

## Recruitment via Social Networking Sites

The effects of source credibility & congruence between (in)formality of the Social Networking Site and (in)formality of the relationship with the source on the impact that job-offer messages have via Social Networking Sites.

Master thesis  
Marketing Communication – Communication studies

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## Summary (English)

Social Networking Sites (e.g., Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter) are popular online communication tools. Yet little is known about how companies can use these Social Networking Sites (SNS) for recruitment purposes. In this study, the effects of source credibility and the effects of different SNS on the job-offer messages impact on potential applicants are studied. Furthermore, the influence of information congruence among (in)formality of SNS and (in)formality of the relationship with the source on the impact that job-offers have on potential applicants is studied. The impact of job-offer messages on potential applicants is operationalised by the perceived job-fit, organisational attractiveness, forward intention, apply intention, and intention to search for more information. This study uses a 2 (relationship with the source: informal versus formal) x 4 (SNS: Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, versus offline) between subjects online experiment with fictitious situation sketches to test the interactions and the relationships between the variables. The results of 315 respondents show that information congruence among (in)formality in recruitment results in more credible messages, higher intentions to search for more information about the job, higher perceived job-fit, higher apply intentions, and higher organisational attractiveness. Additionally, informal sources are perceived as more credible than formal sources. Moreover, receivers with an informal relationship with the source had a higher attitude towards the message than receivers with a formal relationship with the source. The results support theories that assume that information congruence positively influences attitudes towards the advertisements, and theories that assume the relationship between source credibility, message credibility, attitude towards the message, and recruitment related variables. Consequently, organisations should choose the source and the SNS for their job-offer messages carefully.

*Key words: Social Networking Sites, Recruitment, source credibility, message credibility, attitude towards the message, organisational attractiveness, perceived job-fit, apply intention, forward intention, intention to search for more information.*

## Summary (Dutch)

Social Networking Sites (zoals Facebook, LinkedIn en Twitter) zijn populaire online communicatie middelen. Toch is er weinig bekend over hoe organisaties Social Networking Sites (SNS) kunnen gebruiken voor recruitment doeleinden. In dit onderzoek is gekeken naar de effecten van zendergeloofwaardigheid en de effecten van de verschillende SNS op de impact die baanaanbod berichten hebben op potentiële kandidaten. Bovendien is in deze studie gekeken naar de impact van informatiecongruentie tussen het (in)formele karakter van de SNS en het (in)formele karakter van de relatie met de zender op de impact van een baanaanbod op potentiële kandidaten. De impact die een recruitment bericht op potentiële kandidaten heeft, is geoperationaliseerd als de verwachting dat de potentiële kandidaat past bij de baan, de aantrekkelijkheid van de organisatie, de intentie om het bericht door te sturen naar anderen, de intentie om te solliciteren en de intentie om meer informatie over de baan te zoeken. Dit onderzoek maakt gebruik van een 2 (relatie met de zender: informeel versus formeel) x 4 (SNS: Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter versus offline) tussen-proefpersoon ontwerp waarbij middels een online experiment met fictieve situatieschetsen de interactie en de relaties tussen de variabelen zijn getest. De resultaten van 315 respondenten laten zien dat de informatie congruentie tussen het (in)formele karakter van de SNS en het (in)formele karakter van de relatie met de zender resulteert in een geloofwaardiger bericht, hogere intentie om meer informatie over de baan te zoeken, hogere intentie om te solliciteren, een hogere verwachting ten aanzien dat de persoon bij de baan past en een aantrekkelijkere organisatie. Bovendien worden zenders die een informele relatie hebben met de ontvanger gezien als geloofwaardiger dan zenders die een formele relatie hebben met de ontvanger. Eveneens hadden de mensen met een informele relatie met de zender een hogere attitude ten aanzien van het recruitment bericht dan de mensen met een formele relatie. De resultaten ondersteunen de theorieën waarin aangenomen wordt dat informatie congruentie resulteert in hogere attitude ten aanzien van advertenties en theorieën waarin de verbanden tussen zendergeloofwaardigheid, berichtgeloofwaardigheid, attitude over een bericht en recruitment afhankelijke variabelen worden verondersteld. Op basis van de resultaten kan geconcludeerd worden dat organisaties weloverwogen keuzes moeten maken over wie een bericht post en op welke SNS.

## Preface

A couple of my friends will certainly be checking Twitter during my graduation ceremony. The first thing I will do after my graduation ceremony is post 'YES GRADUATED' on Facebook, and I will soon after change my career status on LinkedIn. The so-called Social Networking Sites are part of my life and it seems that almost everyone nowadays has integrated so-called Social Networking Sites into their daily activities. Therefore, Social Networking Sites are an amazing, actual subject for my master thesis.

Last October I started two theses at Ziggo about recruitment via Social Networking Sites; one for Marketing Communications and one for Business Administrations. In front of you lies my Marketing Communication thesis, which completes my Marketing Communications study. However, without the support of others I could not have written this thesis. Therefore, I would like to use this preface to thank some people.

First, I would like to thank Jan Karel Sindorff for giving me the opportunity to discover Ziggo, the million possibilities I got, and the always encouraging supervision. Jan Karel Sindorff provided me with a job for three months (July 2011 – September 2011), and after finishing gave me the opportunity to write two master theses at the Recruitment department of Ziggo simultaneously. I also want to thank my colleagues at Ziggo who received me with open arms at the department. I really feel part of the department. The inspiring environment of Ziggo, with friendly colleagues, motivated me to write this thesis, and to learn more about the organisation.

Second, I would like to thank Mirjam Galetzka and Ardion Beldad for giving me insight in their vision of Marketing Communication studies, teaching me how to use Structural Equation Modelling, and mostly for their motivating comments on my thesis. They really helped me to become more competent in doing Marketing Communication research.

Last but not least, I would like to thank my parents, my boyfriend Niek, my siblings (Jasper and Lotte), my friends, and my flat mates, who gave me social support throughout the assignment. After a long day of hard work, it is really nice to laugh, hug or call with people you really like.

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## 1. Introduction

*Facebook has 8.7 million unique Dutch visitors per month, Twitter has 4.1 million unique Dutch visitors per month, and LinkedIn has 3.7 million unique Dutch visitors per month (Hemminga, 2012).*

As a recruiter for a company, you might think ‘So many users, thus so many possibilities to attract potential applicants via Social Networking Sites (SNS)’. Still, only a small amount of companies use a SNS recruitment strategy. This is logical, because scientific support for such a strategy is not available. Traditionally, theories suggest that offline situations are better in persuading potential applicants. For example, the media richness theory of Daft and Lengel (1984) and the Media Naturalness of Kock (2005) explain that messages sent via more natural/rich media channels are more persuasive than messages sent via less natural/less rich media channels. Media rich/natural channels are channels in which people can send different cues; auditory cues, visual cues, olfactory cues, and tactile cues. The more cues are present, the richer/more natural the channel is. Face-to-Face is the most rich/most natural channel, according to these theories. Therefore, it could be expected that offline (face-to-face) messages to recruit new employees are more persuasive than SNS recruitment messages to recruit new employees. Nevertheless, more and more companies use SNS for recruitment activities (Unique & TNO, 2012) and the effects are promising, because a vacancy could ideally reach 5000 people if only 10 people with 500 online connections share the vacancy via SNS. However, a message to recruit new employees (a job-offer message) needs to persuade receivers to do something with the message in order to have effect. The relationship with the sender of the message in online situations could differ from close friends to one-time business partners. The relationships probably differ radically from one another in the degree to which they are useful for recruiting employees. Moreover, SNS probably differ in the degree they are useful for recruiting potential applicants, because users do use every Social Networking Site differently. Scientific studies are needed to test the effects of recruitment via connections on SNS on recruitment dependent variables; for example intentions to apply, and organisational attractiveness. First, this chapter discusses why recruitment activities become essential in the future for organisational success. After explaining the importance of recruitment, recruitment via SNS is described. In this process online connections as senders (the senders can be seen as sources of the job-offer messages) play an important role. The effects of recruitment sources are discussed in the end of this chapter.



## 1.1 Necessity of recruitment

Human resources are a critical component for organisation success (Van Hoyer & Lievens, 2009), even though the nature of human resources work has changed due to new technology in organisations (Allen, van Scotter & Otondo, 2007). Having good human resources in the organisation depends on two aspects: the recruitment of new employees and the retention of current employees, according to Rynes and Cable (2003). The recruitment of employees consists of organisational practices with the purpose of identifying potential employees, informing them about job and organisation attributes, and persuading them to join the organisation (Breaugh & Starke, 2000). It is becoming harder to recruit potential employees due to varying quantitative and qualitative shortages in the labour markets (Lievens, Decaesteker, Coetsier & Geirnaert, 2001; Van Hoyer & Lievens, 2009). There are three reasons for these (future) shortages (Van Hoyer & Lievens, 2009):

- 1) There will always be hard-to-fill vacancies and as such always shortages on certain functions, which requires organisations to compete fiercely to attract potential applicants.
- 2) Talented potential applicants have enough options to critically investigate and compare potential employers.
- 3) There is a smaller supply of younger workers replacing the retiring generation of baby boomers, making fewer employees available in the (future) labour market.

Due to these shortages in the labour markets, companies have to compete with one another to recruit and retain employees. One factor increasing the competition between companies is the internet. Potential employees can immediately find thousands of available jobs online, and the information about a company is more transparent online than in traditional job advertisements (Van Hoyer & Lievens, 2007). The wide range of options for potential applicants could be a disadvantage because a company has to impress these potential applicants to attract them. Nevertheless, e-recruitment also has many advantages for organisations, it can cut costs (Cober, Brown, Blumental, Doverspike & Levy, 2001), save time (Pin, Laorden & Sàez-Diez, 2001), and it leads to better matching candidates in comparison to the traditional recruitment methods (Barber, 2006; Pin, Laorden, & Sàez-Diez, 2001). These advantages make e-recruitment important in this world with digital communication.

In sum, the shortages in the labour market and the competition for potential employees emphasize the importance of the attraction of an organisation (Lievens, Decaesteker, Coetsier & Geirnaert, 2001) and the need to recruit effectively. Since many Dutch people use SNS, this paper will focus on the possibilities of SNS for recruitment.

## 1.2 Recruitment via SNS

A few years ago, a lot of companies used job-boards and special recruitment sites to post their job-offers on the internet. Nowadays, companies use SNS more and more to share their job-offers. The definition that is used in this study for SNS is the definition of Boyd and Ellison (2007, p. 211):

*“Web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semipublic profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system.”*

Sharing updates with many people at the same time is easier than before, because SNS made it possible. Therefore, companies use these SNS for job-offer updates. Commonly used SNS for vacancies are Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter. These SNS differ in their primary purpose (Kucherenko, 2011; LinkedIn.com, 2012; Teevan, Ramage & Morris, 2011):

- Facebook: a Social Networking Site designed for friends (informal relationships).
- LinkedIn: a Social Networking Site designed for business relationships (formal relationships).
- Twitter: a micro blogging site (also called a Social Networking Site according to Teevan, Ramage & Morris, 2011) designed to share updates with users with the same interests.

Companies can ask their employees to post job-offer updates on their SNS (all three SNS can be used: Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter). Random employees as online connections of the potential applicants are the new sources of the job-offer messages via SNS. The standard company recruiter plays a less important role. In most cases companies do not make a deliberate choice between one of the SNS and which employees to ask. The employee posting the message can have all kinds of relationships with the receivers; he/she can be an informal friend, a formal colleague, a sport mate, a classmate, a roommate and so forth. In an offline situation, some people are better in persuading potential applicants than others. The effect that someone could have on an online connection could depend on the relationship with the online connection. The impact of using random employees as new recruitment sources via SNS on organisational attractiveness, intentions to apply and other aspects needs to be studied, since the impact of these sources (via SNS) has never been studied. The next paragraph focuses on the impact of sources.

## 1.3 The recruitment source impact

Recruitment sources play an important role in the first steps of the recruitment process; the source communicates about jobs, working conditions, expectations, values, and working climate in order to persuade potential applicants (Popovich & Wanous, 1982). The important role of a recruitment source is to be expected, because it is often the case that applicants do not have enough information about job characteristics to make a rational choice based on job characteristics (according to the

critical contact theory of Behling et al., 1968; cited in Chapman, Uggerslev, Piasentin & Jones, 2005). In addition, recruiters differ in credibility and as such in their capacity to persuade potential applicants (Chapman et al., 2005; Rynes, Bretz & Gerhart, 1991; Boswell, Roehling, LePine & Moynihan, 2003). Applicants base their opinion about organisational attractiveness on the recruiter behaviours (Chapman et al., 2005). Chapman et al. (2005) found that the recruiter characteristics (competence, informativeness and trustworthiness) influence the persuasiveness of a recruiter and that these behaviours have indirect impact on the perceived job-fit, and organisational attractiveness. Eisend (2004) mentions three similar indicators that can predict the persuasiveness of the recruiter: trustworthiness, competence and attraction. Fisher, Ilgen & Hoyer (1979) found that liking, expertise and trust determine the persuasiveness of a source. All aspects named are measures of credibility. Credibility refers to the perception of the truth according to the receiver of the information (Breagh & Starke, 2000). Credibility is the judgement about the 'believability' (Birnbaum & Stegner, 1979). It could be that source credibility leads to higher persuasion effects of online messages and it could be that online connections are more credible, thus better in persuading potential applicants than the standard corporate recruiters. Therefore, the next paragraph focuses on the impact of different recruitment sources.

