

# Institutional complexity in talent management practices: Employee staffing, development, and retention

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## **Abstract**

Talent management (TM) continues to receive extensive attention in the literature. Due to the comprehensiveness of the term 'talent', it is challenging to find the right strategy to manage this resource. Two critical limitations play an essential role. First, literature often focuses on the single perspective of HR, top management, or talents, while little is known about the triangular relationship between these perspectives in the internal organisational context. Second, studies regularly highlight one practice instead of analysing the complete TM approach. Therefore, in this research, a case study is conducted based on in-depth semi-structured interviews among HR professionals, line management, and IT talent in a platform organisation. In addition, the study aims to explore the drivers of all the TM practices: employee staffing, development, and retention. Based on the institutional logic perspective, three underpinned logics are explored: the leadership logic, the management logic, and the developer logic. Accordingly, this study is in line with existing literature that explores institutional complexity in the underpinned logics rather than the stereotype logics formulated by Thornton et al. (2012). In contrast with existing literature, the research found that underpinned logics clashed in the TM processes instead of the TM practices. This means that institutional complexity is not generalisable for employee staffing, development, or retention but is manifested in the process that includes attraction, selection, onboarding, training, performance management, succession planning, compensation, and benefits.

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## Introduction

This research sets out to explore the drivers in the talent management (TM) practices: employee staffing, development, and retention. In existing literature, the institutional logic perspective received academic attention because it showed to be a robust framework to analyse similarities and differences in drivers of various actors (Thornton et al., 2012; Lewis et al., 2019; Tyskbo, 2019). Although drivers and logics are not synonyms, 'drivers' could be seen as a simplification of the comprehensive definition of logics. In principle, logics explain why actors behave and socially accept their surroundings in a specific context. Since every context is different, the institutional logic perspective enables the classification of drivers to establish a good representation of reality. In practice, this is crucial information for an organisation to ensure that practices are well executed. To illustrate, if actors adhere to incompatible drivers it could lead to tension between them and even result in internal (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Tyskbo, 2019) or external conflicts (Luo et al., 2017). In the institutional logic perspective, this tension between actors is also described as institutional complexity, which captures the clashing logics of (multiple) actors (Lewis et al., 2019; Tyskbo, 2019). In terms of TM, institutional complexity could explain between which actors tension arises, and in which practices it could be problematic for the execution.

In the last two decades, TM received significant attention because of two reasons. First, well-organised and -implemented practices lead to competitive advantage (McDonnell et al., 2017; McKinsey, 2018). Second and perhaps more important, due to the comprehensive meaning of the word 'talent', companies have distinct approaches to manage their talents (Lewis & Heckman, 2006). In addition, the meaning given to 'talent' changes over time (Maguire, 2004), and organisational factors must be considered to identify talent in a specific context (Dries, 2013; Al Ariss et al., 2014). In other words, talent identification is (slightly) different for every company (Collings & Mellahi, 2009; Silzer & Church, 2010). This is in line with Wiblen and McDonnell (2019), who indicate that different meanings of talent are irrelevant without knowing how contextual factors underpin these meanings. Contextual factors explain the enormous variation in perceptions, implementation, and execution of TM practices (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2020). One of the studies explicitly examining institutional complexity affirms that a headquarters and subsidiary have different ways to adopt talent identification (Tyskbo, 2019). While existing literature mainly discusses talent identification, other TM practices like development and retention are largely neglected. Moreover, when talent identification is discussed, this is often based on the perspective of top management and/or HR professionals rather than including talents (Collings, 2014; McDonnell et al., 2017; Meyers et al., 2020). Despite the imposing attention for TM, limited scientific insights are collected on how multiple actors shape practices and consequently impact the execution. Also, little empirical research is done about the presence of institutional complexity in other practices than talent identification (Tyskbo, 2019). Therefore, the following research question is asked to expand the existing literature: How is institutional complexity manifested in employee staffing, development, and retention? The overarching aim is to explore the drivers in

employee staffing, development, and retention of HR professionals, line management, and talents. Accordingly, the incompatible drivers of multiple actors result in a better understanding of how TM unfolds in practice. As a result, this understanding is beneficial to better align TM among various actors within a specific organisational context.

To continue, the relevance of this study is based on two critical limitations in the existing literature. First, TM includes more practices than only talent identification. Initially, Collings and Mellahi (2009) distinguish the identification of critical positions, the development of a talent pool, and the differentiated human resource architecture to organise TM in any context. Especially this architecture, which proposes customised practices for every group of employees (e.g., sales, marketing, operations, HR), shows the importance of contextual factors. In fact, customised practices are depending on the business and therefore TM practices could differ in every organisation. Ten years later, Collings et al. (2019) reformulated the TM practices as employee staffing, development, and retention. Although these practices are still broad, it provides a direction which elements need to be considered to explore how the entire TM approach unfolds in practice. Second, and linked to the comprehensiveness of TM, various actors play a role in the internal context (Collings, 2014; Thunnissen, 2016). For instance, HR professionals usually are a group of actors consisting of recruiters, advisors, administration, et cetera. Depending on the business activity, the actors are involved in the execution. A recruiter is probably fully involved in employee staffing, whereas they have limited involvement in developing talents during their career. This is in line with Wiblen and McDonnell (2019), who point out that TM can only be studied in a specific context, time, and with individual actors included. While contextual factors are primarily examined in the external context, there is often a lack of knowledge about the drivers in the internal context (Beaumont et al., 2020; Dries, 2013). A number of study focuses on the perspective of two actors: HR managers and top management (Collings, 2014; McDonnell et al., 2017; Thunnissen et al., 2013), other studies emphasise the essential role of talents within organisations (Sumelius et al., 2020; Meyers, 2020). Additionally, several studies suggest a crucial role for the more decentralised (line) managers (Gallardo-Gallardo & Thunnissen, 2016; Paauwe, 2009; Thunnissen et al., 2013). Ulrich and Allen (2014) state that line managers are the responsible persons to take decisions in talent identification and judge the performance of talents regarding the value they add to the achievement of business objectives. In short, to capture institutional complexity, more internal actors and TM practices must be included to better understand how TM unfolds in the internal context (Gallardo-Gallardo & Thunnissen, 2016; Wiblen & McDonnell, 2019). Therefore, the results of this study will illustrate the alignment and contradictions in a multi-perspective analysis among employee staffing, development, and retention of a talented workforce.

Accordingly, this study will contribute to two streams of literature. First, it contributes to the TM literature that calls for examining more practices than only talent identification (Tyskbo, 2019). This research aims to overlap the entire TM process by discussing employee staffing, development, and retention. In addition, where previous research focuses on a single actor perspective, this study

investigates a triangular relationship between HR professionals, line management, and talents. Also, institutional complexity between actors is considered in terms of tension between the actors of a specific group. As a result, this study provides a conceivable overview of how institutional complexity is manifested in TM. Second, the study contributes to the HRM literature that continues to address the consideration of contextual factors. Significantly, the institutional complexity is studied to provide insights on how TM practices unfold in the internal context. In this case, the local context is used to consider multiple perspectives. The study embraces the institutional logic perspective to analyse institutional complexity and establishes an overview of the drivers at HR professionals, line management, and talents. By analysing the dominant logics of multiple internal actors, this study explains how institutional complexity is manifested in employee staffing, development, and retention.

This study starts with a theoretical framework that includes an extensive explanation of TM practices and explains why the institutional logic perspective is a suitable framework to assess institutional complexity. Afterwards, the methodology chapter includes the data collection, data analysis, measurement, and the organisational context. The last part will consist of the results, followed by the discussion and conclusion section.

### **Theoretical framework**

This section provides a brief overview of the literature to explore which drivers are manifested in TM practices and potentially cause institutional complexity. To cover this, the structure is determined based on three questions: 1) What is TM and which actors are involved? 2) What is institutional complexity? And 3) How could institutional complexity be manifested in employee staffing, development, and retention?

### **Talent management**

Talents can be described as the resource to create and maintain competitive advantage (Dries, 2013; Tlaiss et al., 2017). Accordingly, talent management is embraced by practitioners to secure this resource (Sparrow & Makram, 2015). Collings and Mellahi (2009) define TM as “activities and processes that involve the systematic identification of key positions which differentially contribute to the organisation’s sustainable competitive advantage, the development of a talent pool or high-potential and high-performing incumbents to fill these roles, and the development of a differentiated human resource architecture to facilitate filling these positions with competent incumbents and to ensure their continued commitment to the organisation” (p. 304). Whereas the emphasis of the definition lies on talent identification, it remains unclear which activities and processes cover TM. Stahl et al. (2012) summarise seven processes: recruitment and selection, succession planning, training and development, performance management, compensation and benefits, retention, and employer branding. From a process perspective, it can be argued that the processes could be classified in the following TM practices: employee staffing (recruitment and selection, employer brand), development (training, performance management,

succession planning), and retention (compensation and benefits). This is in line with the definition of Collings et al. (2019) that divide the global talent management process in attraction, selection, development, and retention (Sparrow & Makram, 2015). In general, the process starts with attracting talented people, and after they are hired, the process continues with the onboarding period. Next, the people usually develop through training, performance management, and succession planning. To complement, compensation and benefits is a typical activity to retain people because a rewarding framework could prevent employees leaving the company for a competitor (Stahl et al., 2012). Nevertheless, the definition of Collings and Mellahi (2009) represents a fundamental choice to organise TM in practice instead of displaying all the activities and processes. To illustrate, the definition highlights 'key strategic positions' and is in line with an exclusive approach that implies that only limited people have talent (Gallardo-Gallardo & Thunnissen, 2016). On the contrary, organisations could also align their practices based on an inclusive approach, which implies that all people have a unique talent (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2020). Presumably, this fundamental choice affects how TM unfolds in practices and therefore the execution highly depends on the internal environment (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2020). To sum up, TM consists of employee staffing, development, and retention, and to explore TM in practice it is critical to understand the fundamental choices organisation make to manage talents.

