of which 10 quotations were found to be irrelevant. Overall, 67 useful quotations were coded by the co-coder of which 65 referred to the topic of HRM competences and 2 to the topic of job performance.

Of the 89 quotations of the researcher and the 67 quotations of the co-coder, there were quotations which were coded by both parties, or by one of the parties. Both parties coded 58 of the same quotations of the total of 98 quotations. The researcher coded 31 quotations which were not coded by the co-coder, as the co-coder coded 9 quotations which were not coded by the researcher.

For us to be able to calculate the reliability of the quotations coded, we looked at the quotations that were both coded by the researcher and the co-coder with respect to the topics of competences and performance. When there was a consensus between the code given by the research and by the co-coder, this was judged as an agreement. This means that codes that at first had no real similarity could still be labeled with an agreement as parties agreed on one of the proposed codes. When no consensus was present between the codes of the two parties, it was noted as an disagreement.

Of the 58 quotations coded by both parties, 46 quotations were characterized by an agreement and 12 quotations were characterized by a disagreement (Appendix 4 and 5). Therefore, the intercoder reliability can be calculated as:

$$Reliability = \frac{46}{(46 + 12)} = \mathbf{79,3}\%$$

The intercoder reliability shows a reliability of 79,3% to exist. To judge the reliability of the check-coding process, we can use the rule of thumb given by Nunnally (1978, pp. 245-246, as mentioned by Rust & Cooil, 1994), which suggests a minimum standard of 70% for early or exploratory work and a standard of 90% for advanced research practice. As our goal of the check-coding process was to ensure some foundation for our codes, the reliability of the check-coding process should be more than 70%. Based on this rule of thumb, the reliability of the check-coding process is acceptable. It means that the codes given to the quotations could be used and applied to other transcripts as there was a general consensus.

RE-CODING
Based on the check-coding process and the positive reliability outcome, we were able to use the codes and apply them to the other transcripts when possible. However, when re-coding the other transcripts based on the codes found to be relevant, there were still quotations which could not be fit into those codes, meaning that new codes still emerged.

However, when all transcripts were coded, the transcripts were again recoded by looking which codes could be grouped into a more generally speaking codes, as otherwise our code list would be too extensive.

After several re-coding, the code list consisted out of codes that referred to the topics of HRM competences and individual HRM job performance. With respect to the topic of HRM competences, 216 quotations showed 34 codes to exist and these codes could be grouped into six competence domains.

With respect to the topic of individual HRM job performance, 19 quotations showed 5 codes to exist.

TRUSTWORTHINESS

Next to the reliability, we also wanted to check the trustworthiness of our coding process. Trustworthiness deals with how a researcher can persuade its audiences that the findings of a study are worth paying attention to and worth taking account of (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290, as cited in Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). In other words, the researcher has to justify why things matter and are important to consider for the research findings to be trustworthy. In our case, the research findings refer to the codes that form the components of HRM competences and individual HRM job performance. As mentioned earlier, coding is a process in which someone subjectively assigns a code to a bulk of text. We need to create a certain level of trust to make our codes valuable as they form the components of the topics of competences and performance.

The trustworthiness of this research needs to be judged based on the information gathering process and the analysis making process (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

When looking at the information gathering processes, it is necessary to have spent enough time in the field to build trust and to be aware of the multiple contextual factors and multiple perspectives the respondents in their social scene experience (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). The respondents of this study were interviewed once in a one-hour during interview. During these interviews, we tried to understand the work environment as much as possible by asking for example questions about the function of the respondent and information about the organization. Although not much time was spent in getting to know each respondent well, we tried to place ourselves as much as possible in the responding party. Furthermore, as this research was designed to gain insight into what the business thinks is important of future HR professionals, we wanted to stay as independent and objective as possible, meaning that when you stay in the field for a long time, you may get influenced on your ideas by other parties.

Next to the importance of having enough time spent in the field, the researcher should also create depth by identifying the characteristics of the social scene that are relevant to the research question (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). With our research, we have tried to create this depth by conducting a set of ten interviews in several different settings. As we wanted to know the opinion of the business, we did not want to restrict ourselves by only researching one particular segment or sector. To gain full insight into the topic of what is required from a future HR professional, we conducted interviews with HR leaders of different companies with different sizes and sectors. With each interview we used the same interview protocol to make sure in each interview the respondent was asked his/her opinion on each topic.

For the analysis making process, there are also methods that describe the trustworthiness of the inferences and conclusions. One of these methods states that triangulation of different methods or investigators can build trustworthiness (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). In this research, only one method was used to gather information, which was the interviewing. However, with analyzing the information from these interviews, one method was used by two different investigators. Hence, both the researcher and the co-coder investigated the data by coding text bulks.

Furthermore, for the analysis making process, it is also necessary that the researcher places itself into a disinterested person and tries to imagine which questions the person can ask regarding the research (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). By searching for such questions, the researcher tries to probe biases and clarify interpretations. In this research, we reflected on our research by looking at the shortcomings.

During the analysis process, patterns and trends may be identified which cannot fit the existing patterns. The researcher should not eliminate this useful information, but try to make it fit by revising existing patterns (Patton, 1990, as mentioned in Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). In this research, we were aware that the HRM competences domains and individual HRM job performance elements we recognized to be of importance in literature, may not exist in the field and that domains and elements may needed to be revised or even eliminated. Hence, with the coding process we tried to apply codes of the general accounting scheme where possible, but not restrict ourselves to these codes as also new codes were generated. With the check-coding process reliable codes were established which were then used to recode all the transcripts according to these reliable codes. Sometimes it was still the case that bulks of text did not fit one of these codes and new codes needed to be generated. However, these new codes did fit the pattern of the other codes.

For the analysis process it is also relevant to first storage data and then to compare these and reanalyze (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). In this research, data was also analyzed this way. After each interview, the interview was transcribed, coded, and the transcript was stored. After the check-coding process, in which a reliable set of codes was created, the transcripts were recoded based on these codes. As new codes emerged, again the transcripts were recoded to eliminate the number of codes by grouping codes into a code with an overall meaning.

Asking members to participate during the investigation or at the conclusions can help make results more credible (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). In this research, next to the opinion of the coder during the investigation, also two supervisors were asked their opinion when supervising this research.

In the analysis, the researcher should also reflect on what can be done with the information by transferring the inferences from a specific sending context to a specific receiving context (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). In this research, we did not only want to send out a message on which competences and performance elements are important for future HR professionals. We also determined what this research can mean for future research.

4 FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the findings of the empirical study are described. First, we look at what we found with respect to the topic of HRM competences. Second, we look at what was found with respect to the topic of individual HRM job performance. Third, we look at the opinions the respondents have about the contingencies of the requirements of the HR professional.

4.2 HRM COMPETENCES

As stated in our theoretical background, HRM competences can be defined as being *the HR professional's knowledge, skills, abilities, and motives that enable the HR professional to perform*.

Our empirical study recognized 34 HRM competences within six HRM competence domains. The competence domains with the corresponding competences are described separately by defining the domains, the competences and giving examples of quotations that refer to the competences. A complete overview of the HRM competence domains, competences, and quotations can be found in Appendix 3.

When comparing the competence domains with the theoretical framework, two competence domains were redefined and one domain was redefined into a competence. Of the original 21 competences, 9 competences were mentioned by respondents, 6 competences were redefined and 6 competences were not found. Furthermore, 18 new competences were recognized by respondents to be of importance. An overview of all these competences is displayed in table 5 below.

Table 5 – HRM competences required for the HR professional

Business focus: Focused on knowing how the business works and is compromised and understanding how decisions influence organization components. (formerly known as business knowledge)	
1. Business knowledge (bundle of knowledge of the social context, value chain, and value proposition)	Knowledge about the value chain, the value proposition, and social context of the business to understand the business and act on that understanding to be able to influence business decisions (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008).
2. Organization sensitivity	To understand the impact and implications of decisions of one department on the community and other departments/components of the organization and relevant to societal and governmental factors (Organizational sensitivity; Employee Evaluation and Selection, 2011)
Learning focus: Focused on gaining new knowledge or skills (Learning, 2011).	
1. Continuous learning (formerly defined as a competence domain)	The ability to continuously gain new skills and develop professionally (Maurer & Weiss, 2010, p. 1).
2. Learn by doing	The capability to improve productivity by regularly repeating the same type of actions (Learn-by-doing (economics), 2011).
3. Self-knowledge (formerly known as self-objectivity)	To understand oneself in terms of self-assessment, meaning that one understands one's own nature, abilities, and limitations (Self-knowledge, 2011; Self-concept, 2011).
4. Self-reflection	To develop an attitude by observing one's behavior and concluding what attitude has caused this behavior (Self-perception theory, 2011) in which there is the willingness to learn more about one's fundamental nature, purpose, and essence (Human self-reflection, 2011).
5. Developmental/learning orientation	The persuasion of developmental activities and endeavors that are important to the HR professional (Maurer & Weiss, 2010).
6. Inner work standards	To strive that one will better oneself, even when a lower level of performance would be acceptable (Maurer & Weiss, 2010).
7. Scholastic aptitude	To be able to learn new things readily (Maurer & Weiss, 2010).
HR delivery: Executing the operational aspects of managing people and organization that are traditionally associated with the HR function (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008; Storey, Wright, &	

		Ulrich, 2009).
1.	HR measurement	To measure how much the HR activities add value to the HR value proposition (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).
2.	HR organization capability	To have an overview of the people and resources that are needed to accomplish a goal and to effectively mobilize the people and resources on the right place in a short amount of time. To monitor progress and take action when needed. (Overzicht competenties met uitleg)
3.	Legal compliance	To have knowledge about the legal issues that influence and safeguard people at work (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).
4.	Operational knowledge	To have knowledge about the operational level.
5.	Staffing	To create a comprehensive staffing process of staffing practices – hiring, promoting, transferring, firing – that supports the HR strategy (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009). To continually define and create the individual competencies and organizational capabilities that are needed (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).
6.	Development	To offer training programs to employees and to take change interventions at the organization and team level (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009). To create capable employees, by looking at the competency requirements of individuals and how they enter and move up, across, or out of the organization (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, & Younger, 2007).
7.	Structure	To assist in the design of the organization by restructuring activities in order for the organization to be more effective – i.e. placing people together, creating coordination mechanisms, creating control mechanisms, creating organization design teams (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009). To make sure employees are matched with the well-designed organization and roles (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, & Younger, 2007).
8.	Performance management	To design and deliver performance management systems that consist out of measuring performance and giving rewards (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).
HR technology: Using HR applications to help accomplish HR tasks (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).		
1.	Facilitating skills (adapted from working with e-HRM)	To be concerned with facilitating HR technology.
2.	Knowledge of HR technology (adapted from working with e-HRM)	To have knowledge about the HR technology possibilities.
Personal credibility: Being credible in personal and interpersonal relationships with all parties HR professionals serve (Adapted from Boselie & Paauwe, 2005).		
1.	Achieving results	To be committed and to do what one says he will do and to achieve results that are error free and meet the highest standards of integrity (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009)
2.	Communication skills	To have effective written and verbal communication skills to clearly communicate critical messages for organizational success (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).
3.	Conversation partner	To facilitate and play an active role in conversation practice.
4.	Cooperation	To work with others in harmony and to actively contribute in formulating and achieving joint goals. (Overzicht competenties met uitleg)
5.	Effective relationships	To maintain effective interpersonal skills to work well with colleagues because of an atmosphere of trust (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).
6.	Empathy	To identify with and understand another's situation, feelings, and motives by imaginatively entering into another person's feelings (Empathy, 2011).
7.	Independence	To take actions based on own convincement which are guided by one's own opinion and dare to disagree with decisions. To make independent decisions in which one takes responsibility for one's actions. (Overzicht competenties met uitleg)
8.	Open-mindness	To be receptive to new and different ideas and the opinion of others.

9. Style flexibility	To be able to associate with people on different levels and to balance needs.
10. Wide orientation	To look further than one's own department.
Strategic focus: Focus on occupying on the strategic level. **(formerly known as strategic contribution)**	
1. Analytical thinking	To separate and distinguish elements of a concept (idea, problem, etc.) in order to understand its essential nature and inner relationships. (Overzicht competenties met uitleg)
2. Change management (formerly known as fast change)	To shift individuals, teams, and organizations from a current state to a desired future state. An organizational process aimed at empowering employees to accept and embrace changes in their current business environment. (Change management, 2011)
3. Culture management	To appreciate, articulate, and help shape a company's culture that is consistent with the requirements of the external customers, the business strategy, and the employees (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009; Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, & Younger, 2007). To design and deliver HR practices that translate and enforce the culture into the right employee attitudes and behaviors (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).
4. Entrepreneurship & Innovation	To be able to introduce new ideas, methods, etc. To be someone who undertakes innovations, finance and business acumen in an effort to transform innovations into economic goods. (Entrepreneurship, 2011)
5. Feasibility analysis	To objectively and rationally uncover the strengths and weaknesses of the existing business, opportunities and threats as presented by the environment. (Feasibility study, 2011)
6. Leadership	To let people know the direction in which the organization wants to go and let them know the goals. To create commitment with goals, when people make decisions let them be aware of the goals. (Overzicht competenties met uitleg)
7. Market-driven connectivity	To take on signals from the external environment and translate these into the organization to respond to market demands (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).
8. Organizational commitment	To set high standards on own work, in which the work is focused on the demands, priorities and goals of the organization and one is working in the interest of the organization and not in its own interest (Overzicht competenties met uitleg).
9. Proactivity	To tend to initiate change rather than reacting to events. (Proactivity, 2011)
10. Result orientation	To be actively oriented on realizing goals and results in which one makes good appointments about ones tasks and responsibilities. (Overzicht competenties met uitleg)
11. Strategic involvement (formerly known as strategic decision making)	To help establish business strategy, to have a vision of the future, and to provide insights on business issues (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008).

Legend:

	Redefined
	New
	Existing
	Not found

4.2.1   BUSINESS FOCUS

The business focus domain refers to the focus of the HR professional on knowing how the business works and is compromised and understanding how decisions influence organization components. The empirical study showed this HRM competence domain to exist out of two competences.

Respondents mentioned the importance for the HR professional to have *business knowledge*, which means that the HR professional should have knowledge about the value chain, the value proposition, and social context of the business to understand the business and act on that understanding to be able to influence business decisions (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008). The importance of having knowledge about the value chain was recognized by respondent 9, as he stated that for the HR professional to be able to act in the role of HR business partner, which is more expected from the HR professional, he should understand the primary processes that make up the value chain. Also respondent 8 referred to the importance of having knowledge of the value chain, as according to this respondent "the HR professional needs to know how the business makes money, as otherwise the HR professional does not know how to contribute on the strategic level". So knowledge of the value chain means that the HR professional should have knowledge of the activities that comprise the value chain and that link the market demands with internal supply (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009; Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008).

The importance of having knowledge of the social context was recognized by respondent 2, as he indicated that "in an international company it is also important that you know the legislation, the culture, and the language" that is present in other countries. Knowledge of the social context means that the future HR professional should have knowledge of how the company creates wealth by knowing the business and social context in which the business operates (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008).