#### **1.4 Different recruitment sources**

Many studies compared the credibility between different recruitment sources (Chapman et al., 2005; Van Hove & Lievens, 2007). Job-information sources differ in credibility mostly due to the perceived company dependency (Van Hove & Lievens, 2007). Company dependent sources are part of the recruitment activities of the organisation and can be directly controlled. On the contrary, company independent sources can only be indirectly influenced through other recruitment activities, and can give positive as well as negative information (Van Hove & Lievens, 2007). According to Van Hove and Lievens (2007), a company independent source is perceived as more credible than company dependent source. This can be explained by the following reason: people do not judge others as credible if someone is paid to tell something about a company (like a company recruiter) he/she gets an external incentive (the money). A company independent source does not get an external incentive to tell something about the company. Therefore, the source has to be internally motivated to tell about the company and people judge this internally motivated advice as more credible.

Nevertheless, company independent recruitment sources are unlikely to send a message in the exact manner the company wants them to. A company wants to influence the content of the messages, but the credibility of the source is essential according to Pornpitakpan (2004) and Van Hove & Lievens (2007). Fisher, Ilgen and Hoyer (1979) confirm these findings. Using an experiment they found that friends are more credible and more influential than company recruiters.

The finding that friends are more credible than company recruiters can also be explained by tie strength with the source according to Marsden and Campbell (1984). Granovetter (1973) described tie strength as (p.1361):

*“a combination of the amount of time, emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding) and the reciprocal services.”*

A close tie results in a high credibility of the source and a weak tie results in a low credibility of the source. However, the effect is mitigated by the fact that most of the time friends are external recruitment sources (no insiders of the company) and recruiters are internal recruitment sources (insiders of the company). Moser (2005) studied the differences between internal and external recruitment sources. Internal recruitment sources (like employees and recruiters) know the company from the inside. These sources are able to give a more realistic view of the company than outsiders of the company. This realistic view has a positive effect on the applicants who are recruited for the job, according to Moser (2005); employees who entered the organisation via internal recruitment sources experienced less unmet expectations and are happier with their new job than employees recruited via external recruitment sources. Besides the effects named above, the influence of the source probably differs also due to different kinds of relationships with the source (Mertz, 2004). Mertz (2004) argues that the credibility between formal and informal contacts could differ, because people think they get more sincere advice from informal contacts than formal contacts.

In sum, random employees of the company (insiders who most of the time do not get an external incentive for telling about the organisation, only get an incentive for doing their job, are online connections thus having a tie with the potential applicant) are probably more credible than company recruiters (insiders who most of the time do not have an existing tie with the applicant and get an external incentive to inform potential applicants about the vacancies). Therefore, the effect of using employees (as online connections of the potential applicants) as source of the job-offer message via SNS looks promising. The effect of the kind of relationship between the potential applicant and the source of the information (formal versus informal) in online situations has never been studied. Because people have both formal and informal connections via SNS, such studies need to be done.

## 1.5 Research focus

This study focuses on the effects of source credibility and (in)formality in recruitment on the impact of job-offer via SNS. The next chapter discusses related studies and the hypotheses that are tested in this study.

## 2. Social networks and credibility

In this study the effects of source credibility and Social Networking Sites (SNS) on the impact of job-offers via SNS are discussed. This chapter consists of two parts. The first part discusses which variables are used to measure the impact of job-offers via SNS and which factors have influence on the used variables to measure job-offer impact, resulting in a path model. The second part discusses in what way SNS and (in)formality in recruitment could influence the path model shown at the end of the first part.

### 2.1 Impact of job-offers

Web-based job-offer messages have an impact on the receivers if the message influences the variables that help reach the intended effect/goal of the message. Web-based recruitment has different goals, namely; to find applicants for the concerning job by influencing the job-choice decisions of the potential applicants (Allen, Mahto & Ottondo, 2007; Chapman, et al., 2005; Shahzad, Gul, Khan & Zafar, 2011), to send positive signals to prospective applicants about the organisation in order to persuade potential applicants that they are fit for the job (Allen, Mahto & Ottondo, 2007), to persuade potential applicants that the organisation is attractive (Chapman et al., 2005), and provide additional information concerning the job (Shahzad, Gul, Khan & Zafar, 2011). Companies cannot provide a lot of information in a single update, because only short updates are possible via SNS. Hence, the goal 'providing information' is reached if receivers are willing to search for more information about the job, for example by clicking on the link in the update to find more information about the concerning job. To what extent the goals/effects of web-based recruitment are met determines the impact of the job-offer via SNS on the receiver. Thus, a job-offer message has impact on the potential applicant if the job-offer message positively influences the apply intentions, the perceived job-fit, the perceived organisational attractiveness and the intention to search for more information about the concerning job. Furthermore, SNS allow people to share a job-offer message with their online friends (Subrahmanyam, Reich, Waechter & Espinoza, 2008). More potential applicants can read the job-offer message if the receivers forward the message in their own (online) network than if receivers do not forward the message. Consequently, the message can influence more people. Therefore, forward intentions are also measured as one of the job-offer impact variables. The next paragraph focuses on factors that can positively influence the named perceptions and behavioural intentions (perceived job-fit, organisational attractiveness, intentions to search for more information about the job, apply intentions and forward intentions) according to previous studies.

In online situations people base their attitude towards the organisation (organisation attraction) on their attitude towards the corporate website (Allen, Mahto & Otondo, 2007). The first impression of the organisation determines the perceived organisational attractiveness and the website is (one of) the first contact moment(s) of the applicant with the organisation (Allen, Mahto & Otondo, 2007). This is in line with the findings of MacKenzie, Lutz, and Belch (1986). They studied the impact of advertisements on the perceived organisational attractiveness and conclude that the advertisement effects on organisational attractiveness are mediated by the attitude towards the advertisement. The job-offer message sent via a Social Networking Site is for most potential applicants (one of) the first encounter(s) with job and organisation in question. Thus, the expectation is that attitude towards the job-offer message sent via the Social Networking Site determines the perceived organisational attractiveness. Additionally, Highhouse, Lievens, and Sinar (2003) suggest that attitude towards recruitment messages can be used to predict the organisational choice of potential applicants:

*“Assessing effective responses to organisational recruitment messages is predicated on the assumption that these responses can be generalised to actual organisational choice” (p. 987).*

Actual job-choice is a behaviour outcome. According to Chapman et al. (2005) attitudes and intentions of company-choice are predictors of real company-choice. Attitudes to what extent people fit the job and apply intentions are predictors of organisation choice decisions. Van Ryn and Vinokur (1992) found that exposure to a stimulating recruitment message positively affects the intention of unemployed people to search for jobs because they are more willing to process information about the jobs. Thus, seeing a stimulating job-offer message could probably result in the intention of searching for more information about jobs in general, but also to the intention to search for more information about the concerning job. Porter and Golan (2006) studied the differences between viral marketing and traditional marketing. Viral marketing (unpaid peer-to-peer marketing) only happens if people like the message. People do not forward the message if they do not like the message. Consequently, the expectation is that attitude towards the job-offer message also determines the forward intention of the job-offer via SNS. The following hypothesis is made based on these studies.

*Hypothesis 1: Attitude towards the job-offer message has a positive influence on the receiver’s a) forward intention, b) apply intention, c) organisational attractiveness, d) perceived job-fit, and e) intention to search for more information about the job.*

Attitudes towards the messages are influenced by the source; high credible sources can have more effect on attitudes towards the messages than low credible sources (Olson & Cal, 1984). Olson and Cal (1984) told participants in the high credible condition that the source was an expert. They told the participants in the low credible condition that the source was misinformed. In both conditions,

the source argued in a message that the participants should frequently brush their teeth. People in the high credible condition, were more convinced about the effects of tooth brushing and brushed their teeth more often soon after the message than the people in the low credible condition (attitude and behaviour difference). After three weeks, there was still a difference in attitude towards the message between the two conditions. Olson and Cal (1984) conclude that messages from high credible sources are more persuasive than messages from low credible sources. The effects on attitude and behaviour changes are probably caused by an indirect effect. Eisend (2004) and Van Hoyer and Lievens (2007) studied the indirect effects of credibility on attitude and behavioural changes. Source credibility is important in influencing message credibility and message credibility is important in influencing attitudes towards a message, according to Eisend (2004). In addition, Van Hoyer and Lievens (2007) concluded that the organisational attractiveness is mediated by credibility of the message and attitude towards the message. The credibility of the message moderates the effect of source credibility on persuasion (Van Hoyer & Lievens, 2007). This results in the following two hypotheses.

*Hypothesis 2: Perceived source credibility has a positive effect on message credibility.*

*Hypothesis 3: Message credibility has a positive effect on attitude towards the job-offer message.*

The dependent variables can have, next to the influence of source credibility, message credibility and attitude towards the job-offer message, impact on other dependent variables. Shahzad, Gul, Khan, and Zafar (2011) studied the relationship between organisational attractiveness (employer brand) and the intention to apply on a job-offer. Their results indicate that there is a significant and strong relationship between organisational attractiveness and applicants' intention to apply on the job-offer. Additionally, Chapman et al. (2005) studied the correlations between different recruitment aspects and job-choice related variables. They also tested the relationships between the job-choice related variables. Job-acceptance intention was related to organisational attractiveness and perceived fit. Their explanation is that people only accept the job if they think it is an attractive organisation and they fit with both job and organisation. People can only tell the acceptance intention after a job-interview. However, intention to search for more information about the job and intention to apply on the job-offer can be measured before the job-interview. Therefore, in the present study the expectation is that apply intention and intention to search for more information are both affected by organisational attractiveness and perceived job-fit. The following two hypotheses are grounded on these studies.

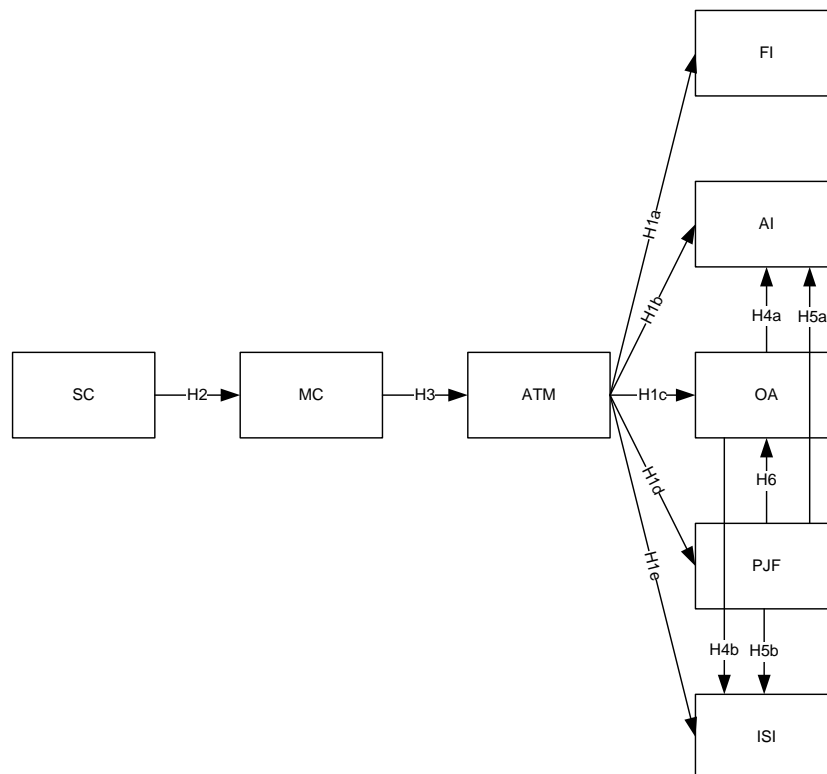
*Hypothesis 4: Organisational attractiveness has a positive effect on a) the apply intention and b) the intention to search for more information about the job.*

*Hypothesis 5: Perceived job-fit has a positive effect on a) the apply intention and b) the intention to search for more information about the job.*

In addition, Chapman et al. (2005) and Arthur, Bell, Villado, and Doverspike (2006) argue that perceived job-fit, and organisational attractiveness are related. Arthur, Bell, Villado, and Doverspike (2006) define this relationship; an attractive organisation according to the potential applicant, is based on the fit-perception of the potential applicant with the job and the organisation. This leads to the final hypothesis of the path model.

*Hypothesis 6: Perceived job-fit has a positive effect on the organisational attractiveness.*

All the hypotheses above are plotted in the path model, see figure 1. The next part of this chapter discusses how SNS and (in)formality in recruitment affects the variables in the path-model.



Note. SC= source credibility, MC=message credibility, ATM=attitude towards the job-offer message, FI=forward intention, ISI= intention to search for more information about the job, AI=apply intention, PJF=perceived job fit, OA=organisational attractiveness.