### ***TM practices***

The TM process typically starts with employee staffing, which includes recruiting and selecting talents (Collings & Mellahi, 2019). In general, talents can be attracted and selected among employees in the current workforce or recruited from outside the company (Rabbi et al., 2015). Likewise, it is a strategic choice to 'make' or 'buy' talents, where they are made when the focus lies on internal development and training, and they are bought when talents are attracted via sourcing (Cappelli, 2008). Commonly, recruiters and hiring managers are the main actors involved in employee staffing (Lewis & Heckman, 2006). For instance, recruiters are responsible for the candidate experience and assess the match between the applicant and the organisation (Jiang & Iles, 2011). Accordingly, managers are often the responsible actors to take the final decision to hire the applicant. To continue, talent development aims to assure a current and future supply of talents to meet business goals (Garavan et al., 2012). Talent development improves the competencies of the employees and enhances the fit between talent and skills (Rabbi et al., 2015). Especially when a lack of firm specific competencies is detected, training, performance assessments, and compensation are powerful tools to develop talents (Schuler et al., 2011). In general, Human Resource Business Partners (HRBPs) or HR managers are responsible for the talent agenda in consultation with (line) management (Sparrow et al., 2013). At last, and often associated with talent development, retention is an important practice to maintain competitive advantage (Tlaiss et al., 2017). In this context, organisational culture and job satisfaction play a crucial role. (Tlaiss et al., 2017). Usually, this is stimulated by an intrinsic or extrinsic approach. In the intrinsic approach, employees are facilitated in their psychological needs, wherein in the extrinsic approach, employees benefit from a well-organised reward system (Rabbi et al., 2015). This is in line with the HR architecture model (Lepak

& Snell, 1999), which indicates that no best practice exists to ensure employees stay committed. In fact, the architecture suggests every group of employees should benefit from a customised HR approach (Luo et al., 2021). In fact, a customised approach requires a well-considered balance of HR instruments to ensure employee satisfaction, which provides another reason why the internal context is essential to consider.

### ***Internal context***

In general, three groups of actors are involved in the internal context of the TM process: HR professionals, talents, and (line) management. First, HR professionals are involved throughout the entire TM process and are the main facilitator for TM practices. Depending on the organisational context, some typical HR professionals are recruiters, HR administrators, HR managers, HR advisors, and HRBPs. Second, talents obviously play an important role because they have to cope with the intended approach formulated by top management. However, De Boeck et al. (2018) highlight the role of employee reaction to talent management but emphasise that little is known about the proactive role employees play in coping with these practices in the long term. In other words, employees can either choose to resist or adapt when a TM practice is introduced. Third, (line) management is the link between the formulated and experienced practices (Gallardo-Gallardo & Thunnissen, 2016; Luo et al., 2021; Wiblen & McDonnell, 2019). Generally, line managers are described as the responsible actors to make decisions about who is considered a talent and how valuable they are towards the business objectives (Ulrich & Allen, 2014). For this reason, they have an essential role in the implementation of TM practices (Luo et al., 2021). In brief, the interplay of HR professionals, talents, and line management is critical because misalignment could negatively affect the execution of TM practices.

### **Institutional logic perspective**

To analyse the interplay of organisational actors, the institutional logic perspective is a promising framework to examine the drivers of each actor (Lewis et al., 2019; Thornton et al., 2012). Particularly, drivers explain why actors behave the way they do, and therefore the institutional logic perspective enhances the understanding of how individuals, departments, or offices affect each other (Lewis et al., 2019). In fact, divergent drivers potentially affect each other negatively and lead to internal or external conflicts between actors (Besharov & Smith, 2014). The tension between actors resulting in conflicts is labelled as institutional complexity (Greenwood et al., 2011; Lewis et al., 2019). To illustrate, HR could initiate a performance management policy including 360-degree feedback. As with many changes, some employees would embrace this activity while others show resistance. In this case, the HR drivers clash with the drivers of the group that shows resistance. Presumably, HR believes that 360-degree feedback will be accepted because it is in line with the desires of the organisation, while in practice, some employees are not convinced of the added value and try to disrupt the performance management activity. As introduced earlier, the term ‘drivers’ is a simplification of the term ‘logics’ described by Thornton et al. (2012). To be more precise, institutional logics are defined as “socially constructed historical

patterns of material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs, and rules by which individuals produce and reproduce their material subsistence, organise time and space, and provide meaning to their social reality and guide the interpretation of organisational reality” (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999, p. 804). In other words, institutional logics explain what motivates actors to react, adapt, and behave the way they do. These motivational reasons are best expressed in the term ‘drivers’ because it explains what drives actors in their social surroundings. Since actors could have many different drivers, it is hard to classify and therefore Thornton et al. (2012) introduced seven ideal type of logics: state logic, market logic, family logic, religious logic, corporate logic, profession logic, and community logic (Thornton et al., 2012). Each of these logics represent a socially accepted goal set by the actor(s) (Battilana & Dorado, 2010). To illustrate, in a state-owned company it is socially accepted to act based on regulations and laws formulated by the state (state logic), whereas a family business (family logic) trusts in short communication lines and loyalty (Frenken et al., 2020). In addition, in the market logic the social accepted goal is to increase profit whereas in the corporation logic, market expansion is the most important driver (Frenken et al., 2020). However, the ideal type of logics represent broad categories of drivers, therefore it is not always clear why actors align or clash with one another. For this reason, the institutional logic perspective received criticism for not considering logics in the internal context (Thornton et al., 2012; Besharov & Smith, 2014). In this context, actors adhere to logics that form the day-to-day work based on their drivers (Greenwood et al., 2011). Consequently, current ideal types were replaced by more than one logic or became a blended logic (Thornton et al., 2012; McPherson & Sauder, 2013). The lack of explanatory power in the internal context stimulated studies to research underpinned logics (Thornton et al., 2012). For example, Tyskbo (2019) shows that institutional complexity is manifested in talent identification and distinguished the business logic (dominant at the headquarters) and the engineering logic (dominant at the subsidiary). In this study, the underpinned logic could better explain how institutional complexity is manifested in the external context between the headquarters and the subsidiary. Thus, the ideal type logics of Thornton et al. (2012) give a good direction, but underpinned logics are in the internal context more appropriate for exploring institutional complexity.

### ***The role of agency***

Institutional complexity can occur in every department, but Lewis et al. (2019) suggest that HR professionals face the greatest institutional complexity. To illustrate, HR faces labour law regulations (state logic), profit maximisation (market logic), the endless consideration to assist top management or support the employees (profession logic), retention of talents to maintain growth (corporation logic) and, for example, movements that want more women in top management positions (community logic). To highlight, HR professionals are often labelled as employee champions and driven by 'caring for the workforce'. At the same time, they are strategic partners that support the achievement of business objectives (Sheehan et al., 2014). Consequently, the HR professional originally wants to act in a socially accepted manner to accommodate both the expectations of top management and employees (Heizmann



& Fox, 2019). Likewise, HR professionals also balance the expectation of line managers, who are seen as the translators of top management's strategy, into local practices (Luo et al., 2021; Wiblen & McDonnell, 2019). Overall, HR professionals could embrace a logic to base their policy on; this is also called 'the degree of agency'. In brief, HR professionals can choose to adhere to a specific logic rather than follow the dominant logic of the company. For instance, HR professionals could stimulate market power to build a TM approach focused on the retention of innovative employees that maintain the competitive advantage (corporation logic). In case the organisation is mainly focused on profit maximisation (market logic), HR professionals do not follow the dominant logic. Furthermore, like other actors, talents possess this degree of agency. Meyers (2020) emphasises the proactive role of talents shaping practices instead of the passive 'being a part of the execution' role. To illustrate, talents shape practices by adapting and coping in a distinct manner. For instance, Frenken et al. (2020) suggest that talents are likely to adhere to the profession logic because they tend to improve their expertise or status in the profession. Similarly, when talents improve and maintain competitive advantage (Elia et al., 2017; Dries, 2013), they could be a critical resource for either profit increase (market logic) or securement of organisational growth (corporation logic). Whatever logic they choose, if it differs from the dominant logic in the organisation, it could create tension between talents and other organisational actors and affect the execution of TM. Finally, line managers are likely to experience a similar situation as HR professionals. Normally, line managers are involved in employee staffing, development, and retention. In this case, they report to top management and could adhere to the corporation logic by retaining talents to expand the current business (Frenken et al., 2020). On the other hand, line managers are responsible for supporting and motivating subordinates and could choose to adhere to the profession logic by investing in development to reinforce the expertise of talented individuals. To summarise, HR professionals, talents, and line management have a degree of agency and could have several motives to adhere to a logic. For this reason, it is interesting to discover which logics actors adhere to and how they are manifested in business activities and potentially result in institutional complexity.

### **Institutional complexity in employee staffing, development, and retention**

There is not a best practice to cope with institutional complexity in employee staffing, development, and retention. Currently, there is a need for HR professionals to switch between roles and use customised approaches (Lewis et al., 2019). For instance, at one moment, variable pay could be important, while in another case, equal pay could be better (Smets et al., 2015). The following paragraph carries out the likelihood of institutional complexity among HR professionals, talents, and management.