The importance of having knowledge of the value proposition was recognized by respondent 4. Hence, "if an HR manager does not know how the business works and is compromised, who the customers, what the problems are, the HR manager is limited in performing its tasks". So knowledge of the value proposition means that the HR professional should have knowledge about who the customers are and why these customers buy the company's products and services (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008).

Though some of the respondents referred to a specific type of business knowledge (i.e. knowledge of the value chain), there were also respondents who considered business knowledge to be of importance as a whole, as respondents 1 stated that "having business knowledge and knowledge of the value chain is essential". Therefore, it was decided to group the types of business knowledge into one competence.

Next to having business knowledge, respondents also indicated it for the HR professional to be of importance to have some *organization sensitivity*, so to understand the impact and implications of decisions of one department on the community and other departments/components of the organization and relevant to societal and governmental factors. As respondent 7 indicated, "you need to be aware that your HR choices influence other parts of the organization". Here, a relationship between the business knowledge becomes visible, as for the HR professional to be able to understand how decisions can influence the other parts in the organization, he first needs to know how the business is compromised. This was also mentioned by respondent 10, as was indicated that "you need to know the organization, you need to know what is going on in the organization, but also to know potential pitfalls with respect to organization development, culture, the processes you have facilitated, and the decisions you together with other people made".

4.2.2   LEARNING FOCUS

The learning focus domain refers to the focus of the HR professional on gaining new knowledge and skills. The empirical study showed this HRM competence domain to exist out of four competences.

Respondents indicated it for the HR professional to be important to *continuously learn*, which can be defined as the ability to continuously gain new skills and develop professionally (Maurer & Weiss, 2010, p. 1). Respondents recognized that just like for each other professional, it is also important for the HR professional to continuously learn. As respondent 8 indicated, "you can never stop learning, because otherwise you will not make progress and stand still". Education for the HR professional is mostly a matter of gaining a business-oriented insight, that is to get insights in all aspects of the organization. The relevance of this was noted by respondent 10, as "you need to be broader educated, to get insights in all aspects of the organization".

Furthermore, the HR professional should possess the competence of *learn by doing*, meaning that he needs to have the capability to improve productivity by regularly repeating the same type of actions. As mentioned by respondent 2, "in practice you learn what the organization expects from you, where knowledge is not that important, but skills and performance are". So, by learning from practice the HR professional should improve himself. Also respondent 3 referred to this, as "you learn to take on your position by doing things".

Learning is also a matter of having *self-knowledge*, meaning that the HR professional needs to understand oneself in terms of self-assessment, meaning that one understand one's own nature, abilities, and limitations. This was mentioned by respondent 1, as "you need to have knowledge of who you are; you need to know your strengths and weaknesses".

Self-reflection was for the future HR professional also found to be important, meaning that the HR professional needs to develop an attitude by observing one's behavior and concluding what attitude has caused this behavior. As was mentioned by respondent 9, for the HR professional it means that "you need to look at what you intended to do and what you really have done, with a look to the interest of the organization, but also what it means for you". As respondent 7 indicated, "the HR professional should determine for itself which things are necessary to be done and why he should be motivated in doing his job". By looking at what the HR professional did, he can develop himself and gain life experience, which was mentioned by respondent 1.

4.2.3   HR DELIVERY

The HR delivery domain refers to the execution of the operational aspects of managing people and organization that are traditionally associated with the HR function (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008; Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009). The empirical study showed this HRM competence domain to exist out of five competences.

Respondents indicated it for the future HR professional to be of importance to be concerned with *HR measurement*, as he needs to measure how much the HR activities add value to the HR value proposition (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009). As was indicated by respondent 3, it is important to quantify the potentials and risks. However, the real added value of HR is less measureable but can be measured with customer satisfaction. Hence, as respondent 3 also indicated, "you need to be able to work with hard data such as absenteeism data, labor market data, and turnover data".

The *HR organization capability* was by respondents also recognized to be of importance, meaning that the HR professional should have an overview of the people and resources that are needed to accomplish a goal and to effectively mobilize people and resources on the right place in a short amount of time. Progress should be monitored and, when needed, actions should be taken. As was indicated by respondent 8, "when you are not concerned with the operational side, you should always have knowledge about what others do (…) as you cannot deliver value on the strategic level when you did not show efforts on the operational level". It means that the HR professional does not have to occupied with performing activities on the operational level, but the operational processes

should be organized in an effective manner as you are responsible for the quality of the HR procedures, processes, and products. You need to monitor if the processes are running smoothly and the necessary instruments are present and take actions when necessary as otherwise you do not deserve the role of interlocutor and the position to make strategic contributions, as was mentioned by respondent 3 and 9.

It was for the future HR professional also found to be important to have knowledge about the legal issues that influence safeguard people at work; the *legal compliance*. This was indicated by respondent 7 as according to this respondent "knowing laws and legal issues is important".

Respondents also recognized it for the future HR professional to be important to possess *operational knowledge*, meaning that he needs to have knowledge about the operational level. As mentioned with the HR organization capability, the HR professional is responsible for organizing the operational processes. As respondent 5 indicated, "it is good to have knowledge about what happens on the operational level, so to know what is happening in the department". As respondent 8 indicated, "activities are performed on the strategic level, but the knowledge that the HR professional should possess is also about the operational level". Overall, it means that "you need to control your field of study, meaning that you need to know the basic processes" and that "it is a must to know the ins and outs of the profession", as was mentioned by respondent 3 and 9.

It was also recognized to be of importance for the HR professional to be able to create a comprehensive *staffing* process – hiring, promoting, transferring, firing – of staffing practices that supports the HR strategy and to continually define and create individual competencies and organizational capabilities that are needed (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009). As respondent 2 and 9 indicated, "you prepare function descriptions" for which "the basic competences need to be translated into type of behavior". As was mentioned by respondent 2, the HR professional is concerned with looking at the consequences for HR, meaning to determine the people and behavior that are needed. As respondent 3 and 8 indicated, you have to strategically select your people. Hence, the HR professional has to look at people their potentials and how people can be matched in the best way, as was mentioned by respondent 3.

4.2.4 HR TECHNOLOGY

The HR technology domain refers to the HR professional's use of HR applications to help establish HR tasks (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009). The empirical study showed this HRM competence domain to exist out of two competences.

Respondents indicated it for the HR professional to be of importance to possess *facilitating skills*, meaning that he needs to be concerned with facilitating the HR technology. This is somewhat similar to the idea of the organization of the operational processes. The HR professional does not necessarily have to work with the HR technology, but as for example respondent 10 indicated, it is necessary to provide the organization with HR technology when the organization is ready for this and asks for this. As respondent 7 mentioned, "you do not have to be able to work with everything, but you need to embrace it and think about it, as you are the one who needs to organize it".

The HR professional is also required to have *knowledge of HR technology*, meaning that he needs to know the HR technology possibilities. This fits the idea of facilitating the HR technology, as before you can facilitate the technology, you need to have knowledge about what the HR technology possibilities are. As respondent 5 mentioned, "knowledge of which HR systems there are and what they are able off may be useful". Furthermore, the knowledge is not only useful for the facilitation process, as for example respondent 3 indicated that the HR professional should also be able to work with the HR technology for his own use.

4.2.5 PERSONAL CREDIBILITY

The personal credibility domain refers to the HR professional's credibility in personal and interpersonal relationships with all parties HR professionals serve. The empirical study showed this HRM competence domain to exist out of ten competences.

Respondents indicated it for the future HR professional to be important to *achieve results*, meaning that he will do what he says he will do and to achieve results that are error free and meet the highest standards of integrity (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009). As respondent 4 indicated, "you need to take decisive actions, no false promises".

It was for the future HR professional also found to be of importance to have effective written and verbal *communication skills* to clearly communicate critical messages for organizational success (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009). As respondent 2 indicated, "you need to possess skills that enable you to communicate on a rational level, not on a normative or emotional level". This means that the HR professional should not be too emotionally involved in his communication but also should not be too distanced and communicate because of certain rules. Because the HR professional is situated in a management position and often is present in the management team, frequent communication with other managers is necessary as was mentioned by respondent 1. However, as respondent 2, 4 and 9 indicated, the HR professional should also communicate with employees. As mentioned by respondent 9, "in the HR function the level of communication skills needed could be higher (compared to other jobs), as you need to communicate with different people from different layers in the organization". So the HR professional has to possess communication skills to be able to communicate on different levels to make oneself understandable.

Furthermore, respondents indicated the future HR professional to be a *conversation partner*, meaning that he needs to facilitate and play an active role in conversation practice. As respondent 7 recognized, the HR professional should profile itself as a conversation partner to which people would like to talk. For people to like to come to talk to the HR professional, he needs to have some impact and persuasiveness, which means that "you need to give people the energy that they want to talk about their work field", as was mentioned by respondent 3 and 7.

Respondent also recognize it for the HR professional to be important to *cooperate*, meaning to work with others in harmony and to actively contribute in formulating and achieving joint goals. This for example fits the idea that the HR professional should often communicate with the direction, as together in the management team they try to work towards accomplishing the business goals. Respondent 3, 4, 5 & 6 indicated the necessary cooperation between the HR professional and the top of the organization, as the HR professional is the person who needs to supply the top of the organization with its experience on personnel matters. As respondent 10 mentioned, "we [the management team] need to question each other on topics to get clear concepts, so we are able to understand each other". Furthermore, as the HR professional most often is not concerned with the execution of the operational HRM activities, he needs to cooperate with the line managers who are occupied with this operational level by providing them with guidance. As was mentioned by respondent 6, "it is operating on the strategic and tactical level".

According to the respondents, the future HR professional should also have *effective relationships*, meaning that he needs to maintain effective interpersonal skills to work well with colleagues because of an atmosphere of trust (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009). The necessity of this competence is in relationship with the competences of cooperation, conversation partner and communication skills. Before the HR professional can play the role of conversation partner, cooperate with the management team and communicate with different parties, effective relationships have to be build. As mentioned by respondent 1, "it is important that the HR professional has a good relationship with

finance, the direction, and others", as he needs to communicate with all parties. As respondent 4 indicated, to be able to build good relationships the HR professional needs to take on the right position which means that the HR professional should build trust and win respect.

Furthermore, respondents indicated it to be of importance for the future HR professional to show *empathy*, so to identify with and understand another's situation, feelings, and motives by imaginatively entering into another person's feelings. This means that the HR professional should be able to place oneself in others to help them develop in their desired direction. By placing oneself in the people present in the organization, the HR professional tries to get an understanding about how people handle themselves and others, as was mentioned by respondent 7. As mentioned by respondent 9, "you should always place yourself in the receiving group when you want to communicate with that group".

The future HR professional should also show some *independence*, meaning to take actions based on one's own convincement which are guided by one's own opinion and dare to disagree with decisions and also to make independent decisions in which one takes responsibility for one's actions. As for example respondent 3 and 5 indicate, the HR professional should hold an independent position, from which you should look from your own field of study. As mentioned by respondent 5, "you should keep yourself independent on you own field of study". As respondent 1 indicated, the HR professional needs to consider itself as a craft and not do things because management tells him to do it, but to do it from its own field of knowledge. Being independent also means that the HR professional needs to dare to disagree with management and dare to ask questions about the decisions management makes, as this was mentioned by respondent 3 and 5. Furthermore, independence also means that the HR professional needs to take risks and show courage as he cannot always play safe.

It was also found for the future HR professional to be important to be *open-minded*, meaning to be receptive to new and different ideas and the opinion of others. When working for example in an international company, this means that the HR professional should be open to other people, cultures, and languages, which was mentioned by respondent 2. When the HR professional is not open to this, it will be difficult to manage people from other nationalities and in companies in other countries. Open-mindness also means that the HR professional should be open to new ideas as otherwise there is the risk that he thinks he knows everything and he will stick to his own special work method, which was mentioned by respondent 4. Furthermore, the HR professional should also have an open mind in thinking about the future, as things might need to change, and how these changes do affect the people in the organization. As was mentioned by respondent 10, "especially the HR manager should have an open view and should look further and have a vision from different perspectives, like those of management and the employees".

Respondents also acknowledged the importance of *style flexibility* for the future HR professional, meaning he needs to be able to associate with people on different levels and to balance needs. As an HR professional you are located between two parties. On one side you have to serve the needs of the business, but on the other side there are also the needs of the employees who need to be taken into account. As respondent 7 indicated, the interpersonal balance should not be forgotten, meaning that the HR professional should be aware that one is also occupied with people and not only with the business. For the HR professional it is important to find a balance between the management team and the client system, as he is the one who needs to oversee the whole because then he can better help the management team by being situated in the middle. Style flexibility means that the HR professional has to be able to associate with different people and that he needs to make himself on all kinds of levels understandable. As was mentioned by respondent 10, it means that "an HR professional should be able to switch quickly between strategic, tactical, and operational levels".

A *wide orientation* was also found for the future HR professional to be important, as one needs to look further than one's own department. As respondent 3 mentioned, "when you are working in the field of HRM, you should not only be occupied in your own specialty". According to this respondent, "it is good to look at other departments so you can learn from them". It means that for the HR professional it is useful to network with other professionals as "looking broader and across borders is important and maybe becoming even more important", which was mentioned by respondent 4.

4.2.6   STRATEGIC FOCUS
The strategic focus domain refers to the occupations of the HR professional on the strategic level. The empirical study showed this HRM competence domain to exist out of eleven competences.

Respondents indicated it for the future HR professional to be important to *analytically think*, meaning that one needs to separate and distinguish elements of a concept (idea, problem, etc.) in order to understand its essential nature and inner relationships. As respondent 6 indicated, these so-called analytical skills are important because the HR professional needs to know how things relate to other matters inside the organization, for which the HR professional needs to be able to make connections/relationships. As respondent 3 indicated, the HR professional should possess a certain talent in making connections, but it can also be further developed. Analytical thinking means for the HR professional that he needs to look what is going on, which questions exactly are being asked, what he can do with this and how he can support it the best, as was also mentioned by respondent 3. Analytical thinking also means that the HR professional has to be able to think out of the box, as he needs "to be able to think from different points of view and needs to come up with different scenario's", which was mentioned by respondent 3.

It was also for the future HR professional found to be important to *manage change*, as one needs to shift individuals, teams, and organizations from a current state to a desired future state. Change management is an organizational process aimed at empowering employees to accept and embrace changes in their current business environment. As mentioned by respondent 4, "as a strategic partner, you more need to have an understanding of (…) change processes". As mentioned by respondent 7, the HR professional should let others in the organization see that change is necessary to create a movement in which people will cooperate with the change, because they believe in it. Hence, as mentioned by respondent 9, "the HR professional is expected to more and more think about organization development". As an HR professional, you should also have an eye on what changes can do with the people that form the organization, as they are the ones who need to cooperate with the change and when you don't consider their opinion this can break a company, as was mentioned by respondent 7.

Furthermore, the HR professional should also *manage culture*, as one needs to appreciate, articulate, and help shape a company's culture that is consistent with the requirements of the external customers, the business strategy, and the employees (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009; Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, & Younger, 2007). Furthermore it is important to design and deliver HR practices that translate and enforce the culture into the right employee attitudes and behaviors (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009). As mentioned by respondent 3, the HR professional should give people a feeling about the character of the organization. The character of the organization is formed by the company culture. The HR professional should try to translate this culture into observable behavior, as was mentioned by respondent 2. As mentioned by respondent 10, "here, you constantly have to look where you want to be in five years, meaning that you need to have visions".