Figure 1: Hypothesised path model of the present study



## 2.2 Influence of SNS and (in)formality of the relationship with the source on the impact of job-offers

Information exchange is a social happening (Haythornthwaite & Wellman, 1998). Hence, it is important to know how social relationships influence the perceptions of the messages from the receivers. Job choice advice comes from all kinds of sources with different relationships, like friends, colleagues, family and so on. The relationships differ in primary intention (the reasons for entering the relationship) and involvement (Mertz, 2004). Mertz (2004) proposed a conceptual model of the different relationships and the primary intention. As shown, all kinds of relationships can have supportive functions, but informal relationships look more supportive than formal relationships. Ragins and Cotton (1999) also used mentor relationships as the subjects in their study; informal mentorships (relationships that are not managed, spontaneous relationships) were somewhat more effective in giving advices than formal mentorships (relationships which are formed due to obligation). Advice takers of informal relationships reported more advice than advice takers of formal relationships reported. In addition, advice of informal relationships is taken into account more often than advice of formal relationships, probably due to a higher credibility of informal contacts. The differences in perceived received advices between the two groups were not significant in this study of Ragins and Cotton (1999). However, the results suggest a difference in credibility between formal and informal contacts. Therefore, the expectation in the present study will be similar for the effect on source credibility.

*Hypothesis 7: Informal contacts are perceived as more credible than formal contacts.*

The potential applicants receive the messages from (in)formal contacts via SNS. Since the 90's the number of SNS have grown enormously (Sørensen, 2009). In 2009, two-thirds of internet users worldwide were active on SNS (Burmester & Covey, 2009) and this percentage is still growing (ComScore, 2011). Millions of users have integrated SNS into their daily activities (Boyd & Ellison, 2007). The presence of millions of Dutch people on SNS offers organisations an opportunity to communicate with potential applicants in an online social environment. Considering the importance of SNS, it is arguably important to understand more clearly how SNS affect the evaluation of online messages. Organisations have the option to choose for any of the individual SNS or to use all or a combination of SNS. Organisations should make a deliberate decision, because media differ in their capacity to communicate different types of information successfully (Allen, van Scotter & Otondo, 2004). Therefore, this section focuses on SNS and to what extent different SNS possibly affect the impact of job-offer messages.

Three popular SNS for recruitment activities in the Netherlands are Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter (Black, 2010). These SNS differ in primary purpose depending on how the sites were designed, see chapter 1. To what extent the credibility differs per SNS message has never been studied, however there are some related studies. Huberman, Romero and Wu (2008) studied links on Twitter. They investigated that online links on Twitter are often meaningless, because there is no real interaction between the ties. They argue that the hidden ties (interaction ties) matter and make ties credible. According to Wu (2010), relationships via Facebook and LinkedIn are bi-directional relationships, this means that connected people have mutual ties with each other. People on Twitter have uni-directional ties; people on twitter can have uni-directional relationships; one can follow another, without being followed by the same person. Ties need to be positive and symmetric, in order to make the tie credible. Ties on Twitter can be asymmetric, ties on LinkedIn and Facebook cannot be asymmetric. Therefore, the expectation is that ties on Twitter are often weaker than ties on Facebook and LinkedIn. Advices from weak ties are less credible than advices from strong ties, according to Goldenberg, Libai, and Muller (2001). Consequently, job-offer messages on Twitter are probably less credible than job-offer messages on Facebook and LinkedIn.

*Hypothesis 8: Job-offer messages on Twitter are less credible than job-offer messages on Facebook and LinkedIn.*

It is hypothesised that both network credibility and source credibility influence overall credibility. SNS can bring network credibility and source credibility together. The job-offer messages are from online contacts (source credibility determines the credibility) and are received via Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter or another Social Networking Site (network credibility determines the credibility). According to Wu (2010), people have different kinds of relationships on the different SNS. Facebook has been developed for maintaining and developing social informal relationships and LinkedIn is a business-oriented SNS (Sørensen, 2009). Most users communicate with informal relationships (family, friends and relatives and so on) via Facebook and with formal relationships (colleagues, classmates, business partners and so on) via LinkedIn. Consequently, messages from informal relationships are more familiar for potential applicants via Facebook than via LinkedIn and messages from formal relationships are more familiar via LinkedIn than via Facebook.

Recent studies focused on the congruence between different aspects of products or websites and their influence on consumer evaluations (Aaker, 1997; Kressmann, Sirgy, Herrmann, Huber, Huber, & Lee, 2006; Suk, Irtel, Park, & Sohn, 2007). Congruence among different aspects makes information easier to process (Van Rompay & Pruyn, 2011). Stimuli generate a positive influence on attitudes if the stimuli can be easily processed (Reber, Schwarz & Winkielman, 2004). The

experimental study of Van Rompay, De Vries & Van Venrooij (2010) focused on congruence among pictorial (cozy, modern versus neutral) and textual elements (cozy, modern versus neutral) of web designs. Results show that picture–text congruence positively affects product attitude via processing fluency, but they only discovered a difference amongst participants with a high need for cognition. As far as known, the congruence among (in)formality of the relationship and (in)formality of the Social Networking Site has never been studied. Therefore, this study will focus on the congruence among SNS (informal versus formal) and relationship with the source (informal versus formal). The expectation is that a formal relationship in combination with LinkedIn will be more positively evaluated (the message will be more credible) than an informal relationship in combination with LinkedIn. In addition, an informal relationship in combination with Facebook will be more credible than a formal relationship in combination with Facebook.

*Hypothesis 9: a) Job-offer messages from informal contacts on Facebook are more credible than job-offer messages from formal contacts on Facebook, and b) job-offer messages from formal contacts on LinkedIn are more credible than job-offer messages from informal contacts on LinkedIn.*

Hypothesis 9 tests the effect of congruence among different aspects on the credibility of job-offer messages. The congruence studies discussed in the literature did not focus on congruence among (in)formality by (online) recruitment, but mostly on the congruence of different product aspects on product evaluations and buying intentions. These studies are discussed, because this study is the first study which focuses on congruence among (in)formality aspects in recruitment via SNS. Van Rompay, De Vries, and Van Venrooij (2010) focused on the effects of congruence among textual and visual signs of hotel booking websites on attitude changes. Though, in the literature congruence effects are tested on all kinds of consumer responses and consumer behaviour intentions, such as buying intentions and product evaluations (Van Rompay & Pruyn, 2011). Congruence among shape and typeface aspects was shown to positively influence processing fluency and consequently boost consumer attitudes towards the brand and buying intentions of the exposed product (Van Rompay & Pruyn, 2011). If congruence results in more positive attitudes towards the brand due to processing fluency, the expectation is that congruence among (in)formality of the relationship with the source and (in)formality of the Social Networking Site can also lead to higher attitudes towards the brand (organisational attractiveness and the expectation that they fit with the job) due to processing fluency. Additionally, people in congruence conditions had higher buying intentions towards a shown product (intentions to take action) after seeing the advertisement than people in the incongruence conditions (Van Rompay & Pruyn, 2011). Based on this premise, it is expected that congruence among (in)formality of the relationship with the source and (in)formality of the Social Networking

Site can lead to higher intentions to take action. In this study, this would mean the intentions to apply for the job, forward the message and search for more information about the job. The following hypothesis is grounded on the arguments just presented.

*Hypothesis 10: The interaction between (in)formality of the relationship and SNS will affect a) forward intentions, b) apply intentions, c) organisation attraction, d) perceived job-fit, and e) intention to search for more information.*

Based on the findings of the above studies, it could be argued that source credibility, SNS, and congruence among (in)formality of the relationship with the source and (in)formality of the SNS affect the credibility of the message, the attitude towards the message, attitude towards the organisation, perceived job fit and intentions to search for more information, apply and forward the job-offer message. This study tests the ten hypotheses mentioned above. The following chapter describes how each of the hypotheses is tested.

### 3. Methodology

In this study a 2 (relationship with the source: *informal* versus *formal*) x 4 (Social Networking Site: *Facebook* versus *LinkedIn* versus *Twitter* versus *offline*) between subjects experiment was conducted. This chapter describes the procedure, participants, stimulus materials and the measures of this experiment.

#### 3.1 Procedure

Participants were recruited via status updates posted on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn, via an email invitation or via an online advertisement posted on the internal company website of Ziggo.

After an invitation to participate in the study, respondents were randomly assigned to one of the eight online conditions, with as precondition that they actually had an account on the concerning Social Networking Site. Before completing the questionnaire, participants were confronted with the experimental stimuli. The experimental stimuli consisted of a fictitious situation sketch on a screen. The situation sketch showed both the independent variables (*informality of the relationship* and *Social Networking Site* of the condition (see §3.3 for more information about the stimulus materials). After showing the fictive situation sketch, respondents were asked to fill in the questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of two parts. In the first part the dependent variables were measured; source credibility, message credibility, attitude towards the message, organisational attractiveness, perceived job-fit, apply intention, intention to search for more information about the job and the forward intention the message. Two control questions, “Which Social Networking Site was used for posting the job-offer message” and “what is your relationship with the source”, were added to check if the respondents had really read the situation sketch. The influence of the independent variables on the dependent variables could not be measured if respondents did not read/see the experimental stimuli of their condition. Therefore, the data of respondents who answered one (or both) control question(s) wrong was deleted. The second part of the questionnaire consisted of questions about the respondents’ use of Social Networking Sites and the demographic data of the respondents. Respondents had to consent to Ziggo using their data. In addition, respondents could leave their email address if they wanted to receive the most important results of the study and/or wanted to win one of the ten pairs of Touch Screen gloves (respondents could win the Touch-Screen gloves by participating in this study).

#### 3.2 Participants

A total of 377 individuals started the questionnaire. The data of 62 respondents was not used in this study, because the participants stopped early in the questionnaire, did not permit Ziggo to use their data or answered one of the/both control questions wrong (see §3.1 for the used control questions).

This resulted in a dataset of 315 respondents (51% males and 49% females) that included participants aged from 17 to 58 years ( $M=29$ ,  $SD = 9.75$ ). In all, 51% of participants were employed, 42% were students, 5% were unemployed and 2% did not want to tell their career status.

### 3.3 Stimulus materials

A fictitious situation sketch was used to manipulate the independent variables. Respondents were asked to imagine that “Gijs” (the source) is someone in their network and Gijs shares an update via a Social Networking Site. The stimulus materials differed per condition. The stimulus materials differed for each Social Networking Site and formality of the relationship with the source.

#### 3.3.1 Social Networking Site manipulation

Print screens of the Social Networking Sites were used to manipulate the medium; print screens of updates on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter were made. Redundant information on the print screens was ‘blurred’ and not readable for the respondents. See figure 2 for the Facebook condition and see appendix A for all the stimulus materials of the eight conditions.

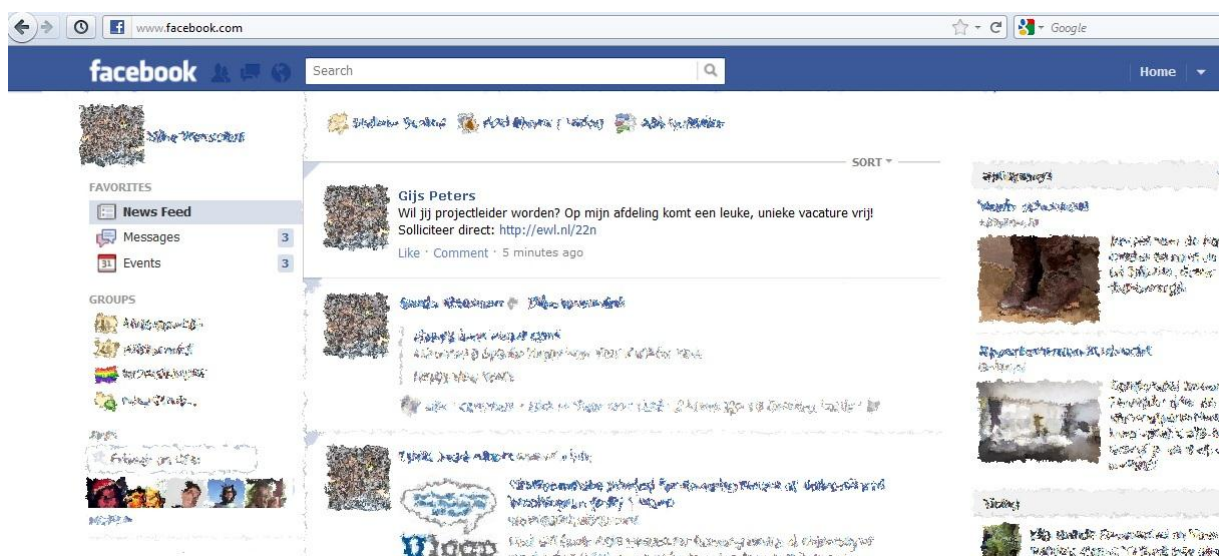


Figure 2: Facebook condition

#### 3.3.2 Formality of the relationship based on a pilot study

The manipulation “formality of the relationship” was designed during a pilot study. The goal of this pilot study was to make stimulus materials which differ in formality (very informal to very formal), but did not differ in tie strength (because tie strength can influence the credibility, see chapter 1). First, based on common sense a formal version and an informal version were made. Second, the qualitative “think out loud” procedure was used by 12 participants to make the informal and formal conditions differ in formality but not differ in tie strength of the relationship with the source

according to the participants. Table 3.1 shows the words that were used to create the differences between formal and informal relationship with the source noticeable without influencing the tie strength.