#### ***Employee staffing***

Recruiting and selecting talents remain a continuous challenge for organisations due to the evolution of TM (Vaiman et al., 2017). Building on the importance of contextual factors, the main focus has been on the design of TM practices rather than the practical embracement (Gallardo-Gallardo et al., 2020). Consequently, institutional complexity could occur when actors disagree on the key strategic positions

(Collings & Mellahi, 2009). For instance, HR professionals are likely to facilitate all talents in achieving their full potential (inclusive approach), while management perhaps label experienced and skilled employees as key strategic positions (exclusive approach). Moreover, recruiters could attract and select talents based on their expertise and reputation (profession logic), whereas line managers could prefer selecting a talent with a fresh look to reconsider current activities that support business growth (corporation logic). In fact, when not all the actors align in talent identification, it is challenging to recruit and select the right talents for the organisation.

### ***Development***

When a social agreement is reached about the key positions, the development of talents could also cause institutional complexity. Meyers (2020) identifies a lack of literature about the proactive role of talents and suggests more short-term contracts. This can be beneficial for organisations and talents because talents are in the lead of their own development, while organisations are able to use talented actors only when they need it (Al Ariss et al., 2014). In contradiction, the HR architecture model supports internal development and long-term investment for talents (Lepak & Snell, 1999). In addition, this dilemma could also stem from the various generations cooperating in the same labour market. Tlais et al. (2017) emphasise that younger talents are less interested in job security, while more experienced employees desire long term employments. To illustrate, if HR professionals adhere to short-term employment contracts but talents prefer long-term development, it can lead to institutional complexity. Although HR professionals and talents could both have organisational growth as a legitimate goal (corporation logic), they disagree on the execution of talent development. Consequently, individuals that experience institutional complexity are likely to delay action and consider different opportunities (Lewis et al., 2019). This example shows that although actors adhere to the same ideal type of logic (corporation logic), underpinned logics are important to explore institutional complexity.

### ***Retention of talents***

Whereas the development of talent is a way to retain a committed workforce, retention of talent goes beyond development. Generally, the retention of talents is done in various ways. For instance, by meeting the psychological needs or via compensation (Rabbi et al., 2015). In the case of compensation, HR professionals could argue that it is legitimate under the corporation logic to increase the payment of talents due to their impact on the competitive advantage that leads to growth (McDonnell et al., 2017). However, line managers could adhere to the market logic when top management impose the importance of profit. Again, the different drivers could lead to institutional complexity. Empirical evidence shows how institutional complexity is manifested in talent identification (Tyskbo, 2019), but few insights are available about how institutional complexity is manifested in other practices. Based on the above-mentioned collection of literature, it is likely to argue that institutional complexity is also manifested in employee staffing, development, and retention.

## Methodology

In this research, a case study is conducted because it enables the researcher to expand the knowledge on behavioural conditions of the organisational actors (Zainal, 2007). These behavioural conditions are essential to find out the drivers of each actor in their social surroundings and explore how institutional complexity is manifested in employee staffing, development, and retention (Flyvbjerg, 2006). Especially, studying institutional complexity based on underpinned logics requires a detailed analysis of individual cases (Lindvall, 2007). In fact, underpinned logics go beyond the stereotype logics and are better able to classify the qualitative data on a local level (Thornton et al., 2012; Besharov & Smith, 2014). Earlier research of Tyskbo (2019) acknowledged the appropriateness of this approach by formulating the business logic (dominant at a headquarters) and the engineering logic (dominant at the subsidiary), which caused institutional complexity in talent identification. Whereas Tyskbo (2019) collected data in the external context from two different groups (headquarters and subsidiary), this case study is conducted in the internal context consisting of three different groups: HR professionals, line management, and IT talents. For this reason, the study focuses on the underpinned logics of HR professionals (leadership logic), line management (management logic), and software developers (developer logic). These underpinned logics explain how institutional complexity is manifested in TM practices (Figure 1).

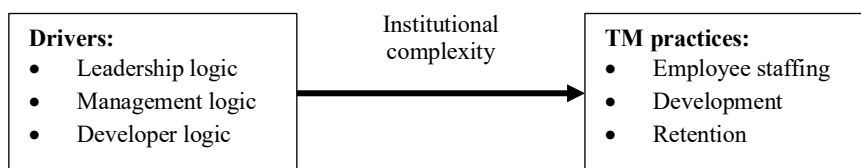


Figure 1: Research design

## TM in a platform organisation

Like many platforms, this organisation works in a triangular business relationship where it enables parties to expand their connections in the market. The platform facilitates the connection between one party that sells products and the other party buying the products. For this reason, it is crucial to have a perfectly working digital infrastructure to maintain and improve the usage of the platform. In this case, software developers are indispensable in programming all the features of the platform. Currently, the increasing number of platform organisations causes a lack of skilled software developers around the globe. As a result, it is essential for a platform organisation to attract, develop and retain skilled software developers to secure competitive advantage. In the past years, the massive growth urged the company to constantly revise business decisions because it could become outdated very quickly. Therefore, the organisation is continuously changing practices to adapt them to stakeholders' desires. This changing nature requires a flexible and adaptive workforce which characterise TM in this organisation. Flexibility and adaptivity became even more important at the end of 2020 when the pandemic forced society to work from home. Not only did it affect the attraction of software developers, but it also affected

development and retention practices because the work-life balance of individuals became more important. Consequently, the ever-changing environment and worldwide crisis created a unique context for this study.

In general, the organisation does not have a formulated policy around TM. Usually, people join the company for its growing character and endless opportunities to develop their skills and competencies. In addition, the international workforce creates an open-minded culture, where working hard and being honest are cornerstones for the success of the company. Moreover, the current TM approach is focused on a centralised toolbox where managers, in consultation with HRBPs, shape a customised approach for every part of the workforce. To illustrate, the performance appraisal is a cycle of four rounds where employees set personal goals and collect feedback from stakeholders to review their progress. However, the IT division decided to use two moments because peers review each other's codes and collaboration skills on a weekly basis to enhance the quality of the platform. To support the performance review, the organisation has a job framework that includes all the competencies and skills for a specific position. Not only can employees see what is expected from them in the current position, but they can also see how they can develop to the next level in their department. Despite the clear structure, the development and possible promotion are judged on a case-to-case basis by the manager. To sum up, employee staffing, development and retention are eminently customised depending on the desires and abilities of every individual.

Furthermore, the overarching aim of this research is to explore how institutional complexity is manifested in employee staffing, development, and retention. In total, this case study is based on thirteen in-depth interviews and is conducted in the IT division of an international platform organisation where employee staffing, development, and retention are all insourced HR activities. This company and division are selected for two fundamental reasons. Firstly, this organisation is likely to face institutional complexity because the company does not have a defined policy regarding TM. In general, every employee benefit from the same employee staffing, development, and retention practices. In addition, the company does not strategically choose an inclusive or exclusive approach. Consequently, this provides a degree of agency for actors to shape practices to suit their desires. Commonly, platform organisations tend to occupy the largest market share to gain market power in the industry they operate in (Frenken et al., 2020). Also, platform organisations realise profit (market logic) by increasing the visits on their website or application (corporation logic). It can be assumed that organisations with this business model align their TM approach to this strategy. Secondly, the division characteristics form an acceptable basis for this study. Usually, in a platform organisation, the IT division is of utmost importance because they ensure the continuity of the core business. For this reason, a variety of employees are concerned with an immaculate working platform. Not only line managers will have a pivotal role in the execution, but also HR professionals probably experience challenges to support the IT division. In addition, the scarce labour market for talented IT personnel urges the organisation to find creative ideas for employee staffing, development, and retention. Besides the type of organisation, the

international setting includes IT personnel from all over the world and therefore provides a cultural dimension which makes it even more conceivable that actors adhere to different drivers due to cultural differences within the company and the team they work in.

### **Participant selection**

To research how institutional complexity is manifested in multiple practices, the participants are selected for two general reasons. First, the actors should at least be involved in one of the TM practices. Except the HRBP and recruiter, the most interviewees are involved in the entire TM approach (Table 2). The involvement in the practices is essential to reflect on how they unfold in practice and to review the participation from other organisational actors. Second, every position should fit one of the organisational actors in the internal context of the IT division: line management, HR professional, or IT talents. This is a critical criterion because it can be assumed that organisational actors in other divisions share a different opinion about the TM approach in practice. The first group of interviewees represents line management. This group is responsible for the direction, support, and facilitation of TM practices. In general, the IT manager is the first to translate the TM agenda in practice and is involved in employee staffing, development, and retention. Additionally, this organisation has scrum masters who are responsible for facilitating the daily workaround and remove obstacles to enable software engineers to focus on their main tasks. Hence, a scrum master is closely connected to the entire TM process since they give advice in the hiring process and support the development and retention of talents on the job. The second group, HR professionals are selected to cover all the aspects of TM. The talent manager is the responsible person for the overall talent management approach in the organisation. Next, the human resource business partner (HRBP) is focused on the development and retention of talents for a specific division in the organisation. Lastly, the recruiters are mainly involved in employee staffing and therefore complete the full HR perspective of TM in this organisation. The third group are the IT talents, which consists of five software developers. This position is selected as 'IT talents' because the organisation does not hold a uniform TM strategy. Whereas some positions argue that the TM strategy is an inclusive approach, other actors stressed that the organisation acts based upon an exclusive approach. Because of the ambiguous TM approach, the study adopts the exclusive approach, which is in line with the definition of Collings and Mellahi (2009) that equals talents as the key strategic positions of the organisation. Accordingly, it was not feasible to consider an inclusive TM strategy because everyone involved in the IT division should be labelled as IT talent. Consequently, the study would lose its focus and due to the variety of organisational actors and opinions will not be a reliable representation of reality. Since the core business of a platform organisation highly depends on a flawlessly working digital infrastructure, software developers are labelled as IT talents. As a matter of fact, these position program this digital infrastructure and are responsible for the maintenance and development of the platform.