Entrepreneurship and innovation were also found to be of importance for the future HR professional as he needs to be able to introduce for example new ideas and methods, and to be someone who undertakes innovations, finance and business acumen in an effort to transform innovations into

economic goods. As mentioned by respondent 9, the HR professional is expected to possess a "certain amount of creativity" as he needs "to think about the daily operations and how the organization will look like in five years". As mentioned by respondent 7, "an HR professional should not do things because it is the normal way of doing", but should find ways which best contribute to the future of the organization. Being innovative and having an entrepreneurial spirit can be linked to the competence of analytical thinking, as the HR professional needs to think out of the box and has to understand concepts in order to come up with new ideas and to make these ideas fit in the organization.

The HR professional should also be able to *analyze feasibility*, as he needs to objectively and rationally uncover the strengths and weaknesses of the existing business, and opportunities and threats as presented by the environment. As respondent 2 indicated, the HR professional should be able to make a so-called risk analysis of HR in which the HR professional looks at what HR can deliver giving the current threats and opportunities present in the environment and based on that to make an action plan. As mentioned by respondent 3, the feasibility analysis the HR professional needs to make is mostly about labor market matters, as the HR professional has to look what the opportunities are with respect to the availability of people in the environment. The HR professional needs to judge whether these people can enforce the strengths of the business or lower the weaknesses.

Respondents also recognized *leadership* to be of importance for the future HR professional as he needs to let people know the direction in which the organization wants to go and let them know the goals and to create commitment with goals, meaning when people make decisions to let them be aware of the goals. As indicated by respondent 7, the organization consists out of a group of people who want to accomplish a shared goal. As mentioned by respondent 7, "as an HR professional you should be occupied with the preconditions that build such a shared goal". This means that the HR professional needs to convince people that the business goals are valuable and need to be accomplished. As mentioned by respondent 7, this the HR professional does by not telling people what to do because they should do it, but "to facilitate the process that people become convinced that it is the right way for the business". So as mentioned by respondent 10, "as an HR manager you are concerned with steering people towards the goals and to monitor this".

According to the respondents, the *market-driven connectivity* was also found to be of importance as the HR professional needs to take on signals from the external environment and translate these into the organization to respond to market demands (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009). The respondents indicated that the signals from the market mostly are a matter of changes in the labor market which need to be taken into account in the organization. As respondent 8 and 10 indicated, the labor market gets tighter and there is a different way in which you connect/get a relationship with people. A new generation is emerging in which people try to find a balance between their private and work lives, in which it is normal to work part time and in which people feel more independent and less committed to their work. As mentioned by respondent 10, the HR professional should continuously monitor development, like the new generation, labor market development, the social system, dismissal laws, retirement development, and the aging. As mentioned by respondent 10, "people see their work as a job that needs to be done and then continue to do another job". An organization should be aware of this. Overall, as mentioned by respondent 3, it means that the HR professional needs to guard policy and trends in his own field, by knowing for example which functions are scarce on the labor market.

The HR professional should also feel *committed to the organization*, as respondents recognized it to be of importance to set high standards on own work, in which the work is focused on the demands, priorities and goals of the organization and one is working in the interest of the organization and not

in its own interest. As mentioned by respondent 2, this means that the HR professional should have "affinity with the business and with the employees". Furthermore, the HR professional is committed when he stays close to the business, which is more expected from him as he has to be in a role of a business partner. According to respondent 2, "HR will be underestimated if you do not stand close to other business processes".

It was also acknowledged by respondents for the future HR professional to be *proactive*, as he needs to change rather than reacting to events. It means that the HR professional should not just follow the rules, but that he should take initiative, as was mentioned by respondent 10. To create value, together with the organization, the HR professional should look how the organization can be further developed. As mentioned by respondent 4 and 8, proactivity also means that the HR professional has to participate in active conversations with managers and employees and that he should help to detect problems and how these problems can be solved. Here, proactivity can be put in relationship with the competences of conversation partner and analytical thinking, as one needs to be proactive in creating conversation and one has to think about how the organization can be brought to a higher level by detecting problems and solving them. As mentioned by respondent 8, "being reactive, managers and employees will not have the intention to ask you to be involved in things that matter".

The HR professional is also required to have a *result orientation*, so to be actively oriented on realizing goals and results in which one makes good appointments about ones tasks and responsibilities. As was mentioned by respondent 4, the HR professional needs to create its own job and needs to add value to the organization for people to come to you and ask you about your opinion. As mentioned by respondent 2, the HR professional should deliver results that speak the language of the entrepreneur.

Respondents also indicated it for the future HR professional to be important to be *strategically involved*, meaning that one needs to help establish business strategy, have a vision of the future, and provide insights on business issues (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008). As mentioned by respondent 2, the HR professional should work on" establishing policy, culture, vision, and strategy". This is necessary as the HR professional should be occupied with the continuity of the business, as was mentioned by respondent 7. When the HR professional works on for example the vision, mission, and strategy, he needs to translate this to the organization, but also to the people who are employed at this organization, as was indicated by respondent 10. As mentioned by respondent 5, the HR professional plays an important role in filling in the business strategy. As mentioned by respondent 7 and 10, this means that the HR professional should make sure that the HR strategy fits the business strategy by translating the strategy to a HR strategy and to get these strategies precise with each other. Furthermore, as mentioned by respondent 3 and 9, the HR professional should also have a vision on the future to be able to look further with respect to how a market develops itself, how difficult it is to get people and how people for the organization need to be found.

4.3 INDIVIDUAL HRM JOB PERFORMANCE

As stated in our theoretical background, individual HRM job performance means that *the HR professional is able to function in his position at the required or even above the required level.* With respect to this topic of individual HRM job performance, little empirical evidence was found. An overview of the quotations based on the topic of individual HRM job performance can be found in Appendix 4.

When respondents were asked the question what performance for the HR professional means, they perceived performance to be mostly a matter of having the required competences. Hence, when the HR professional has the required competences to perform his job, he will be able to perform. As

respondent 1 indicated, performance is a matter of delivering production, meaning that the HR professional should do his job as is expected from him.

Furthermore, as mentioned by respondent 2, 4, 5 and 9, performance is being measured by key performance indicators, as these indicate the added value of HR. This means that the performance of the HR professional is assessed based on indicators such as his sick leave, absenteeism, and turnover. As mentioned by respondent 3, these performance indicators have to be as SMART as possible, meaning that they have to be specific, measurable, acceptable, realizable and timely.

Performance also means that the HR professional should set and attain goals. As mentioned by respondent 9, performance is about results and how the HR professional gets to these results. This means that next to setting goals, the goals also need to be monitored. As mentioned by respondent 2, the goals and key performance indicators should be formulated based on the Balanced Scorecard and derive from where the organization wants to go. As mentioned by respondent 6, the HR professional is assessed on behavior objectives, which refer to the current level of competences the HR professional has with respect to the level that is needed, but also on result objectives, which derive from the annual business plan and the job description.

Furthermore, performance for the HR professional is mostly a matter of the right behavior, as was also highlighted by respondent 2 as this person indicated the performance of the HR professional to be his doing, his behavior. According to respondent 2, the resulting behavior and performance of a HR professional depends on his knowledge, skills, and attitude as he needs to know things, to do things and have the willingness to do things.

Last, as was mentioned by respondent 9, the HR professional is assessed on the way he acts on what is expected from him, meaning that the HR professional needs to know what is expected from him and to act on that understanding. As mentioned by respondent 2, meeting expectations does not only mean that the HR professional should cover his job description, but should also do more when possible.

4.4 CONTINGENCIES OF REQUIREMENTS FOR HR PROFESSIONALS

Next to investigating the topics of HRM competences and individual HRM job performance, the empirical study also tried to investigate respondents' opinion about whether the qualities of the HR professional that are required may depend on the characteristics of the organization, such as the size, type or scope of the organization.

The empirical study indicated that the respondents think that how much is being required from an HR professional does depend on certain contingencies. An extended overview of the opinions of the respondents regarding these contingencies can be found in Appendix 5.

First, we found that respondents think that the HR professional should satisfy different requirements with respect to company size. As mentioned by respondent 2, the availability of HR sources differs between company sizes. Respondents 3, 4, 8 & 10 all agreed that the work dimension also differs with company size, as larger companies give the HR professional the possibility to specialize on certain topics, where in a small company the HR professional has to be an all-rounder in which he needs to perform all activities. Next to the work dimension, the education of the HR professional also plays a role, as when the education of the HR professional is very specialized, he could better fit working in a large company in which he could specialize himself, as he does not have the capacity to perform the role of an all-rounder. Furthermore, as respondents 6 and 8 indicate, the level of thinking of an HR professional differs with respect to company size. In a large company, more stratification is possible which means the HR can be performed by more layers in the organization, and the HR profession only has to think about HRM on one of these levels. However, in smaller organization the HR professional should be able to think about problems and issues on all kinds of levels. The insight the HR professional should have in situations does also depend on the size of the company, as in larger organization the complexness of the organization is higher, which was mentioned by respondent 7.

Next to the dependence of the size of the company, also the type of the company seems to play a role in what is required from an HR professional. As mentioned by respondent 3, the corporate culture is different between types of companies. In a company that is characterized by a culture that enforces work floor presence more may be required from an HR professional compared to a company with a corporate culture that enforces a HR professional to stay on a more distanced position. As mentioned by respondent 4 and 8, the business challenges are different between types of companies, as in more knowledge intensive companies the HR professional is concerned with a different group of employees compared to production oriented companies. This means that the HR professional is exposed to different business challenges. As mentioned by respondent 5, the way companies work differs between types of companies. Hence, in knowledge intensive companies the HR trends of the new way of working is more visible compared to production oriented companies. The capabilities of the HR professional have to fit the way people work in the organization. As for example, the HR professional does not understand the new way of working, he cannot be able to work in a knowledge intensive company in which employees prefer this working style. As mentioned by respondent 6, the level of thinking is different between types of companies. When a HR professional works in a knowledge intensive company he needs to communicate and understand professionals, which is different when working with people in a production oriented company. Respondent 10 mentioned the fact that the resource availability is also different between types of companies and determines what is being required of the HR professional. Hence, the resource availability determines the way of operating. Similar to the level of thinking, the people focus is different between types of companies, meaning that in knowledge intensive companies the HR professional has to treat employees somewhat different from production oriented companies. As for example mentioned by respondent 10, an HR manager needs to offer a production worker transparency and clearness.

Also the scope of the company seems to play a role in what is required from an HR professional. As mentioned by respondent 2, the HR professional needs to fit the country in which the organization is located, which is mostly a matter of knowing the legislation. Furthermore, as mentioned by respondent 4, the cultural differences do play a role when the HR professional is working in an international oriented company. When a company is located in more countries, the HR professional needs to be open to cultural differences, which would be not necessary when the HR professional would be located in a national company.

Last, the position of the company seems also to play a role in what is required from an HR professional. Here, respondent 10 referred to the idea that the phase in which the organization is situated determines the requirements of the HR professional. When an organization is in a developing stage, the HR professional may for example be more concerned with organizing activities on the operational level, where in a mature stage the HR professional may be more concerned with activities on the strategic level.

4.5 REFINED FRAMEWORK ON THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE HR PROFESSIONAL

The findings described above, show three elements to be of importance: HRM competences, the contingencies and performance. The three elements do relate to one other, as the competences determine whether the HR professional is able to perform and the contingencies influence to which extent the competences are required for the HR professional to perform.

Based on this, the following refined framework (Figure 5) with respect to the requirements of the HR professional can be illustrated. This framework shows the HRM competences, individual HRM job performance and contingencies to exist. Here, the inner field represents the HRM competences required for the HR professional. The circle represents the individual HRM job performance, which is mostly characterized by possessing the competences and taking on the right behavior to accomplish

goals. The outer blocks represent the dependence issues that influence what exactly is being required of the HR professional.
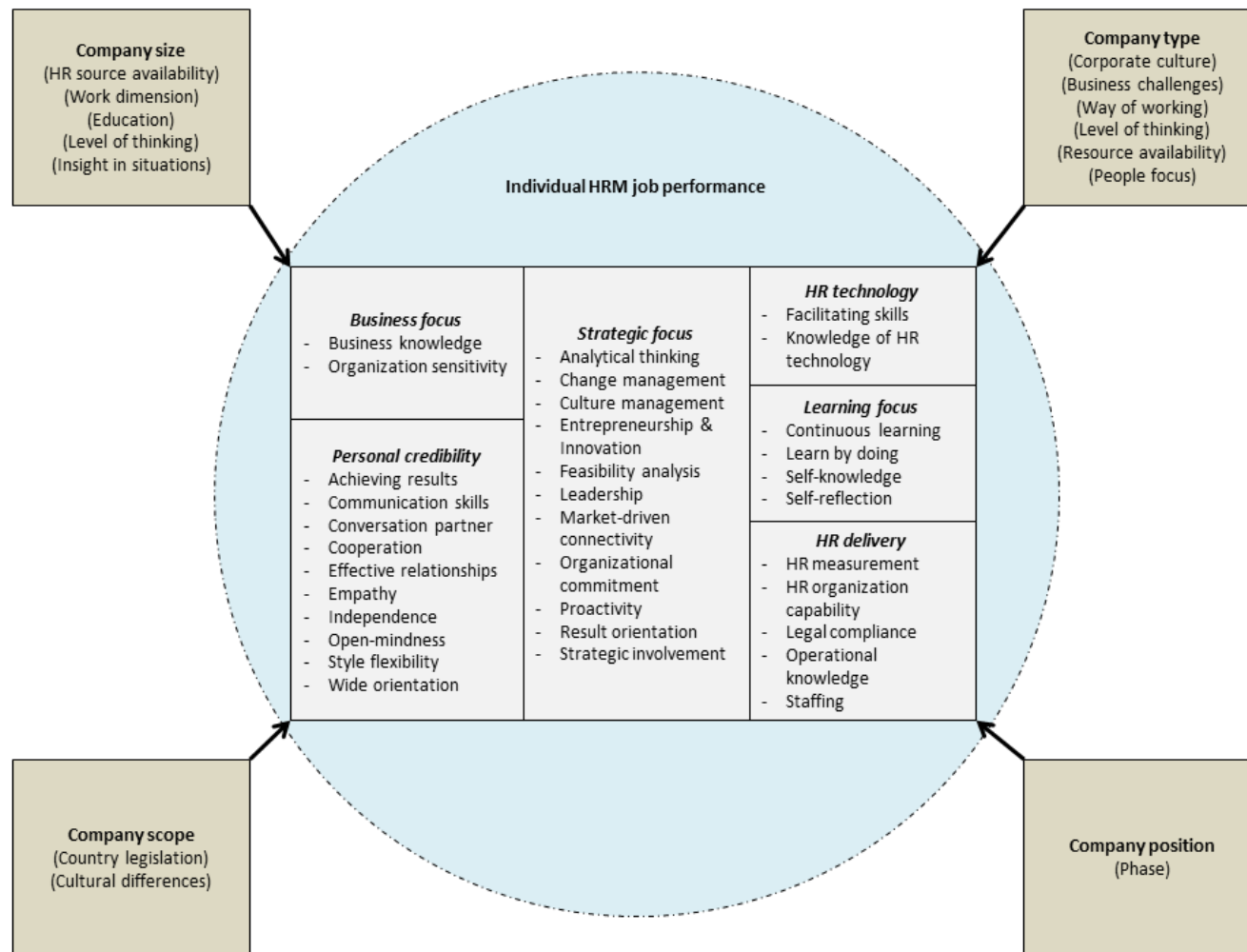
Figure 5 - Refined framework on the requirements of the HR professional

5 DISCUSSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, we described our findings from the empirical study. In this chapter, further discussion on the topics will follow, as we need to relate our findings to the existing knowledge on the topics of HRM competences and individual HRM job performance.