Table 3.1: Differences between the informal and formal situation sketches

	Informal	Formal
<b>Relationship</b>	Gijs is an old friend	Gijs is your previous manager
<b>Activities with each other</b>	Sports, going to the pub, dinners	Work meetings, business dinners
<b>Conversation subjects</b>	All kind of subjects	Only work
<b>Meetings per week</b>	1	1

Third, a quantitative pilot study was used to test if the differences in (in)formality of the relationship were significant and in which the differences in tie-strength did not differ between the informal and formal condition. Fifty-seven respondents (all friends, colleagues and family of the researcher) participated in this pilot study. Results of this pilot study showed that the final formal ( $M=2.29$ ,  $SD=0.85$ , 1=very formal and 7= very informal) and informal condition ( $M=5.57$ ,  $SD=0.87$ ) differed significantly in formality ( $t(55)=13.076$ ,  $p<.01$ ), but did not differ significantly in tie strength ( $M_{\text{formal}}=3.47$ ,  $SD=1.13$ ,  $M_{\text{informal}}=3.58$ ,  $SD=1.11$ , 1=very weak tie and 7=very strong tie,  $t(55)=0.324$ ,  $p=ns$ ). Therefore, these materials could be used to manipulate the difference between the informal and formal conditions, without influencing tie strength of the relationship.

### 3.4 Measures

The response format was a five-point Likert scale. All the measures were based on scales used in previous studies. The items were adapted for this study and if necessary translated into Dutch. This section describes how the constructs were measured, for an overview of all items see appendix B.

*Source credibility.* Source credibility can be measured by directly asking respondents to indicate whether the source is credible (Wathen & Burkell, 2002). Therefore, three items were made to measure source credibility. The items were: "I feel this person is extremely trustworthy", "This person is genuine" and "I think the source is credible". The internal consistency of the scale was .80.

*Message credibility.* Eastin (2001) postulates that the credibility of a message is based on three aspects (accuracy, believability and factualness). In this situation, if someone posted an update (a few minutes ago) the message is accurate and an update is valid because there is a vacancy available. This makes believability in this situation the more important concept. Moreover, according to Wathen and Burkell (2002) message credibility can be measured by directly asking respondents to indicate whether the message is believable. Three items were used to measure message credibility.

The used items were: “I think this message is plausible”, “I think the information is believable” and “I think the message is credible”. The internal consistency of the scale was .84.

*Attitude towards the message.* This scale is based on attitude towards the message is based on the scale that MacKenzie, Lutz, and Belch (1986) to measure attitude towards the advertisement. In this study, they based their own attitude towards the advertisement on four items; pleasant, liking, interesting and irritating. Only irritating correlated poorly with the other items. Therefore, this item was deleted from the construct by measuring attitude towards the message. The three other items were used to measure the construct attitude towards the message. The internal consistency was .84.

*Organisational attractiveness.* Potential employees’ attitude towards the organisation as an employer is measured with four items from Highhouse, Lievens, and Sinar (2003). An example item is “For me, this company would be a good place to work.” The internal consistency was .85.

*Forward intentions.* The forward intention in Tang (2005) is measured with three items. This present study uses three items based on the items used by Tang (2005) to measure forward intentions. One example item is “I will recommend this vacancy to others”. The internal consistency of the forward intention was .91.

*Apply intentions.* The apply intentions of potential employees towards the job presented is assessed with four items adapted from the pursue intentions of Highhouse, Lievens and Sinar (2003). An example item is “Based on this message, I think I would like to apply for this vacancy”. The internal consistency of the scale was 0.87.

*Perceived job-fit.* To measure perceived job fit, the three-item measure of Singh and Greenhaus (2004) was adapted slightly to make it usable in this study. The following items are made “I think I will fit with this job” and “I think this job fits with my job-wishes” and “This job will be a perfect next step in my career”. The internal consistency of the scale was .87.

*Intention to search information about the job.* Van Rijn and Vinokur (1992) measured the attitude towards job-search. They used three items to measure this attitude. To measure the intention to search for more information about the job, the overall attitude of Van Rijn and Vinokur (1992) was used. The three items were adapted to measure the intention to search for more information about the job. The following items were made: “I will click on the link to go to the company”, “I will ask the source for more information about the job” and “I will search for more information about the job”. The internal consistency of the scale was .85.



### 3.5 Analyses

The factor analyses were performed to determine whether the (in)formality of the relationship and (in)formality of the Social Networking Site had impact on the dependent variables. Structural Equation Modelling was used to test the hypotheses about relations among the variables in the research model. The significance of each path in the model was tested. Structural Equation Modelling also tested whether the research model fits the data. Different fit-indices were used to check to what extent the model fits the data. Chi-square value is reported, however the chi-square is sensitive to sample size (Kline, 2005, as cited in Hooper, Coughlan & Muller, 2008). To prevent from the sensitivity of the chi-square values, a normed chi-square is calculated. The normed chi-square is calculated by dividing the chi-square by the degrees of freedom ( $\chi^2/df$ ). The normed chi-squares should be lower than 5 for an acceptable fit. In addition to the normed chi-square, other fit indices were used to test a relatively good fit of the data with the model; comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis index (TLI) and standardized root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA). A CFI  $\geq .90$  is needed in order to ensure that misspecified models are not accepted (Hu & Bentler, 1999). A value of CFI  $\geq .95$  is presently recognised as indicative of good fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999). Hu & Bentler (1999) recommend a cut-off value of TLI close to .95. In addition, for a good fit with the data, the RMSEA has a cut-off value close to .06 (Hooper, Coughlan & Mullen, 2008). No consensus has emerged concerning which overall fit measure is superior (Bollen & Hoyle, 1990).

## 4. Results

This chapter will take an in depth look at the results of the statistical analysis performed on the data acquired from the online experiment. First the means, standard deviation and correlations amongst the variables will be presented on Table 4.1. Next, the results of the Structural Equation Modelling is discussed. The last section will discuss the impact of the (in)formality of the relationship, the SNS and the congruence among both for all variables in the path-model.

Table 4.1: Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations among study variables

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1.SC	3.58	0.71	-						
2.MC	3.43	0.81	.584	-					
3.ATM	3.34	0.84	.480	.639	-				
4.FI	2.91	1.07	.256	.403	.512	-			
5.ISI	3.89	0.85	.277	.454	.551	.412	-		
6.AI	3.36	0.82	.365	.548	.612	.436	.634	-	
7.PJF	3.35	0.74	.240	.399	.431	.341	.579	.660	-
8.OA	3.45	0.68	.331	.471	.560	.411	.632	.701	.710*

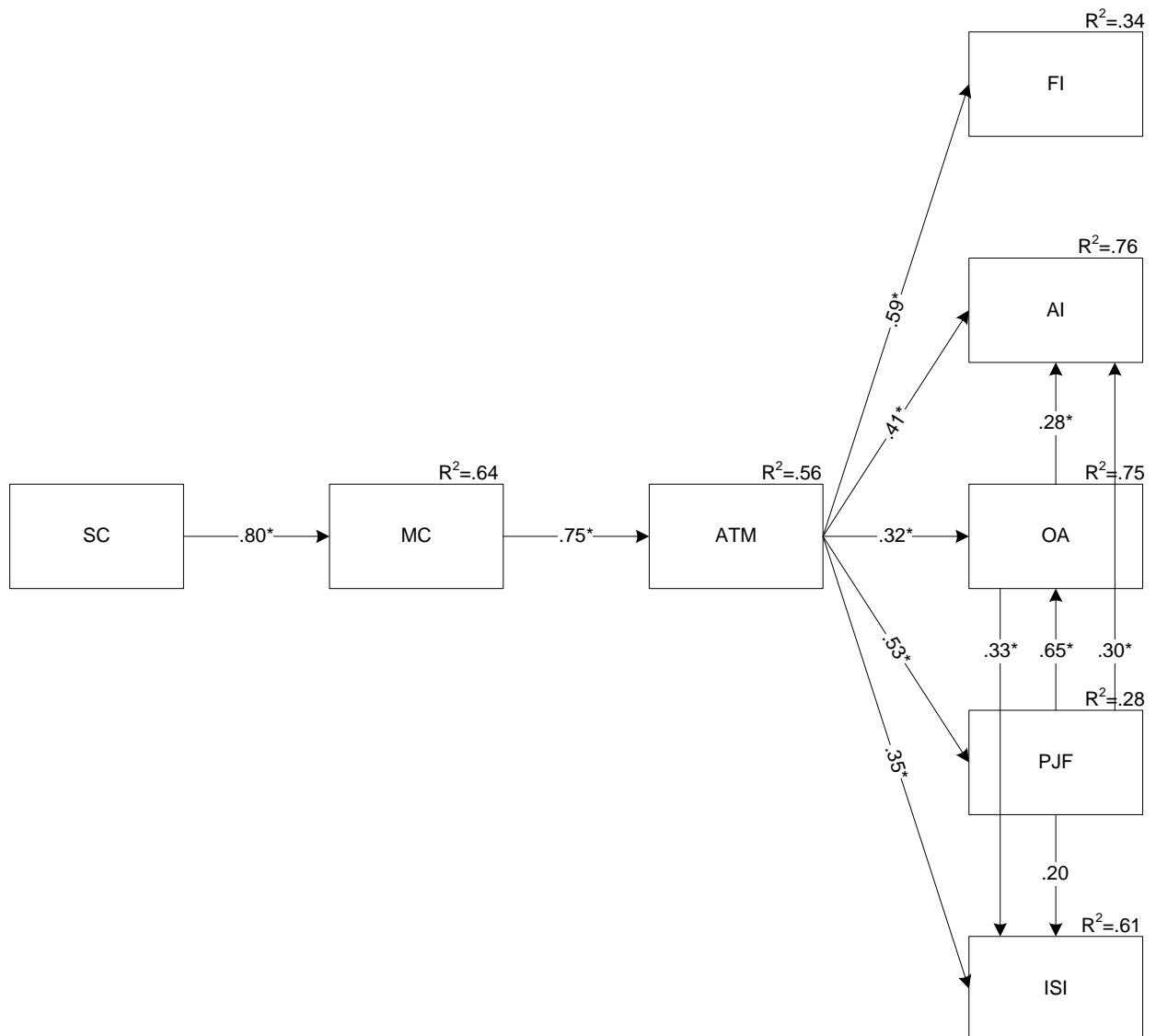
*Note. All variables were rated on a 5-point scale, all correlations were significant  $p < .01$ . \*Correlation between PJF & OA were relatively high, probably due to close related items in the different constructs. SC= source credibility, MC=message credibility, ATM=attitude towards the job-offer message, FI=forward intention, ISI=intention to search for more information about the job, AI=apply intention, PJF=perceived job fit, OA=organisational attractiveness.*

### 4.1 Results of Structural Equation Modelling

Structural Equation Modelling was used to test and estimate (the mediating) causal relations of source credibility, message credibility and attitude towards the job-offer message on the dependent variables and the fit of the model with the data. The model yielded an acceptable fit with the data,  $\chi^2(288) = 643.59$ , normed  $\chi^2 (\chi^2/df) = 2.24$  and RMSEA=.06, CFI=.93 and TLI=.92. Factor loadings of the observed items into their latent variables are shown on Table 4.2. In addition, the significance of each path in the model was checked by examining the regression weights. All paths were plotted in the model, see figure 3.

Table 4.2: Factor loading of the observed items into their latent variable

Latent variable	Observed item	Factor loading
Source credibility	I feel this person is extremely trustworthy	.70
	This person is genuine	.66
	I think the source is credible	.76
Message credibility	I think this message is plausible	.75
	I think the information is believable	.85
	I think the message is credible	.88
Attitude towards the message	I like the message	.82
	I think the message is interesting	.80
	I think this is a good message	.75
Forward intention	If I am not interested, I will forward the message in my network	.95
	If I do not apply, I think about sending the message to others	.86
	If I do not apply, I will tell others about the message	.84
Apply intention	Based on this message, I would like to apply for this vacancy	.79
	My first reaction was: I would like to apply	.82
	I am willing to put effort to react on the vacancy	.88
	If they invite me, I will go to the company for a job-interview	.70
Organisational attraction	I am interested to know more about this company	.75
	I think this is an attractive organisation	.87
	This company looks alluring to me	.76
	The company does not look as a nice company to work for	.78
Perceived job-fit	I think I will fit with this job	.83
	I think this job fits with my job-wishes	.86
	This job will be a perfect next step in my career	.79
Intention to search for more information	I will click on the link in the message to check the vacancy	.69
	I will check the company website for more information	.87
	I will ask the source for more information about the job	.83



Note.  $R^2$  = adjusted  $R^2$ , SC= source credibility, MC=message credibility, ATM=attitude towards the job-offer message, FI=forward intention, ISI=intention to search for more information about the job, AI=apply intention, PJF=perceived job fit, OA=organisational attractiveness.

Figure 3: Standardised path coefficients of the model. \*  $p < .01$ .