Table 1: Sample data collection

Organisational actor	Position	Main involvement	N
<b>IT talent</b>	Software Developers	Employee staffing, development, retention	5
<b>Line management</b>	IT Manager	Employee staffing, development, retention	1
	Scrum Master	Employee staffing, development, retention	3
<b>HR professionals</b>	Human Resource Business Partner	Development and retention	1
	Recruiter	Employee staffing	2
	Talent Manager	Employee staffing, development, retention	1
<b>Total interviews:</b>			<b>13</b>

## Measurement

The interviews with line management, HR professionals and IT talents are conducted from the 28<sup>th</sup> of May until the 21<sup>st</sup> of June 2021 and last approximately one hour and ten minutes (Appendix 2). To explore institutional complexity in the in-depth interviews, four sections are included in the interview script (Appendix 1). To get a detailed overview of employee staffing, development, and retention, the practices are divided into the following sections (1) The TM approach in general, (2) the drivers of attraction and selection, (3) the drivers of training, performance management, and succession planning and (4) the drivers around compensation and retention. In this layout, employee staffing, development include the activities described by Stahl et al. (2012) and is complemented with onboarding in the second section because it is a typical part of the employee staffing process. Except the first, the sections explore how each TM practice is organised and aims to understand what interviewees label as socially accepted. In this case, social acceptance implies how actors perceive and experience TM within the specific organisational context. Additionally, every actor is asked to express their idea about the overall TM policy (section 1) and to reflect on other actors and their potential drivers. The answers are captured in the transcripts, which are partly processed in Amberscript. This software automatically transcribes recordings based on an algorithm. Because the software is not flawless, all the transcripts are reviewed to ensure a good representation of the interview. In addition to the in-depth interviews, organisational documents regarding TM and ongoing changes were analysed and captured in field notes. These notes included updates on the internal website, corporate presentations, and HR policies. The notes are referred to as 'field notes' in the results section to provide a context of the TM practices.

Both the in-depth interviews and field notes are anonymised on behalf of the organisation. For this reason, the company name and related terms are excluded from the entire study. Therefore, the full transcripts will be included in a confidential appendix to prevent that the study can be linked to the company. Also, interviewees have the possibility to delete their quotes if these somehow could be related to the company. The interviewees will check their transcript and consent if they label it as a good representation of the interview. To prevent the manipulation of data and to enhance the trustworthiness, the interviewees could not adjust the transcript. After interviewees received their transcripts via email, they had three weeks to report any inconvenience regarding the information given (Appendix 2). Within

these weeks, none of the interviewees replied on the email sent. In addition, to achieve a good snapshot of the current situation, all the interviews are held within three weeks. So, potential organisational changes should have less influence on the results. This is crucial for this platform because the organisational growth and international Covid-19 crisis activate the organisation to respond quickly regarding HR topics like remote working, work-life balance et cetera. Lastly, this study is reviewed by the BMS Ethics Committee from the University of Twente to ensure its appropriateness in practice. This is a mandatory part for this study to secure ethical responsibility for research that involves human participants.

### **Data analysis**

The analysis of the data is done via an inductive coding process supported by the software program ATLAS.ti and the Gioia methodology (Gioia et al., 2013). In this methodology data is transformed from first-order categories into second-order themes and eventually in aggregate dimensions (Table 2). In the first-order categories the key messages from interviewees regarding employee staffing (attraction, selection, and onboarding), development (training, performance management, and succession planning), and retention (compensation and benefits) are listed. These key messages are a simplification of the general experience of how the TM activities unfold in practice. The aim is to cover the common ground for HR professionals, line management, and IT talents. Interestingly, all interviewees stressed somewhere the importance of organisational growth in the TM approach. To illustrate, some stressed it as an advantage to attract talented people and others addressed the importance of growth to keep developing in their position. Although the study did not explicitly focus on the ideal type of logics (Thornton et al., 2012), there seems alignment on the corporation logic that legitimises the expansion of market share. This assumption made it even more interesting to explore in-depth insights on how the organisational actors experience TM. To discover these insights, this study used axial coding to discover linkages between the retrieved data (Strauss & Corbin, 2014). The second-order themes illustrate the general focus of each organisational actor. Interestingly, in some activities organisational actors gave similar answers, while in other cases they provided conflicting information. The comparison between the organisational actors resulted in clear insights on whether the drivers of HR professionals, line management, and IT talents aligned on the general TM strategy. For this reason, the institutional logic perspective is seen as a convenient framework to discover the drivers in practice. Especially on this local level, organisational actors seem aligned on the overall TM strategy, but slightly differ on the way how to achieve a socially accepted execution of TM in practice. Finally, out of the second-order themes three aggregate dimensions are determined. Each dimension represents the local drivers of HR professionals (leadership logic), management (management logic), and developer logic (software developers). These underpinned logics are extensively discussed in the result section.

Table 2: Inductive coding analysis

First-Order Categories	Second-Order Themes	Aggregate Dimensions
Narrow-minded onboarding and quickly outdated	Global/standardised	<b>Leadership logic (HR Professional)</b>
Many standardised channels		
Subjective career planning	Soft skills	
Manager decides career steps		
Limited benefits	Extrinsic motivation	
Natural retention because of growth		
Depending on the team support	Local/unstandardised	<b>Management logic (Line management)</b>
Manager only involved in platform onboarding		
Supportive management	Soft skills	
On the job development		
Standardised for entire organisation	Intrinsic motivation	
Challenging work and freedom		
Team specific onboarding	Local/unstandardised	<b>Developer Logic (Software Developers)</b>
Self-management		
Unclear expectation in job framework	Hard skills	
Peers review personal progression		
Passion	Intrinsic motivation	
Challenging work and new technologies		
Freedom to develop		

## Results

HR professionals, line management, and software developers seem aligned on the advantages and disadvantages of the TM approach. The actors find common ground by emphasising the need for a flexible and adaptive mindset to fit the organisation. On the other hand, due to the fast-changing context, practices age rapidly and need to be continuously revised and renewed. Consequently, processes are quickly outdated and sometimes labelled as a misfit in the current stage of the organisation. Interestingly, organisational growth is acknowledged by all the actors as a critical factor to maintain competitive advantage. This reasoning perfectly matches the corporation logic, which states that the market position of the firm is the source of legitimacy (Thornton et al., 2012).

*"The company grows, and the number of employees is growing, the market is growing, a number of teams is growing, how we are organising is not growing but evolving. With the market also changes the work changes. You need to have the ability to change and adapt to that." (Scrum master)*

On the contrary, several software developers emphasise the importance of improving the quality of the product rather than only program what is delegated. This is in line with the profession logic that builds on the expertise of a profession (Thornton et al., 2012). In this case, the expertise of software developers is critical for a platform organization because technology is continuously evolving. Although you would assume that software developers adhere to the profession logic it seems to be the organisational growth



(corporation logic) that guides the action. This is in line with the theory that suggests the presence of more than one or a blended logic, but that it is always the dominant logic that determines the guidance (Lounsbury, 2008).

*“If I look at hiring choices that were made in the past, we have quite a bit of developers who do not excel at soft skills, but they are surrounded in a team with people who do have the necessary soft skills so they can compensate for that.” (Software developer)*

The scarce labour market urges the company to hire new software developers instead of focusing on the expertise and quality. In conclusion, the dominant logic of this organisation is the corporation logic. Therefore, the stereotype logics of Thornton et al. (2012) cannot explain how institutional complexity is manifested in TM. In fact, all the organisational actors adhere to the corporation logic and thus no institutional complexity is manifested on the level of ideal type of logics. For this reason, this study formulated the underpinned leadership logic, management logic, and developer logic to explore how institutional complexity is manifested on the local level. Thus, this study aims to provide a detailed analysis of the alignment and the clashing drivers in the internal context.

### **Institutional logics**

The three underpinned logics legitimises organisational growth (corporation logic) but differ in the approach how organisational growth should be achieved. The leadership logic (dominant among the HR professionals) legitimises the development of (local) leadership skills at the management layer of the organisation (field note). The focus on a limited group of people is a typical example of an exclusive TM approach. However, there is not a uniform TM policy, and this results in disruption of the execution. One of the reasons for this disruption is the organisational growth that challenges HR professionals to organise its practices to suit the desires of the workforce. Currently, HR organises its practices on a global level and is less able to influence the local practices. Accordingly, the focal points on a global level are the enhancement of a company culture driven by soft skills and the improvement of the rewarding framework to compete with other platform organisations (field note). Whereas the organisation is planning to improve the secondary labour conditions, the rewarding framework is still priority. Therefore, the leadership logic is currently focused on extrinsic motivation. In brief, leadership is a keyword for HR professionals because they tend to achieve organisational growth by developing strong leadership skills and ensure these leaders translate the global HR activities and company culture into local activities.

*“If I look on how we do TM in our organisation it is a very exclusive TM policy because we are really talking about leadership, so focusing on certain people in our company, but I think we should focus on everybody, we should say that everybody in the company is a talent and have the opportunity to develop themselves.” (HRBP)*

Next, the management logic (dominant at the scrum masters and IT manager) is a legitimate response to the lack of an explicit policy around TM. In comparison with the leadership logic, the management logic is also focused on soft skills by emphasising team fit. In contrast with the leadership logic, the management logic is focused on local activities where the managers possess control in employee staffing, development, and retention. To illustrate, the IT manager has the final decision in the hiring process and decide whether development requests will be approved. One of the key criteria in the hiring process is intrinsic motivation and a proactive attitude. In closing, the management logic tends to achieve organisational growth by creating a healthy balance between achieving business objectives and ensuring software developers stay satisfied in their job.