5.2 INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

LITTLE EVIDENCE FOR INDIVIDUAL HRM JOB PERFORMANCE

Our theoretical framework on individual HRM job performance showed there are five performance categories. As already mentioned with our findings, little empirical evidence on the topic of performance was found.

Overall, performance for the HR professional means that he sets, monitors, and achieves the goals. This could fit the idea of the qualitative and quantitative behavioral performance. Hence, the HR professional has to take the right actions at the quantitative and qualitative level. On the quantitative level, he has to make sure that goals are set and achieved. On the qualitative level, he needs to reach the goals on a certain level that fits the requirements of the business.

As mentioned by a respondent, when the right knowledge, skills, and attitude are present, the HR professional can perform. Here we see a connection with the attitudinal performance element, as the attitude of the HR professional matters for him to be able to perform. When we asked respondents about their opinion on for example job satisfaction, they recognized it for the HR professional to be important to feel satisfied with one's job. So they perceived the attitudinal performance to be relevant. However, this was only mentioned by the respondents when they were asked about the topic of job satisfaction. When asked about performance, they did not come up themselves with the necessity for the HR professional to be satisfied.

This was also the case with the cognitive performance element of knowing one's role expectations and acting on that understanding. These opinions were only recognized when respondents were asked whether they felt the need for the HR professional to go further than what the job description says.

A MORE EXTENSIVE SET OF HRM COMPETENCES

Our theoretical framework on HRM competences showed 21 HRM competences within 6 HRM competence domains to exist. Of these competences, 17 HRM competences derived from the existing knowledge on HRM competences developed by Ulrich and colleagues (2007; 2008; 2009). As Maurer & Weiss (2010) acknowledged that for managerial work there is an increasing need to be able to continuously learn, the 4 competences that characterize this continuous learning were added.

When looking at the domains defined in the theoretical framework, the empirical study showed the same six domains to exist. However, because new defined HRM competences were found to be of importance, some of these existing domains were adjusted to the business language. Therefore, the new defined competence domains consist out of HRM competences that corresponded with our theoretical framework and new defined HRM competences.

With respect to the *business focus* domain, respondents indicated it for the future HR professional to be important to have knowledge of the social context, the value chain and the value proposition. However, were Ulrich and colleagues (2007; 2008) grouped these types of business knowledge into one domain, we decided to group the competences into the competence of business knowledge, as respondents perceived it for the HR professional to be important to have business knowledge, meaning that the HR professional should have knowledge on all business topics. Therefore, the competences that characterize the business knowledge domain were grouped and redefined as the business knowledge competence.

Different from our theoretical framework, the organization sensitivity competence was added. Hence, respondents were of the opinion that the HR professional should possess some organization sensitivity, as he needs to understand how decisions will influence other parts in the organization. However, for him to be able to understand this, he also needs to have knowledge about how the business works and is compromised. Here, the importance of the competences inside this business focus domain becomes visible as Schuler & MacMillan (1984) and Ulrich (1994) (as both mentioned in Ulrich, Brockbank, Yeung, & Lake, 1995) recognize that HR professionals have become businesss partners and have new opportunities for personal growth and have to be active builders of their firms' competitive advantage. This means that as a HR business partner, the HR professionals are more occupied with business success then was earlier the case. The HRM competences that refer to the business focus domain do contribute to the understanding that the HR professional has of the organization, which he needs to have in order for him to be able to contribute to business success. Hence, if you do not understand your business, you will not be able to make the decisions that help the business to create advantage. Or as Ulrich, Brockbank, Yeung, & Lake (1995) recognize, knowing the capabilities of an organization is a necessary condition of entry to any strategic discussion.

In the previously named continuous learning domain, Maurer & Weiss (2010) indicated the competence of continuous learning to consist out of four competences. The necessity of continuous learning was recognized in our empirical study, which should confirm Maurer & Weiss (2010) their idea that because HR professionals are considered to be managers and are occupied with managerial work, they need to be able to continuously learn. However, as was indicated by the respondents themselves, this is not completely true, as the competence to be able to continuously learn should not only be possessed by the professionals, as the importance of this competence also applies to other employees. So where it is not marked by respondents as a unique competence for the HR professional because of his managerial position, it is something he needs to be able to do. The reason why the HR professional should possess the competence of continuous learning is that by learning, the HR professional gains insight into the business, as one gets to understand more aspects of the organization. So when comparing the necessity of this competence of an HR professional and another employee, the difference may lay in the learning orientation, as the HR professional may need to broaden his knowledge and an employee may deepen its knowledge to be able to do his job. However, with our empirical study we found no distinction to exist with respect to the elements of continuous learning and therefore decided to redefine the continuous learning from a competence domain into a competence inside the *learning focus* domain. Of the original four competences inside the continuous learning domain, we only found some correspondence with self-objectivity, as it was defined as one needs to be able to recognize one's own strengths and weaknesses. However, our respondents indicated the importance of this on a broader field, that is to not only know your strengths and weaknesses but to have complete knowledge about who you are. So, the idea of self-objectivity did appear in the empirical study, but was much broader than recognized at first. Therefore, the self-knowledge competence was created and adapted from the competence of self-objectivity. For the other three competences of the continuous learning domain we did not found evidence. This can be explained by the fact that the competences are quite specifically formulated by Maurer & Weiss (2010). The learning competences we defined are much broader. Based on what was mentioned by the respondents, the two additional competences of learn-by-doing and self-reflection needed to be added.

The competences HR measurement, legal compliance, and staffing of the *HR delivery* domain corresponded with our empirical study. The reason that these corresponded with the existing knowledge on HRM competences, could be the strategic relevance of these topics. By measuring the value of HR, the HR professional gets an overview on what was done good and what can be done better. The knowledge of legal issues helps the HR professional to organize people the right way. The staffing competence is also of strategic relevance, as the HR professional needs to make sure the

right people are hired and that these people take on the right behavior that is necessary for company success.

The new HRM competences we recognized to be of importance in the empirical study, enforce the idea that the HR delivery has a strategic relevance. Hence, some respondents indicated that before the HR professional could have some strategic input, he should be able to organize the processes and provide others with the necessary instruments. For the HR professional to be able to organize the operational level of HR, it also means that he needs to have operational knowledge, which means that he needs to know what others are doing.

Of the competences developed by Ulrich and colleagues, there were also competences we did not recognize with our empirical study. The fact that they were not mentioned, doesn't have to mean that for the future HR professional they are not of any importance. However, we recognize that the HR professional is less occupied on the operational level and should be more occupied with the strategic level. However, the proportion the HR professional should be occupied with operational and strategic activities depends on the size of the organization, as in larger organizations more stratification and specialization is possible, where in smaller organization the HR professional has to function as an all-rounder.

The original *HR technology* domain consisted out of one competence, that is the ability to work with e-HRM. With this competence, Ulrich and colleagues (2008) recognized that the HR professional should invent new e-HR applications and use them. However, with our empirical study we found two separate issues with respect to e-HRM to exist. Some respondents indicated that the HR professional should only have to be able to work with e-HRM when it is for his own use.

The topic of e-HRM is for the HR professional mostly a matter of being the one who needs to see the potentials of the e-HR applications and to be the one who needs to facilitate it. It means that the HR professional does not necessarily have to work with e-HRM, but he does need to have knowledge about the technology, meaning that he needs to know what e-HRM is and which possibilities it can give. Therefore, it was decided to refine the original competence of Ulrich and colleagues into the two competences of facilitating skills and knowledge of HR technology.

In our empirical study we recognized all the competences inside the *personal credibility* competence domain to be of importance for the future HR professional. However, we felt the original definition to show some shortcomings, as only the relationship with HR counterparts and line managers is underlined. Based on what respondents mentioned, also the relationship between the HR professional and other people in the organization should be included, as the HR professional also has to have contact with employees on the work floor and has to hold effective relationships with other departments inside the organization.

Next to the existing competences of the personal credibility domain, the empirical study also showed new competences to exist. When looking at these new competences, these competences do complement the existing competences. For example, the competences of conversation partner and cooperation do fit the competences of communication skills and effective relationships. If you want to be a good conversation partner, you should be able to communicate and hold good relationships with the persons you want to have the conversation with. The same could be the case for the cooperation competence: the HR professional can only cooperate with people when he has a good relationship with this people and can communicate with this people.

Furthermore, when the HR professional interacts with a person, he needs to be able to place himself in the other person to gain understanding about what the person means and feels. Because the HR professional is always occupied with human capital, this is an important competence.

The HR professional is a professional in his own field of expertise which means he needs to take on an independent position. As the HR professional is considered to have different relationships with different parties, he needs to keep his own opinion and should not do things because people tell him to do so. The relationships with different parties also means that the HR professional needs to have

an open mind, as he needs to place himself in different parties and perspectives. Furthermore, different parties have different needs that need to be taken into account. The HR professional should find a middle position position between the top and the employees in the organization, which is the so-called style flexibility. Towards the top and the employees the relationship and the communication level is different.

As earlier mentioned, the HR professional also needs to hold relationships with people from other departments, which means that he needs a wide orientation and needs to look further than his own department.

What makes these new competences different from the competences defined by Ulrich and colleagues (2008) is that our new competences go further into the topic of relationships, as the HR professional should be able to be credible in relationships with all kinds of parties inside the organization. This corresponds with the role of employee advocacy recognized by Ulrich and Brockbank (2005b, p. 201, as mentioned by Francis & Keegan, 2006). Though the HR professional is more expected to act in the role of a business partner, the role of employee advocacy should not be forgotten, as HR professionals are the ones who need to "form a bridge between management and employees, so that mutual understanding makes the best of whatever the company faces" (Ulrich and Brockbank, 2005b, p. 201, as cited by Francis & Keegan, 2006).

With respect to the original strategic contribution domain, we decided to rename this domain into *strategic focus* as the new competences referred to the occupation on the strategic level and went beyond the meaning of the original domain.

Of the four competences developed by Ulrich and colleagues (2008) inside the original domain of strategic contribution, all were found to be important for the future HR professional. However, the extent to which the elements were of importance were not enough highlighted by the original concepts of Ulrich and colleagues. Therefore, some of the original competences were redefined. As Ulrich and colleagues described fast change to be the ability to make change happen successfully and thoroughly when planning and implementing change (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009), we felt this definition to have some shortcomings as respondents perceived the future HR professional to be occupied with change management, which is an organizational process in which the HR professional needs to create awareness for the necessity for change and facilitate the complete change process.

The competence of market-driven connectivity was defined by Ulrich and colleagues as the ability to take on signals from the external environment and to translate these into the organization to respond to market demands (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009). This competence corresponded with our empirical study in the sense that respondents perceived it for the future HR professional to be necessary to monitor generational developments and to take these into account when for example hiring new people.

The competence of strategic decision making also corresponded with our empirical study. However, we felt the need to broaden the competence, as it was perceived to be a larger topic. Hence, respondents did not only perceive the need for the future HR professional to set the direction of change for the future, but also to be concerned with helping establish the business strategy, translating this business strategy to the HR strategy and to have a vision of the future. Therefore, it was decided to rename this competence into strategic involvement, as the HR professional has to be occupied with more strategic activities than only setting directions for change.

Next to the existing and redefined competences, additional competences with a strategic focus were added. To make strategic decisions, the HR professional should possess the competence of analytical thinking, meaning that he needs to understand concepts by understanding its elements and inner relationships. Furthermore, the HR professional should also be able to come up with new ideas that can gain advantage for the organization, which is the entrepreneurship & innovation competence. The HR professional should also be able to make a feasibility analysis, as the HR professional should know the strength and weaknesses of the business, and the opportunities and threats in the environment to make the right decisions.

Furthermore, the leadership competence also has strategic relevance, as the HR professional needs to convince others that the business goals need to be attained in the interest of the organization and the employees.

The organizational commitment competence is of strategic relevance as the HR professional needs to make strategic decisions that are in the interest of the organization and not in his own interest. This means that he should have affinity with the business and the employees and not be too distanced from business processes.

The proactivity competence is of strategic relevance as the HR professional needs to be active in making strategic decisions that enforce change and not to be reactive by waiting for events to happen.

Last, the result orientation is of strategic relevance as the HR professional needs to be able achieve goals, as these goals are important for the strategic advantage of the organization.

Overall, our empirical study showed more competences in the strategic focus domain than Ulrich and colleagues (2008; 2009) did in their original strategic contribution domain. The reason that the strategic focus domain consists out more competences may be explained by the fact that HR professionals more take on the role of strategic partner. In this role, "HR professionals partner with line managers to help them reach their goals through effective strategy formulation and strategy execution" (Ulrich and Brockbank, 2005b, p. 27, as was cited by Francis & Keegan, 2006). With the business focus domain, we recognized the HR professional to be more expected to act as a business partner. For the HR professional to be able to be a business partner, one should not only know and understand the business, as one should also be strategically involved, meaning that the strategic partner role can be seen as an aspect of the business partner role (Francis & Keegan, 2006).

THE EXISTENCE OF CONTINGENCIES

Our empirical study also tried to investigate if the requirements of HR professionals depend on issues like the size or type of a company. In their set of HRM competences, Ulrich and colleagues (2007; 2008) do not make a difference between the competences with respect to these contingencies.

Some answers on why these contingencies show to exist, may be explained by focusing on the contingency theory, which was originally developed by Lawrence & Lorsch (1967). However, to confirm our ideas on this contingency theory, further research needs to be done.

The contingency theory suggests the organization to depend on certain environmental factors. It is interesting to see that what we found with respect to the contingencies of the requirements of the HR professional might be related to the idea of the contingency. Though Lawrence & Lorsch (1967) and Scott & Davis (2007) speak of the relationship between the organization and the environment, such a relationship can also exist between the HR professional and the company in which one works. As mentioned by Scott & Davis (2007), in their book on organizations as systems, the design decisions in an organization are contingent on environmental conditions. This can also apply to the HR professional, as we found the job of the HR professional to depend on organizational characteristics such as company size. Hence, in a small company the HR professional needs to be an all-rounder, where in a larger company the HR professional can act in a more specialized role.

The contingency theory is guided by the idea that organizations whose internal features match the demands of the environment will achieve the best adaption (Scott & Davis, 2007). This could confirm our idea that the HR professional's competences need to fit what is being required by the organization. When for example in an organization many professionals are employed, the HR professional should possess the right level of thinking to make oneself understandable to these people.