The indirect impact of source credibility, and the (in)direct impacts of message credibility and attitude towards the job-offer message on all the dependent variables shows the importance of these variables for the dependent variables. In the next section the direct effect of the two manipulated variables Social Networking Site in relation to (in)formality of the relationship on all the dependent variables; source credibility (SC), message credibility (MC), attitude towards the job-offer message (ATM), forward intention (FI), intention to search for more information about the job (ISI), apply intention (AI), perceived job fit (PJF) and organisational attractiveness (OA) are discussed.

## 4.2 Results of two-way analyses of variance with formality of the relationship and Social Networking Site

Means and standard deviations of the dependent variables for each condition are given on Table 4.3. The parts below discuss the effect of the (in)formality of the relationship in relation to the Social Networking Site per variable.

Table 4.3. Means and standard deviations (SDs) of dependent variables by formality of the source and Social Networking Site

	Informal relationship (n=155)				Formal relationship (n=160)			
	FB (n=44)	LI (n=41)	TW (n=32)	OFF (n=38)	FB (n=39)	LI (n=47)	TW (n=35)	OFF (n=39)
	M(SD)	M(SD)	M(SD)	M(SD)	M(SD)	M(SD)	M(SD)	M(SD)
SC	3.67(0.69)	3.61(0.79)	3.63(0.65)	3.81(0.73)	3.28(0.70)	3.44(0.70)	3.69(0.57)	3.49(0.73)
MC	3.65(0.66)	3.15(0.94)	3.53(0.77)	3.37(0.58)	2.98(0.87)	3.35(0.90)	3.48(0.79)	3.63(0.66)
ATM	3.48(0.69)	3.22(0.75)	3.51(0.74)	3.74(0.71)	2.92(0.91)	3.13(0.94)	3.14(0.83)	3.67(0.81)
FI	2.95(0.91)	2.67(1.04)	2.81(1.14)	3.25(0.89)	2.74(1.09)	3.04(1.18)	2.97(1.17)	2.90(1.08)
ISI	4.08(0.66)	3.63(0.87)	3.81(0.86)	4.22(0.69)	3.57(0.94)	3.96(0.82)	3.47(0.96)	4.35(0.56)
AI	3.51(0.75)	3.21(0.66)	3.31(0.87)	3.48(0.82)	3.01(0.85)	3.41(0.86)	3.23(1.02)	3.67(0.56)
PJF	3.40(0.69)	3.07(0.66)	3.34(0.72)	3.53(0.61)	3.07(0.73)	3.41(0.77)	3.26(0.83)	3.75(0.69)
OA	3.59(0.65)	3.36(0.67)	3.44(0.62)	3.65(0.53)	3.11(0.81)	3.42(0.71)	3.37(0.84)	3.67(0.44)

*Note.* All variables were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1= completely disagree to 5= completely agree. SC= source credibility, MC=message credibility, ATM=attitude towards the job-offer message, FI=forward intention, ISI=intention to search for more information about the job, AI=apply intention, PJF=perceived job fit, OA=organisational attractiveness.

### Source Credibility (SC)

A two-way analysis of variance showed a main effect of informality of the relationship on source credibility,  $F(1,297)=6.695$ ,  $p<0.05$ . An informal relationship with the source ( $M=3.69$ ,  $SD=0.71$ ) is related to higher source credibility than formal relationships with the source ( $M=3.47$ ,  $SD=0.69$ ). The main effect of Social Networking Site on source credibility was not significant  $F(3,297)=1.228$ ,  $p=ns$ . neither was the interaction effect on source credibility  $F(3,297)=1.482$ ,  $p=ns$ .

### Message Credibility (MC)

A two-way analysis of variance showed no main effect of informality of the relationship on message credibility ( $F(1,297)=2.570$ ,  $p=ns$ ). However, there is a main effect of SNS,  $F(3,297)=4.122$ ,  $p<0.01$ , and an interaction effect of informality of the relationship and SNS on message credibility,  $F(3,297)=4.548$ ,  $p<0.01$ . The differences in Social Networking Site are caused by the difference between the LinkedIn ( $M=3.26$ ,  $SD=0.91$ ) and offline condition ( $M=3.65$ ,  $SD=0.62$ ), according to the Bonferroni post-hoc test. Figure 4 illustrates the interaction effect for message credibility; only in the Facebook condition, the informal and formal significantly differ from each other. In the Facebook condition, messages of informal contacts ( $M=3.45$ ,  $SD=0.56$ ) are perceived as more credible than

messages of formal contacts ( $M=2.97$ ,  $SD=0.77$ ,  $F(1,305)=12.88$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). The credibility of informal and formal contacts did not significantly differ in the LinkedIn, Twitter and Offline conditions (respectively;  $F(1,297)=1.252$ ,  $p=ns.$ ,  $F(1,297)=0.069$ ,  $p=ns.$  and  $F(1,297)=0.060$ ,  $p=ns.$ ).

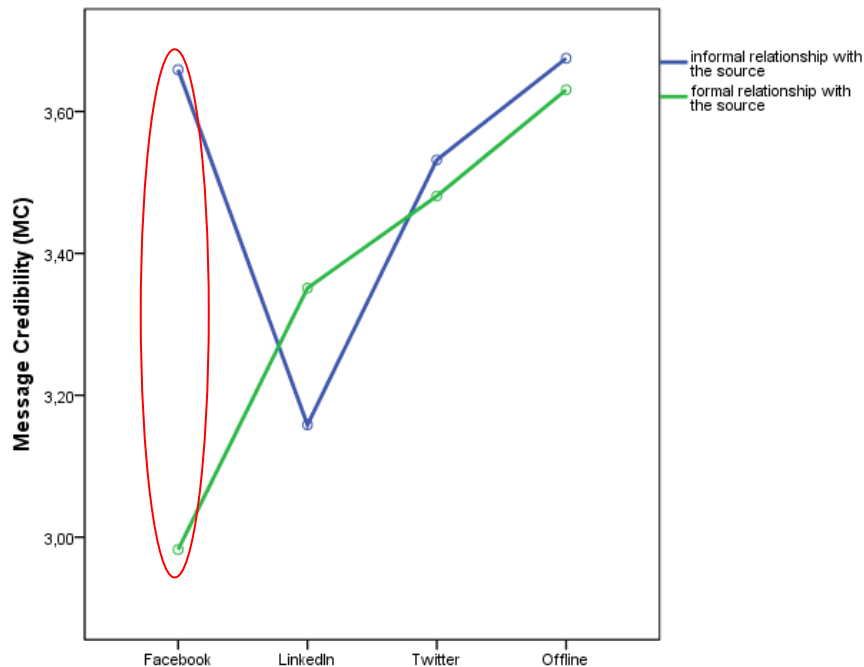


Figure 4: Interaction effect of Social Networking Site and formality of the relationship on message credibility.

#### Attitude towards the job-offer message (ATM)

A two-way analysis of variance showed a main effect of informality of the relationship on message credibility,  $F(1,296)=7.211$ ,  $p<0.01$  and a main effect of Social Networking Site,  $F(3,296)=8.678$ ,  $p<0.01$ . An informal relationship ( $M=3.48$ ,  $SD=0.74$ ) is related to a higher attitude towards the job-offer message than a formal relationship with the source ( $M=3.21$ ,  $SD=0.92$ ). A Bonferroni post-hoc test for the independent variable Social Networking Site showed that the attitudes towards the offline job-offer messages ( $M=3.71$ ,  $SD=0.76$ ) were more positive than the attitudes towards LinkedIn messages ( $M=3.17$ ,  $SD=0.85$ ). There was no significant interaction effect between SNS and (in)formality of the relationship investigated ( $F(3,296)=1.711$ ,  $p=ns.$ ).

#### Forward Intention (FI)

A two-way analysis of variance did not show a main effect of relationship with the source ( $F(1,304)=0.005$ ,  $p=ns.$ ), a main effect of SNS ( $F(3,304)=0.832$ ,  $ns.$ ) or interaction effect of these two variables ( $F(3,304)=1.991$ ,  $p=ns.$ ) on the forward intention.

### Intention to search more information about the job (ISI)

A two-way analysis of variance did not show a main effect of relationship with the intention to search for more information about the job ( $F(1,299)=1.092$ ,  $p=ns.$ ). However, the analysis did show a main effect of Social Networking Site on the intention to search for more information about the job ( $F(3,299)=8.791$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Respondents who received the job-offer message in the offline condition have a higher intention to search for information about the job ( $M=4.29$ ,  $SD=0.63$ ) than respondents in the Facebook ( $M=3.84$ ,  $SD=0.83$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), LinkedIn ( $M=3.80$ ,  $SD=0.86$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and Twitter condition ( $M=3.64$ ,  $SD=0.92$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), according to the Bonferroni post-hoc analysis. There is also a significant interaction effect between formality of the relationship and Social Networking Site ( $F(3,299)=4.778$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), see figure 5. In the Facebook condition the respondents who had received the job-offer message from an informal contact showed a higher intention to search for more information about the job ( $M=4.06$ ,  $SD=0.67$ ) than the respondents who received the message from a formal contact ( $M=3.59$ ,  $SD=0.94$ ), differences were significant ( $F(1,299)=8.102$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). In all the other conditions the differences between informal and formal contacts were not significant (LinkedIn:  $F(1,299)=3.590$ ,  $p=ns$ ; Twitter:  $F(1,299)=3.070$ ,  $p=ns.$  and Offline:  $F(1,299)=0.492$ ,  $p=ns.$ ).

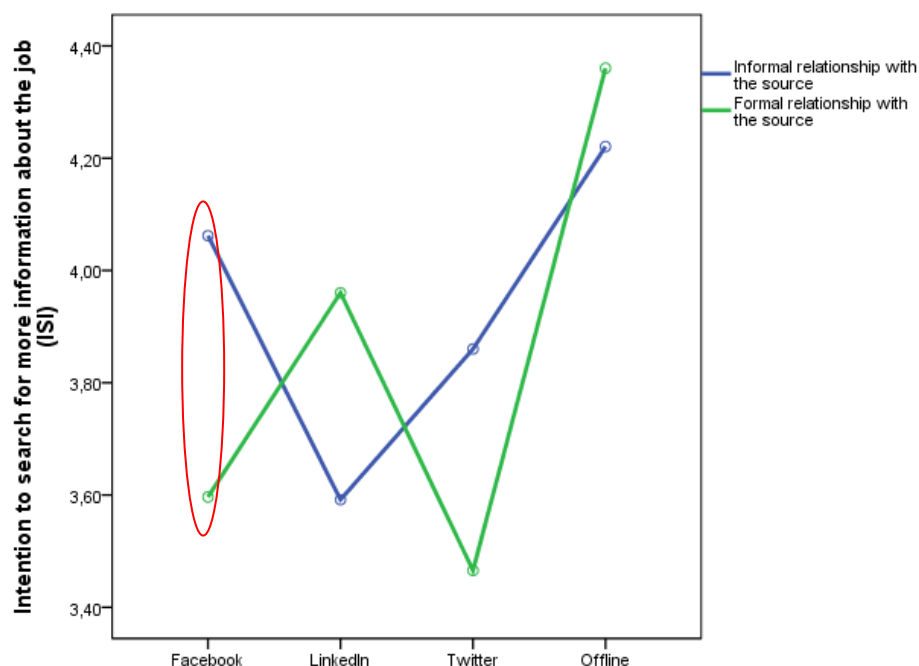


Figure 5: Interaction effect of Social Networking Site and formality of the relationship on the intention to search for more information about the company.

### Apply Intention (AI)

A two-way analysis of variance showed a main effect of Social Networking Site on apply intention ( $F(3,297)= 2.651, p<0.05$ ) and an interaction effect between Social Networking Site and formality of the relationship with the source on apply intention,  $F(3,297)=3.335, p<0.05$ , see figure 6. The apply intention of the respondents was higher if the job-offer message came from an informal contact via Facebook than if the job-offer message came from a formal contact via Facebook ( $F(1,297)=7.768, p<.01$ ). In the LinkedIn condition ( $F(1,299)=1.366, p=ns.$ ), Twitter condition ( $F(1,299)=0.154, p=ns.$ ), and offline condition ( $F(1,299)=0.983, p=ns.$ ), no significant differences between informal and formal relationships are discovered. The analysis did not show a main effect of formality with the source ( $F(1,297)=0.253, p=ns.$ ) on apply intention. A two-way analysis of variance did show a main effect of Social Networking Site. However, the Bonferroni post-hoc test failed to show a significant difference between the two specific conditions, no differences were significant;  $p=ns.$

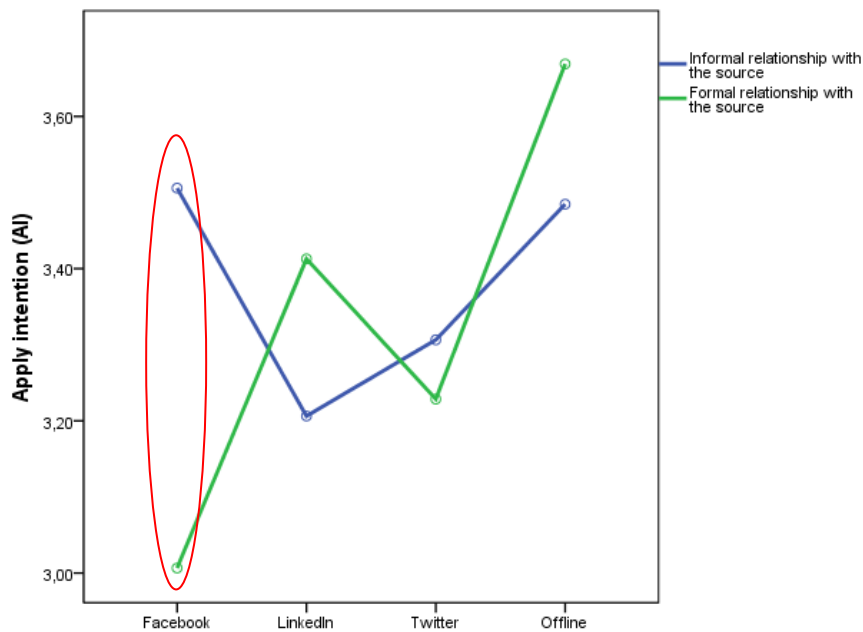


Figure 6: Interaction effect of Social Networking Site and formality of the relationship on apply intention.