*"You can be the best coder or developer, but if that means you're working on your own, you cannot achieve that much, that is why you can settle with a less perfect coder but a really nice team player."  
(Scrum master)*

Lastly, the developer logic (dominant among the software developers) is balancing the leadership logic and management logic. On the one hand, the developer logic benefits from the local and unstandardised approach initiated by line management. Additionally, software developers and line management are both focused on intrinsic motivation to secure organisational growth. On the other hand, the developer logic is different from the leadership logic and management logic because it legitimates hard skills instead of soft skills. While software developers have the possibility to improve their soft skills, they shape TM practices by focusing on expanding knowledge and by learning new technologies. Although it is similar to the management logic, the developer logic legitimises intrinsic motivation and the unstandardised approach based on hard skills instead of soft skills.

*I think there's also a lot of room to develop soft skills within the company. I think the challenge sometimes is that people might not see that it is important for them to develop those skills.  
(Software developer)*

Thus, all actors label organisational growth (corporation logic) as a legitimised goal, but they have various ways to achieve this growth via employee staffing, development, and retention. In fact, these various ways result in tension between logics, and this is called institutional complexity.

### **Institutional complexity**

To explore where logics cause tension, this study examined employee staffing, development, and retention. It turned out that institutional complexity does not occur on a practice level but rather on a process level. This process level implies the several activities that form a certain practice. For instance, employee staffing is formed by the attracting, selecting, and onboarding processes. Table 6 displays (in grey) in which processes institutional complexity is manifested. First, in employee staffing the leadership logic clashes with the management/developer logic in the onboarding process. During the

onboarding journey, all parties work together to support a head start (field note). In this phase, HR professionals take care of the contract and global onboarding, line managers arrange the equipment, and software developers function as a buddy in the local onboarding. Whereas the leadership logic socially accepts the importance of global onboarding, the management/developer logic adhere to a local approach. Normally, the local approach is organised by scrum masters and colleagues from the same department with limited involvement of HR professionals. The misalignment between the global and the local onboarding program results in a delayed head start in some cases. This is either because of technical equipment that is not working properly or issues with the payment of allowances. Although this looks like a common issue that probably occurs in other organisations as well, the flawless arrangement of practicalities becomes relevant in a scarce labour market (field note).

*“We need to make sure that if you want to hire someone, we have a smooth onboarding very. We need to make sure that this person has everything that he or she wants. Not only from a technical point of view, but also from the HR point of view and the finance point of view.” (Software developer)*

Second, development is customised for every individual in the organisation. While this leads to customised career planning, the guidelines are not always a clear description to climb the corporate ladder. The current guidelines leave room for interpretation and are therefore experienced as subjective. With the current framework, the leadership logic and management logic legitimise the development of soft skills and give managers the control to decide about the future career of software developers. In response to this, the developer logic legitimises the insufficient fulfilment of the performance appraisal. In fact, the developer logic stresses the focus on hard skills and the lack of time to actually develop themselves due to the high workload.

*“Multiple of my colleagues have been very vocal about it. If they don't understand what this thing means, that is standing over here [guidelines], I cannot give you a rating, therefore I will give you the perfect rating.” (Software developer)*

Third, retention carries the greatest institutional complexity. Although the company responded adequately by optimising the rewarding framework, it appears that the management logic and the developer logic value challenging work and they put more emphasis on secondary labour conditions like development opportunities. In this case, the leadership logic legitimises retention by increasing salary, however in the management/developer logic, the daily quality of the job is socially accepted and more labelled as more important to stay with the company.

*I can go to another organisation and maybe make a little bit more money, but will I get opportunities like this? That is an important part in retention. And just having cool stuff to work on is also important. I believe we have a lot of freedom in choosing our own topic. (Software developer)*

Thus, actors acknowledge the importance of the market position and the innovative attitude that is necessary to continue expanding. On the other hand, actors feel that the organisation is searching for the best way to organise TM and align everyone on this view. While the organisation does not have a clear TM strategy, this study chose to label software developers as talents because it is in line with the exclusive definition of Collings and Mellahi (2019), who argue that the key strategic positions of the organisations should be labelled as talents. Usually, software developers are critical to keeping the platform running and therefore could be classified as key strategic positions.

Table 3: Overview alignment and institutional complexity where the grey colour marks competing logics.

		Leadership logic	Management logic	Developer logic
<b>Adhered by</b>		HR professionals	Mangers and scrum masters	Software developers
<b>TM approach</b>		Inclusive/exclusive	Predominantly exclusive	Inclusive/exclusive
<b>Source of legitimacy</b>		Organisational improvement and innovation	Innovation, organisational growth	Improvement, organisational growth
Employee staffing	<b>Attraction</b>	Well-known brand, growth opportunities	Challenge, learning experience	Organisational size, challenge, growth opportunities
	<b>Selection</b>	Team match, flexible, attitude	Team match, learning mentality, attitude	Team match, learning ability
	<b>Onboarding</b>	Standardised, unprofessional	Organic, local, team-specific	Local, team-specific
Development	<b>Training</b>	Voluntary, proactivity, lack of time	Voluntary, proactivity	Voluntary, lack of time
	<b>Performance Management</b>	Unstandardised, soft skills	Unstandardised, soft skills, supportive management	Hard skills, unclear expectations
	<b>Succession Planning</b>	Customised, subjective	Customised career path, manager control	Good guidance, unclear expectations
Retention	<b>Compensation</b>	Underpay, short satisfier	Standardised, transparent	Decent, disconnect long term
	<b>Benefits</b>	Natural retention, lack of benefits, human touch	Respect, mindset, involvement	Opportunities, human touch

## Employee staffing

The staffing process is either done via headhunting by the recruiters or via the current software developers referring candidates from their network. In general, the labour market for software developers is scarce, and therefore the organisation is delighted if they have at least one applicant each month. Although limited talent is available, the organisation is searching for new joiners that match their company culture, assessed by the IT manager and the potential team. Typically, the IT manager is the first filter in the process, and if the applicant is a possible match, a meeting is set up with the team. In this meeting, the team asks questions to assess whether an applicant fits the team. Overall, employee staffing consists of attracting, selecting, and onboarding talents.

**Attracting.** Although the scarce labour market causes challenges to attract talents, the organisation primarily relies on the company's size, which enables employees to grow in their careers due to the many opportunities.

*"I think we currently make use of the fact that we are well known. We have a good company name because we are growing to a corporate organisation, and we profit from that. We are also a young company" (HRBP)*

*"And I think just the size here in Europe is something that motivates people to come working here." (Software developer)*

In contradiction, one of the recruiters and one of the software developers disprove this alignment by questioning the adequacy of this attraction process. This is a plausible statement since the organisation receives limited applications and is highly dependent on headhunting and referred candidates via the current software developers (field note).

*"It's tricky for the company because we don't really have an image of this big fancy tech company. It's very hard to attract people... There's just as much glory to be here in terms of making complex things or changing the world of software, as there could be at Google." (Software developer)*

*"We take what we have, but we don't put effort in making something new or creative, or more targeted to the audience that we want to reach. It seems to me that it is narrow-minded." (Recruiter)*

In addition to the technical skills, the company tries to attract people that fit the organisational culture, which is important in the selection process. Overall, the three logics seem well-aligned on the fact that the ability to collaborate in a team is of utmost importance to fit the company.

**Selection.** This alignment regarding organisational fit becomes visible in the selection process. Where other teams use assessments to test technical skills, the IT manager mainly talks about personal drivers. While the manager has the final decision, the team has a huge impact if someone will be hired. Overall, the logics agree that software developers do not have to be the best coders to excel in the positions. For instance, one of the developers states that a self-managing and proactive attitude is more important. Notably, if an applicant lacks soft skills, the team ensures that other members compensate for securing a good balance in the team. For this reason, the organisation is still able to hire software developers who are not the best fit in advance. Nevertheless, it remains unclear which qualifications someone needs to be a good match with the organisation.

*"We are in most teams not looking for people who can just contribute, but also for people we call game-changers, people who can proactively improve things." (Recruiter)*

*"You need to be dancing like a butterfly, stinging like a bee. Being on point, delivering what we need, and delivering high-level quality. But also, being flexible enough to dance like a butterfly. So you need to acknowledge, you need to be able to define what it's like to be mean in every stage." (Talent manager)*

Whereas the above-mentioned quotes give a good direction, other actors question the general selection approach and see the additional value to discover what a perfect match would look like. On the other hand, in every group of organisational actors, there is at least one interviewee that suggests a more team-oriented talent management approach.

*"I ensure everyone feels recognised and have talents as a total. Maybe we should talk about team talents instead of individual talents." (IT manager)*

*"Not focusing too much only on talent but focus on what we need to perform as a whole." (Talent manager)*

*"I really would like to have a team reward or a reward on a monthly or quarterly basis. Just acknowledge this person has done a great job and let's appreciate his work. Let's show him that he's an asset to the team." (Software developer)*

In brief, the organisational fit may be ambiguous, but the statements around team performance strengthen the consideration of collaboration skills in the selection process. Despite the fact that no characteristics describe a good organisational fit, the leadership logic, management logic and developer logic do not clash because they all legitimise the importance of team fit and personal drivers to achieve organisational growth.

**Onboarding.** The focus on personal drivers continues in the local onboarding program, where colleagues have a crucial role in the introduction of core tasks and workarounds at the department. Meanwhile, new hires follow a global onboarding via a digital platform. At this platform, people can do e-learning to create awareness about the strategy and core values (field note). Recently, the global onboarding platform was labelled as too passive since the manager did not consistently participate in the journey. Consequently, the current platform will be replaced to ensure continuous dialogue between managers and new hires (field note). Hence, actors acknowledge that improvements are necessary to professionalise the global and standardised onboarding journey.