Furthermore, Lawrence & Lorsch (1967) are of the opinion that there are different environments that place different requirements on organizations. The idea of the contingency theory is that the

features of the organization should suit the specific environment, and that the differentiation and mode of integration of the organization should suit the complexity in the environment in which the organization must operate (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967; Scott & Davis, 2007). Hence, when the organization does not match its contingencies, the organization performance suffers (Scott & Davis, 2007). The contingencies we showed to be of importance can make clear that different environments exist, as there may be different organizations in which the HR professional can use his competences. Hence, the company size, type, scope and position can determine to which extent the HR professional is required to possess the HR competences.

Though Ulrich and colleagues (2007) do not recognize the contingency factors in their HRCS, they do recognize the idea that the HR profession, as a dimension of HR, is affected by the organization environment. The environment, or the so-called business context, faces the organization with challenges as it needs to respond to it to be successful. Organizational challenges mean that HR should respond to these challenges, as they affect the five dimensions of HR: management of people and organization, the HR profession, the HR department or function, the HR practices, and the HR professionals (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008). Here, we see that the environment eventually has an effect on the HR professionals, as the organization needs to cope with environmental changes and the right HR professional needs to fit these changes of new requirements of the environment.

So where Ulrich and colleagues (2007) do recognize the idea that what is required of the HR professional can change and does depend on the environment, they do not explicitly recognize the idea that the character of the organization itself also determines what is required of the HR professional.

5.3 THEORETICAL AND PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

RELEVANCE OF INDIVIDUAL HRM JOB PERFORMANCE NOT CONFIRMED

Little empirical evidence could be found about the topic of individual HRM job performance. The reason that little evidence was found could be explained by the fact that the individual job performance can be applied to each function and is not specific to the HR function. Hence, for each employee it is important that one feels satisfied with the job. Though we did add the social performance as important for the HR professional, it is also relevant to other professions, as you have to interact with people. The fact that respondents did not come up with the individual performance elements themselves, does not mean that they are not found to be relevant. Hence, as we asked the respondents directly about the topics of for example job satisfaction and knowing your role expectations, respondents agreed it to be important for the HR professional to feel and know. So while the performance elements were not recognized in the empirical study, they do matter for the HR professional to be able to perform, as job design literature has indicated its importance for each job, so also for the HR job.

We recognized performance mostly to be a matter of accomplishing goals and having the necessary knowledge and skills to do a job. Hence, when respondents were asked their opinion about performance for the HR professional, they started to come up with competences. It may be that the topics of performance and competences show some overlap as for the respondents it seemed to be difficult to make a distinction between job performance and the HR competences. Furthermore, some of the competences mentioned by the respondents were previously defined as performance elements. However, with our empirical study we perceived the original performance elements of organizational commitment and proactive behavior to be competences. The competence of result orientation also shows the overlap with performance as performance is about achieving results. Therefore, it would for future research be interesting to look whether the individual HRM job performance elements are found to be relevant for the HR professional and whether the performance elements may be refined as they more refer to the topic of competences.

Overall, when looking at the findings of our empirical study and the existing knowledge on HRM competences, developed by Ulrich and colleagues, there are quite some differences. Hence, our empirical study showed it to be necessary to redefine existing HRM competences and formulate new ones.

- Research method

As Ulrich and colleagues developed surveys that contained expectations on HRM competences, our research was performed by conducting interviews. So where the research of Ulrich and colleagues was more focused on testing their ideas and observations, we focused on exploring the topic of HRM competences. This could be a reason for the fact that in our study we found more interesting competences to exist. Hence, as Ulrich and colleagues used surveys, respondents were not encouraged to add additional ideas but only to give their opinion on what was presented. As we interviewed our respondents, there was interaction and for us the possibility to further ask questions about the competences that are important for the future HR professional. Furthermore, we did not ask respondents how they felt about specific competences found to be of importance in existing knowledge on HRM competences, but let them come up with their own.

- Sampling

Next to the use of a different research method, Ulrich and colleagues also sampled differently. Where we only asked the opinion of HR leaders, Ulrich and colleagues also asked the opinion of non-HR associates, meaning that this eventually may have caused a more balanced set of HRM competences to exist as our set of HRM competences is quite extensive.

- The level of the respondents

With respect to the expertise on HRM, Ulrich and colleagues referred to their respondents as being HR managers. For our study, we interviewed HR leaders that had the criteria of having experience in HR and positioning a high level in HR. Ulrich and colleagues actually asked the opinion of HR participants arrayed into four levels: individual contributor, manager of individual contributors, director of managers, and top manager. So where we had the opinion of HR leaders who position a high level in HR, Ulrich and colleagues asked the opinions of people with different HR positions, meaning that our set of competences reflects the opinion of the top of the HR department, where the competences developed by Ulrich and colleagues reflects the opinion of the whole HR department.

- Cultural differences

Where the research of Ulrich and colleagues was performed by sending surveys all over the world and Boselie & Paauwe (2002) investigated the HR effectiveness of HR professionals located in Europe, we only asked the opinion of Dutch HR leaders, located in companies in the Netherlands. It could mean that the set of HRM competences we found to be important, do not apply to HR professionals working in other countries, as there are cultural differences. Because of cultural differences, the set of competences recognized by Ulrich and colleagues to be of importance, may not be enough for the Dutch HR profession, as we recognized a more extensive set of competences to be required for and by the Dutch HR professional.

- Changes in the environment

As was noted by Johnson & King (2002), the requirements of the business regarding HR practitioners change because of changes in the business environment. This could also explain the difference in the competences this empirical study and the studies of Ulrich and colleagues found. Hence, the last research round was performed in 2007/2008 and this research is more recently dated. Changes in

the business environment are mostly a matter of coping with the new generation, as this was also noted by the respondents themselves. People from the new generation like to be treated in a different way which has consequences for how people should be handled and directed by the HR professional. In light of their HRCS, Ulrich and colleagues do recognize the fact that HR is changing and that the new HR needs to understand the challenges that are present in a changing business context, which are globalization, technology, the employees inside the company, the customers outside the company, investors, and competitors (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008, p. 7).

Next to the differences, also similarities were found between the competences we recognized to be of importance and the competences Ulrich and colleagues found to be important. Hence, the competences we found to be of importance could be organized in the five competence domains developed by Ulrich and colleagues. Although we did redefine some of them, the meaning is quite the same. Redefining the competence domains was mostly done to make the new competences fit the original concepts.

The similarities could be explained by the fact that in both our study and in the studies of Ulrich and colleagues, the top of the HR department was represented in the sample and their opinion was asked. The competences that correspond between our study and those performed by Ulrich and colleagues are mostly competences that are required for HR professionals on a high management level – like for example the competences of business knowledge and strategic contribution. In other words, the competences that did not correspond with the existing knowledge on HRM competences are most likely competences that are being required from other more operational HR levels and may have emerged because of the opinion of people on other HR positions. We translated the original concepts that are required from all HR levels to a higher level of HR, that is, the competences that are required for the HR professional being the one who has the highest position in HR.

6 CONCLUSIONS

Based on the discussion, we can conclude that we found 34 competences within 6 competence domains to exist. Though some of these competences were not recognized by other researchers, they do add value to the existing knowledge on HRM competences as they fit the original competence domains and the emerging roles of the HR professional.

With respect to individual HRM job performance, little empirical evidence was found. Though some respondents referred to the importance of setting and achieving goals, we can conclude that for the HR professional performance is mostly a matter of possessing the required competences. The fact that little correspondence between our findings and theoretical study was found, does not mean that the job performance is not found to be of importance. As noted, when respondents were asked their opinion about elements of the job performance they agreed with the necessity of it for the HR profession, but did not come up with it themselves.

Next to the topics of HRM competences and individual HRM job performance, the respondents also recognized contingencies to exist that influence what is being required of the HR professional. Though the importance of the contingencies for the HR profession was not recognized by other researchers, we can conclude that company size, type, scope and position do matter as respondents indicated them to determine different requirements from the HR professional.

Overall, the major contributions of this research to the existing knowledge on HRM competences and individual job performance are that:
- A more extensive set of competences for the HR professional was recognized
- Performance was perceived to be the possession of HRM competences and little correspondence with the elements of individual job performance was found
- Contingency factors of company size, type, scope and position determine the competences that are required from the HR professionals

The contributions of this research give new insights in the topic of what is required from the HR professional as the existing knowledge on HRM competences found a more limited set of competences to exist and did not consider the topics of performance and contingencies. Further research should add to the overall understanding of what is required from the HR professional and how this is influenced by contingency and/or other environmental factors.

6.1 LIMITATIONS OF RESEARCH

Next to the contributions, this research is also characterized by limitations. We found ten respondents to be willing to participate with the research. It would have been interesting to investigate the opinions of more HR professionals. However, as it was not easy to find respondents as it was sometimes difficult to get in contact with HR professionals, we think a number of ten respondents is acceptable and enough to explore what is required from the HR professional by the business. Furthermore, the ten respondents that did participate in this research were from quite diverse companies, meaning that our sample gave us the opportunity to gain a broad understanding of what is required by investigating opinions from respondents in different businesses.

The fact that we investigated a diverse sample has the limitation that our findings cannot be generalized to a specific company sector or company size, as we did not make a distinction in this with the selection of our respondents. However, the selection of the diverse sample gave us the opportunity to come up with contingency factors that influence the competence requirements, as HR professionals in different companies face different challenges.

Furthermore, as noted in the research framework, associations can exist between the HRM competences and individual HRM job performance. As earlier mentioned, due to the scope of this research it was decided to conduct a qualitative study to explore the opinion of the business. It was

not possible to come up with associations between the topics of competences and performance as this would ask for a quantitative study. However, by only conducting the qualitative study, we were able to focus all our attention to gaining a deep understanding on what HRM competences and performance for the future HR professional mean.

6.2 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The contributions of this study show that with a different look on the topic of HRM competences, new insights have emerged. However, as these insights are new and only confirmed within this study, we would recommend future studies to help improve our insights. We think future research can add to the understanding of what is required from an HR professional by the business and also to add understanding about which topics influence these requirements.

As our study showed little empirical evidence to exist on the topic of individual HRM job performance, further research on this topic is recommended as it would be interesting to further investigate whether the performance elements are found to be of importance by current HR professionals. The job design literature suggests the performance elements for each job to be important. However, as our research showed the respondents not to come up with the elements themselves but did recognize the relevance of the elements when asking them about these, future research may focus on which performance elements are found to be relevant. We would recommend this future research to be a quantitative study. With for example the use of a questionnaire, respondents may be asked their opinion on different statements regarding the importance of the performance elements. Here, the statements should have a likert-scale, meaning that respondents can indicate from a number of 1 to 5 the importance of the statement.

Furthermore, as we were not able to investigate possible associations between the competences and performance elements, future research can try to investigate this by also conducting a quantitative study with a questionnaire. In addition to investigating which performance elements are found to be relevant, the HRM competences we recognized to be of importance can also be further tested to see if they are found to be of importance by a larger sample of respondents. To further research both the topics of performance and competences, the questionnaire should possess statements about these topics to investigate their relevance. Then, based on the ranking to the statements given, the researcher will be able to say something about the performance elements and HRM competences found to be of importance. Furthermore, with the ranking and use of statistical software like SPSS, correlations between the two topics can be calculated in order to say something about possible associations. Besides a quantitative study, a qualitative study can also be conducted to explore the associations between the topics of competences and performance. Interviewing should then be used as the method, as this creates a response from the respondents about which associations they think why to exist. The investigation of the associations can also be done by performing both the quantitative and qualitative study in a sequential design. Hence, the qualitative study can give insight in the associations mentioned by respondents and the quantitative study can further test these ideas with a questionnaire. In addition, the quantitative study can try to statistically find which associations exist and the qualitative study can then further explore these associations.

As we provided new insights on the contingencies that may influence what is required from an HR professional, we would recommend further research to be done on these contingencies. We think more answers could be found in the contingency theory, as the existing knowledge on HRM competences has not paid attention to this. This future research could be of a quantitative or qualitative nature. We feel a qualitative study to be the best, as by conducting interviews in the field, further exploration on the contingencies can be done. However, as we already found contingencies to exist, a quantitative study could try to test these ideas by again distributing a questionnaire and with the use of statements ask current HR professionals their opinion about these contingencies.

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8   APPENDICES

8.1   APPENDIX 1 – INTRODUCTORY LETTER SENT TO COMPANIES (IN DUTCH)

Geachte heer/mevrouw,

Bent u werkzaam binnen HRM en herkent u het probleem dat het niveau van afgestudeerde HRM academici niet aan uw verwachtingen voldoet? Er is nu de kans om uw verwachtingen duidelijk te maken.

Het HRM onderzoeksteam van de Universiteit Twente houdt zich momenteel bezig met een verkenning naar wat bedrijven verwachten van mensen die een combinatie van bedrijfskunde en HRM op universitair niveau hebben gestudeerd.

Het doel van het onderzoeksproject is om mogelijke verschillen tussen de competentie verwachtingen van de bedrijven en wat wordt geleerd door de universiteiten te ontdekken. Aan de hand van de uitkomsten van het onderzoek, zal het HRM curriculum worden aangepast.

Op dit moment zijn wij op zoek naar HR managers, die bereid zijn om mee te werken aan ons onderzoek.

Graag vragen wij om uw medewerking in dit onderzoek. Uw bedrijf is aantrekkelijk, omdat bedrijfskundige afgestudeerden vaak in uw sector terecht komen en uw bedrijf waarschijnlijk de nodige ervaring heeft met de betreffende groep afgestudeerden.
Uw bereidheid om mee te werken zou voor de organisatie enkele voordelen met zich mee kunnen brengen:

- Uw input vormt een bijdrage aan veranderingen aan het HRM curriculum;
- Wanneer het onderzoek is afgerond, zult u het gehele rapport met een volledige analyse van het onderzoek ontvangen.

Wat we van uw organisatie verwachten, is een interview met een HR manager. Dit interview zal ongeveer een uur in beslag gaan nemen.

Uiteraard vindt het onderzoek plaats onder gehele anonimiteit en zal met zorg met uw gegevens worden omgegaan.

Indien u bent geïnteresseerd in deelname aan het onderzoek, dan kunt u uw contactgegevens mailen naar: e.m.marsman@student.utwente.nl
Wij zullen dan telefonisch contact met u opnemen om verdere afspraken te maken.

Bedankt voor uw tijd.

Met vriendelijke groet,

Namens het HRM onderzoeksteam,
Eline Marsman, HRM onderzoeker
e.m.marsman@student.utwente.nl

Interview Protocol

NAME OF THE COMPANY:

NAME OF THE INTERVIEWEE:

FUNCTION OF THE INTERVIEWEE:

YEARS IN FUNCTION:

DATE OF INTERVIEW:

TIME OF INTERVIEW:

CONTACT INFO

TELEPHONE:

E-MAIL:

MEZELF INTRODUCEREN

INTRODUCTIE ONDERZOEK
- Er is een gebrek aan kennis over wat bedrijven verwachten van mensen die HRM hebben gestudeerd. Huidig onderzoek laat zien dat studenten niet voldoen aan de verwachtingen van bedrijven en dat dit te maken kan hebben met het feit dat universiteiten niet op de hoogte zijn van de wensen van bedrijven.
- Dit onderzoek is ontworpen om verdere inzichten te krijgen in wat bedrijven verwachten van mensen die HRM op academisch niveau hebben gestudeerd. Aangezien de bedrijven degene zijn die de standaarden zetten, is het belangrijk om hun mening te weten.