### Perceived Job fit (PJF)

A two-way analysis of variance did not show a main effect of formality with the source ( $F(1,297)=0.207$   $p=ns.$ ) on perceived job fit. However, this analysis showed a main effect of Social Networking Site on perceived job fit ( $F(3,297)= 5.463$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). According to the Bonferroni post-hoc analysis, respondents who received the job-offer message in the offline condition perceived that they had a better fit with the job ( $M=3.64$ ,  $SD=0.67$ ) than the respondents in the Facebook ( $M=3.24$ ,  $SD=0.72$ ), LinkedIn ( $M=3.25$ ,  $SD=0.74$ ) and Twitter condition ( $M=3.30$ ,  $SD=0.78$ ). Furthermore, the analysis showed an interaction effect of Social Networking Site and formality of the relationship with the source on apply intention,  $F(3,297)=3.497$ ,  $p<0.05$ , see figure 7 for the interaction effect. Respondents in the Facebook condition expected to fit the job better if they had an informal relationship with the source than if they had a formal relationship with the source ( $F(1,297)=1.170$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). The opposite is found for the LinkedIn respondents, respondents in the LinkedIn condition expected that they fit better with the job if they had a formal relationship with the source than if they had an informal relationship with the source ( $F(1,297)=4.170$ ,  $p<.05$ ). In the Twitter and offline conditions there were no differences for the effect of the (in)formality of the source (respectively,  $F(1,297)=0.217$ ,  $p=ns.$  and  $F(1,297)=1.797$ ,  $p=ns.$ ).

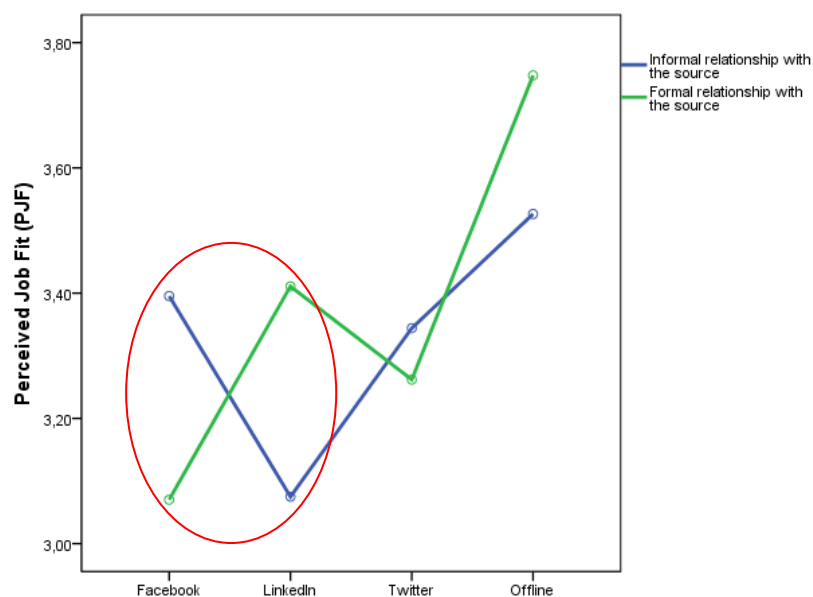


Figure 7: Interaction effect of Social Networking Site and formality of the relationship on perceived job fit.

### Organisational attractiveness (OA)

A two-way analysis of variance did not show a main effect for formality with the source on organisational attractiveness ( $F(1,297)=2.385$   $p=ns.$ ). However, this analysis showed a significant main effect of Social Networking Site on organisational attractiveness ( $F(3,297)= 3.438$ ,  $p<0.05$ ). The perceived organisational attractiveness was, according to the Bonferroni post-hoc test, higher if the respondent was informed about the vacancy in the offline situation ( $M=3.66$ ,  $SD=0.49$ ) than if the respondent was informed about the vacancy via Facebook ( $M=3.36$ ,  $SD=0.76$ ) or via LinkedIn ( $M=3.38$ ,  $SD=0.68$ ). Between the offline and Twitter condition ( $M=3.41$ ,  $SD=0.74$ ) were no significant differences.

In addition, the analysis showed a significant interaction effect of Social Networking Site and formality of the relationship with the source on organisational attractiveness,  $F(3,297)=2.759$ ,  $p<0.05$ , see figure 8 for the interaction effect. Respondents indicate the organisation as more attractive if an informal source updated the vacancy via Facebook than if a formal source updated the vacancy via Facebook ( $F(1,297)=10.44$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). In all other conditions there were no differences between informal and formal sources (LinkedIn:  $F(1,297)=0.180$ ,  $p=ns.$ , Twitter:  $F(1,297)=0.191$ ,  $p=ns.$ , Offline:  $F(1,297)=0.10$ ,  $p=ns.$ ).

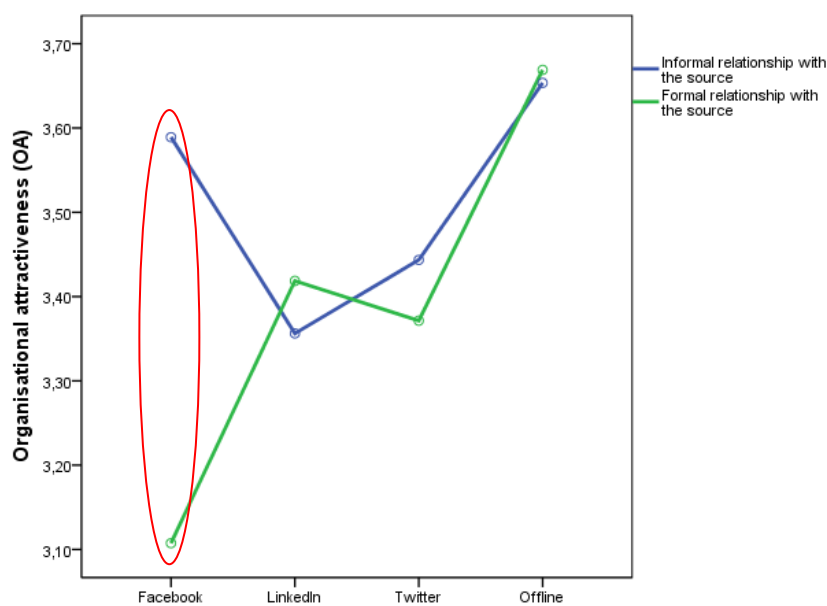


Figure 8: Interaction effect of Social Networking Site and formality of the relationship on organisational attractiveness.

### 4.3 Summary of the (un)supported hypotheses

The two paragraphs above show the results of the Structural Equation Modelling and the two-way analyses of variance. A summary of which hypotheses are supported based on these findings is given on Table 4.4.

Table 4.4: Supported and unsupported hypotheses

Hypothesis	Supported?
H1 <i>Attitude towards the job-offer message has a positive influence on the receiver's a) forward intention, b) apply intention, c) organisational attractiveness, d) perceived job-fit, and e) intention to search for more information about the job.</i>	Yes, all: a,b,c,d&e
H2 <i>Perceived source credibility has a positive effect on message credibility.</i>	Yes
H3 <i>Message credibility has a positive effect on attitude towards the job-offer message.</i>	Yes
H4 <i>Organisational attractiveness has a positive effect on a) the apply intention and b) the intention to search for more information about the job.</i>	Yes, both: a&b
H5 <i>Perceived job-fit has a positive effect on a) the apply intention and b) the intention to search for more information about the job.</i>	Partly, only 5a
H6 <i>Perceived job-fit has a positive effect on the organisational attractiveness.</i>	Yes
H7 <i>Informal contacts are perceived as more credible than formal contacts.</i>	Yes
H8 <i>Job-offer messages on Twitter are less credible than job-offer messages on Facebook and LinkedIn.</i>	No
H9 <i>a) Job-offer messages from informal contacts on Facebook are more credible than job-offer messages from formal contacts on Facebook, and b) job-offer messages from formal contacts on LinkedIn are more credible than job-offer messages from informal contacts on LinkedIn.</i>	Partly, only 9a
H10 <i>The interaction between (in)formality of the relationship and SNS will affect a) forward intentions, b) apply intentions, c) organisation attraction, d) perceived job-fit, and e) intention to search for more information.</i>	Partly, only b, c, d&e

## 5. Discussion

This study contributes to recruitment literature and the understanding of applicant attraction in the earliest phase of recruitment via SNS in a number of ways. The roles of key components in influencing attitudes and intentions to behaviors, such as source credibility, message credibility and attitude towards the advertisement are tested in recruitment situations via SNS. In addition, the role of information congruence in recruitment is integrated in this process of influencing attitudes towards job-offer messages and recruitment dependent variables. This chapter starts with the theoretical implications (§5.1), followed by the limitations & directions of future studies (§5.2) and ends with practical implications and concluding remarks (§5.3).

### 5.1 Theoretical implications

The impact of recruitment sources on recruitment dependent variables has been studied many times. However, the impact of an online recruitment source via SNS has never been studied, neither has the impact of congruence among (in)formality of the relationship with the source and (in)formality of the SNS on job-impact factors. The effects seem to be relevant. The theoretical implications are discussed below.

First, this study supports the findings of Ragins and Cotton (1999) that people take into account more advice from informal contacts than advice from formal contacts. Ragins and Cotton (1999) postulate that the difference between informal and formal contacts can probably be explained by the internal/external motivation of the source to build a relationship. Informal sources entered the relationship voluntary, the source is internally motivated to enter the relationship. Formal relationships are forced to enter the relationship; people are doing business together and it is necessary to enter a (formal) relationship (the source is externally motivated to enter the relationship; he/she is indirectly paid to form this relationship), according to Ragins and Cotton (1999). According to Ragins and Cotton (1999) internally motivated people are perceived as more credible. The findings of this study are consistent with the findings of Ragins and Cotton (1999); this study shows that the sources and their job-offer messages are perceived as more credible if the source had an informal relationship with the receiver than if the source had a formal relationship with the receiver.

Second, Huberman, Romero, and Wu (2008) propose that interaction ties determine the credibility of the tie. No support for this theory is found because Twitter seems to be more credible than Facebook and LinkedIn, while Twitter is a micro-blogging Social Networking Site, in which unidirectional relationships are possible (one can follow another, without being followed by the same person) and Facebook and LinkedIn are built to interact, and people have interaction ties. One explanation could be that on Twitter people only follow people they like, and liking is one of the

three credibility aspects that determine source credibility (Fisher, Ilgen & Hoyer, 1979). Another explanation lies in the Impression Management tactics that SNS-users (unconsciously) use. For instance, Harris, Van Hoyer and Lievens (2003) argue that privacy perceptions can cause SNS-users to present themselves differently via SNS. Twitter is a less private SNS than Facebook and LinkedIn; most Twitter profiles are public. It could be that receivers expect that people are more conscious about what they post via Twitter than via LinkedIn or Facebook, because via Twitter (in most cases) everybody can see the message and via Facebook and LinkedIn (in most cases) only friends or friends of friends can see the message. This could possibly result in a higher message credibility.

Third, this study shows that the importance of information congruence should not be underestimated. The expectation of this study was that job-offer messages posted by informal contacts were more credible via Facebook (an informal Social Networking Site) than via LinkedIn (a formal Social Networking Site). In addition, job-offer messages posted by formal contacts are more credible via LinkedIn than via Facebook. These hypotheses were based on the theory of Reber, Scharz, and Winkielman (2004). They proposed that information congruence leads to processing fluency, and processing fluency leads to higher evaluations. The information congruence among (in)formality of the relationship and (in)formality of the SNS affects the impact of the job-offer on SNS. Van Rompay, De Vries, and VanVenrooij (2010) studied the importance of information congruence between pictures and text in online situations. The current study shows the importance of congruence between medium and relationship with the source in online situations. Results of this current study provide evidence for the theory of Reber, Swarz, and Winkielman (2004) that information congruence among different aspects results in higher brand evaluations. In addition, the results of the current study provide evidence for the findings of Van Rompay, De Vries, and Van Venrooij (2010) that information congruence plays an important role in online situations.