*"In IT, they have that pretty good covered, but it is all a little bit unprofessional. It could be much more professional, especially for the phase we are in with the company." (HRBP)*

*"It is not that effective. Lots of things I was finding out myself. I was going to my colleagues asking lots of questions and bothering them, I do think there is not much settled in stone." (Recruiter)*

Despite the upcoming improvements on a global scale, local onboarding is perhaps even more important. At this moment, an effective onboarding highly depends on the team. In general, the scrum masters, who function as contact persons, try to remove every obstacle software developers experience. However, scrum masters are often focused on obstacles that form a problem for the direct execution of core tasks. Therefore, the local onboarding should have attention to facilitate a head start in the company regarding equipment and practicalities.

*“That's very dependent on the team. There are teams where it's still wishing them good luck, go talk one hour and now you know everything, and other teams are more structured in making sure that new teammates get up to speed.” (Software developer)*

*“We need to make sure that not only things which relate to the company are important but also I would like to get a lot of information about the city, I need to get information about how to open a bank account.” (Software developer)*

Not only the task-related topics in the local onboarding should be considered, but also private practicalities as housing and equipment is not always arranged flawlessly. Consequently, institutional complexity arises between the leadership logic, which legitimises the global onboarding, and the management/developer logic, which legitimises organising the local onboarding at their own discretion due to the lack of guidelines.

Table 4: Overview of logics, keywords, and representative quotes for employee staffing

Logics	Keywords	Representative quotes
<b>leadership logic</b>	Well-known brand, team match, standardised	<p><i>“You fit this organisation if you are fast-paced, you have to think in opportunities and not in boundaries, because we have such great opportunities to explore” (HRBP)</i></p> <p><i>“Talent doesn't come from the knowledge, but also from your given behaviour and how you are raised, your attitude.” (Recruiter)</i></p> <p><i>“I think especially in this stage of the company, we are looking for people who not only have technical skills and who will meet the requirements when it comes to hard skills. We also have certain soft skills that are necessary to excel in the job.” (Recruiter)</i></p>
<b>Management logic</b>	Challenge, team match, organic and local	<p><i>The company acts at an extreme pace, so the work can be pretty demanding. You have to be able to switch contexts often enough, you have to have the can-do mentality, you need to be humble enough to be willing to learn but also to open up and understand that we don't take things personally, it is always part of the learning experience.” (Scrum master)</i></p>
<b>Developer logic</b>	Organisational size, team match, local	<p><i>“I think a very important part to excel in a function is that you are strong at some level, personal leadership. I would call it a self-management attitude. That you are someone who does not have to wait around to be told what to do.” (Software developer)</i></p> <p><i>“Like most software developers, I find those tests actually to be really annoying because they don't really prove anything useful, at least that's the sentiment I hear a lot, and I feel it myself as well.” (Software developer)</i></p>

## Development

At this moment, the organisation develops its employees via different channels depending on the position. Whereas LinkedIn learning is accessible for every employee, software developers do not have a default development program due to the endless changes in the world of technology. Besides the mandatory corporate training about security and privacy, individual development is voluntary. In this case, the organisation expects employees to find training, webinar, conference etc. Afterwards, employees can submit a request which is considered by the manager. Normally, the request is approved when it is business-related, and it fits the annual budget of the employee (field note). Moreover, hard skills and soft skills are equally important for development and are both assessed in the performance review. Notably, this review is mainly done by peers through the 360-degree feedback method. In this

method, employees formulate personal goals, which are reviewed twice a year. At the end of the year, the manager decides potential career steps based on the collected feedback of peers and information from scrum masters. Hence, the organisation has a clear job framework based on its core values which consist of competencies and skills that employees need to fulfil in a specific position and for a specific job level. To illustrate, juniors could exactly see what is expected from them to develop towards a senior position.

**Training.** This practice is perfectly summarised in two words: voluntary and proactivity. All actors highlight the same fundamentals for development. In fact, everyone in the organisation can request training for themselves, the team or the entire department and the training could be both on soft and hard skills. On the other hand, the challenges for training are also summarised in two words: lack of time and limitations. Whereas employees feel free to request training, they question the organisational to a fixed budget per employee instead of every request being considered.

*“We reduce that to €X because we are also buying products like systems. Those licences cost a lot of money, so we use that from the budget as well.” (HRBP)*

*“A personal budget is never a good thing. That is my say on it, because we hadn’t a personal budget before, but now everything will be taken off my budget. It gives a lot of transparency, but it cuts a lot of possibilities.” (Scrum master)*

Furthermore, employees make use of voluntary development possibilities but indicate time constrain. Usually, this is a result of the high workload and the many tickets that need to be finished in time. Also, development is driven by a proactive attitude and therefore depended on intrinsic motivation.

*“Unfortunately, there is no room, because we are all packed with a lot of tasks. We are all packed with different types of tasks, from the book issues and maintenance tickets, future tickets and so on.” (Software developer)*

*“I do think that only giving people the freedom to do it, to develop themselves, is actually not enough. I think it definitely should be encouraged.” (Recruiter)*

*“It could be made clear that you need to actually set that time apart. If you want people to develop themselves in any case, then it needs to become something like company-mandated” (Software developer)*

Thus, freedom is a great benefit of the development approach in this organisation, but especially the software engineers do not always feel they have the time to develop. Overall, all actors align on the benefits of voluntary training and development, but there is not a well-considered approach to ensure everyone continues learning.

**Performance Management.** The continuous learning cycle is crucial input for performance management. To illustrate, one of the HR professionals clearly stated that it is not about performance



but rather about development management. This development is mainly driven by feedback from peers, and actors generally like this because they feel that peers are the best people to assess their development.

*"I am the man that is coming along, but what do I know about them because I am not working directly with them. They really like it. However, it is also difficult because it is not anonymous anymore." (IT manager)*

*"I think your team members are a very good measurement. Also, their opinions about your work, because they're the ones inspecting the work we do." (Software developer)*

Ultimately, a balance between soft and hard skills is used to assess performance. However, actors have different opinions about the key elements. The leadership logic and management logic emphasise the importance of soft skills but stress the difficulties around the willingness of the software developers.

*"Developers are really looking into developing their own hard skills. Soft skills do not get much attention. It is not their line of birth, that is why we look in attracting because it is not easily taught." (Scrum master)*

*"If you ask a developer, it is more important to develop the hard skills, but if you ask me how a developer should develop, he would have to develop the soft skills. It is always a balance; if they like to learn, they need to spend more time on soft skills." (Scrum master)*

Overall, the emphasis on soft skills derives from the fact that software developers not only need to program what they have been instructed to do but also to critically assess consequences. Institutional complexity arises because the developer logic legitimises hard skills instead of soft skills.

**Succession Planning.** The doubts of scrum masters perfectly blend in with the hesitant attitude of software developers towards the job framework. Although the job framework gives guidance in the development of soft skills, the descriptions and ratings are not for everyone clear.

*"No, we don't have that [succession planning] at all. I don't know the exact reason, but if you don't have a career path and you see some people get promotion, and it has to do with the personal contribution, it feels like you get kept in the dark" (Scrum master)*

Overall, the development approach suits the company context. The voluntary training and customised career path provide every individual with the space to develop at its own pace. Nevertheless, the essential soft skills to fit the organisational culture and proactively develop are considered, but there is a lack of clear guidelines.

Table 5: Overview of logics, keywords, and representative quotes for development

Logics	Keywords	Representative quotes
<b>leadership logic</b>	Voluntary, lack of time, soft skills, customised, subjective	<p>"I think everything is voluntary, that is also the best way to learn, because if you are not motivated to learn, do you really have opened your body to what you want to learn." (HRBP)</p> <p>"Everything about succession planning and performance management, even if there is plan, it is subjective, it does not feel objective, and they got this feedback from different departments." (Recruiter)</p> <p>"And it's not only growing, but it's also changing. So, it is very hard, apparently. Also for the senior leadership in our company to look into the future and say this is going to be your path." (Recruiter)</p> <p>"It's not telling you how to develop. It's opening up the conversation. I think that's where the role of the manager is going to go towards, a facilitator. Not a manager." (Talent manager)</p>
<b>Management logic</b>	Voluntary, soft skills, supportive management	<p>"If you really want to learn from each other and you want to increase the level of openness and transparency, we need people to feel safe and respect them, and then you can start experimenting." (Scrum master)</p> <p>"He asked can we do trainings? And I always say look up a training and come back to me. The organisation is giving room, but they not always take it." (IT Manager)</p> <p>"It should be aligned with the work. It is mandatory to align it with the business. A career switch is not feasible and not encouraged." (Scrum master)</p>
<b>Developer logic</b>	Voluntary, lack of time, hard skills, unclear expectations	<p>"Everything that has to do with developing yourself in your skillset as a software developer. Everything about that is purely voluntary. I think you would be a fool not to do it. But if you don't want to, you don't need to do it." (Software Developer)</p> <p>"I think the main challenge we have is finding enough time to work on ourselves, to read that book or to follow that course, or to watch that video." (Software developer)</p> <p>"I talked about it with my colleagues also, and they also said it is best to ask what you need to do to make a promotion. But I also know other people have been given a promotion, so it totally depends on how you profile yourself." (Software developer)</p> <p>"I don't really like them at all [performance management guidelines]. I just want to do my job instead of those kind of things. But I do think the process has evolved over the years. What I don't really like is how it currently works with the whole job framework. Because usually the descriptions, they don't make any sense. And for some levels you are a few levels ahead for your current function, but for other layer, you're at the right level." (Software developer)</p>

## Retention

While the development approach is encountered as a secondary labour condition, retention is usually organised around compensation and benefits. Currently, the organisation is busy aligning this TM practice with the various competitors in the market. Especially for compensation, the organisation aims to be in the top 25% of the market regarding base salary (field note). Besides the monetary reward, the organisation offers benefits which include company events and allowances. Especially in the pandemic working from home became an interesting topic, and therefore a fixed allowance per month was introduced during the time that working remotely was a default. Moreover, retention is mainly done by ensuring people feel respected and let them learn and grow together with the company.