BEDANKEN VOOR DE BEREIDHEID OM MEE TE WERKEN AAN DIT ONDERZOEK.
Uw mening is erg belangrijk en wij staan dan ook open voor uw gedachten en ideeën.

OPNEMEN & TRANSCRIPT
- In het kader van het onderzoek, is het goed als dit gesprek wordt opgenomen? Dit maakt verdere analyse mogelijk.
- Er zal met zorg met uw gegevens worden omgegaan. Uiteraard zal het geheel onder gehele anonimiteit worden verwerkt.
- Is het goed als ik u na de analyse van dit gesprek, u het transcript stuur voor verificatie? Dan weten we zeker dat we uw mening op de juiste manier hebben begrepen.

~OPNAMEAPPARATUUR AANZETTEN EN VOORSTELLEN OM TE BEGINNEN MET DE VRAGEN~

1. Zou u mij om te beginnen iets kunnen vertellen over uw functie binnen deze organisatie?

2. Hoelang heeft u al deze functie?

3. Heeft u verder nog een werkverleden in HRM?

4. Wat maakt uw beroep/baan zo aantrekkelijk voor u?

5. Hoe is HRM binnen de organisatie gestructureerd?

INDIVIDUELE HRM BAAN PRESTATIE

6. Hoe dient volgens u iemand die HRM op academisch niveau heeft gestudeerd (of de HRM professional) te presteren? Hoe dient volgens u de ideale HRM professional te presteren?

7. Waarom prefereert u deze prestatie? (Welke belangrijkst, welke minst belangrijk)

HRM COMPETENTIES

8. Waar hoort de HRM professional zich mee bezig te houden?

9. Waar dienen eventuele andere HRM medewerkers zich mee bezig te houden?

10. Welke kwaliteiten/competenties dient de ideale HRM professional te bezitten? Wie wilt u graag aannemen?

11. Waarom vindt u deze kwaliteiten belangrijk?

12. Verschil in verwachtingen van een HR professional wat betreft sector? Grootte van bedrijf? Scope (nationaal/internationaal)? Privaat/particulier?

- Indien de tijd dringt – Er zijn nog een paar vragen die ik zou willen behandelen
- Vragen: waarom, kunt u een voorbeeld geven?

Dat waren de vragen die ik graag wou stellen vanuit onze kant. Heeft u nog vragen?

Als laatste zouden wij nog graag een beroep op u willen doen. Kent u misschien nog meer bedrijven die het leuk zouden vinden om hun mening te laten horen voor dit onderzoek?

Wat vond u van het gesprek?

Hartelijk bedankt voor uw medewerking.

ALLE CONTACT INFORMATIE AANWEZIG?

8.3 Appendix 3 – Overview of the HRM competences

Table 6 - Overview of the HRM competences

Domain	Competence	Quote	Coder 1 (researcher)	Coder 2 (co-coder)
Business focus Focused on knowing how the business works and is compromised and understanding how decisions influence organization components.	**Business knowledge** Knowledge about the value chain, the value proposition, and social context of the business to understand the business and act on that understanding to be able to influence business decisions (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008).	1) It is important to have knowledge of the business. If an HR manager does not know how the business works and is compromised, who the customers are, what the problems are (actually the SWOT analysis: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats), the HR manager is limited in performing its tasks. [R4]		
		2) You need to know where the business stands for, where a business wants to go to, the economic laws. [R1]	1. Business knowledge	
		3) Having business knowledge and knowledge of the value chain is essential. [R7]	2. Business knowledge / knowledge of the value chain	1. Business knowledge
		4) You also need to have some financial insight and business-oriented insight. Having some knowledge of the administrative organization and ICT components can also be useful. [R7]	3. Business-oriented insight Operational knowledge	2. Financial insight Business knowledge Wide orientation
		5) in an international company it is also important that you know the legislation, the culture, the language, etc. [R2]		
		6) Business knowledge, knowing how value is being created in the organization is also important for the HR professional, as otherwise you don't know how to contribute on the strategic level. [R8]		
		7) For the HR professional it is more expected to have the competence to be an HR business partner. This means that you are believed to have in-depth understanding of the primary processes and that you understand the business for which you work. Having business knowledge is not that much a competence, it is more a gift in which you are open to what is playing in the primary process and that you understand how this		

Legend
[Rx] = the x refers to the respondent
■ = new competences found in empirical study
☐ = competences in existing knowledge on HRM competences

■ = agreement between researcher and co-coder
■ = disagreement between researcher and co-coder

		works, in order for you to be able to be a good interlocutor for the managers who work in the primary process. [R9]		
		8) You need to be able to think in input, throughput and output and to set clear goals that make clear what needs to be added to help the business where it wants to go to. [R1]	4. Quantitative performance behavior	3. Knowledge of the value chain
	Organization sensitivity To understand the impact and implications of decisions of one department on the community and other departments/components of the organization and relevant to societal and governmental factors (Organizational sensitivity; Employee Evaluation and Selection, 2011).	1) Organization sensitivity [R6]		
		2) This (the communication) asks for organization sensitivity, meaning that you need to know the organization, you need to know what is going on in the organization, but also to know potential pitfalls with respect to organization development, culture, the processes you have facilitated, and the decisions you together with other people made (for example about the development of the organization). [R10]		
		3) For a beginning academician you cannot expect him to know the tensions (spanningsveld) in the organization. You need to learn the political relations inside the organizations, which are written down into rules. [R3]	5. Business knowledge	4. Organization sensitivity
		4) You need to be aware that your HR choices influence other parts of the organization. [R7]	6. Choice influence awareness	5. Wide orientation
Learning focus Focused on gaining new knowledge or skills (Learning, 2011).	**Continuous learning** The ability to continuously gain new skills and develop professionally (Maurer & Weiss, 2010, p. 1).	1) He needs to be educated constantly. [R8]		
		2) The importance of continuously being educated is just as important for the HR professional as each other employee. [R9]		
		3) It is important for a HR professional to be continuously educated, especially to get the business-oriented insight. [R10]		
		4) you need to be broader educated, to get insights in all aspects of the organization. [R10]		
		5) HR professional should be open to continuous learning. However, this does not only apply to HR professionals, everyone should continuously learn. It is important to keep up. [R4]		

		6) Just like each professional, an HR professional should continuously learn. [R8]		
		7) You can never stop learning, because otherwise you will not make progress and stand still. [R8]		
		8) for an HR professional to be taken seriously, it is necessary to educate him so he can be more business-oriented. [R8]		
		9) Doing HR is something that you directly need to be able to do and has to be inside you and needs to be further developed. [R3]	7. Feeling for HR	6. Continuous learning
		10) You need to have the potential that you have feeling for HR. This is a matter of growth. [R3]		7. Continuous learning / developmental orientation
	Learn by doing The capability to improve productivity by regularly repeating the same type of actions (Learn-by-doing (economics), 2011).	1) In practice you learn what the organization expects from you, where knowledge is not that important, but skills and performance are. Through work experience you learn. [R2]		
		2) You learn to take on your position by doing things, like supporting the management team at a session. [R3]	8. Learn by doing	
	Self-knowledge To understand oneself in terms of self-assessment, meaning that one understand one's own nature, abilities, and limitations (Self-knowledge, 2011; Self-concept, 2011).	1) You need to trust yourself and cope with your role in an honest manner. [R9]		
		2) You need to know yourself and have some life experience. Self-reflection, empathy, and self-critics are important. [R1]	9. Self-objectivity	8. Self-knowledge
		3) You need to have knowledge of who you are. You need to know your strengths and weaknesses. [R1]	10. Self-objectivity	9. Self-knowledge
		4) who you are as a human: what is your philosophy ("levensovertuiging"), what are your motives, what is your ambition. [R1]	11. Life goals	10. Self-development
		5) What formed you as a person so far? What do want to achieve? [R1]	12. Life experience Life direction	11. Self-insight
	Self-reflection To develop an attitude by observing one's	1) You need to look at what you intended to do and what you really have done, with a look to the interest of the organization, but also what it means for you. [R9]		

	behavior and concluding what attitude has caused this behavior (Self-perception theory, 2011) in which there is the willingness to learn more about one's fundamental nature, purpose, and essence (Human self-reflection, 2011).	2) The HR professional should determine for itself which things are necessary to be done and why he should be motivated in doing his job. When people, from their own work field and equal as human beings, gain insight in why things need to done and why people want the things to be done, you can create outcome. [R7]	13. Self-reflection / self-objectivity	
		3) emotional development, to work on yourself, psychology. You need to gain life experience. [R1]	14. Inner work standards	12. Inner work standards
HR delivery Executing the operational aspects of managing people and organization that are traditionally associated with the HR function (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008; Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).	**HR measurement** To measure how much the HR activities add value to the HR value proposition (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).	1) What are the potentials and where are the risks? This you can quantify. The real added value is less measurable. This, we measure with customer satisfaction. [R3]		13. HR measurement
		2) You need to be able to work with hard data: absenteeism data, labor market data, turnover data. [R3].	15. Work with hard data	14. Numerically skillful
	HR organization capability To have an overview of the people and resources that are needed to accomplish a goal and to effectively mobilize the people and resources on the right place in a short amount of time. To monitor progress and take action when needed. (Overzicht competenties met uitleg)	1) As an HR manager you are not responsible for the people reporting to the line manager, you only have functional responsibility (meaning being responsible for the quality of HR procedures, processes and products.) [R2]		
		2) The result of your work is important, but the process of coming to your results is of the same importance. It is important to keep track of what you are doing and where you spend your time. [R1]	16. Monitor work	15. Achieving results / process orientation
		3) You also need project management skills, meaning that you need to monitor and make plans. [R3]	17. Project management skills	
		4) If the management team decides to go to LEAN, then as a HR manager you should question whether the organization is ready for this. You need to know whether the right personnel is present and what the consequences for the organization are. [R10]		
		5) When you are not concerned with the operational side,		

		you should always have knowledge about what others do, as otherwise you are not a HR professional. You cannot deliver value on the strategic level when you did not show efforts on the operational level. [R8]		
		6) Depending on the role in the organization, you need to be able to let the basic process of HR run smoothly in the organization. [R9]		
		7) The basic processes are the operational side of HR. If you haven't organized the basic processes of HR, you cannot be a interlocutor about the larger topics in the organization, which is more and more expected from a HR professional. [R9]		
		8) The traditional HR work belongs to the line, so the managers. We need to make sure that we have the right managers. These are heads of departments who take on the traditional P&O-oriented tasks. They are for example responsible for absenteeism. HR needs to facilitate that the managers are able to perform these non-professional P-oriented tasks. [R10]		
		9) The HR professional has to profile itself in order to become involved with the strategic activities. The HR professional has to deliver value to become involved. [R1]	18. Value delivery / strategic contribution	
		10) First you have to make sure the basic processes are organized, so you will deserve to consult on the strategic field. You need to earn your role and position. If you make a mess of basic processes, you lose credit. [R3]	19. Value delivery	
		11) the HR professional should run processes smoothly and possess the necessary operational instruments. [R7]	20. Organize processes Possess operational instruments	16. Process orientation?
		12) A company is a collection of people and those people need HR instruments that need to be present. However, the HR instruments are not the main field of the HR professional; this just has to be present. If it is	21. Organize processes Possess operational instruments	

		not present, then you should make sure it is organized the right way. As an HR professional you are responsible for this. [R7]		
		13) You are responsible for the HR administration, but it is the work field of the HR administration to organize things. [R7]		17. Organizing capacity/power
	Legal compliance To have knowledge about the legal issues that influence and safeguard people at work (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).	1) Knowing laws and legal issues is important. [R7]	22. Legal knowledge	18. Legal compliance
	Operational knowledge To have knowledge about the operational level.	1) It is a must to know the ins and outs of the profession. [R3]	23. Profession knowledge	
		2) it is good to have knowledge about what happens on the operational level, so about what is happening in the P&O department. [R5]		
		3) Activities are performed on the strategic level, but the knowledge that the HR professional should possess is also about the operational level. [R8]		
		4) You need to control your field of study, meaning that you need to know the basic processes. [R9]		
		5) As an HR professional you do not have to be involved in everything, but you need to have knowledge about everything (knowing what you do and why). [R2]		
	Staffing To create a comprehensive staffing process of staffing practices – hiring, promoting, transferring, firing – that supports the HR strategy (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).	1) Looking at consequences for HR: which people do we need, which kind of behavior. [R2]		
		2) you prepare function descriptions, the HR professional needs to be able to do this. [R2]		
		3) Scarcity on the labor market also means that you have to make sure you get home grown talent, meaning that you select people in which you see some potential but who still have to be educated before they fit the job. [R8]		

	To continually define and create the individual competencies and organizational capabilities that are needed (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).	4) The basic competences need to be translated into type of behavior. [R9]		
		5) Strategic resource planning is necessary in which we need to expand our horizons and think out of the box. What are the potentials, how can we match people in the best way. [R3]	24. Strategic resource planning	19. HR delivery / Think out of the box
		6) If you hire a person to do A, and you want to let him do B, you have to look if it is possible and useful. If someone does B and works above his ability, then the principle has to be broken and the person has to be preserved (or not, depending on the situation). [R7]	25. People placement / strategic resource planning	
HR technology Using HR applications to help accomplish HR tasks (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).	**Facilitating skills** To be concerned with facilitating HR technology.	1) Thinking about for example the e-HRM applications, fits the competence of being innovative. [R9]		
		2) HR technology is becoming more important. As a HR manager you should draw the lines, so you need to determine when the organization is ready to build and organize the organization with e-HRM instruments. [R10]		
		3) As HR professional, it is important that you know how e-HRM works. You do not have to be able to work with everything, but you need to embrace it and think about, it as you are the one who needs to organize it. [R7]	26. Know how e-HRM works Facilitate e-HRM	20. Work with e-HRM
	Knowledge of HR technology To have knowledge about the HR technology possibilities.	1) With respect to e-HRM, we work with people soft. I can work with it, but for me it is not important. My colleague, the HR specialist, more works with the system. [R4]		
		2) With respect to the use of HR technology, it is useful to know it, but not really sure whether an HR professional really should be able to use it. [R5]		
		3) Knowledge of which HR systems there are and what they are able off may be useful. [R5]		
		4) the HR professional needs to be able to work with e-HRM. However, the HR professional uses this for own use instead of using it to direct others. [R3]	27. Work with e-HRM	21. Work with e-HRM

Personal credibility	Achieving results	1) You need to take decisive actions. No false promises. [R4]		
Being credible in personal and interpersonal relationships with all parties HR professionals serve (Adapter from Boselie & Paauwe, 2005).	To be committed and to do what one says he will do and to achieve results that are error free and meet the highest standards of integrity (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009)			
	Communication skills To have effective written and verbal communication skills to clearly communicate critical messages for organizational success (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).	1) You need to possess skills that enable you to communicate on a rational level, not on a normative or emotional level. [R2]		
		2) Communication skills, both oral and writing [R6]		
		3) in the HR function the level of communication skills needed could be higher, as you need to communicate with different people from different layers in the organization. [R9]		
		4) For HR it is important to ask relevant questions and to listen. [R1]		22. Communication skills
		5) There are conversations with the direction weekly. Good communication skills are an absolute must [R1]	28. Communication skills	23. Communication skills
		6) Communication is needed when you want something from someone, if you want to reach something. [R7]	29. Communication skills	
		7) frequently communicate with the employees from all layers of the organization. [R7]	30. Communication skills	
		8) Being present on the work floor is important. You need to visit factories and talk with people. Look at what needs to happen and think about the manner things are done now (like for example with performance appraisal). [R2]		
		9) It is good to have contact with the employees on the work floor [R4]		
		10) One of the most important things is to communicate, to maintain your relations, and to maintain your network. [R3]	31. Communication skills Effective relationships	24. Communication skills Effective relationships Networking