Fourth, in this study the path model shown in figure 3 shows an acceptable fit with the data. In addition, most paths were significant. This provides evidence for the studies in which 1) the relationships between source credibility and attitudes towards advertisements are tested (Eisend, 2004; Van Hoyer & Lievens, 2007; Olson & Cal, 1984), 2) studies in which the relationships between attitudes towards the messages and behavioural intentions are tested (Allen, Mahto & Ottondo, 2007; Highhouse, Lievens & Sinar, 2003; MacKenzie, Lutz & Belch, 1986; Van Ryn & Vinokur, 1992) and 3) studies in which the relationships between recruitment dependent variables are tested (Chapman et al., 2005; Porter & Golan, 2006; Van Ryn & Vinokur, 1992). Data analysis, however, reveals that the perceived job-fit has no significant direct impact on intention to search for more information about the job. In this study the attitude towards the job-offer message and organisational attractiveness already determine a big part of the intention to search for more information. The influence of perceived job-fit on intention to search for more information is

mediated by organisational attractiveness, since perceived job-fit significantly influences organisational attractiveness and organisational attractiveness significantly influences intention to search for more information.

## 5.2 Limitations and future research directions

Despite the fascinating insights about the source credibility and the interaction effects of SNS in relation to the (in)formality of the relationship, the results of this study should be interpreted with respect to its limitations. These limitations result in suggestions for further research.

The first limitation regarding the experiment is the fictive situation sketch. In the experiment, respondents were asked to imagine the situation, in which they were not searching for a new job but a situation in which they were open to career opportunities. The job-offer in the status update was a perfect next step in the sketched situation. This situation sketch is fictitious. This limitation has effect on the persuasiveness, the attitude towards the job-offer message and the perceived behavioural consequences. A real life situation, with the use of an available vacancy would probably be better in testing these effects. If the link to the real vacancy works, people would probably base their opinion more on the matching background, the organisation, and specific job requirements. The critical contact theory of Behling et al. (1968) cited in Chapman et al. (2005) explains that potential applicants often do not have enough information about job attributes. Therefore, they base their opinion on other aspects than job attributes. In previous studies applicants based their opinion on the signals of the recruiter. This study confirms that they base their opinion about the job attributes on the recruiter (in this study an online friend via SNS). If receivers have the possibility to check the vacancy text and the company website, they would probably have less difficulty in forming a meaningful opinion about the job, and the impact of the recruiter would probably play a less significant role in the process. Future studies need to test these effects in a real life situation, to see if people still base their opinion on source credibility and the SNS. It might be that other factors, such as frequency of posting job-offer updates, affect the effects of job-offers on potential applicants.

The second limitation concerns the simulation of the SNS. Using a real life situation (as suggested for further research in the paragraph above), also prevents the second limitation of this study. The different pages look like the different SNS. It were the authentic (print screens of) Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter pages, however the status update was fictional and the other not useful content was blurred. Using a real life situation, by posting an available vacancy in a status update and testing the effects afterwards would be more realistic.

The third limitation that should be taken into account is the preconditions of the randomisation of this study. Respondents were randomly assigned to one of the eight conditions, precondition being they actually had an account on the concerning Social Networking Site. For

example, if respondents did not have an account on Facebook but did have an account on the other SNS, they were automatically assigned to one of the six remaining conditions but not to one of the two Facebook-conditions. However, it could be that non-Facebook users are significantly more/less sceptical about vacancies than Facebook users. If there are significant differences between Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and non-users the main effects between the different SNS could be explained by the precondition of the randomisation of this study. However, the expectation is that this randomisation does not affect the results of the study, because 40% of the respondents had all SNS and were randomly assigned to one of the eight conditions. 32% of the respondents were randomly assigned to six of the eight conditions. Only 21% of the respondents were randomly assigned to four of the eight conditions and only 7% of the respondents are directly assigned to one of the two offline conditions. If there were systematic differences between the different SNS-users, the 40% of the respondents who were randomly assigned to one of the eight conditions would probably mitigate these effects. Still, future studies are needed to investigate if and to what extent there are differences between Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and non SNS-users.

Fourth, because the current study relies heavily on respondents with a bachelor or master degree, the external generalization of the findings could be constrained. In this study, the people with a bachelor or master degree were the target group. However, to conclude to what extent people with a degree lower than bachelor are influenced by source credibility and information congruence between (in)formality of the relationship with the source and (in)formality of the SNS is never studied. Thus, future research is needed to examine whether the findings of this study can be generalised to participants with lower than bachelor education levels.

Fifth, no significant difference in credibility was found between the SNS (Facebook, LinkedIn versus Twitter). However, the interaction effects of (in)formality of SNS and (in)formality of the relationship with the source were significant, suggesting differences between the SNS. Additionally, job-offer messages via Twitter seem to be more credible than messages via Facebook and LinkedIn, but the results of this study failed to show a significant difference. A possible explanation why there could be differences between the SNS is given in the theoretical implication section; the impression management of the users could differ per SNS due to different privacy settings per SNS (Harris, Van Hoyer, and Lievens, 2003). This, however, remains a suggestion; future research should study all possible explanations that could cause the differences in credibility between the SNS and the effect on the credibility of the posted job-offer message.

Last, no perfect fit between the data and the model was yielded. Although an acceptable fit was found, future studies should look for a perfect fitting model with the data, in order to show more precise the explaining path coefficients between the variables, and more precise explaining variances of the variables in the research model.

### 5.3 Practical implications and conclusion

The goal of this study was to compare the effectiveness of job-offers on different SNS. All three SNS tested in this study are useful for sending job-offers. However, people should be aware that source credibility is dependent on the Social Networking Site. This study shows that (in)formality of the relationship in relation to (in)formality of the Social Networking Site have impact on the dependent recruitment variables, like organisational attractiveness, and intentions to apply. The conclusion is clear:

- If a job-offer message is posted via Facebook, a sender with an informal relationship with the receiver will have more impact on the receiver than a source with a formal relationship with the receiver.
- If a job-offer message is posted via LinkedIn, a sender with a formal relationship with the receiver will have more impact on the receiver than an informal relationship with the receiver.

The (in)formality of the relationship with the source in relation to (in)formality of the Social Networking Site determine the credibility of the job-offer, and the behavioural intentions after reading the job-offer message.

The results have interesting implications for all organisations that want to recruit new employees via SNS; in some cases it would be more efficient to use one Social Networking Site over another, but it could also be that using the other Social Networking Site would be more efficient. Most companies spray the job-offers via employees, while praying for potential applicants to understand the job-offer and apply on the job-offer (spray and pray method). However, some SNS in combination with the formality of the source were better in persuading potential applicants than other SNS in combination with the formality of the source. Just using the spray and pray method is not the best option, according to the results of the present study. As can be seen in the results, the best way of recruiting via SNS depends on the overall effect that you want to realise. This section details the practical advice for posting job-offers via SNS. The advice for organisations who want to use SNS for sending job-offers is that they have to think about which effects they want to achieve. The sender of the job-offer message should know the effect of posting the job-offer. The following sections give advice on how to achieve each of the possible outcome effects.



**Which of the following three outcome effects do you want to achieve? The following sections give advice on how to achieve each of the possible outcome effects.**

**Outcome effect 1: Receivers have to forward the job-offer within their own network**

*Advice:* Post the message on all the three SNS, and ask as many employees of the organisation as possible to do the same. However, the sender should be warned: most receivers in the present study were not willing to share the message into their own network. Regardless of the condition, people had a low intention to forward the message.

**Explanation:** In general, respondents in none of the conditions were willing to share the job-offers in their online network. Nevertheless, in all conditions some of the people intended to forward the message into their own network.

**Outcome effect 2: Receivers have to apply or have to think they fit with the job**

*Advice:* Talk to the receivers face-to-face, if you already have some receivers in mind who could fit the job-offer. Do you think some of your formal and informal contacts could be interested? Use Twitter. Use LinkedIn if some of the formal contacts of the sender can be interested in the job, and your informal contacts are probably not interested in the job. Use Facebook if some of the informal contacts could be interested in the job, and the formal contacts are probably not interested.

**Explanation:** Informal contacts are in general more credible than formal contacts, but that is not all; the congruence between kind of SNS and kind of relationship makes the message even more credible and effective. If someone wants to be credible for his/her formal contacts, LinkedIn would be a better option than Facebook and Twitter. If someone wants to be credible for his/her informal contacts, Facebook would be a better option than LinkedIn and Twitter. If as well formal and informal contacts could be interested, you should use Twitter, due to the negative consequences of incongruence of (in)formality in recruitment. It could have negative consequences if a formal contact posts the job-offer message on Facebook or if an informal contact posts the job-offer message on LinkedIn. The effect of the congruence between (in)formality of the medium in relation to the (in)formality of the relationship, has a direct effects on the following variables: intention to search more information about the job, apply intention, perceived job-fit, and organisational attractiveness. The variables organisational attractiveness, and perceived job-fit were high in all conditions. The effects of the job-offer message were in the (in)congruence conditions less than in other conditions; however, the effects were positive in all conditions. The variables apply intention and perceived job-fit did not have a positive effect in the (in)congruence conditions. Therefore posting all vacancies via all SNS would not be the best option, but the option suggested above would be the best option.

**Outcome effect 3: Receivers have to search for more information about the job or have to perceive the organisation as an attractive organisation**

*Advice:* Let employees post the message on Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter, and tell people face-to-face.

**Explanation:** In all conditions most receivers perceive the organisation as an attractive organisation and have a high intention to search for more information about the job, if the job-offer message is posted via SNS, according to the results. Despite the condition of the respondents, people judge the organisation as attractive and, are intended to search for more information about the job, even though they could only see the job-offer message without additional information about the job or organisation. Telling people face-to-face about an available vacancy leads to the highest perceived organisational attractiveness. However, due to the small differences between the offline and online conditions, and the ease of spreading the job-offer messages via SNS, the advice is to use the SNS as well.

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## Appendix A: Stimulus materials

### Informal condition:

The respondents in the informal conditions are confronted with the following text:

#### STEL:

Jij bent werkzaam als **project medewerker** bij een groot bedrijf. Alhoewel je niet actief op zoek bent naar een nieuwe baan, ben je wel geïnteresseerd als er iets nieuws op jouw pad komt waarbij je een stap kan maken van project medewerker naar een hogere functie (ongeacht in welke stad dit is).

Jij komt Gijs Peters (een vriend van vroeger) tegen bij één van jouw vrienden op [Facebook /LinkedIn/Twitter/in de coffee corner] en voegt Gijs toe als vriend op Facebook. Gijs Peters is een **oud-vriend**, die je al een tijd niet meer gesproken hebt omdat hij voor zijn werk als ‘manager marktonderzoeken’ is verhuisd naar een andere stad. Het contact met Gijs (**jouw oud-vriend en tevens sportmaatje**) is hierdoor verwaterd en jij hebt hem al een jaar niet meer gesproken. Toen jullie nog in dezelfde stad woonden, gingen jullie minstens één keer per week sporten. Af en toe aten jullie samen een hapje of belandden jullie na het sporten samen in de kroeg.

5 minuten nadat jij oud-vriend Gijs Peters toegevoegd hebt op Facebook zie je het onderstaande bericht van Gijs:

### Formal condition:

The respondents in the formal conditions are confronted with the following tekst:

#### STEL:

Jij bent werkzaam als **project medewerker** bij een groot bedrijf. Alhoewel je niet actief op zoek bent naar een nieuwe baan, ben je wel geïnteresseerd als er iets nieuws op jouw pad komt waarbij je een stap kan maken van project medewerker naar een hogere functie (ongeacht in welke stad dit is).

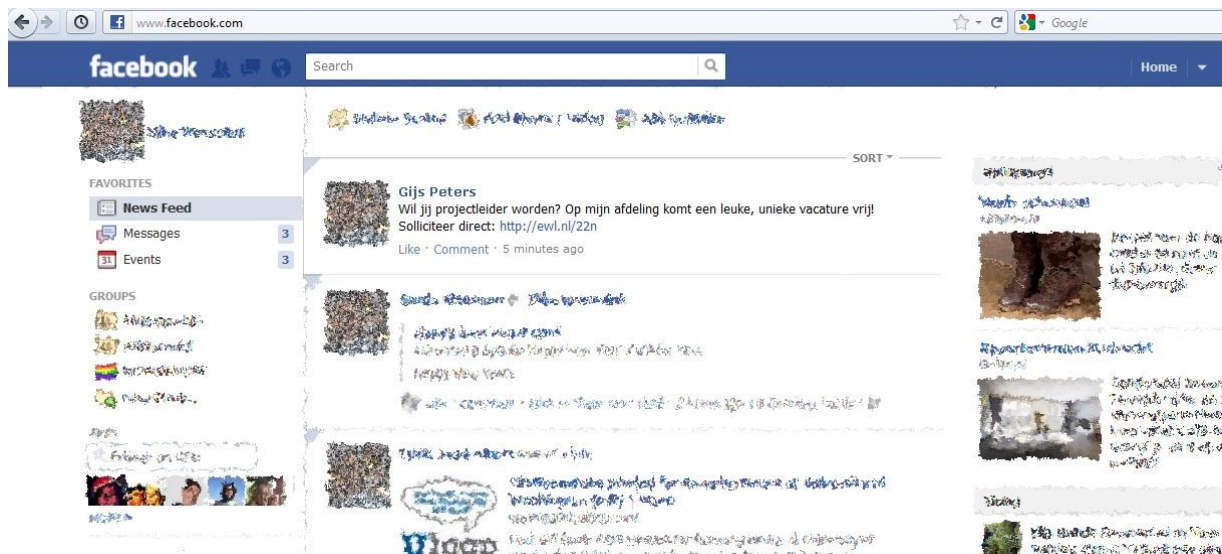
Jij komt Gijs Peters (een leidinggevende van vroeger) tegen bij één van jouw vrienden op [Facebook /LinkedIn/Twitter/in de coffee corner] en voegt Gijs toe als vriend op Facebook. Gijs Peters is **jouw voormalige manager**, die vorig jaar met een nieuwe baan als ‘manager marktonderzoeken’ is begonnen bij een ander bedrijf in een andere stad. Het contact is hierdoor verwaterd en jij hebt hem al een jaar niet meer gesproken. Toen jullie vorig jaar nog bij hetzelfde bedrijf werkten had jij minstens één keer per week een functionele afspraak met hem (zoals een werkoverleg). De gesprekken met Gijs waren altijd erg zakelijk en doelgericht. Af en toe hadden jullie samen een zakelijk diner, maar ook dan gingen de gesprekken met Gijs altijd over werk.