**Compensation.** While pay is a crucial factor in retention, HR professionals, line management, and software developers acknowledge the fact that the compensation is not at the level of some competitors. Meanwhile, they question if the salary is the most important factor to organise retention.

*“Sometimes you cannot hold people to your organisation because money is a really short satisfier. Only a satisfier for three months and then you are used to the salary, you probably want more, and you are dissatisfied again. Then the retention starts again, we don't do a lot on retention currently.” (HRBP)*

*“It was a few years ago that we compensated developers because they were earning too little to get them on the right track. And then it is fun, if you speak to someone, and they get 30% extra they react that they were okay with the salary, it is a little bit crazy. The real motivation is not coming from the salary. Then I know they are happy.” (IT manager)*

Interestingly, all the software developers confirm that salary is not as important as their daily job. In many platform companies, software developers are programming without the possibility to be innovative and explore alternative technologies (field note).

*“A promotion is cool because it's just fun, but the money, it doesn't really matter anymore, it's like if you got a certain amount of salary, you cannot complain anymore.” (Software developer)*

*“I can go to another organisation and maybe earn a little bit more money, but will I get opportunities like this? That's an important part in retention, of course. Just having cool stuff to work on is also important. I believe we got a lot of freedom in choosing our own topic, so to speak.” (Software developer)*

Thus, compensation is perhaps not the most crucial part of retention in this organisation.

**Benefits.** Remarkably, the organisation does not offer many benefits but is retaining people in a natural way. Although it is hard to attract the right people, many admire the great opportunities to grow with the company and work in the newest offices. In addition, the organisation profiles itself by offering the 'human touch'. The scrum master plays an important role in this since the closely monitor the feelings of software engineers instead of a focus on performance.

*“What other people within tech probably aren't doing in other companies is talking about the feelings, keep talking and be human.” (Talent manager)*

*“We're just a very cool company to work for. You should also not forget that. A lot of people choose for a company because they just see that there's a lot of growth opportunity and a lot of learning opportunity by just working here and meeting all kinds of interesting people.” (Recruiter)*

This human approach is widely supported throughout the organisation. Especially, freedom and the feeling that you can add value to the company growth causes a natural retention. This is mainly facilitated by the continuous dialogue between software developers and line management.

*“You are retaining people by respecting them and by giving them the feeling that they are really important for the company and that they do a good job and have the room to develop themselves and have the feeling of self-control.” (IT manager)*

*“And I’m really enjoying it where I’m working now. The work itself is really interesting. And we get a lot of freedom from our manager. If we mark something as important, we get the time to work on that as well. To me, that is the most important thing.” (Software developer)*

In contrast, HR professionals and software developers both identify a gap in the offered benefits. Although the pandemic reinforces this gap, working remotely could enhance the attraction and retention of talented software engineers.

*“That’s just how you grow in this organisation. That’s how people are retained in this organisation if you can manage the disruption and the workload. I think natural space there. But I do feel retention wise, we need to be focusing also on purpose. What is this, what are we choosing to do, flexibility work where you work anytime, anywhere.” (Talent manager)*

*“There’s only one thing I heard people complain about and that is because we don’t have an official policy on working from home yet. So that has cost us a bunch of developers already.” (Software developer)*

In short, money could be beneficial in employee staffing, but in this organisation, software developers stay because they have the possibility to grow together with the organisation. Although recruiters struggle with selling the benefits package to applicants, they promote freedom and development.

Table 6: Overview of logics, keywords, and representative quotes for retention

Logics	Keywords	Representative quotes
<b>leadership logic</b>	Underpay, natural retention, human touch	<p><i>“There’s a lot of things possible, but we are not really at a point where we can really sell it as a benefit because it’s still unclear, even within recruitment, it changes all the time.” (Recruiter)</i></p> <p><i>“You’d be crazy to leave this company at this point in time because this is a unique opportunity to learn super-fast and to grow in your role without being promoted.” (Talent manager)</i></p> <p><i>“Currently we have a lot of things, we have a cool place to work, we have the newest offices with the newest gears, but that doesn’t sell it anymore because we are all at home.” (HRBP)</i></p>
<b>Management logic</b>	Standardised, transparent, respect, mindset	<p><i>“In fact, everyone wants to be important in the work what they do. You don’t have to push them; it is coming out of the person themselves. You only have to unleash the energy so that people can do where they good at.” (IT Manager)</i></p> <p><i>“The scrum master is a sort of team coach. Looking how people feel instead of perform.” (Scrum master)</i></p> <p><i>“In our case, it is related to the self-organising and self-management. We try to be open and transparent and to be honest to each other and give freedom to do stuff you want to do. You have the work you need to do, from a tech perspective and you have a buffer to do things you want to do.” (Scrum master)</i></p>
<b>Developer logic</b>	Decent pay, opportunities, human touch	<p><i>“The money and what you can buy with it is not important, but more about today’s value to me as an employee or something like that, it’s an important factor.” (Software developer)</i></p> <p><i>I think it’s more related to the person, go and find some help. And if it needs just more human touch, talk to the people, I think that’s the way you can deal with it [retention]. (Software developer)</i></p> <p><i>“Our pay is good, but it’s not the greatest in the market. So that could be a factor.” (Software developer)</i></p> <p><i>“I get paid a decent amount and enough holidays, usually trouble of spending them all.” (Software developer)</i></p> <p><i>“And he gave up looking for a good job because he was so happy with us. Even though his salary was a bit lower as it used to be, he’s still sticking because he just loves the place.” (Software developer)</i></p>

## Discussion

The starting point of this study is to explore the following research question: How is institutional complexity manifested in employee staffing, development, and retention? Based on a multi-actor analysis of the entire TM approach, the study found that all interviewees legitimise organisational growth as dominant logic (Lounsbury, 2008), which is perfectly characterised by the corporation logic (Thornton et al., 2012). Since the interviewees uniformly adhere to the corporation logic, no institutional complexity is found in the ideal type logics formulated by Thornton et al. (2012). In order to explore how institutional complexity is manifested in TM, the study found three underpinned logics: leadership logic, management logic, and developer logic. These three logics adhere to the corporation logic but have various ways to achieve organisational growth in employee staffing, development, and retention. Notably, institutional complexity was manifested on a process level instead of the practice level. To illustrate, while employee staffing consists of attraction, selection, and onboarding, the logics clashed within the onboarding process instead of within every process that includes this practice. In addition, the three logics did not compete in the same process. The study shows it was either the leadership logic/management logic clashing with the developer logic or the developer/management logic clashing with the leadership logic.

These are interesting findings because the study confirms the two recommendations for future research in the existing literature. In fact, the addition of more organisational actors and more than one TM practice are important to explore institutional complexity. In the first place, the organisational context is essential to consider because various actors shape practices in their own way. This is in line with Tyskbo (2019), who distinguished the underpinned business logic (dominant at the headquarters) and the engineering logic (dominant at the subsidiary). Surprisingly, the engineering logic overlaps the developer logic proposed in this study. Both logics focus on in-depth knowledge of products and the importance of technical know-how (hard skills). However, Tyskbo (2019) included HR specialists, line managers and employees under the engineering logic and explored institutional complexity in the external context. On the contrary, this study analysed the internal context and therefore divided the interviewees into different groups. As a result, this study found that within a local business, institutional complexity arises between HR professionals, line management, and IT talents (software developers in this study). Based on the analysis, this study found that within these groups of organisational actors, experiences could differ. To illustrate, about half of the software engineers stressed the importance of an inclusive approach, while the other half stressed that only limited people are talented. This is another argument to explore the internal context since institutional complexity could not only arise between a headquarters and a subsidiary (Tyskbo, 2019), but also between the groups within the same office. In the second place, by including more TM practices than only focus on talent identification (Tyskbo, 2019), this study shows that institutional complexity is also manifested in employee staffing, development, and retention of talented individuals. Although Tyskbo (2019) highlights performance evaluation and rewards, the study outlines the role of senior managers and HR managers in the

identification of talents. Tyskbo (2019) complements this view with the general experience of employees. Whereas the insights are relevant, Tyskbo (2019) studies a minor part of the entire TM strategy. In contrast, this research displays the experience of the entire TM process. This is in line with the call of action from Lewis and Heckman (2006), who propose the addition of all the TM practices.

In contrast with existing literature, this study additionally shows three interesting insights about the importance of considering the full TM approach. Firstly, institutional complexity can be manifested in processes rather than practices. This is important when exploring institutional complexity because a modest part of the practice could be responsible for tension between logics instead of the entire practice. For instance, within the development practice, the logics align with the voluntary training approach and the customised succession planning while they clash regarding the importance of soft skills in performance management. Whereas the leadership logic and management logic shape development processes based on soft skills, the developer logic shapes the process based on hard skills. In practice, this results in an insufficient execution of the performance appraisal by software engineers. Therefore, to explore how talent management unfolds in practice, it is essential to study the underlying processes in employee staffing, development, and retention. Secondly and in line with the first insight, when two or more groups of actors are analysed, underpinned logics could overlap. Whereas previous research separately stresses the role of organisational actors in shaping practices (Meyers et al., 2020), this study shows that line management and HR sometimes share similar drivers, and in other cases, software developers and line management share comparable drivers. This is another reason to argue that the underlying processes are critical to consider when exploring how institutional complexity shapes talent management in practice. Thirdly, employee staffing, development, and retention tend to affect each other in practice. To illustrate, a rewarding framework is crucial for attracting talents, but also for the retention of talents. Likewise, development opportunities can reduce turnover, but it also makes it easier to attract talented employees. Again, to secure a proper execution of TM in an internal context, a comprehensive overview is necessary to understand how TM unfolds in practice in a unique organisational context.