	Conversation partner To facilitate and play an active role in conversation practice.	1) The HR advisor is a confidant. He needs to be approachable for everyone. You serve the needs of the company. [R3]	32. Conversation partner	25. Customer/service orientation
		2) You need to have a certain amount of impact and persuasiveness. [R3]	33. Impact and persuasiveness	26. Communication skills
		3) Of all, the impact and persuasiveness is the most important. On this competence, people are being hired, otherwise someone cannot do the job. It is possible to learn it, but it has to be in you. [R3]	34. Impact and persuasiveness	
		4) You need to give people the energy that they want to talk about their work field. You need to let them see that there is more than they expect. Self-discovery is the highest power. As a HR professional, you should steer these processes of self-discovery. [R7]	35. Steer self-discovery	27. Continuous learning
		5) All activities in which the HR manager should be a conversation partner. [R2]		
		6) you to be able to be a good interlocutor for the managers who work in the primary process [R9]		
		7) Business-oriented insight means that you need to be able to be a balanced interlocutor. [R10]		
	Cooperation To work with others in harmony and to actively contribute in formulating and achieving joint goals. (Overzicht competenties met uitleg)	1) You need to stimulate each other to get to the points. This means that you need to have a business-oriented insight. [R7]	36. Business oriented insight Stimulate each other	
		2) Very important to have contact with management on a daily basis: like for example guide new managers. [R4]		
		3) Daily contact with the executive board. Important to have much contact with them, because they are the clients who tell you what to do. They are your direct boss. [R5]		
		4) It is about supporting the top of the organization. It is operating on the strategic and tactical level [R6]		
		5) Focused on cooperation [R6]		
		6) Cooperation: as an HR manager you should be able to make connections with people [R8]		
		7) we need to question each other on topics to get clear		

		concepts, so we are able to understand each other (the management team). [R10]		
		8) You need to be able to work in a group. [R1]		28. Cooperation
		9) Working together with the top is needed because managers are no HR professionals, but they are considered to have the skills to be a good HR manager. Hence, you need to guide your people, so you have to be able to do your own HR. [R3]		29. Cooperation Effective relationships
		10) Working together [R3]	37. Cooperation	30. Cooperation
	Effective relationships To maintain effective interpersonal skills to work well with colleagues because of an atmosphere of trust (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).	1) When you have an idea you should create support at your colleagues in the management team. [R10]		
		2) As an HR professional you make a difference with your personal approach. You need to take the right position, you need to build trust and win respect. [R4]		
		3) Interpersonal skills are very important. To negotiate, to make decisions, to convince people, you steer people. These skills are absolutely essential to make your role a success. [R4]		
		4) Communication with the executive board is one of the most important parts of the function of P&O. Especially keeping up relationships and building new, strong relationships. [R5]		
		5) it is important that the HR professional has a good relationship with finance, the direction, etc. [R1]	38. Effective relationships	
		6) Holding good relations with others is crucial. [R1]	39. Effective relationships	31. Effective relationships
		7) Being able to develop relations with people has to be in you, but you can also learn how it goes. [R3]	40. Effective relationships	32. Effective relationships
	Empathy To identify with and understand another's situation, feelings, and motives by imaginatively entering into another person's feelings (Empathy, 2011).	1) If you don't like people, you're not right for the field of HR. As a manager you need to "truly love your people and ask for results". You have to do both, not just one of them. If you don't like people this is a problem for HR. Of course, you should handle this professionally. [R1]	41. Liking people	33. Sociability
		2) As an HR manager you need to cope with the soft side of HRM. [R4]		

		3) You need to like to work with people. You need to show an intrinsic interest in people. [R4]		
		4) I always think: how do I want to be treated? To place yourself in the person. Then you also get appreciation back. [R4]		
		5) I measure my employees to a certain standard. I let them ask themselves the question 'what I can do to make the other person successful' on a daily basis. This is what HR is about. [R8]		
		6) You should always place yourself in the receiving group when you want to communicate with that group. [R9]		
		7) The HR professional distinguishes itself from other management disciplines in that one needs a well-developed empathy ("inlevingsgevoel") on realizing the processes that you wish to realize. [R7]	42. Well-developed empathy	34. Empathy
		8) The interpersonal psychological field is also important, meaning that you know how people handle themselves and others. [R7]	43. People awareness	
		9) HR professional needs to be concerned with human capital. [R1]	44. People concern	35. People-orientation
		10) If there is a conflict, you should be aware that there are still people in the organization, whose needs also need to be taken into account. You need to have an eye for the employees. [R3]	45. People awareness / people concern	
		11) you should like people. [R1]	46. Liking people	
	Independence To take actions based on own convincement which are guided by one's own opinion and dare to disagree with decisions. To make independent decisions in which one takes responsibility for one's	1) Being aware that one has to hold an independent position. If you want to execute your field of study and give reliable advises towards management, you have to stand strong. The interest that you have, does not always have to be the interest of the organization. You should not become an extension of management. You should keep yourself independent on your own field of study. Not because you have to look at the interest of employees, because you are not a lobbyist of the personnel. [R5]		

actions. (Overzicht competenties met uitleg)	2) When the manager of a school hires you as a P&O advisor, you should dare to disagree with the manager and tell him why. You are there to provide the manager with advice. Not "when the manager says it, then we must do it". You are an independent intermediary. [R5]		
	3) Independence: very important; you should not focus on satisfying the needs of your relations, but you should dare to, based on your professionalism, give advice. [R6]		
	4) Show courage, guts: meaning that you need to dare to show managers and employees what they are doing ("Spiegel voorhouden") [R8]		
	5) You need to be able to take on an independent position. When you look from an independent point of view, you are able to be the most professional and credible. [R9]		
	6) The more independent you act, the better you are able to shape your role. This means that you need to be able to keep distance and to be credible. [R9]		
	7) Consider yourself as a craft, and not just as an extension of top management. If you cannot be autonomous, you cannot deliver value. [R1]	47. Independence / autonomy	36. Independence
	8) Important competences: autonomy, commitment, and ownership. Autonomy is the most important, you need to have a high degree of independence. You need to have your own identic autonomous opinion. [R1]	48. Independence Autonomy	37. Autonomy / independence Commitment Ownership Own opinion
	9) The HR advisor needs to take up a strong position, in which he dares to disagree with the managers. [R3]	49. Dare to disagree	38. Communication skills
	10) If you do not agree with what the managers want, you need to defend yourself and dare to ask questions. [R3]	50. Independence	
	11) Just like other professionals, the HR professional is an independent person who knows its own profession. [R3]	51. Independence	39. Independent Professional / continuous learning

		12) You need to be able to take a distance from your work and to take criticism not too personal. You always have to realize that you are an HR professional who represents the business. [R4]		
		13) Taking risks and showing courage are important. You cannot always play safe. [R4]		
	Open-mindness To be receptive to new and different ideas and the opinion of others.	1) You need to be open to other people, other cultures, other languages. You need to think global. [R2]		
		2) You need to be open-minded, because if you are in the job for a long time, there is the risk that you think you know everything and that you have a special work method to which you stick. [R4]		
		3) Especially the HR manager should have an open view and should look further and have a vision from different perspectives, like those of management and the employees. [R10]		
		4) You need to keep a clear mind and this is sometimes hard for management. A clear mind pays off as people become employable. If does not matter if a person is going to do something else, as long as you approach it with an open vision you can get far. [R7]	52. Open mind	
		5) The HR professional has to be someone who is open-minded and thinks about HRM the modern way and not the old-fashion way. [R7]	53. Open minded Think HRM the modern way	40. Open minded
		6) You always have to show interest in what someone else is doing. [R7]	54. Show interest	
		7) Personality refers to whether a random employee feels pleased with the HR professional. However, the HR professional should also feel pleased with the random employee, or manager. Personality refers to questions as whether a person enters the organization unprejudiced, whether the person is able to ask good questions and listen well, whether the person is non-judgmental, and whether the person can make good considerations and not to see everything black and		

		white, as you always are concerned with different situations. [R8]		
	Style flexibility To be able to associate with people on different levels and to balance needs.	1) You are in a mix: on one side you need to keep an eye on the business goals, but on the other side there is a certain human factor. You need to find a balance between both. [R4]		
		2) Towards the management team there is the impact, the persuasiveness, and towards the client system is the analytical capacity. You need to find your position between both sides. [R3]	55. Balance needs	
		3) The interpersonal balance should not be forgotten. If you are business-oriented, you are occupied with people. [R7]	56. Consider interpersonal balance People awareness	
		4) You need to have the potential to steer a middle course between different needs: those of the managers and those of the employees. [R3]	57. Balance needs	41. Personal credibility
		5) Style flexibility is also an important competence. It should be in your 'repertoire' to work with different people. HR advisors are often too close to the management team and not to the client system, while they actually need to find a balance between both. He needs to oversee the whole, because then he can better help the management team as he is in the middle. This is the style flexibility. [R3]	58. Style flexibility	42. Flexibility People-orientation Personal credibility / balance between customers
		6) You try to translate the message of the management team and to look at how this will influence other levels inside the organization. [R10]		
		7) You need to be social skillful, meaning that you need to associate with different people. For that, you need style flexibility. [R3]	59. Style flexibility	43. Sociability Flexibility
		8) It is good to have contact with the employees on the work floor and also to be able to strategically think. This is the challenge: to think and act on different levels. Trying to get a balance between the work floor and the top. [R4]		

		9) Make oneself on all kinds of levels understandable, both to the employees as to the top of the organization. [R5]		
		10) you have to serve many different clients, you are lived by ad hoc questions of the management; senior management want to spar. [R6]		
		11) you need to act from a tension field between business interest, personnel interest, organization interest, and all kinds of stakeholders. [R9]		
		12) A HR professional should be able to quickly switch between strategic, tactical, and operational. [R10]		
		13) he should be able to change the communication, meaning that you have to communicate with different levels, as you need to communicate with managers and employees. [R10]		
		14) You need to be able to negotiate on the micro level (with a new employee about his terms of employment), inside the management team, with labor unions about the CAO, with lawyers about contract termination. [R10]		
		15) customer focus (internal and external customers) [R3]	60. Customer focus	44. Customer-oriented
	Wide orientation To look further than one's own department.	1) to have a wide orientation (networking in NVP, participating in other networks by doing workshops and visiting companies). [R3]	61. Wide orientation	
		2) concern wide thinking (look further than your own department, business, etc.) [R3]	62. Think concern wide	45. Business knowledge / HR delivery
		3) Looking broader and across borders is important and is maybe becoming even more important. [R4]		
		4) When you are working in the field of HRM, you should not only be occupied in your own specialty, it is also good to look at other departments so you can learn from them. [R4]		
Strategic focus Focus on occupying on the	**Analytical thinking** To separate and distinguish elements of a	1) Analytical skills: important, because you need to know how things relate to other matters inside the organization; you need to be able to make		

strategic level.	concept (idea, problem, etc.) in order to understand its essential nature and inner relationships. (Overzicht competenties met uitleg)		connections. [R6]		
		2)	It's good to possess theory, but you should know how to handle this theory and to bring it into practice. [R8]		
		3)	for a certain amount of analytical thinking capacity, but also business-oriented insights. [R10]		
		4)	You need to make reasonable analysis, you need to make connections, you need to live above the matter. Making connections has to be in you, but also has to develop itself. Making analysis (what is going on, which questions are exactly being asked, what can I do with it, how can I support it the best) you have to be able to do very quickly. [R3]	63. Analytical thinking skills	46. Analytical capability Organization sensitivity
		5)	analytical thinking capacity (problem analysis and making judgments: what is going on, to look for the question behind the question, is this really the problem?) [R3]	64. Analytical thinking skills	47. Analytical thinking capacity
		6)	You need to listen well, and see what happens. Experience means being able to listen well, to see what happens, and to make connections. [R3]	65. Analytical thinking skills	48. Analytical
		7)	You need to come up with different scenario's, you need to be able to think out of the box and deliver different points of view. This by looking from the outside in and being able to analyze. [R3]	66. Scenario making	49. Analytical
	Change management To shift individuals, teams, and organizations from a current state to a desired future state. An organizational process aimed at empowering employees to accept and embrace changes in their current business environment. (Change management, 2011)	1)	Change management is important. Especially when you have to do with reorganizations. [R4]		
		2)	As a strategic partner you more need to have an understanding of for example change processes. [R6]		
		3)	The HR professional is expected to more and more think about organization development (change management). Change is becoming more present as a routine, meaning that as an HR professional you need to play a role in helping to establish this change. [R9]		
		4)	If you let others see that changes are necessary, then you create a movement that people from their own conviction pick up their tasks, and not because	67. Make change necessity visible Convince people	

		someone tells them to do so. [R7]		
		5) You need to have an eye on what changes can do with the people that form the organization. This can make or break a company [R7]	68. People awareness	
	Culture management To appreciate, articulate, and help shape a company's culture that is consistent with the requirements of the external customers, the business strategy, and the employees (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009; Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, & Younger, 2007). To design and deliver HR practices that translate and enforce the culture into the right employee attitudes and behaviors (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).	1) Behavior is central, everything needs to be translated to observable behavior. [R2]		
		2) You need to know the core of the company. The "on-boarding program" ("inwerkprogramma") is focused on getting a feeling of the character of the organization, not so much of the business. This is more valued. [R3]	69. Business knowledge	50. Culture management?
		3) As a HR professional you need to form the culture. Here, you constantly have to look where you want to be in five years, meaning that you need to have a vision. [R10]		
	Entrepreneurship & Innovation To be able to introduce new ideas, methods, etc. To be someone who undertakes innovations, finance and business acumen in an effort to transform innovations into economic goods. (Entrepreneurship, 2011)	1) Entrepreneurship [R8]		
		2) Certain amount of creativity [R8]		
		3) Of an HR professional it is expected that he is continuously concerned with innovation. This means that you need creative, innovative competences to be able to think about the daily operations and to think about how the organization will look like in five years. This asks for an analytical thinking capacity. [R9]		
		4) A HR professional should not do things because it is the normal way of doing. [R7]		51. Innovative
	Feasibility analysis	1) You need to be able to make a risk analysis of HR: this		