5 minuten nadat jij oud-leidinggevende Gijs Peters toegevoegd hebt op Facebook zie je het onderstaande bericht van Gijs:



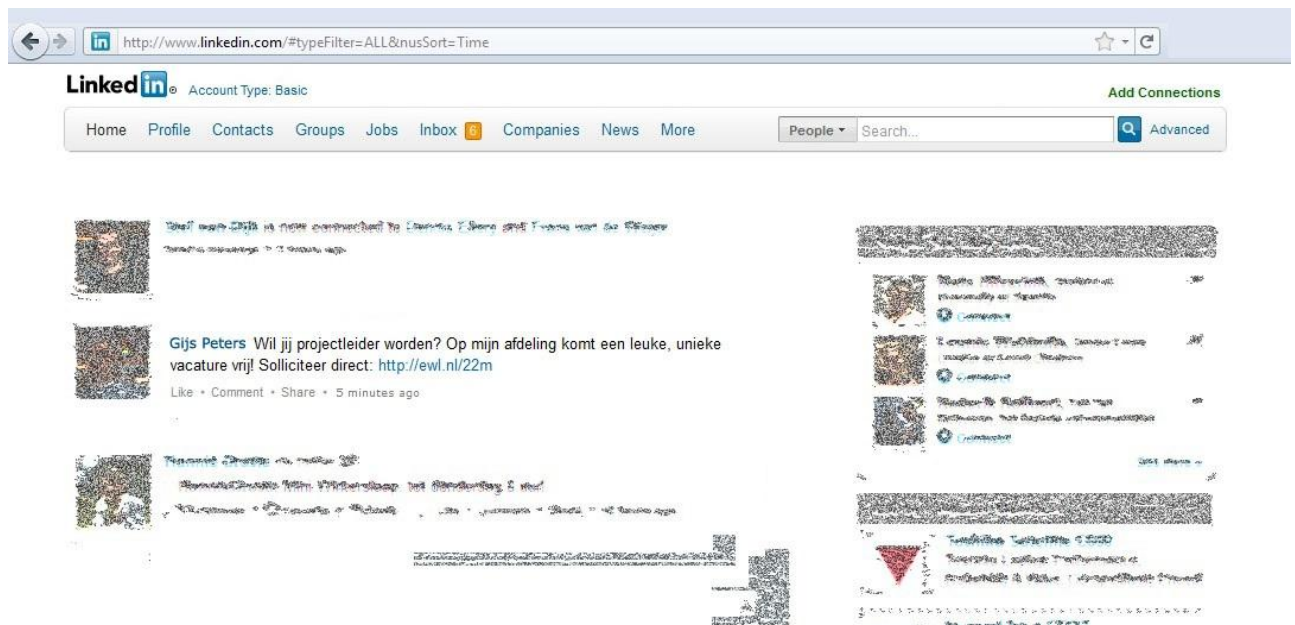
## Facebook condition:

The respondents in the Facebook conditions are confronted with the following status update:



## LinkedIn condition:

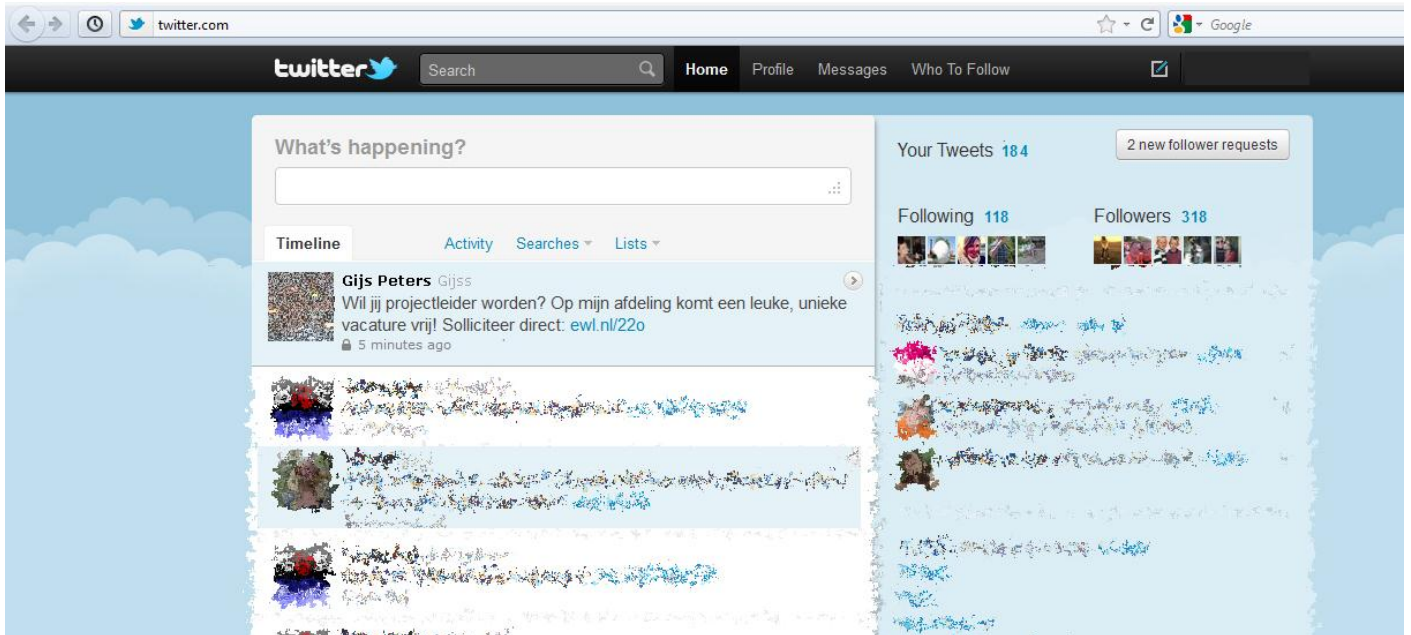
The respondents in the LinkedIn conditions are confronted with the following status update:





## Twitter condition:

The respondents in the Twitter conditions are confronted with the following status update:



## Offline condition:

The respondents in the offline conditions are confronted with the following message:

Na vijf minuten praten in de coffee corner, vertelt oud-leidinggevende Gijs jou het onderstaande:

“Wil jij projectleider worden? Op mijn afdeling komt een leuke, unieke vacature vrij! Solliciteer direct via de werkenbij-website.”













**Waar kwam je Gijs tegen: \***

- Bij connecties op LinkedIn
- Bij connecties op Facebook
- Bij connecties op Twitter
- In de coffee corner vlakbij het station
- Weet ik niet meer

**Wat is Gijs van jou: \***

- Oud-leidinggevende
- Oud-vriend
- Huidig leidinggevende
- Huidige vriend
- Weet ik niet meer

**LET OP: Het eerste en grootste gedeelte van de vragenlijst heb je afgesloten. Je hoeft je géén situatie meer in te beelden.**

Er volgen nog een aantal vragen over jouw achtergrond en jouw Social Networking Sites gebruik (Facebook, LinkedIn en Twitter).

Klik op volgende om door te gaan naar de laatste paar vragen.



**Hoe vaak ben je online op Facebook: \***

- Nooit, ik heb geen Facebook account.
- (Bijna) nooit, ik heb een Facebook account maar maak er (bijna) geen gebruik van.
- Tenminste één keer per maand
- Tenminste één keer per week
- Dagelijks 0 t/m 1 uur per dag
- Dagelijks 2 t/m 4 uur per dag
- Dagelijks 5 t/m 10 uur per dag
- Dagelijks meer dan 10 uur per dag

**Hoe vaak ben je online op LinkedIn: \***

- Nooit, ik heb geen LinkedIn account.
- (Bijna) nooit, ik heb een LinkedIn account maar maak er (bijna) geen gebruik van.
- Tenminste één keer per maand
- Tenminste één keer per week
- Dagelijks 0 t/m 1 uur per dag
- Dagelijks 2 t/m 4 uur per dag
- Dagelijks 5 t/m 10 uur per dag
- Dagelijks meer dan 10 uur per dag

**Hoe vaak ben je online op Twitter: \***

- Nooit, ik heb geen Twitter account.
- (Bijna) nooit, ik heb een Twitter account maar maak er geen gebruik van.
- Maandelijks (een keer per maand t/m een keer per week)
- Wekelijks (een keer per week t/m een keer per dag)
- Dagelijks 0 t/m 1 uur per dag
- Dagelijks 2 t/m 4 uur per dag
- Dagelijks 5 t/m 10 uur per dag
- Dagelijks meer dan 10 uur per dag



**Wat vind jij van Facebook?**

	Helemaal niet			Helemaal wel			Geen mening
Leuk	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Zakelijk	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Wat vind jij van LinkedIn?**

	Helemaal niet			Helemaal wel			Geen mening
Leuk	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Zakelijk	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Wat vind jij van Twitter?**

	Helemaal niet			Helemaal wel			Geen mening
Leuk	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Zakelijk	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Wat zijn jouw connecties op...**

	Uitsluitend privé connecties (vrienden, studiegeNoten e.d.)			Uitsluitend zakelijk connecties (werkgerelateerd)			Niet van toepassing
Facebook	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
LinkedIn	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Twitter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Sta jij open voor vacatures op...**

	Helemaal niet			Helemaal wel			Geen mening
Facebook	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
LinkedIn	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Twitter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Geslacht: \***

- Man
- Vrouw





**Leeftijd (in aantal jaren): \***

**Opleidingsniveau (hoogst genoten, indien je nog met een opleiding bezig bent, vul dit niveau dan in): \***

- VMBO
- HAVO
- VWO
- MBO
- HBO
- WO
- Basisonderwijs/geen

**Werkstatus: \***

- Ik heb een baan, maar ben wel geïnteresseerd in carrièremogelijkheden
- Ik heb een baan en ik ben niet geïnteresseerd in carrièremogelijkheden
- Ik ben net afgestudeerd en werkzoekend
- Ik ben werkeloos en werkzoekend
- Ik ben werkeloos maar ben niet op zoek naar nieuw werk
- Ik ben student, zonder bijbaan
- Ik ben student, met bijbaan
- Anders/ Zeg ik liever niet

**Werkzaam in de sector: \***

- Commerciële sector (bedrijf met winstoogmerk)
- Niet-commercieel (bedrijf zonder winstoogmerk)
- Publieke sector (overheid/zorg e.d.)
- Zeg ik liever niet
- Geen
- Anders, namelijk



**Niet verplicht: Heb je nog op/of aanmerkingen over dit onderzoek? Feedback wordt op prijs gesteld!**



**De resultaten van dit onderzoek worden gebruikt voor wetenschappelijk onderzoek uitgevoerd door Silke Wesselink (masterstudie Marketingcommunicatie). Daarnaast worden de resultaten van dit onderzoek gebruikt om het recruitment proces van Ziggo te optimaliseren: waarbij je anonimiteit voor 100% gewaarborgd blijft! Mag jouw vragenlijst gebruikt worden voor dit onderzoek?**

- Ja, ik geef toestemming om mijn vragenlijst te gebruiken voor dit onderzoek.
- Nee, ik geef GEEN toestemming om mijn vragenlijst te gebruiken voor dit onderzoek.

**Niet verplicht:**

**Vul hieronder jouw emailadres als je kans wilt maken op één van de tien paar Touch screen-handschoenen (Winnaars krijgen in februari bericht):**

**Niet verplicht:**

**Vul hieronder jouw emailadres in als je de resultaten van het onderzoek wilt ontvangen:**

**Hartelijk bedankt voor het invullen van deze vragenlijst en jouw bijdrage aan dit onderzoek!**

Druk op 'versturen' om deze vragenlijst te versturen.

Bedankt voor jouw deelname aan deze vragenlijst!

Silke Wesselink