In brief, this study provides two important implications. To begin, future avenues should focus on underpinned logic instead of the ideal type of logic (Thornton et al., 2012). Underpinned logics are better able to explain institutional complexity in an internal context due to the involvement of various actors in the several practices within TM. To be more precise, the participants in this research generally were used to the disrupted TM approach, which resulted in the tension on a more detailed level. Additionally, the disruption could be labelled as a characteristic of an organisation that legitimises organisational growth. In order to ensure organisational growth, the company usually needs a flexible and adaptive workforce to cope with changes and maintain a competitive advantage. Especially for platform organisations, growth is crucial because the more users on the platform, the more valuable the platform becomes. For this reason, it could be assumed that the business model represents the dominant ideal type of logic. To put it differently, in health services, the profession logic is likely to be the

dominant driver because the expertise of nurses and doctors is essential to achieve the organisational objective, treating and curing people. Similarly, in a local government, the dominant driver is supposedly manifested in the state logic because bureaucracy is socially accepted to organise the public administration processes (Thornton et al., 2012). These examples point out that not only for platform organisation but also in other internal contexts, the underpinned logics might be a better representation to explore how institutional complexity is manifested. To continue, strategic choices regarding TM could serve multiple goals in underpinned logic. Particularly, this study shows that the new rewarding framework is used to improve employee staffing and retention. However, the effect of this strategic choice differs. In employee staffing the organisation is better able to attract talented software developers, while in retention, software developers prefer secondary labour conditions instead of a salary increase. Moreover, the disrupted context resulted in unclarity about the main strategic choice to label every employee as a talent (inclusive) or rather choose to label limited employees as talent (exclusive). As a matter of fact, the ambiguous approach affects the execution because actors have more agency to shape TM in practice. In this study, the high degree of agency results in very detailed ways to cope with practices and the underlying processes. Accordingly, underpinned logics better represent tension within a disrupted context with a lack of direction in the strategic agenda. Thus, future research is recommended to focus on the underpinned logic within the processes of TM. Besides, it would be interesting to execute a similar research in a public context or in a different sector that adopts a different business model to confirm or disprove these results.

### **Limitations and recommendations for future research**

In a similar fashion to other research, this study has limitations. First, the internal context of an organisation always consists of specific characteristics, but in this case study, some ongoing changes and temporary characteristics are likely to affect the results of this study. As a matter of fact, the platform organisation is expanding quickly and therefore, continuously changing and reviewing their daily practices. The growth in the past years is perhaps not generalisable for other platform organisations that act in a stable market. Also, the temporary characteristics imply the worldwide pandemic, which rapidly increased the interest in topics like remote work and work-life balance. Certainly, this directly affects the TM strategy in terms of employee staffing, development, and retention. So, it is plausible to argue that the results of this study will differ post-pandemic. Besides, the organisation introduced a new pay framework to align it with competitors and plans to review the benefit package within the next months. In like manner, the organisation is improving the global onboarding journey and is planning to align this locally at the end of this year. For this reason, current insights on institutional complexity could be outdated quickly. However, the importance of underpinned logic presumably will not change because the lack of uniformity and direction in TM still results in a high degree of agency. When actors keep the freedom to shape practices, the institutional complexity will still be manifested in the underpinned logics. Provided that, the main conclusion of this study is not likely to change. Second, the organisational

structure in the IT division consists of HR professionals, line management, and software developers. Within line management, there is an influential role for scrum masters. Additional to regular line management, scrum masters tend to remove all obstacles that software developers experience while executing their core tasks. Also, they monitor well-being and closely follow the team dynamic to prevent team conflicts or external conflicts with stakeholders. In this structure, scrum masters possibly have more (positive) influence on the development and retention in comparison with traditional line management. Additionally, scrum masters do not make managerial decisions and can therefore objectively support and motivate software developers. Hence, without scrum masters in line management, the role of HR professionals could slightly differ in comparison with organisations where HR professionals monitor the execution of HR practices. Taking these limitations into account, future research is supported to collect more empirical insights in a less disruptive internal context. Research could be conducted in another platform organisation if it concerns stable growth. Besides, it is recommended to choose an organisational structure to assess HR professionals and traditional line management in a clear hierarchy experience similar institutional complexity.

## **Conclusion**

This study shows that institutional complexity is manifested in employee staffing, retention, and development. Whereas organisational growth is legitimised by all the actors (corporation logic), the institutional complexity is manifested in the underlying processes and represented by three underpinned logics: the leadership logic, the management logic, and the developer logic. By adapting the institutional logic perspective, this study confirms the importance of contextual factors stressed in the HRM literature and affirms the power of institutional theory to display tension between (groups of) organisational actors. In addition, the study responds to the call in TM literature to examine more practices than only talent identification (Tyskbo, 2019). Not only the consideration of more practices became important, but also the analysis of underlying processes should be considered. Remarkably, in the underlying processes, the leadership/management logic clashed with the developer logic, and in other cases, the developer/management logic clashed with the leadership logic. This results in interesting insights regarding institutional complexity between more than two organisational actors. In fact, this implies that institutional complexity could occur on a strategic, tactical and operational level. In this specific organisational context, it is recommended to formulate and communicate the TM strategy based on an inclusive, exclusive, or balanced approach. At this moment, organisational actors shape TM because there is a lack of direction which contribute to the occurrence of tension between employees. When the organisation manages the expectations by labelling who the talents are, it will be better able to align employee staffing, development, and retention on a local level. In closing, the provided insights hopefully stimulate future research to gather more empirical evidence on how institutional complexity is manifested in both the practice and process level of talent management.



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## **Appendices**

### **Appendix 1: Interview script (IT talent/Management/HR professional)**

#### **Talent management**

- Which position(s) or individuals would you label as the talents of the organisation?
  - Why?
- In what ways does your organisation attract, develop and retain these talented individuals?
- From your perspective, why are talents important?

#### **Employee staffing**

1. How are talents recruited?
2. Which actors are involved in employee staffing?
3. Which requirements does an employee need to fulfil in order to be qualified as a talent?
  - Do all actors agree on these criteria?
4. On the basis of which criteria do you assess the (future) potential of talented individuals?
  - Do all actors involved agree on these criteria?
5. How are talents selected? Why?
6. What are the selection criteria? Why?
  - Do all actors involved in recruiting and selecting talents agree on these criteria?
7. Who is making the final decision?
  - How is this done? Do all actors involved usually agree on who should be classified as talents?
8. How get talents on board?
9. To what extent do you think all the involved actors align with your perspective?
10. How would you like to improve employee staffing?

#### **Development**

11. How can talents develop their knowledge, skills and competence?
12. Which actors are involved in developing talented employees? Why?
13. How are talents trained?
14. How is performance management organised for talents?
15. What criteria are used to evaluate the performance of talented employees?
  - Why these criteria?
  - Do all actors involved agree on these criteria?
16. Do talents get succession planning? (explain if necessary)
17. To what extent do you think all the involved actors align with your perspective?
18. How would you like to improve development?

## **Retention**

19. What does the organisation do to retain talents?
20. Which actors are involved in retention?
  - Do all actors involved agree on how to retain talents? Why (not)?
21. How is compensation organised for talents?
22. What benefits do talents get?
23. Which initiatives are used to retain talented personnel?
24. To what extent do you think all the involved actors align with your perspective?
25. How would you like to improve retention?

## Appendix 2: Interview information

	Organizational actor	Position	Main involvement in TM practice	Date of interview	Time
1	HR professional	IT Manager	All practices	28-05-2021	1:32:40
2	Line management	Scrum master	All practices	31-05-2021	1:17:08
3	HR professional	Recruiter	Employee staffing	02-06-2021	1:06:39
4	Line management	Scrum master	All practices	02-06-2021	1:10:26
5	Line management	Agile coach	All practices	02-06-2021	1:07:06
6	HR professional	HRBP	Development and retention	03-06-2021	0:45:10
7	Talent	Developer	All practices	07-06-2021	1:01:01
8	Talent	Developer	All practices	07-06-2021	1:16:02
9	Talent	Developer	All practices	08-06-2021	1:00:17
10	HR professional	Recruiter	Employee staffing	09-06-2021	1:12:09
11	HR professional	Talent manager	All practices	10-06-2021	1:03:17
12	Talent	Developer	All practices	11-06-2021	1:18:09
13	Talent	Developer	All practices	21-06-2021	1:20:20
<b>Total:</b>					<b>15:06:52</b>
<b>Average:</b>					<b>01:10:00</b>

Hi ...,

At the moment, I am almost done with my master thesis! Currently, I am reviewing my discussion section which marks the last part of my article.

On Tuesday the 10th of August I have my 'green light meeting', which means that my two assessors review my work to decide if I can defend my thesis on the 26th or 27th of August. Also, next week, I scheduled a presentation moment for everyone that is interested on the **13th of August at 14:00**. No worries if you can't make it, afterwards I will send everyone who participated an overview of the results accompanied by the entire article.

Attached your transcript of the interview. The transcript will be in the confidential appendix of the article which means that no one, except my two assessors and I will have access to it. My assessors only use this to assess if I transferred the transcripts into sufficient results. Besides, the research is completely anonymous to prevent that readers link the article to the company, that is why in the final version, I only talk about 'platform organization'.

**Be aware! To guarantee the quality of the research I included many quotes of every interviewee.** If you have any information in mind, you don't feel comfortable to share, please let me know before the 26th of August. You can do this via an email to [n.wolters@student.utwente.nl](mailto:n.wolters@student.utwente.nl) (please cc: [nordinwolters@hotmail.com](mailto:nordinwolters@hotmail.com)).

If you have any questions regarding your participation in the research or transcript, please contact me on the abovementioned email addresses. Again, I am very grateful you were willing to help me with this research!