	To objectively and rationally uncover the strengths and weaknesses of the existing business, opportunities and threats as presented by the environment. (Feasibility study, 2011)	is to compare what the company requires, and what HR can deliver giving current threats and opportunities. Being able to make a SWOT analysis and based on that to make an action plan. [R2]		
		2) Look at the opportunities and treats, look at your strengths and weaknesses (SWOT analysis) and how you together with others should proceed to create advantage. [R10]		
		3) Feasibility is also an important issue: we can do what we want, but it needs to be feasible, do we have the right people? For example internationalization: are the right people in those countries or do we need to send our own people abroad? Is it feasible to close offices? Feasibility with respect to HRM is mostly a matter of labor market. [R3]	70. Consider feasibility	52. HR delivery / staffing
	Leadership To let people know the direction in which the organization wants to go and let them know the goals. To create commitment with goals, when people make decisions let them be aware of the goals. (Overzicht competenties met uitleg)	1) A company is a collection of people who share the goal to create outcome/results. As a HR professional you should be occupied with the preconditions that build such a shared goal. [R7]	71. Create preconditions / Strategic contribution Culture management	53. Business knowledge
		2) As a HR professional you can set goals, but eventually the creation of preconditions that lead to the outcomes that are preferred is the thing you need to do. You need to do this from a business-oriented perspective. [R7]	72. Business oriented perspective	54. Performance management
		3) If the business is in some kind of development process, you don't want to let others do things because you tell them to do so. You need to facilitate the process that someone becomes convinced that the way it needs to be done is the right way for the business. [R7]	73. Convince people	55. Process orientation
		4) You can provide people the basis of why things need to be done: what needs to be done to reach a goal together. [R7]		56. Performance management
		5) It is important that you are not too helpful and do things for people, you need to direct people. [R3]	74. Direct people	
		6) As a HR manager you are concerned with steering		

		people towards the goals and to monitor this. [R10]		
	Market-driven connectivity To take on signals from the external environment and translate these into the organization to respond to market demands (Storey, Wright, & Ulrich, 2009).	1) Sociology will become more important as the society changes, the labor market gets tighter, and there is a different way in which you connect to people. [R8]		
		2) The HR professional needs to know how to handle the current generation, because there are some movements when looking at the societal development of the way work is done (for example how the work is done, the use of technology, personal contacts). [R8]		
		3) the new, well-educated, future employee expects different things from an organization. It is not that Calvinistic anymore. People try to find a balance between their private and work lives, they think that working part time is normal. These are processes which you need to take into account in your current organization. The rise of "ZZP'ers" also asks for changes. People want independence and freedom. [R10]		
		4) people see their work as a job that needs to be done and then continue to do another job. As an organization you should be aware of this. [R10]		
		5) you should continuously monitor developments, like the new generation, labor market development, the social system, dismissal laws ("ontslagrecht"), retirement developments, and the aging. [R10]		
		6) he needs to guard policy and the trends in his own field. This means that he needs to know which functions are scarce on the labor market [R3]		57. Market-driven connectivity
	Organizational commitment To set high standards on own work, in which the work is focused on the demands, priorities and goals of the organization	1) affinity with the business and with the employees. [R2]		
		2) The HR manager is a business partner, which means that you need to be close to the business and need to speak their language. [R2]		
		3) HR will be underestimated if you do not stand close to other business processes. [R2]		
		4) You are an asset of the business, which means that you	75. Knowing your role	58. Organizational

			expectations	commitment
	and one is working in the interest of the organization and not in its own interest (Overzicht competenties met uitleg).	are a cost and you need to be close to the business to know what they expect from you. [R1]		
	Proactivity To tend to initiate change rather than reacting to events. (Proactivity, 2011)	1) You need to be proactive, meaning that you should not just follow the rules, you should take initiative. There is no ideal way of executing HR. You have to look at what comes to the organization, to look at the developments, and what suits the organization. Together with the organization you should look at how the organization should be developed. Then you can create added value. [R10]		
		2) HRM has to be proactive, and not reactive, which in the past was the case. [R4]		
		3) Proactive means that in a conversation with managers you try to detect problems in a department, and that these problems maybe affect another department. How do we solve these problems: is it a matter of training, is it the people whom we maybe have to manage in a different way? [R4]		
		4) Proactivity [R6]		
		5) Proactivity: being present in the business and to work with managers and employees and not to just sit at your desk. HR should not be reactive as then you just follow the facts. Being reactive, managers and employees will not have the intention to ask you to be involved in things that matter. [R8]		
	Result orientation To be actively oriented on realizing goals and results in which one makes good appointments about	1) For the HR professional it is important to go further than what is on paper. You need to create your own job, you need to try to add value to the organization for which your work, in order for people to like to come to you and ask you for your opinion on special topics. [R4]		

ones tasks and responsibilities. (Overzicht competenties met uitleg)	2) You need to bring and translate it to the language of the entrepreneur: you need to deliver data/results. [R2]			
	3) He also needs to be aware that you sometimes need to go further than what your job description says. [R8]			
	4) Mostly, you should look how, with the help of starting points, you can bring the organization to a higher level. [R10]			
	5) result oriented [R3]	76. Result-oriented	59. Result-oriented	
Strategic involvement To help establish business strategy, to have a vision of the future, and to provide insights on business issues (Ulrich, Brockbank, Johnson, Sandholtz, & Younger, 2008).	1) For the head of the P&O department is it important to have some input on the strategic level. [R5]			
	2) set up concrete goals for which you need to look at the strategy of the organization, the business, the trends in the society, and what is on the agenda. [R9]			
	3) you are working on establishing policy, culture, vision, and strategy. [R1]	77. Strategic contribution		
	4) Mostly, the HR professional has to be occupied with the continuity of the business. Hence, the main goal of a company is to survive. [R7]	78. Business continuity	60. Strategic contribution	
	5) When there is no continuity for the business, there is no HR needed. So as an HR professional you have to be occupied with the continuity of the business. [R7]	79. Business continuity	61. Strategic contribution	
	6) What about your vision, your mission, your strategy? This you need to think about and continuously translate to the organization and the people who are employed in the organization. [R10]			
	7) It's all about strategic human resource management, meaning that HR activities are close to the business strategy and deduced from this strategy. [R2]			
	8) We are busy with how we in a consistent manner can work to the strategy (process supervision). We are process supervisors because we look from the outside into the inside. [R3]	80. Process supervision	62. Strategic contribution	
	9) to be able to strategically think [R4]			
	10) It is important that the HR policy fits the business			

		policy. The HR professional should take care of this. [R4]		
		11) P&O plays an important role with strategy, in the sense that when the course of the strategy becomes known, P&O plays an important role in filling in that strategy. [R5]		
		12) you should also know how to develop a vision and how the business works and is compromised. [R8]		
		13) There is a gaining need for HR people to be able to develop a vision and based on that vision to imagine the consequences for the organization. [R8]		
		14) You need to have a vision to be able to look further. This asks for strategic thinking and creative leadership. [R9]		
		15) A HR professional is concerned with a lot of strategic activities, like translating the strategy to a HR strategy but also to get this strategy precise with each other. [R10]		
		16) You need to make clear how HRM can contribute to where the business wants to go. These goals have to be SMART – specific, measurable, acceptable, realistic, timely – and ambitious. HRM can partly influence these goals. However, together with the whole business chain, goals can be reached. [R1]	81. Qualitative performance behavior Contributing to business decisions	63. Strategic decision making
		17) You need to figure out what the best way is to get there, with a concern for profitability and human capital. [R1]	82. Strategic decision making	
		18) You need to have a vision on the future: how does the market in a particular segment develop itself, how difficult is it to get people, how do we find people for our organization [R3]	83. Vision on future	64. Strategic contribution / long term insight
		19) make sure that the HR strategy fits the business strategy [R7]	84. HR strategy	65. Strategic contribution

8.4 APPENDIX 4 – PERFORMANCE ELEMENTS

Table 7 - Performance elements

Performance element	Quotation	Coder 1 (researcher)	Coder 2 (co-coder)
Deliver production	1) Performance is delivering production. [R2]		
Job satisfaction	1) It is important how the HR professional feels and thinks about his job and the organization he/she is working for. [R2]		
	2) He has to feel satisfied with his job. [R8]		
	3) Feeling comfortable in your job is important for every employee, also for the HR professional. A manager should monitor this, is doesn't matter whether the manager is an HR professional or not. [R3]	1. Job satisfaction	
Performance indicators	1) Added value of HR indicated through key performance indicators (balanced Scorecard). [R2]		
	2) a few indicators that can be measured objectively: sick leave / absenteeism, turnover, etc. However, these are not the most important. The goals are the most important. [R4]		
	3) Performance is measured by how reliable the advises are that you provide. Also in which matter the policy that you develop, suits the organization and is applicable to the organization. [R5] Furthermore, performance has to do with how the head of the P&O department maintains its relationships with key figures inside the organization. [R5]		
	4) Independent of these goals and actions, you are also going to formulate key performance indicators, meaning that you are going to follow and monitor the things that you find important. [R9]		
	5) For every employee we make a performance document in our performance management system. We try to keep this as SMART as possible. [R3]	2. Performance indicators	
Qualitative & Quantitative performance behavior	1) Performance is about results and the way you get to these results. [R9]		
	2) Performance is setting goals that are ambitious and to become owner of those goals, even if you are not able to reach them all. This is the basis of performance, to make it quantifiable. [R1]	3. Quantitative and qualitative performance behavior	1. Quantitative and qualitative performance behavior
	3) Goals need to be quantifiable and of a qualitative good level. [R1]	4. Quantitative and qualitative performance behavior	2. Quantitative and qualitative performance behavior
	4) Knowledge (to know), skills (to be able to), attitude (to be willing to) → perform (the resulting behavior). The doing/the behavior is the performance. [R2]		

	5) Behavior objectives: which is the current level of the competences that are needed [R6]		
	6) Result objectives: which derive from the annual plan and the job description [R6]		
	7) Performance is measured by the executive. Are the goals reached: yes or no. [R4]		
Role expectations	1) Meeting expectations is not only covering your job description, but requires also more if possible. [R2]		
	2) It is important to not only look at what your job description says, but also to go further. [R3]	5. Role breadth self-efficacy	
	3) People are assessed on the way they act on the field of what is expected from them. [R9]		

Table 8 - Opinion respondents on the contingencies of the requirements of the HR professional

Dependence	Indicators	Opinions[1]
Size of company	HR sources availability	- In a small company the controller often performs the HR. In a larger company, there are more sources to perform HR. [R2]
	Work dimension / operation level	- HRM also differs with respect to size of the business. As personnel advisor of a small business of 100 people, you do everything yourself. In larger companies, there is a higher dimension of work, as much is done lower in the organization. Large companies have the possibility to invest in this. [R3] - Larger companies give the opportunity for specialization. With smaller companies, you need an all-rounder who can do everything. [R4] - Expectations of the qualities of an HR professional depend on the size of the business, because in a smaller organization you need to work more all-round, because less manpower is available to specialize in HRM. In a larger organization more specialties may be done, so other qualities are expected from an HR professional than in a smaller organization. [R5] - When working in a smaller company you cannot chose to do what you like or find interesting, as more activities need to be done. You are concerned with a lot of tasks at the same time. [R8] - The basic competences will be preferable for each company. However, when working in a small company, the operational competences will weigh heavier than the strategic competences. When working in a larger company, you will more operate on the strategic level and others will be operating on the operational level. Your primary responsibility depends on your role. However, in essence all basic elements are necessary to cope with your role. [R9] - The larger the company, the more HR is distanced. The smaller the company, the more you are between employees. [R10]
	Education	- There is a difference when you look at size of the business. It depends also on what you have learned. If you are specialized in for example compensation and benefits, you don't need to know everything about HRM, and then it is better to work in a large company. [R4]
	Level of thinking	- With respect to size of the business, there is a difference in what is expected from the HRM professional, because in smaller organization you must deal with smaller issues/problems than in larger organization. There is less stratification. Probably the same competences will be needed, but on a lighter level. Smaller organizations ask for a different level of thinking, a more operational level. [R6] - With respect to size of the business, the professional in a small company should have a more complex set of skills and knowledge as in a larger company. [R8]

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[1] Legend: [Rx] = the x refers to the number of the respondent

	Insight in situations	-	The larger the company, the more as a HR professional you need to have an overview of and insight in complex situations. [R7]
Type of company	Corporate culture	-	HRM differs with respect to sector. The main difference lies in the corporate culture. Different problems matter. The operational HR in a process oriented company is much more important, more contact with the work floor is needed. [R3]
	Business challenges	-	Different types of business have their own challenges. With a production company people may be less educated and this may require different communication. No matter if people are high or low educated, you want to reach the business goals, you want to reach the production. If this does not succeed, you have to speak to people, you need to motivate them, you need to train them. So this is the same, but on another level compared to a knowledge intensive company. There it may be easier to steer people. When you work with professionals (in a knowledge intensive company) it is a matter of setting a vision and then they will work towards it. At production companies you need to steer more targeted. [R4]
		-	With respect to type of business, the HR professional is being concerned with different challenges. People with higher education have different challenges in their professional lives than people with a lower education and a different job responsibility. For example, flex working asks for different challenges. Flex working will not be possible or desirable in a plant environment, but in a professional environment it will be. The difference also asks for a different communication level. [R8]
	Way of working	-	Expectations of the qualities of an HR professional depend on the type of business. For example the difference between a company in which there is the traditional way of working and the new way of working ("het nieuwe werken"). If an organization asks for a specific kind of P&O'er or HRM'er who for example needs to work very traditional, there is a different point of departure then from someone who needs to work in a company that is busy with the new way of working ("het nieuwe werken"). [R5]
	Level of thinking	-	With respect to type of the business, there is a difference in what is expected from the HRM professional, as a knowledge intensive company with professionals asks for a different level of thinking than a traditional, production company. The higher the knowledge level, the higher the knowledge level of HR. This applies to the P&O advisors, as they should be good interlocutors. [R6]
	Resource availability	-	A family business operates in a different way than an exchange oriented ("beursgenoteerd") company. The availability of financial resources causes a different way of operating. In an exchange oriented company there is a constant focus on the efficiency of the organization. This asks for a different HR approach when inserting ideas, proposals, and policy. The reason to get somewhere is very different than with a family business. [R10]

	People focus	- The importance of human capital for knowledge intensive companies is large, because people are an important asset. This makes the importance of HR very important. [R1] - A knowledge intensive company is characterized by professionals. A professional is being steered in a different way than a production employee. This asks for a different communication level. A production worker asks for more transparency and clearness that needs to fit his world. A professional is more empowered and critical, which asks from the HR manager to be a good interlocutor. Proactivity will not be necessary for production employees. [R10] - With respect to sector, there does not have to be a difference. There could be a difference between a service company and a production company. This has to do with the organization of labor and the level of people you are concerned with. [R2]
Scope of company	Country legislation	- HR depends on the country the company is located. It has to do with the legislation. [R2]
	Cultural differences	- In an international company, where you have to do with international employees, you have to do with cultural differences. This matters for HRM. A fully Dutch company may work different from a company with all kinds of cultures. You have to be open to these cultural differences: you need to know how to steer people. You need to prevent misunderstandings, and to make sure that the cooperation works well. It is very challenging to contribute to this. [R4]
Position of company	Phase	- The phase of the organization determines whether there will be a difference in the execution of HRM. A pioneer phase asks for different skills from the department HR. When an organization is in a phase in which one wants to control the systems and processes, this asks for different skills for HR. Based on the size and the phase of the organization, you are going to work with the organization and the people who are employed in this organization. [R10]